



# CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN NEBRASKA

## Hope in the Good Life

November 2023

St. Dymphna/The women of St. Gianna Program

### Healing with the support of each other

Long known as the patron saint of those struggling with emotional disorders including anxiety, PTSD, and depression, St. Dymphna is also considered a great intercessor for victims of domestic violence.

Born in Ireland in the 7th century, Dymphna's father was Damon, an iron-fisted minor king of Oriel in Ireland. Her mother, Odilla, was a kind-hearted, beautiful Christian woman who secretly had Dymphna baptized and raised in the Catholic faith.

Sadly, when Dymphna was just 15 her mother passed away. Odilla's sudden death sent Damon into a mind-destroying spiral of despair. Eventually his aides convinced him to remarry, but he could not find a woman as beautiful as Odilla- except for Dymphna.

Terrified, Dymphna managed to flee Ireland with her family priest, Fr. Gereban. Dymphna realized that

escaping meant giving up the comforts of her home and living in poverty, but she felt she had no choice. Dymphna and Fr. Gereban found a boat that would take them to Antwerp, Belgium. From there they traveled to the village of

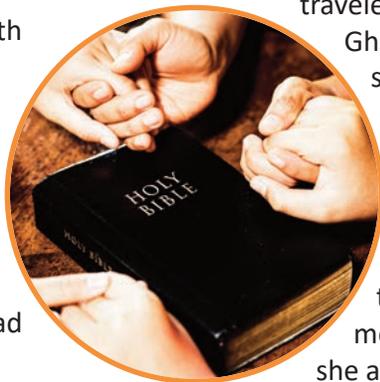
Gheel. Making a home in a small hut next to St.

Martin of Tours chapel, Fr. Gerebran attended to the spiritual needs of the people while Dymphna attended to the poor. It wasn't merely the physically ill she attended to, but the

emotionally ill as well—those filled with anxiety, depression and trauma. Through helping them heal, she was able to find healing for her own distraught and anxious soul after enduring the ravages of domestic assault at the hands of her father.

Sadly, Damon eventually caught up to Dymphna and Fr. Gereban. Damon immediately killed Fr. Gereban, and when Dymphna refused her father once again, Damon killed her as well.

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**ST. GIANNA PROGRAM**  
OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

**2023 Educational COLLABORATION**



**Food Bank OF LINCOLN**  
"Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-by World" workshop



**NEP**  
Nutrition Education Program  
Nutrition classes for moms & kids

**UBT**  
Union Bank & Trust  
Financial literacy classes

**WOMEN'S CARE CENTER**  
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA 

Parenting classes

*Hope in the Good Life*



PO Box 30425  
Lincoln NE 68503-0425



## #HopeintheGoodLife

### *Healing with the support of each other (continued)*

While in Belgium and consumed with fear and anxiety about her survival, Dymphna discovered that her suffering and trauma could be used for the benefit of others. People came to her with their emotional distress and illnesses, and she prayed with them.

Through helping them heal, she was able to find healing for herself. This is something we have been blessed to witness in our St. Gianna Program.

Some of the women at SGP regularly attend a bible study. Typically, the study begins with our staff asking how each person is doing, giving them time to share whatever is on their mind or in their heart. Through this group, many of the women have built solid friendships and found a safe place to express their frustrations and difficulties. In one instance, a resident spent the entire evening telling the group about a particularly difficult situation she was facing. She was met with encouragement, understanding, and a great deal of love from the other women present as they offered her advice and accompanied her in her pain and challenges.

Please pray for those we serve in our St. Gianna Program, that through encouragement and support, they may heal from the hurt they have endured. St. Dymphna, pray for us!

**CAROLE FESTO**

A HYBRID BENEFIT FOR  
ST. GIANNA PROGRAM

Sunday, December 10, 2023  
3:00 PM  
St. John the Apostle Church  
Lincoln, NE  
[csshope.org](http://csshope.org)