

Reflection Saturday Easter Week 7 St Rita of Cascia 2021

Saint Rita of Cascia (1377 - 1447) was born near Cascia, Italy. She was married at 12 despite wanting to be a nun. Her husband was rich, quick-tempered and immoral and had many enemies. She endured his insults, abuse and infidelities for 18 years and bore him two sons, who grew to be like him. Eventually she helped convert her husband but he was stabbed to death by his enemies not long after. He repented before he died and was reconciled to the Church. Her sons planned to avenge their father's death. When Rita's pleas were ignored, she prayed that God take their lives if that was the only way to preserve them from committing murder. They died of natural causes a year later. Rita asked to join the convent of St Mary Magdalen at Cascia but was rejected for being a widow. She managed to reconcile her family with her husband's murderers and was accepted into the convent at 36 where she remained until her death. She is a patron saint of impossible or lost causes.

John ends his gospel making it clear that however much we know from scripture about Jesus and the Good News there is so much more we do not know let alone understand. We have a statue of St Rita in Bethnal Green parish. She watched over all the Assumptionists who have lived there. Reflecting on the little we know, St Rita teaches us that it is the way in which we live our lives and how we work for peace and reconciliation, like Jesus, that really matters.

Pentecost Novena: *Laudato Si'* on 'Care for our Common Home.'

God, who wishes to work with us and counts on our cooperation, can bring good out of the evil we have done. *"The Holy Spirit possesses an infinite creativity, proper to the divine mind, which knows how to loosen the knots of human affairs, including the most complex and inscrutable"*. Creating a world in need of development, God sought to limit himself in such a way that many things we think of as evils, dangers or sources of suffering, are in reality part of the pains of childbirth which he uses to draw us into the act of cooperation with the Creator. God is intimately present to each being, without impinging on the autonomy of his creature, and this gives rise to the rightful autonomy of earthly affairs. His divine presence, which ensures the subsistence and growth of each being, *"continues the work of creation"*. The Spirit of God has filled the universe with possibilities and something new can always emerge: *"Nature is a kind of art, God's art, impressed upon things, whereby those things are moved to a determinate end. It is as if a shipbuilder were able to give timbers the wherewithal to move themselves to take the form of a ship"* N.80.

Loving God, Creator of Heaven, Earth, and all therein contained.

Open our minds and touch our hearts, so that we can be part of Creation, your gift.

Be present to those in need in these difficult times, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. Help us to show creative solidarity as we confront the consequences of the global pandemic. Make us courageous in embracing the changes required to seek the common good. Now more than ever, may we all feel interconnected and interdependent.

Enable us to succeed in listening and responding to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. May their current sufferings become the birth-pangs of a more fraternal and sustainable world. We pray through Christ our Lord, under the loving gaze of Mary, Help of Christians. *Amen*.

My wife recommended I do some - LIGHT - reading to relax at the end of the day, but to be perfectly honest, it wasn't all that relaxing. In fact, my eyes are in a lot of pain right now... I did however, managed to make out, "60 Watts - Made in China."