

Reflection Friday Week 21 St Monica 2021

Saint Monica (331 - 387) was born in Thagaste in Africa of a Christian family. She was married young, to Patricius, and among her children was Augustine. Augustine had a brilliant intellect but initially rejected Christianity so that his spiritual development saw him at one time a Manichee and then a Neoplatonist. Through many tears, Monica prayed unceasingly to God for Augustine's conversion and her prayers were answered shortly before she died. She had a deep faith and outstanding virtue and is a wonderful example of a Christian mother. She even converted her husband from paganism to become a Christian before he died.

The readings for St Monica are so apt. She was certainly a good wife to Patricius in the true sense of love; a love he did not initially reciprocate but eventually led to his conversion. The spirit of the psalm would also describe Monica in terms of patience, tolerance and care for her family. While the Gospel is chosen because her son Augustine was dead to her Lord and God but, in his eventual conversion, in her eyes he was brought to life. She died a very short after that. Not only did Augustine's conversion bring new life to her, her son became a powerful influence in the development of the Church through a very difficult time in its history. But, more about Augustine tomorrow.

As Monica reminds us that *"Nothing is far from God!"* Let us ask St Monica to pray for us as she prayed for her son,