St. Rita

Feastday: May 22
Patron of impossible cases
Died: 1457

St. Rita was born at Spoleto, Italy in 1381. At an early age, she begged her parents to allow her to enter a convent. Instead they arranged a marriage for her. Rita became a good wife and mother, but her husband was a man of violent temper. In anger he often mistreated his wife. He taught their children his own evil ways.

Rita tried to perform her duties faithfully and to pray and receive the sacraments frequently. After nearly twenty years of marriage, her husband was stabbed by an enemy but before he died, he repented because Rita prayed for him. Shortly afterwards, her two sons died, and Rita was alone in the world. Prayer, fasting, penances of many kinds, and good works filled her days. She was admitted to the convent of the Augustinian nuns at Cascia in Umbria, and began a life of perfect obedience and great charity.

Sister Rita had a great devotion to the Passion of Christ. "Please let me suffer like you, Divine Saviour," she said one day, and suddenly one of the thorns from the crucifix struck her on the forehead. It left a deep wound which did not heal and which caused her much suffering for the rest of her life. She died on May 22, 1457. She is the patroness of impossible cases. Her feast day is May 22.