

Nothing is impossible with God

Rita of Cascia is an Augustinian saint and the patron of St Rita's College, but she was also a daughter, wife, mother, widow, religious sister, mystic, healer, reconciler and peacemaker and as such she lived out God's mission in a multitude of ways.

In God's mission, each person enacts God's love in large and small ways through acts of compassion, justice, humility, kindness and patience. Saint Rita of Cascia is a great exemplar of living God's mission in the world.

Saint Rita lived the gospel message of reconciliation and peace in a hurting world. In her time rival families fought for control. Her own family suffered because of the family feud which existed between the Chiqui and Mancini families. Rita's husband, Paolo Mancini, was violently killed by a member of the feuding family. Rita tried desperately to dissuade her two sons not to avenge their father through retribution. She did this by showing her young boys the image of Christ crucified and explaining how Jesus forgave those who placed him on the cross. Rita embodied forgiveness and love.

Sadly, within a year of her husband's death her sons both died leaving Rita a childless widow. During this time Rita placed her trust in God, accepting the tragedies and relying on her faith to keep going. Her loss and grief led Rita to answer the call to religious life in the Augustinian convent.

Within the convent however there was a sense her presence would disturb the harmony of the congregation as there were members of the rival family in the convent and although Rita had forgiven her husband's killers, the feud was not over. Rita was determined to make peace between the families.

She convinced her husband's family to put aside their anger and convinced by her courage, they agreed. The rival family, surprised by this suggestion of peace, also agreed. Rita united the families through reconciliation, trust and bravery. The vendetta was over. Rita had achieved the impossible.

At the age of 36, Rita officially entered the Augustinian convent where she lived a contemplative life for forty years. During this time her participation in God's mission led her to become a role model for prayer, compassion and a loving and peaceful presence for everyone she encountered.

May we all follow the example of St Rita, the role model for peace and patron for impossible causes. St Rita of Cascia, pray for us.

St Rita of Cascia's Feast Day is celebrated on 22 May.



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REFLECTION

When faced with seemingly impossible tasks,
where do you find the strength, patience and courage to achieve a positive outcome ?