



## Eparchy of Saskatoon Family and Life Office Bulletin:

October 2019

### “The future of the world passes through the family”

St. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 79

**Praying for our children:** I heard a talk recently about the importance of praying for our children. The speaker said that he is repeatedly asked by parents about what to do when children have apparently abandoned their faith and/or refuse to attend church as young adults. This is unfortunately an all too common problem. His primary recommendation to parents was relentless intercessory prayer, along with pursuit of personal formation and holiness, as well as working to maintain connection and relationship with our kids (I call this *accompaniment* with *conviction and direction, driven and guided by love*).

It is, however, really easy to be discouraged—I know this from personal experience. None of us have been perfect parents and our awareness of this becomes incredibly painful as we watch our children turn from the true faith we have done our best to raise them in. Our hope is in Christ and we must never lose hope. This is beautifully described in a poem by J.R.R. Tolkien from the *Fellowship of the Rings*:

“All that is gold does not glitter, Not all those who wander are lost;  
The old that is strong does not wither, Deep roots are not reached by the frost.  
From the ashes a fire shall be woken, A light from the shadows shall spring;  
Renewed shall be blade that was broken, The crownless again shall be king.”

It may seem that our children are rejecting their ‘eternal crowns’ offered to them through the sacramental life of the Church, but we, through prayer, and sacrifice (offering up our suffering and even choosing to fast, deliberately depriving ourselves of some good thing for the sake of our kids) can bring about a real difference. St. Monica, mother of St. Augustine would be a great prayer partner and co-intercessor in this quest for our children’s salvation. We can find novenas to her in this regard at the following website: <https://gnm.org/prayers-for-parents/st-monica-litany/> or we can try this simple prayer from Brandon Vogt

*“St. Monica, I need your prayers. You know exactly how I’m feeling because you once felt it yourself. I’m hurting, hopeless, and in despair. I desperately want my child to return to Christ in his Church but I can’t do it alone. I need God’s help. Please join me in begging the Lord’s powerful grace to flow into my child’s life. Ask the Lord Jesus to soften his heart, prepare a path for his conversion, and activate the Holy Spirit in his life. Amen.”*

(<https://www.wordonfire.org/resources/blog/how-st-monica-can-help-your-child-return-to-the-church/>)

**We might add this to our prayers found on the Family and Life website:**

<https://skeparchy.org/flo/family-life/prayers/>

See especially the TAB **Praying for Our Children**

Learn more about this amazing Saint and Prayer Partner:

1) *St. Monica's example converted her husband and mother-in-law. Even though the fourth-century saint was a Christian, her parents gave her away to a man named Patritius. Both he and his mother were pagans and had violent tempers. St. Monica endured this with patience and kindness, and her example eventually led to their conversions to Christianity.*

2) *She prayed for St. Augustine for 17 years before his conversion. Much of what St. Monica is known for is her persistence in prayer. Her son, St. Augustine of Hippo, lived a life of immorality, most notably that of lust and impurity, before converting to Catholicism. Throughout these years, she endured a tremendous amount of suffering. Augustine rejected her on multiple accounts, but she continued to love, pray and nurture her son throughout his wayward time.*

3) *She felt discouraged, but never gave up St. Monica cried many times over her son's transgressions, but received affirmation from God on several accounts. St. Monica had a dream in which she wept over her son, and a figure told her that he was still with her. In his autobiography, The Confessions of Saint Augustine, St. Augustine wrote, "that it was my soul's doom she was lamenting..." The figure told her to be at peace, and "see that where she was there I was also." She also received encouragement from a local bishop, who told her that "God's time will come." He added, "Go now, I beg you; it is not possible that the son of so many tears should perish."*

4) *She knew her purpose in life St. Monica wept, prayed and sacrificed for her son for many years. Her greatest desire in life was to see her son's conversion to Catholicism, and once this happened, she believed her purpose in life had been fulfilled. She said to Augustine just a few days before she came down with a fever that caused her death: "My son, speaking of myself, nothing earthly delights me any longer. I do not know why I am still here or why I should remain here. I have no further earthly desires."*

5) *She is the patron saint of wives, mothers, conversions, alcoholics and abuse victims. Especially in a time where conversion is needed in our world and we see the tragedy of abuse in our Church, St. Monica is a great example of faith and hope. God's grace is infinite, and he will never abandon us, even if it seems as if he is not present. Let us look to St. Monica's example of persistence—that God will never abandon us, even in the hardest of times.*

<https://churchpop.com/2018/08/27/5-incredible-facts-about-st-monica-that-will-inspire-you-to-never-give-up-hope/>

If anyone is interested in working with me to form an **online** Eparchial prayer group praying specifically for our children or other family members where we could share not only our concerns but also answered prayers, please email me Deborah Larmour at:

[uwitness2family@skeparchy.org](mailto:uwitness2family@skeparchy.org)

God Bless, and *St. Monica, pray for us.* ☺ DPL