

Saint Rita of Cascia

- Feastday: May 22
- Patron Saint of: impossible causes, sterility, abuse victims, loneliness, marriage difficulties, parenthood, widows, and bodily ills.
- Birth: 1381
- Death: 1457
- Canonized: by Pope Leo XIII on May 24, 1900



*"Most Holy
Sacred Heart
of Jesus,
help my
heart
to preserve
in all that
is holy."*



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Saint Rita was born in Italy in 1381. At an early age, she begged her parents to allow her to enter a convent but she instead obeyed their will for her to marry a cruel man named Paolo Mancini. Young Rita became a wife and mother at only twelve years of age and her husband was a man of violent temper. In anger, he often mistreated Rita verbally and physically.

Paolo had many enemies, one of which eventually murdered him during a feud. Following her husband's death, Rita gave his murderers a public pardon, but her two sons wanted to avenge their father's murder. Rita prayed to God, asking Him to take her sons before they lost their souls to the mortal sin of murder. One year later, her prayers were answered when both of her sons fell prey to dysentery and died. Following the deaths of her sons, Rita attempted to enter the monastery of Saint Mary Magdalene in Cascia. Rita performed her duties faithfully and received the sacraments frequently.

Rita had a great devotion to the Passion of Christ, and one day when she was sixty-years-old, she asked, "Please let me suffer like you, Divine Savior." After her request, a wound appeared on her forehead, as if a thorn from Christ's crown had pierced her. It left a deep wound, which did not heal, and it caused her to suffer until the day she died.

It is said that as she neared the end of her life, Rita was bedridden from tuberculosis. It was then that she asked a cousin who had come to visit for a rose from the garden in her old home. As it was January, her cousin did not expect to find any roses, but there was a single rose in bloom, which was brought back to Rita at the convent.

She passed away four months later, on May 22, 1457. Following her death, she was buried at the Basilica of Cascia, and was later discovered to be incorrupt. Her body can be found today in the Saint Rita shrine at Cascia. Rita was beatified by Pope Urban VIII in 1627 and canonized by Pope Leo XII on May 24, 1900.