



ENCOURAGEMENT

FROM
ST. MONICA SODALITY

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E-mail: stmonicasodality@yahoo.com Website: www.cantius.org

Dear Friends of St. Monica,

I am happy to report that our trip to St. Monica's Tomb in Rome went very well. Eighty Masses will be offered at the tomb of St. Monica for the intentions of those individuals who requested them and for the members of the St. Monica Sodality. Approximately 30,000 petitions were placed on the Tomb of St. Monica.

On arriving at St. Augustino's Church I was greeted by the Rector. He remembered me from previous visits and more importantly the Sodality. He was deeply impressed with the number of active members we have (3,000) and the number of petitions that continue to pour into St. Monica.

I was impressed by the restoration which has taken place in the church of St. Augustino since my first visit in 1994. When I say restored I mean restored in the Catholic sense, not turned into a meeting hall the way some of our churches have been "restored" to the bare walls. On my first trip to St. Augustino's I could hardly find St. Monica's Tomb, and almost no one visited it. Now, as you can see from the photos, it has been well restored and people are visiting her shrine.

As heartbreaking as so much of the news about the Catholic Church is today, in this place I could see that by the tomb of St. Monica there was light — a light of hope — hope that the grace of God will bring our loved ones back to the Light of the World, Jesus, our King. And so we must persevere daily, praying and sacrificing for all who do not see and embrace the Light of the World.

Please always remember: **we are not commanded by God to be successful; we are commanded to be persistent in prayer, determined in sacrifice, and to hopefully trust in God.** Don't waste the precious time that God has given you to "worry and fret" — when those dark clouds



Father C. Frank Phillips, C.R. at the Tomb of St. Monica

of sorrow surround you look to the Cross, and shout in your soul "Jesus, have mercy; Jesus, have mercy; Jesus, have mercy!"

Look on page three for some hopeful accounts of *lapsi*—and some requests for prayers. Please send us your account of even the smallest success stories—God's grace in action, through the intercession of St. Monica.

Father C. Frank Phillips, C.R.
Pastor, St. John Cantius Church,
International Director, St. Monica Sodality

Fr. Phillips brought three of the members of the Society of St. John Cantius to the tomb of St. Monica. All of them were impressed by the experience and made some observations about the visit. This was the first trip to the Eternal City for Brothers Alexander and Anthony. Brother Chad, who had been to Rome once before commented, “Everything of our faith is centered here, the bones of the martyrs, the sense of how truly universal the Church is, and the splendid churches themselves with all their history. With Fr. Phillips for a tour guide we really get more out of the visit than the average tourist.”

“I feel a strong connection to St. Monica,” added Brother Alexander, “since the Society of St. John Cantius follows the Rule of St. Augustine, she is the mother of our spiritual father and had such an important impact on his life and conversion.”

Brother Chad sees St. Augustine as a very important model for our time. “He experienced the effects of man’s fallen nature, and the need of divine grace. I don’t see how anyone can pretend that the human race is not broken by sinfulness, and in dire need of God’s grace. St. Augustine knew sin, and how difficult it was to break free of the stranglehold it has on each

FROM ST. MONICA’S SON –

The pure prayer that ascends from a faithful heart will be like incense rising from a hallowed altar.

No fragrance can be more pleasing to God than that of His own Son. (The Mass) May all the faithful breathe out the same perfume.—*(Commentary on Psalm 140, 6)*

Holy prayer is the column of all virtues; a ladder to God; the support of widows, the foundation of faith; the crown of religious; the sweetness of the married life.—*(Auct. Serm. ad. Fratres in eremo apud St. Aug. Serm 22)*

Prayer is the protection of holy souls; a consolation for the guardian angel; an insupportable torment to the devil; a most acceptable homage to God; the best and most perfect praise for penitents and religious; the greatest honor and glory; the preserver of spiritual health. *(Aug. ad. Probam)*



Brothers Chad, Alexander and Anthony at the Tomb of St. Monica

sinner. But he did not fall into despair and by God’s love and mercy he confessed his sins, and with a strong willed intention tried for the rest of his life to “sin no more”. I only hope that with help of St. Monica all the people on the petitions learn those two lessons.”

Let us desire continually, and thus let us pray continually. But at certain hours we ought to recall our minds from other cares and business, in which desire itself is almost somehow cooled down, to the very business of prayer.

We must admonish ourselves by the words of our prayer to fix attention upon that which we desire. — *(Letter 130, 10)*

Let me be helped by your prayers, so that the Lord may see fit to help me bear His burden. When you pray in this way, it is really for yourselves that you are praying. For what is the burden of which I am speaking but you?

Pray for me, then, as I myself pray that you may not be burdensome. Support me so that we may bear one another’s burdens, thus fulfilling the law of Christ. — *(Sermon 340, 1)*

PLEASE PRAY

- “I have so many family members away from the Church it is scary.”
- “I pray the St. Monica prayer everyday and the litany on Wednesday evening — please pray for me and my loved ones.”
- “Just to let you know, one of my daughters not only came back to the church but is having her two children also. One will make her first Holy Communion next year. Please pray for my other children.”
- “I had been away from the church 14 years and returned four years ago. Unfortunately when I left my children did too. My daughter has returned and it was her oldest daughter who brought me back. My two sons have not returned Please pray both will come back to their Catholic roots.”
- “Please pray for us. I would love to join but cannot have the mail come to my home.”
- “Pray for my grandson . . . he is having a rough time, and he needs prayer more than anything else.”
- “Thanks for what you are doing . . . please continue to pray.”
- “Please pray to take care of all my family. For my daughter to find her way back, and my son to quit drinking.”
- “Please pray for my parents. They are in their 80s and have not practiced their faith in years. They need the consolation that the love of Jesus can give to their lives.”
- “Include my son who has been lured away from the Church by a non-Catholic girlfriend. He was once so spiritual and has left everything.”
- “My 85 year old mother (having married a non-Catholic) has slowly slipped into not practicing the Faith. Please pray for her.”
- “Keep praying please, my daughter is so involved in drugs.”

WITH GRATITUDE . . .

- “In gratitude for my brother’s marriage in the church.”
- “Thank you for your prayers. One person I prayed for did go back to church.”
- “Thank you for your prayers. My daughter who was on the prayer list is now active in the church.”
- “Shortly before my sister died last of May, she returned to the sacraments and the Church, in large part due to the help and prayers of St Monica.”
- “I am a convert to the Church and try to say each day the novena prayers for my children (6 sons) and grandchildren (5). It hurts my heart so much to realize the mistake they are all making, and I pray ardently for them. Their father died in 1996 on Divine Mercy Sunday at 3:15. He had not gone to Mass in seven years but did get the Last Rites and went to Confession. Even though the children were pleased, they still did not feel the need to return to the church.”
- “Thank you so much for your prayers—my nephew called recently and said he had returned to the Church.”
- “Thank you for *ENCOURAGEMENT*—it does help.”
- “I wish to give thanks to St. Monica for the reconciliation and peaceful death of my son.”
- “Thank God, one of my six returned to the Church. Please keep praying for my other children.”
- “Good news—on May 1st my daughter had her marriage blessed in the Church and her two children baptized.”
- “Give thanks for the return to the Faith of my son, at least partially, after many years.”
- “Every great accomplishment begins with an idea and a very dedicated believer—Thank God for whoever had the idea for St. Monica Sodality.”

DO YOU HAVE A LAPSI IN YOUR FAMILY?

Lapsi is a Latin word used to refer to persons who have lapsed from the practice of the Catholic Faith. (*Lapsi* is a collective plural. Singular is *lapsus* for a male and *lapsa* for a female.) If you do, here is what we suggest: Send their names to: St. Monica Sodality, 825 N Carpenter St, Chicago, IL 60622-5499.

From Pennsylvania

PRAY WHILE YOU DRIVE – USING ST. MONICA TAPES

A 50-minute professional audio tape of the St. Monica Novena Prayers and music is available for \$10.00 each, plus \$2.00 for postage. The “Seraphim Vocal Ensemble” provides the inspirational hymns. Order a tape to play in your car when you’re stuck in traffic—increase your prayer life—decrease tension. Order from St Monica Sodality, 825 N Carpenter St, Chicago, IL 60622-5499.

SODALITY MEMBERSHIP

Saint Monica Sodality members meet every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm at St. John Cantius Church. Novena prayers and Rosary are followed by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

On the feast of St. Monica, May 4th of every year (in the Traditional calendar), please renew your membership by sending \$20.00 U.S. funds (outside U.S.—\$30.00) along with any change of address information, or letters of gratitude to St. Monica. New members are accepted at any time and prayer booklets, petition forms, medals, and rule booklets are available from: Saint Monica Sodality, 825 North Carpenter Street, Chicago, IL 60622-5499. Phone: 312-243-7373 - Fax 312-243-4545. E-mail: stmonicasodality@yahoo.com Website: www.cantius.org.

PAST ISSUES of *Encouragement* and more information about the St. Monica Sodality are available on the website, www.cantius.org under Parish Life Activities, St. Monica Sodality.

JUNE 2004

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ST. MONICA SODALITY

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**IN MY DISTRESS
I CRIED UNTO
THE LORD**

St. Monica, pray for us.

