

One Mother's Prayers

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Her son grew up in a small town. The family owned their home, but they weren't wealthy. Determined their son would have a good education, they scrimped and saved to send him to school. Somehow his brother and sister didn't receive the same attention or prayers.

He did extremely well in school. People began to notice his brilliant mind. A prominent citizen of the town set up a scholarship for her son's graduate studies. She was so proud. Her joy diminished with worries about his spiritual health. He attended church some, but he refused baptism. And there were little incidents—stealing, things like that. She worried and she prayed.

He excelled in graduate school and finished with high expectations. But his religion . . . his letters contained long explanations of finding true reality and speculation how reality divided into darkness and light. Jesus was not truly God incarnate, he said, but an example of pure light entrapped and suffering in matter. He had always been good with words, but these words wounded her.

She decided to visit him. She thought her heart could stand no more pain, but she was wrong. He was living with a girl and they weren't married. They had a son. She was a grandmother, but she couldn't be proud of it. In desperation she explained the situation to her minister. He told her that the son of so many tears could never come to destruction. Somehow the message seemed from God.

The years passed. Her son was unhappy with his job; he was often ill. He left the girl but kept the son. Finally he became disillusioned with his mystical religion and began to question her about God. He started to go to church again. There he found Christian friends and questioned them. He began to read the Bible.

Her prayers increased. Her husband died, but he had become a Christian in his final illness. She, too, grew weaker, older. She feared she would die before the prayers for her son were answered.

Her grandson was a teenager now and she went to visit. A changed son met her—a son hungry to know about God, asking questions, requesting prayer. A son who would one day rush to tell her he had given his life to God by trusting Jesus as his personal savior. At Easter her son and grandson were baptized.

Their times together now were so precious, talking about the Lord and praying together. Her prayers overflowed with thanks but still she desired much more for her son. She knew her son as a Christian less than a year. In the August after his Easter baptism she breathed her last and went home to the Savior, to whom she had spent so much of her life talking.

She never saw with earthly eyes the great man of God her son became. She never heard his great sermons or read writings that determined much of Christian theology. She never knew her son's insights would jog Martin Luther into seeing that one is justified by faith alone. She would never hear her son's words that caused so many hearts to consider Jesus as Savior: "Thou hast made us for thyself, oh Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee."

Every part of this story is true—the mother who prayed was Monica, the mother of St. Augustine.

By Yvon Prehn



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