Saint Francis Chapel
Staffed by the Oblates of the Virgin Mary
Encountering the Heart of Christ in the Heart of Boston

Fifth Sunday of Easter — May 19, 2019

Saint Rita of Cascia, Pedro Antonio Fresquis
If you would like an offertory envelope sent to you on a regular basis, please fill out one of the cards in the chapel entrance and drop it off at the Gift Shop. Thank you for your continued support. God bless you!
St. Rita of Cascia
by Fr. James Doran, OMV

May 22 is the feast of St Rita of Cascia, patroness of impossible cases. I wanted to speak about her today and I think she is very big help to us, especially when praying for members of our families.

Her mother was sterile and yet gave birth to her in 1381 when both parents were older. From childhood she was very prayerful and expressed her great desire to become a nun, but her parents arranged a marriage for her with a man who turned out to be an adulterer and monster of violence to the family and a terror to the neighbors. For 18 years she put up with him with holy patience, praying and doing penance for his conversion.

Her two sons inherited their father’s violent temperament and began to follow his example. Poor Rita suffered tremendously, as they would not listen to her. She continued to pray for them with many tears.

Jesus said; “All that you ask the Father in my Name, you will receive”. Her husband converted and begged pardon of Rita for all he had made her suffer. He went to confession and just in time, because it was not long before the neighbors brought his body, covered with wounds, home to his wife. He died a victim of vengeance.

Now Rita’s sons vowed to avenge their father. Since they would not listen to her, Rita prayed to God that her sons would not become assassins. They suddenly became very sick. She lovingly took care of them in their illness. They forgave their enemies and they died.

Now a widow with no children, she dedicated her life to charity and prayer. She wanted to be a nun but the convents would only take girls who were never married. Finally, the Augustinian Sisters made an exception and allowed her to join their community. Once, her superior, to test her obedience, ordered her to water a wooden post in the garden. Rita obeyed without protest.

Ever since she was a child she had a great devotion to the Passion and Death of Jesus. Many times while she meditated on the sufferings of Christ, she would go into ecstasy - that is, her senses were suspended. She would neither see, hear, nor feel anything else. Once as she was kneeling in front of the Crucifix meditating on the Crowning of Thorns, she perceived a light like a laser come from the Cross to her head. From that time on, she carried a painful wound on her forehead, as if a thorn had pierced it. That wound would never heal during the last 14 years of her life.

In the community, she took care of the infirm Sisters and prayed for the conversion of sinners. Once when she was very sick, she asked a visitor for roses when roses were not in season. Her friend went o the garden and found roses. Another time a friend asked her if she could get her anything. She asked for figs. Again it was not time for figs, but in the garden they found the fig tree without leaves but there were figs. All these details explain why she is known as the saint of impossibilities and many people in difficult circumstances have found admirable solutions through her intercession.

We Oblates of the Virgin Mary have a sanctuary dedicated to Saint Rita in France, in the city of Nice. So if you ever go to Nice, you are invited to our sanctuary of St Rita.

She died in 1457 on the date she was born, the 22nd of May, and her body is incorruptible to this day.

Saint Rita, patron of impossible cases, pray for us!
The Oblates of the Virgin Mary is an international religious community of priests and brothers serving in Italy, France, Austria, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Nigeria, the United States and the Philippines. The Oblates are involved in retreat and parish missions, spiritual direction, parish work, the mass media, clergy formation, and the foreign missions.

The US Province of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary is dedicated to St. Ignatius of Loyola, and includes communities in Massachusetts, Illinois, Colorado, California and the Philippines.

The OMV US Province House is at St. Clement’s in Boston.

The OMV motto, “MARIAM COGITA, MARIAM INVOCA” “THINK OF MARY, CALL ON MARY” is taken from a homily by St. Bernard.