

The Bishops of the United States are urging the faithful to seek the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary in these times of trial and social upheaval. In response to the coronavirus outbreak, Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, has composed a prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe. He says the difficult situation facing the world has reminded us that we are all brothers and sisters. As “one family under God”, we turn to our Mother for protection and delivery from the threat of the Covid19 virus.

Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Times of Trial

Holy Virgin of Guadalupe,
Queen of the Angels and Mother of the Americas,
We fly to you today as your beloved children.

We ask you to intercede for us with your Son, as you did at the wedding in Cana.
Pray for us, loving Mother, and gain for our nation and world, and for all our families and loved ones, the protection of your holy angels, that we may be spared the worst of this illness.

For those already afflicted, we ask you to obtain the grace of healing and deliverance. Hear the cries of those who are vulnerable and fearful, wipe away their tears and help them to trust. In this time of trial and testing, teach all of us in the Church to love one another and to be patient and kind.

Help us to bring the peace of Jesus to our land and to our hearts. We come to you with confidence, knowing that you truly are our compassionate Mother, health of the sick and cause of our joy. Shelter us under the mantle of your protection, keep us in the embrace of your arms,
help us always to know the love of your Son, Jesus. Amen.

St. Monica/St. Augustine

Monica was an African, born near Carthage of Christian parents. She married and had three children, Augustine being the eldest. Augustine felt no attraction to Christianity which saddened Monica deeply. Instead, he sought the meaning of life in various other religions, but none gave him answers.

Monica prayed constantly for his conversion and wept over his sins until a sympathetic bishop consoled her by saying: “Go now, I beg of you; it is not possible that the son of so many tears should perish.” Her prayers were finally answered when Augustine came under the influence of Bishop Ambrose. Augustine began to find in Christian doctrine a greater depth than he had realized and he asked to be baptized.

During the time before Augustine’s baptism, Monica became ill. Just before she died, she confided that she had no further need for life: “there was one reason and one alone why I wished to remain a little longer in this life and that was to see you a Catholic Christian before I died. God has granted my wish...What is left for me to do in this world?”

Augustine returned to North Africa, hoping to pursue a monastic life, but was pressed to become Bishop of Hippo until his death in 430 at the age of 75.

Augustine was one of the great architects of Christian theology. His works were vast, leaving his mark on virtually every aspect of Christian doctrine. His autobiographical *Confessions* reflected on the meaning of his life in light of the pivotal turning point: his conversion and baptism into the Catholic Church, where he discerned the hand of God, caring for him and guiding him toward his eventual happiness. As he addressed God in one of his most famous lines, “You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”

St. Augustine gave his mother special credit for his conversion: “In the flesh, she brought me to birth in this world; in her heart she brought me to birth in Your eternal life.”

St. Augustine was recognized as a Doctor of the Church in 1298 by Pope Boniface VIII.

St. Monica’s Feast Day is August 27. She is the Patron of Wives and Abuse Victims.

St. Augustine’s Feast Day is August 28. He is the Patron of Brewers.

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