

Sermon for Sunday, May 10th, 2015. Gospel: John 15:9-17

Ever heard of Monica? She was a mother extraordinaire! She was most especially known for her faithful nurturing of her son. She lived in modern Algeria, in northern Africa, born circa 325 AD.

She was a devout believer in the then “new religion” called “Christianity.” Her husband was a pagan who finally embraced the faith, but only on his deathbed. But it was her son for whom she had so many dreams, and for whom she held so much hope...he was her greatest concern. Born in 354 AD, it was clear from an early age that he was brilliant. As a young man he studied philosophies and thought from both Greek and Roman academies, and though he sought to be faithful to one, he remained with many questions. His personal life was a mess, and involved the consumption of a lot of wine and the company of many young women. His first recorded prayer gives a sense of his debauchery. “God grant me serenity and continence, but not yet.”

Knowing of her son’s failings, Monica went to her priest and her tears fell like rain, as she asked the priest to pray that her son might somehow be saved. After listening to it all, at some length, finally said, “Go on! Leave me alone. Live as you are living. It is not possible that the son of such tears should be lost.”

The love of a mother may well be the closest analogy to understanding the love that Jesus encourages us to have for one another, and in which we must remain. This power of this love often seems to extend beyond the individual, to effect some wonderful changes in the life of the one loved, as it seemed to have done for Monica’s son.

Join us, where we shall explore the kind of love that Jesus is talking about, celebrate Mother’s Day, and find out who Monica’s son had become.

Rev. Dr. Luther Symons