

My Mother Taught Me ...

Mother's Day (May 13) is in our rearview mirror, but every day could be Mother's Day because we learn so many things from them.

Maybe a few of these lessons resonate with you (they do for me), in an article written by an unknown author:

- My mother taught me religion. She used to say things like, "You better pray that comes out of the carpet."
- My mother taught me medicine: "If you don't stop crossing your eyes, they're going to freeze that way."
- My mother taught me how to be a contortionist: "Will you look at the dirt on the back of your neck!"
- My mother taught me to appreciate a job well done: "If you're going to kill each other, do it outside. I just finished cleaning!"
- My mother taught me about genetics: "You are just like your father!"
- My mother taught me logic: "Because I said so, that's why."

I don't know if any of you had mothers like that; maybe we all did. But here is a more profound question: Do you know anyone whose mother prays for them daily? Numbers of you are in that category. Here's a story – from the book *99 Perseverance Success Stories: Encouragement for Success in Every Walk of Life* by Michal Stawicki and Jeannie Ingraham – about a young woman who became one of the most important women in the history of the church simply because of her faithfulness as a mother who prayed.

Her name was Monica. That name is probably familiar to some of you. Monica was born in 331 A.D. in North Africa in what is now Algeria. As a young girl, Monica converted to Christianity, which was still a relatively new faith. Her parents, who were not religious and not in sympathy with her new faith, married her off to a Roman pagan named Patricius.

Both Patricius and his mother, who lived with them, were hot-tempered people and difficult to deal with. Nevertheless, Monica did her best to be a good wife and daughter-in-law. While Monica's prayers and Christian deeds bothered Patricius, he respected her beliefs and not long before his death, both he and his mother converted to Christianity.

Monica and Patricius had three children, two of whom entered religious life as young adults. The third was a son named Augustine, who was more of a challenge. By his own admission, he was a wayward youth, giving in to most of the pleasures of his day. One writer describes him as lazy and uncouth. But Monica kept praying for her son. Her watchful, prayerful persistence paid off when Augustine finally became a Christian.

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Monica lived to see her son baptized into her faith. She died shortly thereafter. She could not know that Augustine would go on to become one of the towering figures of the church of his time – a man whom we now refer to as St. Augustine. He went from a sinner to a saint, simply because of the prayers and the influence of his mother. The writings of Augustine, the theologian, influenced the development of Western Christianity and Western philosophy.

Do mothers play an important role in society? St. Augustine was one of millions of people who have come to know Christ through their mother's never-failing love and prayers. I'm one of those.

Let's honor our mothers all year long – in our own families and those we serve in Life Care and Century Park.

She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness (Proverbs 31:26-27 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter