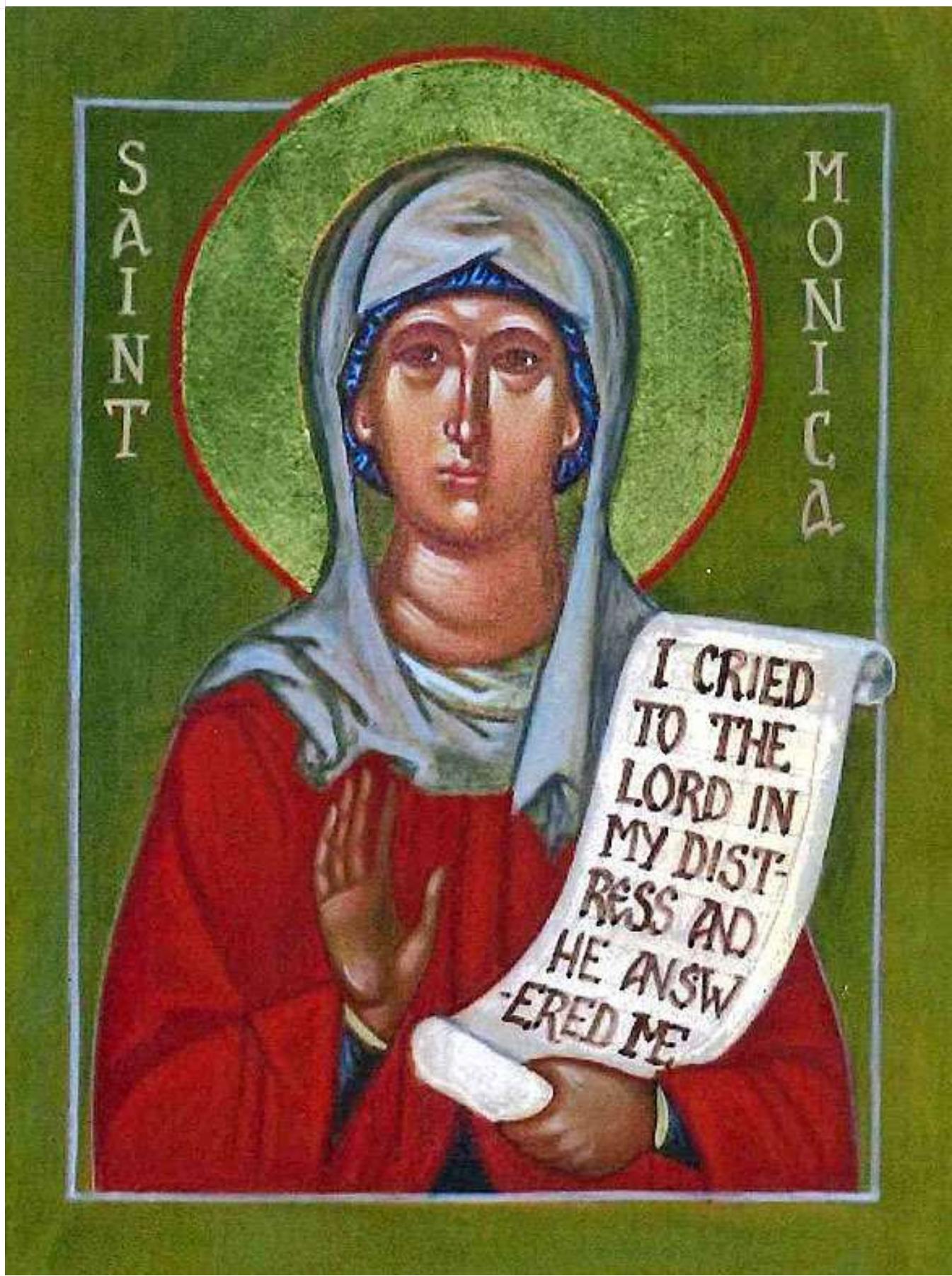


**15 IUNIE
NATALIA GARLAND**

**ACATISTUL
SF.CUVIOASE
MONICA
DE LA
TAGASTE**



ACATISTIERUL PE IUNIE-EG



Akathist Hymn to Saint Monica

Kontakion 1

Praise God from the mountains to the oceans, from the East to the West, in the cities and the countryside, in the cathedrals and the desert, with clean hearts and attentive minds, and through sincere words ever rising from earth to Heaven. Praise Him for His splendid saints, for today we honor Saint Monica of Africa who shone forth patience, hope and zeal in all her doings in this life. We are therefore privileged to proclaim from every church and monastery, and from the icon corner of every home:

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Ikos 1

Saint Monica, you were a married woman who lived a life of prayer: as though a reclusive but a wife and mother, as though an angel but a mortal, with fervor amid your household responsibilities, with dedication despite disapproval, and always filled with faith in the purpose and mercy of the Father Almighty. You are renown throughout Christendom for your resolute love of your

wayward son, Saint Augustine, whose soul was saved through your heartfelt supplications. Hence, we wish to emulate your inspirational discipleship:

Rejoice, model of parenting for both mothers and fathers.

Rejoice, example of prayer for both laypeople and monastics.

Rejoice, dependable homemaker and a follower of Christ.

Rejoice, reliable caregiver and a believer in the Gospel.

Rejoice, finder of the far-away sheep.

Rejoice, collector of the long-missing coin.

Rejoice, harvester of admirable children.

Rejoice, gatherer of righteous friends.

Rejoice, for you lived your faith through self-sacrifice.

Rejoice, for you beseeched God with earnest prayers.

Rejoice, for you turn back the hearts of pleasure-seekers.

Rejoice, for you bring back the minds of false-thinkers.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 2

“Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the Kingdom of God.” This teaching of Jesus Christ was truly lived in your daily life, Saint Monica, as you prepared a Heavenly path for your three children — one of whom went astray but then embraced the Holy Church through your faithful intercession. In like manner, you spiritually buoyed your difficult husband and mother-in-law for union with the Divine. You regarded all people as children to be led to their true homeland where they would gratefully say: Alleluia.

Ikos 2

Let us hear again the message of our Savior Christ. “Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.” We therefore look up to you, Saint Monica, as hopeful children in need of your

prayers and guidance. May we say and do what is pleasing to God and inherit, as you have, everlasting life in His Eternal Kingdom. Be a holy mother to us and to ours, whether we be virtuous or vagrant, and may truth and love thereby triumph over all forms of deceit and corruption. Help us to become true children of the true God and to offer endless praises to you:

Rejoice, mother of the children whom God gave you in the flesh.

Rejoice, mother to all children who hasten to you in the spirit.

Rejoice, dawning of those who arise to do the work of God.

Rejoice, sunray to those who have sunk into an abyss of evil.

Rejoice, for your speech is nurturing.

Rejoice, for your manner is edifying.

Rejoice, for your prayers are invigorating.

Rejoice, for your petitions are enduring.

Rejoice, devoted daughter.

Rejoice, wondrous wife.

Rejoice, mystical mother.

Rejoice, close companion.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 3

We see that in your youth, Saint Monica, you began tasting the family wine and soon developed a desire for its effect. One of your household chores was to go to the cellar and fetch wine for the dinner table. Nobody knew of your secret sipping until, one day, a slave girl caught you in the act and called you a drunkard. In this moment of astonishment and exposure, you changed the course of your life and never again partook in any detrimental doings. Thenceforth, your only desire was to say before God and mankind: Alleluia.

Ikos 3

Show us our sins, holy Monica, show us our flaws and defects, our tendencies and inclinations, our secret doings as well as our public pretense, so that we may redirect our course and worship God in purity of heart. Inspire us to seek and build the Kingdom, starting with our own families, including

our friends, reaching to strangers, and spreading to enemies. Strengthen our faith on difficult days and celebrate with us in triumphant times, as we turn to you and say:

Rejoice, that we may connect and not coerce.

Rejoice, that we may explain and not embarrass.

Rejoice, that we may unite and not undo.

Rejoice, that we may protect and not possess.

Rejoice, that we may inspire and not inhibit.

Rejoice, that we may discern and not denigrate.

Rejoice, that we may greet and not grudge.

Rejoice, that we may perceive and not polarize.

Rejoice, that we may repair and not ruin.

Rejoice, that we may transform and not tamper.

Rejoice, that we may consecrate and not collude.

Rejoice, that we may forge and not feud.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 4

When you became a young woman, Saint Monica, you married a non-Christian man who had both good and bad qualities. He had a quick temper and was a womanizer, which caused you much grief and misery in your marriage. He disapproved of your fervent praying and charitable doings, and he refused to allow the children to be baptized. Herein we see the complications of being mismatched with a marital partner. Yet, you accepted this situation as a calling forth of your prayers for the sake of your family's salvation, and to this you bravely said: Alleluia.

Ikos 4

Saint Monica, show Christians the way to a fruitful life both before and during marriage, and also guide prayerful souls into monasteries if they are so disposed. Pray for parents, that they may wisely assist their children in choosing a suitable spouse. Pray for priests, that they may join together true soulmates in matrimony. Pray for husbands and wives who are unequally yoked, that a viable path will open before them and that holiness of life will prevail over all obstacles. In appreciation of your Heavenly aid, we bring forth heartfelt praises:

Rejoice, holy mother to troubled wives and husbands.

Rejoice, spiritual guide to believers and their loved ones.

Rejoice, blessed woman who fathomed the height of faith.

Rejoice, devout housewife who realized the breadth of prayer.

Rejoice, pious Christian who carried the cross of self-denial.

Rejoice, steadfast disciple who trusted in our Lord Jesus.

Rejoice, for you looked to Heaven for courage.

Rejoice, for you saw beyond the earthly forces.

Rejoice, for you cried out to God for wisdom.

Rejoice, for you held your family together in His Name.

Rejoice, for your distress was transformed into peace.

Rejoice, for your faith was rewarded with victory.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 5

Saint Monica, you had three children and two of them, a son and a daughter, were all that a mother could wish her children to be. Your third child, however, who happened to be the most intelligent and talented, went astray and wasted his youth in sins. His wayward lifestyle and his heretical beliefs caused you much sorrow. As a Christian mother, you disapproved but persisted in prayer and faithfully said: Alleluia.

Ikos 5

In this environment of mutual disapproval of beliefs and lifestyles — between you and your pagan husband and mother-in-law; as well as between you and your deviant son, Augustine — you nonetheless grew in faith and never betrayed the teachings of the Holy Church. You sailed your ship through stormy waters, Saint Monica, always keeping your eye on Christ and steering your life of prayer into the beautiful harbor of His truth and love. We therefore humbly sing praises of your endurance:

Rejoice, for you were crucified with Your Savior.

Rejoice, for you no longer lived but Christ lived in you.

Rejoice, for you were exalted by the Father Almighty.

Rejoice, for you confessed His Son, Jesus Christ.

Rejoice, for you called your family into one Faith and one Baptism.

Rejoice, for you were in travail until Christ was formed in them.

Rejoice, for you were not ashamed of the Gospel.

Rejoice, for you became a slave of righteousness.

Rejoice, for you redeemed your time on this earth.

Rejoice, for you were watchful in prayer with thanksgiving.

Rejoice, for you sowed generously.

Rejoice, for you harvested bountifully.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 6

Teach us to intercede for our families and friends. Saint Monica, encourage us to pray even for those whom we find repulsive — those who cheat, lie, steal; those who gossip, slander, insult; those who reject, snub, disrespect — and let us guard against any descent into such ungodliness and unbelief. Let us say with a pure heart to the worthy and the unworthy: Alleluia.

Ikos 6

There are those who bring sorrow into our lives and into the world. Yet, your holy life, Saint Monica, is a testament to the effectiveness of prayer. You have shown that all people can communicate with God, at any time and no matter their station in life, and ask for His help and blessings. God knows what we need and how we feel and, in His wisdom and mercy, He can apply medicine even to the most infected sores and the most diseased innards of families. For this reason, we lovingly praise you, Saint Monica, for lighting our way forward:

Rejoice, that we may reach and not reproach.

Rejoice, that we may welcome and not withhold.

Rejoice, that we may deliver and not deprive.

Rejoice, that we may model and not meddle.

Rejoice, that we may plant and not pollute.

Rejoice, that we may sanctify and not scatter.

Rejoice, that we may beckon and not brag.

Rejoice, that we may enrich and not endanger.

Rejoice, that we may convene and not connive.

Rejoice, that we may amaze and not avenge.

Rejoice, that we may include and not intrude.

Rejoice, that we may enfold and not engulf.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 7

Your son, the Blessed Augustine, in those early days, had a girlfriend and this relationship produced a son. Augustine also had false notions about God and spirituality, following the teachings

of a heretical sect and not the True Church. We see that errors in thinking and living cause separation from Christ and family, for there is no impurity in Christ and there is no marital fulfillment or family unity unless centered in His purity. Jesus Christ is our First Love, for He first loved us and then we loved Him. This you knew, Saint Monica, and for this you prayed and said: Alleluia.

Ikos 7

According to the New Commandment, we are to love one another and therefore all family members should express pure love toward one another. Yea, wife to husband, father to daughter, sister to brother, devotedly bearing one another's burdens and becoming examples of Christ-like purity. Saint Monica, you knew that the home is to be a domestic church, filled with worship and goodwill, and as a wife and mother your vision was that of glory and not of dysfunction. We are indebted to your holiness and we praise you in divine togetherness:

Rejoice, glorious bearer of our problems and troubles.

Rejoice, Heavenly aide to the honest and courageous.

Rejoice, wonderful listener to our praises and requests.

Rejoice, marvelous support of the prayerful and gentle.

Rejoice, for your way of thinking was Scriptural.

Rejoice, for your way of living was theological.

Rejoice, for your goal was to assemble in Christ.

Rejoice, for your aim was to abound in the True Church.

Rejoice, faithful follower.

Rejoice, true teacher.

Rejoice, dutiful deliverer.

Rejoice, upright unifier.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 8

Augustine had been living in Carthage with his girlfriend and their son — and you open-heartedly accepted this little boy as your rightful grandchild.

When Augustine returned home, with lady friend and son in tow, you were nonetheless distressed over this arrangement. As always, Saint Monica, your response was to trust in God's provision and say: Alleluia.

Ikos 8

Saint Monica, in your maternal anguish, God granted you His consolation. You had a vision in which a figure appeared to you. A voice emanated from the figure, and it was revealed that your son was with you. When you told this to Augustine, he misinterpreted the vision to mean that you should renounce the Church and align with his ways. But in your wisdom, Saint Monica, you correctly understood that one day Augustine would renounce heresy and serve the True God. We likewise wish to serve Him by offering these praises:

Rejoice, for God is with us.

Rejoice, for His ways are mysterious.

Rejoice, for God is our Heavenly Father.

Rejoice, for all life is precious in His sight.

Rejoice, for God is holy.

Rejoice, for we are called to be saints.

Rejoice, for God sent His only Son.

Rejoice, for we abide in Christ.

Rejoice, for God is One.

Rejoice, for we are temples of the Holy Spirit.

Rejoice, for God is plentiful.

Rejoice, for we choose life.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 9

If we have strayed, Saint Monica, show us the way. If we have drifted, straighten our path. If we have become negligent, increase our faith. If we have become weary, revitalize our purpose. If we are lost, find us. If we are mistaken, enlighten us. If we are disobedient in any way, have mercy upon us and save us through your holy prayers. Saint Monica, we implore you to deliver us into the arms of God, even as you delivered Saint Augustine into redemption from deceit and corruption, that we all might say: Alleluia.

Ikos 9

The hardest thing is to come to terms with oneself: to ascend into the light or to descend into the darkness, to mature in faith or to degenerate into abomination, to be an example of belief or to be a toy of the devil. It is a decision, for there is neither force nor magic. But we have before us the valiant Saint Monica who epitomizes possibility for those who repent of all detrimental doings and who consecrate their lives to God. Let each one go forth, and may all true Christians declare Saint Monica's excellence:

Rejoice, boast of virtuous wives and devoted mothers.

Rejoice, conscience of honorable husbands and loyal fathers.

Rejoice, affirmation of wholesome children and teenagers.

Rejoice, integrity of generous grandmothers and grandfathers.

Rejoice, intensity of single-minded monastics and reclusives.

Rejoice, nourishment of kindhearted orphans and widows.

Rejoice, for you loved all of God's creation.

Rejoice, for you cared for the lives which were created through you.

Rejoice, for you cheerfully assisted your friends and neighbors.

Rejoice, for you graciously befriended the needy and downtrodden.

Rejoice, for you managed a difficult household.

Rejoice, for you shaped a domestic church.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 10

Because of your steadfast prayers and with the grace of God, your husband converted to Christianity. However, this new marital unity was brief, for he died one year later. Your mother-in-law was also baptized, and in this you saw the building up of your domestic church as well as the Kingdom of God. In response to the salvation which had come into your household, Saint

Monica, you said with joy and thanksgiving:
Alleluia.

Ikos 10

At the time of his father's death, Augustine was still a teen and studying in Carthage. As we know, he had fallen into heresy and was living with his girlfriend. After he returned to his hometown of Tagaste, in North Africa, you kept a watchful eye on him. Saint Monica, your joy would not be complete until you had prepared a path to the Kingdom for your beloved but wayward son. In recognition of your works and prayers, we offer our sincere praises:

Rejoice, that we may fortify and not forsake.

Rejoice, that we may attract and not argue.

Rejoice, that we may develop and not destabilize.

Rejoice, that we may prepare and not pretend.

Rejoice, that we may illumine and not ignore.

Rejoice, that we may reconcile and not rupture.

Rejoice, that we may comfort and not clash.

Rejoice, that we may straighten and not scold.

Rejoice, that we may preserve and not pester.

Rejoice, that we may educate and not exploit.

Rejoice, that we may shepherd and not scapegoat.

Rejoice, that we may mend and not marginalize.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 11

Saint Monica, the years passed by and Augustine grew into an adult man, but your prayers on his behalf never ceased. Augustine, who became a teacher of rhetoric, decided to take a job in Rome and you wanted to go with him. However, he deceived you as to his actual departure date, and he slipped away one night while you were keeping vigil in a church. This trickery stung you with the worst sting of sorrow, for you were betrayed and unwanted by your own offspring. Nonetheless, you set sail for Rome on your own and you continued to say: Alleluia.

Ikos 11

While aboard ship, a fierce storm rose up. Saint Monica, you comforted your fellow passengers with your faith in God's provision, and the ship safely

docked in Rome. However, your destiny was not yet to be fulfilled, for you learned that Augustine had gone on to Milan — the city of the great bishop, Saint Ambrose, who was to prove to be a holy link between you and your son. In wonderment at God's mysterious ways, we bow before Him and put forth these praises to you:

Rejoice, for you journeyed by land and by sea for your family.

Rejoice, for you traveled far to complete your domestic church.

Rejoice, for you performed charitable doings in Milan as in Tagaste.

Rejoice, for you continued as a brilliant light of Christian virtues.

Rejoice, for you soared above personal feelings of rejection.

Rejoice, for you turned to God for healing of all emotions.

Rejoice, for you liberated your husband from outer darkness.

Rejoice, for you freed your mother-in-law from desolation.

Rejoice, for you pursued your son despite risk to your own life.

Rejoice, for you prayed to God and He did not fail you.

Rejoice, for you likewise attend to those who call upon you in prayer.

Rejoice, for you guide us through the tempestuous seas of life.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 12

Saint Augustine converted to Christianity, due to your prayers and due to Saint Ambrose who counseled him. Saint Ambrose was a spiritual father to you also, as he was the right shepherd at the right time to guide mother and son to all fruition. Saint Ambrose baptized Saint Augustine who accepted that his true Father, and the Father of us all, is our Father in Heaven. Nothing was lost, Saint Monica: not one prayer or sacrifice, not one

life that was entrusted into your care, and not one utterance of: Alleluia.

Ikos 12

Although you wanted Saint Augustine to marry a Christian woman, he chose to live a celibate life and give his entire being to God. From that point, Augustine never pursued or accepted other arrangements but followed the path which he believed God had prepared for him. Nonetheless, Saint Monica, your happiness was complete in the salvation of the son for whom you had prayed with amazing patience. We thank you for your service to the Holy Church, for your inspirational example, and we ask you to accept our humble praises:

Rejoice, victorious mother of God-fearing children.

Rejoice, triumphant warrior over deception and corruption.

Rejoice, firm believer who lifted up unbelievers to God.

Rejoice, loyal handmaid who served with dignity and humility.

Rejoice, for all your children were baptized.

Rejoice, for all your neighbors were edified.

Rejoice, for all womankind is encouraged.

Rejoice, for all Christians are enlightened.

Rejoice, essential endurance.

Rejoice, sober strength.

Rejoice, rich reward.

Rejoice, bountiful blessing.

Rejoice, Saint Monica, vanquisher of sorrow through prayer.

Kontakion 13

Saint Monica, your doings on earth having been concluded and your prayers having been fulfilled, as well as your joy having been completed, you perceived that every mile of your spiritual journey had been traveled and you were now at the end. As you and your family headed back to Tagaste, you expressed this sentiment to Saint Augustine. Then, at the Ostia harbor, as everyone took a moment to relax, you took your last breath at the age of fifty-six and departed this life to the Lord. Yet, yours was not a death to evoke grief, but to establish the magnificence of Heaven for those who believe in Jesus Christ. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

(Repeat Kontakion 13 three times.)

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