



St. Rita was born in Spoleto, Italy, in 1381. At an early age, she begged her parents to allow her to enter a convent. Instead, they arranged a marriage for her.

Rita became a good wife and mother, but her husband was a man of violent temper. He often mistreated her. He taught their children his evil ways. Rita tried to perform her duties faithfully, to pray, and to receive the sacraments frequently.

After nearly twenty years of marriage, her husband was stabbed by an enemy, but before he died he repented because Rita prayed for him. Shortly afterwards, her two sons died, and Rita was alone in the world. Prayer, fasting, penances, and good works filled her days. In 1417, she was admitted to the convent of the Augustinian nuns at Cascia and began a life of perfect obedience and great charity.

Sister Rita had a great devotion to the Passion of Christ. "Please let me suffer like You, Divine Savior," she said one day. Suddenly, one of the thorns from the crucifix struck her on the forehead. It left a deep wound which didn't heal and which caused her much suffering for the rest of her life. She died on May 22, 1457.

Because of her many trials and sacrifices throughout her life, St. Rita is known as the patron saint of those suffering the afflictions of abuse, sickness, desperate causes, difficult marriages, widows, and those suffering from sterility and infertility.

The Memorial of St. Rita is celebrated on May 22.