



Feast of St. Helen

Reflection by Fr. Quan Tran, KHS

St. Helena was the mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine, and converted to Christianity late in life. But she was filled with zeal and accomplished more for the Church than most cradle Catholics accomplish in their lifetime. It seemed as if there was a sense of urgency within her to do as much as she could for the Lord before her earthly life ended.

The saint lived as if she was trying to make up for lost time because of her late conversion to the faith. This sentiment is shared and expressed by many saints, including, St. Augustine, who wrote:

“Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new, late have I loved you!” St. Helena used her position, influence, and resources to help the poor and the needy to, find precious relics, including the true Cross; to reclaim holy sites, including the tomb of Jesus; and to build many churches, including the Church of the Nativity and the Church of the Ascension. St. Helena, like all the saints, was zealous for the Glory of God and the salvation of souls!

The saint cooperated fully with divine inspirations and gave herself generously for the building up of the Body of Christ. She was on fire for the love of God and neighbor, and labored tirelessly for the sake of the Kingdom. In return, the Lord blessed her efforts and multiplied her graces, so that she was able to bear much fruit, fruit that remains to this day. Truly, St. Helena used all her gifts and abilities for the praise of God and the good of others. Her life, after her conversion, was a gift back to the Lord and His Church. Indeed, Jesus and the saints teach us that life is meant to be a gift. St. John Paul II wrote, “Life has meaning to the extent that it becomes a free gift for others.” St. Helena’s life was indeed meaningful because of her generous heart.

St. Helena’s gift of self is an expression of inner humility. She came from humble beginnings and remained humble throughout her life, despite her lofty status. The saint took on the disposition of Jesus, who is “meek and humble of heart” and who “came to serve and not to be served.” Although she was the mother of the Roman Emperor, St. Helena never lorded her position over others, but instead, used her influence as a way to serve Christ and His people.

We can all learn from St. Helena by imitating her zeal, generosity, and humility, and by doing so, contribute to the building up of the Church. Through the intercession of St. Helena, may our hearts be filled with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls; may we be generous in giving our life back to the Lord and make it a gift for others; and may we take on the virtue of humble service in imitation of our Lord and His saints!

St. Helena, Pray for Us!

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