

Mother Angelica

Have you heard about EWTN? Have you ever wondered who founded it? Mother Angelica did. Mother Angelica founded the largest religious media network in the world, known as EWTN. Get settled, and here is the very beginning where this story first began.

In southeast Canton, Ohio, a baby was born to John Rizzo, a tailor, and Mae Gianfrancesco Rizzo, a loving mother. They named her Rita Antoinette Rizzo. She was an only child of Italian immigrants. Her father, who never wanted a child, ran away when Rita was still at a young age. Mae Rizzo wanted a divorce, so John Rizzo divorced Mae Gianfrancesco Rizzo. Rita grew up in the “Roaring 20s.”

Rita’s education mattered very much for Mae, so Rita was sent to St. Anthony Catholic Church and stayed there until 5th grade. A few years later, Rita graduated from McKinley High School in 1941. Rita then got a job at the Timken Roller Bearing Company. Rita started to get a stomach ailment that had to get special medical attention. After months of trying to help Rita, her mother Mae went to an elderly woman for help. Her name was Rhoda Wise, and she had prayed to God herself for healing. She told the family to pray a novena to St. Therese of Lisieux, so they did. On the ninth day of the novena, Rita was healed. After that, Rhoda Wise became a spiritual mother to Rita. Rita visited Rhoda every day, and on the way home she would stop at St. Anthony’s for the Stations of the Cross.

Rita finally realized she wanted to be a nun. Mae was very stubborn about it, and she made it clear that she did not want Rita to become a nun. But Rita knew what she wanted to do with her life. Rita secretly entered the “Poor Clares.” In the convent, Rita had very poor health, which made convent life difficult. As soon as she made her final vows, she changed her name to “Mother Angelica,” which everyone calls her today.

At the convent one day, Mother Angelica was going past a big working machine, and before she knew what had happened, the machine slid out of control, knocking Mother Angelica to the ground! She

had back pain for years after that, but all attempts to help failed, just like it had with the stomach ailment. Finally, Mother Angelica made a bargain with God. Mother Angelica said she would build a monastery if God would only heal her. God healed her, and Mother Angelica set off to build a monastery. After she built the monastery, she traveled the country converting people to holiness. In March of 1978, she went to Chicago, where she toured a Baptist-run television studio. There, Mother Angelica was greatly inspired. What was it that inspired her? The studio! She wanted to have her own television studio. She gathered people, nuns, and whatever money she had, and built a television studio! She called it EWTN, which stands for the Eternal World Television Network.

Mother Angelica's first show on EWTN was called "Our Hermitage." It was so popular that the other nuns sold recordings of the show! Through EWTN, Mother Angelica defended Roman Catholic Doctrine.

Mother Angelica founded EWTN and educated others through it. Mother Angelica greatly spread the good news of salvation. She soon won a lot of awards. Mother Angelica died on March 27, 2016 in Hanceville, Alabama. She taught us to never give up. She gave us EWTN and converted a lot of people to Catholicism. We will never forget Mother Angelica.

Bibliography

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