

## INTRODUCTION

Our mothers are our first teachers. They teach us to eat with a spoon, wash our hands after play, and share our toys. But first and foremost, our mothers are the keepers of the flame of our faith, teaching us to know and love and serve God. Their influence on our lives is too valuable to calculate. And the ripples of that influence through the generations are inestimable.

The mothers included in this book—*Mothers of Influence*—are women who have changed their worlds, most often through the accomplishments of their well-known offspring. Each courageous mother has made a major contribution both inside and outside the walls of her home. Each exemplifies a child-rearing principle that we feel will be of great value to you as you raise your own children.

We hope that reading about these remarkable women will inspire you and learning their child-rearing principles will allow you to guide your own children as they strive to reach their full, God-given potential. Then you will also be—a mother of influence.

## MOTHER

You painted no Madonnas  
On chapel walls in Rome,  
But with a touch diviner  
You lived one in your home.

You wrote no lofty poems  
That critics counted art,  
But with a nobler vision  
You lived them in your heart.

You carved no shapeless marble  
To some high soul design,  
But with a finer sculpture  
You shaped this soul of mine.

You built no great cathedrals  
That centuries applaud,  
But with a grace exquisite  
Your life cathedraled God.

Had I the gift of Raphael  
Or Michelangelo,  
Oh, what a rare Madonna  
My mother's life would show.

THOMAS W. FESSENDEN

# ANGELENA RICE

1924-1985

CONDOLEEZA RICE'S mother, Angelena, passed on a love of music, a legacy of higher education, a sense of self-worth, and a bold religious faith to her daughter, who would one day serve as National Security

Advisor to President George W. Bush.

**T**he tall, beautiful black woman and her young daughter carefully perused the colorful children's dresses on the rack before selecting an outfit for the seven-year-old to try on. They headed for the fitting room, but a white saleswoman blocked their way. It was 1961 in Birmingham, Alabama, and racial segregation was the law of the South.

"This is reserved for white customers only," the salesclerk said and then directed Angelena Rice and Condi to a storage room reserved for "colored" people. It did not sit well with Angelena, who knew her position in Christ. She was a teacher of music and science at an all-black high school and much better educated than the woman standing in her way. In no uncertain terms, Angelena informed the clerk that her daughter would change in that dressing room, or she would take her money to another department store.

The clerk hesitated. It was possible she could lose her job, but it was certain that she would lose her sales commission if the mother and daughter walked out of the store. Condoleeza still remembers how nervous and apprehensive the clerk was when she guided Condi and her mother into a remote whites-only dressing room and stood guarding the door, afraid someone would find out she had let them in.

Another time when a salesclerk scolded young Condi for touching a

hat, Angelena told her daughter to touch every hat in the store. Condoleeza did—happily. Angelena was that determined racism would never chart her daughter's future.

Since the time of slavery, Condoleeza Rice's family had used education and their faith in God as the way to overcome racial prejudice. Condi learned to read as a toddler, and by the age of three, she was learning to play the piano, as well as taking French and figure skating lessons. John, her father, pastored Westminster Presbyterian Church in Birmingham and became dean of Stillman College, where her grandfather had graduated. Later, he would serve as vice chancellor of the University of Denver.

Condi, who graduated from high school at the age of fifteen, was the third generation of the Rice family to go to college. At the University of Denver, she began as a music major. But Condi soon realized she would never be good enough to compete on the world stage and cast around for another major.

Soon she found her niche—she was simply mesmerized with international studies. At the age of nineteen, she received her bachelor's degree and went on to earn a doctorate.

By the time she was twenty-six, Condoleeza was an assistant professor at Stanford University, but that wasn't enough to satisfy this ambitious young woman. Twelve years later, she became the first female, non-white, and youngest person ever to serve as Stanford's provost. Condi crowned her long list of "firsts" by joining the Bush campaign and becoming the country's first woman to serve as National Security Advisor. Her stunning success was no doubt due, at least in part, to her mother, who taught her that she was a child of God and could do anything with His help.

WE REJOICE IN THE  
HOPE OF THE GLORY  
OF GOD. NOT ONLY  
SO, BUT WE ALSO  
REJOICE IN OUR SUFFERINGS,  
BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT SUFFERING  
PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE;  
PERSEVERANCE, CHARACTER;  
AND CHARACTER, HOPE. AND HOPE  
DOES NOT DISAPPOINT US,  
BECAUSE GOD HAS POURED  
OUT HIS LOVE INTO OUR HEARTS  
BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHOM HE  
HAS GIVEN US.

ROMANS 5:2-5 NIV

**A Mother of Influence teaches her children  
who they are in Christ.**