St. Margaret of Hungary
January 18

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1242–1270 • Croatia

Margaret was the daughter of King Bela IV of Hungary, who had fled with his family to Croatia because his enemies, the Tartars, had invaded Hungary. Right before she was born, King Bela promised God that if the Tartars left his country, he would give his next child to the Church. After the Tartars left, the king kept his promise. Margaret was born soon after, and so was sent to live in a Dominican convent at the age of three.

When Margaret was eighteen, the king of Bohemia wished to marry her. Margaret's father, King Bela, also wished this marriage to take place because it would create a strong alliance between the two kingdoms. But Margaret refused. What had started as a promise to God from her father had become a promise Margaret made to God in her heart. Margaret wanted to be a nun and give her love to God alone. When King Bela discovered that Margaret had a true vocation as a nun, he allowed Margaret to remain in the convent.

Margaret gave her life to God in a special way. She offered Him many sacrifices and would spend nights alone, praying before the Blessed Sacrament. When she realized that the nuns assigned her the easiest work because of her royal blood, she chose to do the dirtiest and lowliest tasks with joy and a prayer in her heart. She also worked hard to comfort and care for the poor and the sick. Soon, God called the holy young nun to be with Him in heaven, and she died at the young age of twenty-eight.

St. Margaret of Hungary, help me to love God with all my heart!