

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque



1647-1690

Feast Day:
October 16

Margaret was born to a poor family in the Burgundy region of France. She developed a special devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, especially while she suffered a long illness. She was so sick that she could not get out of bed for years. One day she promised the Blessed Virgin Mary that she would enter religious life if she could be cured. Immediately, her health was restored. In thanks, Margaret took Mary as part of her first name. Margaret entered the convent at the age of 23.

Margaret reported that Jesus several times, and revealed to her devotions to His Sacred Heart. He said to her, “My *divine Heart* is so *inflamed with love for mankind ... that it can no longer contain within itself the flames of its burning charity and must spread them abroad by your means.*” Sister Margaret Mary described Jesus’ heart as burning and encased by a crown of thorns. The flames were a sign of Jesus’ love for humanity, and the crown of thorns was a symbol of our rejection of Him. Jesus also told Margaret that He wants people to receive the Eucharist on the first Friday of each month, spend an hour in Eucharistic adoration on Thursdays, and celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

At first, only Margaret’s superior believed that Margaret had really seen and heard Jesus. But Margaret persisted, and eventually she was able to begin celebration of the Feast of the Sacred Heart in her convent. Later in a chapel was built nearby in honor of the Sacred Heart. Margaret died two years later. Her last words were, “I need nothing but God, and to lose myself in the heart of Jesus.” Pope Pius IX officially added the Feast of the Sacred Heart to the Church calendar in 1856.