

Spiritual Bouquet: Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ. Gal. 6:2

SAINT MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE

Virgin, Apostle of the Sacred Heart
(1647-1690) Feastday : October 17th



Saint Margaret Mary, a soul of divine predilection, was born at Terreau in Burgundy, on July 22, 1647. During her infancy she showed a wonderfully sensitive revulsion to the very idea of sin, and while still a young child always recited the entire Rosary every day. She lost her father at the age of eight years, and her mother placed her with the Poor Clares. She was often sick and for four years was bedridden, losing almost entirely the use of her members. She made a vow to Our Lady to become one of Her daughters if She cured her, and was suddenly entirely well.

She was of a gay temperament and her heart became easily attached to human affections. God began her purification when the charge of her mother's house was confided to persons who reduced the family to a sort of servitude. Margaret Mary turned to God for strength and consolation when she was accused of various crimes she had not committed. In short, the Saint of the Sacred Heart learned to suffer for Christ, with patience, what innocence can suffer in such situations.

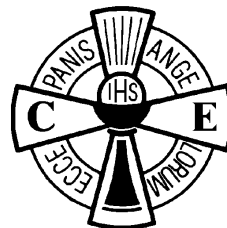
She desired to be a religious, but her mother could not bear to hear a word of that desire. Finally God came to her assistance through a Franciscan priest, who told her brother that he would answer to God for the vocation of his sister. In 1671 she entered the Order of the Visitation of Mary, at Paray-le-Monial, and was professed the following year. She followed all the practices of the monastery in perfect obedience, spending as much time as she could in the chapel with her Lord. After sanctifying her by many trials, Jesus appeared to her in numerous visions, displaying to her His Sacred Heart, sometimes burning as a furnace, and sometimes torn and bleeding on account of the coldness and sins of men. *"Behold this Heart which has so loved men, and been so little loved by them in return!"*

In 1675, she was told by Our Lord that she, with the aid of Father Claude de la Colombiere of the Society of Jesus, was to be His instrument for instituting the feast of the Sacred Heart, and for spreading that devotion everywhere. This was not accomplished without great sufferings. The good Jesuit did all in his power to make known and loved the Heart of Jesus, but when it seemed all obstacles were about to disappear, his credit diminished, and his Superiors sent him to England. He returned to France exhausted and soon died.

Saint Margaret Mary was for a time Mistress of Novices, and in this office exercised a true apostolate, working to win for the Heart of Jesus the hearts of the young girls who were aspiring to religious consecration. She was persecuted when she sent one of them home, not having seen in her the indications of a genuine vocation; the family attempted to have her deposed. She remained in the charge but was deprived of Holy Communion on the First Friday of the month. This practice was one of Our Lord's specific requests; for souls who communicate nine First Fridays in succession, He promised the most wonderful graces. The demons also persecuted her visibly; nonetheless her entire Community was finally won over to devotion to the Divine Heart.

Saint Margaret Mary died at the age of forty-two years, on October 17, 1690, and everywhere was heard in the city: "The Saint is dead! The Saint is dead!" She was beatified in 1864 by Pope Pius IX, and canonized in 1920 by Pope Benedict XV.

Reflection: Love for the Sacred Heart especially honors the Incarnation, and makes the soul grow rapidly in humility, generosity, patience, and union with its Beloved.



Handmaids of Christ and Children of Mary

Supplement to the Bulletin of the Eucharistic Crusade in Ireland

October 2008
Month of the Most Holy Rosary

This leaflet is intended for high-school girls. Being part of the Eucharistic Crusade, you receive the bulletin of the Crusade and pray for the intentions of the Crusade. As girls, Our Lady is your special model. Therefore as well as being Crusaders and Handmaids of Christ, you are also Children of Mary. The purpose of these few pages is to help you in your spiritual life.

AN EASY WAY TO BECOME A SAINT By Fr Paul O'Sullivan, OP

Chapter 5 - THE PASSION (3)

WHAT THE SAINTS SAY

- a) The Saints say that five minutes' prayer in honor of the Passion is of greater value than many hours spent in other devotions.
- b) St. Alphonsus says that all the Saints became Saints by devotion to the Passion and that there was no saint who had not a great love of the Passion.
- c) Devotion to the Passion gives intense pleasure to Our Lord. Want of devotion to the Passion wounds His Sacred Heart most deeply.
- d) Our Lord said to St. Bernard, "I will remit all the venial sins and I will no more think of the mortal sins of those who honor the grievous wound on My right shoulder, which caused Me unutterable pain when bearing My heavy Cross to Calvary: We honor this wound by saying the Fourth Sorrowful Mystery of the Rosary.
- e) Our Lord promised St. Gertrude that He would protect, most especially in the Judgment, those who make loving reparation to Him for the insults, outrages and blasphemies heaped on Him in His Passion. This we can do by offering to Our Lord all the offenses, slights and humiliations we may have to bear.

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f) Our Lord said to St. Mechtilde: "Those who thank Me for the awful thirst I endured in My Passion I will reward as if they had assuaged My thirst on the Cross. "And those who thank Me for having been nailed to the Cross for love of them I will reward as if they had taken Me down from the Cross." We can do this by saying the Fifth Sorrowful Mystery of the Rosary.

Instruction upon meditation

Meditation, or mental prayer, is a devout and fruitful consideration of Divine things, and of all that is conducive to the acquirement of virtue and of eternal salvation.

It is not a difficult exercise; it requires attention and reflection, a desire to know God better in order to love Him more. It should be done in the company of Our Lady, the saints and our guardian Angel.

Refer to the previous issues of this bulletin to learn how to make meditation properly. Remember that as Handmaid, you promised to meditate 15 minutes every day. St Teresa of Avila says that he who spends 15mn a day in mental prayer cannot be lost.

A spiritual man quickly recollects himself because he has never wasted his attention upon externals. No outside work, no business that cannot wait stands in his way. He adjusts himself to things as they happen. He whose disposition is well ordered cares nothing about the strange, perverse behavior of others, for a man is upset and distracted only in proportion as he engrosses himself in externals.

Imitation of Christ, Book 2, Chapter 1 "On Meditation"

Meditation – On Purgatory - 2

Though it be not a defined article of faith that fire is the punishment of purgatory, still it is the common belief; and St Gregory says, the same fire purifies the elect and burns the reprobate. The pains of purgatory differ immensely, it is true, from the torments of hell, inasmuch as these are eternal, while those are temporary, and the souls there detained have the consolation of hope; but still the sufferings of purgatory exceed all that we can imagine in this world. Yet the pain of sense endured by these suffering souls is far more tolerable than the pain of loss. This torments them by the languishing of intense desire and deferred hope; nor is it possible for us in our imperfect state to imagine in any just degree the anguish they feel till they can be united with God, whom they now love with perfect charity, and whom they know and feel to be the only centre of their happiness.



ON THE ROSARY: A ROSE BUD

DEAR FRIENDS, this beautiful rosebud is for you; it is one of the beads of your Rosary, and it may seem to you to be such a tiny thing. But if you only knew how precious this bead is! This wonderful bud will open out into a gorgeous rose if you say your Hail Mary really well. Of course it would be too much to expect you to say the whole fifteen mysteries every day, but do say at least five mysteries, and say them properly with love and devotion. This Rosary will be your little wreath of roses, your crown for Jesus and Mary. Please pay attention to every word I have said---and listen carefully to a true story that I want to tell you, and that I would like you to remember.

Two girls (two little sisters) were saying the Rosary very nicely and devoutly in front of their home. A beautiful Lady suddenly appeared, walked towards the younger--- who was only about six or seven---took her by the hand, and led her away. Her elder sister was very startled and looked for the little girl everywhere. At last still not having found her, she went home and heart-brokenly told her parents that her sister had been kidnapped. For three whole days the poor father and mother sought the child but could not find her.

At the end of the third day they found her at the front door looking extremely happy and pleased. Naturally they asked her where on earth she had been, and she told them that the Lady to whom she had been saying her Rosary had taken her to a lovely place where she had given her delicious things to eat. She said that the Lady had also given her a Baby Boy to hold, that He was very beautiful and that she had kissed Him over and over again.

The father and mother, who had been converted to the Catholic Faith only a short time before, sent at once for the Jesuit Father who had instructed them for their reception into the Church and who had also taught them devotion to the Most Holy Rosary. They told him everything that had happened and it was this priest himself who told me this story. It all took place in Paraguay.

So, dear children imitate these little girls and say your Rosary every day as they always did. If you do this you will earn the right to go to Heaven to see Jesus and Mary. If it is not their wish that you should see them in this life, at any rate after you die you will see them for all eternity. Amen. So be it.

Therefore let all men, the learned and the ignorant, the just and the sinners, the great and the small praise and honor Jesus and Mary, night and day, by saying the Most Holy Rosary.

