

St. Catherine Laboure

Feast: November 28



Facts

Feast Day: November 28

Patron: the elderly, infirmed people and the Miraculous Medal

Birth: May 2, 1806

Death: December 31, 1867

Beatified: May 28, 1933 by Pope Pius XI

Canonized: July 27, 1947 by Pope Pius XII

St. Catherine Labouré was born in France on May 2, 1806 as the ninth of 11 children to Pierre and Madeleine Labouré.

In 1815, Catherine's mother passed away, leaving her 9-year-old daughter with the responsibility of caring for the household. After her mother's funeral, Catherine returned home and picked up a statue of the Blessed Virgin. Holding it close, she said, "Now you will be my mother."

Growing up, Catherine was known for being a quiet and practical child, though she was extremely devout.

A couple of years after her mother's death, Catherine experienced a dream of an old priest motioning her to a room of sick people. "It is a good deed to look after the sick. God has designs on you. Do not forget it."

Years later, during a visit to the Daughters of Charity hospital, Catherine saw a picture of the old priest on the wall. She discovered it was of their founder, St. Vincent de Paul. Catherine immediately knew she would become a member of St. Vincent's order.

In January 1830, Catherine Labouré entered the novitiate of the Daughters of Charity.

Months later, on July 19, 1830, Catherine woke from her sleep after hearing a child's voice calling her to the chapel as the Blessed Virgin Mary was waiting for her.

As Catherine approached the chapel, the door swung open revealing a brilliant light. The Blessed Virgin told Catherine she would be given a mission with all the graces necessary to complete it.

Our Lady said, "God wishes to charge you with a mission. You will be contradicted, but do not fear; you will have the grace to do what is necessary. Tell your spiritual director all that passes within you. Times are evil in France and in the world."

In November 1830, the Blessed Mother visited Catherine a second time during evening meditations. She showed herself inside an oval frame, standing upon a globe with rays of light coming from her hands toward the globe. Around the frame were the words, "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."

Mary asked Catherine to take these images to her father confessor, Father Jean Marie Aladel, telling him they should be placed on medallions. "All who wear them will receive great graces."

At first, the priest did not believe Catherine, but after two years, he brought her story to the Archbishop. The Archbishop ordered 2,000 medals struck.

The medals were dispersed so rapidly and effectively it was said to be miraculous.

Catherine Labouré spent the next 40 years of her life caring for the elderly, sick and disabled.

On December 31, 1876, Catherine passed away at 70-years-old. Her body was encased in glass beneath the side altar in the Chapel of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in Paris.

Her body was discovered to be incorrupt after being exhumed in 1933. She was beatified by Pope Pius XI on May 28, 1933 and canonized by Pope Pius XII on July 27, 1947.

St. Catherine Labouré is often shown with the Daughters of Charity habit and the Miraculous Medal.

St. Catherine Labouré is the patron saint of the elderly, infirmed people and the Miraculous Medal. Her feast day is celebrated on November 28.

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