

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, to Thee I consecrate and offer up my person and my life, my actions, trials, and sufferings, that my entire being may henceforth only be employed in loving, honoring and glorifying Thee. This is my irrevocable will, to belong entirely to Thee, and to do all for Thy love, renouncing with my whole heart all that can displease Thee.

I take Thee, O Sacred Heart, for the sole object of my love, the protection of my life, the pledge of my salvation, the remedy of my frailty and inconstancy, the reparation for all the defects of my life, and my secure refuge at the hour of my death. Be Thou, O Most Merciful Heart, my justification before God Thy Father, and screen me from His anger which I have so justly merited. I fear all from my own weakness and malice, but placing my entire confidence in Thee, O Heart of Love, I hope all from Thine infinite Goodness. Annihilate in me all that can displease or resist Thee. Imprint Thy pure love so deeply in my heart that I may never forget Thee or be separated from Thee. I beseech Thee, through Thine infinite Goodness, grant that my name be engraved upon Thy Heart, for in this I place all my happiness and all my glory, to live and to die as one of Thy devoted servants.
Amen.

“Only the Heart of Christ who knows the depths of his Father’s love could reveal to us the abyss of his mercy in so simple and beautiful a way.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1439.



The Apostle of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Feast Day, October 16

Margaret was born on July 22, 1647, at L'Hautecour in Burgundy, France. She was the fifth of seven children, born to parents who were respected for their virtue. Unfortunately, Margaret's father died when she was only eight years old. Her mother sent her to live and study with the Poor Clare nuns. While at the boarding school Margaret spent much time praying before the Blessed Sacrament. Because of her great love for Jesus in the Eucharist she was allowed to make her first communion at the age of nine instead of the usual age of thirteen.

She became very ill with rheumatic fever, moved back home, and was confined to her bed for four or five years! One tradition says that she recovered her perfect health only after she made a vow to the Blessed Virgin to enter religious life. When she was healthy again, Margaret began attending many of her uncle's parties and there she met several men who desired to marry her. Her uncle and her mother encouraged her to marry but Margaret did not want to. Then Jesus appeared to Margaret in a vision and He encouraged her to devote herself totally to Him.

Therefore, she told her mother to send away all her suitors, and in 1671 she entered the community of Visitation nuns at Paray-le-Monial. Instead of entering into a human marriage with a common man, Margaret entered into a spiritual marriage with Jesus Christ. As a nun, Margaret Mary spent many hours in prayer to our Lord before the Blessed Sacrament.

For a year and a half Jesus appeared to Margaret Mary in different apparitions. He told her about His great love for her and for all people. And He told her how much pain He suffered when people ignored Him and His real presence in the Holy Eucharist. Jesus instructed Margaret Mary in a new devotion to His Sacred Heart, and He told her that she was His chosen instrument to spread the devotion to others. As part of the devotion at 11pm on the first Thursday of the month for nine months in a row people were to spend an hour meditating about Jesus in the

garden of Gethsemane before His passion. Additionally, they were to receive Holy Communion at Mass on the first Friday of each month for those nine months.

Margaret Mary suffered greatly throughout her life, not only from her own penances, but also from persecution from others. When she told others, even the sisters, of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, many ridiculed or harassed her. Though she eventually convinced her Mother Superior of the truth of her visions, she could not convince a group of theologians sent to test her. Margaret's confessor, Blessed Claude La Colombiere, believed Margaret and he helped her spread the devotion.

At its root, devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is about recognizing how much Jesus loves each person. So much so that He became a man and died for our sins. The heart is the symbol of love; therefore, the Sacred Heart of Jesus celebrates how much He loves us. Jesus appeared to Margaret Mary and asked her to spread this devotion because in her time many people had forgotten about Jesus' love for them and they thought of God as a strict and cold judge. Through Margaret Mary's efforts and sufferings to spread the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus many people learned anew about the love that Jesus has for all people.

In 1686 her convent celebrated the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the first time. Only four years later, Margaret Mary died suddenly on October 17, 1690. The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus spread throughout France, and in 1765 Pope Clement XIII officially approved the devotion. Margaret Mary was canonized and declared a saint in 1920 by Pope Benedict XV.

Goal for the month:

Consider doing the nine Fridays' devotion or see if your parents want to do the act of consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Ask St. Margaret Mary to help you understand how much Jesus loves you and all people.