

# SAINT MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE

**Apostle and Messenger of the Love of the Sacred Heart** (*Fr. George Bowboski (The Lay Institute of the Divine Mercy)*)

The main merit in spreading the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus goes to the modest nun, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-1690). She lived at the same age and time as St. John Eudes, but completely hidden in the convent of Paray-le-Monial.

On 27 December 1673, the Feast of Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist, Margaret Mary claimed that Jesus had permitted her to rest her head upon his heart, and then disclosed to her the wonders of his love: "My Divine Heart is so passionately in love with men that it can no longer contain within itself the flames of its ardent charity. It must pour them out by thy means, and manifest itself to them to enrich them with its precious treasures, which contain all the graces of which they have need to be saved from perdition".

Then Jesus took the heart of Margaret and placed it symbolically in his Heart. Then, transformed and shining, he gave it back to Margaret. She heard comforting words: "My well-beloved, I give you a precious token of My love, having enclosed within your side a little spark of its glowing flames, that is may serve you for a heart and consume you to the last moment of your life. If before, you have taken only the name of My slave, I now give you that of the beloved disciple of My Sacred Heart".

The second apparition took place at the beginning of 1674. Lord Jesus again revealed His Heart to Margaret and mentioned the favors and graces He promised to the worshipers of His Heart. "These devotion," writes St. Margaret - is the last effort of His love and will be only salvation for people in recent times. Among the various forms of devotion, Jesus also demanded that images of His Heart be honored. The image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the symbol of His ardent love for us. This image was to be exhibited in homes or worn on the breast, especially in the form of a medal, offering promises of graces and blessings to all who would venerate it

In the same year 1674, the third of the great apparitions took place. During the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the Lord Jesus appeared "shining with glory, with the stigmas of the five wounds, shining like the sun". The Lord Jesus unveiled his breast again and showed his heart in full radiance. He demanded that in return for the ingratitude that befell His Heart and His love shown to mankind, pious souls should reward this Heart wounded by sins and human ingratitude. He demanded from the saint that, in the spirit of her congregation, there should be an hour-long adoration ("Holy Hour") every night before the first Friday of the month, and that Holy



Communion on the first Friday of the month should also be offered to reward the Divine Heart for sins and human coldness.

Finally, on Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi, June 10, 1675, the last great revelation took place. When Margaret was kneeling in front of the tabernacle during the visit to the Blessed Sacrament, Christ appeared to her, unveiled his Heart and said: "Behold this Heart which has so loved men that It spared nothing, even going so far as to exhaust and consume Itself, to prove to them Its love. And in return I receive from the greater part of men nothing but ingratitude, by the contempt, irreverence, sacrileges and coldness with which they treat Me in this Sacrament of Love. But what is still more painful to Me is that even souls consecrated to Me are acting in this way. Therefore I ask of you that the first Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi be dedicated as a feast in honor of My Heart, and amends made to It in an Act of Reparation offered to It and by the reception of Holy Communion on that day, to atone for the outrages It has received during the time It has been exposed on the Altars. I promise you that My Heart will open wide and pour forth lavishly the influence of Its Divine love on all who will render and procure for It this honor."

### **PROMISES OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS**

Of the many promises Our Lord Jesus Christ revealed to Saint Margaret Mary in favor of souls devoted to His Sacred Heart the principal ones are as follows:

1. I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life.
2. I will give peace in their families.
3. I will console them in all their troubles.
4. I will be their refuge in life and especially in death.
5. I will abundantly bless all their undertakings.
6. Sinners shall find in my Heart the source and Infinite Ocean of mercy.
7. Tepid souls shall become fervent.
8. Fervent souls shall rise speedily to great perfection.
9. I will bless those places wherein the image of My Sacred Heart shall be exposed and venerated.
10. I will give to priests the power to touch the most hardened hearts.
11. Persons who propagate this devotion shall have their names eternally written in my Heart.
12. In the excess of the mercy of my Heart, I promise you that my all powerful love will grant to all those who will receive Communion on the First Fridays, for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance: they will not die in my displeasure, nor without receiving the sacraments; and my Heart will be their secure refuge in that last hour.