

France, 1830

## Saint Catherine Labouré



Catherine Labouré was born on May 2, 1806 into a family of farmers. On April 12, 1830, she entered the religious life at the novitiate of the Daughters of Charity in Paris, at the mother house on the Rue du Bac. Here Catherine, in that same year 1830, had the famous apparition of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, who told her: “Have a medal minted according to what you see; those who wear it on their neck will receive special graces.” During her entire time of residence on the Rue du Bac, Catherine also had the grace of seeing Jesus in the consecrated Host, both at the moment of Holy Communion, and during the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Catherine herself so describes the moment of the apparition: “While I was making Eucharistic Adoration in deep silence, I seemed to hear from the side of the apse a sound like the rustling of a silk dress. I cast my gaze upward and I saw the Blessed Virgin. She was of medium height and of indescribable beauty. From her head flowed a white veil which went down almost to her feet, which were planted above a half-globe. Her hands, raised to the level of her waist, were holding up, in a very natural way, another globe that was smaller and golden, surmounted by a cross of pure gold. She had her eyes turned toward Heaven. While I was intent on contemplating her, the Blessed Virgin lowered her eyes towards me and said these words, “This globe that you see represents the entire world – France in particular, and every single person.” And the Virgin added: “The rays are a symbol of the graces that I pour down on the people who request them from me,” words which made me realize how pleasant it is to pray to the Blessed Virgin and how generous She is to those who invoke her. And then I saw forming around the figure of the Blessed Virgin a background rather oval in shape, on which could be read these words, written in golden letters in the form of a semicircle from the right to the left hand of Mary: “O MARY, CONCEIVED WITHOUT SIN, PRAY FOR US WHO HAVE RECOURSE TO THEE.” At this point in the vision, the globe which the Virgin held up in offering to God disappeared; her hands, laden with graces, were opened up and slanted toward the globe on which She planted her feet, crushing the head of a greenish serpent with yellow spots. Suddenly, the background was turned and I was presented with the “reverse side of the medal,” which was the monogram of Mary with a Cross superimposed on it; in the lower foreground there were two Hearts: that of Jesus crowned with thorns and that of Mary pierced by a sword. Around it, as a frame, there was a royal crown of twelve stars. Then I heard a voice which said to me: “Have a medal minted according to what you see. All those who have this medal blessed and wear it, especially around their neck, and who recite the short invocation, will enjoy the special protection of the Mother of God and receive special graces. These graces will be in abundance for those who wear it faithfully.”



(1) Saint Catherine Labouré



(2) Image of the Miraculous Medal



(3) Statue of the Blessed Mother as she appeared to St. Catherine Labouré with the globe, the rays of light, and the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary



(4) The urn containing the body of St. Catherine Labouré