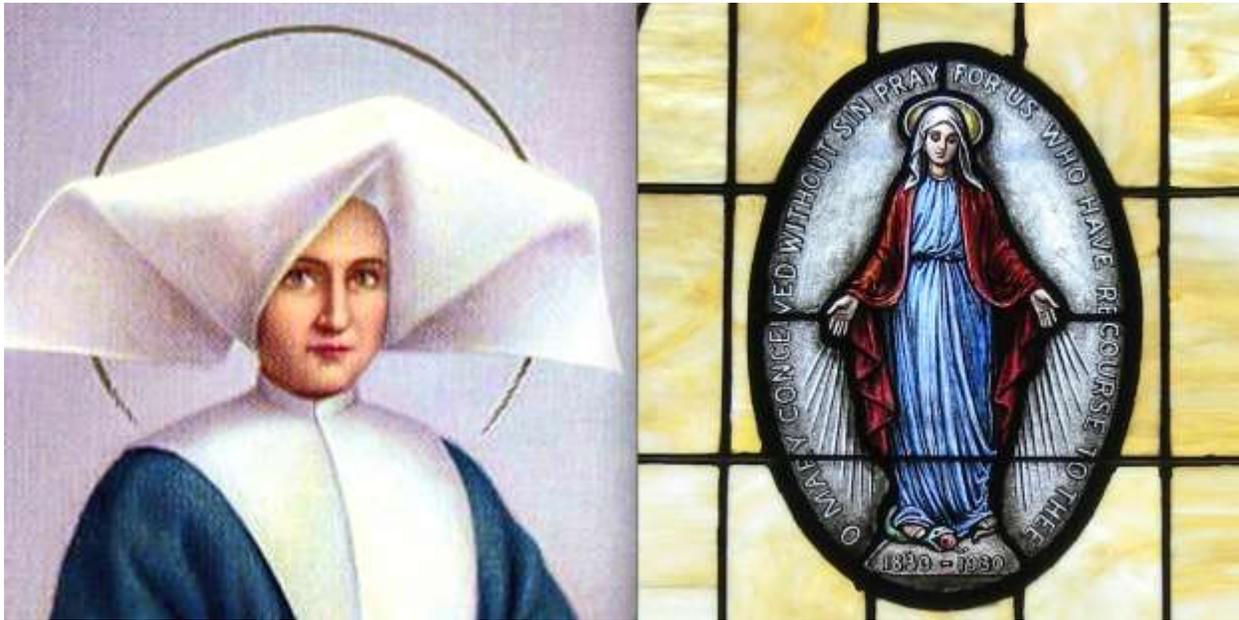


Lesson 11: Miraculous Medal

Please click twice to watch the video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olrWi6HHzWU>



Among the most famous and well known of all medals in Catholicism is the Miraculous Medal. This medal was given to us by the Blessed Mother through her chosen daughter, Catherine Laboure.

Catherine was born on May 2, 1806, in the Burgundy region of France. Her parents were Pierre and Madeleine Laboure and Catherine was their ninth of 11 children. In 1815, when Catherine was nine years old, her mom died. After the funeral, when Catherine was home, she picked up a statue of the Blessed Virgin and, holding it close to her face, said, “Now you will be my mother.”

Catherine’s dad, within a year, gave Catherine the responsibility of caring for the household. Catherine dutifully and lovingly did as she was asked. She was all of 10 years old.

Soon after, Catherine had a dream in which an old priest motioned her to a room filled with sick people. He told her, “It is a good deed to look after the sick. God has designs on you. Do not forget it.”

Some years later, upon visiting a hospital of the Daughters of Charity, she saw a picture of the same priest on the wall. She asked who that might be and she was told that it was their founder, St. Vincent de Paul. She immediately knew she must become a member of St. Vincent’s order. In January of 1830, Catherine Laboure entered the novitiate of the Daughters of Charity. Three months later she left for Paris and entered the Mother House of the order. After hearing a homily about St. Vincent de Paul, she prayed to him to ask Our Lady if she might see her. That very night a bright light woke her and the voice of a child told her to go to the chapel as the Blessed Mother was waiting for her. The date was July 19, 1830.

As Catherine neared the chapel door it swung open and the inside was filled with a brilliant light. Catherine went up and knelt at the communion rail. Then she heard the rustle of a silk dress. She

turned and the Blessed Mother was sitting in the celebrant's chair. The angel said, "The Blessed Mother wishes to speak to you."

Catherine slowly approached the Blessed Mother and knelt beside her. She folded her hands and placed them in Our Lady's lap. The Blessed Virgin told her that she was being given a mission and that she would have all the graces necessary to complete it. Our Lady said, "... *You will have the protection of God and St. Vincent. I always will have my eyes upon you. There will be much persecution. The cross will be treated with contempt. It will be hurled to the ground and blood will flow.*" Then the Virgin faded away.

Four months later, as Catherine and the other sisters headed to the chapel for evening prayers. Catherine heard the "swishing" sound of silk and immediately recognized it as a signal from the Blessed Mother (can you imagine knowing the Virgin Mary is signaling you to come to her).

Catherine looked to the main altar and saw Our Lady standing on a globe inside an oval frame. Around the margin of the frame appeared the words "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."

She told Catherine: "*Have a medal struck after this model. All who wear it will receive great graces; they should wear it around the neck.*" She also told Catherine to bring her instructions to Father Jean Marie Aladel, telling her, "*He is my servant.*"

Catherine did as instructed and brought her message to the priest. At first he did not believe her. Finally, after two years, he brought her story to the Archbishop. The archbishop ordered 2,000 medals to be struck.

Catherine Laboure sought no attention and for the next 40 years simply went about the business of caring for the elderly, infirm and disabled. That is why she is known as a patron of elderly people.

On New Years' Eve, 1876, Sister Catherine passed to her heavenly reward. Only a few people knew that she had been the one who had received the Miraculous Medal from the Blessed Virgin Mary. After her passing, word of who she was got out and spread like wildfire.

Catherine Laboure's body was exhumed in 1933. It was miraculously as fresh as the day she was buried.

Catherine Laboure was canonized a saint by Pope Pius XII on July 27, 1947. She was, without doubt, not only a remarkable and humble woman, she was also a personal confidante of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She was and still is counted among the chosen. Her feast day is November 28.



The Front Side

Mary stands on a globe, crushing a serpent beneath her feet. Describing the original vision, Catherine said the Blessed Mother appeared radiant as a sunrise, "in all her perfect beauty."

Rays shoot out from Mary's hands, which she told Catherine, "... symbolize the graces I shed upon those who ask for them."

Words from the vision form an oval frame around Mary: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."

The Reverse Side

The large letter "M": Mary as Mother, Mediatrix.
Cross and bar : Jesus' Cross of Redemption.
12 stars: 12 Apostles, who formed the first Church.

Left Heart: The Sacred Heart, who died for our sins.
Right Heart: The Immaculate Heart, who intercedes for us.
Flames: The burning love Jesus and Mary have for us.

THE MEANING OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL

