

Catherine Labouré was born on May 2, 1806 to a family of farmers. On April 21, 1830, she entered as a novitiate into the religious order, *Daughters of Charity*, in the motherhouse of Paris near Rue du Bac. Here in 1830, Catherine had the famous apparition of the Immaculate Mary, who told her, “Have a medal of this style coined; those who wear it around their neck will receive great graces.” During her entire stay at Rue du Bac, Catherine also had the grace of seeing Jesus in the consecrated Host, at both the moment of Holy Communion and during the Exposition of the Holy Sacrament.



Image of the Miraculous Medal



Urn containing the body of Saint Catherine



Fresco in the Church of Rue du Bac showing Catherine with the Virgin Mary



Statue of Mary as she appeared to Saint Catherine with the globe, rays, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus



Pope John Paul II on a visit to the chapel in the church of Rue du Bac in Paris on May 31, 1980



Saint Catherine Labouré

Catherine herself described the moment of the apparition: “While making Eucharistic Adoration in deep silence, I seemed to hear a sound coming from the side of the tribune, like the rustle of a silk dress. I got up and looked and saw the Holy Virgin. She was of medium build and indescribably beautiful. A white veil fell from her head to her feet and rested upon a half-globe. Her hands, raised to waist level in a natural position, held another small golden globe with a gold Cross on top. Her eyes looked beseechingly towards Heaven. While I was intent on contemplating her, the Holy Virgin lowered her eyes towards me and said these words: ‘This globe that you see represents the entire world, in particular France, and every single person.’ And the Virgin added, ‘The rays symbolize the graces shed on those who petition me’, making me understand how sweet it

is to pray to the Holy Virgin and how generous she is to those who invoke her. And then an oval frame formed around the figure of the Holy Virgin, with a semi-circular border of writing in gold above the right hand of Mary spelling out: ‘OH MARY, CONCEIVED WITHOUT SIN, PRAY FOR US WHO HAVE RECOURSE TO THEE’.

“At this point in the vision, the globe that Mary had offered to God disappeared; her hands, full of graces, faced the globe that she rested her feet upon, stepping on a green serpent with yellow spots. Suddenly the frame flipped and I saw the back of the medal showing the letter ‘M’ for Mary, and the Cross, and below the monogram there were two hearts; that of Jesus with the crown of thorns and

that of Mary pierced by a sword. Around it, like a frame, there was a regal crown of twelve little stars.

“Then I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Coin a medal in this style. All those who carry this will receive graces, especially if they wear the blessed medal around their neck and recite this short prayer. They will receive special protection from the Mother of God and will receive great graces. The graces will be abundant for those who wear it with great faith.’”