MARIE-CATHERINE OF SAINT-AUGUSTIN

Catherine was born on May 3, 1632, in Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte, France. Her parents, Jacques Simon, Lord of Longpré and Françoise de Launay-Jourdan, had Catherine baptized the same day. She went to live with her maternal grandmother and grandfather.

Love God

Catherine is a little girl who already loves God very much. When she was three and a half years old, she already wanted to do the Will of God, she wondered how she could do that. Little Catherine already wanted to obey God by doing what pleased Him. At her grandmother's, it was like a hospital where the poor and the sick were received with charity. Catherine had learned from her grandparents the love of the poor and the sick and the example of Christian charity. She loved to give her meals to the poor.
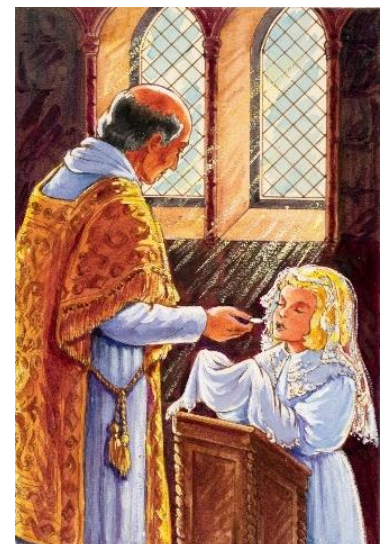
Suffering for others

Catherine had a great desire to suffer for others and to do the Will of God in her sufferings. A priest had taught Catherine that it is something that pleases God to endure what displeases us because we love Him and to pray well for our neighbor. Little Catherine had also heard the priest tell a sick person that he could offer his suffering for a person who needs it more than him. We do God's will more easily in sorrows, humiliations and sufferings than when we have everything very easily as we want. The Lord asks us to love Him in joy as in suffering. It is easier in joy; so that is why if we suffer without complaining and we love God even when it is difficult, we do God's Will more easily.
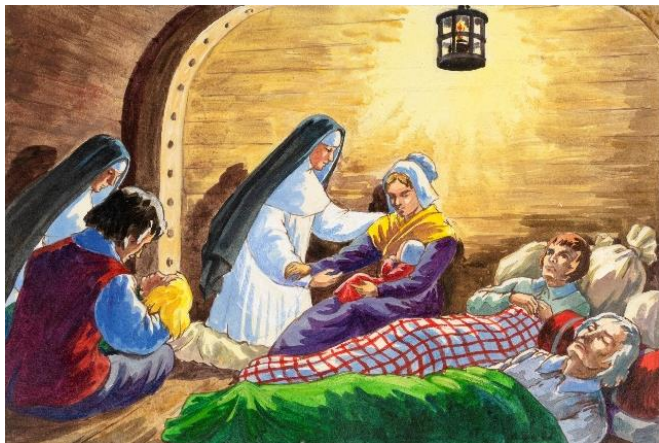
First Holy Communion

After having prepared herself well, Catherine received Jesus for the first time at her First Holy Communion when she was 8 years old, November 1rst 1640. She knew that God wanted her to be a Saint. One day after receiving Holy Communion, she decided to become a Nun because that was what God wanted for her.

Catherine loves the Blessed Virgin Mary

Catherine loved the Virgin Mary very much during her life. When she was 10 years old, little Catherine consecrated herself to the Virgin Mary on September 8, 1642. Also, her grandmother had given her a beautiful statue of the Virgin Mary, which she took to Canada with her. Throughout her life, she had the assistance of Our Lady who helped her to better do God's Will. Catherine also loved to pray the Rosary.

Sister Hospitaller

Catherine entered the Augustinian Nuns Monastery in Bayeux, France, at the age of 12 and a half and became a Hospitaller Nun of the Mercy of Jesus; she therefore took care of the poor and the sick. Her name became Marie-Catherine of Saint-Augustin.

Life in Canada

Sister Marie-Catherine de Saint-Augustin arrived in Quebec on August 19, 1648, at the age of 16. At the Hôtel-Dieu hospital in Quebec, she cared for the many sick people in the colony and the First Nations people. Sister Marie-Catherine always wanted to do the special mission that Jesus had for her.

God wanted Sister Marie-Catherine to come to Canada because many sick people needed to hear about Jesus and to have someone pray for them and care for them. She had much joy in her heart to do the Will of God. Jesus needs our help so that everyone can go to Heaven. Sister Marie-Catherine offered herself in her new country for the salvation of the sinners she would care for, in union with Jesus our Savior. Life in Canada was very difficult; she accepted and offered many sufferings for the love of Jesus. Also, she prayed a lot for the souls in Purgatory. Catherine was a good nurse; all the sick wanted her to take care of them and the other Sisters loved working with her. She did her tasks with great obedience and love, and she loved to be of service. She took care of all the poor with great charity and gentleness. The First Nations people had given her a special name: Iakonikonriiostha. This means "She who makes the interior more beautiful, warms the heart and she who consoles." She took care of bodies but also of the souls. When people saw her, they thought more about Heaven and God.

Marie-Catherine died on May 8, 1668, at the age of 36. She continues to pray for us in Heaven. The humble servant of the Lord, Blessed Marie-Catherine of Saint-Augustin, became, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary and the Eucharist, the protector of her beloved Canada.