

St. Madeleine Sophie Barat

Basic information:

Born: December 12, 1779. Died: May 25, 1865. (85 years old)

Canonized: May 24, 1925

Feast day: May 25

Reflection:

St. Madeleine Sophie Barat lived in extraordinarily dangerous times to be a devout Catholic. She was old enough to know the terrors of the French Revolution which sought to abolish Catholicism and persecute anyone who continued to practice it. Yet she not only continued to live out the faith but proceeded to found a religious order (Society of the Sacred Heart) at a time when religious orders were outlawed. To be such a devout Catholic during the time of the French Revolution very likely could have brought St Madeleine to the guillotine. Such courage is uncommon but is a form of courage which we are, as Christians, meant to live out when we are persecuted for our beliefs.

While our culture in the U.S. is nowhere close to a French Revolution it is not an easy thing to live out the Catholic faith in public society. The Church is routinely mocked for the positions She takes or the teachings which She lovingly gives to us. St Madeleine once said “We don’t live with angels; we have to put up with human nature and forgive it.” We choose to forgive those who mock us as we should. This does not mean however that we allow the truth to be disparaged. Instead, we need to study the truths of the faith and be prepared to give a defense for them. While we may not be asked to found a religious order or have to go underground to practice the faith but we are meant to be defenders of the faith in whatever situation which we find ourselves. Be courageous like St. Madeleine and seek to learn more of the faith.