



THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF **Mary**
MOTHER OF THE CHURCH



A MARIAN APPARITION AND ITS MEANING

While many Catholics wear the brown scapular or a crucifix around their necks, another popular sacramental that has been in use for almost two hundred years is the Miraculous Medal. In 1830, the Mother of God appeared to a twenty-four year old woman. Her name was St. Catherine Labouré. She had recently joined the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul at their mother house in Rue du Bacin, Paris. On the eve of St. Vincent de Paul's feast day, July 18, a child—shining with a dazzling light—awoke her and told her that Our Lady was in the chapel awaiting her.

When St. Catherine arrived in the chapel, she heard the rustling of a silk dress. She looked to see the Virgin Mary near the altar. St. Catherine immediately leapt to her side and rested her hands on Our Lady's knees. The two of them spoke for over two hours. She [later recounted](#) that:

“There, a period of time passed, the sweetest of my life. It would be impossible for me to say what I experienced.”

Our Lady would appear to St. Catherine on two more occasions, and during these apparitions, she made it clear that she desired to dispense many graces upon the faithful, only if they might ask. Our Lady would appear at one point with beams of light coming forth from gems on the ring which she wore on her finger. However, some of the gem did not glow. [The message](#) Our Lady gave to St. Catherine was this:

“These rays symbolize the graces I shed upon those who ask for them. The gems from which rays do not fall are the graces for which souls forget to ask.”

How important, then, it is to pray for the intercession of our Blessed Mother! After this, the image we see on the Miraculous Medal appeared, with Our Lady telling St. Catherine to have the medal struck as soon as possible. She promised:

“All who wear it will receive great graces; they should wear it around the neck. Graces will abound for persons who wear it with confidence.” To this day, graces abound for those that have received this precious medal as their own.

