

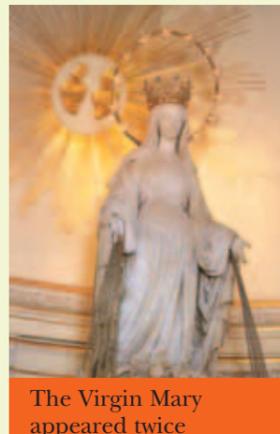
Saint Catherine Labouré

1806-1876

The life of Saint Catherine Labouré is intimately connected to the Virgin Mary, who appeared to her two times: the first on July 19, 1830 and the second on the following November, when she revealed the miraculous medal.

The first appearance came through her Guardian Angel, as the Saint recalls: “At eleven thirty I heard my name being called: ‘Sister Labouré! Sister Labouré!’ I woke up; I was looking to where the voice came from, which was at the side of the bed. I opened the curtain and saw a little boy, around four or five years old, dressed in white, and he tells me: ‘Come to the chapel, the Madonna awaits you’. My first thought was: ‘They will hear me!’

Finally the moment arrived. The little boy warned me saying: ‘Here is the Madonna, here she is!’ I heard a sound like the rustle of a silk dress coming from the podium area, near the picture of Saint Joseph, and I saw the most holy Virgin who came and sat on the steps of the altar next to the pulpit. The little boy who was there said to me: ‘Here is the Madonna!’ It would have been impossible for me in that moment to say anything. It was as if I did not recognize the Madonna.



The Virgin Mary appeared twice



“But that boy was quick to reply: ‘Be calm: it is eleven thirty and every one is in a deep sleep. Come because we are waiting for you’. I got dressed in a hurry; I went towards the little boy who was standing still by the foot of the bed. The boy followed me, or better yet, I followed him wherever he went, keeping him always at my left. Lights were lit everywhere we passed, which surprised me a lot. The most marvelous, however, remained the entrance to the chapel, which swung open as soon as the little boy touched the door with the tip of his finger. The marvel was at its peak when I saw all of the candles and all of the torches lit, like at midnight Mass. The little boy led me to the rectory near the chair of the Pastor, where I kneeled, while the little boy stayed standing the whole time. Seeming to me like a long time, every once in a while I looked with fear to see if the nuns were passing by the podium.

That little boy talked to me then not with the voice of a baby, but with that of a tall and robust man and he said strong words. Looking at the most holy Virgin, I leaped towards her, and kneeling on the steps of the altar, I put my hands on her knees...that was the sweetest moment of my life. It would be impossible for me to tell everything I felt. The Madonna explained to me how I needed to behave with my director and several things that I must not tell. She showed me the way to control my pain and told me to throw myself at the foot of the altar and open up my heart so I could receive all of the comforts necessary.”