

# Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque

Part 3

1647-1690

PURGATORY

Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque had numerous mystic visions and some of them were about souls in purgatory, as she herself recounts in her autobiography: "One time while I was before the Holy Sacrament on its feast day, I suddenly found myself in front of a person surrounded by fire, his fervor penetrating me so strongly that I seemed to be burning in that fire with him. His pious condition made it clear that he was in purgatory and I shed many tears. He said that he was a Benedictine that had received my confession and ordered me to receive Communion. In virtue of that event, God gave him permission to address me and find relief from his pain. He asked me to offer him every suffering that I could for a period of three months and I agreed to it right away, after having obtained permission from my superior. He told me that the first reason for his great suffering was because during his life he was more interested in his own reputation than the glory of God. The second reason was his lack of charity compared to his fellow brothers; and the third reason was his excessive natural affection for people with whom he had spiritual encounters, something God disliked very much. It would have been too difficult to express how much I had to suffer during those three months. He never got too far away from me and on his behalf it was as if I was burning in those flames with him and I suffered such vivid pain and wailed and cried continuously. My superior was moved with compassion so she ordered me

good penitence, above all discipline because my exterior pain and suffering had given the others relief, for goodness sake, seeing that the sanctity of love imprinted in me was just a small taste of the suffering of those poor souls in purgatory. Now I saw the Benedictine completely different from how he was at the start of those three months, because he went to enjoy himself in eternal happiness surrounded by joy and glory. He thanked me and said that he would ask for God to protect me. My sickness and suffering from those three months ended at the same time as his passing into heaven and I healed right away.

