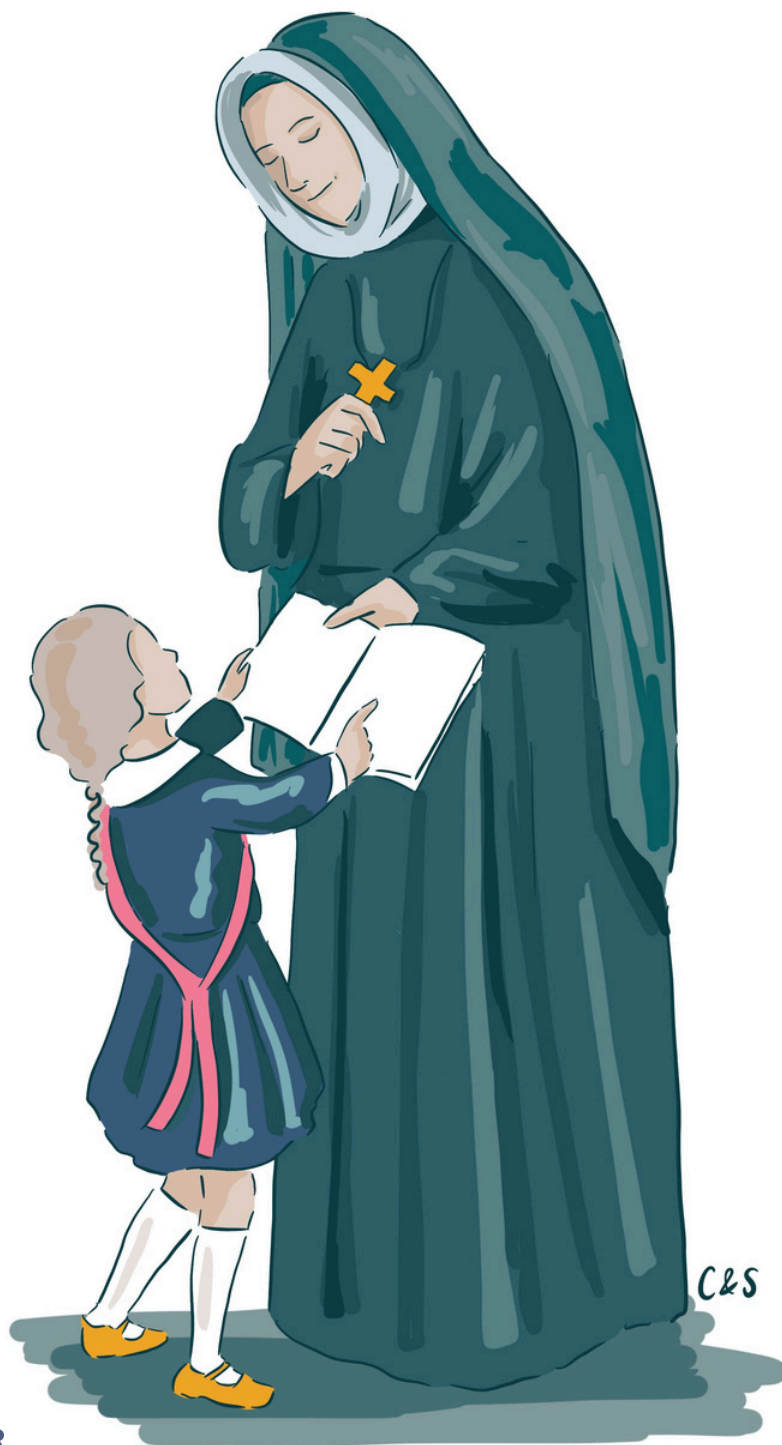


Novena with Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat



C&S



RELIGIEUSES
DU SACRÉ-CŒUR
de Jésus

Introduction

Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat (1779-1865) was born in the midst of revolutionary turmoil and experienced violence at close quarters. She grew up in a world in crisis and in search of bearings. Her family, marked by the image of a severe God, gradually discovered the love of the Heart of Jesus. Madeleine-Sophie let herself be seized and transformed, and became a young woman with a heart burning with love for Christ. She wanted to give her life to him, and was drawn to the Carmel and the interior life of Saint Teresa of Avila. However, she had received an exceptional education for her time and understood that education could transform hearts and restore society.

In 1800, together with a few other young women, she founded a community that later became known as the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Her first mission was to proclaim that the Heart of Jesus reveals God's tenderness for all creation, and for each individual in particular. Education of young girls, rich and poor, was the principal means of achieving this. She also initiated spiritual formation and guidance for adults, and other initiatives to meet the needs of her time. With her companions, she sought to give a good human education, to strengthen "the foundations of a living faith and to rekindle in hearts the torch of charity".

Her educational mission was not simply a human undertaking, but a work carried out by Jesus himself, a participation in his plan of love for humanity, to enlarge hearts to the infinity of his mercy:

*« Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,
for I am gentle and humble in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls. » (Matthew 11,28-29)*

Inhabited daily by contemplation and the desire to live in the breath of the Holy Spirit, Madeleine-Sophie remained rooted in the realities of her time: a woman of energetic action, she was firmly rooted in reality. She responded to challenges with courage and discernment.

In this novena, we put ourselves in her school to learn, with her, to respond to the invitation of the Heart of Jesus, to radiate his love around us and to open our hearts to the dimensions of the world. Each day, we will meditate on a facet of her testimony, allow ourselves to be transformed, and intercede for our brothers and sisters along the way.

FOR EACH DAY

As an introduction:

Lord Jesus, may your Holy Spirit enlighten and transform us throughout this novena, so that we may walk in hope, with the universal Church and in communion with all humanity.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie, in this year 2025, we celebrate the centenary of your canonization, guide us to the Heart of Jesus! Amen!

Finally: if we wish, we can pray the Our Father, three Hail Marys, and proclaim "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, for ever and ever. Amen".

DAY ONE: A WOMAN OF FIRE



A fire in the town of Joigny led to the premature birth of Madeleine-Sophie on December 12, 1779. As a child, she liked to say: "Fire brought me into the world". She soon showed a rich sensitivity and a lively spirit. Her heart was opened to God's love by discovering the Heart of Jesus and praying to Him as a family.

Touched by the revolutionary violence against religion and faith, she felt the fire that fills the Heart of Jesus: "I have come to bring fire to the earth..." (Luke 12:49). She let herself be transformed by this inner fire. The burning love of the Heart of Jesus fostered in her a tireless missionary zeal, a passion to help others discover God's immense, unconditional love. This fire was not a disorderly agitation, but a deep flame sustained by prayer and union with God in the Holy Spirit. St. Madeleine-Sophie teaches us that true fire does not come from us, but from Christ himself. This fire warms, enlightens, purifies and impels us to act in his Name.

*Today, with Saint Madeleine-Sophie, we ask for the grace
to rekindle our inner fire.*

LET US PRAY



Heart of Jesus,

Come and set our hearts ablaze with the fire of your love.

Give us a living faith, fervent prayer and greater charity,

so that we can bear witness to your love wherever you send us.

Burn in us that which distances us from you, and give us the power to be ardent witnesses to your Kingdom.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie,

You who, through a new religious family, brought the fire of the Heart of Jesus to the four corners of the world, teach us to live by this flame that comes from God.

Foster in us a burning zeal for God and for our brothers and sisters.

O Jesus, through the intercession of Saint Madeleine-Sophie

We entrust to you ... those whose faith has grown cold, who have lost their momentum or who have not yet recognized your love.

Look, and do what your Heart tells you,

Let your Heart act.

Jesus, I count on you, I trust in you, I wait for you,

I am sure of you.

Amen.

Taking action

I look upon my inner flame...

What in my life feeds this flame for the Heart of Jesus and his mission?

What can smother it? How can I nurture it in the midst of daily life and trials?

DAY TWO: A ROOTED WOMAN



As a child and teenager, Madeleine-Sophie Barat grew up in a family of coopers. Her father was also a winemaker. With him, she marveled at the vineyard in all its seasons. Her contemplative soul discovered the Creator in the beauty of creation. Throughout her life, she remained in close touch with nature. She was a friend to animals, who attached themselves to her, as if drawn by her kindness. Her sense of communion with all creation nourished her prayer life.

She often repeated Jesus' words: "I am the vine and you are the branches. He who abides in me and I in him, the same bears much fruit..." (John 15:5). In this way, she expressed the deep roots of her life and the sap that irrigated her actions. It was in the Heart of Jesus, through prayer, that she drew the strength to accomplish her work. She knew that the important thing was to let Jesus work through her. The wisdom she had acquired in contemplating nature made her realize that without intimate union with the Heart of Jesus, her action was likely to remain sterile.

*Today, with Saint Madeleine-Sophie, we ask for the grace
to put down deeper roots.*



LET US PRAY

Heart of Jesus

Teach us to cultivate our roots: those that link us to all of creation,
just as those that unite us to you. Grant us not to be swept away by opposite winds,
but to abide in you, as you abide in us.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie,

You who, thanks to your union with Jesus, were able to get through difficult times,
show us how to make him the center of our existence.

Let us also discover with wonder the deep bond that roots us in creation.

O Jesus, through the intercession of Saint Madeleine-Sophie

We entrust to you ... those who feel uprooted, who are forced to leave their country,
who have lost the meaning of their lives, or who have forgotten their Christian roots.

Look, and do what your Heart tells you,

Let your Heart act.

Jesus, I count on you, I trust in you, I wait for you,

I am sure of you.

Amen.

Taking action

I identify the spiritual and human roots of my life.

How can I expand my inner space and "abide" in Jesus?

I can reread Jesus' words about the vine (John 15:1-15).

DAY THREE: A WOMAN FOR YOUTH



Madeleine-Sophie had the good fortune to receive an exceptional education for a young girl of her time. Her brother, eleven years older than her, saw her keen intelligence and taught her everything he was learning himself. Madeleine-Sophie was providentially prepared for a mission of education. She saw the urgent need to give young people a solid education and help them grow in faith and love. For her, education meant more than imparting knowledge: it was about forming hearts, awakening to the beauty of self-giving, and preparing generations capable of acting in the world with intelligence and charity. She was aware that young people and their families were the future of the world and the Church.

Madeleine-Sophie had a predilection for children and young people who were undisciplined, exiled or experiencing difficult family situations. She showed them a great deal of empathy and asked her sisters to be encouraging and to trust them. She spontaneously took a hopeful look at young people. In each one she saw Jesus: "Whoever welcomes this child in my name, welcomes me" (Luke 9:48).

*Today, with Saint Madeleine-Sophie, we ask for the grace
of hope and confidence in the future.*



LET US PRAY

Heart of Jesus

Nurture in us the grace of hope.

Grant that those whose mission it is to educate and pass on the faith
may be joyful and credible witnesses who inspire us to follow you.

Fill young people with confidence in the certainty that you are accompanying them on their journey.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie,

You who consecrated your life to the Heart of Jesus through the education of youth, intercede for them, we pray:
may they have the desire to discover and manifest the love of the Heart of Jesus. And may their parents,
teachers and educators find the words and actions that will open their hearts to the truth and love of God.

○ Jesus, through the intercession of Saint Madeleine-Sophie

We entrust to you ... all young people, especially those who are searching for meaning, those who doubt,
those who suffer from loneliness or hardship...

Look, and do what your Heart tells you,

Let your Heart act.

Jesus, I count on you, I trust in you, I wait for you,

I am sure of you.

Amen.

Taking action

I pray for young people I know in my environment: family, friends, neighbors, parish... I identify someone
in difficulty and comfort them with a kind word or a concrete gesture.

DAY FOUR: A HUMBLE & AUDACIOUS WOMAN



Madeleine-Sophie had the audacity and courage to follow the inspirations of the Holy Spirit and respond to the concrete needs that presented themselves to her. At a time when women had little place in society, she dared to found a congregation, open schools and orphanages, and endure crises and persecution, all the while maintaining an unshakeable trust in God. Her audacity came not from a simple human will, but from a certainty: Jesus was calling her to share his mission, and giving her the strength to undertake the impossible. "Nothing is impossible for God" (Luke 1:37); "I am with you until the end of time" (Matthew 28:20). Deeply humble, Madeleine-Sophie sought above all to be a supple instrument in God's hands, so that he could act through her.

What was her secret? One day, she wrote to one of her friends: "All these worries, preoccupations, feelings, overactive forecasts, all this is excessively detrimental to you. If you were careful to hold on to God's good pleasure for everything that happens, you would receive it in peace, with tranquillity, almost without movement". Trust in God was the source of her audacity, for she relied on Him, while committing herself entirely.

*Today, with Saint Madeleine-Sophie, we ask for the grace
to entrust ourselves to the breath of the Holy Spirit to be more daring in our commitments.*



LET US PRAY

Heart of Jesus

Give us a humble and bold heart, ready to follow you without fear. Deliver us from our hesitations, fears and doubts, so that we can take risks for the Gospel.

Give us the strength to be bold in your Name, with confidence and generosity.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie,

You who dared to undertake in the face of obstacles, teach us not to shrink from today's challenges, relying on the Holy Spirit. Intercede for all those who hesitate to respond to their vocation, that they may find the courage to say yes to the Lord wherever he calls them.

O Jesus, through the intercession of Saint Madeleine-Sophie

We entrust to you... all those who feel paralyzed by uncertainty or difficulties,
who dare not make commitments...

Look, and do what your Heart tells you,

Let your Heart act.

Jesus, I count on you, I trust in you, I wait for you,

I am sure of you.

Amen.

Taking action

I ask myself: where is Jesus calling me to be bolder?

I dare to take a step of faith: talk to someone about God without fear, respond to an inner calling...

DAY FIVE: A WOMAN OF DISCERNMENT



Madeleine-Sophie was a woman who wanted to "seek and find God in all things", in the spirit of Saint Ignatius. She was not content with easy answers or spiritual comfort. She wanted to go further in the life of union with God. For her, seeking God meant meditating and contemplating, but also letting herself be challenged, questioning herself under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, discerning what God was calling her to day by day. It meant moving forward without always seeing the road clearly, but with the certainty that God was there. She didn't act alone. She knew how to seek advice and discern with others. She loved to act as a Church.

One day, she visits a community, determined to close it down and send the sisters to other places. The superior asked her to pray to see if this was really God's will. After half an hour of adoration, she returned to the sisters, acknowledging that God's will was to maintain the community. She really listens and is able to change her point of view.

*Today, with Saint Madeleine-Sophie, we ask for the grace
to discern God's unexpected in our lives and to mature our choices in his light.*



LET US PRAY

Heart of Jesus

Give us a heart that is always searching, that never tires of desiring you and discerning your calling in everyday life. Keep us from withdrawing into ourselves, from the ease of spiritual comfort and routine. Open us to your surprises.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie,

You who have never stopped questioning yourself and deepening your covenant with God, teach us to listen to the Holy Spirit and trust him. Teach us to make our choices by discerning with others, in our communities, in the Church.

○ Jesus, through the intercession of Saint Madeleine-Sophie

We entrust to you... those who are called upon to make decisions that affect the life of the community at social, political, economic and ecclesial levels...

Look, and do what your Heart tells you,

Let your Heart act.

Jesus, I count on you, I trust in you, I wait for you,

I am sure of you.

Amen.

Taking action

I let the question Jesus asked the first disciples resonate within me: "What are you looking for?" (John 1:38).

How can I better seek and find God at the heart of my daily life?

How can I make the right choices?

DAY SIX: A WOMAN THIRSTING FOR JUSTICE



Madeleine-Sophie wanted education to be a means of fighting injustice and poverty. She opened free schools, vocational training workshops, classes for handicapped children, retreats for people employed in the homes, etc. She united the young people of the elite with the poorest. Her love of the Heart of Jesus led her to see Christ in the most vulnerable, and she sought to respond to the material and spiritual distress of her time. For her, faith cannot be separated from love for others. She reminded us that true charity manifests itself in concrete gestures of care, commitment and sharing. For example, she demanded that construction workers be treated justly and paid on time. When she returned from her many travels, she would often say: "I've seen heartbreaking misery". She would repeat to her sisters: "The poor don't touch us enough". She had a gift for sensing the hidden sufferings of others, and did what she could to alleviate them.

The source of his commitment was the Heart of Jesus. Like him, she let herself be taken by the heart: "When Jesus saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were helpless and distressed, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36).

*Today, with Saint Madeleine-Sophie, we ask for the grace
of compassion and solidarity.*

LET US PRAY



Heart of Jesus,

Open our eyes and hearts to the suffering of those around us.
Teach us to be more sensitive to all distress, and to love not only through words,
but also through actions.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie,

You who saw Christ in those in difficulty or unjustly treated, teach us to serve
with humility and tenderness. May we share in the love of the Heart of Jesus, filled with compassion
and respect for the dignity of every human being.

O Jesus, through the intercession of Saint Madeleine-Sophie

We entrust to you ... those who are victims of discrimination or harassment,
who feel excluded in society and in the Church...

Look, and do what your Heart tells you,

Let your Heart act.

Jesus, I count on you, I trust in you, I wait for you,

I am sure of you.

Amen.

Taking action

I open my eyes, my ears, my heart around me and more broadly, in the world's situations.
What are the distresses that touch me and impel me to "love and serve"?

DAY SEVEN: A WOMAN OF COMMUNION



Madeleine-Sophie was deeply attached to the communion of hearts. She saw unity and love as the heart of Christian witness, as Jesus himself said: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). She attached great importance to unity within her congregation and in the Church, even as she experienced its difficulty. She was convinced that the love of the Heart of Jesus drives us to overcome individualism, divisions and conflicts, to build together a world of peace and solidarity. For her, communion did not mean uniformity, but a willingness to accept others as they were, and to work together with their differences. Against a backdrop of revolution and civil war, she sought to understand diverse aspirations, overcome prejudice and reconcile families. She suffered to see so much violence and hatred; she prayed for the world in pain and gestation.

*Today, with Saint Madeleine-Sophie, we ask for the grace
to build unity wherever we live and work, and to take world peace to heart.*



LET US PRAY

Heart of Jesus,

Give us a generous heart, capable of loving without exclusion, uniting without crushing, building with respect for differences. Make us builders of peace and unity wherever we are, so that our lives become a reflection of your love.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie,

You, who have made contact with so many different people and tirelessly sought union and communion, teach us to be people who bring people together and build unity, whatever the circumstances.

O Jesus, through the intercession of Saint Madeleine-Sophie

We entrust to you... divided families, communities in tension, countries devastated by war...

and also those who open paths of peace...

Look, and do what your Heart tells you,

Let your Heart act.

Jesus, I count on you, I trust in you, I wait for you,

I am sure of you.

Amen.

Taking action

I pray for world peace.

What concrete gesture of reconciliation am I inspired to make today?

DAY EIGHT: A FORWARD-LOOKING WOMAN



Madeleine-Sophie was a woman of vision and hope. She sought to read the signs of her times and respond to them with intelligence and faith. Her well-founded intuition has been a source of inspiration for over two centuries and across five continents. Even during her lifetime, she sensed the need to constantly adapt pedagogy and spirituality to different cultures and changing mentalities. "Times change, we must change too", she often said. For her, looking to the future and the far reaches of the world meant anticipating and organizing with others, and making the necessary changes. It's about hope and trust. When she gave advice to the sisters in America, she added: "This is only an opinion, with full freedom not to follow it. You can't see the disadvantages from so far away. Time will give you counsel, and above all the Spirit of God".

*Today, with Saint Madeleine-Sophie, we ask for the grace
of active hope!*



LET US PRAY

Heart of Jesus,

By opening our hearts to you, we can look to the future with confidence. Teach us to free ourselves from our fears and calculations, and to move forward in life with desires and plans according to your Heart.

Help us to be sowers of hope.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie,

Toi qui as vu loin et rêvé grand, montre-nous comment contempler ce monde avec espérance parce que Jésus est venu pour que tous « aient la vie, la vie en abondance » (Jean 10, 10). Aide-nous à voir les signes de lumière.

○ Jesus, through the intercession of Saint Madeleine-Sophie

We entrust to you ... those who have reason to fear the future, who are discouraged and despairing...

Look, and do what your Heart tells you,

Let your Heart act.

Jesus, I count on you, I trust in you, I wait for you,

I am sure of you.

Amen.

Taking action

I choose a way that can help me today to choose hope at the very heart of my worries.

I consider who, what group I can join to walk together in hope.

DAY NINE: A WOMAN RADIATING THE HEART OF JESUS



The treasure that Madeleine-Sophie found, and for which she gave her all, was the Heart of Jesus. "All my life, I have been nothing but an instrument of the Heart of Jesus", she said at the end of her life. Little by little, she let herself be transformed by his love, which leads us to the Father and sends us out to our sisters and brothers. Madeleine-Sophie's great desire was that everyone should be able to experience the overflowing love of the Heart of Jesus and draw from this infinite source of grace. Like Saint Marguerite-Marie, and many others who experienced this ardent love of Christ, she suffered that it was not more widely known and loved. For she was aware that every human being is created for love, that the love of Jesus can fulfill this expectation, that everyone can have this experience of which Saint Paul speaks: "I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me" (Galatians 2:20).

*Today, with Saint Madeleine-Sophie, we ask for the grace
to truly discover the love of the Heart of Jesus.*



LET US PRAY

Heart of Jesus

Reveal to us the depth of God's love, of which your Heart is the spurting spring.
Help us to drink from this fountain. Make our hearts like yours, gentle and humble,
turned to the Father and loving every human person to the end.

Saint Madeleine-Sophie,

You who have experienced the intimacy of the Heart of Jesus, intercede for us: that we may be closer to him,
so that we may live more of his love and spread it around us.

O Jesus, through the intercession of Saint Madeleine-Sophie

We entrust you ... those who have lacked love, who are desperately seeking it,
who would like to meet you...

Look, and do what your Heart tells you,

Let your Heart act.

Jesus, I count on you, I trust in you, I wait for you,

I am sure of you.

Amen.

Taking action

I read and pray, alone or with others, Pope Francis' encyclical on the Sacred Heart: "He Loved us" (2024).



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