

◆◆◆ **THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL** ◆◆◆

**THE STORY OF OUR LADY’S APPEARANCES TO ST. CATHERINE LABOURE**

**COURSE PLAN METHODOLOGY:** *The Miraculous Medal, the Story of Our Lady’s Appearances to St. Catherine Laboure* by Mary Fabyan Windeatt is represented by the abbreviation **MM**. Each weekly assignment is summarized in the first line of the week’s daily course plan. The specific daily assignments are outlined in the following lines indicated by the **MON, TUES, WED, THUR** and **FRI** abbreviations. We suggest assigning the weekly written assignment at the beginning of the week to be completed by the following Monday. This will allow the student to think about the assignment while he is reading. **The chapter study questions, chapter vocabulary and glossary are located in the Elementary Literature Study Question booklets available for purchase from Kolbe Academy.** Answers should be given in complete written or oral sentences.

WEEK 1	
<b>MM</b>	<p><b>Chapters 1-12.</b> Note there are NO vocabulary words for <i>The Miraculous Medal</i>. Study questions may be completed as the student reads or at the end of the week when reading has been completed.</p> <p><b>Written Assignment:</b> Describe the difficulty Sr. Laboure had trying to get Fr. Aladel to believe that she had seen the Blessed Virgin Mary. Why didn’t he believe her? What was her attitude about his disbelief? What can you learn from this situation?</p>
<b>MON</b>	<p><b>Read Chapters 1-3 and answer the Study Questions.</b> At half-past eleven, on the night of July 18, 1830, an angel awakes Sister Laboure and invites her to the chapel where the Blessed Virgin is waiting for her. They rush to the chapel through the empty but lit corridors. They arrive at the chapel with the altar candles ablaze. Sr. Laboure kneeled at the communion rail and waited. When the angel tells her that Mary has arrived, Sr. Laboure cannot tell if she is awake or not and does not approach her. After much urging, the angel finally losses patience with Sr. Laboure and uses a deep stern voice to tell her to approach the Blessed Virgin. Mary warned Sr. Laboure that she would know sadness, but in times of trial she should come before the altar to pour out her troubles and receive consolation. The message Mary brought was that God had a mission for Sr. Laboure, and that she would have to suffer much. She warned of the future for France and for the religious. Then Mary left and Sr. Laboure realized she did not ask what her mission was to be. She spoke to the convent chaplain, Fr. Aladel, who did not believe her and told her to forget about it. Fr. Aladel had a hard time believing Sr. Laboure because three months earlier she had told him that she had seen the heart of St. Vincent de Paul, founder of her order the Daughters of Charity, floating in the air over the silver box in the chapel containing his relics. Sr. Laboure remembered that Mary told her to bring her troubles to the altar so she knelt before the Tabernacle and prayed. The Blessed Virgin answered by appearing a second time. This time Mary had numerous brilliant rings on her fingers. Dazzling rays of light came from them though some stones had no rays coming from them. She held a small golden ball with a cross. The globe represented the world, especially France and everyone in it. The rays were graces that she shed on those who asked for them. She held a golden ball that vanished and then an oval frame appeared about her with the prayer, “O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.” A heavenly voice spoke within her heart telling her that her mission was to have a medal made that looked like the vision and that all who wore the medal would receive great graces, especially if it was worn around their neck. The vision turned around and</p>

	revealed what the back side of the medal was to look like.
TUE	<p><b>Read Chapters 4-6 and answer the Study Questions.</b> Fr. Aladel once again does not believe Sr. Laboure when she tells him that Mary appeared to her again. He also doesn't believe that she was given a mission to have a medal made. Sr. Laboure obeyed Fr. Aladel and tried to put the whole thing out of her mind, but then one month later the Blessed Virgin appeared to her again. Sr. Laboure once again described what the medal should look like and Fr. Aladel questioned her. She took his questions to mean that he believed her, which he did not. Fr. Aladel questioned her as to what words should be on the back of the medal and Sr. Laboure didn't remember there being any so Fr. Aladel told her to ask the Blessed Virgin the next time she appeared. A few weeks later (January 1831) she took her vows with the Daughters of Charity and was given the new name of Catherine. Sr. Catherine had a nagging worry that she was not yet successful in having the medal made. She constantly prayed for the Blessed Virgin to answer her. Finally she received her answer through an internal voice speaking to her soul. Sr. Catherine told Fr. Aladel who still did not believe her and tried to put her off by saying they needed to wait longer. Sr. Catherine was moved from the Motherhouse to the convent in Enghien, a suburb of Paris, where she would not see Fr. Aladel as frequently. Sr. Catherine once again heard the voice of Our Lady who assured her that Fr. Aladel is her servant and would fear to displease her. When Sr. Catherine told Fr. Aladel what Our Lady had said, he knew that he could not willingly disobey Our Lady and immediately went to see the Archbishop in Paris. The Archbishop had no doubts that the Blessed Virgin appeared to Sr. Catherine and had no objections to the medal being made. The Archbishop wanted to meet the Sister whom the Blessed Virgin appeared to, but Fr. Aladel informed him that he had promised not to give away her identity. Our Lady had told Sr. Catherine that she was to only confide in the priest who heard her confession. The Archbishop agreed that Fr. Aladel should find an artist to sketch what the medal should look like. The Archbishop thought that the medal would be the saving of France in which two years earlier a revolution had begun and the religious were being persecuted.</p>
WED	<p><b>Read Chapters 7-9 and answer the Study Questions.</b> Fr. Aladel immediately found an artist to make the sketches. Without being able to talk to Sr. Catherine directly, the artist had difficulty in making the sketches because Mary appeared in two different ways during the apparitions. He had other questions too, such as how much of the globe that Mary was standing on was visible? Did she have bare feet or were they covered? Was the Devil in the form of a snake? How was her hair and veil? The artist ended up making a whole series of drawings for Sr. Catherine to choose from. She chose the sketch in which "Our Lady was standing with outstretched hands atop a cloud-encircled globe, the rays from her open palms streaming earthwards in a blaze of glory. Her hair was covered, her feet bare, crushing beneath them an evil-looking serpent." They initially had two thousand medals made. Fr. Aladel worried they had made too many. Within a short time the story of the medal got around and they ran out of medals. The interest spread and several thousand more medals were made. It was soon realized that people who wore the medal were saved from the cholera plague that had broken out. Excitement for the medal grew even more rapidly. The medal became known as the "Miraculous Medal". The Daughters of Charity, Sr. Catherine's order, gave them to all of the orphans and the sick in their care. They all questioned who the sister might be that Our Lady appeared to. Sr. Catherine worked in the kitchen at the convent and even joined in their guessing game when they pressed for an opinion, although, she felt a much greater need to promote a love of Our Lady.</p> <p>Two things Sr. Catherine felt were important were frequent and devoutly praying the prayer</p>