

When she was eight years old, this quiet, happily life came to an end. Claude Alacoque died, and little Margaret was recalled home by her mother. A few months later she was put to a school conducted by the Urbanist Clares, who had a large establishment at Charolles. Here she followed her studies diligently, and still more her pious practices.



Baptism of Margaret Mary.

The nuns soon discovered the saintliness of their new pupil, and they began to prepare her for her first Communion. This great event in Margaret's life took place when she was not more than nine years old; and its fruit

was that all her remaining love of pleasure and natural gaiety of disposition gave way to an intensity of fervor. Every little enjoyment hitherto indulged in became distasteful, in comparison with the incessant prayer which filled her soul and kept her in close union with God.

She describes herself as having at that time an irresistible attraction to prayer. It drew her, almost in spite of herself, into solitude where she used to prostrate herself in adoration and give way, in loving sighs and petitions, to her growing desires after the religious life. She thought that if she could only become a religious she would be a saint, and this made her think of praying for the grace of vocation.

At ten, she fell ill with a kind of rheumatic fever. This kept her confined to her bed for no less than four years. At the end of which long term, notwithstanding the continued efforts of the physician, no cure seemed to have taken place. She had left the convent on account of her ill health, and