

*Did you know . . .*

### **Blessed Among Us: St. Marie of the Incarnation**

On April 2, 2014, Pope Francis canonized three new saints for the Catholic Church, one of whom was Blessed Marie of the Incarnation, an Ursuline Nun from France who came to the New World to establish a community and school for Indian girls.

Marie Guyart was born on Oct. 28, 1599 in Tours, France. At the age of 14, Marie confided to her parents her desire to join her cousin in the convent. But, at the age of 17, with strong pressure from her family, she agreed to marry a young silk worker. He died a year later, leaving her with an infant son and she vowed that she would not remarry.

In 1625, she began to receive a series of visions of the Trinity, with the sensation of a “spiritual marriage” to Jesus. In 1632, leaving her son in the care of her sister, she entered the Ursuline convent in Tours, taking the name Marie of the Incarnation.

In 1639, at the age of 40, she volunteered for the new mission in Quebec, becoming the first French missionary sister in Canada. She studied the extremely difficult Indian languages and wrote an Algonquin-French dictionary, as well as an Iroquois dictionary and catechism.

She died on April 30, 1672, at the age of 72. She was honored as one of the founders of Canada and has been named the Teresa of New France.

In France, St. Marie’s son Claude became a Benedictine monk in 1641. For 30 years he kept up regular correspondence with his mother in Canada. When she died, he was the first to write a biography of his mother, and in the foreword, the Bishop of Quebec wrote:

“Having chosen her to establish the Ursulines in Canada, God gave her the full spirit of her Institute. She was a perfect superior, an excellent Mistress of novices, capable of undertaking any religious enterprise. Her exterior life, simple and well-disciplined, was animated by an intense interior life, so that she was a living Rule for all her Community. Her zeal for the salvation of souls, and especially for the conversion of the Indians, was great and so universal that she seemed to carry them all in her heart. We cannot doubt that, by her prayers, she greatly called down God’s many blessings upon this new-born Church.”



**Judy Pearson**