

MAY

The month of YES!

This month we celebrate three special women.

May is dedicated to Mary, mother of Jesus, because it is the month of flowers, when nature awakens to a new life after winter.

The most characteristic flower of May is the rose, and in ancient times, children used to decorate Mary statues with crowns of roses. Each rose symbolized a prayer, a beautiful and scented prayer, worthy of the Virgin Mary. The beads that compose the Rosary come from those roses.

Mary has many feasts and we celebrated her in March so let us give our attention to the two women associated with us.



Janet Erskine Stuart 1857-1914

The story is told in her own words: One day, it was May 6, 1882, when I was walking up through Regent's Park I was thinking of religious life and saying to Almighty God, 'O my God, I should like it very much, but you see it is impossible to think of it at present' and then and there, standing by the side of a bed of blue hyacinths factum est ad me verbum Domini and I saw it all. When I went into the convent chapel, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, and the nun who was on the prie-dieu was replaced by another as I came in. I asked as a sign that, if the 'word' was from God, He would put me on the prie-dieu instead of the nun who had just come, and almost immediately she left the prie-dieu and came to beg me to take it, saying she felt too ill to stay so I did not doubt further.

Blue hyacinths remained to her for ever after the symbol of a great revelation. She always kept this anniversary, and if possible liked to look at blue hyacinths on that day, but 1882 had been a late year and in May they were often out of flower.



UTUBE Spirit Seeking Light and Beauty.

Set to video of nature scenes by Beth Sulleza, RSCJ.

Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat

Her feast is 25th May

She was born in Joigny, France as fire raged in houses nearby. Truly a child of fire.

Sophie's heart was captivated by God from an early age, and she was drawn to a life of contemplative prayer. At the same time she recognized that post-revolutionary France had a pressing need for transformation through rigorous education and a spirituality of the Heart of Christ. Sophie and four companions made their first vows in 1800, giving themselves to a form of religious life which combined the contemplative and the apostolic, the one informing and enlivening the other. "Discovering and revealing the Heart of Christ" remains the mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart to this day.

Besides her all-embracing passion for God, Madeleine Sophie Barat had other passions as well: she was an exceptional spiritual guide who helped countless others to discover and deepen their relationship with God; she was an inspired educator who insisted that those who would educate others had to cultivate in themselves both learning and virtue; and she was a gifted administrator who, by the time of her death in 1865, saw her little Society grow beyond 3500 members in foundations throughout Europe, North and South America, and Africa



Madeleine Sophie Barat was named a saint 1925.

Many people have said YES to God, sometimes in small things and at other times in ways that led to life changing plans. This month let us take time to see and reflect on how and where we say YES each day.

What images help you to be aware of God each day?

What things and people help you to be conscious of the Spirit inviting you to respond to God's presence in others and the world around you?

Jesus, help me to seek your presence. Help me to be generous with my time and attentiveness. Guide me so that I have an open heart and an open mind, ready to respond like Mary,
like Janet,
like Sophie

<https://www.rscjuk.org/about/madeleine-sophies-story#:~:text=Following%20Jesus%20in,the%2025th%20May.>

