



31 May 2026
IN HONOR OF ST. JOAN OF ARC
“The heart of the Saint!” (Part 2)

Joan was born on January 6, 1412, in Domrémy, France, the fourth child of Jacques d’Arc and his wife Isabelle. She grew up in humble peasant circumstances, could neither read nor write, learned to spin and sew, and sometimes tended to the household. Her parents were considered devout Christians. Her mother instructed her in the faith.

When, in 1456, as part of the process to vindicate Joan (King Charles VII had ordered an investigation into the truth of the church trial against Joan), witnesses from the village of Domrémy were questioned about her, they gave unanimous testimony in her favor. She was regarded as a devout girl who enjoyed going to church and helping others. May the testimony of the farmer Simonin Musnier from January 30, 1456, stand for many similar testimonies:

“I grew up with Joan, whom they called the Virgin. I lived near her father’s house. Truly, I know how good she was, how simple and pious! She revered God and His saints. She often and gladly went to church and to holy places, comforted the sick, and gave alms to the poor. I experienced this myself: when I was little, I was unwell, and Joan came to comfort me...”

When Joan was thirteen years old, the Archangel Michael appeared to her. She herself describes the event when, during her trial in Rouen on February 22, 1431, Magister Beaupère asked her about the voices she heard. She testified under oath:

“When I was thirteen years old, I had a voice that came from God to guide me. The first time, I was very afraid. The voice came at noon; it was summer in my father’s garden. I had fasted the day before. I heard the voice to my right, coming from the direction of the church... The voice seemed sublime to me. I believe it was sent to me by God. By the third time, I knew it was the voice of an angel. The voice has always guided me rightly, and I have always understood it.”

When asked by the magistrate what the voice told her regarding her salvation, she replied:

“To guide me well, to go to church. Above all, it told me to be a good child, and God would help me. And among other things, He told me that I should come to the aid of the King of France... and the angel told me of the great misery in which France was.”

From the interrogation of Joan—as painful as it was for her—we nevertheless learn a great deal from her own mouth about what had begun with the angel’s apparition, because everything was written down during the trial against her.

Thus Joan reports that first the Holy Archangel Michael came to her, accompanied by angels from heaven. This encounter had been so beautiful for her that she testified:

“When they left me, I wept, for I wished they had taken me with them.”

We hear from her own lips that God sent two saints to accompany her:

“When Saint Michael appeared to me, he told me that Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret would come to me, and that I should do whatever they advised me to do; that they had received the command to guide and counsel me, that I should believe them, and that it was by the command of Our Lord.”

With the appearance of the angel and the spiritual guidance of the saints, Joan began her more detailed preparation for the mission that God had intended for her. God's selection of the saints who guided her already gives us a glimpse of what lies ahead for Joan.

The Holy Archangel Michael is the patron saint of France. We know that it was he who opposed the rebellious angels and, as a heavenly commander, led those who remained faithful to God in the “heavenly war”: “Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought” (Rev 12.7).

God thus provides His Joan with a “warrior angel” as her companion. Even if Joan later has to lead an earthly war, it is always important to include the heavenly dimension, for the faithful angels fight in their own way on the side of those who do God’s work.

The two holy virgins are St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Margaret of Antioch. Both are martyrs.

A special feature is to be noted regarding St. Catherine, who evidently became Joan’s principal companion. It is told of her that she defended her Christian faith so wisely and enlightenedly before fifty philosophers of the king of that time—who demanded that she offer a sacrifice to the pagan deities—that the philosophers converted to the Christian faith and suffered martyrdom together with her.

Looking ahead, we see that Joan, too, would later have to defend her mission against scholars, and the Lord placed the right heavenly companion at her side.

But let us not rush ahead any further; let us pause here.

Through the holy Archangel Michael and the two saints, God gently guides the thirteen-year-old Joan of Arc from Domrémy toward her mission. He finds in her a heart that loves Him and is willing to follow Him. He can entrust her with a task so extraordinary that even today, people continue to attempt to depict and comprehend the events of that time.

NOTE: We have created a radio play about Joan of Arc. You can listen to it via the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVKE6WCNZ3g>