

Short life of Blessed Eugénie Joubert

Eugénie Joubert was born in Yssingaux (Haute Loire, France) on 11 February 1876, on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Throughout her life, she deeply loved the Virgin Mary. « *With Mary, we can do anything.* », she used to say.

From the age of 5, she went to the boarding school of the Ursulines Sisters in Monistrol. Her fondest childhood memory was that of her First Holy Communion at the age of 11, followed by her Confirmation. From that day on, she felt that she had a wonderful Friend, Jesus, who filled her heart. She used to say: « *So long as Jesus is pleased.* »

She spent the holidays with her family in their beautiful house in Yssingaux. She taught her brothers and sisters to pray. « *Love Mary, love Her always more and more.* », she used to say. As a teenager, she joined 'The Children of Mary'. There she learnt to resemble the Virgin Mary by praying to Her and seeking to imitate Her qualities. She quickly became a role model because she was filled with intense joy. Her good mood was contagious and helped her friends to grow in their faith. In Yssingaux, the small town where she lived, Eugénie used to go in search of little children. She taught them prayers and catechism. She used to say: « *The little ones are those who need love the most.* » Jesus called her, and she wanted to dedicate herself to Him forever in religious life. Her family was divided. Her father and mother were separated, and her father strongly opposed her vocation because he had marriage proposals for her. But she meant it and became a nun at the age of 20 with the Sisters of the Holy Family of the Sacred Heart. There, day after day she realised that you can give great pleasure to Jesus and become a saint in putting a lot of love into little things. She used to say: « *Nothing is small in what Loves demands.* »



After professing her vows, she was sent to Aubervilliers, near Paris. There, along with other sisters, she was put in charge of teaching catechism to children. She immediately stood out for her real gift for attracting, captivating and transmitting the faith to those poor children. Sister Eugénie preferred the most unfortunate, unluckiest, and destitute children. She used to welcome them like a mother, with great patience and overflowing kindness. A hundred times, without getting tired, she repeated the same argument with gentleness and joy. The children's hearts opened up to faith, to an encounter with Jesus. « *He who has Jesus has everything.* », she used to say.

Sister Eugénie fell ill in 1902. She was 26 years old. The doctor found that her lungs were seriously affected by tuberculosis. She was sent to Liège in Belgium because the climate was better adapted to her health. She understood that the time for fighting was over, that her vocation was not only apostolic then but contemplative above all. She experienced a profound union with Jesus. She surrendered herself totally to the perfect love and will of Jesus. « *Only the pure heart is truly small.* », she used to say.

In 1903, Sister Eugénie's health seemed to be improving. The nuns made a vow: a pilgrimage to Rome and Loreto to obtain Sister Eugénie's healing. It seemed the right time to make that pilgrimage. Sister Eugénie was amazed to discover the Holy House in Loreto. She spent joyful days in Italy, discovering Rome, the Vatican and the Pope.



In 1904, she returned to Liège. She became increasingly fragile, almost transparent. Her cough was insistent and she could barely speak. She passed away at just 28 years old, invoking the name of Jesus.

« *One day I will go to Africa.* », Sister Eugénie said with a determined tone that she rarely used. Her community did not agree. But Sister Eugénie was determined to go ahead with her idea. Ten years after her death, her community learned that a young girl from Dahomey (now Benin), Marie Okoko, who was also seriously ill with lung disease, was completely healed after a novena to Sister Eugénie Joubert.

Sister Eugénie Joubert was beatified in 1994 by Pope John Paul II and her feast is celebrated on 2 July.