

October 13

Madeleine Delbr l (1904-1964) witness

Madeleine Delbr l, a witness to the Gospel, died unexpectedly in 1964, in the years of her full human and Christian maturity.

Born in 1904 in Mussidan, Dordogne, Madeleine was influenced in her childhood by the liberal thinkers with whom her father associated. As a young adult, she joined the chorus of those who were proclaiming the death of God.

The very discovery that she could live without God led her to seek out the company of other people, and this search eventually took her back to the Other, God himself, first in prayer and then in a vital, daily relationship with the Gospel.

After her minimal and yet radical conversion, Madeleine studied social work, and in 1933 she settled in Ivry, in the secularized, communist suburbs of Paris. There she spent the second half of her life as a simple Christian. She shared her plain dwelling with a small community of women, making it a house open to all.

Madeleine's daily life was the most important aspect of her witness to the Gospel in the company of others. She understood that behind atheism lurk many mistakes made by Christians, who are often quick to announce a God who takes sides rather than a Truth that can never exclude other people, since it coincides, when all is said and done, with love.

Until the end of her short life, Madeleine kept listening both to God's reasons and to the reasons of those around her, and to all those who met her she was a source of radiant joy and peace.

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:

Edward the Confessor (d. 1066), king of England

WESTERN CATHOLICS:

Marguerite Mary Alacoque (d. 1690), virgin (Ambrosian calendar)

Faustus, Gennaro and Martialis of Cordova (3rd-4th cent.), martyrs (Spanish-Mozarabic calendar)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (3 b bah/teqemt):

Simon II (d. ca. 830), 51th patriarch of Alexandria (Coptic Orthodox Church)

Gregory the Enlightener (d. ca. 328), patriarch of Armenia (Ethiopian Church and Coptic Catholic Church)

LUTHERANS:

Theodor Beza (d. 1605), theologian at Geneva

MARONITES:

Carpus and Papyrus of Pergamus (d. 251), martyrs

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:

Carpus and Papyrus of Pergamus, martyrs

Michael (d. 992), first metropolitan of Kiev (Russian Church)