



# Boston Catholic Journal

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## Venerable Margaret Sinclair Sister Mary Francis of the Five Wounds

Margaret Sinclair  
Sister Mary Francis of the Five Wounds  
(1900 - 1925)

### Margaret Sinclair, another Mary



### ... and a Diamond in the Dump

"It is through the Holy Spirit  
that this child has been conceived in her."

Saint Matthew 1.20

In a similar way, we may say this of the mother of Margaret Sinclair, *Sister Mary Francis of the Five Wounds* ... in fact, in the very same way in which it may be said of all our mothers. Though the Holy Spirit we had been conceived – in the mind of God and, in our case, through our earthly

father's cooperation (wittingly, willingly, or not) with God – in our our own mother's wombs, for the Holy Spirit is "the Giver of Life."

And always for a purpose, to an end, that redounds not only to God's glory, but our own happiness , and the happiness of the lives of others whom we touch, whom God would have us touch – wittingly, willingly, or not. God knows what He is about.

We see this so clearly in the life of Margaret Sinclair – she was one of us. Lowly. Unimportant in the eyes of the world. Another child of another poor family. When Margaret walked down the street, a halo did not shine over her. People passed her by, as they do you and me, perhaps remarking on her beauty, but nothing more. And yet, like Mary, unknown to the world she bore within her, Christ ... and like Mary, brought Him to the world.

I would like to share with you a picture of Divine Love that has dwelt in my understanding, within my memory for many years now, a picture, an icon, of the love of God that has taught me so much, spoken to my soul so deeply of His great love and limitless mercy.

It is a picture of God sitting upon the trash heaps of a city dump, the city slums of this world, panning for diamonds! God sits upon a great mound of decaying matter and twisted junk, a great sieve in his hands, and he is panning for diamonds, panning, among all the refuse, for He knows that there are hidden diamonds there!

He is looking for his lost children, which are to him as diamonds, of infinite worth. ... children whose beauty He can yet see.

What is a rubbish dump really? It is a random heap of discarded people, discarded refuse, that from which all seeming usefulness has been extracted, that which bears the stench of life, that which is thrown away, unwanted ... All kinds of human excreta and offal, superfluous junk, all intermingle to present a utter squalor ... AND YET!

To the eye of an artist, something could always be found which could be used to create something beautiful! A twisted piece of iron, a bent tin, fragments of glass; all could be recreated by the artist to become, to make, something new!

And so it with our God. He sits on the city dumps, He sees the hidden beauty within it all, He sees His children that can be cleansed and recreated in His image; He knows, He sees, that they can be transformed into new and unspeakably beautiful creations. That is love! That is Divine Love that never lets go, never gives up, always hoping, longing, seeking for the better, the beautiful.

Think of the slums and city dumps of this world, the utter poverty they embrace; places where children scavenge for food, or seek for something, anything, that would bring them a few pennies! Staggering over a stinking mass, they hope, they trust, that they will find something! ... If a human child can have such expectations amongst such chaos, what of God looking upon the slums of this world?

In such areas, drug addiction, gang bullying, violence, prostitution, pornography, all manner of sin and deprivation are present, and yet this is the great love of our God, that it is these very places that He visits, that He touches, that He seeks out the lost, those who need healing, those who need His salvation.

Margaret Ann Sinclair was a diamond on such a dump. Raised up in the slums of Edinburgh, Margaret would Have been well acquainted with poor, frail, sinful, human nature. By a gift of grace her life was preserved in purity and integrity. God called her out of the slums, called her to be His bride, to be a Consecrated Nun, a Poor Clare Sister – Margaret was a diamond ... and God found her.

Not all are so fortunate as Margaret. Many fall under the sinful hands and influence of others, so-called friends and families may give up on them, but God never does ... Never! When they have served their usefulness and are cast out, tossed aside, bled and broken, God keeps a record of all their tears and wanderings. Not one ... not one escapes Him. He keeps every one.

Many lay groups, many apostolic sisters give of themselves heroically to others that are living in such conditions. They are truly angels, and many, many cloistered nuns pray for the lost that they may be found.

They are not forgotten. Not by God. Not by us. And, please God, not by you.

Margaret Sinclair has a wonderful witness to give for our times. She is an embodiment of the mercy and love of God, a sign that wherever we are, God wants us, loves us and will seek us out.

Reflect deep within you upon this picture, this image, of God panning for diamonds ...

Mary – our Mother, their Mother, your Mother – also ceaselessly walks the streets of this world, the highways and byways, the alleys, the dumps and the slums ... seeking her children, seeking whom she loves for Christ her Son ... join her, unite your heart to her Immaculate Heart and pray for all the "hidden diamonds". Never loose hope, never give up on another human being – no matter how lost they may appear.

God never does.

If you have a son or daughter caught up in vice and sin, never give up! Pray and hope, for God loves them so much! Many fall from human esteem, but none can ever fall beyond Gods love and mercy ... except that they choose to.

Give thanks to the Lord for all the beautiful diamonds He finds daily ... so many beautiful souls, made clean by His precious blood, by his great love. And whom He makes clean, shines as stars in the firmament, or as inextinguishable lights in the darkness that covers the wastelands of this world.

*A Poor Clare Colettine Nun*

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