

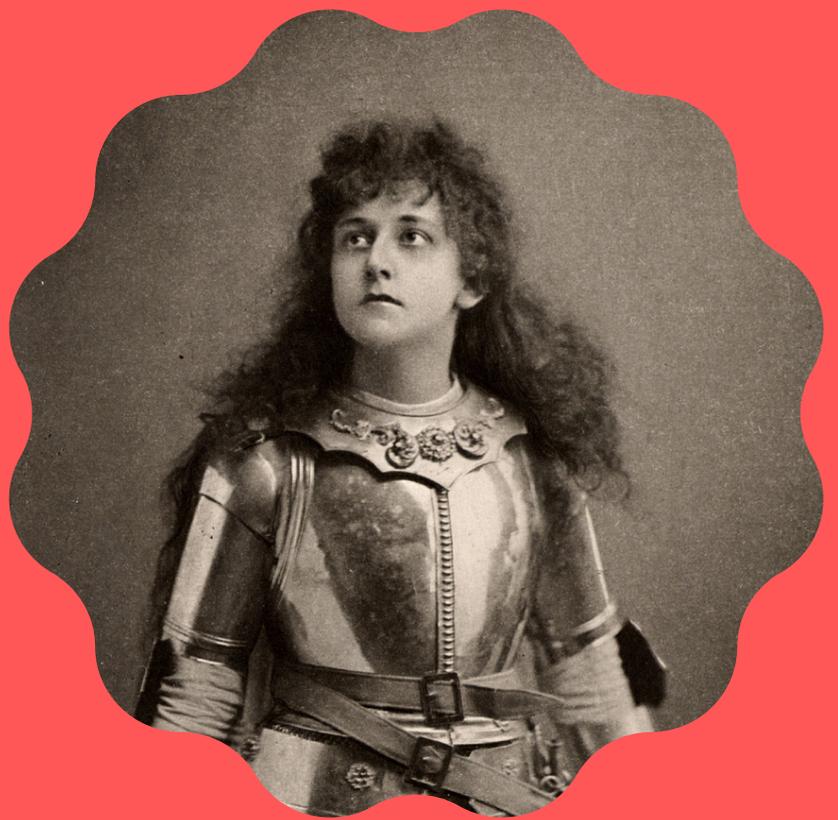
Joan of Arc

Born: 1412

Died: 1431

Feast Day:

30 May



**DERRY DIOCESAN
CATECHETICAL
CENTRE**

Joan was born to a peasant family at Domrémy in northeast France. She was the daughter of a tenant farmer, Jacques d'Arc. She was not taught to read or write, but her pious mother, Isabelle Romée, instilled in her a deep love for the Catholic Church and its teachings. Joan believed that God had chosen her to lead France to victory in its long-running war with England. England occupied much of northern France, and many in Joan's village were forced to abandon their homes under threat of invasion.

In 1428, she travelled to Vaucouleurs and requested to be taken to Charles VII of France, later testifying that she had received visions from the archangel Michael, Saint Margaret, and Saint Catherine instructing her to support Charles and recover France from English domination.

Her request to meet the king was rejected twice, but she eventually met Charles at Chinon. After their interview, Charles sent Joan, who was about 17 years old, to the siege of Orléans as part of a relief army. She arrived at the city on 29 April 1429, and quickly gained prominence for her role in the fighting. A momentous victory over the English and their French allies, the Burgundians was achieved. The siege was lifted nine days after her arrival.

After seeing the prince crowned King Charles VII, Joan was captured by Anglo-Burgundian forces, tried for witchcraft and heresy and burned at the stake in 1431, at the age of 19.

By the time she was officially canonized in 1920, the Maid of Orléans (as she was known) had long been considered one of history's greatest saints, and an enduring symbol of French unity and nationalism.

She is patroness of France; martyrs; captives; military personnel; people ridiculed for their piety; prisoners; soldiers, women who have served in the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service); and Women's Army Corps