

# Saint Jane Frances de Chantal



Date of birth: January 28, 1572  
Birthplace: Dijon, France  
Date of death: December 13, 1641  
Canonization: July 16, 1767  
Feast Day: August 12

**Patron Saint of: Forgotten people, mothers, widows, and wives**

## About St. Jane Frances:

Born of French nobility, Jane's mother passed away when she was only 18 months old. At 21 years old, Jane married Baron de Chantal, a nobleman. Together, they had 6 children with 4 surviving infancy. At age 28, Baron was killed in a hunting accident, leaving Jane a widow and mother of 4. She took a vow of chastity and, with her children, moved into her father-in-law's house where the family stayed for 7 years, enduring the ill temper of the housekeeper.

In 1604, Jane traveled to Dijon to see her father and met St. Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva. They quickly befriended and Francis de Sales became Jane's spiritual director. He advised that she defer her decision to become a nun until the financial and educational futures of her children were secured. In 1610, after experiencing many tragedies in her personal life, Jane Frances de Chantal, along with the help of Francis de Sales, established the order of the Congregation of the Visitation, a group of nuns who would accept applicants other orders would not, including the ill and the elderly.

St. Jane's life was marked by her sanctity; the virtues of humility, reason, gentleness, and charity were abounding within her actions. Jane is an encouraging example of the feminine genius of motherhood, both spiritually and biologically. Though inclined to perfectionism, Jane, while under the spiritual direction of St. Francis de Sales, was challenged to practice patience with herself, her children, and her employees. She practiced gentleness, a disposition not natural to her, and freed herself of her inflexibility and her inclination toward control. St. Jane Frances de Chantal is an example to all of us of the mortification of the flesh and the unification of one's will with God's will.

St. Jane de Chantal was canonized in 1767 by Pope Clement XIII.

## A word from Jane:

"Suffering borne in the will quietly and patiently is a continual, very powerful prayer before God."

## Find out more:

**Websites:** [oblates.org/st-jane-de-chantal](http://oblates.org/st-jane-de-chantal)  
**Books:** *Francis de Sales, Jane de Chantal: Letters of Spiritual Direction*; *Madame de Chantal* by Elisabeth Stopp