



# **Katharine Drexel: The Riches-to-Rags Life Story of an American Catholic Saint**

*Cheryl C. D. Hughes*

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On October 1, 2000, Pope John Paul II proclaimed Katharine Drexel (1858–1955) to be a saint of the Roman Catholic Church. Only the second American-born Catholic saint in history, Drexel founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in 1891 and established more than sixty Blessed Sacrament missions and schools.

In this biography Cheryl Hughes chronicles the remarkable life of St. Katharine Drexel, exploring what drove her to turn away from her family's wealth and become a missionary nun who served some of the most underprivileged and marginalized people of her time. Through her inspiration and effort "Mother" Katharine improved the lives of untold numbers of Native Americans and African Americans, overcoming open hostility to her work from various quarters, including the Ku Klux Klan. Her saintly legacy lives on today.

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