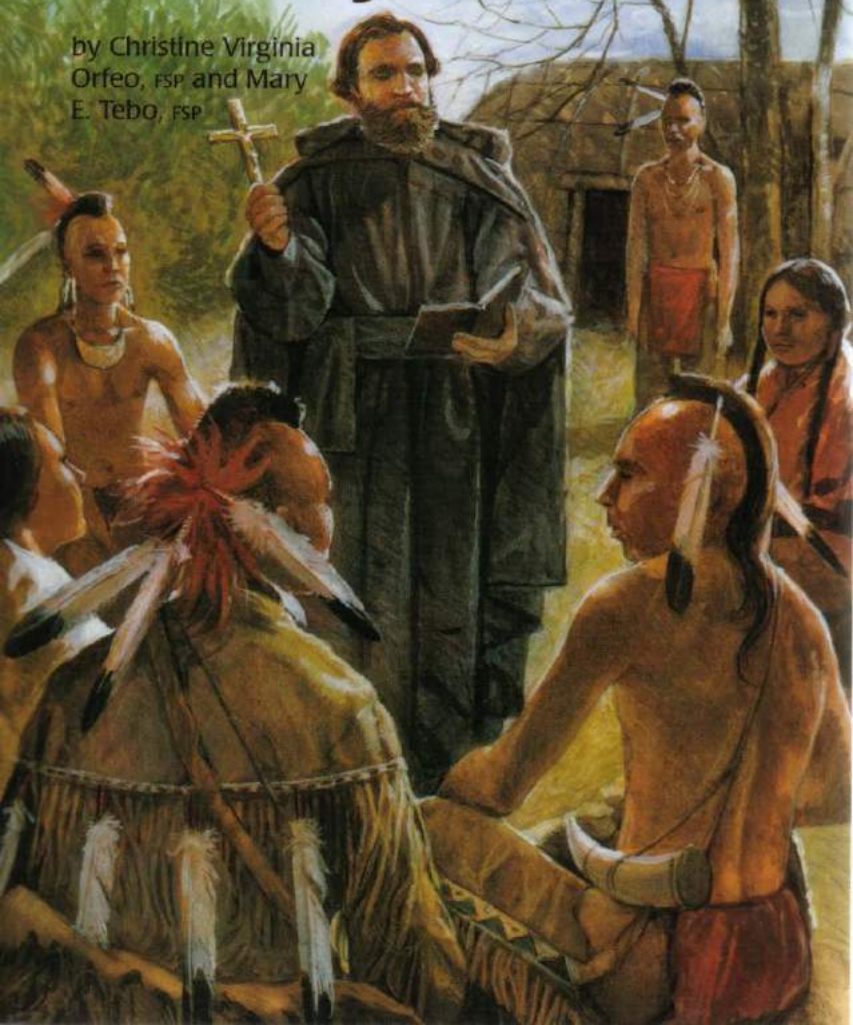


# Saint Isaac Jogues

*With Burning Heart*

by Christine Virginia  
Orfeo, FSP and Mary  
E. Tebo, FSP





# Saint Isaac Jogues

*With Burning Heart*

Written by  
Christine Virginia Orfeo, FSP

and

Mary Elizabeth Tebo, FSP

Illustrated by  
Barbara Kiwak

  
**Pauline**  
BOOKS & MEDIA  
Boston



## A MIND OF HIS OWN

While the city of Orléans, France, slept soundly under a fresh blanket of snow, most of the Jogues family was wide awake. Long before dawn on that morning of January 10, 1607, lamps burned brightly and there was much commotion in the house. A third son had just been born to the wealthy merchant Laurent Jogues and his wife Françoise. They named the child Isaac.

Right from the start, his mother felt a special love for her little Isaac. He was a happy and quiet baby. *In some mysterious way, it seems that Isaac is more a part of me than my older boys, François and Jacques,* Madame Jogues told herself. As she watched him grow year by year, a thought kept coming back to her: *I believe Isaac will be a priest.*

One day, when Isaac was almost eleven, his father called for him. "Up until now you've studied with a tutor, Isaac," Monsieur Jogues began. "But the Fathers of the Society of Jesus have opened a school here in Orléans. These Jesuits, as they're called,

staff some of the finest schools in all of France. I'm going to enroll you in their college, Isaac," his father finished with a smile. (In those days, schools did not follow the same age divisions that they do today.)

At first Isaac was a little worried. He had heard about the long list of rules at this new school: no telling lies, no writing on the desks or walls, no bragging or acting better than others, no talking during times of silence. The students were also required to attend Mass and go to confession on certain days. It seemed strict. But if his parents wanted to enroll him, Isaac would try his best.

Through the years Isaac became a good student and a gracious young man. He was tall for his age and his long legs helped him run faster than any of his classmates. On the other hand, Isaac's light skin and refined features made him look much younger than he really was—something he didn't like at all!

The Jogues family was one of the most respected in the city of Orléans. "Isaac has a promising future ahead of him," friends and relatives were always telling his father. "Maybe he'll turn out to be a merchant or a lawyer." Laurent Jogues would proudly nod his head in agreement.

But Isaac had plans of his own. He enjoyed spending time with the Jesuit priests at his school. He was attracted by their good example and their dedication to God and those in need. As far back as he could remember, Isaac had always loved to receive the sacraments and to slip into church for some quiet prayer. By the time the seventeen-year-old had finished college, his mind was made up: *I'm going to be a priest.*

Some family members and friends were shocked at his decision, but not his mother. (Isaac's father had died a few years earlier.) Madame Jogues was happy. For years she had secretly prayed for Isaac's vocation. The surprise was not that Isaac wanted to be a priest, but that he wanted to be a *Jesuit* priest.

"Why don't you become a diocesan priest here in Orléans, Isaac, near your family?" his mother urged. "If you become a Jesuit, you could be sent anywhere. Your life might even be in danger. Please, Isaac, think about this..." Madame Jogues pleaded, cupping his face in her hands. "We might never see one another again...."

"I have thought about it, Mother, and for a long time," Isaac answered quietly. "I'm

certain that God wants me to be a Jesuit and a missionary. I only want what God wants. You understand, don't you?"

“Yes,” she whispered.



## A NEW HOME

The impatient stagecoach driver paced back and forth while Isaac said his final goodbyes to the family. Isaac gave his mother's tearstained cheek one last kiss, then turned and jumped into the carriage. He waved farewell until the last familiar figure was out of sight. It was October of 1624. Isaac, not yet eighteen years old, was on his way to the Jesuit novitiate in Rouen.

After a few days of travel, the stagecoach pulled to a sharp stop in front of the Jesuit College of Rouen. Isaac hopped out. The driver swung the luggage down from the top of the coach and then rumbled on. For a moment Isaac just stood there. He gazed up at the sprawling building surrounded by high walls. How different it was from his home! The teenager fought back an unexpected feeling of panic.

Summoning his courage, Isaac picked up his bags and approached the front entrance. He knocked. In what seemed like just a few

seconds, the heavy door creaked open. A porter led Isaac into a dim, simply furnished parlor. He left him waiting there.

Some minutes later, Isaac heard footsteps approaching. A friendly, young-looking priest entered the room. "Isaac!" he greeted him warmly. "Welcome to Rouen and to the Society of Jesus! I'm Father Louis Lalemant, the master of novices."

"Thank you, Father. I'm happy and grateful to be here," Isaac responded with a smile.

From his first days in the novitiate, Isaac felt right at home. He adapted quickly and was peaceful in his new Jesuit life of prayer, work, and study. Deep in his heart, his desire to be a missionary continued to grow. It was like a fire that couldn't be extinguished. Soon it dominated all his thoughts and prayers.

"Father Louis, please let me volunteer to go to a mission country!" Isaac begged.

"You must accept as God's will whatever work you will be given," the wise novice master replied. Father Louis knew just how Isaac felt. Years earlier he too had petitioned his superiors to send him to the missions. But his dream had never been fulfilled. His talents had been put to use in other ways.

France had begun to establish colonies in New France, the area we call Canada today, around the year 1603. As colonies were set up, French missionary priests traveled to New France to minister to the Catholic colonists and preach the Gospel to the native people.

In 1625, Jesuit Fathers Charles Lalemant, John de Brébeuf, and Ennemond Massé passed through the Rouen novitiate on their way to the city of Dieppe. From there they would set sail for New France.

Meeting these missionaries stirred up Isaac's enthusiasm once again. "Father, please accept me for the missions," he pleaded with his novice master.

"Where do you feel called to work, Isaac?"

"Constantinople! That's where I should go—to work among the people of the East."

Father Louis was thoughtful for a moment. "Brother Isaac," he said quietly, "New France is where you will die."



Isaac pronounced his religious vows as a Jesuit on October 24, 1626, placing his whole life in God's hands with great joy. A

few days later, he was sent to study at the College of La Fléche. During the three years he spent there, he never gave up asking his superiors to send him to the missions. But at La Fléche Isaac began thinking more and more about New France. Many of his fellow Jesuit students dreamed of being sent there as missionaries. They traded stories about the heroic Jesuits already working there.

Once he finished his studies at the College of La Fléche, Isaac, who was almost twenty-three by then, received a new assignment. For four years he taught grammar to young boys at the Jesuit College of Rouen. Next he was called to the College of Clermont in Paris. This was exciting! At Clermont he would finally begin his theological studies for the priesthood.

Brother Isaac had always found schoolwork easy enough. But the theology courses needed for ordination turned out to be a real challenge. Isaac's desire to become a priest gave him the courage to go on. It didn't bother him that he wasn't at the head of his class. All he wanted was to be able to instruct others in the Catholic faith and lead them to God. All he wanted was to become a good and holy servant of God.