



Reading Sophie's Story In a Time of Terror

Sophie's Story by Mary Shanahan RSCJ and Kylie Swanson provides a brief introduction to the life of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, and how she speaks to us today. It can be read online here http://issuu.com/rscjanz/docs/sophie_s_story_digital_version or downloaded from the home page of the Province website www.rscj-anz.org. Insightful and easy to read, it is often used in the induction of people joining the ministries of the Society of the Sacred Heart Australia New Zealand Province.

These questions are offered for the reflection of those reading, or re-reading, *Sophie's Story* in the wake of terror attacks. It may be most fruitful to focus on one or two of these questions that speak to you, or your group.

- In what ways are our times and the France of Sophie's day similar?
- What did you notice that you might not have noticed if you had read this story at another time? Did the current context of terror attacks shape your awareness in any way?
- The Sacred Heart was used as a symbol by some involved in the violent political struggles of Sophie's day. What might we learn from the use of religious language and symbols in violent struggles then and now?
- Sophie responded to her context with a desire to make known the love of the Heart of God. How are we called to make the love of the Heart of God known in our world today?
- What do we make of Louis Barat and Joseph Varin's interventions in Sophie's discernment of her vocation and mission?
- Many times Sophie was betrayed by friends. How do we deal with friendship and betrayal?
- What might the quality of courage look like in our context, and in the exercise of our responsibilities?
- Some readily recognized Sophie's leadership potential while others didn't. How might we recognize the qualities of leadership called for by our times?
- Can we imagine how Sophie might go about the tasks assigned to us now?