Isabella I of Castile

Born in 1451, Isabella I was the Queen of Castile and Leon. She married her second cousin, Ferdinand II of Aragon, who was heir to the throne. Their marriage soon changed the course of history. The two brought stability to the two kingdoms that would later be unified into Spain, laying out the basis for the political unification, which was accomplished by their grandson, Carol the Quint.

Pope Alexander VI named both Isabella and her husband Catholic Monarchs. Their daughter, Catherine of Aragon, would become the wife of Henry VIII of England, giving birth to Mary Tudor, who later became Queen Mary I.

Isabella I financed Christopher Columbus in his journey to discover the New World in 1492. She was a patron of the arts, but at the same time, the couple is responsible for the Inquisition in Spain, which led to thousands of deaths.