



---

### DEVOTIONS TO THE SACRED HEART

---

*"Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart: And you shall find rest to your souls." -- Matthew 11:29*

*"We the Christians are the true Israel which springs from Christ, for we are carved out of His heart as from a rock." -- St. Justin Martyr (d. 165)*

*"There is in the Sacred Heart the symbol and express image of the infinite love of Jesus Christ which moves us to love in return." -- Pope Leo XIII (d. 1903)*

### THE PROMISES OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS TO ST. MARGARET MARY

Many are the promises that the Sacred Heart of Jesus has made to His Servant St. Margaret Mary, in favor of His devoted ones, as is evident from her writings. The principal ones are as follows:

1. I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life.
2. I will give peace in their families.
3. I will console them in all their troubles.
4. I will be their refuge in life and especially in death.
5. I will abundantly bless all their undertakings.
6. Sinners shall find in my Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
7. Tepid souls shall become fervent.
8. Fervent souls shall rise speedily to great perfection.
9. I will bless those places wherein the image of my Sacred Heart shall be exposed and venerated.
10. I will give to priests the power to touch the most hardened hearts.
11. Persons who propagate this devotion shall have their names eternally written in my Heart.
12. **The Nine First Fridays:** I promise you, in the excess of the mercy of my heart, that my all powerful love will grant to all those who will receive Communion on the First Fridays, for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance: they will not die in my displeasure, nor without receiving the sacraments; and my Heart will be their secure refuge in that last hour.

## ENTHRONEMENT OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Father Mateo Crawley-Boevey, a South American priest of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, was inspired by God, after his instantaneous cure at Paray-le-Monial, to preach everywhere the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart to verify this promise of the Saviour given to St. Margaret Mary: "I will bless every dwelling where an image of My Heart is both exposed and honoured."

Enthronement of the Sacred Heart is a solemn act of a family giving formal recognition of the kingship of Christ over their family and home and the official, ceremonial beginning of a family's commitment to live out the effects of their recognition of Christ's Kingship. During the Enthronement ceremony, a blessed image of the Sacred Heart is hung in the most prominent place in the house and Sacred Scripture is placed before it. Formal prayers are prayed and then each member of the household signs a certificate of the Covenant.

*For the ceremony of the Enthronement, see the booklet **Enthronement of the Family to the Sacred Heart**.*

## PERIODIC RENEWAL OF THE ENTHRONEMENT

*Periodically, the family might want to renew the Consecration, especially on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, at the Feast of Christ the King (the last Sunday in October), at births, deaths, major life events, such as First Communions, Confirmations, a child leaving for College,*

*etc. The following prayers are for this purpose:*

Most sweet Jesus, humbly kneeling at Thy feet, we renew the consecration of our family to Thy Divine Heart. Be Thou our King forever! In Thee we have full and entire confidence. May Thy spirit penetrate our thoughts, our desires, our words and our works. Bless our undertakings, share in our joys, in our trials and in our labours. Grant us to know Thee better, to love Thee more, to serve Thee without faltering.

By the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Queen of Peace, set up Thy kingdom in our country. Enter closely into the midst of our families and make them Thine own through the solemn enthronement of Thy Sacred Heart, so that soon one cry may resound from home to home: "May the triumphant Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved, blessed and glorified forever!" Honour and glory to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary!

## LITANY OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

**Lord, have mercy.** Lord, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.** Lord, have mercy.

**Christ, hear us.** Christ, hear us.

**Christ, graciously hear us.**

Christ, graciously hear us.

**God, the Father of Heaven,**  
have mercy on us.

**God, the Son, Redeemer of the World,**  
have mercy on us.

**God, the Holy Ghost,**  
have mercy on us.

**Holy Trinity, one God,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, Son of the Eternal  
Father,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, formed in the womb of  
the Virgin Mother by the Holy Ghost,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, united substantially  
with the word of God,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, of infinite majesty,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, holy temple of God,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most  
High,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate  
of heaven,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, glowing furnace of  
charity,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, vessel of justice and  
love,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and  
love,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, abyss of all virtues,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, most worthy of all  
praise,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, king and center of all  
hearts,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, in whom are all the  
treasures of wisdom and knowledge,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, in whom dwelleth all  
the fullness of the Divinity,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, in whom the Father is  
well pleased,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, of whose fullness we  
have all received,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, desire of the  
everlasting hills,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, patient and rich in  
mercy,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, rich to all who invoke  
Thee,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, fount of life and  
holiness,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, propitiation for our  
sins,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, saturated with  
reproaches,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, crushed for our  
iniquities,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, made obedient unto  
death,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, source of all  
consolation,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, our life and  
resurrection,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, our peace and  
reconciliation,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, victim for our sins,**  
have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who  
hope in Thee,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, hope of those who die  
in Thee,** have mercy on us.

**Heart of Jesus, delight of all saints,**  
have mercy on us.

**Lamb of God, who takest away the  
sins of the world,** spare us, O Lord.

**Lamb of God, who takest away the  
sins of the world,**  
graciously hear us, O Lord.

**Lamb of God who takest away the  
sins of the world,** have mercy on us.

**Jesus, meek and humble of Heart.**  
Make our hearts like unto Thine.

**Let us pray.** Almighty and everlasting God, look upon the Heart of Thy well-beloved Son and upon the acts of praise and satisfaction which He renders unto Thee in the name of sinners; and do Thou, in Thy great goodness, grant pardon to them who seek Thy mercy, in the name of the same Thy Son, Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, world without end. Amen.

### **ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART - ST. MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE**

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, to Thee I consecrate and offer up my person and my life, my actions, trials, and sufferings, that my entire being may henceforth only be employed in loving, honoring and glorifying Thee. This is my irrevocable will, to belong entirely to Thee, and to do all for Thy love, renouncing with my whole heart all that can displease Thee.

I take Thee, O Sacred Heart, for the sole object of my love, the protection of my life, the pledge of my salvation, the remedy of my frailty and inconstancy, the reparation for all the defects of my

life, and my secure refuge at the hour of my death. Be Thou, O Most Merciful Heart, my justification before God Thy Father, and screen me from His anger which I have so justly merited. I fear all from my own weakness and malice, but placing my entire confidence in Thee, O Heart of Love, I hope all from Thine infinite Goodness. Annihilate in me all that can displease or resist Thee. Imprint Thy pure love so deeply in my heart that I may never forget Thee or be separated from Thee.

I beseech Thee, through Thine infinite Goodness, grant that my name be engraved upon Thy Heart, for in this I place all my happiness and all my glory, to live and to die as one of Thy devoted servants. Amen.

### **FEAST OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS**

The Friday that follows the Second Sunday after Pentecost is the Feast of the Sacred Heart which brings to mind all the attributes of His Divine Heart mentioned above. Many Catholics prepare for this Feast by beginning a Novena to the Sacred Heart on the Feast of Corpus Christi, which is the Thursday of the week before. On the Feast of the Sacred Heart itself, we can gain a plenary indulgence by making an Act of Reparation to the Sacred Heart.

**ACT OF REPARATION TO THE  
SACRED HEART OF JESUS ON  
THE FEAST OF THE MOST  
SACRED HEART**

O sweet Jesus, whose overflowing charity for men is requited by so much forgetfulness, negligence and contempt, behold us prostrate before Thy altar eager to repair by a special act of homage the cruel indifference and injuries, to which Thy loving Heart is everywhere subject.

Mindful alas! that we ourselves have had a share in such great indignities, which we now deplore from the depths of our hearts, we humbly ask Thy pardon and declare our readiness to atone by voluntary expiation not only for our own personal offences, but also for the sins of those, who straying far from the path of salvation, refuse in their obstinate infidelity to follow Thee, their Shepherd and Leader, or, renouncing the vows of their baptism, have cast off the sweet yoke of Thy law.

We are now resolved to expiate each and every deplorable outrage committed against Thee; we are determined to make amends for the manifold offences against Christian modesty in unbecoming dress and behavior, for all the foul seductions laid to ensnare the feet of the innocent, for the frequent violation of Sundays and holidays, and the shocking blasphemies uttered against Thee and Thy Saints. We wish also to make amends for the insults to which Thy Vicar on earth and Thy priests are subjected, for the profanation, by conscious neglect or terrible acts of sacrilege, of the very Sacrament of Thy

divine love; and lastly for the public crimes of nations who resist the rights and the teaching authority of the Church which Thou hast founded.

Would, O divine Jesus, we were able to wash away such abominations with our blood. We now offer, in reparation for these violations of Thy divine honour, the satisfaction Thou didst once make to Thy eternal Father on the cross and which Thou dost continue to renew daily on our altars; we offer it in union with the acts of atonement of Thy Virgin Mother and all the Saints and of the pious faithful on earth; and we sincerely promise to make reparation, as far as we can with the help of Thy grace, for all neglect of Thy great love and for the sins we and others have committed in the past. Henceforth we will live a life of unwavering faith, of purity of conduct, of perfect observance of the precepts of the gospel and especially that of charity. We promise to the best of our power to prevent others from offending Thee and to bring as many as possible to follow Thee.

O loving Jesus, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary our model in reparation, deign to receive the voluntary offering we make of this act of expiation; and by the crowning gift of perseverance keep us faithful unto death in our duty and the allegiance we owe to Thee, so that we may all one day come to that happy home, where Thou with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest God, world without end. Amen.

**LESSONS TAKEN FROM THE  
NOCTURNS OF THE DIVINE  
OFFICE FOR THE FEAST OF THE  
MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS**

**I. Jeremiah the Prophet - Chap. 24, 5-7.**

Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so will I regard the captives of Juda, whom I have sent forth out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans, for their good. And I will set my eyes upon them to be pacified, and I will bring them again into this land: and I will build them up, and not pull them down: and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: because they shall return to me with their whole heart.

**II. Chap. 30, 18-24.** Thus saith the Lord: Behold I will bring back the captivity of the pavilions of Jacob, and will have pity on his houses, and the city shall be built in her high place, and the temple shall be founded according to the order thereof. And out of them shall come forth praise, and the voice of them that play: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be made few: and I will glorify them, and they shall not be lessened. And their children shall be as from the beginning, and their assembly shall be permanent before me: and I will visit against all that afflict them. And their leader shall be of themselves: and their prince shall come forth from the midst of them: and I will bring him near, and he shall come to me: for who is this that setteth his heart to approach to me, saith the Lord? And you shall be my people: and I will be your God. Behold the whirlwind of the Lord, his

fury going forth, a violent storm, it shall rest upon the head of the wicked. The Lord will not turn away the wrath of his indignation, till he have executed and performed the thought of his heart: in the latter days you shall understand these things.

**III. Chap. 31, 1-3; 31-33.** At that time, saith the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith the Lord: The people that were left and escaped from the sword, found grace in the desert: Israel shall go to his rest. The Lord hath appeared from afar to me. Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity on thee. Behold the days shall come, saith the Lord, and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Juda: Not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, the covenant which they made void, and I had dominion over them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord: I will give my law in their bowels, and I will write it in their heart: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

**IV.** Among the wonderful developments of sacred teaching and piety, by which the plans of the divine Wisdom are daily made clear to the Church, hardly any is more manifest than the triumphant progress made by the devotion of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Very often indeed, during the course of past ages, Fathers, Doctors, and Saints have celebrated our

Redeemer's love: and they have said, that the wound opened in the side of Christ was the hidden fountain of all graces. Moreover, from the Middle Ages onward, when the faithful began to show a more tender piety towards the most sacred Humanity of the Saviour, contemplative souls became accustomed to penetrate through that wound almost to the very Heart itself, wounded for the love of men. And from that time, this form of contemplation became so familiar to all persons of saintly life, that there was no country or religious order in which, during this period, witnesses to it were not to be found. Finally, during recent centuries, and most especially at that period when heretics, in the name of a false piety, strove to discourage Christians from receiving the most Holy Eucharist, the veneration of the most Sacred Heart began to be openly practised, principally through the exertions of St. John Eudes, who is by no means unworthily called the founder of the liturgical worship of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

V. But in order to establish fully and entirely the worship of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to spread the same throughout the whole world, God himself chose as His instrument a most humble virgin from the order of the Visitation, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, who even in her earliest years already had a burning love for the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and to whom Christ the Lord had very many times appeared, and was pleased to make known the riches and the desires of His divine Heart. The most famous of these apparitions was that in which

Jesus revealed himself to her in prayer before the blessed Sacrament, showed her His most Sacred Heart, and, complaining that in return for His unbounded love, He met with nothing but outrages and ingratitude from mankind, He ordered her to concern herself with the establishment of a new feast, on the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, on which His Heart should be venerated with due honour, and that the insults offered Him by sinners in the Sacrament of love should be expiated by worthy satisfaction. But there is no one who knoweth not how many and how great were the obstacles which the handmaid of God experienced, in carrying out the commands of Christ; but, endowed with strength by the Lord himself, and actively aided by her pious spiritual directors, who exerted themselves with an almost unbelievable zeal, up to the time of her death she never ceased faithfully to carry out the duty entrusted to her by heaven.

VI. At length, in the year 1765, the Supreme Pontiff Clement XIII approved the Mass and Office in honour of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus; and Pius IX extended the feast to the universal Church. From then on the worship of the most Sacred Heart, like an overflowing river, washing away all obstacles, hath poured itself forth over all the earth, and, at the dawn of the new century, Leo XIII, having proclaimed a jubilee, decided to dedicate the whole human race to the most Sacred Heart. This consecration was actually carried out with solemn rites in all the churches of the Catholic world, and brought about a great

increase of this devotion, leading not only nations but even private families to it, who in countless numbers dedicated themselves to the Divine Heart, and submitted themselves to its royal sway. Lastly, the Sovereign Pontiff Pius XI, in order that, by its solemnity, the feast might answer more fully to the greatly widespread devotion of the Christian people, raised the feast of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus to the rite of a double of the first class, with an octave ; and moreover, that the violated rights of Christ, the supreme King and most loving Lord, might be repaired, and that the sins of the nations might be bewailed, he ordered that annually, on that same feast-day, there should be recited an expiatory form of prayer in all the churches of the Christian world.

**VII. The Holy Gospel according to John - Chap. 19, 31-37.** Then the Jews (because it was the Parasceve), that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day (for that was a great sabbath day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken: and that they might be taken away. The soldiers therefore came: and they broke the legs of the first, and of the other that was crucified with him. But after they were come to Jesus, when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side: and immediately there came out blood and water. And he that saw it hath given testimony: and his testimony is true. And he knoweth that he saith true: that you also may believe. For these things were done that the scripture might be fulfilled: You shall not break a bone of

him. And again another scripture saith: They shall look on him whom they pierced.

**VIII. A Homily by St. Bonaventure the Bishop - *Liber de ligno vitæ*, num.**

**30.** In order that the Church might be taken out of the side of Christ, in his deep sleep on the Cross, and that the Scripture might be fulfilled which saith : They shall look on him whom they pierced : it was divinely ordained that one of the soldiers should pierce his sacred side with a spear, and open it. Then forthwith there came flowing out blood and water, which was the price of our salvation, pouring forth from its mountain-source, in sooth, from the secret places of his Heart, to give power to the Sacraments of the Church, to bestow the life of grace, and to be as a saving drink of living waters, flowing up to life eternal for those who were already quickened in Christ. Arise, then, O soul beloved of Christ. Cease not thy vigilance, place there thy lips, and drink the waters from the fount of salvation.

**IX. *De vite mystica* Cap. 3.** Because we are now come to the sweet Heart of Jesus, and because it is good for us to be here, let us not too soon turn away therefrom. O how good and joyful a thing it is to dwell in this Heart. What a good treasure, what a precious pearl, is thy Heart, O most excellent Jesus, which we have found hidden in the pit which hath been dug in this field, namely, in thy body. Who would cast away such a pearl? Nay, rather, for this same I would give all my pearls. I will sell all my thoughts and affections, and buy the same for myself, turning all my thoughts to the Heart of the good Jesus,



and without fail it will support me. Therefore, o most sweet Jesus, finding this Heart that is thine and mine, I will pray to thee, my God: admit my prayers into the shrine of hearkening; and draw me even more altogether into thy Heart.

For to this end was thy side pierced, that an entry might be open unto us. To this end was thy Heart wounded, that in it we might be able to dwell secure from alarms from without. And it was wounded none the less on this account that, because of the visible wound, we may perceive the wound of love which is invisible. How could this fire of love better shine forth than for him to permit that not only his body, but that even his Heart, should be wounded with the spear? Who would not love that Heart so wounded? Who would not, in return, love one who is so loving? Who would not embrace one so chaste? Wherefore let us who are in the flesh love in return, as much as we can, him who so loveth, embrace our wounded one, whose hands and feet, side and Heart, have been pierced by wicked husbandmen; and let us pray that He may deign to bind our hearts, still hard and impenitent, with the chain of his love, and wound them with the dart thereof.

**CONSECRATION OF THE HUMAN  
RACE TO THE MOST SACRED  
HEART OF JESUS ON THE FEAST  
OF CHRIST THE KING**

*Last Sunday of October*

Most sweet Jesus, Redeemer of the human race, look down upon us humbly prostrate before Thine altar.

We are Thine, and Thine we wish to be; but, to be more surely united with Thee, behold each one of us freely consecrates himself today to Thy most Sacred Heart.

Many indeed have never known Thee; many too, despising Thy precepts, have rejected Thee. Have mercy on them all, most merciful Jesus, and draw them to Thy sacred Heart. Be Thou King, O Lord, not only of the faithful who have never forsaken Thee, but also of the prodigal children who have abandoned Thee; grant that they may quickly return to Thy Father's house lest they die of wretchedness and hunger.

Be Thou King of those who are deceived by erroneous opinions, or whom discord keeps aloof, and call them back to the harbour of truth and unity of faith, so that there may be but one flock and one Shepherd.

Be Thou King of all those who are still involved in the darkness of idolatry or of Islamism, and refuse not to draw them into the light and kingdom of God. Turn Thine eyes of mercy towards the children of the race, once Thy chosen people: of old they called down upon themselves the Blood of the Saviour; may it now descend upon them a laver of redemption and of life.

Grant, O Lord, to Thy Church assurance of freedom and immunity from harm; give peace and order to all nations, and make the earth resound from pole to pole with one cry: "Praise be to the divine Heart that wrought our salvation; to it be glory and honour for ever." Amen.

## PRAYER TO THE EUCHARISTIC HEART OF JESUS

*The following prayer is particularly appropriate for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. In the former discipline of indulgences, it was added by Pope Leo XII into the Raccolta.*

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, gracious companion of our exile, I adore you.

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus — lonely Heart — humiliated Heart — abandoned Heart — forgotten Heart — despised Heart — outraged Heart — Heart ignored by men — Heart which loves our own hearts — Heart pleading for our love — Heart so patient in waiting for us — Heart so eager to listen to our prayers — Heart so anxious for our requests — Heart, unending source of new graces — Heart so silent, yet desiring to speak to souls — Heart, welcome refuge of the hidden life — Heart, teacher of the secrets of union with God — Heart of him who sleeps but watches always — Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

Jesus Victim, I desire to comfort you; I unite myself to you; I offer myself in union with you. I regard myself as nothing in your presence. I long to forget myself in order to think only of you, to be despised and forgotten for love of you. I have no desire to be understood or loved by anyone but you. I will keep silent in order to listen to you, and I will abandon myself in order to lose myself in you.

Grant that I may thus satisfy your thirst for my salvation, your burning thirst for my holiness, and that once purified I may give you a sincere and pure love.

I am anxious not to tire you further with waiting: take me, I hand myself over to you. I give you all my actions, my mind to be enlightened, my heart to be directed, my will to be stabilized, my wretchedness to be relieved, my soul and body to be nourished by you.

Eucharistic Heart of my Saviour, whose blood is the life of my soul, may I myself cease to live and you alone live in me. Amen.

## A PRAYER FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

O God of goodness and mercy, to Thy fatherly protection we commend our family, our household and all that belongs to us. We commit all to Thy love and keeping; do Thou fill this house with Thy blessings even as Thou didst fill the holy house of Nazareth with Thy presence. Keep far from us, above all things, the taint of sin, and do Thou alone reign in our midst by Thy law, by Thy most holy love and by the exercise of every Christian virtue. Let each one of us obey Thee, love Thee and set himself to imitate in his own life Thine example, that of Mary, Thy Mother and our Mother most loving, and that of Thy blameless guardian, Saint Joseph.

Preserve us and our house from all evils and misfortunes, but grant that we may be ever resigned to Thy Divine will even in the sorrows which it shall please Thee to send us. Finally give us all the grace to live in perfect harmony and in the fullness of love toward our neighbour. Grant that every one of us may deserve by a holy life the comfort

of Thy holy Sacraments at the hour of death. O Jesus, bless us and protect us.

O Mary, Mother of grace and of mercy, defend us against the wicked spirit, reconcile us with Thy Son, commit us to His keeping, that so we may be made worthy of His promises. St. Joseph, foster father of our Saviour, guardian of His holy Mother, head of the Holy Family, intercede for us, bless us and defend our home at all times. Amen.

### **THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS**

*taken from:*

*CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE  
WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF  
THE SACRAMENTS: DIRECTORY ON  
POPULAR PIETY AND THE LITURGY -  
PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES*

*Vatican City, December 2001*

#### **The Sacred Heart of Jesus**

166. The Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the Friday following the second Sunday after Pentecost. In addition to the liturgical celebration, many devotional exercises are connected with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Of all devotions, devotion to the Sacred Heart was, and remains, one of the most widespread and popular in the Church.

Understood in the light of the Scriptures, the term "Sacred Heart of Jesus" denotes the entire mystery of Christ, the totality of his being, and his person considered in its most intimate essential: Son of God, uncreated wisdom; infinite charity, principal of

the salvation and sanctification of mankind. The "Sacred Heart" is Christ, the Word Incarnate, Saviour, intrinsically containing, in the Spirit, an infinite divine-human love for the Father and for his brothers.

167. The Roman Pontiffs have frequently averted to the scriptural basis of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus(182).

Jesus, who is one with the Father (cf. John 10, 30), invites his disciples to live in close communion with him, to model their lives on him and on his teaching. He, in turn, reveals himself as "meek and humble of heart" (Mt 11, 29). It can be said that, in a certain sense, devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a cultic form of the prophetic and evangelic gaze of all Christians on him who was pierced (cf. John 19, 37; Zac 12, 10), the gaze of all Christians on the side of Christ, transfixed by a lance, and from which flowed blood and water (cf. John 19, 34), symbols of the "wondrous sacrament of the Church"(183).

The Gospel of St. John recounts the showing of the Lord's hands and his side to the disciples (cf. John 20,20), and of his invitation to Thomas to put his hand into his side (cf. John 20, 27). This event has also had a notable influence on the origin and development of the Church's devotion to the Sacred Heart.

168. These and other texts present Christ as the paschal Lamb, victorious and slain (cf. Apoc 5,6). They were objects of much reflection by the Fathers who unveiled their doctrinal richness. They invited the faithful to penetrate the mysteries of Christ by

contemplating the wound opened in his side. Augustine writes: "Access is possible: Christ is the door. It was opened for you when his side was opened by the lance. Remember what flowed out from his side: thus, choose where you want to enter Christ. From the side of Christ as he hung dying upon the Cross there flowed out blood and water, when it was pierced by a lance. Your purification is in that water, your redemption is in that blood"(184).

169. Devotion to the Sacred Heart was particularly strong during the middle ages. Many renowned for the learning and holiness developed and encouraged the devotion, among them St. Bernard (+1153), St. Bonaventure (+ 1274), the mystic St. Lutgarda (+1246), St Mathilda of Marburg (+ 1282), the sainted sisters Mathilda (+ 1299) and Gertrude (+ 1302) of the monastery of Helfta, and Ludolf of Saxony (+1380). These perceived in the Sacred Heart a "refuge" in which to recover, the seat of mercy, the encounter with him who is the source of the Lord's infinite love, the fount from which flows the Holy Spirit, the promised land, and true paradise.

170. In the modern period devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus underwent new developments. At a time when Jansenism proclaimed the rigours of divine justice, the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus served as a useful antidote and aroused in the faithful a love for Our Lord and a trust in his infinite mercy symbolized by his Heart. St. Francis de Sales (+ 1622) adopted humility, gentleness (cf. Mt 11, 29) and tender loving mercy, all aspects of the Sacred Heart, as a model for his life and

apostolate. The Lord frequently manifested the abundant mercy of his Heart to St. Margaret Mary (+ 1690); St. John Eudes (+ 1680) promoted the liturgical cult of the Sacred Heart, while St. Claude de la Colombière (+ 1682) and St. John Bosco (+ 1888) and other saints were avid promoters of devotion to the Sacred Heart.

171. Devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus are numerous. Some have been explicitly approved and frequently recommended by the Apostolic See. Among these, mention should be made of the following:

- personal consecration, described by Pius XI as "undoubtedly the principal devotional practice used in relation to the Sacred Heart"(185);

- family consecration to the Sacred Heart, in which the family, by virtue of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony already participating in the mystery of the unity and love of Christ for the Church, is dedicated to Christ so that he might reign in the hearts of all its members(186);

- the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, approved for the whole Church in 1891, which is evidently biblical in character and to which many indulgences have been attached;

- the act of reparation, a prayer with which the faithful, mindful of the infinite goodness of Christ, implore mercy for the offences committed in so many ways against his Sacred Heart(187);

- the pious practice of the first Fridays of the month which derives from the "great promises" made by Jesus to St.

Margaret Mary. At a time when sacramental communion was very rare among the faithful, the first Friday devotion contributed significantly to a renewed use of the Sacraments of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist. In our own times, the devotion to the first Fridays, even if practised correctly, may not always lead to the desired spiritual fruits. Hence, the faithful require constant instruction so that any reduction of the practice to mere credulity, is avoided and an active faith encouraged so that the faithful may undertake their commitment to the Gospel correctly in their lives. They should also be reminded of the absolute pre-eminence of Sunday, the "primordial feast"(188), which should be marked by the full participation of the faithful at the celebration of the Holy Mass.

172. Devotion to the Sacred Heart is a wonderful historical expression of the Church's piety for Christ, her Spouse and Lord: it calls for a fundamental attitude of conversion and reparation, of love and gratitude, apostolic commitment and dedication to Christ and his saving work. For these reasons, the devotion is recommended and its renewal encouraged by the Holy See and by the Bishops. Such renewal touches on the devotion's linguistic and iconographic expressions; on consciousness of its biblical origins and its connection with the great mysteries of the faith; on affirming the primacy of the love of God and neighbour as the essential content of the devotion itself.

173. Popular piety tends to associate a devotion with its iconographic expression. This is a normal and

positive phenomenon. Inconveniences can sometimes arise: iconographic expressions that no longer respond to the artistic taste of the people can sometimes lead to a diminished appreciation of the devotion's object, independently of its theological basis and its historico-salvific content.

This can sometimes arise with devotion to the Sacred Heart: perhaps certain over sentimental images which are incapable of giving expression to the devotion's robust theological content or which do not encourage the faithful to approach the mystery of the Sacred Heart of our Saviour.

Recent time have seen the development of images representing the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the moment of crucifixion which is the highest expression of the love of Christ. The Sacred Heart is Christ crucified, his side pierced by the lance, with blood and water flowing from it (cf, John 19, 34).

### **The Immaculate Heart of Mary**

174. The Church celebrates the liturgical memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary the day after the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The contiguity of both celebrations is in itself a liturgical sign of their close connection: the mystery of the Heart of Jesus is projected onto and reverberates in the Heart of His Mother, who is also one of his followers and a disciple. As the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart celebrates the salvific mysteries of Christ in a synthetic manner by reducing them to their fount -the Heart of Jesus, so too the memorial of the Immaculate Heart of

Mary is a celebration of the complex visceral relationship of Mary with her Son's work of salvation: from the Incarnation, to his death and resurrection, to the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Following the apparitions at Fatima in 1917, devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary became very widespread. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apparitions (1942) Pius XII consecrated the Church and the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and extended the memorial to the entire Church.

In popular piety devotions to the Immaculate Heart of Mary resemble those of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, while bearing in mind the distance between Jesus and his Mother: consecration of individuals and families, of religious communities and nations(189); reparation for sins through prayer, mortification and alms deeds; the practice of the First Five Saturdays.

With regard to receiving Holy Communion of the Five First Saturdays, the same as has been said in relation to the Nine First Fridays can be repeated(190): overestimation of temporal factors should be overcome in favour of re-contextualization the reception of Holy Communion within the framework of the Eucharist. This pious practice should be seen as an opportunity to live intensely the paschal Mystery celebrated in the Holy Eucharist, as inspired by the life of the Blessed Virgin.

(182) Cf. LEO XIII, Encyclical Letter *Annum sacrum* (25.1889) on the consecration of mankind to the Sacred Heart, in *Leonis XIII Pontificis Maximi Acta*, XIX, Typographia Vaticana, Romae 1900, pp. 71-80; PIUS XII, Encyclical Letter *Haurietis aquas*, in AAS 48 (1956) 311-329; PAUL VI, Apostolic Letter *Investigabiles divitias Christi* (6.2.1965), in AAS 57 (1965) 298-301; JOHN PAUL II, Message on the centenary of the consecration of mankind to the Sacred Heart of Jesus (11.6.1999), in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 12 June 1999.

(183) SC 5; cf. St. AUGUSTINE, *Ennaratio in Psalmum 138*, 2: CCL 40, cit.,m p. 1991.

(184) St. AUGUSTINE, *Sermo* 311, 3: PL 38, 1415.

(185) PIUS XI, Encyclical Letter *Miserentissimus redemptorin* AAS 20 (1928) 167.

(186) Cf. EI, *Aliae concessiones* 1, p. 50.

(187) Cf. EI, *Aliae concessiones*, 3, pp. 51-53.

(188) SC 106.

(189) Among the various consecrations to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, one of the most important is that of Pius XII's consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on 31 October 1942 (cf. AAS 34 [1942] 318), which was renewed by John Paul II, in communion with the bishops of the Church, on 25 March 1984 (cf. *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II VII/1* [1984], Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 1984, pp. 774-779).

(190) Cf. supra n. 171.