

June

Sacred Heart

The Sacred Heart devotion has enriched and strengthened Catholic living. This devotion, using the traditional symbol of love, focuses on the self-sacrificing love of Jesus Christ for us all. This devotion reminds us of the love we should return to the Lord, and calls on us to apologize for all human indifference and sinning. This devotion, since the 17th Century, has brought to Catholic living the act of reparation on this day, the monthly First Friday devotion, the Holy Hour, nocturnal adoration, enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the home, etc. With its solid theology, this devotion has a continuing lesson and warm appeal for Catholic Christians.

The Devotion to the Sacred Heart and St. Margaret Mary

Margaret Mary lived in the seventeenth century. She is the famous French nun to whom Jesus showed his Sacred Heart. As a child, she was a happy little girl who loved the nuns at school. But when she was eleven, she became very sick. It was four years before she was well again. Her father had died, and an aunt had moved into their home. This aunt and her husband made Margaret Mary and her mother suffer very much. Almost every day, the teenager would hide in the garden to cry and pray. What hurt her most was seeing her mother get hurt.

Yet Margaret Mary grew to love good times. A few years later, she was considering marriage. Her mother wanted her to marry and so did her relatives. They were worried about her, especially when she brought beggar children into the garden to try to teach them. Margaret Mary hesitated a while, neither marrying nor entering the convent. At last she decided on the convent.

She joined the Visitation sisters and was a kind, humble sister. Often she made others impatient since she was slow and clumsy. But she was dear to Jesus. He began to appear to St. Margaret Mary to show her how much he loves us all. Jesus wanted her to spread devotion to his Sacred Heart. It was a very hard thing to do. Many people thought Margaret Mary had not really seen Jesus at all. Some were angry with her for trying to spread the new devotion. This brought her great suffering. Yet she did her best to carry out the Lord's wish. Jesus blessed her hard work and pain. Today, this wonderful devotion to the Sacred Heart is practiced all over the world.

Our Lord made great promises to St. Margaret Mary for those who are devoted to his most Sacred Heart. Some of these promises are: "I will comfort them in all their afflictions. I will establish peace in their homes. I will bestow abundant blessings on all their undertakings. I will bless every place where a picture of my Heart shall be displayed and honored." The greatest promise Jesus made is this: "My divine Heart shall be the safe refuge in the last moment to all those who receive Holy Communion on the First Friday for nine months in a row."

We can ask St. Margaret Mary to help us understand the importance of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The Nine First Fridays

"I promise you, in the excessive mercy of my heart that my all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the First Friday for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance;

they shall not die in my disgrace nor without receiving my sacraments; my divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in that last moment." -- From the promises of our Lord to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Prayer of St. Margaret Mary

O Heart of love, I place my trust entirely in You. Though I fear all things from my weakness, I hope all things from Your goodness!

Challenge

Your challenge is to look in a concordance (a big book that lists all the words used in the bible and where to find them) or use a search on computer/internet and find each time the word "heart" is used in the Bible in reference to Jesus. Draw a picture for each event or write a heart-to-heart prayer to Jesus.

Bookmarks

Design a bookmark. Look up (or ask a priest) what the traditional picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus looks like. Draw the Sacred Heart on the bookmark and underneath it write "Sacred Heart of Jesus, I trust in you." Put tassels in the top and give it to a friend.

Immaculate Heart of Mary

The Five First Saturdays

"...Behold my Heart in the midst of thorns that ungrateful persons, at every instant, press on it with their blasphemy and ingratitude. At least you console me, and tell all people that I promise to help, in the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, whoever the first Saturday of each month for five consecutive months will go to confession, receive Holy Communion, say five decades of the rosary and keep me company for fifteen minutes, meditating the mysteries of the rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me." -- from the Promises of Our Lady of Fatima to Sister Lucy

Together with the other members of the family mark a calendar for five consecutive Saturdays that you can go to Mass together and pray the rosary.

Prayer taught by the Blessed Mother to the children of Fatima

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins! Save us from the fire of hell, and release the holy souls from purgatory, especially those who are most abandoned.

O Jesus, for Your love, for the conversion of sinners, in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and for the Holy Father.

Say the Rosary as a Family

The rosary is a blend of contemplative and vocal prayer. While saying the prayers, we meditate on the mysteries of the lives of Jesus and Mary. There are 15 mysteries divided distinctly into 3 parts, each containing 5 mysteries.

The rosary is usually prayed on a string of beads. The practice of using a string of beads as an aid in meditation and prayer is an ancient one. Early monks, wishing to say a certain number of prayers,

counted the prayers by moving small pebbles or stones from one container to another. Later, strings of beads were used for counting. During the Middle Ages, the rosary (which we know today as the Dominican Rosary) evolved and became one of the most popular sacramentals of the church. The word "rosary" is from the Latin *rosarium*, or rose garden. It signified a wreath or garland and was seen as a special favor or presentation to our Lord and our Lady.

The Mysteries of the Rosary

The Joyful Mysteries

The Annunciation of the Angel to Mary

The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth

Jesus Is Born in a Stable in Bethlehem

The Presentation of the Child Jesus in Jerusalem

Jesus Is Lost in the Temple and then Later Found by Mary and Joseph

The Sorrowful Mysteries

The Agony of Jesus in the Garden

Jesus Is Scourged at the Pillar

Jesus Is Crowned with Thorns

Jesus Carries His Cross to Calvary

Jesus Is Crucified and Dies on the Cross

The Glorious Mysteries

The Resurrection of Jesus

The Ascension of Jesus into Heaven

The Descent of the Holy Spirit upon Mary and the Apostles

The Assumption of Mary into Heaven

The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth

Decorate a Mary Altar

Place a statue of Mary in a prominent place in the house on the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (*Saturday following the Second Sunday after Pentecost*). Decorate it with flowers.

