

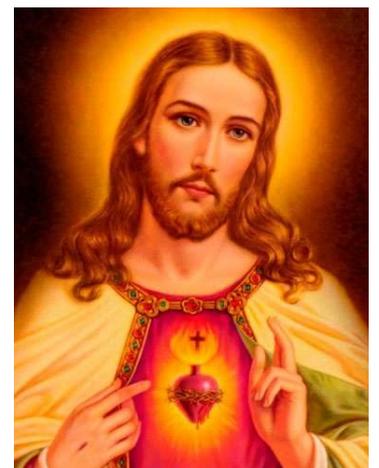
## *Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I ADORE*

From the Liturgy Office... Celebrating the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

The devotion to the Sacred Heart (or the **Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, *Sacratissimum Cor Iesu* in Latin) is one of the most widely practiced and well known devotions in the Roman Catholic Church. This devotion focuses upon the unmitigated love, compassion and long-suffering of the heart of Jesus towards all humanity.

Although this devotion had existed in some form from the very beginning of the Church, the institution of the feast was as a result of appearances of our Lord to a Visitation nun, St Margaret Mary Alacoque, in 1675. St. Margaret Mary reported that Jesus permitted her to rest her head upon His heart. Then, "He (Jesus) disclosed to me the marvels of his Love and the inexplicable secrets of his Sacred Heart." Christ emphasized to her His love -- and His woundedness caused by Man's indifference to this love. During another appearance, she said Jesus requested to be honoured under the figure of his heart. He then showed her his heart on a throne of flames, crowned with thorns and surmounted by a cross. He then addressed her and made 12 promises to those who honour the Sacred Heart. These are:

- 1. I will give them all the graces necessary for their state in life.**
- 2. I will establish peace in their families.**
- 3. I will comfort them in their trials.**
- 4. I will be their secure refuge during life, and, above all, in death.**
- 5. I will shed abundant blessings on all their undertakings.**
- 6. Sinners will find in My Heart an infinite ocean of mercy.**
- 7. Lukewarm souls will become fervent.**



8. **Fervent souls will rapidly grow in holiness and perfection.**
9. **I will bless every place where an image of My Heart shall be exposed and honoured.**
10. **I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.**
11. **The names of those who promote this devotion will be written in My Heart, never to be blotted out.**
12. **I promise thee, 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 of nine consecutive months, the grace of final penitence; they shall not die in My disgrace nor without receiving their Sacraments; My Divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment.**

Almost 100 years later, in 1856, Pope Pius IX, at the request of the French bishops, extended the feast to the universal Church. It is celebrated on the day requested by our Lord—the First Friday after the octave of **Corpus Christi**, or 19 days after Pentecost Sunday.

Even in recent times, devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus continue to grow and have been encouraged by the Church. In 2005, speaking of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, Pope Benedict XVI was quoted as saying, *“In biblical language, “heart” indicates the centre of the person where his sentiments and intentions dwell. In the heart of the Redeemer we adore God’s love for humanity, his will for universal salvation, his infinite mercy. Practicing devotion to the Sacred Heart of Christ therefore means adoring that Heart, which, having loved us to the end, was pierced by a spear and from high of the cross poured out blood and water, an inexhaustible source of new life.”* (Benedict XVI, Angelus 5 June 2005)

Therefore, as we approach the Feast of the Sacred Heart, here are some ways you may like to celebrate at home with your family.

- Read the Scripture readings of the day. The readings for the solemnity include a beautiful Sequence that you can sing or pray before your evening meal.
- Make valentines from Jesus to each child, with a message echoing the theme of Christ’s infinite love.
- Consecrate your family to the Sacred Heart of Jesus using the act of consecration found below.
- Celebrate with a heart-shaped cake or other heart-themed goodies. Use the time to talk about why Catholics practice devotion to the Sacred Heart .
- Learn more about the practice of First Friday devotions, and consider practicing them in some form in your family. You can find a ritual for the **First Friday Devotion** at <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/prayers/devotions/to-our-lord-jesus-christ/first-friday-devotion>
- For more information or ideas, check out this related article: **The Sacred Heart of Jesus - Monthly Devotion for June** at <https://teachingcatholickids.com/the-sacred-heart-of-jesus-monthly-devotion-for-june/>

God Bless, Rita Cordina