

Relationship with GOD

More than Just SUNDAY



We experience our deepest desires and affections in the depths of our heart. Likewise, Jesus experiences an immense love and personal interest for each one of us in His Heart, which is referred to as the Sacred Heart. Jesus' love for us is expressed most vividly in His suffering and death as He restores us back to grace and friendship with our Heavenly Father. The Sacred Heart of Jesus, then, wonderfully signifies the fullness of His boundless love for all people, and each person individually.

We respond to this unfathomable love of Christ through having a devotion to His Sacred Heart. This devotion includes being more clearly focused on Jesus, seeking to return His love by deepening our personal relationship with Him, receiving the Holy Eucharist every Sunday, and serving Our Lord by serving others.

On Friday, June 28th the Catholic Church throughout the world will celebrate the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This Feast Day is one of the most important in the Church's calendar, as it is based upon the fact that "God is love" which is the center of our Faith.

The origin of the devotion to the Sacred Heart

We can see throughout the Bible that God has always loved mankind with

a deep and abiding love and this love was present from the beginning. The greatest act of love on the part of God the Father for us is the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. After Jesus was crucified and died, a spear was thrust into His side, which pierced His very Heart, causing blood and water to flow forth. The water signifies Baptism through which we become adopted children of God as we receive His Divine Life into our soul. The blood signifies the Blood of Christ that we receive at Holy Mass. Jesus gives us His very life-Blood to strengthen us to love as He loves.

The devotion to the love of God received its most definitive support by the Church after the revelations made by Jesus to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. "The revelations... brought nothing new into Catholic doctrine. Their importance lay in this: that Christ our Lord, showing His Sacred Heart, wished in an extraordinary way to invite us to a contemplation of, and a devotion to, the mystery of God's merciful love for the human race" (*On Devotion to the Sacred Heart*, nn. 96, 97) Jesus made "12 promises" to those who devote themselves to His Sacred Heart. The third promise is "I will bless every house in which the picture of My Heart shall be honored." Therefore, the center of this devotion is the enthronement of an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in a prominent place in the home, as well as parishes, schools, hospitals, businesses, etc. The ceremony is usually led by a priest, and is often the occasion for a

celebration.

The Enthronement is an expression of our acceptance of Jesus as our constant Companion and Friend as well as King of our hearts, as He gave His life for us. The image of the Sacred Heart visibly represents the Headship of Jesus in the home; families gather at this "holy place" for prayer or whenever help is needed. Jesus promised that, "where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (*Mt. 18:20*).

The day-to-day effects of enthroning the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is more than just putting up a holy picture, include the awareness that Jesus is with us. We look to Him for guidance and strength and depend on Him in our difficulties and times of sorrow. Families tell me that their children touch the image of Jesus and even kiss His face throughout the day, while also offering their needs to Him.

Life pulls us in so many directions. Returning to this "holy place" in the home on a daily basis brings stability and security to our weak hearts as we focus on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Who is "full of goodness and love". It is time that we place Jesus at the center of our hearts, our families, our homes, our workplace and our country!

For further info and resources on the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in your home, go to diolc.org/sacredheart

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