



Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

The tradition of the Sacred Heart devotion grew from the revelations of Our Lord to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, a French Visitation nun who had a series of visions for two years from 1673-1675. During these visions, Jesus showed her His exposed Heart, the symbol of his great love for the world, and gave her twelve great promises to pass along to the faithful. Our Lord told St. Margaret Mary that those who devoted themselves to His Sacred Heart would receive many special graces.

No one believed St. Margaret Mary when she began to talk about her visions of Jesus, and she suffered much ridicule and hostility within her own community. Finally, her confessor, Blessed Claude de la Colmbiere, a Jesuit priest came to believe in her visions and helped assure their authenticity. St. Margaret Mary died in 1690 and was finally canonized in 1920.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart spread after her death. In 1856, the Feast of the Sacred Heart officially was established by the Church. This special feast always falls on the Friday following the Feast of Corpus Christi. Pope Leo XII consecrated the world to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1899. Probably the most popular part of the devotion to the Sacred Heart is attendance at Mass on the First Friday of the month for nine consecutive months.

Our Lord promised St. Margaret Mary that those who received the Eucharist during these Liturgies would be blessed with the "grace of final repentance."

The 12 Promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Revealed to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque:

1. "I will give them all the graces necessary in their state of life."
2. "I will establish peace in their homes and families"
3. "I will comfort them in their afflictions."
4. "I will be their secure refuge during life, and especially at the hour of death."
5. "I will bestow abundant blessings upon all their undertakings."
6. "Sinners shall find in My Heart the source and the infinite ocean of mercy."
7. "Tepid souls shall grow fervent."
8. "Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection."
9. "I will bless every place where a picture of My Heart shall be set up and honored."
10. "I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts."
11. "Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names 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 Communion on the First Friday in nine consecutive months, the grace of final penitence; they shall not die in My disgrace nor without receiving the Sacraments; My Divine heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment."

SACRED HEART NOVENA

MEDITATION

Devotion to the Sacred Heart, as we know it, began about the year 1672. On repeated occasions, Jesus appeared to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, a Visitation nun, in France, and during these apparitions He explained to her the devotion to His Sacred Heart as He wanted

people to practice it. He asked to be honored in the symbol of His Heart of flesh; he asked for acts of reparation, for frequent Communion, Communion on the First Friday of the month, and the keeping of the Holy Hour.

When the Catholic Church approved the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, she did not base her action only on the visions of Saint Margaret Mary. The Church approved the devotion on its own merits. There is only one Person in Jesus, and that Person was at the same time God and Man. His Heart, too, is Divine -- it is the Heart of God.

There are two things that must always be found together in the devotion to the Sacred Heart: Christ's Heart of flesh and Christ's love for us. True devotion to the Sacred Heart means devotion to the Divine Heart of Christ insofar as His Heart represents and recalls His love for us. In honoring the Heart of Christ, our homage lingers on the Person of Jesus in the fullness of His love. This love of Christ for us was the moving force of all he did and suffered for us -- in Nazareth, on the Cross, in giving Himself in the Blessed Sacrament, in His teaching and healing, in His praying and working. When we speak of the Sacred Heart, we mean Jesus showing us His Heart, Jesus all love for us and all lovable.

Jesus Christ is the incarnation of God's infinite love. The Human Nature which the Son of God took upon Himself was filled with love and kindness that has never found an equal. He is the perfect model of love of God and neighbor.

Every day of His life was filled with repeated proofs of "Christ's love that surpasses all knowledge" (Eph 3:19). Jesus handed down for all time the fundamental feature of His character: "Take My yoke upon your shoulders and learn from Me, for I am meek and humble of Heart" (Mt 11:29). He invited all, refusing none, surprising friends and rivals by His unconditional generosity.

The meaning of love in the life of Jesus was especially evident in His sufferings. Out of love for His Father He willed to undergo the death of the Cross. "The world must know that I love the Father and do just as the Father has commanded Me" (Jn 14:31).

The love that Jesus bore toward us also urged Him to undergo the death of the Cross. At the Last Supper, He said, "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13)

The Heart of Jesus never ceases to love us in heaven. He sanctifies us through the Sacraments. These are inexhaustible fountains of grace and holiness which have their source in the boundless ocean of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

NOVENA PRAYER

Divine Jesus, You have said, "Ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you." Behold me kneeling at Your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by Your Sacred Heart to Saint Margaret Mary. I come to ask this favor: **(Mention your request)**.

To whom can I turn if not to You, Whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of Your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives Himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to You, Heart of Jesus. In You I find consolation when afflicted, protection when persecuted, strength when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that You can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of Your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of mercy, and You will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of You, and Your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weakness a reason for granting my prayer.

Sacred Heart, whatever may be Your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising, and serving You. My Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of Your adorable Heart, which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled in and by me and all Your creatures forever.

Grant me the grace for which I humbly implore You through the Immaculate Heart of Your most sorrowful Mother. You entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with You. Amen.

OFFERING

My God, I offer You all my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for the intentions for which He pleads and offers Himself in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in thanksgiving for Your favors, in reparation for my sins, and in humble supplication for my temporal and eternal welfare, for the needs of our holy Mother the Church, for the conversion of sinners, and for the relief of the poor souls in purgatory.

LITANY OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

V- Lord, have mercy.

R- *Lord, have mercy.*

V- Christ, have mercy.

R- *Christ, have mercy.*

V- Lord, have mercy.

R- *Lord, have mercy.*

V- Jesus, hear us.

R- *Jesus, graciously hear us.*

*(After each petition, the faithful respond **"have mercy on us."**)*

God, the Father of Heaven,

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God, the Holy Spirit,

Holy Trinity, One God,

Heart of Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father.

Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mother,

Heart of Jesus, substantially united to the Word of God,

Heart of Jesus, of Infinite Majesty,

Heart of Jesus, Sacred Temple of God,

Heart of Jesus, Tabernacle of the Most High,

Heart of Jesus, House of God and Gate of Heaven,
Heart of Jesus, burning furnace of charity,
Heart of Jesus, abode of justice and love,
Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and love,
Heart of Jesus, abyss of all virtues,
Heart of Jesus, most worthy of all praise,
Heart of Jesus, king and center of all hearts,
Heart of Jesus, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,
Heart of Jesus, in whom the Father was well pleased,
Heart of Jesus, of whose fullness we have all received,
Heart of Jesus, desire of the everlasting hills,
Heart of Jesus, patient and most merciful,
Heart of Jesus, enriching all who invoke you,
Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness,
Heart of Jesus, propitiation for our sins,
Heart of Jesus, loaded down with opprobrium,
Heart of Jesus, bruised for our offenses,
Heart of Jesus, obedient to death,
Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance,
Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation,
Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection,
Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation,
Heart of Jesus, victim for our sins,
Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who trust in you,
Heart of Jesus, hope of those who die in you,
Heart of Jesus, delight of all the Saints,

V-Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world.
R- spare us, O Lord.

V-Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,
R- graciously hear us, O Lord.

V-Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,
R- have mercy on us.

V-Jesus, meek and humble of heart.
R- Make our hearts like to yours.

V-Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, look upon the Heart of your most beloved Son and upon the praises and satisfaction which he offers you in the name of sinners; and to those who implore your mercy, in your great goodness, grant forgiveness in the name of the same Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you forever and ever. *Amen.*

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, filled with infinite love, broken by my ingratitude, pierced by my sins, yet loving me still - accept the consecration that I make to You of all that I am and all that I

have. Take every faculty of my soul and body. Draw me, day by day, nearer and nearer to your Sacred Heart, and there, as I can bear the lesson, teach me Your blessed ways. Amen.