

DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

This devotion and its promises were given by Our Lord to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, a Visitation nun in Paray-le-Monial, France, in a series of revelations during 1673-1675. Jesus showed her His Heart, and how greatly He loves men; and yet He receives only ingratitude and indifference in return. He sorrowfully complained, ***“I feel this more than all I suffered in My Passion... The sole return they make for all My eagerness to do them good, is to reject and treat Me with coldness.”***

And again, ***“Behold this Heart, Which has loved men so much, that It has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming Itself in order to testify to them Its love; and in return I receive from the greater number of them nothing but ingratitude by reason of their irreverence and sacrileges, and by the coldness and contempt which they show Me in this Sacrament of Love [the Holy Eucharist].”***

St. Margaret Mary was given to understand what the symbolism of the image of the Sacred Heart meant: the wound in the side, the cross on top, the crown of thorns encircling It, and the flame around and atop the Heart. This image expressed Our Lord’s over-abundance of love for souls, and the tremendous grief and sorrow it causes Him to be unloved and rejected by them in return, especially in the Blessed Sacrament.

She describes in detail a vision of Our Lord’s Sacred Heart as “on a throne of fire and flame, shedding rays on every side, brighter than the sun and transparent as crystal.” Here again He spoke to her of the relationship between His love and His sufferings. Jesus told her that the infinite love which He has for each person, had been the source of all His sufferings. It was this great desire to be perfectly loved by men which compelled Him to reveal to them His Sacred Heart, and of giving them, in these latter times, an additional and final proof of His love, by presenting to them an image of It to inspire them to love Him in return.

Our Saint tells us: ***“He assured me that we must honor the Heart of God under the figure of this Heart of flesh, the picture of which He wished to be exposed, in order to touch the insensible hearts of men... and that, wherever this picture would be exposed and singularly honored, it would draw down every sort of blessing.”***

PROMISES OF OUR LORD TO THOSE WHO LOVE AND HONOR HIS SACRED HEART

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. ***In the excess of the mercy of My Heart, I promise you 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.***

WAYS TO OBTAIN THE PROMISES OF OUR LORD:

- Publicly and privately display images of the Sacred Heart for devotion, especially in our homes.
- **Develop and increase a real love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Offer up prayers of thanksgiving, reparation and love to console the Heart of God.**
- **Receive Holy Communion frequently, especially on Fridays, in a spirit of love and reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for all the ingratitude and hatred He receives, especially in the Blessed Sacrament.**
- Go to First Friday devotions: Attend Mass and receive Holy Communion on the first Friday of each month for nine consecutive months with the intention of offering reparation and atonement to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Receiving the Sacrament of Confession within a week of each first Friday is also strongly recommended. We must never receive Holy Communion if we are conscious of being in a state of mortal sin.
- Make Holy Hours of loving reparation and atonement to the Sacred Heart. For example, you could make a Eucharistic Adoration for one hour on Thursdays, in honor of His agony on Holy Thursday night, (“Could you not watch one hour with me?”). Holy Hours can be made alone, or as part of a group with formal prayers, in a private home or in a church or chapel.
- Consecrate yourself, your family, your Parish Church, etc. to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pope Pius XI composed a beautiful consecration in 1925 for the world to recite entitled, “Consecration of the Human Race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.”
- Celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
- Make the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the home: This is a solemn act of a family giving formal recognition of the Kingship of Christ over their family and home. It is the official, ceremonial beginning of a family’s commitment to live their recognition of Christ’s Kingship in every aspect of their lives. During the Enthronement ceremony, a blessed image of the Sacred Heart is hung in the most prominent place in the house and formal prayers are recited. Remember Christ’s promise: ***“I will give peace in their families.”***
- Spread awareness of, and encourage others to practice, this devotion and the various ways of fulfilling it. This will benefit them as well as Jesus, Who is so completely neglected, ignored and even despised in today’s world.

6 - NINE FIRST FRIDAYS DEVOTION

The ‘*Great Promise*’ associated with this devotion (the 12th promise in the list above) is for those who receive Holy Communion on the First Friday of nine consecutive months, with the intention of offering reparation and atonement to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Our Lord promises: ***“In the excess of the mercy of My Heart, I promise you that My all powerful love will grant... 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.”***

By this, Our Lord has promised us that we will save our souls if we fulfill His simple requests.

Also, since this devotion has as its object giving love and reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, all of the promises listed above would be attained as well.

Life is filled with its many obligations, sufferings, trials and temptations. Trying to lead a good and virtuous life requires vigilance at every moment of our lives. Jesus implicitly promises to those who make the Nine First Fridays, with the intention of offering reparation and atonement to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, abundant graces that will help them carry out their everyday obligations and persevere to the end. It is very evident from the twelve promises that these devotions (the practice of the Nine First Fridays, and devotion to the Sacred Heart in general) greatly please Our Lord. With this knowledge, encourage all whom you know to make the Nine First Fridays, and to give our good God the immense consolation of loving Him and His Most Sacred Heart.

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