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A Newsletter from the Missions Office/Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States  
Catholic Diocese of Columbus, Ohio

## *What inspired Venerable Fulton Sheen to make a Holy Hour each day?*

***To monthly mission donors:  
Thank you for your support!***

On behalf of His Excellency Robert J. Brennan, the Bishop of Columbus, and Very Rev. Father Andrew Small, OMI, the National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States, I would like to thank you for your prayers, sacrifices and financial support for the missions.

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Before his death, Bishop Fulton Sheen was interviewed on national television. One of the questions was this: "Bishop Sheen, you have inspired millions of people in the world. Who inspired you? Was it a Pope?"

Bishop Sheen responded that it was not a Pope, a cardinal, or another bishop, or even a priest or a nun. It was a little Chinese girl of eleven years of age.

He explained that when the communists took over China, they imprisoned a priest in his own rectory near the Church. After they locked him up in his house, the priest was horrified to look out his window and see the communists proceed into the church, where they went into the sanctuary and broke into the tabernacle. In an act of hateful desecration, they took

the ciborium and threw it on the floor with all of the Sacred Hosts spilling out. The priest knew exactly how many hosts were in the ciborium: thirty-two.

When the communists left, they either did not notice, or did not pay attention to a small girl praying at the back of the church who saw everything that had happened. That night the girl came back. Slipping past the guard at the priest's house, she went inside the church. There she made the holy hour of prayer, an act of love to make up for the acts of hatred.

After the holy hour, she went to the sanctuary, knelt down and bent over, and with her tongue received Jesus in Holy Communion, since it was not permissible for laymen to touch the Sacred Host with their hands.

The girl continued to come back each night to make her Holy Hour and received Jesus in Holy Communion on her tongue. On the thirty-second night, after she consumed the last thirty-second host, she accidentally made a noise and woke the guard who was sleeping. He ran after her and beat her to death with the butt of his rifle. This act of heroic martyrdom was witnessed by the priest, as he watched grief-stricken from his

bedroom window.

When Bishop Sheen heard the story, he was so inspired that he promised God he would make a holy hour of prayer before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament every day of his life.

If this frail, little girl could give testimony and witness to the world, concerning the real and wonderful presence of her Savior in the Blessed Sacrament, then Bishop Sheen was absolutely bound by all that was right and true to do the same. His sole desire from then on was to bring the world to the burning Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

The little girl showed Bishop Sheen what true courage and zeal really is; how faith could overcome fear, how true love for Jesus in the Eucharist, must transcend life itself.

What is hidden in the Host is the glory of His love. The sun in the sky is symbolic of the Son of God in the Blessed Sacrament. This is why most monstrances are in a form of a sunburst. As the sun is the source of all energy, the Blessed Sacrament is the supernatural source of all grace and love. The Blessed Sacrament is Jesus, the Light of the world.

## ***June is dedicated to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus***

This dedication has its origin in the appearance of Christ made to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, a French religious sister.

After joining the Visitation Convent at Paray-le-Monial, France, in 1671, she began in 1673 to receive visions revealing the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She was rebuffed by her superior and by theologians for a time, about the validity of the visions, but she remained humble, obedient and charitable to them.

Christ gave her the task to teach and to encourage the devotion to His Sacred Heart. It was based on this Christly inspiration that Saint Margaret Mary was moved to establish the Holy Hour and the Sacred Heart Devotion in the modern form.

Prior to this time, there was a devotion to the love of Jesus and to wounded heart of Christ, but not established as the devotion is today.

The practice encouraged by Saint Margaret Mary, at the guidance of Christ, included the Holy Hour on Thursdays, to share the mortal sadness He endured when abandoned by His Apostles in His agony, and to receive Holy Communion on the first Friday of every month.

Additionally, He appointed through Saint Margaret Mary for the Friday after the octave of the feast of Corpus Christi to be the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart.

Saint Margaret Mary was canonized in 1920 by Pope Benedict XV and then in 1928, Pope Pius XI reiterated in his encyclical *Miserentissimus*

Redemptor the value of the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

## ***Three Catholic practices that were developed by three young women from different eras***

Among the most beautiful of all Catholic practices are the Solemnities of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the celebration of Divine Mercy. They are part of the Church's liturgical calendar because God graced three young women, in different eras, to be his instruments in the development and implementation of these special devotions.

Juliana of Cornillon (1192-1258), Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-90) and Faustina Kowalska (1905-38) were holy women, and though originally unknown to many, were not unknown to God. Each of them claimed to have received visions and messages from Jesus. While the Church does not ask us to believe personal revelations, the results of their visions and impact on the Catholic faith are undeniable.

Through the divinely inspired revelations of these three young nuns, Holy Mother Church offers prayers, practices, and special celebrations that elevate us above worldly things, and calls us to the loving heart of Jesus, to his body and blood, to his Divine Mercy.

## ***Goodbye and Thank You***

I have decided to retire as the Director of the Diocesan Missions Office effective June 22. It is more important now for me to be able to spend time with my wife, who has been in frail health for quite awhile.

I would like to thank you for your

support for the mission work of the Church - for your kindness and generosity. The years I have spent in the Missions Office are the most rewarding years in my life. For that, I praise the Lord.

May God bless you and your loved ones. Farewell and thank you.

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## ***Pope Francis' June Prayer Intention:***

The Way of the Heart:  
We pray that all those who suffer may find their way in life, allowing themselves to be touched by the Heart of Jesus.

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## ***A joke a priest can tell... LOL!***

A minister died and went to heaven and ahead of him at the Pearly Gate was a guy in sunglasses and a leather jacket and the guy said to Saint Peter,

"I'm Joe Nestorenko, cab driver of Las Vegas." Saint Peter gave him a golden robe and golden staff.

And then it was the minister's turn.

"I am Elmer Lundberg, pastor of Zion Lutheran for forty five years." Saint Peter gave him a cotton robe and wooden staff.

"But that man was a taxi driver? and he gets a golden robe? And a golden staff?" Saint Peter said, "Up here, we go by results. While you preached, people slept; while he drove, people prayed."

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