

DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

“A decree, dated 1765, granted to the prelates of Poland and the Roman Archconfraternity permission to celebrate with Mass and proper Office the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Liberty was left to other prelates to solicit the same for their respective dioceses. Hardly had this decree been issued, when the clergy assembled at Paris hastened, at the importunity of the pious Queen Marie Leczinska, to subscribe to it; and it was decided that the devotion to the Heart of Jesus should be established in all the dioceses of France. Thus did God, on the eve of their great misfortunes, reunite **Poland and France that they might work together at the spread of devotion to the Heart of Jesus in the Church.**” (Excerpt from Chapter 16 of “The Life of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque” by Rt. Rev. Emile Bougaud)

It is to St. Margaret Mary’s humility, obedience and total surrender to Christ that we attribute having the genuine revelations of Jesus and devotion to His most Sacred Heart and officially celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Church. It seems St. Margaret Mary could be considered St. Faustina’s forerunner in revealing the infinite love and mercy, which is contained in Our Lord’s Sacred Heart. However, this devotion certainly was not a new thought or devotion in Holy Mother Church, but rather was expressed often centuries before with many of our Church Fathers’ inspirational insight and writings in regard to this devotion. Tertullian contemplated the pierced side of Jesus as well as St. Cyprian, who was one of the first to connect the blood and water from the side of Christ as the birth of Holy Mother Church. This belief was expounded upon by St. Augustine, who through his austere and holy life was able to understand the mysteries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. “Oh!”, he cried, “of what a perfect word the Evangelist made use when he said: ‘One of the soldiers opened His side with his lance.’ He does not say, ‘His side was struck;’ he says, ‘His side was opened;’ that is to say, the door of life was opened to allow the sacraments and all other graces to flow upon the world.” St. Ambrose spoke of the Divine would whereby Our Savior’s graces abundantly flowed and gives balm to wounded souls. St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil, St. Gregory, St. Ephrem, Sty Cyril and St. Bonaventure have all agreed and concluded the efficacy of contemplating the Sacred would in Our Lord’s side where all His love and mercy flowed out upon all mankind. This authenticates the honoring the Sacred Heart of Jesus in revelations of Jesus given to St. Margaret Mary. May these expressions of deep love for Our Lord of our early Church Fathers and St. Margaret Mary resonate deep with our souls in order that we live out our faith fully in constant reflection and contemplation of Our Lord’s Sacred Heart and His infinite love and mercy for ***all of us.***