



FR. DANIEL'S CORNER

JUNE, MONTH OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

In popular piety, each month of the year has a corresponding spiritual theme that focuses on various aspects of the Christian faith. June has become known as the **Month of the Sacred Heart**, due to the fact that the feast of the Sacred Heart is celebrated each year during this month. The Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi. This year it falls on June 11th. In addition to the liturgical celebration, many devotional exercises are connected with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Of all devotions, the devotion to the Sacred Heart was, and remains, one of the most widespread and popular in the Church.

It all started in recognition of Jesus' apparitions starting in 1673 to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-1690), a member of the Visitation Sisters, through whom He asked for devotion to His Sacred Heart. In that first apparition, Jesus enveloped St. Margaret Mary in a mystical experience of His love. She reported that Jesus allowed her "to recline for a long time on His divine breast, where He disclosed to me [her] the marvels of His love and the unutterable secrets of His Sacred Heart."

In His second apparition to her, a First Friday in 1674, Jesus showed St. Margaret His Heart, "more dazzling than the sun and transparent as crystal." The Cross stood above it, and a crown of thorns encircled it, signifying the wounds it had endured as a result of our sins. Christ told St. Margaret that He wanted to reveal His wounded Heart because He could not abide watching as countless people turned away from Him. He wanted all to experience His love, mercy, and grace, and to attain salvation.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart emphasizes the vastness of God's concern and love for struggling humanity. It serves as a reminder to the sinful and hurting people to trust in His Heart, which so tenderly loves each of us. In the Image of the Sacred Heart, Jesus shows His burning love for us and His desire that we return that love. This calls to mind the Gospel of St. Matthew when the Lord remarks on the mercy He wishes to bestow. He says, "how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing (23:37)."

Brothers and sisters, as we stand today in the midst of this pandemic and other life challenges, Jesus is calling us to trust in His Sacred Heart. Let us pray often to the Sacred Heart of Jesus: "Jesus, I trust in You!" Jesus has opened His Heart for us. He has given His life out of love for us. Now He calls us to entrust our lives to Him — our whole heart, our whole mind, all our feelings and thoughts, our words and actions.

In this month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, let us often repeat some simple little prayer each waking hour of each day for all our loved ones, living and deceased. And let us include all those who have no one to pray for them, especially priests, religious, and victims of neglect or abandonment. Let us draw from the Heart of Jesus the spiritual food and drink for our life so that, nourished by Christ, we are new persons, transformed in depth by this divine love.

Like the love of Jesus, our love should have no bounds.