

THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

The Solemnity of the Sacred Heart is celebrated throughout the world on the Friday following the Feast of Corpus Christi. Every year, 19 days after Pentecost, the Catholic Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Devotion to the wounded heart of Jesus has its origins in the eleventh century, when pious Christians meditated on the Five Wounds of Christ. There grew up among the faithful prayers to the Sacred Heart, prayers to the Shoulder Wound of Christ—private devotions which helped Christians to focus on the passion and death of Christ. It was not until 1670, however, that a French priest, Fr. Jean Eudes, celebrated the first Feast of the Sacred Heart. Around the same time, a pious sister by the name of Margaret Mary Alacoque began to report visions of Jesus. He appeared to her frequently, and in December 1673, he permitted Margaret Mary to rest her head upon His Heart. As she experienced the comfort of His presence, Jesus told her of His great love and explained that He had chosen her to make His love and His goodness known to all. The following year, in June of 1674, Margaret Mary reported that Jesus wanted to be honoured under the figure of His Heart of Flesh. He asked the faithful to receive Him in the Eucharist frequently, especially on the First Friday of the month, and to observe a Holy Hour of devotion to Him. And then in 1675, during the octave of Corpus Christi, Margaret Mary received the vision which came to be known as the “great apparition.” Jesus asked that the Feast of the Sacred Heart be celebrated yearly in reparation for sins against His Sacred Heart. The devotion became popular after St. Margaret Mary’s death in 1690. However, because the Church is always careful in approving a private apparition or devotion, the feast was not established as an official feast until May 8, 1873, when the Devotion to the Sacred Heart was formally approved by Pope Pius IX.

The Promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to St. Margaret Mary

- (1) I will give them all the graces necessary in their state of life.
- (2) I will establish peace in their homes.
- (3) I will comfort them in all their afflictions.
- (4) I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all, in death.
- (5) I will bestow abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.
- (6) Sinners will find in my Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
- (7) Lukewarm souls shall become fervent.
- (8) Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.
- (9) I will bless every place in which an image of my Heart is exposed 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.
- (12) I promise you in the excessive mercy of my Heart that my all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the First Fridays in nine consecutive months the grace of final perseverance; they shall not die in my disgrace, nor without receiving their sacraments. My divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment.”



IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

The Immaculate Heart of Mary was honoured to some degree prior to the 17th century, but St. John Eudes, a 17th-century French priest, popularized this devotion with his great love of the Blessed Mother. What is the First Saturday devotion?

Part of the Fátima message is that God is asking us to make reparation for the sins of the world.

The Angel in 1916 taught the children prayers of reparation and asked them to do penance.

The Blessed Virgin also called for prayers and acts of reparation, and, on July 13, 1917, she promised that she would return to request a special kind of reparation. She did this in 1929, appearing to Lucia, stating “Look, my daughter, at my Heart, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful ones pierce me every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You at least try to console me and say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me.”

