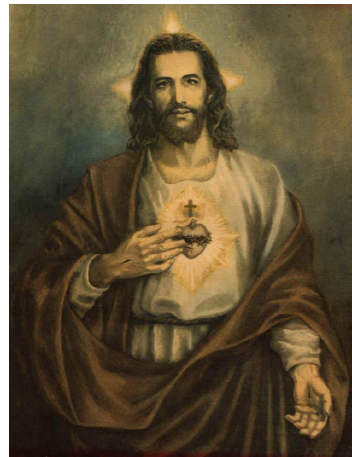


DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS



Information from *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart*, by Rev. Fr Francis Larkin, SS.CC., published by The Daughters of St Paul, 1978, and *Pocket Dictionary of Saints*, abridged edition, by John J. Delaney, Published by Doubleday, New York, 1983. Prayers from the Roman Ritual.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus has always been part of the Catholic Church's devotions from the earliest times. However, in order to establish fully and entirely the worship of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to spread it throughout the whole world, God Himself chose as His instrument a most humble virgin from the Order of the Visitation, St Margaret Mary Alacoque.

St Margaret Mary Alacoque

St Margaret Mary Alacoque was born on 22nd July 1647 at L'Hauteclerc, Burgundy, France. Her father was a royal notary and also served as a judge. Margaret's godmother was a lady of the nobility proving that her family was held in high esteem. At the age of four Margaret was sent to her godmother's castle where she lived for some time. The castle had a chapel and here the pious child spent long hours kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament. Margaret's love for the Holy Eucharist was so great that when she could not be found in the castle one need only look in the chapel to find her. Margaret also had a tender devotion to Our Blessed Mother and prayed her Rosary fervently.

She was sent to the Poor Clares' school when she was eight on the death of her father. She was bedridden for five years with rheumatic fever until she was fifteen. She refused marriage and in 1671 she entered the Visitation convent at Paray-le-Monial. She was professed the next year.

On November 6, 1672 Sister Margaret Mary made her vows. She was an excellent religious and was perfectly obedient. At times during her life as a religious Sister Margaret Mary worked in the infirmary and also was in charge of the little girls who attended the school at the convent. Along with her intense spirit of prayer was a great amount of penance. She fasted much, she mortified her thirst and she put pieces of wood and even pieces of broken pots in her bed.

Sister Margaret Mary's great love was the Blessed Sacrament. The sisters always knew where to find her, before the tabernacle. On Sundays and feasts, when she had more free time, she spent almost the entire day kneeling, immobile before the Blessed Sacrament.

Since the time of her profession in 1672, St Margaret Mary experienced the "actual and continuous" presence of our Lord. Most of the apparitions took place while the saint was kneeling in adoration behind the grille in the nun's choir, or after Holy Communion. Thus they have a Eucharistic setting.

St Margaret Mary Alacoque died at Paray-le-Monial, 43 years old, on 17th October 1690, and was canonised a saint in 1920. Her memorial is celebrated on 16th October.

At Paray-le-Monial, France, in the Visitation chapel, took place the numerous apparitions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The four principal ones occurred on 27th December 1673, two in 1674, and one on 16th June 1675, when Christ requested the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

THE FIRST APPARITION

Feast of St. John, the Beloved Apostle, December 27, 1673.

The Saint herself related: "One day, having a little more leisure, for the occupations confided to me left me scarcely any, I was praying before the Blessed Sacrament when I felt myself wholly penetrated with that Divine Presence, but to such a degree that I lost all thought of myself and of the place where I was and abandoned myself to this Divine Spirit, yielding up my heart to the power of His love. He made me repose for a long time upon His sacred breast, where He disclosed to me the marvels of His love and the inexplicable secrets of His Sacred Heart, which so far He had concealed from me. Then it was, that, for the first time, He revealed to me His Divine Heart in a manner so real and sensible as to be beyond all doubt, by reason of the effects which this favour produced in me. . . It seems to me that this is what took place: 'My Divine Heart,' He said, 'is so inflamed with love for men, and for you in particular that, being unable any longer to contain within Itself the flames of Its burning Charity, It must spread them abroad by thy means and manifest Itself to them [mankind] in order to enrich them with the precious treasures which I reveal to you and which contain graces of sanctification and salvation necessary to withdraw them from the abyss of perdition. I have chosen you for the accomplishment of this great design.' "

"After this He asked me for my heart, which I begged Him to take. He did so and placed it in His own adorable Heart where He showed it to me as a little atom which was being consumed in this great furnace and withdrawing it from His Heart it was like a burning flame in the form of a heart, He restored it to the place where He had taken it saying: 'See, My well-beloved, I give you a precious token of My love, having enclosed within your side a little spark of its glowing flames, that it may serve you for a heart and consume you to the last moment of your life; its ardour will never be exhausted. . . As a proof that the great favour I have done for you is not of your imagination, and that it is the foundation of all those which I intend further to confer upon you, although I have closed the wound in your side, the pain will always remain. If before you have taken only the name of My slave, I now give you that of the beloved disciple of My Sacred Heart.' "

THE SECOND APPARITION

1673 - 1674.

St. Margaret Mary states: "After that I saw this divine Heart as on a throne of flames, more brilliant than the sun and as transparent as crystal. It had its adorable wound and was encircled with a crown of thorns, which signifies the pain our sins caused Him. It was surmounted by a cross which signified that, from the first moment of His Incarnation, that is, from the time this Sacred Heart was formed, the cross was planted in It; that It was filled from the very first moment with all the bitterness, humiliations, poverty, sorrow and contempt His sacred humanity would have to suffer during the whole course of His life and during His holy Passion.

"He made me understand that the ardent desire He had of being loved by men and of drawing them from the path of perdition into which Satan was hurrying them in great numbers had caused Him to fix upon this plan of manifesting His Heart to men, together with all its treasures of love, mercy, grace, sanctification and salvation. This He did in order that those who were willing to do all in their power to render and to procure for Him honour, love and glory might be enriched abundantly, even profusely, with these divine treasures of the Heart of God, which is their source.

"It must be honoured under the symbol of this Heart of flesh, whose image He wished to be publicly exposed. He wanted me to carry it on my person, over my heart, that He might imprint His love there, fill my heart with all the gifts with which His own is filled, and destroy all inordinate affections.

Wherever this sacred image would be exposed for veneration He would pour forth His graces and blessings. This devotion was as a last effort of His love which wished to favour men in these last centuries with this loving redemption, in order to withdraw them from the empire of Satan, which He intended to destroy, and in order to put us under the sweet empire of His love. This He would establish in the hearts of all those who would embrace this devotion."

THE THIRD APPARITION 1674.

The second great revelation of the Sacred Heart occurred sometime in 1674. We do not know the exact date. St Margaret Mary states: "On one occasion, while the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, feeling wholly withdrawn within myself by an extraordinary recollection of all my senses and powers, Jesus Christ, my sweet Master, presented Himself to me, all resplendent with glory, His Five Wounds shining like so many suns. Flames issued from every part of His sacred humanity, especially from His adorable breast, which resembled an open furnace and He disclosed to me His most loving and most amiable Heart, which was the living source of these flames. It was then that He made known to me the ineffable marvels of His pure love and showed me to what an excess He had loved men, from whom He received only ingratitude and contempt. 'I feel this more,' He said, 'than all that I suffered during My Passion. If only they would make me some return for My love, I would think but little of all I have done for them and would wish, were it possible, to suffer still more. But the sole return they make for all My eagerness to do them good is to reject me and treat me with coldness. Do you at least console me by supplying for their ingratitude, as far as you are able.'

On my representing to Him my inability, He replied: 'Behold, this will supply for all that is wanting to you.' And at the same time, His Divine Heart being opened, there issued from It a flame so ardent that I thought I should be consumed, for I was wholly penetrated with it, and being no longer able to bear it, I besought Him to have pity on my weakness. 'I will be your strength,' He said to me, 'fear nothing, but be attentive to my voice and to what I shall require of you that you may be in the requisite dispositions for the accomplishment of my designs.

In the first place you shall **receive me in Holy Communion as often as obedience will permit you.** You shall, moreover, **receive Holy Communion on the First Friday of each month.** Every night **between Thursday and Friday** I will make you share in the mortal sadness which I was pleased to feel in the Garden of Olives, and this sadness, without your being able to understand it, shall reduce you to a kind of agony harder to endure than death itself. And in order to accompany me in the humble prayer that I then offered to my Father in the midst of my anguish, **you shall rise between eleven o'clock and midnight and remain prostrate with me for an hour,** not only to appease the divine anger by begging mercy for sinners, but also to mitigate in some way the bitterness which I felt at that time on finding myself abandoned by my apostles, which obliged me to reproach them for not being able to watch one hour with me. During that hour you shall do what I shall teach you.

But listen, my daughter, believe not lightly and trust not every spirit, for Satan is enraged and will seek to deceive you. Therefore do nothing without the approval of those who guide you; by being under the authority of obedience, his efforts against you will be in vain, for he has no power over the obedient.' "

It was after this revelation that St. Margaret Mary was to meet and be guided by the great Jesuit priest, Bl. Claude de la Colombiere.

THE FOURTH OR "GREAT" APPARITION June, 1675.

It was in June of 1675 that the fourth revelation took place. St. Margaret Mary wrote: "Being before the Blessed Sacrament one day of Its octave [the eight days after the Feast of Corpus Christi], I received from my God special tokens of His love, and felt urged with the desire of making Him some return and of rendering Him love for love. 'You cannot make me a greater return of love,' He said,

'than by doing what I have so often asked of you.' Then, revealing to me His Divine Heart, He said: '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 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. But what I feel the most keenly is that it is hearts which are consecrated to me that treat me like this. Therefore, I ask of you that the Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi be set apart for a special feast to honour my heart, by receiving holy communion on that day and making reparation to it by a solemn act in order to make amends for the indignities which it has received during the time it has been exposed on the altars. I promise you that my heart shall expand itself to shed in abundance the influence of its divine love upon those who shall likewise honour it and cause it to be honoured.' "

Feast of the Sacred Heart

The Apostolic See approved the liturgical feast before it approved the writings of St Margaret Mary, as such, private revelation was not the source of the approval of this devotion. The Sacred Congregation of Rites by a decree of the 25th January 1765, and approved by Pope Clement on 6th February of the same year, granted the liturgical celebration of the feast to the Polish bishops and to what was called the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at Rome. The celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus was extended to the universal Church by decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites of the 23rd of August 1856, by Pope Pius IX, and ordered it to be fittingly observed. The Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart is celebrated on the Friday following the Second Sunday after Pentecost. This is closely followed by the memorial celebration of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, on the Saturday following the Second Sunday after Pentecost.

Bl Claude de la Colombiere S.J.

Bl Fr Claude de la Colombiere S.J. was born at St Symphorien, France, 2nd February, 1641. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1658, and was ordained 6th April, 1669. In 1675 he was appointed Rector of the Jesuit house in the little town of Paray-le-Monial. There he also became the spiritual director and confidant of St Margaret Mary Alacoque, and an unflagging apostle of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He was sent to England in 1676 to be the chaplain to the Catholic Duchess of York. Eventually he was briefly imprisoned and then banished from the kingdom due to anti-Catholic persecution. He arrived in France in January 1679, his health shattered. Bl de la Colombiere died of tuberculosis in Paray-le-Monial in 1682. After his death, St Margaret Mary prayed to him with great confidence. To a priest she wrote: "You must turn to His faithful friend, the good Father la Colombiere, to whom God has given great power and to whom He has entrusted, so to say, all that concerns this devotion (to the Sacred Heart). I confess to you confidently that I have received great help from him".

THE 12 PROMISES OF JESUS TO THOSE WHO ARE DEVOTED TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

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 on all their undertakings.
6. Sinners will find in My Heart the source and the infinite ocean of mercy.
7. By devotion to My Heart tepid souls will grow fervent.
8. Fervent souls will quickly mount to high perfection.
9. I will bless every place where a picture of my Heart shall be set up and honoured.
10. I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.
11. Those who promote this devotion shall have their names written in My Heart never to be blotted out.
12. I promise you, in the excessive mercy of my Heart, that my all-powerful love will grant the grace of final penitence (repentance) to those who receive Holy Communion on the first Friday of nine consecutive months. They shall not die in my displeasure nor without their sacraments, and in those last moments My Heart shall be a safe refuge for them.

THE THREE THINGS REQUIRED FOR DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

1. Promote devotion to the Sacred Heart.
2. Frequent Communion especially on first Fridays.
3. Set up a picture of the Sacred Heart in the home and honour it.

ST. MARGARET MARY'S CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS:

"O Sacred Heart of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to Thee I consecrate and offer up my person and my life, my actions, trials and sufferings, that my entire being may henceforth only be employed in loving, honouring and glorifying Thee. This is my irrevocable will, to belong entirely to Thee, and to do all for Thy love, renouncing with my whole heart all that can displease Thee.

"I take Thee, O Sacred Heart, for the sole object of my love, the protection of my life, the pledge of my salvation, the remedy of my frailty and inconstancy, the reparation for all the defects of my life, and my secure refuge at the hour of my death. . . I fear all from my own weakness and malice, but placing my entire confidence in Thee, O Heart of Love, I hope for all from Thine infinite goodness. Annihilate in me all that can displease or resist Thee. Imprint Thy pure love so deeply in my heart that I may never forget Thee or be separated from Thee. I beseech Thee, through Thine infinite goodness, grant that my name be engraved on Thy Heart for in this I place all my happiness and all my glory, to live and to die as one of Thy devoted servants. Amen.

LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father in heaven, **have mercy on us.*

*(*After each invocation: "have mercy on us.")*

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God, the Holy Spirit,

Holy Trinity, one God,

Heart of Jesus, Son of the eternal Father,

Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mother,

Heart of Jesus, substantially united to the Word of God,

Heart of Jesus, infinite in majesty,

Heart of Jesus, sacred temple of God,

Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High,

Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven,

Heart of Jesus, aflame with love for men,

Heart of Jesus, abode of justice and love,

Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and love,

Heart of Jesus, endless source of all virtues,

Heart of Jesus, worthy of all praise,

Heart of Jesus, King and centre of all hearts,

Heart of Jesus, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,

Heart of Jesus, in whom dwells the fullness of divinity,

Heart of Jesus, in whom the Father was well pleased,

Heart of Jesus, of whose fullness we have all received,

Heart of Jesus, desire of the everlasting hills,

Heart of Jesus, patient and merciful,

Heart of Jesus, enriching all who call upon you,

Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness,

Heart of Jesus, atonement for our sins,

Heart of Jesus, loaded down with opprobrium,

Heart of Jesus, bruised for our offences,

Heart of Jesus, obedient unto death,

Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance,

Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation,

Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection,

Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation,

Heart of Jesus, victim for sin,

Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who trust in you,

Heart of Jesus, hope of those who die in you,

Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints, *have mercy on us.*

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, *spare us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, *graciously hear us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, *have mercy on us.*

P: Jesus, meek and humble of heart.

All: *Let our hearts resemble yours.*

Let us pray.

Almighty everlasting God, look upon the heart of your dearly beloved Son, and upon the praise and satisfaction He offers you in the name of sinners and for those who seek your mercy. Be appeased, and grant us pardon in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you forever and ever.

All: Amen.

HOME ENTHRONEMENT OF THE SACRED HEART

His Eminence Albert Cardinal Meyer, in a televised talk given on May 31, 1964, said: "The enthronement of the Sacred Heart in a home is not just a pretty ceremony once performed and then forgotten. It is a way of life. It is the official and social recognition of the loving kingship of the Heart of Jesus in a Christian family." The Cardinal also noted that the presence of a priest is not necessary at the enthronement; that the father of the family may conduct the ceremony; but that if a priest were present he could bless the picture or statue of the Sacred Heart during the rite. The present suggested ceremony may be adapted according to circumstances, depending on whether a priest or the father of the family presides at the enthronement.

On entering the home the priest sprinkles holy water in the living room and on the members of the family, saying:

Purify me with hyssop, Lord, and I shall be clean of sin. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Have mercy on me, God in your great kindness. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

All: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All: Who made heaven and earth.

P: Lord, heed my prayer.

All: And let my cry be heard by you.

P: The Lord be with you.

All: May He also be with you.

Let us pray.

Hear us, holy Lord and Father, almighty everlasting God, and in your goodness send your holy angel from heaven to watch over and protect all who live in this home, to be with them and give them comfort and encouragement; through Christ our Lord. All: Amen.

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, as I, in all humility, enter this home, let there enter with me abiding happiness and God's choicest blessings. Let serene joy pervade this home and charity abound here and health never fail. Let no evil spirits approach this place but drive them far away. Let your angels of peace take over and put down all wicked strife. Teach us, O Lord, to recognise the majesty of your holy name. Sanctify our humble visit and bless + what we are about to do; you who are holy, you who are kind, you who abide with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Prayer To The Sacred Heart

Lord Jesus Christ, we acknowledge you as King of the universe. All that has been made exists for your glory. Exercise over us your sovereign rights. We now renew the promises of our baptism; we again renounce Satan and all his works and attractions; we again promise to lead a truly Christian life. And in a very special way we undertake to bring about the triumph of your rights and the rights of your Church. Sacred Heart of Jesus, we offer you our poor actions to obtain that all men acknowledge your sacred kingly power. May the kingdom of your peace be firmly established throughout the world.

All: Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, who, while you were subject to Mary and Joseph, sanctified family life by your unexcelled virtues; grant that we, aided by Mary and Joseph, may be inspired by the example of your holy family, and so attain the happiness of living with them in heaven. We ask this of you who live and reign forever and ever. All: Amen.

Lastly the priest blesses the family:

May the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son, + and Holy Spirit, come upon you and remain with you forever. All: Amen.

PERSONAL PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

O most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Fountain of all good, I adore You, I love You, and sincerely repenting of my sins I offer You my poor heart. Give it back to me humble, patient, pure, and in everything conformed to Your wishes.

Grant, O good Jesus, that I may live in You and for You. Protect me in dangers, comfort me in afflictions, give me health of body, assistance in my temporal needs, Your blessing in all my works, and the grace of a holy death. Amen.

EFFICACIOUS NOVENA TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

N.B. This novena prayer was recited everyday by St Padre Pio for all those who asked his prayers.

I) O my Jesus, You said "Verily I say to you, ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you", behold I knock, I seek and I ask for the grace of . . .

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

II) O my Jesus, You said "Verily I say to you, whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it to you", behold in Your name I ask the Father for the grace of . . .

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, . . . etc.

III) O my Jesus, You said, "Verily I say to you, Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words will not pass away", behold encourage by Your infallible words, I now ask for the grace of . . .

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, . . . etc.

Sacred Heart of Jesus I place all my Trust in you.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, to whom one thing alone is impossible, namely, not to have compassion on the afflicted, have pity on us miserable sinners, and grant us the grace we ask of You through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Your and our tender mother. Amen.

Hail Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, hail our life, our sweetness and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, O most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus; O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God; that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus, pray for us.



