

Sacred Heart Novena

Pray for 9 consecutive days

Day 1

The word "heart" is a strong word and a beautiful one. "Take heart!" we say, when we want a man to pick up courage. "He gave her his heart," we say, when a man gives to a woman his pure love. With perfect understanding, we talk of a motherly heart...of a man who puts heart into his work...of the innocent heart of a child...of the pulsing heart of a city. What more natural then, that when Christ the Saviour revealed Himself once more to humanity, He should borrow our word, knowing that it would ring with complete familiarity? "Behold the heart that hath loved men so much," He cried, indicating His Own Heart. And men of good heart and of loving heart answered, "Indeed, we know how much You have loved us."

To the Savior who revealed Himself to the world that needs love, we pray:

O God, Who in the heart of Thy Son, wounded by our sins, dost deign mercifully to bestow upon us the infinite treasures of Thy love, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who now pay Him the devout homage of our piety, may also perform the duty of worthy satisfaction. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Day 2

Ours is a gracious God of love, of that there is no slightest doubt. God the Father created the world lovingly and tenderly. The long passages of the ages--a flash of God's eternity--were spent in the preparation of a beautiful, convenient, well-stocked earth to be man's dwelling place. The newly made creatures, made to the image and likeness of the Heavenly Father, He adopted as His sons and daughters.

When in dark rebellion, these sons and daughters revolted, "God so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son that...the world may be saved." The love story of God is written anew in the star of Bethlehem, the smile of the Child Jesus, His hidden life of service to Mary and to the villagers of Nazareth, the miracles and parables of His public life, the death by which Christ laid down His life for His friends.

Then, on the wings of wind and in the symbolic form of flame, the Spirit of love came to dwell in human souls, divine love taking up its residence in the men and the women that God had loved into life, loved unto death, loved to their own sanctification.

Before the three Persons of the Trinity, Who love us with a divine love, we kneel and pray:



O God, Who in the heart of Thy Son, wounded by our sins, dost deign mercifully to bestow upon us the infinite treasures of Thy love, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who now pay Him the devout homage of our piety, may also perform the duty of worthy satisfaction. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Day 3

Christ of the tender and loving heart... The Infant heart that beat with the impulse of love on Christmas...

The heart that yearned over the world, which was dark in ignorance and wandering in sin...

The heart that leaped in response to the love of Mary and knew the warmth of a devoted Son for the foster father who guarded Him tenderly...

The heart that could hardly wait for the beginnings of His work over the lost multitudes... The heart of the Good Shepherd searching for His lost sheep...

The heart that speaks in the poetry of the parables and the strength of the sermons... The heart that yearned for sinners and drove the Saviour questing for them far into the night...

The heart that raised the widow's son from death...

The heart that selected twelve men as intimate friends and then responded gratefully to the love of the innocent John...

The heart that poured itself out in miracles of healing and forgiveness and mercy and loving kindness...

This is the Sacred Heart of the historic Savior. To this Heart we pray:

O God, Who in the heart of Thy Son, wounded by our sins, dost deign mercifully to bestow upon us the infinite treasures of Thy love, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who now pay Him the devout homage of our piety, may also perform the duty of worthy satisfaction. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Day 4

The heart of the Saviour broke during the course of the Passion. The paschal moon that shone with fierce brilliance over the garden was like a searchlight beating upon the sins of the parading world.

Christ saw that world, knew its horror and vileness, and broke into a bloody sweat. Yet that Heart held Him captive when the traitor came and made Him call the betrayer "friend." Upon the loving Savior, bound, not with cords and chains, but by His heartstrings, fell the blows of the scourging, the mockery of the mob, the spittle of the soldiers, the awful humiliation of public rejection. It was His Heart rather than His Head that was crowned with thorns.

Upon the cross, it was His Heart that held Him fast. He loved us and delivered Himself for us. He bore our bruises and our infirmities. Greater love than this no man hath, that He die for His executioners. And that the last drop of love might flow out and the lowest and meanest of His sinners might find safe entrance to His Heart.

He offers that Heart to the lance of the centurion. In the cleft of His Heart, as in the cleft of a rock, the penitent world has found warmth, safety, and protection.

Before the suffering Christ of love, we pray:

O God, Who in the heart of Thy Son, wounded by our sins,

dost deign mercifully to bestow upon us the infinite treasures of Thy love, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who now pay Him the devout homage of our piety, may also perform the duty of worthy satisfaction. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Day 5

The ages roll swiftly along their course. God's love for His creatures is undying. The love of Christ lives on in the Mass and in the sacraments and in His abiding Presence upon the altar and in the soul. But men are fickle. Doubt is a cold and chilling thing.

The hot flame of passion has a way of dying down to the dark, cold, dusty ashes of bitterness and despair. So it was that into an age when men taught the denial of God's love, when they rejected His Presence on the altar, or forbade believers to approach the altar, the God of love came again.

A little nun, holy and loving, knelt in her Visitation Convent. Margaret Mary, she was called. The combination of the two names has become music to the Catholic world ever since that time.

On the altar before her was the vision of the loving Christ. There was shown the tortured, flaming Heart. There were spoken such words of pathetic beauty, of such divine yearning, of dignity combined with passion that only God could have said them. *"Behold the Heart that has loved men so much and has been loved so little in return."*

Beholding that Heart, we kneel adoringly to pray:

O God, Who in the heart of Thy Son, wounded by our sins, dost deign mercifully to bestow upon us the infinite treasures of Thy love, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who now pay Him the devout homage of our piety, may also perform the duty of worthy satisfaction. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Day 6

As the symbol of love, Christ had chosen the heart, the favorite symbol of human speech. It was His human heart, still pierced with the spear of Calvary, still open to welcome returning sinners. Around that Heart was twined the crown of thorns; for though Christ is indeed King, He is a King Who won His kingdom along the bloody course of love.

From the Heart leap up living flames. They are like the tongues of fire that descended upon the apostles when the Spirit of love came to inflame them for the apostolate. These flames are restless, as love is always restless; but while, like fire, they warm and light, they do not burn or destroy or even smudge.

A tiny cross, that unfailing symbol of God's love even unto death, surmounts the Heart. Poetry has known that a sequence of sonnets could not say what a single glimpse of this Heart reveals! Catholics everywhere have looked upon the Heart of the Savior and have known that it was offered to them. God's Heart was theirs for the asking, theirs if only they would give their own worthless hearts in exchange.

Before the symbol of the Sacred Heart, we pray:

O God, Who in the heart of Thy Son, wounded by our sins, dost deign mercifully to bestow upon us the infinite treasures of Thy love, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who now pay Him the devout homage of our piety, may also perform the duty of worthy satisfaction. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Day 7

Love is always generous. It gives without the prospect of reward.

It asks only to give in a flooding desire to be lavishly generous. Much as the Heart of the Saviour had during His public life sought love and responded to love and been divinely grateful for the slightest sign of love, that Heart always thought first in terms of giving...giving...and more giving.

Miracles for the needy, forgiveness for the sinful, faith for those in darkness, hope for the despairing - these were the outpourings of the Heart of the Savior.

Now again He speaks, this time to promise the sweet gifts of His love. To those who love Him,

assurance of eternal salvation.

To those who honor a picture of Him, peace in their households and blessings upon their family.

His reward for little acts of devotion just before death.

His Presence in the Blessed Sacrament.

Favors, gifts - promises made out of the greatness of His love - to anyone who will show some little signs of love for Him.

With that vision, the great devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, old as Christianity itself but new in its present manifestation, moves in the wind-fed fire of love across the earth.

Loving the Lover of our souls, we pray:

O God, Who in the heart of Thy Son, wounded by our sins, dost deign mercifully to bestow upon us the infinite treasures of Thy love, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who now pay Him the devout homage of our piety, may also perform the duty of worthy satisfaction. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Day 8

"Behold the Heart that has loved men so much and that has been loved so little in return." It is upon the second half of the Savior's statement that the loving Christian focuses his attention.

We have known always the love of God. We have tried not to remember the lovelessness of men and women. With love for everyone and for everything, now as on the first Christmas, no love remains for Christ. With love walking in a thousand cheap disguises, as it did even during the climax of love on Calvary, love passes by without a nod to the victim of love.

That is why the Savior Himself asked loving souls for a little reparation. *"Make up,"* He pleads, *"for the millions who do not love Me. Tell Me at least that you wish sinners would stop their sin, and the faithful in name would become faithful in fact, and the sins committed in the ugly travesty on love would cease to kill the human power of love."*

"Consecrate yourself," He begs, *"to my Heart. Dedicate your homes and your children to My loving protection. Spend at least an occasional hour with Me."*

We consecrate ourselves to the loving Christ and pray:

O God, Who in the heart of Thy Son, wounded by our sins, dost deign mercifully to bestow upon us the infinite treasures of Thy love, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who now pay Him the devout homage of our piety, may also perform the duty of worthy satisfaction. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Day 9

Christ of the Sacred Heart, Christ of the Blessed Sacrament--these two are identical. Devotion to the Sacred Heart is inseparably linked to devotion to the Holy Eucharist. Love for the Sacred Heart must inevitably lead to the tabernacle.

Host and Heart are equally manifestations of the love of the Savior for saints and sinners. The impulse of love in the Heart of the Savior made inevitable the promise of the Eucharist, which climaxed the love feast of the loaves and the fishes. Love in the wonderful evening before His Passion, when love was the sole subject of His speech, inevitably passed beyond words and became bread made Flesh and wine made Blood, with the guarantee that never would He leave us orphans.

That is why in His revelation

to Saint Margaret Mary, Christ speaks of Holy Communion, that close union of the human soul with the divine. That is why He asks that on the first Friday we come to welcome Him.

That is why He begs that on our knees before His loving Presence in the tabernacle, we remember that the love of Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Before the Eucharistic Heart of Christ, we kneel and pray:

O God, Who in the heart of Thy Son, wounded by our sins, dost deign mercifully to bestow upon us the infinite treasures of Thy love, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who now pay Him the devout homage of our piety, may also perform the duty of worthy satisfaction. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

Taken from a pamphlet written by Daniel A. Lord, S.J., © 1947.

Nihil Obstat: John M Fearn, S.T.D.

Imprimatur: Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York

O Lord Jesus Christ, to Your most Sacred Heart, I confide this intention (state it). Only look upon me, then do what Your love inspires. Let Your Sacred Heart decide... I count on You... I trust in You... I throw myself on Your mercy. Lord, Jesus, You will not fail me.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I trust in You.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I believe in Your love for me.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, Your kingdom come.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I have asked You for many favors, but I earnestly implore this one. Take it, place it in Your open Heart. When the Eternal Father looks upon it, He will see it covered with Your Precious Blood. It will be no longer my prayer, but Yours, Jesus. Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in You. Let me not be disappointed. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, we consecrate ourselves to Your divine Heart, with all that we are and have. We give You our thoughts, words, actions, our joys and sufferings of each day. We renew our promise to live as good Christians ever mindful of Your merciful love. Heart of Jesus, we take You as our security in whatever anxieties may assail us. Be our source of comfort and encouragement in every trial. Rule over us as King and Center of our hearts now and forever.

Amen.