

# Society of the Sacred Heart



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## LENT 2015

### Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

*Canon Raphel Ueda, Chaplain of the Oratory of the Immaculate Heart of Mary*

After serving in the Institute of Christ the King's apostolate in Chicago and St. Louis for four years, in October 2014, I was assigned to the apostolate of the institute in San José, California. In 2013, San José Bishop Patrick McGrath erected the Immaculate Heart of Mary Oratory at Five Wounds Portuguese National Church to serve as the center of the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Latin Rite for the diocese and entrusted the ministry of the oratory to priests of the Institute of Christ the King.

Five Wounds Portuguese National Parish was dedicated on November 8, 1914. For a hundred years, this parish has been a source of identity and piety for the over a hundred thousand Portuguese-speaking people who live in California. It was in Portugal in 1917 that Our Blessed Mother appeared to three children in Fatima. Therefore, it is very fitting that the oratory located at Five Wounds Portuguese National Church is dedicated to the Immaculate

Heart of Mary.

The veneration of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is often connected with worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is, however, necessary to indicate a few differences in the devotions to the Heart of Mary and Jesus.

The devotion to the Heart of Jesus is especially directed to the "Divine Heart" as overflowing with God's love for humanity. In the devotion to the Heart of Mary, on the other hand, the attraction is to the love of her heart for Jesus and for the other persons of the Holy Trinity and to her compassionate love for all people.

Scripture gives us several passages about Our Lady's heart. Luke's gospel recounts the prophecy delivered to Mary at Jesus' presentation in the temple, which said that her heart would be pierced with a sword (Luke 2:34–35). This image of the pierced heart is the most popular representation of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart.

St. John's Gospel further invites attention to Mary's heart with its depiction of Mary at the foot of the cross at Jesus' crucifixion. St. Augustine said that Mary was not merely passive at the foot of the cross; she cooperated through charity in the work of our redemption.

Another Scriptural passage from St. Luke, chapter 2 verse 19, helps illustrate another aspect of the heart of Mary, "But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart." So throughout her life, Mary kept all the sayings and doings of Jesus in her heart, and she pondered over them.

In answering the woman who proclaimed His mother blessed, Jesus said, "Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." The Church Fathers understood this as an invitation to seek in Mary that attention and obedience to the word of God that had so endeared her to God and caused her to be selected as the Mother of Jesus.

In modern times, devotion to Mary's Heart has had a great flowering following the manifestation of the Miraculous Medal to St. Catherine Labouré in 1830 in France. The Immaculate Heart is depicted on the Miraculous Medal, pierced by a sword. The Sacred Heart of Jesus also appears on the medal, next to the Immaculate Heart, crowned with thorns. The M on the medal signifies the Blessed Virgin at the foot of the Cross when Jesus was being crucified.



The First Apparition of Our Lady at Fatima, in Portugal, occurred in 1917 just eight days after Pope Benedict XV entreated the Mother of God to intercede for the end of World War I. Our Lady came to the Cova da Iria, just outside the little village of Fatima, and appeared on top of a small holm-oak to three little children: Lucia, Jacinta, and Francesco. Significantly, in this first encounter the Blessed Virgin Mary taught the children about the gravity of sin, which merits temporal punishment; the reality of Grace by which we are given the vision of God, and the efficacy of the daily recitation of the Rosary to bring about world peace. The expression "Alliance of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary" was spoken by Pope John Paul II. He urged Catholics to unite with the "admirable alliance" of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Our Lady's question to the three children is also significant for those who wish to enter into the admirable alliance of hearts like them: "Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the suffering He wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and of supplication for the conversion of sinners?"

Our Lady of Fatima asked that, in reparation for sins committed against her Immaculate Heart, that on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, a Catholic should do the following: go to Confession; receive Holy Communion; recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep her company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary. She promised that whoever would ever do this would be given at the hour of his death the graces necessary for salvation.

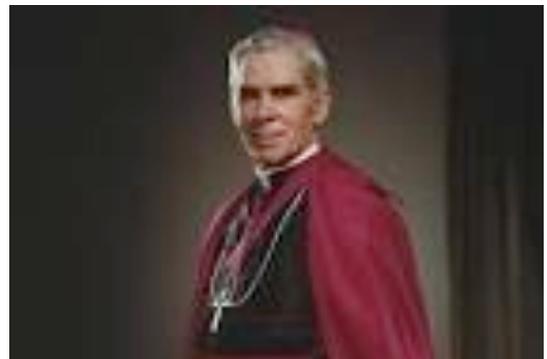
To Lucia, Our Lady of Fatima gave the mission of remaining in the world to establish devotion to Her Immaculate Heart. She promised Lucia: "My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God."

Prayer, penance and courageous sacrifices are inseparable from the life of Our Blessed Mother. Dear faithful, let us offer our prayers, penances and sacrifices during this Lent uniting our hearts with the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

## **Becoming Rich in Holiness**

Fulton J. Sheen, *Manifestations of Christ*

Sanctity is not a question of relinquishing or giving up something for Christ: It is a question of exchange. In the spiritual world, I learn that there are many things that I can get along without, and as I grow in acquaintance with Christ, I find that I can get along without sin, but I cannot get along without his peace of conscience, and so I exchange one for the other. I find by a still deeper acquaintance that I can get along without the world's goods, but not without the wealth of Christ's grace, and so I exchange one for the other...Thus, the saint goes on exchanging one thing for another. And this it is that in making himself poor, he becomes rich, and in making himself a slave, he becomes free.



## St. Thomas Aquinas

By Canon Benoit Jayr, Rector of St. Stanislaus, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

We will celebrate on March 7th the Feast of St. Thomas of Aquinas. This saint is not a tremendously popular one, like say St. Therese the Little Flower or St. Nicholas. He did not tend to the sick or convert savages, he did not make birds sing nor did he die by being swallowed by a lion. Rather, his life was one of consecrated religious life. He was a religious, a priest, a Dominican preacher who traveled far and wide. Saint Thomas Aquinas is known to be a great philosopher and a theologian. We admire from a distance this prince of thought, a doctor of the Church, his exceptional spirit, this powerful writer.

Why then? Because St. Thomas Aquinas is a modest man. He doesn't worry about himself. His only interest is God, whom his soul desires alone, to whom he has given his entire life : the living God, Christ Our Savior. Thomas does not speak about his own path towards God; He speaks only about God. This was his strength, but for us today this strength appears to the world like a weakness. To discover Thomas Aquinas, we must listen to him when he sings about the Eucharist. "Sing, my tongue, the mystery of this glorious body, of this precious blood, which the king of nations, the son of the Virgin poured forth to pay for this world".



This is how the Pange Lingua begins. We understand how we must lift our intellect in the liturgy and turn our reasoning toward singing divine praises, and words into music. Here St. Thomas' theology becomes poetry through which he manifests the intensity of his love for God.

One day Jesus appeared to Thomas who was busy working. "Thomas," Jesus says, "you have spoken well of me, what do you wish as your reward?" Thomas responds, "*Non, nisi te, Domine*"... "*Nothing except Thee, O Lord.*" His reward is Jesus Himself. In response to the question: what is the final goal of Christian life, the author of the Summa Theologica makes the follow response "to discover Christ face to face in heaven."

For St. Thomas, Christ is given personally and intimately in the Eucharist. "The Eucharist," St. Thomas tells us, "differs from the other six sacraments in that it is not only a sign of the grace of God but contains even more so the author of this same grace." When he speaks of Holy Communion, he does not say "to receive the body of Christ," but rather "to receive Christ" and even "to receive God." In Heaven, we will be fully united to Christ, but what makes this friendship very special is that Jesus does not want to make us wait too long. This union is given to us, now, in the sacrament of the Eucharist, while waiting to see Christ face to face.

Often St. Thomas Aquinas is portrayed as having a sun over his chest. This sun is a mystical monstrance and the sun of the Eucharist, because the Eucharist warms, enlightens, nourishes and transforms us. That is why during adoration, our regard upon the Sacred Host calls for a deeper union with Christ.

"O sacred banquet!" sings St. Thomas, "in which Christ is received, the memory of his passion is renewed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory to us is given." The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass brings us therefore into eternity. Here we are given Christ in person, not only his grace but also more intimately Jesus Christ himself.

The Word of God manifested himself in the Incarnation, in which the Virgin Mary was his first monstrance. The Holy Eucharist makes us in turn little monstrances. Christ is in us and we live in Him. Jesus awaits His adorers both in body and spirit. We must then rediscover this savor of the Eucharist and rekindle our love for the Holy Mass.

But how? In the same manner as how your appetite grows when eating, so too does the love of the Eucharist grow when you come to adore Him.



### **G.K. Chesterton, *Saint Thomas Aquinas***

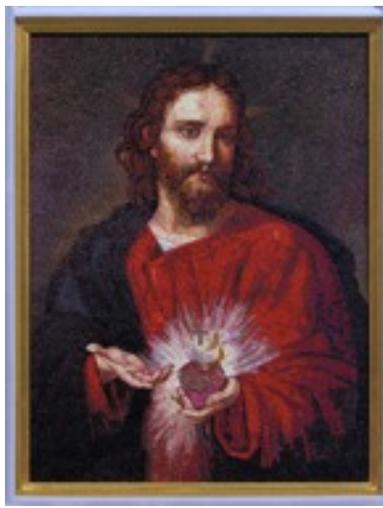
“We might even say that the one thing which separates a saint from ordinary men is his readiness to be one with ordinary men. In this sense the word ordinary must be understood in its native and noble meaning; which is connected to the word order.”

## Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas Before Communion

Almighty and eternal God, behold, I approach the Sacrament of Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I approach as one who is sick to the physician of life, as one unclean to the fountain of mercy, as one blind to the light of eternal brightness, as one poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth. Therefore I beseech Thee, of Thine infinite goodness, to heal my sickness, to wash away my filth, to enlighten my blindness, to enrich my poverty, and to clothe my nakedness, that I may receive the Bread of angels, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords with such reverence and humility, with such contrition and devotion, with such purity and faith, with such purpose and intention, as may conduce to the salvation of my soul. Grant, I beseech Thee, that I may receive not only the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord, but also the fruit and virtue of this Sacrament. O most indulgent God, grant me so to receive the Body of Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, which He took of the Virgin Mary, that I may be found worthy to be incorporated with His mystical body and numbered among His members. O most loving Father, grant that I may one day contemplate for ever, face to face. Thy beloved Son, whom now on my pilgrimage I am about to receive under the sacramental veils; who liveth and reigneth with Thee God, world without end. Amen.

## Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas After Communion

I give Thee thanks, O holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God, who hast vouchsafed, not for any merits of mine, but only out of the condescension of Thy mercy, to satisfy me a sinner, Thine unworthy servant, with the precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ. I pray that this Holy Communion be not to me a condemnation unto punishment, but a saving plea unto forgiveness. May it be unto me the armour of faith and the shield of good will. May it be the emptying out of my vices, the extinction of all concupiscence and lust, the increase of charity and patience, humility and obedience, and of all virtues; a strong defence against the snares of all enemies, visible and invisible; the quieting of all my evil impulses, both fleshly ghostly; a firm cleaving unto Thee, the one true God; and a pledge of a blessed destiny. And I beseech Thee, that Thou wouldst vouchsafe to bring me, a sinner, to that ineffable banquet, where Thou, with Thy Son and the Holy Ghost, art to Thy saints true light, fulness of content, eternal joy, gladness without alloy and perfect bliss. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.



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