

SACRED HEART NEWSLETTER



No. 10

A Quarterly Newsletter on Devotion to the Sacred Heart

December 2012



Heart of Jesus: Formed in Mary's Womb

After the noonday Angelus on 2 July 1989, Bl. Pope John Paul II spoke to the people on the theme *Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the Womb of the Virgin Mother*. He noted that “Christ’s sacred humanity is the work of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin of Nazareth.”

He said the Spirit shaped his humanity, including his capacity to love. “In a word, he molded his Heart.” From the Spirit came his wisdom, as well as “the love which welcomes and pardons sinners, the mercy which stoops down to human misery, the tenderness which blesses and embraces the children, and the understanding which soothes the pain of the afflicted.”

He continued: “Christ’s humanity is also the work of the Virgin, ... who collaborated actively with the Spirit as mother and educator. She accepted with trepidation and silent adoration the mystery of the Life which had germinated and was developing in her.

“As educator, she molded the Heart of her Son ... and exercised a sure influence on the formation of his character.

“Therefore we can truly say: In the Heart of Christ there shines forth the wonderful work of the

Holy Spirit; in it is also reflected the heart of his Mother.”

Jesus and Mary: Two Hearts United

There is no doubt but that, physically and affectively, the Heart of Mary was intimately united to the Heart of Jesus. In a short time after conception, as the physical heart of Christ developed, it beat alongside Mary’s heart and was nourished by the nutrients of her body.

The close physical union of these two hearts was the basis and impetus for an affective union—of love, faith, trust and courage—that grew during the nine months of her pregnancy and formed the pattern for their lives after Jesus was born.

The union of the hearts of Jesus and Mary, and the confident exchange fostered by this union is the basis for the practice of Catholics praying “to Jesus through Mary” (Marian sodalities) and for begging for our needs by going to Christ through Mary (Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius). Since both of these practices are clearly Ignatian, it is clear that all who have imbibed an Ignatian spirituality see, at least implicitly, the close relation between the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

This relationship was especially clear to St. John Eudes (1601-1680), who encouraged devotion to both Hearts and secured the approval of the Church for this practice. St. Catherine Laboure fostered wearing of the Miraculous Medal, which showed the Heart of Jesus crowned with thorns on one side and the Heart of Mary pierced with a sword on the other. Our Lady at Fatima stressed the need for acts of reparation to Jesus for the sins of the world.

Pope Pius XII said that “in carrying out the work of human redemption, the Blessed Virgin Mary was inseparably linked with Christ”, so that honouring her Heart follows directly on our honour to the Heart of Christ. (*Haureatis Aquas* #124). It is in token of this relationship that the

feasts of the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary are celebrated on successive days

at the end of the Paschal cycle.

Morning Offering

God our Father, I offer you my entire day — my thoughts, words, prayers, actions, joys and sufferings — in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as he offers himself in the Eucharist for the salvation of the world.

May the Holy Spirit, who guided Jesus, be my guide and my strength today so that I may witness to your love.

Together with Mary, the mother of Jesus, I pray with all the members of the Apostleship of Prayer for this month's special intentions as proposed by the Holy Father.

Join 40 million others in this worldwide union of persons praying for the intentions of the Pope

Apostleship of Prayer Pope Benedict XVI's Intentions for 2013

January

That Christians may know more deeply the mystery of Christ and witness to their faith in him.
That the Spirit may inspire Middle East Christians with fidelity and perseverance.

February

That migrant families, especially mothers, may be supported in their difficulties.
That peoples at war and in conflict may lead the way in building a peaceful future.

March

That we may grow in respect for nature, aware that the Creator has entrusted it to our care.
That all clergy may be tireless Gospel heralds.

April

That public, prayerful celebration of the liturgy may inspire life and faith in the people..
That mission churches may be signs and instruments of hope and resurrection.

May

That justice may always be administered with integrity and right conscience.
That seminaries, especially in mission areas, may form pastors after the Heart of Christ, fully dedicated to proclaiming the Gospel.

June

The Morning Offering—in this form or one very much like it— is at the heart

of the Apostleship of Prayer.
We dedicate our entire day to God through the Sacred Heart of Christ.
We join others like ourselves throughout the world in offering ourselves and everything we do to the glory of God for the intentions of our Holy Father the Pope.

Each month the Pope asks our prayers, especially

for a general intention and for a mission intention.

These intentions for 2013 are listed in brief form in the columns below..

Apostleship of Prayer – P.O. Box 1140 – Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

June (cont'd)

That Christian communities may promote a new evangelization in secularized areas.

That a culture of dialogue, listening and mutual respect may prevail among peoples.

July That World Youth Day in Brazil may inspire all young Christians to promote the Gospel
To proclaim the Gospel more freely in Asia.

August

That parents and teachers may help children grow in upright conscience and life.
That the local Church in Africa, through the Gospel, may promote peace and justice.

September

That people may rediscover the value of silence, and listen to the voice of God and others.
That persecuted Christians may by their witness be prophets of Christ's love.

October

That despairing people, tempted to suicide, may sense the nearness of God's love.
That World Mission Day may help all Christians realize they must proclaim God's word.

November

That priests in difficulties may find comfort, support, and be confirmed in fidelity.
That Latin American churches may send missionaries to other Churches.

December

That abandoned children or victims of violence may find love and protection.

That Christians, enlightened by Christ, may prepare others for Christ's coming

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Appendix

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The Sacred Heart and Social Justice, Part I

We frequently think of devotion to the Heart of Christ as an important way to a deeper personal spirituality, and so it is. The heart necessarily speaks of interiority, related to a whole array of virtues associated with prayer and holiness of life.

Such a limited view of the scope of this devotion is not surprising. But the emphasis in the Second Vatican Council on participating in communal worship in the Mass underscores the orientation of the Church today. This is toward a broader spirituality that involves concern for the problems and needs of people all over the world, an emphasis on social justice issues, which has grown steadily in the Church since the 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII.

Emphasis on the demands for social justice in today's world has picked up steam over the past 131 years with the publication of each new encyclical and pastoral letter on social issues, and there have been many. These documents are the basis for the comprehensive volume *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Nairobi: Paulines, 2004).

It is not surprising that we ask how the Sacred Heart devotion relates to this emphasis on social justice. A good start is by considering the general intentions and the mission intentions of the Apostleship of Prayer as endorsed by the Holy Father. Members of the Apostleship have conscientiously prayed for "the Pope's intentions" over many years. The fact is that devotion to the Sacred Heart has long been intimately tied to social justice concerns.

Persons at the centre of this devotion are convinced that issues like these reflect the deep concerns of the Heart of Jesus Christ himself. From the evidence of the gospel, we know his special love goes out to those who live inhuman lives deprived of their personal and social rights.

These were people for whom he laid down his life in bringing about the salvation of the entire world.

Jesus, who himself was treated very unjustly, knew that injustice would always be the lot of vast numbers of his fellow human beings. It is true this would be one way to draw people to a greater faith and holiness. But he did not accept that injustice was in itself a good thing or that it was a proper part of the world his Father had created and that he was sent to redeem.

The Sacred Heart devotion is built on love. In his love for the human race, God intended that there would be food and water enough for all people. For people to live without adequate shelter or food or clothing, to be deprived of basic rights as human beings, for women to be treated violently—all these and other forms of injustice were intolerable. For wars to be fought over greed or out of offended pride could not be justified; it was also a terrible waste of lives and property.

Human beings were made stewards of this creation, and God expected all people to share in the abundant goods he created. He intended people to cooperate with the work of his Son in assuring that the world would meet the needs of all people for countless generations.

The Heart of Christ could not help but be moved by the painful and inhuman way in which so many people are forced to live. These social issues are the intentions for which people who are part of the Apostleship of Prayer pray and work daily. (over)

This newsletter is produced at Loyola High School, P.O. Box 1140, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania by Fr. Ted Walters, S.J. Editorial contributions to the newsletter are warmly welcomed. Please send us the names and email addresses of additional persons who would like to receive issues of the newsletter. (To send such names or for items to contribute, you may email: <twwalters2002@yahoo.co.uk>) Thank you.

You are cordially invited to take part in the Sacred Heart Hymn competition. Please see last page.

The Sacred Heart and Social Justice, Part II

Clearly, social justice is intimately linked to God's love for the human race and to fulfilling the purpose of creation. Since the love of the Heart of Christ reflects God's love for the world, in honoring that love we are compelled to work hard to achieve the goals of social justice.

Our faith in the love of Christ would be hollow if it did not include this conviction. And we know that the conviction is not enough until it issues in efforts to pray and work for justice. That is why so many intentions of the Apostleship of Prayer are phrased in terms of justice for all people. We can draw upon the example of some of the intentions of the Apostleship of Prayer in 2012:

- Support for health workers (February)
- Safe and secure employment for all (July)
- Treating prisoners with justice and respect (August)
- Generous welcome for migrants (December)

It is easy for us to see devotion to the Sacred Heart as closely linked to social justice when we see the parallel effort in Jesuit education to form "Men and Woman for Others". This important direction of Jesuit education arose from a talk by Fr. Pedro Arrupe to Jesuit alumni in 1973. He said:

Today our prime educational objective must be to form men and women for others; men and women who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ ...; men and women completely convinced that the love of God which does not issue in justice for men and women is a farce.

This brilliant insight meant that students must be formed to go out into the world around

them, learn firsthand of the plight of the homeless and crippled, the battered and the hopeless, and discover in practice that their education is intended to prepare them to help make society a place of justice and concern for all people. Love for God and neighbor is not enough; it must work to help people to live fully human lives.

In few areas is the love of the Heart of Christ that inspires Jesuit activities so obvious as in the world-wide concern for refugees and displaced persons, which is another initiative conceived by Fr. Arrupe. With so much of the Society of Jesus' attention fixed today on "the faith that does justice", it should not be difficult to see that the love for Christ that drives Jesuits in the Sacred Heart devotion has a very strong connection with social justice in its many forms.

The current emphasis on the wounded Heart of Christ dates from the devotion's early beginnings. This was a central theme in the writings of Hugo Rahner, S.J., and was elaborated on by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) in a paper he delivered on this theme in July 1981 in Toulouse. This wound suggests a connection between the love of Christ's Sacred Heart and the sufferings of the people he died for. It is as if we are being told that, in addition to the pain of Christ's passion and death, we should not forget that the injustice and misery of the poor and helpless down the ages was part of the heavy load Christ bore for us.

We need go no further than the pages of the New Testament to see that the Heart of Jesus Christ was frequently moved with compassion over the pains of his fellow man and that it is hard for human love to survive amid injustice and deprivation of the goods of the earth.

Thus, converging from several angles are the marks of a close connection between the love of Sacred Heart and the pains of injustice experienced by so many millions of people today. Social injustice cannot be tolerated by one truly convinced of the love of the Heart of Christ.

Please note the opportunity to enter the Sacred Heart Hymn Competition described on the following page. Entries are due by 31 January 2013. Winning hymns receive a cash award and will likely be printed.

Sacred Heart Hymn Competition

Entries are due 31 January 2013

Most people would admit that we need new and inspiring hymns honouring the Sacred Heart of Jesus. A new spirit is pervading this devotion today and people need music that will lift hearts and spirits and give us a bright new sense of the love of Christ active in our lives and the world around us. And so we are announcing a prize competition for two kinds of hymns built on the Sacred Heart devotion.

First category

The first type is a fairly simple (but not trite) hymn that can be sung by entire congregations as well as by small groups gathered around the altar. The melody should be one that people can easily pick up and that they will be inclined to hum and even sing while at work or at prayer or out for a walk. Three verses would be appropriate, preferably with a chorus. The theme and words should express sentiments that men as well as women will find appealing and inspiring.

Second category

The second type of hymn will be of a broader, more melodious kind, one that lifts spirits and sends them to grander expression. It can be sung by congregations, choruses or individuals and will raise people's spirits to praise the grandeur and glory of God. It would be the product of a free and exuberant spirit rejoicing in God's love and the glory of the Sacred Heart. The hymn need not be bound by structural limitations, but it should not be difficult to learn and to sing

Details

First and second prizes (of \$150 and \$100) will be awarded in each category, assuming that entries of sufficient quality are received to

merit the award of such prizes. Such decisions will be made by the judges. Persons may send more than one entry. Each entry must be accompanied by a written statement that it is an original composition produced by the sender, and never before published in any form.

All entries of words and music must be received by **31 January 2013**. Please send entries to T.W.Walters, S.J., Loyola High School, P.O. Box 1140, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

This competition is for English hymns. Both words and music should be submitted in clear, legible form. In addition to a hard copy, a cassette with a recording of the hymn may be submitted. You may wish to send your entry by email. In that case, record your hymn on a computer, using Sound Recorder in Accessories, and send it. Put the hymn in a music partition, if possible.

Contest entries must be original and the work of the person or persons submitting them. (If the prize is to be divided, the person most responsible should be indicated.) All this should be attested to by memo at the time of submission. They must never have been published in any form.

All entries become the property of the contest sponsors and will not be returned to the authors. After the competition, the sponsors reserve the right to print words and music (in booklet or other form, with the author's name) of all entries judged suitable, without compensation to authors

The entries will be judged by five pre-selected judges. The basic criteria for judgment are the following: a) the sense of prayer (20%), b) a correct and acceptable characterisation of the Sacred Heart devotion (20%), c) the simplicity and beauty of the hymn (20%), d) the quality of the art (any instrument) (20%), and e) the originality of the hymn (20%). We look forward to your participation.