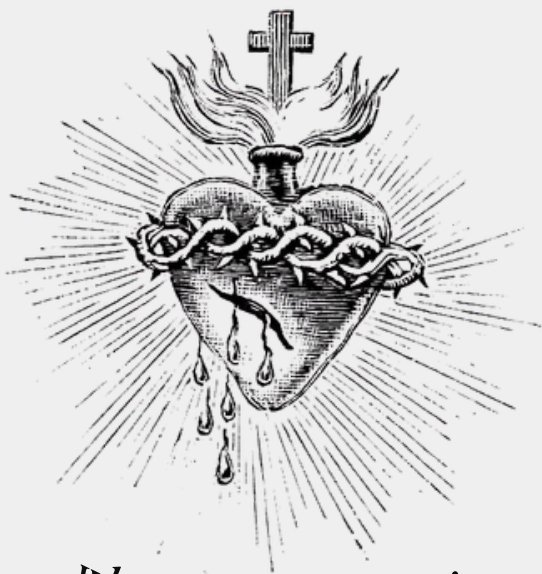


# Novena to the Sacred Heart

June 3 - June 11

*behold this heart*



*which has so loved men.*

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This Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus draws its daily devotions from the Litany of the Sacred Heart. Each day reflects on the wisdom of saints and pontiffs on the Sacred Heart and offers opportunities for prayer and action, framed by Pope Francis' encyclical *Dilexit Nos* (*He Loved Us*) and Pope Leo XIV's apostolic exhortation *Dilexi Te* (*I Have Loved You*).

The novena concludes with the consecration of the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

# Day 1

## *Heart of Jesus, aflame with love for us*

### *Pray*

*Lord, I come to Your tender Heart today, to You who have words that set my heart ablaze, to You who pour out compassion on the little ones and the poor, on those who suffer, and on all human miseries. I desire to know You more, to contemplate You in the Gospel, to be with You and learn from You and from the charity with which You allowed Yourself to be touched by all forms of poverty. You showed us the Father's love by loving us without measure with Your divine and human Heart. Grant all Your children the grace of encountering You. Change, shape, and transform our plans, so that we seek only You in every circumstance: in prayer, in work, in encounters, and in our daily routine. From this encounter, send us out on mission, a mission of compassion for the world in which You are the source from which all consolation flows. Amen.*

### *Learn*

While reflections on the heart of Jesus date to the earliest writings of Christianity, the modern devotion to the Sacred Heart began in 17th century France when Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque received visions of Jesus revealing his heart burning with love for humanity. In this revelation, Jesus expressed his desire to be honored in a special way through his Sacred Heart. This devotion grew when Pope Pius IX extended the observance to the universal Church in 1856, and later when Saint Mary of the Divine Heart urged Pope Leo XIII to consecrate the world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which he did in 1899 through his encyclical, *Annum Sacrum*. There have been four papal encyclicals on the Sacred Heart of Jesus: *Annum Sacrum* (on consecration to the Sacred Heart), Pope Pius XI's 1928 encyclical *Miserentissimus Redemptor* (on reparation to the Sacred Heart), Pope Pius XII's 1956 encyclical *Haurietis Aquas* (on devotion to the Sacred Heart), and Pope Francis' 2024 encyclical *Dilexit Nos* (on the human and divine love of the heart of Jesus Christ).

### *Act*

Take time today to read *Dilexit Nos* and explore resources to reflect on Pope Francis' final encyclical. What stands out to you about the Holy Father's writings on the Sacred Heart? How might this meditation on Jesus' love for us set your own heart on fire to love others?

**Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.**

## Day 2

### *Heart of Jesus, source of justice and love*

#### *Pray*

*Lord Jesus, You gave your life for us. Your Sacred Heart is ablaze with love. Your hand extends towards me, and towards all, offering love, mercy, and healing. Sacred Heart of Jesus may your love transform me. Burn away my hesitation that I may become your love and radiate your mercy. Amen.*

#### *Learn*

Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, who reflected on the Sacred Heart wrote, “I received from my God excessive graces of his love, and I felt moved by the desire to respond to some of them and to respond with love for love” (Autobiography, no. 55). Both Pope Francis in *Dilexit Nos* and Pope Leo XIV in *Dilexi Te* teach us that our encounter with the love of Christ’s heart allows us to build up God’s kingdom in this world. Pope Leo emphasizes that “God has a special place in his heart for those who are discriminated against and oppressed, and he asks us, his Church, to make a decisive and radical choice in favor of the weakest” (*Dilexi Te*, no. 16). For centuries, the Church has established missions centered on the love of the heart of Christ, such as the Society of the Sacred Heart founded in 1800. The Society states in its constitution: “Caught up as we are in the desires of the heart of Jesus, we want people to grow in dignity, as human beings and as children of God. Our starting point is the Gospel, with all that it demands from us of love, forgiveness and justice, and of solidarity with those who are poor and rejected by the world” (Constitutions of 1982, 7).

#### *Act*

Consider who is rejected, vulnerable, or living in fear today. How does the Sacred Heart invite you to respond to the needs and suffering of others? You can get involved with your local Catholic Charities, Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, or a Catholic Campaign for Human Development funded group. You can also make small, sustainable commitments to care for your neighbors. Finally, consider praying for all elected officials that they may have the guidance and wisdom to create a just, peaceful society that honors the human dignity of all people living in our nation.

**Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.**

## Day 3

### *Heart of Jesus, worthy of all praise*

#### *Pray*

*O most Sacred, most loving Heart of Jesus, Thou art concealed in the Holy Eucharist, and Thou beatest for us still... I worship Thee then with all my best love and awe, with my fervent affection, with my most subdued, most resolved will. O my God, when Thou dost condescend to suffer me to receive Thee, to eat and drink Thee, and Thou for a while takest up Thy abode within me, O make my heart beat with Thy Heart* (Meditations and Devotions, London, 1912, Part III [XVI], par. 3, pp. 573-574).

#### *Learn*

Pope Francis reflects in *Dilexit Nos* that it is in the Eucharist that the ever-present love of the Sacred Heart invites us into union with Christ. At the same time, the Holy Father warns that in the frenetic pace of today's world, "*we forget to nourish our lives with the strength of the Eucharist;*" therefore, he recommends that we spend an hour in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament every Thursday. Pope Francis goes on to say, "When we carry [adoration] out with devotion, in union with many of our brothers and sisters and discover in the Eucharist the immense love of the heart of Christ, we 'adore, together with the Church, the sign and manifestation of the divine love that went so far as to love, through the heart of the incarnate Word, the human race'" (no. 85).

In Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque's visions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we see the light and fire of the Lord of life who transforms our human hearts. One such vision occurred in meditation before the Blessed Sacrament, when Saint Margaret sees Christ's paschal mystery in all its splendor: "Once, when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, Jesus appeared, resplendent in glory, with his five wounds that appeared as so many suns blazing forth from his sacred humanity, but above all from his adorable breast, which seemed a fiery furnace. Opening his robe, he revealed his most loving and lovable heart, which was the living source of those flames" (Autobiography, no. 55).

#### *Act*

Let us seek to deepen our relationship with the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Eucharist. You can take up Pope Francis' challenge to hold weekly adoration on Thursdays. You can also commit to attending Mass at a local shrine or parish devoted to the Sacred Heart.

**Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.**

## Day 4

### *Heart of Jesus, patient and full of mercy*

#### *Pray*

*Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself. Amen (Diary: Divine Mercy in My Soul, 950).*

#### *Learn*

The merciful heart of Jesus is at the center of his ministry, both in Scripture and throughout the history of the Church. Saint John Paul II reflects that when we draw close to the heart of Christ, it is revealed that the “merciful love of the Father...constituted the central content of the messianic mission of the Son of Man” (Dives in Misericordia, 1980). To this point, Saint Gregory the Great instructs us to “learn the Heart of God in the words of God;” and we see the heart of God revealed when Jesus quotes the prophet Hosea to the Pharisees, saying, “Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice’” (Matthew 9:13). The earliest saints of the Church took Christ’s command seriously, preaching that our response to the words of Jesus must be to live our faith by showing mercy to others. In the third century, Saint Gregory of Nazianzus taught, “The Lord of all asks for mercy, not sacrifice... Let us then show him mercy in the persons of the poor and those who today are lying on the ground, so that when we come to leave this world they may receive us into everlasting dwelling places” (Oratio XIV, 40: PG 35, Paris 1886, 910).

#### *Act*

In devoting ourselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we are challenged to imitate Christ’s mercy. Pope Leo XIV points to the parable of the Good Samaritan as the ultimate example of Christ’s merciful love: “The final words of the Gospel parable—‘Go and do likewise’ (Lk 10:37) — represent a mandate that every Christian must daily take to heart” (Dilexi Te, no. 107). Amid the many challenges facing our nation today, how can you be a beacon of mercy? Pope Francis reminds us that “even in our slightest works of mercy, his heart is glorified and displays all its grandeur” (Dilexit Nos, no. 203).

**Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.**

## Day 5

### *Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness*

#### *Pray*

*Lord Jesus, Saviour of the world and source of holiness, look with kindness on all whom you have chosen to be Missionaries of your loving Heart.*

*Ask your heavenly Father to keep us in your love, and sanctify us in the truth so that you may be glorified in us and we may reflect your goodness.*

*Ask your Father to keep us from evil that we may always be united in bonds of love. As you are one with your Father, so may we be one with each other in your divine Heart, whose sentiments shall forever be ours and to which we consecrate ourselves in time and for eternity. Amen.*

#### *Learn*

The devotion of the wounds of Christ as the fountain of life and holiness dates to the earliest Christians. The Church Fathers interpreted the blood and water flowing from Christ's side as a profound mystery, fulfilling His promise to provide living water (John 4:13–14; 7:37), which symbolized the Holy Spirit's outpouring on the Church and the cleansing waters of baptism. We see an early correlation to the heart of Jesus in the words of Origen of Alexandria, who said, "Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water" (In Num. homil. 12, 1: PG 12, 657). In the 13th century, Saint Bonaventure connected the salvation that flows from the pierced heart of Christ to the sacramental life of the Church, reflecting that the price of our salvation flows "from the hidden wellspring of his heart, enabling the Church's sacraments to confer the life of grace" (Lignum Vitae. De mysterio passionis, 30). Pope Francis encouraged the devotion of the pierced heart of Christ as the fountain of life for the Church's mission. The Holy Father taught that "in contemplating the pierced heart of the Lord, who 'took our infirmities and bore our diseases' (Mt 8:17), we too are inspired to be more attentive to the sufferings and needs of others, and confirmed in our efforts to share in his work of liberation as instruments for the spread of his love" (Dilexit Nos, no. 171).

#### *Act*

When Jesus revealed his heart to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, he imparted 12 promises to all who venerate his Sacred Heart. One promise is that Jesus will "bless the home in which the image of my Sacred Heart shall be exposed and honored." When we place the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in a prominent place in our homes, we signify that Jesus is king and the center and source of love for all. Consider enthroning the Sacred Heart in your home.

***Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.***

## Day 6

### *Heart of Jesus, atonement for our sins*

#### *Pray*

*My Jesus, I love You with my whole heart. I am sorry for having so many times offended Your infinite goodness. With the help of Your grace, I purpose never to offend You again. And now, unworthy though I am, I consecrate myself to You without reserve. I renounce and give entirely to You my will, my affection, my desires, and all that I possess.*

#### *Learn*

In Pope Pius XI's encyclical, *Miserentissimus Redemptor* (on reparation to the Sacred Heart), the Holy Father connects our love for Christ with the realization that the wounds we inflict on others are the same wounds inflicted on Our Lord on the cross. He states, "Anyone possessed of great love for God, and who looks back to the past, can dwell in meditation on Christ, and see him laboring for man, sorrowing, suffering the greatest hardships, 'for us men and for our salvation' ... The more the faithful ponder all these things the more clearly they see that the sins of mankind, whenever they were committed, were the reason why Christ was delivered up to death" (no. 13). The image of the pierced heart of Christ has its meaning in our sinfulness, and when we devote ourselves to the Sacred Heart, we are compelled to repair the damage we have done. In a reflection about seeking authentic reparation, Bishop Joseph Perry explores how the Sacred Heart can lead us to reconcile our human hearts to one another. He says, "In the Catholic tradition, reparation is not a transaction, but a sacred offering—one that involves not only words, but gestures. Just as the Sacrament of Penance invites physical expressions of contrition—making the sign of the cross, performing a penance, offering restitution—so too do acts of reparation in communal life require gestures of sincerity, and concrete actions."

#### *Act*

There are many ways we can offer reparation to the Sacred Heart. When we go before Jesus in the Eucharist, Pope Pius XI recommends making a Communion of Reparation or a Holy Hour for the atoning of sins (*Miserentissimus Redemptor*, no. 12). We also see a lack of fraternal love today, especially in our politics and conversations with one another. Read Pope Francis' encyclical on fraternity and social friendship, *Fratelli Tutti*, and reflect on how to build a culture of encounter together.

***Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.***

## Day 7

### *Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation*

#### *Pray*

*I believe, O Lord, but strengthen my faith... Heart of Jesus, I love Thee; but increase my love. Heart of Jesus, I trust in Thee; but give greater vigor to my confidence. Heart of Jesus, I give my heart to Thee; but so enclose it in Thee that it may never be separated from Thee. Heart of Jesus, I am all Thine; but take care of my promise so that I may be able to put it in practice even unto the complete sacrifice of my life. Amen.*

#### *Learn*

The heart of Christ has always been a source of consolation for the Church. We hear Jesus' great love for us in Scripture, as when he reassures us of the Father's care in the Sermon on the Mount. We are consoled with God's intimate love when we are told how we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14) and "even the hairs of your head are all counted" (Matthew 10:30). Saint Francis de Sales teaches that all our names are written on the heart of God: "Surely it is a source of profound consolation to know that we are loved so deeply by our Lord, who constantly carries us in his heart" (Sermon for the Second Sunday of Lent, February 20, 1622). Pope Francis tells us that when we contemplate the heart of Christ and his self-surrender even to death, we are consoled in Christ's love for us: "The grief that we feel in our hearts gives way to complete trust and, in the end, what endures is gratitude, tenderness, peace; what endures is Christ's love reigning in our lives" (Dilexit Nos, no. 161).

#### *Act*

Just as we find consolation in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, so too should we pray for others so that they might also encounter the consoling love of Christ. Every day, Padre Pio would pray the Efficacious Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the intentions of all who asked him to pray for them, ending each intention with "Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you." Consider entrusting your intentions to the Sacred Heart as Padre Pio did.

**Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, *I place all my trust in you.***

## Day 8

### *Heart of Jesus, gentle and humble of heart*

#### *Pray*

*O Jesus! When You were a Pilgrim on earth, You said: “Learn of Me for I am gentle and humble of heart and you will find rest for your souls.” O Mighty Monarch of Heaven, my soul finds rest in seeing You, clothed in the form and nature of a slave, humbling Yourself to wash the feet of Your apostles... I beg You, my Divine Jesus, to send me a humiliation whenever I try to set myself above others. I know that You humble the proud soul, but to the one who humbles one’s self. You give an eternity of glory... To obtain this grace of Your infinite mercy I will very often repeat: “O Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, make my heart like Yours!”*

#### *Learn*

Saint John Paul II notes that only once in Scripture does Jesus refer to his own heart, when he instructs us to learn from his humility and gentleness in Matthew 11. The Holy Father concludes that our Lord stresses these features “as if to say that only in this way does he wish to win us to himself” (Catechesis, June 20, 1979). The saints, facing the challenges of their age, looked to the heart of Christ as a model to respond with humility and grace. Saint Claude de La Colombière reflected on the attitude of Christ’s heart in his greatest hours of suffering: how during his passion, his heart remained firmly directed to God, and despite the betrayal of Judas and the abandonment of his apostles, Christ did not respond with hatred or indignation – but forgiveness. Saint Claude resolved to “present myself anew to this heart free of anger, free of bitterness, filled instead with genuine compassion towards its enemies” (Spiritual Exercises in Lyon, October-November 1674, *ibid.*, p. 45).

#### *Act*

Devotion to the Sacred Heart allows us to put aside our pride and respond to the challenges of life. Saint Vincent de Paul teaches us: “We should remember that [Christ] himself said that by gentleness we inherit the earth. If we act on this, we will win people over so that they will turn to the Lord. That will not happen if we treat people harshly or sharply” (Saint Vincent de Paul, Common Rules of the Congregation of the Mission, May 17, 1658, c. 2, 6). Use an Examination of Conscience to reflect on how you are acting on Christ’s teachings to love humbly and gently. Then, conclude with Saint Thérèse of Lisieux’s prayer: “*O Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, make my heart like Yours!*”

**Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.**

**Day 9**  
***Consecration of the United States  
to the Sacred Heart of Jesus***

***Pray***

Today, we consecrate the United States of America to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Parishes and individuals around the country are encouraged to join the U.S. Catholic bishops in this historic occasion, beginning with this Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus written for the consecration.

**O Most Sacred Heart of Jesus:**

**You know the longings of our hearts, and you desire that we enjoy friendship with you.**

**From your pierced side, you have poured out the wellspring of life, for which we thirst.**

**Your heart burns with a love for all people to return to a right relationship with you.**

**We celebrate the abundant gifts you have given this nation, founded on the self-evident truths that our Creator has endowed all people with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.**

**We make reparation for the offenses against you and against human dignity that have taken place in this nation.**

**May our hearts be united to yours, so that our families and communities enjoy peace and happiness; may broken relationships be reconciled, injustices repaired, and the wounds of our land be healed. May your holy Catholic Church serve as a sign, pointing all people to your infinite love.**

**O Desire of Nations and Center of History, we ask you to bless these United States of America.**

**Who live and reign with God the Father  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

**Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!  
Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!**

## ***Learn***

Why do we consecrate to the Sacred Heart of Jesus? In the first such act in 1899, when Pope Leo XIII consecrated the world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, he writes in his encyclical, *Annum Sacrum*: “Since there is in the Sacred Heart a symbol and the express image of the infinite love of Jesus Christ that moves us to love one another, it is fit and proper that we should consecrate ourselves to his most Sacred Heart – an act that is nothing else than an offering and a binding of oneself to Jesus Christ.”

Likewise, in Saint John Paul II’s Message for the Centenary of the Consecration of the Human Race to the Divine Heart of Jesus, he reflected on the need for a missionary spirit of the Church that flows from consecration to the Sacred Heart: “Consecration thus understood is to be joined to the missionary activity of the Church herself, because it answers the desire of Jesus’ Heart to propagate in the world, through the members of his Body, his total dedication to the kingdom, and to unite the Church ever more closely to his offering to the Father and his being for others.”

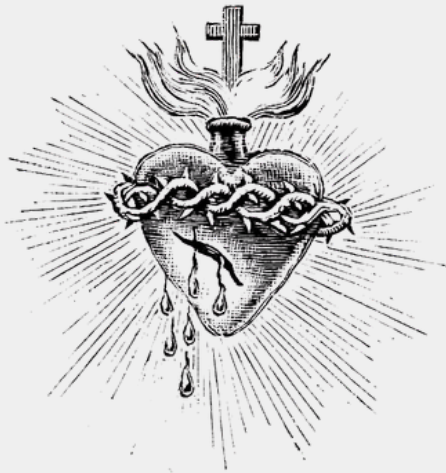
In addition to drawing us into deeper unity with Christ, consecration to the Sacred Heart also reveals a message that Saint John Paul II called “necessary for humanity today”: Only in Christ’s love can we discover the gentleness and forgiveness needed to heal the conflicts that wound our world (Angelus 2002).

## ***Act***

As we conclude this Novena to the Sacred Heart, we reflect with Pope Francis in *Dilexit Nos*. “There are moments when [Jesus] speaks to us inwardly, calls us and leads us to a better place. That better place is his heart. There he invites us to find fresh strength and peace: ‘Come to me, all who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest’ (Mt 11:28)” (no. 43). Let us go forth with this renewed sense of strength and peace, consoled by the great love that Jesus has for us and transformed by the missionary fire of his Sacred Heart.

***Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.***

# Catholic Church of St Ann



Find more resources like *Padre Pio's Efficacious Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus*, *the Examination of Conscience in Light of Catholic Social Teaching*, and other resources here:

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