

The Month of the Sacred Heart.

DEVOTION to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is as ancient as the Church. Ever since our Divine Saviour shed His Precious Blood for the redemption of the world there have been privileged souls to whom Our Lord has disclosed the ardent love of His Heart. "But," in the words of the late Pius IX. in the decree of the beatification of Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque, "to establish this pious devotion, so calculated to advance souls in virtue, so worthy in its object, Our Lord was pleased to choose a humble daughter of the Visitation." By wonderful and miraculous revelations He made known His will to His chosen servant—revelations since recognized by the Church and eloquent of God's pure love. This was in 1673. Margaret Mary had been two years a nun in the Convent of the Visitation at Paray-le-Monial in France. "She was," says her biographer, "eminent in every virtue—in sanctity, humility and charity."

On one occasion, when the Blessed Margaret Mary was in an ecstasy of adoration before the Most Blessed Sacrament, Our Lord vouchsafed to show her in very truth His Heart saying: "Behold this Heart which has loved men so much, and which, to testify Its infinite love for them, is spent, and yet with love is ever consumed." Then having complained in the most pathetic terms of man's ingratitude Our Lord adds: "I ask of thee that the first Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi be appointed a special feast to honor My Heart—that reparation and atonement may be made It—that Holy Communion be received to make expiation for the insults It has received while exposed on the Altar. I promise thee that My Heart shall dilate to pour forth yet more abundantly Its gifts of divine love upon all those who shall practice this devotion, or be instrumental in spreading such devotion. Go seek My servant, thy director (Father Colombiere, a very holy religious of the Society of Jesus), and tell him from Me to do all in his power to institute this devotion, and so bring joy to My Heart."

With fervor Father Colombiere obeyed this command. The Friday following the Corpus Christi (June 21st, 1675) he offered himself as a victim of love and reparation to the Adorable Heart of Jesus. He induced many devout persons to do likewise, and to observe faithfully the

rules indicated by Our Lord to Blessed Margaret Mary respecting frequent Communion, particularly the Communion of Reparation on the first Friday of every month, as well as on the Friday following the Octave of Corpus Christi.

The fruits of this pious practice were wonderful. The Church from that time consecrated the glorious memory of these Revelations by honoring the Sacred Heart of Jesus with special devotions during the month of June, best known to-day by the beautiful name of The Month of the Sacred Heart.

It is thus the Church expresses her solemn Act of Thanksgiving for the abundant favors her Heavenly Spouse desires to lavish upon her as revealed in a vision to Blessed Margaret Mary when He bound Himself to fulfil the following promises:

1. I will give them (adorers of the Sacred Heart) all necessary graces for their station in life.
2. I will establish peace in their families.
3. I will console them in all their troubles.
4. I will be their safe refuge during life, and especially at their death.
5. I will pour down abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.
6. Sinners will find in My Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
7. Tepid souls shall become fervent.
8. Fervent souls shall rapidly attain a great perfection.
9. I Myself will bless the houses where the image of My Sacred Heart shall be exposed and honored.
10. I will give to priests the grace of touching the most hardened hearts.
11. Those who spread this devotion shall have their names written on My Heart, and they shall never be effaced therefrom.
12. All those who receive Communion on the first Friday of nine consecutive months shall receive the grace of final perseverance and that of not dying under My displeasure nor without the Sacraments, and My Heart shall be their secure refuge at that last hour.

ASPIRATION. Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto thine. Indulgence 300 days.

PLENARY INDULGENCE may be gained on the Feast of the Sacred Heart by all who may communicate on that day and visit a church or public oratory where the feast is celebrated, praying according to the intent of His Holiness.