

The Sacred Heart of Jesus

*A selection of prayers, poems, hymns and
reflections on the Sacred Heart of Jesus
for devotional use throughout the year*



THE CHURCH UNION



The Society
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The Sacred Heart of Jesus

Statues or pictures of the Sacred Heart of Jesus are found in many homes and churches. It is an image that shows God's boundless and passionate love for us. The feast of the Sacred Heart is kept on the Friday 19 days after Pentecost, but devotion to the Sacred Heart is something which can sustain us spiritually throughout the year.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart became popular in England in medieval times, as the faithful meditated on the wounds of Jesus brought about by His Passion and on the Heart of Jesus pierced by a lance. The writings of Julian of Norwich talk about Jesus showing her His side during her visions of Him, and Jesus talking of His love for us with the words "See how I love you".

The devotion to the Sacred Heart in its more modern form was spread by St Margaret Mary Alacoque, who lived in the second half of the 17th century. She was a French nun in the town of Paray-le-Monial and had visions of Jesus, where Our Lord revealed to her His Sacred Heart. During these visions, He told her of His love for us and His desire for us to be devoted to His Sacred Heart.

The symbolism of the Sacred Heart shows a heart that is often surrounded by light, depicting the divine light which shines from the Heart of Jesus. There is a wound in the heart where the lance was thrust into the side of Jesus on the Cross. The Heart is surrounded by the crown of thorns, showing how His Heart is wounded by our sins, and is surmounted by a cross and flames of fire, symbolising the transformative power of God's love for us.

In this booklet you will find a selection of prayers to use in your devotions to the Sacred Heart throughout the year. Perhaps you might wish to light a candle before a shrine to the Sacred Heart, either at home or in church, as you pray. Or perhaps you can refer to this booklet when you feel the need to be closer to God's love after a difficult encounter of some sort. However you use this booklet, our prayer is that we may all grow closer to the Sacred Heart in our day-to-day lives and find an outpouring of God's love in that way.



Act of consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

I give myself to the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, my person and my life, my actions, pains and sufferings, so that I may be unwilling to make use of any part of my being save to honour, love and glorify the Sacred Heart. This is my unchanging purpose, namely, to be all his, and do all things for love of him at the same time renouncing with all my heart whatever is displeasing to him. I therefore take you, O Sacred Heart, to be the only object of my love, the guardian of my life, my assurance of salvation, the remedy of my weakness, the atonement for all the faults of my life, and my sure refuge at the hour of death. Be then, O Heart of goodness, my justification before God our Father, and turn away from me his justified anger. O Heart of love, I put all my confidence in you, for I fear everything from my own wickedness and frailty, but I hope for all things from your goodness and bounty. Consume in me all that displeases you or resists your holy will; let your pure love imprint itself so deeply on my heart, that I shall never be able to forget or be separated from you. May I obtain from your loving kindness the grace of having my name written on your Heart, for in you I desire to place all my happiness and all my glory, living and dying in your true service. (*St Margaret Mary Alacoque*)

A short act of consecration to the Sacred Heart

Sacred Heart of Jesus,
filled with infinite love,
broken by my ingratitude,
pierced by my sins,
yet loving me still,
accept the consecration which I make to you,
of all that I am and all that I have.
Take every faculty of my soul and body,
and draw me, day by day, nearer and nearer to your sacred side:
There, as I can bear the lesson,
teach me your blessed ways. Amen.

Prayers, hymns and poems from the Anglican Tradition

Almighty God,
whose Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ,
was moved with compassion for all who had gone astray
and with indignation for all who had suffered wrong:
in flame our hearts with the burning fire of your love,
that we may seek out the lost,
have mercy on the fallen
and stand fast for truth and righteousness;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen. (*Eric Milner-White*)



O dearest Lord, thy sacred head
with thorns was pierced for me;
O pour thy blessing on my head
that I may think for thee.

O dearest Lord, thy sacred hands
with nails were pierced for me;
O shed thy blessing on my hands
that they may work for thee.

O dearest Lord, thy sacred feet
with nails were pierced for me;
O pour thy blessing on my feet
that they may follow thee.

O dearest Lord, thy sacred heart
with spear was pierced for me;
O pour thy Spirit in my heart
that I may live for thee. (*Fr Andrew SDC*)



To rest a tired head upon thy Heart,
And to be still –
To come to thee from the whole world apart
And learn thy will –
And in that will, because it is thy will, to live and die,
Knowing thy love and will are one eternally.
That be my way of prayer –
That bring me where thou art –
Heaven is there. (*Fr Andrew SDC*)



O Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of the living God,
whose Heart was pierced by the spear of our sinfulness,
and hath been by thy love left open for all who will enter:
Thither bring us for refuge and rest in the hour of trouble;
and there, O Lord, hold us for ever;
who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, world without end. Amen. (*Eric Milner-White*)



Lord, let me come apart
And be with thee,
But not forget the quivering heart
Of all humanity.

Let me lift up my eyes
To where there breaks
A golden light in the leaden skies
For all our sakes.

Let me look up to Heaven
From Calvary,
Kneeling there with the much forgiven
And close to thee.

In thy one pierced Heart
All sorrows are,
And prayer away with thee apart
Reaches so far. (*Fr Andrew SDC*)

Other prayers to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

O most holy Heart of Jesus, fountain of every blessing,
I adore you, I love you and will a lively sorrow for my sins.
I offer you this poor heart of mine.
Make me humble, patient, pure, and wholly obedient to your will.
Grant, good Jesus, that I may live in you and for you.
Protect me in the midst of danger; comfort me in my afflictions;
give me health of body, assistance in my temporal needs,
your blessings on all that I do, and the grace of a holy death.
Within your heart I place my every care.
In every need let me come to you with humble trust saying,
Heart of Jesus, help me.
Amen.



Heart of Jesus, burning with love for me,
inflame my heart with burning love for thee.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart,
make my heart like your heart.

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



Love of the heart of Jesus, inflame my heart.
Charity of the heart of Jesus, flow into my heart.
Strength from the heart of Jesus, support my heart.
Mercy from the heart of Jesus, pardon my heart.
Patience of the heart of Jesus, grow not weary of my heart.
Kingdom of the heart of Jesus, be in my heart.
Wisdom of the heart of Jesus, teach my heart.
Will of the heart of Jesus, guide my heart.
Zeal of the heart of Jesus, consume my heart.
Immaculate Virgin Mary, pray for me to the heart of Jesus.
(Elizabeth Ruth Obbard)

O Lord, take away my heart of stone, my hardened heart,
and grant to me a new heart, a heart of flesh, a clean heart.
Come you, who cleanse the heart, and love the pure of heart,
possess my heart and dwell in it,
containing it and filling it, higher than my highest
and more intimate than my intimate thoughts.
You are the image of all beauty and the seal of all holiness,
seal your image on my heart, and seal my heart in your mercy,
O God the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Amen.
(*Baldwin of Canterbury d. 1190*)



O Heart of Jesus, grant me and increase of faith in you,
strong faith to realise you,
a loving faith to appreciate you,
a trusting faith to turn to you in every want and sorrow.
O loving Heart,
I commend to you my thoughts, words and works that you may inspire and guide them,
my affections, intentions and desires that you may purify and direct them;
my dearly-bought soul that you may sanctify and save it;
my last sigh that you may receive it united to your own. Amen.



O God, what will you do to conquer
the fearful hardness of our hearts?
Lord, you much give us new hearts,
tender hearts, sensitive hearts,
to replace hearts that are made of marble and bronze.
You must give us your own heart, Jesus.
Come, loveable heart of Jesus.
Place your heart deep in the centre of our hearts,
and enkindle in each heart a flame of love
as strong, as great, as the sum of all the reasons
that I have for loving you, my God.
O holy heart of Jesus, dwell hidden in my heart,
so that I may live only in you and only for you,
so that, in the end, I may live with you eternally in heaven.
(*St Claude de la Colombiere SJ*)

How good and sweet it is, Jesus, to dwell in your Heart!
All my thoughts and affections will I sink in the Heart of Jesus, my Lord.
I have found the Heart of my king, my brother, my friend, the Heart of my beloved Jesus.
And now that I have found your Heart, which is also mine, dear Jesus, I will pray to you.
Grant that my prayer may reach you, may find entrance to your Heart.
Draw me to yourself.
O Jesus, who are infinitely above all beauty and every charm, wash me clean from my defilement; wipe out even the smallest trace of sin.
If you, who are all-pure, will purify me,
I will be able to make my way into your Heart and dwell there all my life long.
There I will learn to know your will, and find the grace to fulfil it. Amen.
(*St Bernard*)



Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that we, who glory in the Heart of your beloved Son
and recall the wonders of his love for us,
may be made worthy to receive an overflowing measure of grace
from that fount of heavenly gifts.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



A prayer to the Heart of Jesus in the Eucharist

O most sacred, most loving Heart of Jesus, thou art concealed in the Holy Eucharist, and thou beatest for us still. Now as then thou sayest 'With desire I have desired'. 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 allow me to receive thee, to eat and drink thee, and thou for a while dost take up the abode within me, O make my heart beat with thy Heart. Purify it of all that is earthly, all that is proud, all that is hard and cruel, of all perversity, of all disorder, of all deadness. So fill it with thee that neither the events of the day nor the circumstances of the time may have power to ruffle it, but that in thy love and thy fear it may have peace.
(*St John Henry Newman*)



Litany of the Sacred Heart

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy

God our Father in heaven. *Have mercy upon us.*

God the Son, Redeemer of the world God the Holy Spirit. *Have mercy upon us.*

Holy Trinity, one God. *Have mercy upon us.*

Heart of Jesus, Son of the eternal Father. *Have mercy upon us.*

Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mother

Heart of Jesus, one with the eternal Word

Heart of Jesus, infinite in majesty

Heart of Jesus, holy temple of God

Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High

Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven

Heart of Jesus, aflame with love for us

Heart of Jesus, source of justice and love

Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and love

Heart of Jesus, well-spring of all virtue

Heart of Jesus, patient and full of mercy

Heart of Jesus, generous to all who turn to you

Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness

Heart of Jesus, source of healing

Heart of Jesus, sharer in our sorrow

Heart of Jesus, safe-guarder of the vulnerable

Heart of Jesus, friend of the betrayed

Heart of Jesus, companion of the ignored

Heart of Jesus, face of the misjudged

Heart of Jesus, memory of the disbelieved

Heart of Jesus, true voice in the silence

Heart of Jesus, wounded by our failings

Heart of Jesus, bearer of our sufferings

Heart of Jesus, acquainted with grief

Heart of Jesus, atonement for our sins

Heart of Jesus, overwhelmed with insults

Heart of Jesus, broken for our sins

Heart of Jesus, obedient even to death

Heart of Jesus, pierced by a lance

Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation

Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection
Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation
Heart of Jesus, victim for our sins
Heart of Jesus, salvation of all who trust in you
Heart of Jesus, hope of all who die in you
Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Grant us peace.

Jesus, gentle and humble of heart.
Touch our hearts and make them like your own.

Father,
we honour the heart of your Son broken by man's cruelty,
yet symbol of love's triumph,
pledge of all that man is called to be.
Teach us to see Christ in the lives we touch,
to offer him living worship
by love-filled service to our brothers and sisters.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen



A reflection on the Sacred Heart from St Bonaventure

Take thought now, redeemed one, and consider how great and worthy is he who hangs on the cross for you. His death brings the dead to life, but at his passing heaven and earth are plunged into mourning and hard rocks are split asunder.

It was a divine decree that permitted one of the soldiers to open his sacred side with a lance. This was done so that the Church might be formed from the side of Christ as he slept the sleep of death on the cross, and so that the Scripture might be fulfilled: 'They shall look on him whom they pierced'. The blood and water which poured out at that moment were the price of our salvation. Flowing from the secret abyss of our Lord's heart as from a fountain, this stream gave the sacraments of the Church the power to confer the life of grace, while for those already living in Christ it became a spring of living water welling up to life everlasting.

Arise, then, beloved of Christ! Imitate the dove 'that nests in a hole in the cliff', keeping watch at the entrance 'like the sparrow that finds a home'. There like the turtledove hide your little ones, the fruit of your chaste love. Press your lips to the fountain, 'draw water from the wells of your Saviour; for this is the spring flowing out of the middle of paradise, dividing into four rivers', inundating devout hearts, watering the whole earth and making it fertile.

Run with eager desire to this source of life and light, all you who are vowed to God's service. Come, whoever you may be, and cry out to him with all the strength of your heart. "O indescribable beauty of the most high God and purest radiance of eternal light! Life that gives all life, light that is the source of every other light, preserving in everlasting splendour the myriad flames that have shone before the throne of your divinity from the dawn of time! Eternal and inaccessible fountain, clear and sweet stream flowing from a hidden spring, unseen by mortal eye! None can fathom your depths nor survey your boundaries, none can measure your breadth, nothing can sully your purity. From you flows 'the river which gladdens the city of God' and makes us cry out with joy and thanksgiving in hymns of praise to you, for we know by our own experience that 'with you is the source of life, and in your light we see light'.



Hymns to the Sacred Heart

O Sacred Heart,
our home lies deep in thee;
on earth thou art an exile's rest,
in heav'n the glory of the blest,
O Sacred Heart.

O Sacred Heart,
thou fount of contrite tears;
where'er those living waters flow,
new life to sinners they bestow,
O Sacred Heart.

O Sacred Heart,
our trust is all in thee,
for though earth's night be dark and drear,
thou breathest rest where thou art near,
O Sacred Heart.

O Sacred Heart,
when shades of death shall fall,
receive us 'neath thy gentle care,
and save us from the tempter's snare,
O Sacred Heart.

O Sacred Heart,
lead exiled children home,
where we may ever rest near thee,
in peace and joy eternally,
O Sacred Heart. (*Francis Stanfield*)

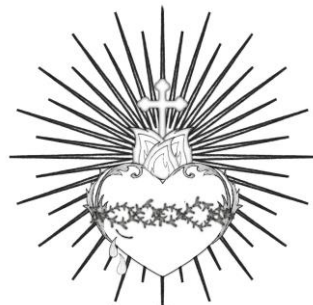


O Sacred Heart! O Love Divine!
Do keep us near to Thee;
And make our love so like to Thine
That we may holy be.

O Temple pure! O House of gold!
Our heaven here below
What sweet delight, what wealth untold,
From Thee do ever flow.

O Wounded Heart, O Font of tears!
O Throne of grief and pain!
Whereon for the eternal years,
Thy love for man does reign.

Ungrateful hearts, forgetful hearts,
The hearts of man have been,
To wound Thy side with cruel darts
Which they have made by sin. (*Anon*)



OH MOST
SACRED HEART OF JESUS
HAVE MERCY ON US