Sacred Heart of Jesus

June 10, 2013-06-29

Last Friday was the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. On this feast of the Sacred Heart we also pray for the Sanctification of priest and close to the Heart of the Son is the Heart of the Mother whom the Church celebrates the day after the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

At mass for the solemnity of Mary on Saturday, our parish priest Fr Damien Ali said that Mary the mother of God was so united to Jesus that their hearts beat in tandem as one heart.

While I was researching tonight's talk this was confirmed as one article stated that in the life of every Saint, you will find the Blessed Mother.

Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI also reminded us in his writings that "The heart that resembles that of Christ more than any other is without a doubt the Heart of Mary, his Immaculate Mother, and for this very reason the liturgy holds them up together for our veneration.

He also never tires of reminding us of the necessity to rediscover the merciful Heart, this infinite Love of God, who reveals Himself in our lives if we open to Him. “Open, open wide the doors to Christ” the voice of the Holy Spirit continues to say. By means of Eucharistic adoration we are "opened" from within by His invisible working in us.

The heart awakens, first of all, the idea of a material heart, of the vital organ that throbs within our bosom, and which we vaguely realize as intimately connected not only with our own physical being, but with our deep emotional and moral, life. The heart is, above all, the emblem of love.

To appreciate this rich symbolism of the heart, we must remember that in Judaism the word heart represented the core of the person. While recognized as the principle life organ, the heart was also considered the center of all spiritual activity. Here was the seat of all emotion, especially love. As the psalms express, God speaks to a person in his heart and there probes him. This notion of the heart is clear when we read the words of Deuteronomy 6:5-6: "Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your strength. Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today."

How society, culture, economy, politics today need this Heart! It is really true, the more man distances himself from God's Love the more he becomes 'heartless', agitated about a thousand things because he has forgotten one important principal: to let oneself be loved by Christ and to respond to this Love with our love.
The deepest longing of Christ’s Heart is that we discover how much he loves us, the extent of his tender love for us creatures who, cooled by selfishness, look only inwards at ourselves, as if we were afraid to let ourselves be loved unconditionally by our Creator, who asks nothing and gives all!

In this secular world the word heart only brings to mind the idea of courage and love, they don't recognise the suffering heart.

When you are in love or excited about something your heart beat accelerates, just at the revelation that such a pure awesome experience called love exists.

In reference to the heart: We often use phrases like the heart of the matter meaning let's get to the really important part, the substance, the part that has meaning that gives meaning.

When we have a broken relationship, we refer to a broken heart, usually we use this term when we speak of two people who were in love and they experienced some kind of betrayal, some kind of abandonment, some kind of disappointment.

A hurting heart usually signifies something lost and a deep longing or desire to reconcile, to somehow make this right again. An estrangement, it could be a longing to be forgiven by someone who is very dear to you. It could stem from a misunderstanding.

A pierced heart- That sounds painful doesn't it and it truly is. This stems from a deep sense of betrayal, a false accusation and maybe even punishment for something you did not do. I was looking at a show on television and they were interviewing prisoners who had been wrongfully accused of crimes they did not commit and some of these men spent as much as 30 years behind bars. In many cases it is only because of the advancement in science and the ability to check DNA that some were exonerated. Of course we can identify with these descriptions because they are our human experiences of the heart.

Now I would like to speak about the extraordinary experiences of the heart of Jesus Christ, son of the living God. Who himself experienced each of those emotions, Love, companionship, Betrayal, abandonment, rejection, false accusations, ridicule, jeering, taunting, mocking, scourging, brutality, he was despised, ignored and the ultimate crucifixion on the cross. Can we even begin to imagine that level of suffering was inflicted by all of humanity on one person, Jesus Christ.

The heart has even greater depth when contemplated in light of the Incarnation. We believe that Jesus Christ, second person of the Holy Trinity and consubstantial with the Father, entered this world taking on our human flesh — true God became also true man. While Jesus' heart obviously served a physiological function, spiritually His Sacred Heart represents love: the divine love our Lord shares with the Father and Holy Spirit in
the Trinity; the perfect, divine love which God has for us; and the genuine human love Christ felt in His human nature.

I remember growing up our home had a picture of the sacred heart of Jesus hung on the wall over the entry to our home. When I got married the first thing my mother did was take me to the religious store and bought me a sacred heart. That was 35 years ago and I have it here tonight. The frame has been changed but it is still the original picture blessed for our very first home.

Over the years, I looked at that picture many times, with tears streaming down my face, while experiencing brokenness, anguish or pain in my heart as I went through one trial or another, many times I was prostrate before his sacred heart and always, always after I calmed down, I felt the pounding in my heart subside and my heart started to beat in a normal rhythm once more and I was able to pick myself up and carry on.

Suffering is a reality for all of us, and to know that Jesus understands what we are feeling is a true consolation.

The feast of the Sacred Heart is celebrated 19 days after Pentecost. While there were many saints that experienced revelations of the Sacred Heart two actually experienced laying their heads on his heart, one was St. Margaret Mary Alacoque from Paray Le Monial a beautiful quiet town in France.

In St Margaret Mary's encounter, Jesus said that his greatest wound was apathy, the lack of respect for the Blessed Sacrament, his Body and blood. For that reason, He wanted a devotion to his Sacred Heart.

He told her that from the moment the Angels proclaimed his incarnation to his triumph on the cross, his heart suffered constantly because of the sins of men.

The Sacred Heart is the Heart of God laid bare for man: word from God. It is a human Heart lifted high on the Cross: word to God. It is the Heart of the Church open to all who seek, to all who thirst, to every lost sheep waiting to be found and carried home: word for the world.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the full and irrevocable message of the Father to us. It is everything we ever could or should need to say to the Father. It is all we have to say to one another and to the world.

Jesus disclosed the wonders of His love. He desired to make them known to all mankind and to diffuse the treasures of His goodness.

In the vision of St. Gertrude on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, she rested her head near the wound in the Saviour's heart, she heard the beating of the Divine Heart and
asked John if, on the night of the Last Supper, he too had felt these delightful pulsations, why he had never spoken of the fact. John replied that this revelation had been reserved for subsequent ages when the world, having grown cold, would have need of it to rekindle its love.

Many times during history the Supreme Pontiffs have reminded humanity that without the Lord Jesus, life has no real meaning, man gropes in the dark to find himself!

By means of Eucharistic adoration we are “opened” from within by His invisible working in us. The Most Holy Eucharist, celebrated and adored, as the Church teaches us, is the greatest and most effective treasure of our salvation, an infinite treasure which must be safeguarded with profound respect and deepest devotion.

Saint, Joseph Sebastian Pelczar strove for holiness and he led others towards it. He was zealous in all things, but in such a way that in his service Christ himself was the Master.

His motto in life was: "All for the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus through the immaculate hands of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary". This motto shaped his spiritual life, which consisted in the entrustment of himself, his life and his ministry to Christ through Mary.

"One of the most ardent desires of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is that his Most Holy Mother be venerated and loved by all: firstly, because the Lord himself has in effable love for her, and then because he made her the mother of all men, so that with her sweetness she might attract to herself even those who flee the Holy Cross, and bring them to the Divine Heart".

St Ursula Ledochowska  "The Most Blessed Sacrament", she wrote, "is the sun of our life, our treasure, our happiness, our all on the earth.... Love Jesus in the tabernacle! Always leave your heart there, even if you are busy at work. It is there that Jesus dwells, whom we must love ardently with all our heart. And if we cannot love him, let us at least seek to love him—to love him more and more".

The early Church Fathers clearly cherished this meaning of the Sacred Heart of our Lord. St. Justin Martyr, in his <Dialogue with the Jew Trypho> said, "We the Christians are the true Israel which springs from Christ, for we are carved out of His heart as from a rock." Likewise, St. Iraneaus of Lyons said, "The Church is the fountain of the living water that flows to us from the Heart of Christ". Paulinus of Nola added, "John, who rested blissfully on the breast of our Lord, was inebriated with the Holy Spirit, from the Heart of all creating Wisdom he quaffed an understanding which transcends that of any creature." Although these are just a few brief examples from the times of the early Church, we find a profound respect for the Sacred Heart of our Lord as a font of His love which gave birth to the Church and continues to nourish its members.
This means allowing the Sacred Heart to speak for us, to pray in us, to pray through us, taking comfort in what Scripture says, "that we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Heb 4:15).

Considering our present day and age, the temptations and sins of this world, the growing apathy and secularism, we too should turn again in loving devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and ask Him to pour forth His grace. We must strive to make our hearts like His own, for He said, "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God" (Mt 5:8).

"Lord Jesus, I come to be silent in your presence, trusting that your Heart will speak for me, knowing that all I could ever want to say, that all I would ever need to say, is spoken eternally to the Father by your Sacred Heart".

Sources include: the Catholic Encyclopedia, Article from the Arlington Catholic Herald and the Treasury of Novenas web page