

The Blessed Sacrament and The Sacred Heart

Today we celebrated the Feast of the Sacred Heart. Devotion to the Sacred Heart is based on the sublime doctrine of the Incarnation, which teaches us that the Son of God became man by uniting to Himself a human nature, so that He is one divine Person in two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man. Since, even in His human nature, He is a divine Person, his human nature and all its parts, when considered as united to His divine personality, is worthy of the highest type of adoration. Hence, the living, physical Heart of Jesus Christ, united to the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, can be adored as the Heart of God Himself.

The reason why we select the Heart of Our Lord for special veneration is that the human heart is a symbol of love. In our ordinary speech we refer to the heart as the source of a person's affection and devotion. Now, since Our Divine Lord has certainly shown His love for mankind in an extraordinary degree from the very beginning of His life until His death on the cross, we naturally desire to venerate His Heart by a special form of devotion. Such is the devotion of the Sacred Heart. The human Heart of Christ also reminds us of the eternal love which He, in union with the Father and the Holy Ghost, has maintained for us from all eternity.

It is the wish of the Church that all her members foster a great love for the Sacred Heart. Besides instituting the Feast, which we celebrate annually on the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, the Church has composed a beautiful Litany in honour of the Sacred Heart, together with an Act of Consecration for public devotions. Holy Communion on every First Friday in honour of the Sacred Heart is also an approved Catholic custom.

The devotion of the Sacred Heart is not precisely the same as the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, but the two are closely connected. For, surely, one of the most striking manifestations of the love of Our Divine Redeemer for the human race was the institution of the Holy Eucharist. Hence, in adoring the Blessed Sacrament, we adore the Sacred Heart.

One of the objects of the devotion to the Sacred Heart is to make atonement to Our Lord for the many sins committed throughout the world. All sins are acts of ingratitude toward Christ, insofar as the sinner rejects the Blood that He shed for mankind. Included in such sins are acts of irreverence and profanation of the Blessed Sacrament.

Practical Application

Try to cultivate the habit of making short ejaculations in honour of the Sacred Heart, such as "Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us" ... "Sacred Heart of Jesus, protect our families" which are richly indulgenced prayers.