

Hearts are not just for February

Like many of you, I learned early in life that the month of June was dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This devotion actually has a long and historic provenance within the Catholic Church. It goes back at least to the eleventh century; but it remained a private devotion, often tied to the five wounds of Christ, through the sixteenth century. St. John Eudes was instrumental in the observance of the first feast of the Sacred Heart in 1670. In 1956 we have "Haurietis aquas" Pope Pius XII's beautiful encyclical on devotion to the Sacred Heart.

This devotion lies not so much in Christ's physical heart but in His great love for each of us. In 1 John 4:8 we read that "God is love." It is through the Sacred Heart of Jesus that we honor the human expression of that love.

Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary flows naturally from devotion to her Son. It has scriptural roots in Luke 2:19: "And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." From her heart comes her purity and the reason we call her Immaculate. It was St. Bonaventure and St. John Eudes who helped to spread devotion to both the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Having a solid devotion to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary provides us with help in reversing the downward spiral of our culture. Praying the Rosary is a good beginning.

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