

Catholic Faith Corner

Understanding, Teaching, and Living the Faith

Sea of Galilee at Sunrise

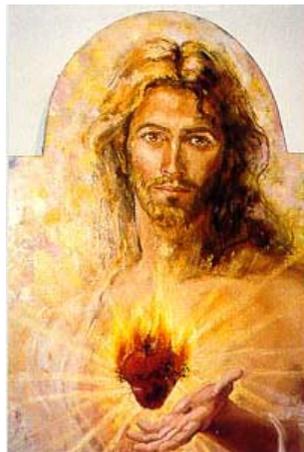


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Why the Sacred Heart?

by KATHLEEN GLAVICH, SND on [JUNE 27, 2012](#)
in [BLOGS](#)



The month of June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart. Not so long ago I was in line in the library. When the man in front of me opened his wallet, I glimpsed a Sacred Heart badge. Today some people consider this devotion passé or sentimental, and children may think the art is morbid. Still, the heart of Jesus is a powerful symbol. What does the heart mean in our culture? Life, love, our whole being. (Hebrews thought kidneys had this role!) The heart of Jesus stands for his total, tremendous love for us. And that is the heart of the matter!

When we say, "I love you with my whole heart," we mean "with all that I am." God's love for us compelled him to hide his divinity and become human. Almighty God became one of his creatures. He showed with all his being that he cared for us. His life on earth culminated in the greatest act of love: dying for the sake of the beloved. What's more, after Jesus died on the cross to save us, a soldier thrust a lance into his heart to make sure he was dead. Yes, a heart is a very fitting symbol for the love of Jesus.



Mary Kathleen Glavich, SND

I'm a Sister of Notre Dame, of Chardon, Ohio, the author of eighty-plus books on religious education and spirituality, including a novel, "The Fisherman's Wife: The Gospel According to St. Peter's Spouse." I enjoy giving talks and retreats and was a pastoral associate at St. Dominic Church. I also edit and self-publish books for others.

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Devotion to the Sacred Heart began in the eleventh century, way before anyone celebrated Valentine's Day with its avalanche of hearts. Saints, monks and others included it in their private prayers. The symbol received a divine boost when Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary in the seventeenth century and asked her to promote it. He said he wanted everyone to know the depths of his love for them. At one point, he said, "Behold this heart, which has so loved men [and women], but which is so little loved in return." Unrequited love is sad. Unrequited divine love is terrible.

Jesus requested frequent Communion, especially on the first Friday of each month; holy hours; and a feast in honor of the Sacred Heart. Devotion to the Sacred Heart took off. The Pope established what we know today as the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, celebrated on the Friday nineteen days after Pentecost. The Jesuits were charged with promoting this devotion, and characteristically, they did a great job. People had scapulars or badges of the Sacred Heart, families were consecrated to the Sacred Heart and his image was enthroned in their homes, Catholics began going to Communion on nine consecutive Fridays, and prayed the Litany to the Sacred Heart.

In art the Sacred Heart is surmounted by a cross and encircled with thorns, both symbols of his love. Flames shoot forth from the heart to represent the burning love Jesus has for us. In some pictures Jesus is shown offering his heart to us.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart is devotion to Jesus. It makes sense. It was specifically requested by him. Aren't these enough reasons to love Jesus in return by honoring him under this title?

What do you think?

Image: "Sacred Heart" by Joseph Fanelli, ©1994. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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About Sister Kathleen Glavich, SND

Jesus ordered us to make disciples of all nations and teach them. Mary Kathleen, a Sister of Notre Dame from Chardon, Ohio, responds to this call through writing, speaking, giving retreats, and teaching. Her motto, adopted from Eddie Doherty's gravesite, is "All my words for the Word!"

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Betty Nagel June 27, 2012 at 4:26 pm



I love this explanation and the picture of the Sacred Heart. I'd never seen that one before. It's beautiful and heart-warming, no pun intended. I've never had a devotion to the Sacred Heart, but perhaps as I ponder this blog prayerfully, I will begin to.

REPLY

Kathleen Glavich, SND June 28, 2012 at 9:25 am



Mr. Fanelli, the artist of the Sacred Heart here, painted this picture as a gift for his mother. His parents always had a chapel in their house. Now that his mother is in Palm Beach, Florida, she has a new chapel, where this picture is displayed.

REPLY

Sister Kathleen Tobin July 1, 2012 at 11:08 am



This makes me think of my sister moving back to Florida. She took with her an old family heirloom picture of Jesus offering the Sacred Heart to us. She tells me she found the perfect place for the picture and treasures it so much.

REPLY

Elena September 26, 2012 at 5:46 pm



Thank you for posting this and for including a lovely representation of the painting. I've recently come back to my Catholic roots, and very unexpectedly, I'm called to the Sacred Heart devotion with a passion I never thought possible. It would seem that there is a resurgence happening with Sacred Heart and Divine Mercy devotions in the Church, for which I am very happy.

REPLY

Kathleen Glavich, SND September 26, 2012 at 7:34 pm



Welcome home, Elena!

REPLY



Mary Kathleen Glavich, SND Heart to Heart with Mary

A Yearly Devotional

Newest Book

In "Heart to Heart with Mary: A Yearly Devotional" Our Blessed Mother speaks to us every day of the year and a suggestion is provided for a response. It is similar to the popular book "Jesus Calling" and can be found on Amazon or purchased from me.

Featured Book

Totally Catholic! A Catechism for Kids and Their Parents and Teachers

Do you wish you had a simple, child-friendly summary of what Catholics believe? This book took first place in the Association of Catholic Publishers awards 2014 in the category of Children's Books. It can be purchased from Pauline Books and Media or from me. (\$14.95)

A Heavenly Book

Do you believe in angels? Most people do. The Catholic Companion to Angels offers heavenly facts about these majestic creatures, confirming that you can turn to them for help. Uniquely, The Angels comes with three covers (statue, stained-glass, or painting). Choose the one you like best.

Barbara Yanek November 1, 2018 at 10:36 pm



I want to buy this. Does anybody know where i can purchase it.? Would prefer to order online.

REPLY

Kathleen Glavich, SND November 4, 2018 at 11:19 am



Barbara, the artist is Joseph Fanelli. You can Google him to find out more. At one site I learned that Sacred Heart Church sells copies for \$500.00.

REPLY

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Available from ACTA Publications and me.
(\$10.00)

My First Novel!

The Fisherman's Wife is the story of St. Peter's spouse, the long-suffering but delightful woman who puts up with Peter and his obsession with the itinerant preacher named Jesus. Through her we meet Peter, Jesus, and other biblical characters. In Capernaum she witnesses Jesus' healings and hears his words. The book is based on the Gospels, legends, and what is known about first-century Jewish women. The rest is sheer imagination. Order directly from me FOR AN AUTOGRAPHED COPY at kglavich@ndec.org.

A Bit of Humor

A Slow Student During indoor recess, the third and fourth graders were playing school. Taking part in the game, the teacher, Sister Janet, sat at a child's desk. Adam, who was playing the teacher, came up to her and asked, "And just how many years have you been kept back?" (from "Why Is Jesus in the Microwave?")

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The Sisters of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio, belong to an international congregation of more than two thousand apostolic women religious. We are one in mind and one in heart for the transformation of the world in Christ.



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