

Sacred Heart of Jesus 2018

Beloved brother and sisters, between December 8, 2015, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception to November 20, 2016, the Feast of Christ the King, we celebrated the year of mercy. The mercy of God is revealed to us in and through Jesus Christ. The heart has always been considered to be the seat of the human feeling; especially those feelings of love, mercy and forgiveness.

In the like manner, the Heart of Jesus has exceeded the boundaries of the human knowledge of love, mercy and forgiveness. Granted that the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is mainly associated with mystics such as St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, St. Mary of the Divine Heart, St. John Eudes, St. Mechtilde, St. Francis de Sales, St. Gertrude, devotion to the heart of Jesus states back to Calvary to the day of his crucifixion.

In truth, through His life and ministry, Jesus showed many acts of love, mercy and forgiveness. While on the cross, after much torture and humiliation, and obsessive human arrogance from the painful cross, prayed "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing". Luke 23:34. After the resurrection, Jesus not only forgave Peter's apostasy, He even recommissioned Peter. The heart of Jesus is rich with love, mercy and forgiveness. The teaching of Jesus is based on these three selfless virtues.

The mission of Jesus is born out of love for the Father and for humanity. For there is no greater love than the one He lived. He became human and sacrificed His life for the salvation of the world. He suffered willingly, not for Himself but for us...1Peter 1:8. He bore our sins in His body on the cross, Peter 2:24. For Christ never sinned! But God treated Him as a sinner, so that Christ could make us acceptable to God, 2 Corinthians 5:21. What the heart of Jesus underwent for our salvation: "He was despised and rejected by many a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief...surely He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was persecuted for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed...He was oppressed and He was afflicted, but He opened not His mouth; no deceit was found in His mouth..." Isaiah 53 1-12.

The heart of Christ endured every punishment and taunts in order to secure human salvation. The heart of Christ is rich with love. He laid down His life as His proof for His unconditional love for us. He wants nothing from us other than we should love one another as He loves us. Through our love for one another we will prove to the world that we are His disciples. By loving one another as Jesus loves us we show that His passion and death were not vain displays, but expressions of the Father's love, mercy and forgiveness. Love without mercy and forgiveness will be dry, false and unchristianly. Mercy and forgiveness are the virtues through which God expressed His love for us in Christ Jesus: Paul testified that "...God

showed his love for us for while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” Romans 5:8. Christ built the strength of love on human weakness. Through human weakness the strength of God is revealed. There is abundance of mercy and forgiveness in the Sacred Heart of Jesus. All who want to be part of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, all who want to be washed with the blood which flows through this Sacred Heart must also be melted in mercy and forgiveness. Hence, Jesus taught us to be merciful so that we may obtain mercy from God.

In the Lord’s prayer, he taught us to forgive one another just as Father has forgiven, emphasizing that: if you do not forgive others their transgressions, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you.

He taught us the parable of the prodigal son. We learned God’s love so that we may practice to forgive unconditionally, Luke15. The free and unconditional love of God which is expressed and given through the broken Sacred Heart of Christ must be freely and unconditionally received: we give God no conditions.

In the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we celebrate God’s love, mercy and forgiveness, and the invitation for us to participate in the divine mercy of God.