

Sermon, Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 19, 2009
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“Behold this Heart, which has loved men so much, and which is loved by them so little!”

Beloved brethren in Our Lord Jesus Christ,

Today we are celebrating with all the Church the great Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The object of this devotion is the Heart of the Incarnate Word, inseparably united to His Humanity and His Divinity, and as such an object of worship as Jesus Christ Himself, with whom it is identified.

This is the material object of this devotion, because the spiritual object is the love of Jesus Christ, of which His Heart is the symbol.

It is the Heart of a God who loves us tenderly; it is Jesus Christ Himself, represented by the noblest organ of His Humanity and the most beautiful attribute of His Divinity – His love.

The Heart of Jesus is even more worthy of our devotion than His Holy Cross, the nails of His Passion, one of the thorns.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is not only the symbol and representation of His love, but is the brief of all His life of love for us.

My dear Brethren, we Roman Catholics are of the religion of love.

Yes, we are of the religion of the Cross. Everywhere we see the Cross of Jesus. By the mystery of the Cross, we learn to carry our cross behind Jesus, every day.

We are the religion of the “Yes.” By His Passion, Jesus said “Yes” to His Father, accepting to suffer for us and repairing the “No” said by Adam and by all men who commit sin. Because to sin is to say “No” to God. By His “fiat,” like the “fiat” of the Blessed Virgin, Jesus repaired all of the “No” of our sins. Because of that, only Jesus could say: **“Which of you shall convince me of sin?”**¹ His Heart is completely pure and innocent. He

¹ John 8: 46.

himself said that **“from the heart come forth”** all manner of sins.² By His obedience, Jesus teaches us to submit ourselves to the Will of God. **“I do always the things that please Him.”**³ And Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin, said to us what she had said to the servants in Cana of Galilee: **“Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye.”**⁴

The “No” to God is the word of the Devil: “Non serviam” (“I will not serve”). The religion of the Devil is the religion of the “No,” the religion of pride, of hate, of Hell.

We are of the religion of humility: we have seen Jesus washing the feet of His Apostles and showing them a child as the model of humility. We are not of the religion of great names, of politicians, of marketing. We are of the religion of anonymity, of humility, as Jesus shows us:

- **“I seek not My own glory.”**⁵
- **“Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them, otherwise you shall not have a reward of your Father who is in heaven.”**⁶
- **“Thy Father, who seeth in secret, will repay thee.”**⁷
- **“Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.”**⁸

We are of the religion of meekness and forgiveness, as we pray in the Our Father. Jesus teaches us: **“Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you.”**⁹ In His Cross, Jesus teaches us to forgive and justify even our enemies: **“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”**¹⁰

² Matthew 15: 19.

³ John 8: 29.

⁴ John 2: 5.

⁵ John 8: 50.

⁶ Matthew 6: 1.

⁷ Matthew 6: 4.

⁸ Psalm 113: 9. **“Not to us, O Lord, not to us; but to thy name give glory.”**

⁹ Matthew 5: 44.

¹⁰ Luke 23: 34.

We are the religion of the empty tomb. Christ won, He is alive. Adepts of the other religions can visit the embalmed bodies of their founders. But we visit the empty tomb of Christ, because He is alive, forever.

But all of this we can say in summary by saying that we are of the religion of love, the religion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Because all of these characteristics we find in the Sacred Heart of Jesus. There, we can see His sufferings, His Cross, His humility, His forgiveness, His victory in the Resurrection, His infinite Love for us. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the summary, the condensation of the Gospel.

Because of that, Jesus said: **“Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart.”**¹¹

All Christian teaching we can find in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Let’s hear the Sermon of the Mount from the Sacred Heart of Jesus: blessed are the meek, blessed are the merciful, the clean of heart, they who suffer persecution. Behold the Sacred Heart of Jesus, meek, merciful, innocent, and suffering patiently all the persecutions, the example of all these beatitudes.

But the most important demonstration of the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the Holy Eucharist. **“Jesus . . . having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end.”**¹²

Jesus in the Holy Eucharist is the companion of our exile, by His real presence: **“Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.”**¹³ He is our friend, our brother, our Father, our consolation in our life.

Jesus in Holy Communion is the food of our souls and, by this food, we live in Him and He in us: **“He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me, and I in him.”**¹⁴ So, in the Holy Communion, we enter into the Sacred Heart of Jesus. And this Sacred Heart is open, like we pray in the Preface of this Mass, “ut apértum Cor divínæ largitátis sacrárium, torréntes nobis fúnderet miseratiónis et grátiaë,

¹¹ Matthew 11: 29.

¹² John 13: 1

¹³ Matthew 11: 28.

¹⁴ John 6: 57.

et quod amore nostri flagrare numquam destitit, piis esset requies et poenitentibus pateret salutis refugium” (“**from His opened Heart, the sacred Treasury of divine bounty, streams of mercy and grace might pour out upon us; a resting place of peace for the devout and a refuge of salvation to the penitent**”).

And more! Jesus in the Holy Eucharist is a Victim perpetually offered for us. This is the miracle of the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He renews continually in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, although unbloody, the same offering which He made on Calvary.

In the Holy Sacrifice, Jesus is both priest and victim, offering Himself by the hands of His ministers.

Because of all that, the Eucharist is something so great, so magnificent, so wonderful that it is worth the highest respect, the greatest sense of the sacred, the best demonstration of our worship and adoration.

As Pope John Paul II said in his Encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, the Eucharist is something so great that it cannot be made the object of ambiguities, liberties, creativities, adaptations, reductions and instrumentalizations.¹⁵

Because of all that, we conserve the traditional liturgical form of the Holy Mass.

Why do we love, preserve, conserve and prefer the extraordinary form of the Roman Rite, sometimes called the Traditional Mass?

Would it be because we are nostalgic or sentimentally attached to past forms of the liturgy? Would it be because we deny the power of the Pope to modify and promulgate liturgical laws? Would it be because we consider the new Mass, Paul VI’s Mass, invalid, heterodox, sinful, sacrilegious or not Catholic? Not at all. We are Catholic.

It is not for these bad or mistaken reasons, but for a question of better and more precise expression of our Faith in the Eucharistic dogmas: for

¹⁵ “The Eucharist is too great a gift to tolerate **ambiguity and depreciation.**” (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, No. 10). “It must be lamented that, especially in the years following the post-conciliar liturgical reform, as a result of a misguided sense of **creativity and adaptation** there have been a number of *abuses* which have been a source of suffering for many.” (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, No. 52). “The mystery of the Eucharist . . . *does not allow for reduction or exploitation.*” (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, No. 61 (emphasis in original)).

safety; for protection against abuses; for the good of the whole Church, in contribution to the liturgical crisis' reform; for wealth and solemnity of rites; for better precision and clarity of rubrics (giving no space to the manipulations that Pope John Paul II complains of in *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*); for the sense of the sacred; for the greater wealth and precision of the prayers' formulas; in reverence, for personal and ritual humility; for elevation and nobility of ceremonies; for respect, beauty, good taste, piety, sacred language, tradition and legitimate right recognized by the Church's Supreme Authority, and in perfect communion with the Holy Father, that is, with the Church. We love the old form of the Roman Rite, as a treasure of the Catholic Liturgy.

How we are happy being Catholics! Every day, in our Churches, it is Christmas, because Jesus born on the altar; everyday it is Good Friday, because Jesus renews his passion on the altar; every day it is Easter, because Jesus, in the altar, is alive, resurrected, as He is in Heaven! Really, we are very rich.

St. Augustine said that God, even being almighty, the most powerful, cannot have given more; even being the wisest, did not know how to give more; even being richest, did not have more to give than Himself in the Eucharist.

As the Eucharist is the summit and the center of the Church, and the greatest demonstration of the love of God, the Sacred Heart of Jesus present in the Eucharist must be the summit, the center of our lives forever. Amen.