

## CELEBRATING the LOVE and MERCY of JESUS in OUR LIVES



God is love. And God's love was revealed in our midst in this way: He sent His only Son to the world that we might have life through Him. Love, then, consists in this: not that we have loved God but that He has loved us and has sent His Son as an offering for our sins. 1 John 4, 8-10



We remind ourselves that we are in the presence of the Lord.  
We will take refuge in His loving heart. He is our Strength in times of weakness. He is our Comforter in times of sorrow.

Lamentations 3:31-36

For the Lord's rejection does not last forever;  
Though He punishes, He takes pity, in the abundance of His mercies;  
He has no joy in afflicting or grieving the sons and daughters of men.  
When anyone tramples underfoot all the prisoners in the land,  
When that person distorts people's rights in the very sight of the Most High,  
When they press a crooked claim,  
the Lord does not look on unconcerned."

HYMN      THERE IS A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY

There is wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea;  
There is a kindness in God's justice which is more than liberty.  
There is plentiful redemption in the blood that has been shed;  
There is a joy for all the members in the sorrows of the Head.

For the love of God is broader than the measures of our mind;  
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.  
If our love were but more simple we should take Him at His word,  
And our lives would be thanksgiving for the goodness of our Lord.

Troubled souls, why ill you scatter like a crowd of frightened sheep?  
Foolish hearts, why will you wander from a love so true and deep?  
There is welcome for the sinner and more graces for the good;  
There is mercy with the Savior, there is healing in His blood.

Frederick Faber

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SCRIPTURE READINGS

Open your ears, O Christian people, open your ears and hear Good News.  
Open your hearts, O Christian people, open your hearts and receive the  
Good News.

Open your mouths, O Christian people, open your mouths and preach the  
Good News.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### ROMANS 5: 5–11

A reading from the letter of Paul the apostle to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters:

The love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit  
Who has been given to us. At the appointed time, when we were still  
powerless, Christ died for us godless men. It is rare that anyone should  
lay down his life for a just man, though it is barely possible that for a  
good man someone may have the courage to die. It is precisely in this  
that God proves His love for us: that while we were still sinners, Christ  
died for us. Now that we have been justified by His blood, it is all the  
more certain that we shall be saved by Him from God's wrath. For if,  
when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him by the death of  
His Son, it is all the more certain that we who have been reconciled will  
be saved by His life. Not only that; we go so far as to make God our boast  
through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have now received  
reconciliation. The Word of the Lord!

### JOHN 15, 9–17

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

At that time Jesus said to His followers: As the Father has loved Me, so I  
have loved you. Live on in My love. You will live in My love if you keep My  
commandments, even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and  
live in His love. All this I tell you that My joy may be yours and your joy  
may be complete. This is My commandment: love one another as I have  
loved you. There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for  
one's friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. I no  
longer speak of you as slaves, for a slave does not know what his master  
is about. Instead, I call you friends, since I have made known to you all  
that I heard from My Father. It was not you who chose Me, it was I Who  
chose you to go forth and bear fruit. Your fruit must endure, so that all  
you ask the Father in My name He will give you. The command I give you  
is this, that you love one another. The Gospel of the Lord!

## REFLECTION

### Saint JOHN EUDES

The most lovable Heart of Jesus is a furnace of love. He loves the Father  
eternally, immensely, and infinitely. He loves his Mother without measure  
or limit, which is abundantly proven by the inconceivable graces He has  
granted her. He also loves the Church – triumphant, suffering and  
militant –, whose sacraments, especially the Eucharist, which is a

summary of all the wonders of God's goodness. are so many inexhaustible sources of grace and holiness flowing, as from an ocean, from the Sacred Heart of our Savior. Finally, He loves each and every one of us as He is loved by the Father. That is why He did everything and suffered everything to withdraw us from the abyss of evil in which we have been thrown by our sinfulness, and made us children of God, members of Christ, heirs of God with Christ, having the same kingdom that the Father gave His Son.

Our duty to this most loving Heart consists in this: that we adore Him, praise Him, bless Him, glorify Him, give Him thanks and ask His forgiveness for ail that He suffered because of our sins; also, that we offer Him, in atonement, ail the joy given Him by those who love and ail the affliction endured by us for the sake of His love; and finally, that we love Him fervently. We must also make use of this Heart, because it is ours: the eternal Father, the Holy Spirit, Mary, and Jesus himself have given it to us, to be our refuge in need, our revelation in doubt, and our treasure in difficulty. Moreover, they gave it to us not only to be the model and norm of our life, but also to be our very own Heart, so that we might, through this wonderful Heart, fulfill our duty to God and neighbor.

#### RESPONSE

I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural hearts. And I will put My spirit within you. Ezekiel 36, 26-27

As the Father has loved us, so Lord, we love You. Let us always live on in Your love.

#### INTERCESSIONS

Response: MAY CHRIST DWELL IN OUR HEARTS BY FAITH

Jesus, You forgave those who crucified You;  
give us the grace to put no limits on our forgiveness of others, we pray:

Lord, You loved sinners and helped them to change their lives;  
give us patience and understanding when we strive to help those who harm themselves or others, we pray:

Good Shepherd, Your love is everlasting;  
You never cease to call us to salvation;  
give us the wisdom and generosity to follow You and draw others to You,  
we pray:

Crucified Lord, a soldier pierced Your heart with a lance;  
open our hearts to the wonders of Your love and to the challenges of Your gospel, we pray:

Jesus, You were moved to pity and You healed the widow's son;  
teach us how to bring hope and comfort to those who mourn, we pray:

Man of Galilee, You wept over Jerusalem and longed to gather the people to Your heart;  
increase our desire to work for the development and safety of all people,  
we pray:

O Great Friend, You wept over the death of Lazarus,  
teach us the value of loyal and faithful relationships, we pray:

For what else shall we pray?

Let us pray:

Your compassion, O God, is eternal, Your love is everlasting.  
Hear our prayers this afternoon and answer them as You know best. May  
we always accept Your holy will in our regard. Amen.

#### HYMN                      LOVING SHEPHERD OF YOUR SHEEP

Loving Shepherd of Your Sheep  
Keep me Lord in safety keep  
Nothing can Your power withstand  
None can pluck me from Your Hand  
Loving Shepherd You did give  
Your own life that I might live  
May I love You day by day  
Gladly Your sweet Will obey

Loving Shepherd ever near  
Teach me still Your Voice to hear  
Suffer not my step to stray  
From the strait and narrow way  
Where You lead may I go  
Walking in Your steps below  
There before Your Father's throne  
Jesus claim me for Your own

#### PRAYER                      PSALM 145

My soul, give praise to the Lord;  
I will praise the Lord all my days,  
make music to my God while I live.  
Put no trust in princes, in mortal men in whom there is no help.  
Take their breath, they return to clay  
and their plans that day come to nothing.  
They are happy who are helped by Jacob's God,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God,  
Who alone made heaven and earth, the seas and all they contain.  
It is He who keeps faith for ever,  
Who is just to those who are oppressed.  
It is He who gives bread to the hungry,  
the Lord, Who sets prisoners free,

the Lord Who gives sight to the blind,  
Who raises up those who are bowed down,  
the Lord, Who protects the stranger  
and upholds the widow and orphan.  
It is the Lord Who loves the just but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign forever, Sion's God, from age to age.

HYMN                      A TOUCHING PLACE

Christ's is the world in which we move,  
Christ's are the folks we are summoned to love,  
Christ's is the voice which calls us to care,  
And Christ is the One Who meets us here.

Refrain

To the lost Christ shows His face;  
To the unloved He gives His embrace:  
To those who cry in pain or disgrace,  
Christ makes with His friends a touching place.

Feel for the people we most avoid,  
Strange or bereaved or never employed;  
Feel for the women and feel for the men  
Who fear that their living is all in vain.

Feel for the parents who have lost their child,  
Feel for the women whom men have defiled,  
Feel for the baby for whom there is no breast,  
Feel for the weary who find no rest.

Feel for the lives by life confused  
Riddled in doubt in loving abused;  
Feel for the lonely heart conscious of sin,  
Which longs to be pure but fears to begin.

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PRAYER

God, Father of mercies, with ineffable goodness You gave us the loving  
Heart of Your Son. Grant, we pray, that our hearts be united as one with  
the Heart of Jesus to love You perfectly. We make this prayer in the name  
of our Lord Jesus the Christ. Amen.

**BLESSING**

To a troubled world, peace from Christ.  
To a searching world, love from Christ.  
To a waiting world, hope from Christ.  
May God the Father, Who loves us,  
and made us accepted in the Beloved:  
to God the Son, Who loved us,  
and loosed us from our sins by His own blood:  
to God the Holy Spirit,  
Who spreads the love of God abroad in our hearts:  
to the One true God be all love and all glory  
for time and for eternity. Amen.



Saint John Baptist de La Salle  
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,  
help us to imitate the great love and mercy shown us by God.

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!

