



The Sacred Heart of Jesus

Read:

Deut. 7:6-11
Ps 103:1-8,10
1 John 4:7-16
Matt 11:25-30

One day many years ago, soon after I had started to celebrate Mass daily, it occurred to me that the Lord was hoping that I would stay for a while after Mass to pray in front of his holy presence in the Tabernacle. I said, Okay.

At first I felt embarrassed that others who stayed would notice me kneeling there. But then the presence of Jesus became strong, not only in the Sacred Host that was hidden behind the closed Tabernacle door, but in Spirit in front of the Tabernacle. Mind you, I am no visionary, but what I experienced can best be described as a keen awareness that Jesus wanted to show me his Sacred Heart. I "saw" him open the robe that covered his chest (it reminded me of Superman peeling off his shirt). I expected to see an image of the Sacred Heart similar to what artists have painted for holy cards.

That's not what I saw. It was alive, beating, pumping, thumping heart. A human heart "on fire" with the glow of pure light — a "fire" of tremendous love, an often-suffering but powerful love.

How sacred his love truly is for you and me and for everyone! It's without flaw or sin. It's complete and all-consuming. It suffers for us when we sin. It suffers with us when we are hurt by the sins of others. And it's as real as your own beating heart.

Jesus did not lose his human body when he ascended to heaven. The heart in his glorified body

did not stop existing. The reason why the Church gives us a special feast day commemorating the Sacred Heart of Jesus — and the reason why Jesus shows his heart to us — is because it symbolizes his love, pierced for us on the cross but forever alive, real, and unconditional.



Problems and unanswered prayers cause us to doubt the liveliness of Christ's love. The inability to *feel* his love pumping through us seems to prove that it's not always here. Our unworthiness seems to prove that he should not make it available.

However, these doubts dissolve away when we give to *others* the love that we seek from the Lord, for it's in giving that we receive, it's in doing that we understand, and it's in taking action that we become aware of what is real. By giving his sacred love to the people around us, our hearts pump in unison with his Sacred Heart. Then we understand what we hear in Deut. 7:6-11: "The Lord has set his heart on you and chose you!"

You were chosen by God to be loved and to love others on his behalf. Remember this: The same doubt that you've felt is also what others are experiencing. Who today needs proof that God loves them? Who's in a bad mood? Who needs a kind, calming, caring word of encouragement and hope? Because you have within you the Sacred Heart of Jesus, you are the proof they need that God's love is real. Give it to them and you will find the proof that cures your own doubts!