

# Sacred Heart Family Devotion Urged To Deepen Mutual Love

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I know you think we're strange, but my husband and I are finding it difficult to achieve a spirit of religious unity and togetherness. Although we're both Catholics, I don't think we're alike as such. I suggest individuals that we don't know how to communicate in this area. Our relationship is not as usual as you may think. Nora, of course, every person's relationship to God is experienced in such an intimate, uniquely personal way that it is difficult to share it wholly with others.



Your experience is not as unusual as you may think. Nora, of course, every person's relationship to God is experienced in such an intimate, uniquely personal way that it is difficult to share it wholly with others.

However, particularly in our society, most people are extremely shy about discussing or sharing any commitments or attitudes pertaining to religion. This reluctance may result from fear that "outsiders" would not understand, but it exists even among Catholics. Indeed, as in your case, even between husband and wife.

It is almost as if we had tacitly agreed to exclude from display or discussion everything but the most formal, impersonal expressions of our love for God.

You are quite right in feeling that this extreme reticence is out of place in marriage. Consider from the viewpoint of your purpose in life, your marriage is supposed to enable you to assist each other in growing directly in love toward God and your neighbor.

Surely, then, something strange if shyness or reticence prevents you from treating this purpose as a shared, mutual endeavor. What can you do to remedy this situation?

Well, Nora, the easiest way to start is to find a devotion that is appropriate to your husband and you acting as a unit.

In this connection, I can think of no more fitting devotion than the consecration of your partnership in marriage to the Sacred Heart. This suggestion sounds far too simple to get results, but

together in My Name, I and there in the midst of you. He has promised to be with you in your home, but you're not likely to remember this unless you have some visible reminder to recall his presence.

Is it not a sorry commentary on the religious shyness of Catholics when we find no religious symbols in their homes? Has He not promised that He would bless every place where a picture of His Heart would be set up and honored?

Furthermore, in practicing this devotion to the Sacred Heart, you are not adopting just another "devotion" from among so many others now available, according to Pope John XXIII, the devotions to the Sacred Heart is unique, representing the very essence of Christianity for it deals with God's eternal love for men.

Hence this devotion is so appropriate for marriage and family life because it offers us Christ as the divine model of love. If there is one thing that husbands and wives must learn, it is how to love.

Marriages are started on a mixture of friendship, sexual attraction, infatuation and mutual flattery, but they endure as mutually perfecting partnerships only if husbands and wives learn to love as Christians.

In this, Christ is your model. As St. Paul reminded husbands in particular, "love your wives as Christ loved the Church," and he went on to point out that the goal of married love was mutual perfection in Christ.

Do not consecration, frequently renewed and kept operative in your lives by a visible reminder in your home, can break down the barriers of shyness and reticence that now separate you.

Not only is your act of consecration a shared, unifying experience, but as you recite it together, you will learn openly to acknowledge the significance of Christ's presence in your hearts and in your home. Once you have accomplished this, your problem of communication is solved.

let's examine its implications more closely.

In the first place, this consecration is not an individual, but a shared, unifying act in which you express your oneness as a couple and potentially as a family. It is a shared public acknowledgment both of your desire to strive for mutual perfection as a couple and to do so "in Christ."

To preserve this consecration vital and operative in your family life, keep a statue or picture of the Sacred Heart exhibited in your home. Our Lord Himself told St. Margaret Mary why this was necessary: "lest men forget how much I have loved them."

You need this constant reminder of His love and your consecration, for the distractions and hurried pace of modern life tend to exclude all thought of Him, except, perhaps for a brief half-hour on Sunday.

Christ said, "Where two or three of you are gathered to-

## Exiled Cardinal

Bomb - (RNS) - Thomas Cardinal Tien, S.J., exiled Archbishop of Peking in Communist China, will return to the United States in Rome at the end of June. It was announced here.

## Red Linked Group Gains In Sicily

Palermo - (NC) - The Catholic-oriented Christian Democrats remain Sicily's largest party following regional elections Sunday, but the balance of power in the island's new legislature appears to rest with a dissident group that has cooperated with the Reds.

The group is the Christian Social Union under the leadership of Silvio Milazzo, Sicilian landowner who leads the outgoing provincial government.

The Union split from the Christian Democrats eight months ago and formed a coalition with parties at both the extreme right and left, including the communists.

It is believed that the Union's action in cooperating with the Communist party prompted the recent decree of the Holy See warning against voting for candidates of non-Communist parties who collaborate with the Reds.

The fact that the Christian Social Union won more than a quarter of a million votes shows that the Holy See's decree was at least partly ignored. It is pointed out, however, that Sicily's Catholics for the most part rallied behind the Christian Democrats to offset a Communist campaign which had sought to appeal to the islanders' spirit of independence and thereby wreck the Christian Democratic party here.

## GI's Pilgrimage To Lourdes

Lourdes - (RNS) - American GI's were among 35,000 soldiers of 12 nationalities who attended the opening of the second International Military Pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The soldiers came from France, Belgium, Denmark, West Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Austria, Spain, Venezuela and Chile as well as the United States.



## Vatican Microfilm Manuscripts

St. Louis - (RNS) - A Gregorian chant, one of thousands of rare hand-written documents in the Vatican Library now on microfilm at the University of St. Louis, is closely examined by a scholar eight years after the recording project began. Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Vatican Microfilm Foundation, the gigantic \$4,000,000 task is expected to be completed this year.

## Scouting Program Wins Popes Praise

Vatican City - (NC) - Pope John XXIII this week praised the Italian Boy Scouts' Association for developing young boys into "men of character and loyal citizens."

In a letter sent to the Italian General Scouting Council, the Pope said that he "was happy to record with paternal satisfaction the noble aspirations, great activity and developments of the scouting association, intended as a school of healthy and sufficient preparation for life, with the purpose of forming among young boys from childhood onward men of character and loyal citizens, trained in discipline and tempered in sacrifice."

And above all, he added, scouting seeks to make boys "good Christians aspiring to be virtuous, active in charity, fully devoted to the Church, and concerned with bearing witness to their Faith."

The mass, he said, "would be an act of dedication of the prestige and power of labor to the purposes of God's providence for America and the world."

## Pope Says Don't Be A Telegraph Pole

Vatican City - (NC) - People at Mass should not be "like telegraph poles" but should all join the priest in offering the Holy Sacrifice, Pope John XXIII declared here.

The Pontiff chose the metaphor of telegraph poles to describe the attitude of some Catholics during Mass. He told several thousand persons from 10 countries - gathered for a general audience in St. Peter's Basilica - that the person who attends Mass with "the proper dispositions" knows "that he possesses an insuperable treasure of interior peace, of grace and well-being."

Pope John stressed that to assist at Mass frequently and devoutly not only constitutes an immense value for the individual because of the infinite merits of the Sacrifice itself, but also because of the benefits and advantages of every nature gained from it for the family, and for everyday living throughout one's life.

## Reparation Church Built In Atom Bombed Nagasaki

Tokyo - (RNS) - Work has been completed on a new Roman Catholic church in Nagasaki and the solemn consecration will take place next year when Catholics celebrate the centenary of the revival of Catholicism on Kyushu Island, it was announced here.

Said to be the biggest Catholic worship center in the East (it seats 4,000) the new church is dedicated to Our Lady of Nagasaki.

The two-towered, Roman-style church stands on the site of the old Urakami church, not far from the spot where the atomic bomb exploded on Aug. 11, 1945. A part of the brick wall of the old church, which had been blown to bits by the atomic blast, has been left standing as a reminder of the tragedy in which 8,000 local Catholics were killed.

Construction of the church was made possible by general contributions from American Catholics in atonement for the atomic attack on the city.

## Anglicans Slow Trend To Doctrine Collapse

Rome - (NC) - The Anglican Church serves to restrain the collapse of doctrine within Protestantism, according to a study in a Catholic review published here.

The study, consisting of two articles, appeared in Civiltà Cattolica (Catholic Culture), fortnightly Jesuit review.

THE ARTICLES were written by Father Roberto Tucci, S.J., who stated that the Anglican Church "exercises a providential restraining function on doctrinal disintegration" within Protestantism.

Father Tucci takes a dim view of the contention of some Anglican authors that the Anglican church is a "middle way," a "bridge" between extreme Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, or at least the dissident churches of the East.

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