

PRAYER PROMPT

Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

The Church invites devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary each August, and Scripture supports this patronage. Mary's Immaculate Conception and sinless heart are recognized at the Annunciation when the angel hails Mary as "full of grace" or "highly favored" (Luke 1:28). Mary's heart is also pondered at the Nativity, the Presentation and Calvary (Luke 2:19, 35; John 19:25). Mary's Assumption (August 15) implicitly recognizes her incorrupt Immaculate Heart beating in heaven. She intercedes for us, devoted to the will of the Sacred Heart, as she inspires us to greater love for Jesus.

5 Ways to Learn More

1. Observe the Memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary following the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in June. Better still, observe devotion to the Two Hearts over two days with attendance at Mass and praying Rosaries. The Sacred Heart focuses on Jesus' love for us and our salvation won by his wounded heart on the Cross. Devotion to the Immaculate Heart focuses on Mary's love for Jesus. As Jesus' heart was pierced by a lance at Calvary, Mary's pure heart was pierced spiritually, as prophesied by Simeon (Luke 2:35), and her will was joined with that of her son's.

2. Learn about St. John Eudes (1601-1690) whose feast is August 19. Recognized as the saint who promoted modern devotion to the Two Hearts, he first established the feast to the Immaculate Heart in France.

3. Wear the Miraculous Medal. Mary's church-approved apparitions in 1830 to St. Catherine Laboure in Paris, inspired the "the miraculous medal" for prayers and graces for the conversion of sinners. Mary's depiction and a prayer are on the face of the medal, and its back depicts the Two Hearts.

4. Discover the messages of Our Lady of Fatima. Devotion to Mary's Immaculate Heart is part of the church-approved messages at Fatima in 1917. As before, Mary's Immaculate Heart keeps souls from being lost, and she recommends prayers for reparations to bring peace. Mary notably invited the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart to prevent future calamities from the threat of communism.

5. Explore the symbolism of the Immaculate Heart. Search online for articles and images on this subject. Or visit <https://bit.ly/HeartsExplained>.

Careful observers of the liturgical calendar will note that the Memorial of the Immaculate Heart is the Saturday after the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart in June. Yet, the month-long dedication for August remains for us because the Memorial was first added to the Church year in 1944 by Pope Pius XII on August 22, but it was later moved to June.