

Human Compassion of Jesus **The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus** Friday, June 8, 2018
8:15 AM Hos 11:1, 3-4, 8c-9; Eph 3:8-12, 14-19; Jn 19:31-37 (But the whole idea of the incarnation is God comes to those who aren't able to seek him, and he seeks them.)

Today we celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart, and the devotion to the Sacred Heart was very important to St. Margaret Mary, who is the patroness of our parish.

So what is the importance of the Sacred Heart? Well in the world there have always been people who have been drawn to the mystery of life, to the central basis, ground, of our being; and they have had time to explore through reason and through silence, through contemplation, they explored the realities of our existence, the miracle that makes us be. And that's all well and good, and they have much to teach us. **But there is a great gap between what the great mystics and theologians and philosophers of the world and of world religions have been able to discover and what ordinary folks are able to discover.** Very often people are living in a world within their own awareness where there isn't a lot of joy, there isn't a lot of contentment, there isn't a lot of visible or tangible goodness. And the whole idea of devotion to the Sacred Heart is to focus the minds of everybody, not only those who have a great deal of opportunity to pray and to be alone and to go into hermitages or live in monasteries, but **the ordinary working people of the world that they can also experience the depths of God's love and focus on it in their own awareness.** So the feast of the Sacred Heart is a feast established to promote this devotion to the heart of Jesus, to the love of Jesus, to the compassion, **the human compassion, in the heart of Jesus that is a revelation of the true nature of God.**

So the whole idea of the incarnation is God did not simply remain, you might say, in seclusion waiting for those people who were ready and able to seek him, and there were always somebody that could do that. **But the whole idea of the incarnation is God comes to those who aren't able to seek him, and he seeks them,** and he comes to them with his goodness and tries to show how everything works out for those who love God, to encourage people and to motivate people in whatever circumstance they find themselves, even circumstances of pain and suffering and downright mean conditions, that they can see a little bit into the goodness of life and realize that much of the **suffering of the world** is due to perhaps the unjust decisions of other people, or it's due to the fact that the creation has not yet been completed and it always has a certain sort of imperfection that can be very sad and can lead to a great deal of grieving. **But**

then all of that is still not reason for despair, that even the grieving are blessed, even those who mourn our blessed, in Christ.

And that he came and God came to show this in his very life and in his very suffering, so that **his death on the cross itself was the wellspring of a new current of supernatural energy and power conveyed to people, especially through the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist.** The blood and the water flowing from the side of Christ is the beginning of Baptism and Eucharist. It's symbolic of these ways in which God is trying to lift up all people and reveal to all people **the goodness of life and the goodness of their minds.** That's why some people can find God through theology, because our minds are really good, but some people don't believe in their minds. There are many people today, even so-called intellectuals, who think life irrational. Well in that case there is not much point thinking about anything. **But God wants us to be assured that life is good and that our minds are capable of knowing God and that our hearts are capable of loving God and desiring God and attaining God.** And in fact God is closer to us than we are to ourselves, as St. Augustine pointed out. That's all part of this mystery of divine love incarnate in Christ.

And so **St. Margaret Mary**, our patroness, was most desirous of promoting this. She herself suffered a great deal, some sort of mental problem. She was what people call a "cutter," that is, she hurt herself, for whatever reason people do those things; but it is a malady. But she **found great help and healing in the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.** And so this is given to all of us for our upbuilding and perhaps for our sharing with others.