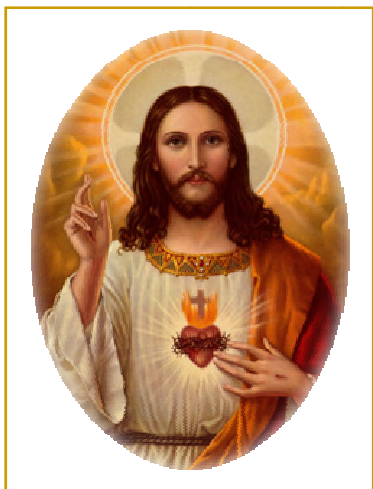


Minister's Insights



Behold the heart that has so Loved mankind...

By Patrick Mendés, SFO
National Minister

Happily, this issue of *TAU-USA* arrives in time for me to wish you all the joy and blessings of the feast of the Sacred Heart!

Reflecting on the words of our Lord to St. Margaret Mary, we celebrate the feast of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (June 15) and traditionally, the entire month of June as the month of the Sacred Heart.

Our Franciscan roots to the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus stem back to the early days following the apparitions to St. Margaret Mary. According to Timothy O'Donnell, S.T.D., in his book *Heart of the Redeemer*, our friars, especially of the German OFM Province, were deeply devoted to the Sacred Heart and zealously shared and encouraged this devotion in their preaching. Small wonder, then, that the American daughter Province of the German Province was given the name Sacred Heart Province. We have, in the United States a TOR Province also dedicated to the Sacred Heart as well as a Congregation of Franciscan Sisters.

We know well the devotion of our Holy Father Francis to the suffering heart of Jesus. So united was

Francis with the heart of Jesus that Our Lord granted him the stigmata.

Jesus, king and center of all hearts, you love us and lead us to yourself with unending mercy (Intercessions of the feast day). In our walk from Gospel to life and life to Gospel, we walk the path in the manner of our holy father, Francis, which leads us to Jesus and provides the impetus for our lives rooted in the Beatitudes, striving to live the expression of our vocation by corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Jesus, our King and Lord, directs us to "Love one another as I have loved you."

We find the model for our Franciscan "Fraternitas" in Jesus Himself. We are fortunate to have brothers and sisters who are confidants, patient listeners, and have compassionate hearts. They are the "cheer leaders" for our endeavors – our companions on the journey. Gifts of the Sacred Heart, we, too, are invited to become the gift. May we remember to give thanks for the brothers and sisters in our lives both in our nuclear and Franciscan families, who support and encourage us and share their unconditional love.

I'll conclude with the prayer from the Office for the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart. "Father, we honor the heart of your Son broken by man's cruelty, yet symbol of love's triumph, pledge of all that man is called to be. Teach us to see Christ in the lives we touch, to offer him living worship by love-filled service to our brothers and sisters. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen."

Let us pray along with St. Bonaventure "... having found this heart, both yours and mine, O most sweet Jesus, I will pray to you, my God."

Know that you are especially remembered in my prayers to the Sacred Heart on His feast day and I ask a remembrance in yours.

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus surround you with His love and fill your lives with His abundant blessings.

