

“Since there is in the Sacred Heart a symbol and a sensible image of the infinite love of Jesus Christ which moves us to love one another, therefore is it fit and proper that we should consecrate ourselves to His most Sacred Heart - an act which is nothing else than an offering and a binding of oneself to Jesus Christ, seeing that whatever honor, veneration and love is given to this divine Heart is really and truly given to Christ Himself.”

With these words, at the dawn of the 20th century, Pope Leo XIII consecrated the entire world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. His hope and fervent prayer was that we as a people find refuge there, and life, as we live in imitation of the One who has loved us to the end. But whether this happens is up to us. Whether we actually love as he loved is our choice. Whether we see our sins as transgressions against his goodness and love and so offer reparation is a question of our own hearts.

As our nation prepares to celebrate its 250th birthday, the US Bishops will be consecrating our nation to the Sacred Heart on June 11th. We will have Holy Hours at all the parishes from 12:30-1:30PM as we join them before the Blessed Sacrament. You can also participate with the US Bishops via the livestream at [www.youtube.com/usccb](http://www.youtube.com/usccb).

These larger consecrations are an extension of what most often happens on a much smaller scale. There is an ancient and venerable tradition of enthroning an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the family home, as the family gathers to consecrate themselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The family attends Mass together, and prays with this particular intention, and then gathers at home, in front of an image or a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus which is perhaps formally enthroned as a part of the prayer and prays a consecration prayer as they kneel before the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. It should be a day of celebration – of feasting, in the goodness of God with and for us. The consecration is usually led by the pastor, but the indulgences do not require it. We will post prayers on the website for those who wish to do so and will have a blessing of images of the Sacred Heart after the Sunday Masses on June 13 and 14.

How many things do families do each week together? Hopefully lots, but with children’s activities or parents traveling for work, it is easy to be going in many directions. If home and family are to be a school of love for all there, it can only happen if Christ is intentionally at the center, in whom everything is oriented from and to. Jesus Christ must be our model, by which we all live, and so find authentic communion. The world holds up its own definitions of love – but Jesus wants more for us. And he shows us the way, unto the Cross, and then Resurrection and Heaven. Our lives, and through us our world, are better when we are faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus. Our lives, and our world, are better, when we love as He loved.

In Christ,

Fr. Matthew Oakland