

Jesus,

gentle and humble of heart

June 10



Pray

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, “the Little Flower,” profoundly understood the gentle and humble heart of Jesus. In contemplating how to be transformed by Christ’s love, she reflected that “What pleases [Jesus] is that he sees me loving my littleness and my poverty, the blind hope that I have in his mercy... the weaker one is, without desires or virtues, the more suited one is for the workings of this consuming and transforming Love” (Letter 197 to Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart, September 17, 1896). Let us join with Saint Thérèse in praying for our hearts to be humble like Jesus.



Saint Thérèse of Lisieux

O Jesus! When You were a Pilgrim on earth, You said: “Learn of Me for I am gentle and humble of heart and you will find rest for your souls.” O Mighty Monarch of Heaven, my soul finds rest in seeing You, clothed in the form and nature of a slave, humbling Yourself to wash the feet of Your apostles... I beg You, my Divine Jesus, to send me a humiliation whenever I try to set myself above others. I know that You humble the proud soul but to the one who humbles one’s self. You give an eternity of glory... To obtain this grace of Your infinite mercy I will very often repeat: “O Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, make my heart like Yours!”

Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

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Learn

Saint John Paul II notes that only once in Scripture does Jesus refer to his own heart, when he instructs us to learn from his humility and gentleness in Matthew 11. The Holy Father concludes that our Lord stresses these features “as if to say that only in this way does he wish to win us to himself” (Catechesis, June 20, 1979).

The saints, facing the challenges of their age, looked to the heart of Christ as a model to respond with humility and grace. Saint Claude de La Colombière reflected on the attitude of Christ’s heart in his greatest hours of suffering: how during his passion, his heart remained firmly directed to God, and despite the betrayal of Judas and the abandonment of his apostles, Christ did not respond with hatred or indignation – but forgiveness. Saint Claude resolved to “present myself anew to this heart free of anger, free of bitterness, filled instead with genuine compassion towards its enemies” (*Spiritual Exercises in Lyon*, October-November 1674, *ibid.*, p. 45).

Act

Devotion to the Sacred Heart allows us to put aside our pride and respond to the challenges of life. Saint Vincent de Paul teaches us: “We should remember that [Christ] himself said that by gentleness we inherit the earth. If we act on this, we will win people over so that they will turn to the Lord. That will not happen if we treat people harshly or sharply” (Saint Vincent de Paul, *Common Rules of the Congregation of the Mission*, May 17, 1658, c. 2, 6).

Use this [Examination of Conscience in Light of Catholic Social Teaching](#) to reflect on how you are acting on Christ’s teachings to love humbly and gently. Then, conclude with Saint Thérèse of Lisieux’s prayer: “O Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, make my heart like Yours!”

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