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Theological Significance of the Sacred Heart

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THE SAINT PAUL SEMINARY SCHOOL OF DIVINITY
UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

Theological Significance of the Sacred Heart

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of the School of Divinity

Of the University of St. Thomas

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree

Master of Arts in Theology

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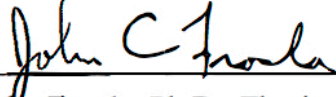
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St. Paul, MN

2020

This thesis by Michael Kapperman fulfills the thesis requirement for the Master of Arts degree in Theology approved by John Froula, Ph.D. as Thesis Advisor, and by John Martens, Ph.D. and by Christian D. Washburn, Ph.D. as Readers.

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Introduction:

The Theological Significance of the Sacred Heart

In 1956, Pope Pius XII wrote an encyclical called *Haurietis Aquas* in which he presented the dogmatic and scriptural basis for devotion to the Sacred Heart. This encyclical was written at a time when devotions of piety were being rejected by the liturgical movement of central Europe in favor of a simpler and more objective form of worship rooted in theological truths as found in the scriptures and the Fathers of the Church.¹ Pius XII was able to navigate this tension by presenting both the beauty of this devotion as well as its deep biblical and theological roots. Because of this dynamic of devotion and theology, Pius XII's encyclical is monumental in the history of devotion to the Sacred Heart. It shows a clear summary of the development of the devotion as well as ushers the devotion into modern times.

In the encyclical, before he presents the scriptural, theological, and historical roots of devotion to the Sacred Heart, Pius XII speaks about the importance of studying the principles that lay the foundation of the devotion. To this he says:

... We wish to urge on you and on all Our beloved children of the Church a more earnest consideration of those principles which take their origin from Scripture and the teaching of the Fathers and theologians and on which, as on solid foundations, the worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus rests. We are absolutely convinced that not until we have made a profound study of the primary and loftier nature of this devotion with the aid of the light of the divinely revealed truth, can we rightly and fully appreciate its incomparable excellence and the inexhaustible abundance of its heavenly favors.²

¹ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "The Paschal Mystery as Core and Foundation of Devotion to the Sacred Heart," in *Towards a Civilization of Love: A Symposium on the Scriptural and Theological Foundations of the Devotion to the Heart of Jesus*, eds. Mario Luigi Ciappi et al. (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1985), 145.

² Pope Pius XII, Encyclical on Devotion to the Sacred Heart *Haurietis Aquas*, (15 May 1956), §19.

Inspired by this exhortation of Pius XII, this thesis desires to further unpack and appreciate the “incomparable excellence and the inexhaustible abundance” of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by presenting the theological significance of the Sacred Heart. This thesis will unpack the theological significance of the Sacred Heart in four parts.

In the first chapter, this thesis will present a brief introduction of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. It will do this by analyzing the term “devotion” and its necessary internal and external dimensions. This chapter will also analyze the idea of the heart and magisterial statements on the Sacred Heart in order to provide a basic understanding of the object of the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Next, chapter two will present the biblical roots of the Sacred Heart. This chapter will do this by analyzing “heart” as it is found in the Bible as well as three Gospel pericopes: Mt 11:25-30, Jn 13:21-32, and Jn 19:31-37.³

The third chapter of this thesis will show that the Sacred Heart is at the core of theology. It will do this by presenting the history of the magisterial statements on the Sacred Heart. This Chapter will also unpacking the three-fold love of the Sacred Heart as described by Pope Pius XII.

Finally, the fourth chapter will present how the theology of the Sacred Heart influences our understanding of other areas of theology. This chapter will analyze how the theology of the Sacred Heart influences Mariology, Ecclesiology, and the theology of the Eucharist.

³ All biblical citations will be taken from Revised Standard Version Second Catholic Edition unless otherwise noted. *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version Second Catholic Edition* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006).

Chapter One:

Devotion to the Sacred Heart

In order to properly examine the devotion to the Sacred Heart and its theological significance, a study into the nature of devotion as well as the nature of the human heart is necessary. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to exploring the term “devotion” and the human heart in its relation to the Sacred Heart. This chapter will first analyze the term “devotion” and its necessary internal and external dimensions. This chapter will also analyze the idea of the heart and magisterial statements on the Sacred Heart in order to provide a basic understanding of the object of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. The goal of this chapter will provide a solid foundation for fruitful exploration into the significance of the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

What is Devotion?

St. Thomas Aquinas explores the nature of devotion in his *Summa Theologica* and examines its influence on the life of a believer. St. Thomas Aquinas defines devotion as “nothing else but the will to give oneself readily to things concerning the service of God.”¹ Devotion is a fruit of meditation upon God’s goodness and man’s shortcomings.² It typically comes through and is aided by meditating on sensible objects (Christ’s humanity being the highest), but has for its end matters concerning God Himself.³ The effects of devotion are first and foremost joy,

¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica*, II-II, q. 82, a. 1, *Summa theologica: First Complete American Edition in Three Volumes*, vol. 2, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benzinger Brothers, Inc., 1947), 1535. This translation will be the translation used for all *Summa theologica* citations unless otherwise noted. The page number of this translation will still be provided at the end of each citation of this translation.

² *Summa theologica*, II-II, q. 82, a. 3, 1536.

³ *Summa theologica*, II-II, q. 82, a. 3, 1536.

which comes through meditating on God's goodness, and secondarily sadness, which comes through meditating on man's shortcomings.⁴ Besides using devotion in reference to the life of the believer, the word devotion has also taken on another meaning within the life of the Church. There are also "devotions" or "devotionals." This use of the term devotion points to a practice that one externally carries out. The most common devotion is the rosary. With respect to this exploration into the significance of the Sacred Heart, most people would see the Sacred Heart in the latter use of the term "devotion." Devotion to the Sacred Heart is seen as being an external practice in which one attends first Friday masses and says prayers in reparation for the sins against the Sacred Heart. While this understanding of devotion is good, it has the risk of reducing the devotion to *merely* an external practice. Instead, devotion must be seen through both meanings: an *internal* offering of one's self to the service of God that *manifests itself* in external practices. Devotion should be a response of love to one's encounter with God. It must never remain only internal or external. Rather, one's devotion shapes all aspects of the Christian life.

Devotion must be rooted in Revelation because the end of devotion is God Himself. One is spurred on to a life of service for God only because one has recognized the Truth and wants to conform one's life to the service of the Truth. Thus, devotion can never be thought of as something opposed to Truth, rather devotion must always be seen as a response of love to an encounter with Truth. To use the example of the rosary, saying the rosary should never be seen as something completely separate from Mariology. Rather the person who is devoted to the rosary is contemplating the truths of Revelation and Mary's role in it. Through this contemplation, the person encounters the reality of Mary's heart and begins to imitate the virtues of the Immaculate Heart.

⁴ *Summa theologica*, II-II, q. 82, a. 4, 1537.

Devotion can only bear fruit in the life of a Christian if it is based upon God's work of salvation. Without this, the life of the Christian will soon die for only in God can the Christian find life. The more a devotion is connected to Revelation, the more the devotion will bring fruit into the life of the Christian. Since devotion must be connected to Revelation, it becomes necessary to explore the biblical and dogmatic basis for the Sacred Heart.⁵

What is the Sacred Heart?

Knowing now that the nature of devotion is an internal and external response to an object of Revelation, a second question must be answered: What is the Sacred Heart? "The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us (Jn 1:14)". The second Person of the Trinity, complete in the divine nature, descended in all humility and took upon Himself human flesh. Jesus possesses a complete divine nature as well as a complete human nature. These natures were completely united in what is known as the hypostatic union. "The cult of the Heart of Jesus...has its dogmatic basis in the dogma of the Hypostatic Union."⁶ When the Church talks about the Sacred Heart, she refers to "the corporeal Heart of Jesus as an essential constituent part of the human nature of Christ, hypostatically united with the Logos."⁷ The Sacred Heart of Jesus is "considered the chief sign and symbol of that threefold love with which the divine Redeemer unceasing loves His eternal Father and all mankind."⁸ This threefold love refers to (1) the divine

⁵ This thesis will provide a particular exploration into these topics. For a broader and more complete exploration into the biblical and dogmatic basis for the Sacred Heart, see Timothy O'Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer: An Apologia for the Contemporary and Perennial Value of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus*, Second Edition (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2017), 1-65.

⁶ Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, trans. Patrick Lynch (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1974), 159.

⁷ Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, 159.

⁸ *Haurietis Aquas*, §54.

trinitarian love, (2) the infused divine charity in Jesus' human nature, and (3) the human love of Jesus.⁹

But what colloquially is meant by the word 'heart'. The heart can be colloquially understood as the center of emotion, affections, motives, and love within the human person. "The heart is the place where I am, where I live."¹⁰ The heart is the place of decision, truth, and encounter.¹¹ The heart is the mysterious depth of man's self that God knows better than man himself. It is the center and core of all of man's affective responses to reality.¹² It is the point of unity in man that allows for stability throughout all of life.¹³ In summary, the heart is the place where I am, and where I am moved. It is a place of response. For example, man often finds himself before something that is true, beautiful, and good. It could come from many things such as a magnificent view from a mountaintop or a song that seems to communicate the experience man is having. When man stands before these things, he comes to knowledge of their meaning and value through his intellect.¹⁴ The intellect allows him to "take it all in." The intellect allows him to understand the profound beauty of the Sistine chapel or the significance of the wedding vows between a young couple. However, if man's experience only stopped at the knowledge of truth, beauty, and goodness, then there would be something lacking. If a man standing on top of a mountain simply said, "That's nice" and then walked away without a moment of pause, there would be something missing. The experience of man before something of significance is only complete when he is "moved." It is proper for man to be moved to tears at a funeral. It is proper

⁹ *Haurietis Aquas*, §55-57.

¹⁰ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 2000), 2563.

¹¹ CCC 2563.

¹² Dietrich Von Hildebrand, *The Heart: An Analysis of Human and Divine Affectivity*, ed. John Henry Crosby (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2007), 21.

¹³ Tomaš Špidlik, "Spiritual Theology," in *The Blackwell Dictionary of Eastern Christianity*, ed. Ken Parry et. al. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 458.

¹⁴ Von Hildebrand, *The Heart*, 37.

to man to be moved to laughter when he is with his family. This “being moved” occurs in the heart. Man encounters the value of reality within his heart and is moved to give his life to that value.¹⁵ He, in response to reality, wants to yoke himself to it, to give of his life to reality. His primary focus is no longer upon himself but instead desires to make of himself a gift. The heart is the place where one becomes self-gift.

The heart is not always fickle and changing. The heart is not an unintelligible and irrational part of man. Instead, the heart can and ought to always be seen in light of objectivity and rationality. The heart is a place of response to an object. The heart is where subjectivity and objectivity meet in a person. The objectivity is that which is received by the intellect. The intellect presents the heart with the reality and its value.¹⁶ This is something that transcends man and is not something that man creates but receives. The heart, which is the place of the subject, is where the subject encounters and responds to the object. This response of the heart to the object must be an adequate response to the value of the object. When man engages reality with his heart and responds adequately to the value of reality, true objectivity occurs.¹⁷ True objectivity does not come from stepping back from reality and remaining neutral before it, but by plunging into the depths of reality and engaging it with our hearts. The truly objective man is the man with a true affectivity. Therefore, the truly objective man is the one who follows the command of St. Paul: “Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep (Rom. 12:15).” Subjectivism occurs when one does not remain open to reality with their heart. Instead of the heart being a place of response to reality, openness to reality, the heart becomes closed in on itself. “The ‘subjectivist’... looks at his own feeling and is concerned only with how he reacts.

¹⁵ Von Hildebrand, *The Heart*, 37.

¹⁶ A good treatment on the interaction between a person, reality, and value can be found in the second chapter of Karol Wojtyła’s book *Love and Responsibility*. Karol Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, trans. H. T. Willetts (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1993), 71-140.

¹⁷ Von Hildebrand, *The Heart*, 48.

He is indifferent to the objective situation as such and to its call for a response. Clearly such a man is incapable of great, genuine, and deep affectivity.”¹⁸ Affectivity that is separated from its object becomes devoid of meaning.¹⁹ It becomes nothing more than an emotional state closer to the emotional life of an animal and not the life of a man for it separates himself from his rationality. This subjective life doesn’t necessarily mean an immoral life. One could live a morally good life, but because of fear of being hurt, closes their heart off to reality. One could do all the right things, but never truly come to know the value of life because their heart never engages with life. When his heart becomes closed off to reality, man never learns how to make of himself a self-gift. He thus never learns how to love.

The heart, for it to be fully alive, must always be in right relation with the intellect and the will. “The intellect or will should not try to supply what only the heart can give, nor should the heart arrogate the role of the intellect or will.”²⁰ The heart should never suppress the intellect and claim to know the truth. Neither should the heart infringe upon the freedom of the will and allow the emotions to run wild.²¹ Von Hildebrand calls this disorder within man that which occurs when the heart infringes upon the intellect and the will the “hypertrophy of the heart.”²² Man becomes fully alive and fully engaged with life only when these three work in union with one another. He can thus never love too intensely for his love is always properly ordered by his intellect and his will.²³

¹⁸ Von Hildebrand, *The Heart*, 47.

¹⁹ Von Hildebrand, *The Heart*, 6.

²⁰ Von Hildebrand, *The Heart*, 51.

²¹ St. Thomas Aquinas equates the heart with the will in the context of the will moving the intellect, appetitive and executive power: *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q. 44, a. 5, 1376-1377. St. Thomas Aquinas also uses the word heart in other senses as well, such as principle of animal life and movement and organ of the passions. A short summary of his usage of *cor* can be found in Leo Elders, S.V.D., “The Inner Life of Jesus in the Theology and Devotion of Saint Thomas Aquinas,” in *Faith in Christ and Worship of Christ*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1986), 78-79.

²² Von Hildebrand, *The Heart*, 54.

²³ Von Hildebrand, *The Heart*, 54.

All expressions of self, that is the words and deeds of man, flow from the deeper reality of the self, found in the heart. Scripture attests to it when it says: “from [the heart] flows the springs of life (Prov 4:23).” The words I speak, the mannerisms that I use, everything that helps me communicate is an expression of the deeper reality of my heart. St Thomas Aquinas, while reflecting on anger, talks about how our external expressions find their root in the heart: “An emotion caused by anger is conveyed to the external members, and particularly to those members in which the heart’s imprint is more obviously reflected, such as the eyes, the face, and the tongue.”²⁴ When one wants to know the heart of man, look to his words and deeds. Our Lord speaks of this when He says: “For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person (Mk 7:21-23).” Sometimes these expressions of self occur without man understanding them. A man may think he will respond one way in a situation, but when the situation occurs, he responds in a different way. This different way reflects the identity of the man more than the way he thought he would respond. Therefore, there is a need for man to come to know himself. Man must plunge into the depths of his own heart. He must look within himself and come to know himself. When he comes to a greater knowledge of himself, he comes to a greater self-possession. This greater self-possession allows for greater freedom, which in turn allows man to become a greater self-gift. His words and deeds take upon themselves greater meaning because they are truly free expressions of his self-gift. They become fuller and more perfect expressions of his heart.

This exploration of the human heart bears significance when we talk about the Sacred Heart. God, by taking upon Himself a human heart, wished to communicate Himself in a human

²⁴ *Haurietis Aquas*, §53. Quoting Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I-II, q. 48, a. 4 in ed. Leon., vol. VI, 1891, p. 306.

way. By virtue of the hypostatic union, the Logos expresses Himself through human nature “with the same intimacy with which a human person expresses itself through its own nature.”²⁵ Jesus now possesses full human powers “of feelings and perception, in fact, more so than any other human body.”²⁶ His intellect, will, and heart all are properly ordered and work together in perfect harmony.²⁷ He knows the value of reality and knows the proper response to this value, thus He lives a life of true objectivity and true self-gift. He is the most affectively intense man since His heart is always open to reality and knows its significance. He rejoices more than anyone else, and He is saddened more than anyone else.²⁸ He feels the weight of human experience more than any other human being. Since He knows Himself perfectly, He is able to freely express His heart perfectly. All of the expressions of Jesus perfectly reveal what is occurring in His Heart. The Heart of Jesus then becomes the focal point of Revelation for it is the perfect human expression of the divine reality. It is thus in the Heart of Jesus that man encounters God.

Conclusion: “We love, because he first loved us.” 1 Jn 4:19

Having explored the nature of devotion and the Sacred Heart in general, this chapter will conclude by combining these two explorations together to explain the nature of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Pope Pius XII in *Haurietis Aquas* says: “devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, of its very nature, is a worship of the love with which God, through Jesus, loved us, and at the same time, an exercise of our own love by which we are related to God and to other men.”²⁹ One

²⁵ “...con la misma intimidad con que la persona human se expresa a través de su propia naturaleza...”
Fernando Ocariz, Lucas F. Mateo-Seco, and José Antonio Riestra, *El misterio de Jesucristo*, 4.a edition (Navarra, SA: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, S.A., 2010), 260-261.

²⁶ *Haurietis Aquas*, §57.

²⁷ *Summa theologica*, III, q. 15, a. 4, 2107-2108.

²⁸ *Summa theologica*, III, q. 46, a. 6, 2270-2271.

²⁹ *Haurietis Aquas*, §107.

who has a devotion to the Sacred Heart is one who, in response to God's love, commits one's whole self to God's love for us through internal and external offering. Since devotion to the Sacred Heart is devotion to the love God has for us, this devotion should never be seen as one among many, but is in fact the highest form of Christian piety.³⁰ Since Christians are called to rejoice in the love God has for them, we now see that some sort of devotion to the Sacred Heart becomes evident as an "essential element of the Christian way of life."³¹

³⁰ *Haurietis Aquas*, §106.

³¹ O'Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, xxiii.

Chapter Two:

The Sacred Heart and the Bible

Having laid out the foundation of the nature of devotion to the Sacred Heart, this chapter transitions to Revelation to see the significance of the Sacred Heart as it appears intertwined with the story of Salvation. It is important to spend time reflecting on the biblical basis for the Sacred Heart because it could be thought that the idea of the Sacred Heart is a recent development in the life of the Church. Although it is true that the Church's current understanding of devotion to the Sacred Heart had its beginnings around the time of Bernard of Clairvaux,¹ the Sacred Heart itself finds its root in Sacred Scripture. Therefore, this chapter will spend time looking at the scriptural root of the Sacred Heart. In looking at the scriptures to understand the roots of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, it would be a reduction to limit the search to explicit mentions of the Heart of Jesus. Only one time does scripture explicitly mention the Heart of Jesus when Jesus himself says: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls (Mt 11:29)." However, to restrict theology to that which is explicitly mentioned in scripture is to reduce the "breadth and length and height and depth (Eph 3:18)" of the mystery of God. Thus when attempting to look to the biblical roots of devotion to the Sacred Heart, one could also include passages that refer to God's love and plan for the redemption of mankind.² This section will begin first with exploring the "heart" as presented by the Bible. Then

¹ Joseph Ratzinger, "The Paschal Mystery as Core and Foundation of Devotion to the Sacred Heart," 159.

² Hugo Rahner has a fascinating exploration into the biblical basis of the Sacred Heart by looking at Old Testament messianic prophecies: Hugo Rahner, "On the Biblical Basis of the Devotion", in *Heart of the Savior: A Symposium on Devotion to the Sacred Heart*, ed. Joséf Stierli (New York: Herder and Herder, 1958), 15-35. Richard Gutzwiller writes another interesting treatment of the biblical basis of this devotion. He walks through the Litany of the Sacred Heart and shows its scriptural roots: Richard Gutzwiller, "On the Biblical Character of the Litany of the

it will focus on three Gospel passages that communicate three of the deepest realities of the Sacred Heart, namely Jesus' obedience to the Father, the depth of His love for mankind, and His desire to give us new life. These Gospel passages are Mt 11:25-30, Jn 13:21-32, and Jn 19:31-37.

The Heart in the Bible

To start this exploration into the scriptures, it is necessary to begin with examining the word "heart" and what it means throughout all of the scriptures.³ The term "heart" can be used in reference to both the heart of man and the heart of God (ex. Gen 6:5-6). First, how is heart used in reference to God? With regard to the heart of God, it does not refer to a literal heart because God is pure spirit (Jn 4:24). Instead, when scriptures refer to the heart of God, it is trying to metaphorically communicate something about the innermost life of God. However, this metaphorical use of heart does not downplay the significance of the imagery. The Bible frequently uses bodily realities to express divine things. It does so because "the body is the person become visible, and the person is an image of God, the body, taken in its full network of relationships, is also where the divine becomes imaged, expressed, seen."⁴ Thus when the term "heart" is used in reference to God, there is a communication of the reality of the inner life of God and His love for man. There are many ways that heart is used in reference to God,⁵ but one of the more common ways is to refer to "an organ of his will by which man is measured."⁶ For

Sacred Heart", in *Heart of the Savior: A Symposium on Devotion to the Sacred Heart*, ed. Jos f Sti rli (New York: Herder and Herder, 1958), 173-192.

³ For a more in-depth treatment of the usage of the word 'heart' in the Bible, see Joachim Becker, SS.CC., "The Heart in the Language of the Bible," in *Faith in Christ and the Worship of Christ: New Approaches to Devotion to Christ*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1986), 23-31.

⁴ Joseph Ratzinger, "The Paschal Mystery as Core and Foundation of Devotion to the Sacred Heart," 149. Athanasius centers his argument in his work *On the Incarnation* around the fact that the incorporeal and invisible God is manifested through his works. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, trans John Behr, Popular Patristics Series, 44b (Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011).

⁵ For a complete list of explicit references to God's Heart, see O'Donnell, *The Heart of the Redeemer*, 4.

⁶ Joseph Ratzinger, "The Paschal Mystery as Core and Foundation of Devotion to the Sacred Heart," 158.

example, when looking at the first reference to the heart of God, it is seen that “the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart (Gen 6:6).” God is immutable so this verse cannot be interpreted as referring to a change in God’s emotional status. Rather, this verse shows that the life that man has chosen is contrary to the will of God, thus man’s choice “grieves” God in that God’s will is not being followed by man. This same principle applies when man pleases the heart of God: “I know my God, that you try the heart, and have pleasure in uprightness... (1 Chr 29:17).” When man follows the will of God, it “pleases” God. Heart is also used metaphorically to refer to God’s desire to have mercy on His people: “My heart recoils within me, my compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my fierce anger (Hos 11:8-9).” God, who in justice could wipe out man from the earth because of man’s wickedness, chooses instead to have mercy on man because God wants to be with man: “For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, says the LORD (Jer 31:20).”

Although the Old Testament refers to the heart of God, something is still left to be revealed. Frequently the prophets reveal that God promises to pour out His love upon His people.⁷ Yet at the conclusion of the Old Testament, these prophecies are still unfulfilled. God also promises, because of the love He has for His people, a new covenant that will be written on the hearts of every believer: “My heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him...Behold the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah...(Jer 31:20,31). Yet at the end of the Old Testament, mankind is still waiting this Revelation of the love of God.

⁷ Examples include: 2 Chr 7:14; Jer 29:11; Ez 36:26; 37:21; Is 30:18; 41:10; 54:10; 55:3.

The second use of heart in the scriptures is a reference to the heart of man. In this use, heart is not only used metaphorically, but also communicates the inner life of man. The following summarizes the heart of man:

“Heart” is the principle and organ of the personal life of man, the centre in which the being and the activity of man as a spiritual personality are concentrated, and consequently the source and centre of his religious and ethical life. “Heart” is the focal point of spirit and courage, of interior insight, of man’s planning and volition, of the ethical decisions of the whole, undivided man.⁸

The heart, since it is the center of the man, becomes the place that either allows man to walk with God or to fall away from God. It’s a place of wickedness and goodness. The heart in the Bible was associated with thinking, reasoning, and planning.⁹ In Ecclesiastes, the heart is that which allows man to perceive the world around him and, in response, strive to obtain happiness.¹⁰

The heart is simultaneously a place of encounter. The heart is the “place in man at which God bears witness to Himself.”¹¹ God wants to encounter man on the level of man’s heart; He wants His word to dwell within man’s heart (Dt 6:6). Man is called to receive this word and love God with his whole heart (Dt 6:4). However, man’s heart is frequently hardened towards the Lord, which prevents him from hearing the voice of the Lord (Ps 95:7-8). When it comes to doing the will of God, the heart is the place within man that produces either good or wicked acts (Mt 12:34). God is “the One who knows the heart,” thus knowing the inmost life of man.¹² From this is seen the tremendous importance that the Bible places on the heart. Man must have true

⁸ Hugo Rahner, “On the Biblical Basis of the Devotion,” 17. Citing G. Kittel, *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament III*, Stuttgart 1938, col. 613.

⁹ Andreas Schuele, “Heart,” in *The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 2, ed. Katharine Doob Sakenfeld et. al. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007), 764.

¹⁰ Andreas Schuele. “Heart” 765.

¹¹ Johannes Behm, “καρδία,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 611.

¹² Johannes Behm, “καρδιογνώστης,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 613. Referencing Acts 1:24; 15:8.

conversion of heart if he wants to follow God (Joel 2:12-13). To overcome man's wickedness of heart, God will place the law on man's heart so that man can finally embrace the will of God.¹³

The Bible shows us that God searches for men after His own heart (1 Sam 13:14; Jer 3:15). God wants to appoint leaders over His people that will know and understand His desires and His love for His people. The central figure of this call to reflect the heart of God was that of King David. Although scripture attests that King David was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), scripture also attest to his failure to live up to this call since he was both an adulterer and a murderer. Thus, at the conclusion of the Old Testament, the people of God still have not received the true leader of Israel who perfectly reflects the heart of God. They are still awaiting the New David, the one who perfectly imitates the heart of God.

The fulfillment of both uses of the heart in the Old Testament is found within the Sacred Heart. In the Sacred Heart, there is a coming together of both the heart of God and the heart of Man. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the final great revelation of the heart of God. The heart of God, which was metaphorical in the Old Testament, now finds a literal fulfillment in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.¹⁴ The Incarnation brought forth an added dimension of the love God has for man. Not only is there the divine love God has for man, which is found in the Old Testament, "but also human sentiments of love."¹⁵ In the Body of Jesus mankind encounters both dimensions of the love God has for man. Since the Heart of Jesus is the literal fulfillment of what was only metaphorically spoken about in the Old Testament, man can "truly apply those biblical references of God's Heart to the Heart of Jesus."¹⁶ Thus it is Jesus who grieves over those who

¹³ Andreas Schuele, "Heart", 765. Referencing Jer 31:31-34 and Ez 11:19; 36:26-27

¹⁴ O'Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, 5.

¹⁵ *Haurietis Aquas*, §38.

¹⁶ O'Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, 5.

fail to do the will of God (Gen 6:6; Lk 19:41-44), is pleased by those who profess faith in Him (Gen 22:15-18; Mt 8:5-13), and has mercy on the sinner (Ez 18:23; Jn 8:1-11).

The Sacred Heart also fulfills the call of the heart of man. Man's heart was called to be obedient to the law of God (Dt 6:4-6); Christ perfectly fulfills this obedience by being "obedient even unto death (Phil 2:8)." Jesus also perfectly fulfilled the call of David to reflect the heart of God: "the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise (Jn 5:19)." Since the Sacred Heart is the perfect human heart, it can be seen in reference to biblical expressions of the "heart" of man. With the exception of all instances of the sinful human heart, all biblical expressions of the heart of man "may be appropriately applied to the most perfect Heart."¹⁷ Since Jesus Christ was fully man and became like us in all things except sin (Heb 2:17), humanity can look to the experiences of man in the Old Testament, and in particular the Psalms, to reveal something about the Sacred Heart.

In the Bible, the term 'heart' is used in reference to God's heart and man's heart. When speaking about the heart of God, it is a metaphorical use of heart in order to communicate something about the life of God. When speaking about the heart of man, it is used to refer to the center of man's life and his response to the call of God. The Sacred Heart, being both the heart of God and the heart of man, communicates both of these realities at the same time. The Sacred Heart is the literal fulfillment of what was metaphorically spoken about God and is the perfectly obedient heart of man.

Meek and Humble of Heart

The first Gospel pericope that reveals to us the significance of the Sacred Heart is Mt 11:25-30, the only passage in which Jesus explicitly refers to His Heart when He says, "I am

¹⁷ O'Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, 5.

gentle and lowly in heart (Mt 11:29).” This passage primarily “presents Jesus as divine wisdom incarnate.”¹⁸ Nevertheless, the evidence Jesus relies upon for showing that He is Divine Wisdom incarnate is that He is meek and humble of heart. This passage begins with Jesus speaking to the Father (Mt 11:25-26) and revealing that “no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him (Mt 11:27).” Jesus is establishing that the revelation of the Father only occurs within Himself. In verse 28, we hear Jesus say, “Come to me.” This is the only time in the New Testament that Jesus says “come to me”, since Jesus usually uses the phrase “come after me.”¹⁹ This helps to see Jesus as Divine Wisdom incarnate for this phrase is “spoken by personified Wisdom several times in Sirach (24:19, 51:23).”²⁰ Looking at these two passages from Sirach, one sees that it is Wisdom herself who is beckoning her listeners to come to her and learn from her by placing her yoke, that is her teaching, upon them (Sir 51:26). This teaching that Wisdom wishes to bestow on her listeners is the Law given by Moses (Sir 24:23). It is easy to see in Jesus’ wording that He is expressing Himself as the true personified Wisdom. In verse 29, Jesus says, “Take my yoke upon you.” This is another reference to the role of Wisdom, for in Sirach, Wisdom even promises rest to those that take her yoke upon them (Sir 6:28). Yoke, throughout biblical and Jewish traditions, is used as a “metaphor for religious instruction” and is sometimes even a reference to the commandments of the Torah.²¹ Jesus is inviting His listeners to follow His teaching as “the definitive interpretation of the law.”²² He invites them to follow His teachings in the same way that they followed the teaching of the Law. In verse 29, Jesus also describes His heart in a similar manner as the heart of Moses is described in Numbers

¹⁸ Daniel Harrington, S. J. *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina, vol. 1 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 170.

¹⁹ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary vol. 33A (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1993), 323.

²⁰ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 323.

²¹ Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri *The Gospel of Matthew*, Catholic Commentary On Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids, MI; Baker Academic, 2010), 161.

²² Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 324.

12:3. Jesus is revealing Himself to be the New Moses, to be the one whom God speaks with “mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark speech; and he beholds the form of the Lord. (Num 12:8).” He is revealing to His listeners that they should listen to Him in the same way that they listen to Moses. In summary, this passage reveals that Jesus is Divine Wisdom incarnate, calling all people to submit themselves to His yoke, that is, to follow His commands.

In noticing the logic of this passage, the reason why those who hear the words of Jesus should take His yoke upon them is because He is “gentle and lowly in heart (Mt 11:29),” or as other translations have “meek and humble of heart.”²³ The evidence that Jesus is the definitive interpreter of the Law is that He is meek and humble of heart. Compare this to the Pharisees who throughout the Gospel of Matthew exhibit “extraordinary pride, loving places of honor, special titles, and in general the authority they exercised over others.”²⁴ This raises the question: what is it about meekness and humility that proves to His listeners that He is the definitive interpreter of the Law? What is it about the meekness and humility found in the Sacred Heart that proves He is the divine wisdom incarnate? In looking at the use of meekness in the Bible, meekness “denotes the powerless righteous who suffer because of the wicked powerful. God will vindicate the former.”²⁵ Matthew 21:5, citing Zechariah 9:9, uses this same word to describe Jesus as the king who will come to vindicate the daughter of Zion.²⁶ Humility is used to denote “dependence on God marked by obedience.”²⁷ This term “synonymously emphasizes Jesus’ low social position, conflict with the powerful, and anticipates God’s vindication.... the phrase ‘in heart’ adds a

²³ From the New American Bible Revised Edition. I used this translation “meek and humble of heart” because of the familiarity many readers have to this translation.

²⁴ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 324.

²⁵ Warren Carter, “Humility,” in *The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 2, ed. Katharine Doob Sakenfeld et al. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007), 915. Also see Mt 5:5.

²⁶ Kenneth D. Litwak, “Meekness,” in *The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 4, ed. Katharine Doob Sakenfeld et al. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2009), 17.

²⁷ Warren Carter, “Humility,” 913.

further dimension...namely openness to and dependence on God.”²⁸ This lowly status “can be positive as reversal by God’s saving work, or it can be negative as experience of God’s judgment.”²⁹ In Matthew, Jesus also uses it twice more in exhortations to His disciples: “Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Mt 18:4)” and “He who is the greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted (Mt 23:11-12).”

In answer to the question above: Wisdom, which resides in the heart (Prov 2:10), flows from one submitting oneself in meek and humble obedience to God. Jesus, through His humility and meekness, submits Himself in total obedience to the Father. The Father then writes His Law on the Heart of Christ (Dt 6:6). It is this total obedience of Jesus to the Father that shines forth to all people revealing His wisdom and understanding (Dt 4:6). Through His meekness and humility, Jesus totally depends on the Father, following the Father’s every command. Jesus thus truly embodies Wisdom who is called “a spotless mirror of the working of God (Wis 7:26).” It is through humbly obeying the Father even to the point of death on the cross that Jesus is exalted (Phil 2:8-9). Jesus, by this meek and humble obedience, “became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him (Heb 5:9).” The Heart of Jesus, the center of whom Jesus is, is submitted to the Father. The disobedience that was within Adam in Genesis is now reconciled through the obedience of Christ, allowing many to “be made righteous.” (Rom 5:19). It is through this meek and humble obedience of Christ to the Father that allows those who obey Christ to enter into the Father’s rest. Those who submit themselves to the yoke of Jesus, and imitate His meekness and humility, shall be the remnant of Israel (Zeph 3:12).

²⁸ Warren Carter, “Humility,” 915.

²⁹ Warren Carter, “Humility,” 912.

In conclusion, Matthew 11:25-30 reveals that the meekness and humility in the Sacred Heart is the evidence that proclaims to His listeners that He is the Divine Wisdom incarnate. This same meek and humble obedience of Jesus becomes the source of salvation for all who obey Him. Therefore, the Sacred Heart is theologically significant because the obedience of Christ to the Father is the source of salvation for all people.

Beloved Disciple Reclining on the Breast of Jesus

The next pericope reveals the theological depths of the Sacred Heart and comes from John 13:21-32. This passage has traditionally been used as an image of devotion to the Sacred Heart. In this passage, the Beloved Disciple reclines on the breast of Jesus. It is the ultimate image of tenderness between Jesus and His disciple and has been used to develop devotion to the Sacred Heart. Many authors and artists throughout the centuries have used this passage to show that “the Heart of Christ is the fountain of living water from which the faithful may draw torrents of heavenly graces, knowledge and comfort.”³⁰ While this passage does not explicitly refer to the Sacred Heart, one can still see that this passage provides a solid foundation for devotion to the Sacred Heart. The passage reveals both the radical love found in the Sacred Heart as well as the response required by those who wish to follow Christ.

This passage comes immediately after the washing of the feet of the disciples and is literarily connected to this action: “When Jesus had thus spoken (Jn 13:21).” Thus, this passage is rooted in the context of Jesus revealing both the love He has for the disciples (Jn 13:1) and a call for the Apostles to imitate the actions of Jesus (Jn 13:15). All of the disciples are gathered around a low table and are all lying down on their left sides, which allow their right sides to be

³⁰ O’Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, 20.

free.³¹ Of all of these disciples, we see two disciples receive preferential treatment by Jesus: the Beloved Disciple and Judas. This passage reveals to us a comparison between these two. The Beloved Disciple would have been on the right of Jesus, a place reserved for a trusted friend.³² The Beloved Disciple is the receiver of the love of Jesus, the one who is leaning on the Bridegroom (Jn 13:23; Song 8:5). He reclines on the breast of Jesus in a similar way to Jesus reclining “in the bosom of the Father (Jn 1:18).”³³ The Beloved Disciple will also be the one who is with Jesus throughout the Paschal Mystery.³⁴ “The whole pericope brings out the intimacy, the depth, trust, confidence, and reciprocity of their friendship.”³⁵ In fact, for the rest of the Gospel of John, the disciple is only referred to as the Beloved Disciple. This pericope shows that when a disciple of Jesus is the recipient of His love, their identity is now found in being the one “whom Jesus loved (Jn 21:20).”

Judas on the other hand would have been on the left side of Jesus.³⁶ Judas is the receiver of the work of the devil (Jn 13:2). He receives the morsel of bread, an act of hospitality and honor (Ruth 2:14). But Judas rejects this act of hospitality in choosing Satan instead of Jesus.³⁷ Jesus, when referring to Judas’s betrayal by eating the morsel of bread (Jn 13:18), cites Psalm 41:9: “Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted, who ate of my bread, has lifted his heel against

³¹ George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 36, second edition (Nashville TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1999), 237.

³² Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week from the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, trans. Philip J. Whitmore (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2011), 66. Citing Charles K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to John*, 446.

³³ George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 237-238.

³⁴ Johns Varghese, *The Imagery of Love in the Gospel of John* (Roma: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2009), 271.

³⁵ Johns Varghese, *The Imagery of Love in the Gospel of John*, 259.

³⁶ It would seem that Judas being on the left of Jesus would be the most logical place. With everyone lying down and the Beloved Disciple on the right side of Jesus, the easiest way for Jesus to give the morsel to Judas would be for him sitting next to Jesus. However, this reconstruction is speculative, as the text does not seem to give us enough information to recreate the seating arrangement.

³⁷ Raymond E. Brown, S.S., *The Gospel According to John (xiii-xxi)*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 29A (New York: Doubleday, 1970), 578.

me.” After he receive the morsel, Judas leaves and “it was night (Jn 13:30).” This is not merely a reference to the time of day. Rather this is revealing us two realities:

First, this notation underscores the truth of Judas’s identity. By removing himself from Jesus, he has demonstrated that he loves darkness more than the light and so cuts himself off from Jesus’ offer of life (cf. 3:17-21). Second, one of the core elements of Jesus’ teaching is that he is the light of the world (8:12; 9:5) and that the day and the light are the times for his work in the world (9:4; 11:10).³⁸

Judas is seen in the rest of John as standing with the enemies of Jesus (Jn 18:5). This pericope also shows to us Judas’ betrayal and rejection of the love of Jesus. Therefore this passage reveals how two disciples respond to the love of Jesus in completely opposite ways.

What exactly is that love of Jesus that is being poured out to these two disciples? The key to understanding the love of Jesus comes from the start of chapter 13: “he loved them to the end (Jn 13:1).” “The love of Jesus for His own *to the end* is the revelation of the incomprehensible love of God. In these gestures of loving self-gift, anticipating the cross, Jesus makes known the love of God.”³⁹ Through the washing of the feet to giving the morsel of bread to Judas, Jesus is revealing His love for His disciples. He loves His disciples by humbling Himself and taking the role of a servant in the washing of the feet. He reveals to them His tenderness by allowing them to draw near like the Beloved Disciple. Jesus wants His disciples to abide in Him (Jn 15:4). Jesus, by allowing the Beloved Disciple to draw near and recline on His breast, reveals that His love is like a hen who “gathers her brood under her wings (Lk 13:34). He desires that all of His disciples would rest in Him in the same way that He rests in the Father (Jn 1:18). Throughout the Gospel of John, it becomes clear that, although the Father and the Son are distinct, there is an intimate oneness between them. Jesus now offers this intimate oneness to His disciples (Jn 15:1-

³⁸ Gail R. O’Day, “The Gospel of John,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 9, ed. Leander E. Keck et al. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 730.

³⁹ Francis J. Moloney, SDB, “He Loved Them to the End: Eucharist in the Gospel of John”, *Worship*, vol. 91, (Jan 2017): 54.

7).⁴⁰ Jesus wishes to honor His disciples and welcome them into a familial covenant, for example when He gave the morsel to Judas. All of this is revealing just how far He will go in loving His disciples “to the end.” The love of the Sacred Heart is a love of friendship. This love is not secretive, but wishes to reveal itself to those who ask (Jn 13:25-26; 15:15). Even when He knows that His friends will betray Him, as we see in both Peter and Judas, Jesus continues to love them.

The love of Jesus is also vulnerable, that is, open to be rejected (Is 50:6, Lam 3:30). Jesus, in pouring out His love to the disciples, opens Himself up to being rejected by those who are closest to Him. “Rather than depicting Jesus as a hapless victim, however, the narrator indicates that He knew both that ‘the Father had given all things into his hands’ and that ‘he had come from God and was going to God’ (Jn 9:3).”⁴¹ He knows that He will be rejected and yet He still pours out His love. “When Jesus had thus spoken, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me (Jn 13:21).’” This “troubled in spirit” is the same verb usage that is found in John 11:33 outside of the tomb of Lazarus. This verb usage “consistently denotes a confrontation with the devastating power of death.”⁴² Jesus is troubled because He knows that one of His own has given himself over to Satan, over to the power of death. Still, even though Jesus knows Judas has given himself over to the evil one, He shows that He loves Judas *to the end* by offering to Judas a sign of hospitality by giving him the morsel. His washing the feet of and breaking bread with Judas would have been a sign of a covenant support.⁴³ Despite this continual offering of love, Judas turns his back on Jesus, and gives himself over to sin and darkness. The ultimate act of betrayal occurs. The love of God,

⁴⁰ Rodney A. Whitacre, *John*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series, ed. Grant R. Osborne et al. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1999), 263.

⁴¹ Larry Paul Jones, *The Symbol of Water in the Gospel of John*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 145 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 185.

⁴² Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 781. Citing Udo Schnelle, 219.

⁴³ George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 237-238.

completely poured out upon man through Jesus Christ, is rejected. Jesus embodies the betrayal felt by the psalmist in Psalm 41:9. Pope Benedict XVI comments on this saying:

It is clear that the Lord will have to endure to the end and to the last detail the suffering of the just, for which the Psalms in particular provide many different expressions. Jesus must experience the incomprehension and the infidelity even of those within his innermost circle of friends and, in this way, “fulfill the Scripture.” He is revealed as the true subject of the Psalms, the “David” from whom they come and through whom they acquire meaning.⁴⁴

The Sacred Heart, which is filled with the perfect love of friendship, is willing to be pierced by the greatest evil of friendship: betrayal. It is at this moment of betrayal that we hear Jesus say, “Now is the Son of man glorified, and in him God is glorified...(Jn 13:31).” The glory of God is revealed in the moment of betrayal because God desires to save us even “while we were yet sinners (Rom 5:8).” It comes through the passion of Jesus (Jn 7:39; 12:23; 17:4) because God wishes to “reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross (Col 1:20).” The Sacred Heart is willing to even suffer the great pain of betrayal in order to redeem it. John 13:21-32 therefore reveals to us the depth of the love of the Sacred Heart.

In conclusion, this passage reveals the profound depth of the love found in the Sacred Heart. Jesus, wishing to love His own even to the end, was willing even to endure betrayal to reveal the depth of the love God has for man. Man can respond to this love either in the response of the Beloved Disciple by drawing near to the Heart that gives this love, or man, like Judas, can prefer to remain in the darkness.

⁴⁴ Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week*, 67.

The Pierced One

The third Gospel pericope this chapter explores is John 19:31-37, where in it the side of Christ is pierced and from it flows blood and water. Christians throughout the centuries have turned to this pericope as a source of hope and love for their crucified savior. Christians since the 2nd century have also seen that the blood and water in this pericope are symbols of Baptism and the Eucharist.⁴⁵ This passage is also included in the history of the devotion to the Sacred Heart and has even found its way into the Litany of the Sacred Heart: *Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance*. But how is this passage tied to the devotion to the Sacred Heart? Like John 13:21-32, this passage does not explicitly refer to the Sacred Heart. Nevertheless, this passage provides a strong biblical basis for the devotion and the desire of the Sacred Heart to pour out divine life upon believers. In order to see the importance of this passage in understanding the Sacred Heart, it is necessary to first demonstrate that this passage is in fact dealing with the Sacred Heart. After establishing the legitimacy of using this passage, this section will then proceed to explore this gospel passage's implications on the theology of the Sacred Heart as a gift of the Father, as the fountain of salvation, and as the giver of the Spirit.

First, it is necessary establish the legitimacy of using this passage with regards to the devotion to the Sacred Heart. In this passage that the side of Christ is pierced, which is an action that has traditionally been seen as a reference to the piercing of the Heart of Jesus. However, via the text of this passage alone, it is not clear that the piercing of the side of Christ is in fact also the piercing of the Heart of Jesus. An argument could be made that it is a simple recording of the fact that Jesus' side was pierced, thus fulfilling the scripture passages the Evangelist records in v. 37, rather than the Evangelist intending the piercing of the Heart of Jesus. Thus, from the text of this passage alone, one could make the argument that it does not appear that the Evangelist

⁴⁵ Brown, *The Gospel According to John (xiii-xxi)*, 951.

intended to speak about the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Therefore to use this passage as a biblical proof text of the devotion is an act of eisegesis rather than exegesis. However, although this passage doesn't explicitly say that the Sacred Heart is pierced in this action, there is supporting evidence within the Gospel of John itself that would show it is not eisegesis to use this text as a biblical basis for the Sacred Heart. This interpretation remains true to the deeper themes of the Gospel of John itself and therefore is a legitimate interpretation of the passage.⁴⁶

The theme that is important for this discussion is that of revelation. The Gospel of John shows that Jesus is the great revealer of the truths of the Father through His words and deeds. "Like a model Jewish son he only does what he sees the Father doing and only speaks what he hears from the Father."⁴⁷ All of Jesus' words and deeds are revelation. The culmination of the revelation of the Father by Jesus comes at His hour of glorification. Glorification includes both a sense of praise as well as manifestation (revelation) of that which is worthy of praise.⁴⁸ Therefore, when Jesus is referring to His hour of glorification, He is in fact pointing to the hour in which He will complete His revelation of God. This hour of glorification is His passion, death, and resurrection.⁴⁹ It is in this hour of supreme revelation that is the context of the pericope. A question then emerges: What is Jesus revealing about God? The supreme revelation of God by

⁴⁶ One possible route of showing that this passage refers to the Sacred Heart is through medically examining the source of the blood and water. Different authors have proposed that there was an accumulation of blood and water around the Heart of Jesus, more specifically within the pericardial sac. Thus when the lance pierced the side of Christ, it pierced through this pericardial sac that surrounds the heart. This would then establish a physical connection to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is an interesting and plausible route to take to establish this passage as a basis for the Sacred Heart devotion. For a brief summary of the various physical explanations of the blood and water flowing from the side of Christ, see Brown, *The Gospel According to John (xiii-xxi)*, 946-47; Whitacre, *John*, 465. This physical connection to the Sacred Heart is affirmed by Pope Pius XII: "What is here written of the side of Christ, opened by the wound from the soldier, should also be said of the Heart which was certainly reached by the stab of the lance, since the soldier pierced it precisely to make certain that Jesus Christ crucified was really dead." *Haurietis Aquas*, §78.

⁴⁷ Whitacre, *John*, 38.

⁴⁸ Whitacre, *John*, 341.

⁴⁹ Gail R. O'Day, "The Gospel of John," in *Luke; John*, The New Interpreter's Bible, vol. IX. ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 799-800.

Jesus in His hour of glory is God's self-sacrificial love.⁵⁰ In Jesus' death, "selflessness and humble self-sacrifice are seen to be divine attributes... God's own life is a life of love that denies self for the sake of the beloved, and therefore such love is the very nature of life itself, real life."⁵¹ Jesus reveals to us that God's love is self-sacrificial (Jn 3:16). Jesus Himself is filled with God's own self-sacrificial love because He is the good shepherd that lays down His life for His sheep (Jn 10:11, 17-18). This self-sacrificial love that fills Jesus is the highest form of love (Jn 15:13). Thus the pericope, since it finds itself in the midst of Jesus's hour of glorification, has as its foundation the revelation of the self-sacrificial love of God embodied in Jesus on the cross. This revelation was not only to remain as an intellectual fact for His disciples. Rather Jesus, in His high priestly prayer, right before His passion, reveals that He has made known to His disciples the Father, so that "that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them (Jn 17:26)."

Jesus, who was willing to be the one who was pierced for our transgressions (Is 53:5), did so out of love. It was His obedience to His Father and His self-sacrificial love for humanity that moved Him to the cross. His willing self-sacrificial love (Jn 10:18) is what makes His death the event that brings new life to humanity. Regardless of whether or not the Evangelist explicitly mentions the Heart of Jesus being pierced, there is no doubt that the Evangelist is intending to show the depths of the revelation of divine love on the Cross. By His side being pierced, Jesus reveals in His very flesh how far the God of the universe will go in order to reveal His love to His people. The Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is the love of Jesus, was willing to allow itself to be pierced by our sins. Out of love, Jesus was willing to allow the veil of His flesh to be torn so that He could tear down the veil between God and us and pour out the revelation of the self-

⁵⁰ Whitacre, *John*, 341.

⁵¹ Whitacre, *John*, 310.

sacrificial love of God. To summarize this moment, the piercing of the Sacred Heart is the apex and completion of Christ's revelation of God. The piercing of the Sacred Heart is the supreme moment of revelation because the veil of the Sacred Heart has been pulled back so that the whole world can now gaze upon the merciful love of God. Thus it is clear to see that this passage, although not explicitly mentioning the Sacred Heart, can be a biblical basis for the Sacred Heart since the pierced love of Christ on the Cross is the fullness of the revelation of the Father.

Having established the connection between this passage and the devotion to the Sacred Heart, this section now turns to the implications this passage has for the theology of the Sacred Heart. This passage influences the theology of the Sacred Heart in three ways: as gift of the Father, as fountain of salvation, and as giver of the Spirit. First, how does this passage illustrate the Sacred Heart as the gift of the Father? In this passage, one obvious fact that is often left unsaid is that Jesus is dead. If Jesus is dead, how can this passage be important for the Sacred Heart? Do not the actions of the Sacred Heart, which in part symbolize the human charity and love of Jesus, require Jesus to be alive? It seems as if the death of Jesus becomes an obstacle in our relying upon this passage for the theology of the Sacred Heart. However, the way Jesus dies will help us to overcome this obstacle. In v. 30, the evangelist states "When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, 'It is finished'; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit." Notice the events that occur and the order that they occur. Whitacre shows that these little details play into the Gospel of John:

John does not say that Jesus died and then his head slumped over, but rather that he bowed his head, an attitude of submission, and then gave over (*paredōken*) his spirit... The very form of his death continues to reveal him as the obedient Son, the key theme regarding his identity throughout his ministry.⁵²

⁵² Whitacre, *John*, 463; references Chrysostom, *In John* 85.3.

His death is marked by an act of gift and surrender to the Father.⁵³ Thus our pericope is found within this context. Even though Jesus expires on the cross, He does so willingly. He freely submits Himself to whatever the Father wishes to do to Him after His death, thus overcoming the obstacle of His death.

This then illuminates the connection between the Sacred Heart and the Father. The events of this pericope occur through the providence of the Father. Jesus has completely submitted Himself to the will of the Father, thus making Him a willing victim in all the events that occur. The focus now turns and is centered upon the Father. In the providence of the Father, He sets up the events necessary so that the side of Jesus could be pierced.⁵⁴ It is the Father who allows the side of Jesus to be pierced and the blood and water to flow out. In a certain sense, we can say that it is the Father who wills that the Heart of His Son would be pierced upon the cross. Why? The Father wills this that the Spirit and Life of His Son, symbolized in the blood and the water, would be poured out upon mankind. This is the fulfillment of what was said in Jn 3:16: the Father, out of love for the world, gives the very life of His Son to the world. It was the Father who willed that the Word would become Flesh. It was the Father whom Jesus imitated and revealed. It was the Father who willed that His Son offer His life for all on the cross. Here is the poverty of the Father.⁵⁵ He could give no more to mankind because He has given all He has, namely His own Son. The world thus no longer waits for a new revelation from the Father for He has revealed Himself perfectly in His Son.⁵⁶ This is important for the theology of the Sacred

⁵³ In fact, his whole life is marked by this reality. This confidence Jesus has in His Father can be seen in Jesus' high priestly prayer. See Whitacre, *John*, 402.

⁵⁴ For a detailed account of authorship in the economy of salvation, see: Fr. John Baptist Ku, O.P., "Thomas Aquinas' Careful Deployment of *auctor* and *auctoritas* in Trinitarian Theology," *Angelicum* 90 (fasc. 4, 2013), 685-696.

⁵⁵ Fr. Scott Carl, lecture on *Gospel of John* (St. Paul, MN: St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity, notes taken 25 October 2018). Original source from A Carthusian, *Poor, Therefore Rich: Carthusian Novice Conferences*, trans. An Anglican Solitary (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1999), 104-105.

⁵⁶ Whitacre, *John*, 380.

Heart for we can now see that the Sacred Heart, pierced upon the cross for all mankind, is a gift to man from the Father. By looking at the Sacred Heart, all see the heart of the Father. Therefore, whenever one gazes upon the Sacred Heart, he or she must keep in mind that this Heart is a gift from the Father as well as the revelation of the Father's love.

The second theological basis this pericope provides is the understanding of the Sacred Heart as the fountain of salvation. In this pericope, John connects the piercing of the side of Christ with a prophecy from Zechariah that speaks about the "day of the Lord." John says, in v. 37, "They shall look on him whom they have pierced." This verse cites Zechariah 12:10. The content of chapters 12-14 of Zechariah focuses on the eschatological rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.⁵⁷ This rebuilding of the temple is a continuation of the theme of the book that also includes the removal of the corrupt shepherds of Israel.⁵⁸ This is significant for the Jews because they see the temple "as the center of creation from which holiness and YHWH's presence proceeds and permeates all of creation."⁵⁹ Another aspect of the Jewish understanding of the temple that is important for this passage is that they believed the stone beneath the altar was the center of the world. "From this center would flow the rivers of life to water the whole world..."⁶⁰ The preceding pericope (Zech. 12:1-9) is an oracle that talks about a coming "day" in which the Lord will bring Jerusalem victory. On that day the weak will be like David (v. 8) and all Jerusalem's enemies will be destroyed (v.9). Then comes v.10, which is a continuation of the oracle that is describing the "day" in which God will bring Jerusalem victory. This verse says, "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of

⁵⁷ Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets: Volume Two*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry, ed. David W. Cotter et al. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 683.

⁵⁸ Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 561.

⁵⁹ Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 685.

⁶⁰ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, vol. I (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 730.

compassion and supplication, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a first born.” This reveals God’s “plans to teach compassion to Jerusalem and the house of David so that they might serve as adequate shepherds for the world once YHWH’s war against the nations is complete and YHWH’s sovereignty recognized.”⁶¹ Then the oracle of the “day of the Lord” continues for the rest of the book. Some of the themes include the following: a fountain opened for Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness (Zech. 13:1), removal of false idols, prophets, and unclean spirits (13:2-9), God himself will fight against Jerusalem’s enemies (14:1-5), perpetual light (14:6-7), living waters that flow to the world (14:8), the LORD will reign over all (14:9), Jerusalem will be a city on a hill overlooking the world (14:10-11), Jerusalem’s enemies will be plagued (14:12-15), and all nations shall worship the LORD on the feast of booths or else they shall suffer from drought (14:16-21). By citing this verse in the Gospel of John, there is no doubt that John is bringing to mind the “day of the Lord” and sees the piercing of Jesus as the inauguration of the “day of the Lord.” The flesh of Jesus is now the new temple (Jn 2:21), and thus is now the center of holiness for all creation. It is the pierced Jesus who converts the hearts of Israel’s corrupt shepherds symbolized in Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (Jn 19:38-42). The blood and water flowing from the side of Christ is the fountain that washes the believer from sin and uncleanness. This water flowing from Christ is the living water that provides life to all of creation (Rev 22:1-2). It is by the wounds of Jesus that the enemies of the people of God are defeated (Is 53:5). Jesus is the perpetual light that came into the darkness (Jn 1:5; Rev 22:5). Jesus, lifted high on the cross, truly draws believers from all nations to Himself (Jn 12:32) so that they may have eternal life (Jn 3:14-15). All nations will forever worship the Word who made His dwelling place in the flesh of Jesus Christ (Jn 1:14).

⁶¹ Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 687.

John is clearly showing Jesus as the new fountain of life, and the source of this fountain is His Sacred Heart for from the heart “flows the springs of life (Prov 4:23).” The love of the Sacred Heart purifies believers from all sins and becomes the source of life from which they will bear much fruit. When the side of Christ was pierced on the Cross, the very life and holiness that fills the Sacred Heart is now available to all believers. The believers of Christ now can abide in the depths of the Sacred Heart as Jesus abides in the Father (Jn 1:18; 15:9). If Jesus’ body is the new temple, then His Heart is the altar of the holy of holies. His Heart now becomes the center of the world from which flows the rivers of life (Ez 47:1-12).⁶²

Another way of seeing the Sacred Heart as the fountain of the springs of life is through looking at Jewish cosmology and the understanding of rain. Rain is part of the cosmic waters above the firmament of heaven and falls when God opens the floodgates of the firmament (Gen 7:11; 8:2).⁶³ Rain was seen as God pulling back the gates of heavens and allowing His abundant gift to be poured out upon the Earth producing life. It was easy for the Israelites in the OT to use water figuratively for God’s spirit (Is 44:3-4; Ez 36:25-26; Joel 2:23).⁶⁴ Without God’s blessing, no life could be produced, either physical (Gn 2:5) or spiritual (Is 42:15; Ps 107: 33-38). In the New Testament, Israel had become a spiritual wasteland. Through Jesus’ many confrontations with the leaders of Israel, one can see that the shepherds of Israel had turned away from their calling in a way similar to what is seen in Ezekiel 34, thus making Israel a dry desert wasteland. When Christ’s Heart was pierced, the heavens were rent opened and God poured down a marvelous rain. It is this rain that makes the believers a new creation (Gen 2:6, Jn 3:3,5). It is this

⁶² Another possible way of showing that the Sacred Heart is the fountain of salvation is through seeing the connection between John 7:38 and John 19:31-37. See Rahner, “On the Biblical Basis of the Devotion,” 28-35.

⁶³ Timothy P. Jenny, “Water,” in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. David Noel Freedman (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 1367.

⁶⁴ Jenny, “Water,” *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, 1368.

rain that gives the believer a new heart that is fruitful (Ez 36:25-27; Jn 7:38).⁶⁵ It is the Sacred Heart the believer can now turn to and receive the blessing he needs in moments of drought (Dt 11:14).

A word must also be said about the connection between the Sacred Heart and the source of faith in the believer. In looking at the pericope, John records these events so as to provoke belief in the listener (Jn 19:35). The piercing of Christ's side is intimately connected to belief. Jesus Himself points to His side twice in the Resurrection accounts in order to provoke belief amongst His disciples (Jn 20:20,27). I have already mentioned above that Jesus' death was the apex of the revelation of the Father, but this death would be nothing without the Resurrection.⁶⁶ The Resurrection shows to the Apostles that the enemies of man, namely death and sin, can never conquer the self-sacrificial love of God. Jesus points to His pierced side to say that His love conquers all. He points to His side to reveal that the Father was truly willing to give up His Son for us (Jn 3:16). The one who encounters the pierced Heart of Christ can say with St. Paul, "If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him (Rom 8:31-32)?"⁶⁷

The third implication this passage has for theology of the Sacred Heart is that the Holy Spirit flows from the Sacred Heart. In order to properly show this connection, it is necessary to analyze the Holy Spirit's role in the Gospel of John by looking at John 16. In this chapter, Jesus makes a puzzling statement: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to

⁶⁵ *Haurietis Aquas*, §30.

⁶⁶ Whitacre, *John*, 486.

⁶⁷ Another notable theme that is highlighted in the Fathers of the Church is the theme of the pierced side of Christ being the source of the Church and of the sacraments. For more on this, see: St. Augustine, *Tractates on The Gosple of John*, 120.2, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 7, ed. Philip Schaff (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc, 1994), 434-435. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 2458 in *Commentary on the Gospel of John: Chapters 13-21*, trans. Fabian Larcher and James A. Weisheipl (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 248.

you (Jn 16:7).” Here is the Word Himself, the Logos, standing before His disciples, and He says to them that it is better that He goes. One is instantly left with the question “Why?” By answering this question a greater understanding of both the piercing of the side of Christ as well as the role of the Holy Spirit emerges. In the Gospel, the Holy Spirit’s role is to be the Counselor, or Paraclete is to “continue the work of revelation begun in Jesus, both his judgment of the world (vv. 8-11) and the revelation of God to the disciples (vv. 12-15).”⁶⁸ Jesus is the one who reveals the Father; He is the Truth of the Father. The Spirit is the one who interprets and bears witness to this revelation.⁶⁹ Thus, when Jesus is gone, it is the Spirit who will guide the Apostles into all truth (Jn 16:13). It is the Spirit who will teach them about Jesus’ revelation as well as help them to remember all that Jesus has revealed to them (Jn 14:26). It is the Spirit who will reveal to all future generations the profound relationship between the Father and the Son as well as the disciples place in that intimacy.⁷⁰ However, the Spirit is not able to fulfill His role until Jesus has completed His revelation.⁷¹ The Spirit is not sent until Jesus has completely revealed all that the Father wishes to reveal. The completion of Jesus’ revelation of the Father comes with His passion, death, and resurrection when He reveals the self-sacrificial love of God. Thus it was better for Jesus to go for two reasons: (1) So that He could completely reveal the Love of the Father (2) So that the Holy Spirit would come and allow the disciples to “share in the very life of God that they have seen in Jesus.”⁷²

With this context and returning to Jn 19:31-37, it becomes easy to recognize that this passage is occurring in the midst of Jesus’ supreme revelation of the Father. The piercing of the side of Christ is a physical manifestation of the self-sacrificial love, the pierced love that both the

⁶⁸ Whitacre, *John*, 388.

⁶⁹ Whitacre, *John*, 388.

⁷⁰ Whitacre, *John*, 389.

⁷¹ Whitacre, *John*, 388.

⁷² Whitacre, *John*, 389.

Father and the Son have: The Father who so loves the world that He would give his only begotten Son (Jn 3:16) and the Son who so loves the Father that He is obedient to death (Phil 2:8). According to Pius XII, this wound of the Sacred Heart is

...a striking image of that spontaneous charity by which God gave His only begotten Son for the redemption of men and by which Christ expressed such passionate love for us that He offered Himself as a bleeding victim on Calvary for our sake: "Christ loved us and delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness."⁷³

In the piercing of the Sacred Heart there is a supreme revelation of the love of God. Notice what occurs immediately after this supreme revelation. Water flows from this pierced side of Christ (Jn 19:34). Water is used in many different ways throughout the Gospel of John: in reference to baptism (1:31,33; 3:23), water is changed into wine (2:7,9), one must be born again by water and spirit (3:5), Jesus is the source of living water (4:10), water is the source of healing (5:7, 9:11), used as another way of describing the Spirit (7:38), used to establish deeper relationship with His disciples (13:5). But above all of this, it can be said that water is used in the Gospel of John to symbolize the Spirit.⁷⁴ Thus, when water flows from the side of Christ, this water symbolizes the Spirit that Jesus promised to send (16:7). From the Revealer (Jesus Christ) flows the Teacher (Holy Spirit). The Sacred Heart, pierced on the Cross, pours out the Holy Spirit upon the world.

John Paul II explains this moment beautifully when he says:

Through the Heart of His Son, pierced on the Cross, the *Father has freely given us everything. The Church and the world receive the Consoler, the Holy Spirit.* Jesus had said, "If I go away, I will send him to you" (Jn 16:7). His pierced heart bears witness that he "has gone away". Now he sends the Spirit of truth. The water that flows from his pierced side is the sign of the Holy Spirit: Jesus had announced to Nicodemus the new birth "of water and the Spirit" (cf. Jn 3:5). The words of the Prophet are accomplished: "I will give you a new heart, I will put a new spirit in you."⁷⁵

⁷³ *Haurietis Aquas*, §78. Quoting Eph 5:2.

⁷⁴ Jones, *The Symbol of Water in the Gospel of John*, 299.

⁷⁵ John Paul II, "The Transformation of Man Is the Work of Jesus Christ", *L'Osservatore Romano*, October 27, 1986, p.3. Found in O'Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, 261.

But notice who the Spirit pours Himself upon: it is upon the disciples of Christ (Jn 19:25-27). The Heart of Jesus so desires that His disciples receive His life that He is willing to allow His own Heart to be pierced. When they receive the Spirit, they are brought into a new community called the Church. This new community is the fruit of the death of Jesus and is characterized by His crucified love.⁷⁶ The fact that this new community is formed from the side of Christ shows a connection to the creation of man in Genesis. The first human community, that of Adam and Eve, flowed from the side of Adam in the form of Eve (Gn 2:21). The fact that Eve came from the side of Adam shows that there is equality between the two, that is, they share the same nature and same dignity: “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh (Gn 2:23).”⁷⁷ Now on the cross, from the side of the new Adam (1 Cor 15:45), is formed His Bride, thus establishing a new and everlasting community, the Church. Since the Church is formed from the side of Jesus, there is equality between Jesus and those who believe in him and follow his commandments: “You are my friends if you do what I command you (Jn 15:14).” This equality with Christ is not an equality of nature, since we are not eternally begotten of the Father. Nevertheless, it is a real equality (an equality of adoption) brought about through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In the piercing of the side of Jesus, and specifically His Sacred Heart, the Holy Spirit is poured forth onto the Church so that her members may be able to partake in the life of the Son.⁷⁸ This Spirit which is poured into the heart of the believer allows the believer’s heart to be harmonized with Christ’s Heart, that is, to love as He loves.⁷⁹ In the Spirit, the Church

⁷⁶ Whitacre, *John*, 462.

⁷⁷ Pope John Paul II, General Audience (9 April 1986), in *God, Father and Creator: A Catechesis on the Creed* (Boston, MA: Pauline Books and Media, 1996), 223.

⁷⁸ *Haurietis Aquas*, §81.

⁷⁹ Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* (25 December 2005), §19.

is drawn into the Son so that it may abide in the Son as the Son abides in the Father (Jn 1:18;13:23).

In summary, this section demonstrated that Jn 19:31-37 is important for understanding the theology of the Sacred Heart. This passage, although it does not explicitly mention the Sacred Heart, provides biblical basis for the Sacred Heart because this passage is used by John to show the depths of the self-sacrificial love of God revealed on the cross. This passage provides the biblical basis to see the Sacred Heart as gift of the Father, as fountain of salvation, and as giver of the Spirit. The Sacred Heart is the gift of the Father for it is the Father who sent the Son. Since the Son reveals the Father, the Sacred Heart reveals to us the love of the Father. The Sacred Heart is also the fountain of salvation. The waters that pour forth from the pierced Heart of Jesus on the Cross brings to us purification and life to all those who believe in Jesus. Finally, the Sacred Heart is the giver of the Spirit. The waters that pour forth from the side of Christ are symbolic of the Spirit. In the power of this Spirit, we are now drawn back into the side of Christ so that we may abide in Him as He abides in the Father. I would like to conclude with a prayer from the Divine Mercy Chaplet which I believe sums up perfectly the theology of the Sacred Heart given to us from Jn 19:31-37:

You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelop the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.

O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in You!

Conclusion

This section on the Sacred Heart and the Bible showed that the Scriptures reveal the depths and significance of the theology behind the devotion to the Sacred Heart and that the heart

is the center of man's life and is often used to reveal something about God. These two ideas come to their complete fruition in the Sacred Heart of Jesus who, through His complete obedience to the Father, reveals to us the heart of God who shows mercy to His people. Jesus in Mt 11:25-30 teaches that the meekness and humility in His Heart reveals that He is the Divine Wisdom incarnate. Through this meekness and humility, Jesus will become the source of salvation to all who obey Him. Jn 13:21-32 reveals that the Sacred Heart, even though it will be betrayed, is willing to love man to the end so that man may abide in Him. Finally, Jn 19:31-37 reveals to the Church that the Sacred Heart is the gift of the Father, the source of salvation, and the giver of the Spirit. Having built a firm foundation of the theology of the Sacred Heart from Scripture, this thesis now turns to the Tradition of the Church to examine the doctrines behind the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Chapter Three:

Doctrinal Basis for Theology of the Sacred Heart

In the opening chapter on the devotion to the Sacred Heart, this thesis demonstrated that Divine Revelation is at the foundation of a devotion. This is because the end of devotion is God Himself and God can only be attained through being faithful to His Revelation. This chapter will now examine what is the doctrinal basis for the Sacred Heart in two parts. It will do this by first going through the history of the Church and examining the different teachings of the magisterium that significantly impact understanding of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. This chapter will then unpack the three-fold love of the Sacred Heart as described by Pope Pius XII.

Doctrinal History of the Sacred Heart

The primary dogma that the devotion to the Sacred Heart rests upon is the hypostatic union. The doctrinal elaboration of the hypostatic union is a fruit of the first four ecumenical councils of the Church.¹ The hypostatic union is the “union of the human and divine natures in the one divine person of Christ” in such a way that the two natures remain perfect.² By virtue of this definition, the human nature of Jesus is the human nature of the Son. Thus, with regards to the Sacred Heart, the human Heart of Jesus is the human Heart of the Son.

After the declaration of this union of natures in the divine person of the Son, a question arose in the history of the Church over worshiping the human nature of Christ. The Church asked

¹ For a brief summary of the first four ecumenical councils and their role in the declaration of the hypostatic union, see O’Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, 43-57.

² John A. Hardon, S.J., “Hypostatic Union,” in *Modern Catholic Dictionary* (Bardstown, KY: Eternal Life, 2008), 262.

the question, ‘Since the Word has two natures, do we have two acts of worship? One for divine nature and one for the human nature?’ To this question, canon 9 of the 2nd Council of Constantinople in 553 responded:

If anyone says that Christ is worshipped in two natures, whereby he introduces two acts of worship, one proper to God the Word and the other proper to the man, or if anyone, in order to suppress the flesh or to fuse the divinity and the humanity, speaks falsely of one nature or essence of the elements that have been united and worships Christ in this sense but does not venerate by one act of worship God the Word made flesh together with his own flesh, according to the tradition received in the Church of God from the beginning, let him be anathema.³

In this council the Church establishes that there is one worship, the worship of the Word made flesh. Thus, the Church doesn’t worship the flesh of the Son *qua* humanity. Instead the Church, whenever it worships the flesh of the Jesus, does so because it is the flesh of the Son. The Church would not worship the flesh if it was not hypostatically united to the Son.

This teaching paved the way for specific questions regarding the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Questions arose in the 18th century by Jansenists about whether one could worship the Sacred Heart.⁴ Jansenists opposed the devotion to the Sacred Heart for they saw it as worshipping the human Heart of Jesus separated from the Divine Son, thus making it idolatry. This Jansenist thought played out in the Synod of Pistoia in 1786. In this synod, the Jansenists attacked the devotion to the Sacred Heart for three reasons:

- (1). By adoring Christ’s humanity or any part thereof, one was giving divine worship to a creature.
- (2). The devotion to the Heart of Jesus was a novelty, false, or at least dangerous.

³ Peter Hünermann, Helmut Hoping, Robert L. Fastiggi, Anne Englund Nash, and Heinrich Denzinger. *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2012), 431.

⁴ For a brief summary of the Jansenist attitude towards Christ’s humanity and devotion to the Sacred Heart, see O’Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, 151-155.

(3). It was wrong for the faithful to adore the Heart of Christ, separate or apart from his divinity.⁵

In response to these attacks on the Sacred Heart, Pius VI, in his constitution *Auctorem fidei*, condemned the errors of the Jansenist Synod of Pistoia. Pius VI clarifies that when the Church venerates the Sacred Heart, it is adoring “the humanity and the living flesh of Christ, not indeed for its own sake and merely as flesh, but as united to the divinity.”⁶ The Church venerates the Sacred Heart because it is the Heart of the Word.⁷ Thus, Pius VI affirms the validity of the devotion to the Sacred Heart.⁸ From this controversy emerges a clear affirmation of what was declared both in the dogma of the hypostatic union and the 2nd Council of Constantinople: the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the Heart of the Son, and therefore it deserves worship.

Leo XIII once again affirmed this declaration of Pius VI. Leo XIII, in his encyclical *Annum Sacrum*, taught that the Sacred Heart is “a symbol and the express image of the infinite love of Jesus Christ” and that “whatever honor, veneration, and love is given to this divine Heart is really and truly given to Christ himself.”⁹ This statement is important for the devotion to the Sacred Heart because it brings clarity to what exactly the Sacred Heart is: a symbol and image of the infinite love of Jesus Christ.

This makes way for the teachings of Pius XII. In his encyclical *Haurietis Aquas*, Pius XII once again affirms and clarifies the teachings of Pius VI. He says that there are two reasons why the Church gives the highest form of worship to the Sacred Heart:

21. The first, which applies also to the other sacred members of the Body of Jesus Christ, rests on that principle whereby we recognize that His Heart, the noblest part of human nature, is hypostatically united to the Person of the divine Word. Consequently, there must be paid to it that worship of adoration with

⁵ O’Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, 152.

⁶ DH 2661.

⁷ DH 2663

⁸ DH 2662

⁹ DH 3353

which the Church honors the Person of the Incarnate Son of God Himself. We are dealing here with an article of faith, for it has been solemnly defined in the general Council of Ephesus and the second Council of Constantinople.

22. The other reason which refers in a particular manner to the Heart of the divine Redeemer, and likewise demands in a special way that the highest form of worship be paid to it, arises from the fact that His Heart, more than all the other members of His body, is the natural sign and symbol of His boundless love for the human race. "There is in the Sacred Heart," as Our predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII, pointed out, "the symbol and express image of the infinite love of Jesus Christ which moves us to love in return."¹⁰

This teaching is important for it is a summary of the previous nineteen centuries of the Church: worship to the Sacred Heart, the symbol of the infinite love of Jesus Christ, is based on the hypostatic union.

In this encyclical, Pius XII elaborates on the logical conclusions of the hypostatic union with regards to the Sacred Heart. This is important for the theology of the Sacred Heart because these teachings are a real development of the devotion and its anthropological and theological significance.¹¹ Pius XII is not just repeating what has gone before him, but is clarifying even further the importance of the Sacred Heart. Pius XII says that because the Word assumed all of the human nature of Christ, such that nothing was lacking, there is also found a human aspect of love found in the Sacred Heart:

...there can be no doubt that Jesus Christ received a true body and had all the affections proper to the same, among which love surpassed all the rest, it is likewise beyond doubt that He was endowed with a physical heart like ours; for without this noblest part of the body the ordinary emotions of human life are impossible. Therefore the Heart of Jesus Christ, hypostatically united to the divine Person of the Word, certainly beat with love and with the other emotions- but these, joined to a human will full of divine charity and to the infinite love itself which the Son shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit,

¹⁰ *Haurietis Aquas*, §21-22. Paragraph 21 quotes Council Of Ephesus, can. 8; Cfr. Mansi, "Sacrorum Conciliorum Ampliss. Collectio IV," 1083 C.; II Council of Constantinople, can. 9; Cfr. Ibid. IX, 382 E. Paragraph 22 quotes Cfr. Encl. "Annum Sacrum": Acta Leonis, vol. XIX, 1900, p. 76.

¹¹ Mario Luigi Cardinal Ciappi, O.P., "Haurietis Aquas to Dives in Misericordia," in *Towards a Civilization of Love: A Symposium on the Scriptural and Theological Foundations of the Devotion to the Heart of Jesus*, ed. Mario Luigi Ciappi et al. (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1985), 13.

were in such complete unity and agreement that never among these three loves was there any contradiction of or disharmony.¹²

Here is a growth in clarity of the “infinite love of Jesus Christ” declared by Leo XIII. Pius XII shows that there is a human expression of the divine love found in Jesus Christ. He clarifies this teaching later on by showing that this infinite love has a threefold nature in it: (1) divine love which the Son shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit, (2) human will full of divine charity, and (3) natural human love. He again reiterates this teaching later on in the document:

54. For these reasons, the Heart of the Incarnate Word is deservedly and rightly considered the chief sign and symbol of that threefold love with which the divine Redeemer unceasingly loves His eternal Father and all mankind.

55. It is a symbol of that divine love which He shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit but which He, the Word made flesh, alone manifests through a weak and perishable body, since "in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col 2:9)."

56. It is, besides, the symbol of that burning love which, infused into His soul, enriches the human will of Christ and enlightens and governs its acts by the most perfect knowledge derived both from the beatific vision and that which is directly infused.

57. And finally - and this in a more natural and direct way - it is the symbol also of sensible love, since the body of Jesus Christ, formed by the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, possesses full powers of feelings and perception, in fact, more so than any other human body.¹³

Since this is an important step for the theology of the Sacred Heart, the next three sections of this chapter will explore more in-depth each of these three loves found in the Sacred Heart.

Divine Love

¹² *Haurietis Aquas*, §41. Quoting Cfr. Sum. Theol. III, q. 15, a. 4; q. 18, a. 6: ed. Leon., vol. X(1), 1903, pp.189, 237.

¹³ *Haurietis Aquas*, §54-57. Paragraph 56 quotes Cfr. Sum Theol. III, q. 9 aa. 1-3: ed. Leon., vol. XI, 1903, p. 142. Paragraph 57 quotes Cfr. Sum Theol. III, q. 33, a. 2, ad 3m; q. 46, a: ed. Leon., vol. XI, 1903, pp. 342, 433.

The first love that is symbolized in the Sacred Heart is the divine love of God Himself. Although the Sacred Heart is part of the Sacred Humanity of Our Lord, it is nevertheless a symbol of God's love because it is hypostatically united to the Son. It is the Son's Heart and this Heart reflects the love shared by all three persons of the Trinity.¹⁴ This section will unpack the divine love of God, why it is fitting that the Son manifests this love in the Incarnation, and how the divine love is manifested in the Sacred Heart.

First, what is love and what does God's love look like. Love is the "first movement of the will and of every appetitive faculty" towards the good.¹⁵ Love itself tends towards two things: "to the good that one wills, and to the person for whom one wills it; since to love a person is to wish that person good."¹⁶ Also, love is both a unitive force and a binding force between the person and the good desired.¹⁷

If this is what love is, what does the love shared by the persons of the Trinity look like? Since God Himself is the supreme Good, love is a unitive force moving Himself to unite completely and totally with Himself.¹⁸ Since God has eternally possessed Himself, then love in God looks like supreme and perfect rest in Himself, the good that He has eternally loved.¹⁹ Not only does God love Himself, He also loves creation by willing that creation may rest in the supreme Good, namely Himself. Love then is a binding force in God that moves Him in willing the good of others.²⁰ Not only does God's love move Him to will their good, but it also infuses and creates goodness in the creature: "God's love with reference to creatures is in no way

¹⁴ For more information of how the Sacred Heart can be an expression of the Divine Love, see Mario Luigi Cardinal Ciappi, O.P., *The Heart of Christ, The Center of the Mystery of Salvation*, trans. Leslie Wearne and Andrew Wade (Rome: C.d.C. Publishers, 1983), 125-167.

¹⁵ *Summa theologica*, I, q. 20, a. 1, 113-114.

¹⁶ *Summa theologica*, I, q. 20, a. 1, ad. 3, 114.

¹⁷ *Summa theologica*, I, q. 20, a. 1, ad. 3, 114.

¹⁸ *Summa theologica*, I, q. 20, a. 1, ad. 3, 114.

¹⁹ Reginald, Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *The One God: A Commentary on the First Part of St. Thomas' Theological Summa*, trans. Dom. Bede Rose, O.S.B, S.T.D. (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1943), 595.

²⁰ *Summa theologica*, I, q. 20, a. 1, ad. 3, 114.

passive, but active; in fact, it creates conserves, and vivifies this love in them.”²¹ Thus, this generous love shared by the three persons of the Trinity is not only a pure, restful, uninterrupted activity²² by which He loves Himself, but also moves him to draw creation into this love so that they may be united to this perfect and complete love.

Second, why is it fitting that the Son should manifest this divine love? It is fitting for the Son to be sent because “He is the image of the invisible God (Col 1:15).”²³ He is the “spotless mirror of God’s *energeia* (that is, his activity).”²⁴ In the Son there is perfect imitation of the Father: “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise (Jn 5:19).” Since the humanity of Christ can never fully express the divinity of God, but acts as a sacrament of the divine love of God, it is fitting that the Son became flesh because then both the humanity of Christ and the Son are doing a similar thing: reflecting. Both the Son and the humanity of Christ point to another: the Son to the Father and the humanity to God. As the Son reflects the Father, so the flesh reflects the divine love. All of creation turns to the Sacred Humanity of Christ to reveal the Infinite. All of creation turns to this Sacred Humanity that acts as a mirror reflecting the divine essence. Thus, it is fitting that the Son, who is the perfect reflection of the divine essence, is sent to manifest the divine love through the Incarnation.

²¹ Garrigou-Lagrance, *The One God*, 598. Also *Summa theologica*, I, q. 20, a. 2, 115.

²² Dr. Stephen Hipp, lecture on *Theology of the Trinity* (St. Paul, MN: St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity, notes taken 20 September 2019).

²³ One can also see this idea of the Son as Image of the Father and His unique relationship with Creation in Athanasius’ work *On the Incarnation*, especially in paragraphs 11, 12, 16, 43, 45, and 54, as well as in Pope John Paul II. Pope John Paul II, General Audience (9 April 1986), in *God, Father and Creator*, 224-225.

²⁴ Origen of Alexandria, *On First Principles: Preface and I.I-I.3*, bk. 1, art. 2, par. 12, trans. Bradley K. Storin in *God, The Cambridge Edition of Early Christian Writings*, vol. 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 95.

Finally, what does the Sacred Heart reveal about the love shared between the Trinitarian persons?²⁵ The Sacred Heart reveals to the world the profound depths of the unitive and binding force that is found in God's love. The unitive force of the love of God is revealed in the fact that the Jesus is completely the Father's: "I and the Father are one (Jn 10:30)." This love between the Father and the Son is so unitive that the Son is resting in the bosom of the Father (Jn 1:18). But not only does the Sacred Heart reveal the unitive love between the Father and the Son, it also invites the disciples into that communion: "I made known to them your name, and I will make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them and I in them (Jn 17:26)."

The binding force of the love of God is revealed in the fact that the Son became like us in all things but sin, for we hear: "For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning (Heb 4:15)." The Sacred Heart wants to associate with us. Even in the midst of our sin, the Sacred Heart still wants to draw close. The Sacred Heart reveals to us that God is not a distant God who doesn't want anything to do with us, but rather is in fact a God who wants to regard us as His own (Ps 95:7).²⁶

In conclusion, the Sacred Heart is a symbol of the divine love shared by the three Persons of the Trinity that is manifested through the Incarnate Son. The divine love that is symbolized by the Sacred Heart is God's love that eternally loves Himself because He is the supreme good. God's love also moves Him to sharing this eternal act of love with the rest of creation. It is fitting that the Son reveal this generous love because He is the Image of God. Therefore, in Christ both the person of the Son and His Humanity reflect the divine love in different respects. The Sacred Heart of Jesus manifests the unitive and binding love of the divine nature.

²⁵ *Haurietis Aquas*, §56.

²⁶ *Summa theologica*, I, q. 20, a. 1, ad. 3, 114.

Charity in the Human Soul

This section examines Christ's human nature and look at how His human Heart is filled with charity. Since the Son assumed a full and complete human nature, He assumed a human soul as well.²⁷ This human soul of Christ, being of a human nature, would be in need of divine grace in order to achieve its end.²⁸ This grace would come by virtue of the fact that this humanity is united to the Divine Son.²⁹ Since His humanity is united to the Divine Son, Jesus has all of the virtues (except for faith and hope).³⁰ This means that Jesus can be said to have charity residing in His soul.

This is an important declaration that Jesus has charity in His soul because charity is something that is connected to the human will. Charity is a supernatural virtue that is given to the human will so that man can freely choose his supernatural end in a supernatural way, namely loving God.³¹ If Jesus did not have charity, that is, if Jesus could not freely love His end, then there would be something lacking in the human will of Jesus. If only the divine love of the Son was found in the Sacred Heart, then when Jesus loved the Father, His human will would not be able to unite itself to this love. In Jesus it would only be God loving Himself. Humanity would not be involved. But since the Sacred Heart was filled with charity, the humanity of Jesus could now love God.

What would the charity of the Sacred Heart look like? Pius XII in his encyclical provides an answer to this question: "It is, besides, the symbol of that burning love which, infused into His

²⁷ *Summa theologica*, III, q. 5, a. 3, 2058-2059.

²⁸ *Summa theologica*, I-II, q. 109, a. 1-10, 1123-1131.

²⁹ *Summa theologica*, III, q. 7, a. 7, 2070; *Summa theologica*, III, q. 7, a. 1, 2065-2066.

³⁰ *Summa theologica*, III, q. 7, a. 2, 2066-2067. For a look at why Christ did not have faith or hope, see *Summa theologica*, III, q. 7, a. 3-4, 2067-2068.

³¹ *Summa theologica*, II-II, q. 23, a. 2, 1270-1271.

soul, enriches the human will of Christ and enlightens and governs its acts by the most perfect knowledge derived both from the beatific vision and that which is directly infused.”³² From this quotation two things are seen: (1) charity “enriches the human will of Christ” (2) charity does so by virtue of Christ’s “perfect knowledge derived both from the beatific vision and that which is directly infused.”

First, how does charity enrich the human will of Christ? The human will’s purpose is to choose acts that will help man achieve his ultimate end, namely the enjoyment of God.³³ Charity is the virtue that allows man to actually achieve that end.³⁴ Charity is also the form of all the other virtues because it directs them all to their last end.³⁵ Therefore the charity found in the Sacred Heart would direct all of Jesus’ actions. It would enrich the human will of Christ by ordering it towards loving God in all things.

Second, what is the relationship between Christ’s knowledge and his charity? Charity, like love, demands some apprehension of the thing loved.³⁶ Thus, for the Sacred Heart, Christ’s knowledge revealed to Him the good which He loved. He would know what the Father willed for Him and would then love it with charity and thus all of His acts would be ordered towards the will of the Father.

In conclusion, by virtue of having His humanity united to the Word, Christ’s humanity has the theological virtue of charity. The charity found in the Sacred Heart would be the form of all the other virtues Christ had since it is by charity that all virtues achieve their final end. The path of charity in Christ was illumined by the unique knowledge that Christ enjoyed.

³² *Haurietis Aquas*, §56. Paragraph 56 quotes Cfr. Sum Theol. III, q. 9 aa. 1-3: ed. Leon., vol. XI, 1903, p. 142.

³³ *Summa theologica*, II-II, q. 23, a. 7, 1274.

³⁴ *Summa theologica*, II-II, q. 23, a. 6, 1273.

³⁵ *Summa theologica*, II-II, q. 23, a. 8, 1274-1275.

³⁶ *Summa theologica*, I-II, q. 27, a. 2, 1306.

Natural Human Love

The final love found in the Sacred Heart is also found in the humanity of Jesus. It is natural human love, or, as Pius XII put it, the “sensible” love of the Sacred Heart. Jesus would have had a love within Him that moved Him, in accords with the dictates of reason, towards perceived sensible goods.³⁷ This means that Jesus has the full spectrum of human emotions, more than any other human being, with regards to love.³⁸ This explains the emotions of Jesus played out in the Gospel such as the cleansing of the temple (Jn 2:12-22) or when He wept outside the tomb of Lazarus (Jn 11:33-36). The reason why Jesus felt these emotions more than any other person is because His emotions are under the proper dictates of reason. He is able to truly understand the significance of each event and properly respond to these events with the corresponding human emotion. Thus, the suffering Jesus felt on the cross is the greatest suffering because He perceived the horror of the sinfulness of mankind as they crucified the Word made flesh.³⁹

This love of the Sacred Heart brings about certain effects in Christ: affection, desire to be with the beloved, complete gift for the other, and zeal for the other. This love brings about affection between Christ and his disciples. This affection brings about a real union between the Christ and His beloved.⁴⁰ The Sacred Heart yearns to be with His people, yearns to save His people. This affective love propels the Christ to great intimacy with His Father and His disciples so that there may be a mutual indwelling: “Abide in me, and I in you (Jn 15:4).”⁴¹ This love

³⁷ *Summa theologica*, I-II, q. 26, a. 1, 703-704.

³⁸ *Haurietis Aquas*, §57.

³⁹ *Summa theologica*, III, q. 46, a. 6, 2270-2271.

⁴⁰ *Summa theologica*, I-II, q. 28, a. 1, 709-710.

⁴¹ *Summa theologica*, I-II, q. 28, a. 2, 710-711.

causes the Sacred Heart to be wholly other focused.⁴² The Sacred Heart is completely focused on the Father and on His disciples: “This is my body which is given for you (Lk 21:22).” This emotional love causes the Sacred Heart to be filled with great zeal, with great intensity for bringing about the good of its beloved: “Zeal for your house will consume me (Jn 2:17).”⁴³

The fact that the Sacred Heart has the emotional aspects of love is significant because it shows that Jesus is not a mere robot who mechanically does the will of the Father. Rather, in His flesh He gives of Himself totally to the mission of the Father. Jesus is emotionally invested in His mission. He has joy, anger, sorrow, sadness, and moments of sheer ecstasy. Also, in His flesh He truly embodies all that His followers will have to endure. He knows what it feels like to be innocent and yet rejected. Thus, all disciples of Christ can turn to the Sacred Heart and be encouraged both by the sufferings and the joys that the Sacred Heart of Jesus felt. By observing the natural love of the Sacred Heart, the disciples of Christ learn what it means to “rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep (Rom 12:15).”

In conclusion, since the Word assumed a real humanity, the Sacred Heart was filled with a sensible love. This sensible love of the Sacred Heart would be affected by events more than any another other human heart. This love also propels Christ towards His beloved such that He wishes to be completely united with His beloved. Finally, this love teaches His disciples how it is that they should respond to the events that occur in their life.

Conclusion

The doctrinal basis of the Sacred Heart is rooted in the dogma of the hypostatic union in which the full humanity of Jesus is hypostatically united to the divine person of the Son. The

⁴² *Summa theologica*, I-II, q. 28, a. 3, 711.

⁴³ *Summa theologica*, I-II, q. 28, a. 4, 712.

Sacred Heart, as Pius XII states, is a threefold symbol that reveals to us the divine love of the Trinity as manifested through the Incarnate Son, the human heart of Jesus filled with charity, and the human emotional love of Jesus. From this section, it becomes clear that the Sacred Heart is found at the center of Christology and helps us to come to a greater understanding of the Word made flesh.

Chapter Four:

The Sacred Heart in Relation to Other Areas of Theology

This thesis began by examining in general what is a “devotion”, what is meant by the word “heart”, and what is meant by the term “Sacred Heart”. Chapter two and chapter three then examined how the devotion to the Sacred Heart has a rich theology behind it that is rooted both in Scripture and Tradition. The fourth chapter of this thesis will examine the theology of the Sacred Heart and its connection to other areas of theology. The theology of the Sacred Heart, since it is rooted in Christology, has an intimate connection to all areas of theology. In fact, since the theology of the Sacred Heart deals with the crucified love of Christ, i.e. the very center of his ministry, the theology of the Sacred Heart will influence all other areas of theology immensely. All other areas of theology have as their core Christology, and at the core of Christology is the Sacred Heart. Thus, to study the theology of the Sacred Heart in its relation to other areas of theology is to study the heart of all of theology. This chapter will now demonstrate the influence that the theology of the Sacred Heart has on three areas of theology in particular: Mariology, Ecclesiology, and the Eucharist.

Mariology

The first discipline this chapter will relate to the theology of the Sacred Heart is Mariology. This is a beautiful connection to study because it is speaking about the relationship between a mother and the Heart of her Son. It would thus be beneficial to examine Mary’s

maternity. Throughout this section it will be shown how the study of the Sacred Heart helps in understanding Mary's maternity as fruitful and active.

First, the Sacred Heart helps show Mary's maternity as fruitful. In order to see this, it is first necessary to examine the fruitful nature of the love of the Sacred Heart. To narrow the discussion even further, this section will look at the fruitful nature of the virginal love of the Sacred Heart. In the Christian sense, to be a virgin means that one has consecrated oneself to God. It means that one has opened oneself up totally to God such that no other being stands between the self and God. It means a radical availability to God. To be consecrated means to be set apart, thus in the Christian sense, virgins have set themselves apart completely for God. They are no longer of the world but have already begun living the eternal communion with God.

What does it mean that Christ was filled with virginal love? It means that Christ's whole being was turned toward the Father. As a divine person, the Son from all eternity was turned towards the Father in a bond of love. This bond of love was also fruitful, for from this bond of love between the Father and the Son proceeds the Holy Spirit. In the divine nature there is an analogous beginning of a fruitful virginal love. This divine person then took upon Himself a human nature. This human nature will now partake in the Son's complete orientation to the Father. This dynamic is explained in the 3rd council of Constantinople. This council declares that this union occurred in such a way as to have within Christ two wills: His divine will and His human will.¹ These two wills found unity in a two-fold manner: unity in the person of the Son and unity in their object. This two-fold unity of the human and divine will of Jesus implies that these wills were never at odds with one another. Rather, the two wills of Christ are united through the complete submission, the complete Yes of the human will to the divine will, such

¹ DH 556.

that they operate as if there was only one will while always remaining two independent realities.² This, according to Ratzinger, is a unity analogous to trinitarian unity that both creates and is love.³ In God, the exchange between the Father and the Son is so complete that the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the both.⁴ This trinitarian dynamic seems to be played out in the exchange between the human and divine will of Christ. In Christ, the human will of Jesus submits itself in a bond of love to the divine will in such a way that a new communion is created, namely that of the Church.⁵ God and humankind, Creator and creation are unified in the act of atonement that presupposes this beautiful exchange between the human will and the divine will in Christ. No longer is the cosmos under the reign of the first Adam's disobedience. Christ's whole being, in His humanity and in His divinity, is turned towards the Father in a bond of virginal love, and this bond of love creates the Church.

The Gospel frequently speaks of Christ's total and love filled orientation to His Father: "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me (Jn 6:38)" and "I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father (Jn 14:31)." This complete love towards his Father reaches its climax in Jesus' hour: His Passion, Death, and Resurrection. It is in this hour that Jesus completely consecrates Himself to the Father. It is here that Christ's virginal love manifests itself. Upon the Cross He completely gives Himself to the Father: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit (Lk 22:46)!" But

² Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One: An Approach to a Spiritual Christology*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1986), 92. There remains a two-fold operation of the human and the divine will, but Ratzinger is emphasizing the fact that the human will is perfectly docile to the divine will. These two wills act as one because of the unity of their object: the plan of God laid out from all of eternity.

³ Ratzinger, *Behold the Pierced One*, 92.

⁴ Pope John Paul II, General Audience (20 Nov 1985), in *God, Father and Creator*, 176.

⁵ It is in this exchange (the human will's complete Yes to the divine will) that Ratzinger locates both the Church and the Eucharist. "We have established that the Incarnation of the Son creates communion between God and man and thus also makes possible a new communion among human beings. This communion between God and man, which is realized in the Person of Jesus Christ, itself becomes communicable in the Easter mystery, i.e., in the Lord's death and Resurrection. The Eucharist is our participation in the Easter mystery, and hence it is constitutive of the Church, the Body of Christ. This is why the Eucharist is necessary for salvation. The necessity of the Eucharist is identical with the necessity of the Church and vice versa." Ratzinger, *Behold the Pierced One*, 93.

Christ's virginal love is also fruitful for it finds its roots in the Trinity. What, then, was created at this moment? It was the Church.⁶ The death of Christ causes belief in the heart of the centurion who witnesses it: "And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that he thus breathed his last, he said, 'Truly this man was the Son of God (Mk 15:39)!' " A stream of blood and water, symbolizing Jesus' Life and Spirit, pours forth upon his disciples who gather around Him (Jn 19:25-37). Through Christ's complete offering to the Father on the Cross, man is reconciled with God and the Church is born. Thus the Cross bears witness to the virginal love of the Sacred Heart that brings forth fruit. This plays into the stark irony of the Christian life: from death we receive life (Jn 12:24), by losing our life we will save it (Mt 16:25), and the fruitful love is virginal love.

How does this play into Mariology? The love of the Sacred Heart on the cross was fruitful. It was here, in the moment of the conception of the Church, Christ said "Woman, behold, your son (Jn 19:26)!" In Jesus' hour, this hour of supreme Revelation, not only did Christ reveal that His crucified love bore fruit and this fruit was new life (the Church), but this new life had a mother. This Mother would be the true Eve, the true mother of the living, for she was not only biologically mother, but this woman is also the mother of new life, which is born from an imperishable source, the pierced Sacred Heart. She is now the mother forever because she is the mother over this eternal life given at the cross. All those who are born from the side of Christ, all those who receive this new life, hear too the voice of Christ saying "Behold, your mother (Jn 19:27)!"

But Mary was not merely passive in this revelation by her Son. She too was a willing agent. She, by a total grace from God, freely willed to submit herself to the will of her Son: "Do whatever he tells you (Jn 2:5)." She imitates her Son by submitting her own human will in love

⁶ *Haurietis Aquas*, §76.

to the divine will. She is completely consecrated to the divine will and is thus filled with virginal love. As in the Annunciation her *fiat* brought about divine life into the world (Lk 1:26-38), so now at the crucifixion her *fiat* continues and brings about divine life in the hearts of the believers. Mary is now the willful mother of all those who are reborn and sustained by the stream that flows from the side of Christ. This stream of blood and water is symbolized in the Eucharist and Baptism.⁷ Whenever a person enters the waters of baptism or is receiving the Eucharist, Mary is active in her maternal care, once again saying *fiat*.

This fruitful and active maternity of Mary stems also from her unique maternal relationship with her Son. No other human person has the same relationship with Jesus as Mary. At the moment of conception, Christ was being formed in the womb underneath the beating heart of Mary.⁸ From this moment onward, Mary was formed by her maternal affectivity for her Son. As any mother, she grew more and more in love with her Son. His life became her life. All the events that occurred in her Son's life were brought into her heart (Lk 2:19). Her whole being, both body and soul, partook in her Son's life. This is a fruit of her being full of grace. Mary, unaffected by the stains of original sin, had a properly ordered heart. All her emotions were properly ordered according to their object. She felt motherly joys more than any mother. This also meant that she would feel motherly pain more than any other mother: "And a sword will pierce through your own soul also (Lk 2:35)." By fruit of being full of grace, she was able to partake uniquely in the mystery of the cross:

No one has experienced, to the same degree as the Mother of the crucified One, the mystery of the cross, the overwhelming encounter of divine transcendent justice with love: that "kiss" given by mercy to justice (Ps 85:11). No one has received into his heart, as much as Mary did, that mystery, that truly divine dimension of the redemption effected on Calvary by means of the death of the Son, together with the sacrifice of her maternal heart, together with her

⁷ *Haurietis Aquas*, §77. Quoting Sum. Theol. III, q. 66, a. 3 m: ed. Leon., vol. XII, 1906, p. 65.

⁸ Pope John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis*, (4 March 1979), §9.

definitive "fiat." Mary, then, is the one who has the deepest knowledge of the mystery of God's mercy. She knows its price, she knows how great it is. In this sense, we call her the Mother of mercy: our Lady of mercy, or Mother of divine mercy; in each one of these titles there is a deep theological meaning, for they express the special preparation of her soul, of her whole personality, so that she was able to perceive, through the complex events, first of Israel, then of every individual and of the whole of humanity, that mercy of which "from generation to generation (Lk 1:50)" people become sharers according to the eternal design of the most Holy Trinity.⁹

As St. John Paul II noted, Mary's whole personality was involved in her participation at the Cross. That means both her body and soul. Everything about her is involved in this action. She is truly the fulfillment of the mother in Maccabees who firmly accepts her sons' death because of love for God (2 Mac 7:27-29). Thus, when Mary is exercising her maternal care over the Church, her whole being is involved, this whole being that is marked by the encounter with her Son's complete self-gift on the cross. She, with her whole being, encourages us to persevere in the love of her Son so that we may one day finish the race (2 Tim 4:7) and enter into the supreme joy of heaven (Mt 25:21).

This maternal affectivity of Mary towards her Son plays a part now in Revelation. The cross is the moment of the supreme revelation of God's love and His mercy. By proclaiming Mary's maternity in this moment of Revelation, Christ is forever linking her maternity to His revelation of mercy. She now plays an active role in the revelation of mercy throughout all ages:

In her and through her, this love continues to be revealed in the history of the Church and of humanity. This revelation is especially fruitful because in the Mother of God it is based upon the unique tact of her maternal heart, on her particular sensitivity, on her particular fitness to reach all those who most easily accept the merciful love of a mother. This is one of the great life-giving mysteries of Christianity, a mystery intimately connected with the mystery of the Incarnation.¹⁰

⁹ Pope John Paul II, *Dives In Misericordia*, (30 November, 1980), §9.

¹⁰ *Dives In Misericordia*, §9.

Mary, being completely formed by her Son's complete revelation of love on the cross, now reveals to us what this mercy means.

In conclusion, the virginal love of the Sacred Heart is fruitful. The fruit it bears is the Church as well as Mary as the mother of the Church. Mary's maternal care is completely formed by her Son's loving gift on the Cross. She now exercises this care over the Church. What a great God we have! The love of God we encounter in the Sacred Heart wills that we not be alone, but to have a mother. A mother who is not distant, but one like the mother in Maccabees who encourages us in our sorrow. A mother who feels our pain. A mother who wishes to be near us in all things. A mother who receives us both at our birth, and our death.¹¹ The Sacred Heart, through its virginal and obedient love, creates community, creates the Church. It is this love that now gives to the Church Mary as her mother, her Mother of Mercy.

Ecclesiology

Ecclesiology, the study of the Church, can be approached through many different lenses. One can approach the Church from an existential question as well as from a dogmatic standpoint. One could start from biblical interpretation as well as from a patristic. This section will show that by studying the Church through the lens of the Sacred Heart offers a greater understanding of why the Church is visible and missionary.

"The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us (Jn 1:14)". The second person of the Trinity, complete in the divine nature, descended in all humility and took upon Himself human flesh. Jesus had a complete divine nature as well as a complete human nature. This is the context the Sacred Heart is situated into. This thesis discussed earlier that the Sacred Heart of Jesus is

¹¹ We can now start to see that devotion to the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary directly flows from devotion to the Sacred Heart. As one looks at the Sacred Heart and sees the compassion that fills it, one starts to see those same traits within the heart of Mary.

“considered the chief sign and symbol of that threefold love with which the divine Redeemer unceasing loves His eternal Father and all mankind.”¹² This threefold love refers to (1) the divine love, (2) the infused divine charity in Jesus’ human nature, and (3) the human love of Jesus.

These first two aspects do shed light on understanding the nature of the Heart of Jesus. However, when considering the Heart of Jesus in only the first two senses alone, the importance of that sentence in John’s proclamation of “the Word became Flesh” is limited. The expressions of the emotional love of the human Heart of Jesus must also be included. The human Heart of Jesus points to the reality that God took upon Himself a human body and all the physical emotions that come with it. It is important to also keep in mind this embodied reality because of what the body is. As Ratzinger says:

The body is not something external to the spirit, it is the latter’s self-expression, its ‘image’. The constituents of biological life are also constitutive of the human person. The person exercises personhood in the body, and the body is thus the mode of expression; the invisible presence of the spirit can be discerned in it.¹³

The embodied reality of the divine person means that through this human Heart, even through its emotions, the Divine Person is understood even more. Thus, when looking to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, it is necessary to consider all three aspects of the Love with which Jesus loves the Father and all of mankind.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is a sign that points us to the reality that Jesus, “though he was in the form of God...emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men (Phil 2:6-7).” The Son took upon Himself a body and all that goes with it (except sin): a human soul, intellect, passions, motives, senses, physical matter, and so forth. This embodiment of God is important because it shows us something completely new in how God expresses love to His people. Pius XII makes note of this new type of love. God loved His people intimately

¹² *Haurietis Aquas*, §54.

¹³ Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One*, 51.

throughout all of the Old Testament. This love was divine love.¹⁴ The Incarnation, however, brought forth an added dimension the love God has for man. Not only is there this divine love “but also human sentiments of love.”¹⁵ In the Body of Jesus exist both of these dimensions of the love God has for man: the divine love found in the Old Testament and the human expression of this divine love. The Body of Jesus expresses the invisible reality of God and His will.¹⁶ The Body of Jesus is a concrete, finite expression of God.

This does not end here, however. God does not encounter man just to leave man in his broken state. God did not pour Himself out into creation just to remain in creation. Jesus did not have His Heart pierced on the Cross just to have His blood pour out. If this were the case, then the Heart of Jesus would not be beneficial to humanity. Instead, the Heart of Jesus becomes beneficial to all of humanity through the Resurrection and Ascension. When Jesus rises from the grave and ascends into heaven, all of humanity goes with Him. The Heart of Jesus now proclaims triumph because the Son has made His triumphant return to the Father. God pours Himself out through the Sacred Heart so that He can bring man to Himself so that man is one with God (Jn 17:11). The Sacred Heart is no longer just God made visible but now becomes the window through which the invisible is seen.¹⁷ The Sacred Heart of Jesus is now a “mystical ladder by which we mount to the embrace of ‘God our Savior.’”¹⁸ In the Heart of Jesus, through the Easter mystery, is shown

“the connection of the body and spirit, of Logos, Spirit and body, making the incarnate Logos into a “ladder” which we can climb as we behold, touch and experience. All of us are Thomas, unbelieving; but like him, all of us can touch the exposed Heart of Jesus and thus touch and behold the Logos himself. So with our hands and eyes fixed upon this Heart, we can attain to the confession of faith:

¹⁴ *Haurietis Aquas*, §38.

¹⁵ *Haurietis Aquas*, §38.

¹⁶ Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One*, 51.

¹⁷ Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One*, 53.

¹⁸ *Haurietis Aquas*, §58.

‘My Lord and my God!’¹⁹

Christianity is “the religion of Jesus which is centered on the Mediator who is man and God, and in such a way that we cannot reach the Heart of God save through the Heart of Christ.”²⁰

How is this reflection on the Sacred Heart important in understanding the Church? This question is answered in two ways: the Sacred Heart of Jesus gives specific content to how the Church is visible and missionary. First, how does the Sacred Heart help to illustrate that the Church is visible? This Heart, pierced with a lance, now continually pours out the love of Christ through the Holy Spirit into the hearts of His people. This people, gathered around Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit, are the Church, the Body of Christ. The bond of love they have received from Christ unites them. What the people gather around, what they share in common, is the love they have received from their Savior. That love they received is not just a divine love like our Fathers in Faith received in the Old Testament. Rather the love that binds them together is this ever ancient love foreshadowed in the Old Testament that has found a radical new expression that is both human and divine. The love they encounter in the Sacred Heart is the three-fold love mentioned earlier: love of the Trinity, the infused divine charity, and human love.

Of these three types of love, it is precisely this third type of love that makes the Church visible. The Son, having taken upon Himself a human heart, also took upon the conditions that are required for human love. One of those conditions for human love is the visibility of another. Visibility, within the context of love, means a concrete and historical presence of another. In order for humans to give of themselves, it implies that the other must be concrete and not simply an idea. A husband away from home may ‘love’ the idea of his wife who is at home, but it is not until the husband gets home and actually encounters the concrete reality of his spouse that his

¹⁹ Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One*, 54.

²⁰ *Haurietis Aquas*, §106.

love comes to its fullest sense. A human also needs their beloved to be historical, that is, a reality that takes up a particular place in a particular time. A husband may look back upon a lifetime of memories and be filled with an attraction to his wife, but it is not until he stands in front of his spouse, here and now, that his love comes to its fullest reality. This can be applied to how we encounter Christ's love. If Christ's love remains a mere idea, a universal, then man cannot fully encounter His love in a human way. If Christ's love does not encounter man here and now, then it is a nice sentiment but is not something that captures man's whole being. Man would only love Him as a nice idea or as a memory, but not as a living person. Rather, it is in encountering Christ's concrete and historical love that man can now be moved by Christ to give of himself completely to Christ. How can the Church be bonded together by this love of Christ if it is missing part of love, that is, the concrete and historical presence that God offered to Her through the Incarnation? The love of Christ encountered by His disciples must be visible.

If the love of Christ, around which the Church is gathered, is visible, then the Church also must be visible. The Church, being visible, has to be a concrete and historical reality because what makes up the heart of the Church is the Heart of Christ, which is the concrete and historical Love of Jesus Christ. A man encountering Christ, who is the visible image of the invisible God (Col 1:15), is also encountering His visible Church. The opposite is also true, to encounter the Church is to encounter Christ, as Christ says: "He who receives you receives me (Mt 10:40)." One who persecutes the Church is also persecuting Christ, as Christ says to Paul: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me (Acts 9:4)?" Since the Church is visible, there must be some location, some particular institution that people can point to and say, "That is the Church." If a man assumed that the Church was not visible and he could not point to a particular Church, then he would not be certain that the Love he encountered was truly Christ's. He would be living a

contradiction for the love of Christ is visible and yet His Body, which only exists because it beats with Christ's visible love, would remain invisible. If the "Word became Flesh (Jn 1:14)," then the Church must be visible. The Church receives everything from its head, Jesus Christ (Col 1:18; 2:19). It only exists because it gathers around and is built upon Him who is the cornerstone (Eph 2:19-22). Since Jesus Christ took upon Himself everything, even a visible love, then the Church, reflecting her Spouse, must also take upon herself a visible love. Thus, the Sacred Heart, which points to the fact that Jesus Christ has a visible love, demonstrates that the Church, which is gathered together around the love of Jesus Christ, is visible.

The second way that the Sacred Heart of Jesus illuminates the reality of the Church is that the Sacred Heart of Jesus aids in understanding why the Church is missionary. All of Jesus' words and deeds flow from His Heart, as is shown above. Thus, a greater understanding of the three-fold love that propelled Him into mission can be gleaned through examining His actions found in the Gospels.

One great example of His love as being the principle of His action comes from the story of Jesus parents finding Him in the temple (Lk 2:41-52). When He was found in the temple Mary asked Him: "Son, why have you treated us so (Lk 2:48)?" This question is important when approaching the actions of Jesus in order to see what is in His Heart. All of His actions find their meaning and motivation in His Sacred Heart and in looking at the meaning and motivations of His actions, the depths of the Sacred Heart will emerge. Jesus, in responding to His mother's question, says: "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house (Lk 2:49)?" This answer reveals the motivation of His action; He stayed behind in Jerusalem because of His heavenly Father. In fact, through the Gospel it emerges that the three-fold Love found in the Sacred Heart has the Father as its object and motivation. Jesus is moved and directed by the love the Father

has for Him. This love that fills Jesus has the Father for its object. Jesus desires to hand over everything to the Father in perfect obedience. Jesus receives all that the Father gives Him and offers it back to the Father. This plays itself out throughout the Gospels. In the Bread of Life discourse, Jesus says: “I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me (Jn 6:38).” After the Last Supper he says: “I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and going to the Father (Jn 16:28).” In the Gospel of John, He says: “the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing (Jn 5:19).” In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus says: “not what I will, but what you will (Mk 14:36).” Finally, on the Cross Jesus cries out: “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit (Lk 23:46)!” Therefore the love that is found in the Sacred Heart flows from the Father (motivation) and returns to the Father (object). This love we encounter in the Sacred Heart reveals to us that “the mystery of the divine redemption is ... a mystery of love, that is, of the perfect love of Christ for His heavenly Father to Whom the sacrifice of the Cross, offered in a spirit of love and obedience, presents the most abundant and infinite satisfaction due for the sins of the human race.”²¹

In the Scriptures, this love exchange between the Father and the Son is not exclusive, that is, a type of relationship that wants to be an isolated event occurring only between the two persons. Rather this love desires to draw all people into this relationship: to draw all people to partake in its fruits. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (Jn 3:16).” The Father wants all of mankind to partake in the exchange between Himself and the Son. The love found in the Sacred Heart is also meant for all. All are called to partake in the same action of Christ: “God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our

²¹ *Haurietis Aquas*, §35.

trespasses, made us alive together with Christ... and raised us up with him, and made us sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph 2:4-6).” In the Sacred Heart, a second meaning of the mystery of the divine redemption is discovered, namely “a mystery of the love of the Most Holy Trinity and of the divine Redeemer towards all men.”²² Thus, in the Sacred Heart, there is a two-fold meaning of the entire life of Jesus: (1) His relation to the Father and (2) the relationship of God to man.

The missionary zeal that drove Christ to offer Himself on the Cross is found in these two meanings of Christ’s life. Missionary zeal is a going out and a coming back. A missionary does not go out for any other reason than to bring back the lost into the Truth. The perfect icon of missionary zeal found in Christ is Christ hanging on the Cross. This icon has two primary characteristics. The first characteristic is that of the pierced Heart of Jesus pouring out blood and water upon the Earth (Jn 19:34). It is in this Heart of Jesus, pierced upon the Cross, that one sees that God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1Tim 2:4).” This blood and water flowing out from the Heart of Jesus points to the deeper truth that the Sacred Heart was not concerned with self-preservation. Rather, as Ratzinger puts it, the Sacred Heart is concerned with self-surrender:

This Heart is not concerned with self-preservation but with self-surrender. It saves the world by opening itself. ... The Heart saves, indeed, but it saves by giving itself away. Thus, in the Heart of Jesus, the center of Christianity is set before us. It expresses everything, all that is genuinely new and revolutionary in the New Covenant. This Heart calls to our heart. It invites us to step forth out of the futile attempt of self-preservation, and by joining in the task of love, handing ourselves over to him and with him, to discover the fullness of love which alone is eternity and which alone sustains the world.²³

The Sacred Heart poured itself out upon the world to reveal to the world that “greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (Jn 15:13).”

²² *Haurietis Aquas*, §36.

²³ Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One*, 69.

This love that fills the Sacred Heart does not only pour itself out upon all of creation, but also draws all nations back into it. Thus, the second characteristic of the icon of missionary zeal found in Christ is the fact that Christ is lifted high on the Cross. In the Gospel of John, Jesus says: “I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself (Jn 12:32).” All of creation is now gathered from all the ends of the world, being brought back into the Sacred Heart, and offered to the Father in the offering of love on the Cross. Jesus, through offering His pierced Heart upon the cross to the Father, made it such so that man “cannot reach the Heart of God save through the Heart of Christ as He Himself says: ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one cometh to the Father save by Me’.”²⁴ Therefore the love that fills the Sacred Heart is missionary, namely, it pours itself out upon the whole world only to gather the whole world and bring it back to the Father.

How does this help in understanding the Church as missionary? As mentioned earlier, the Church is filled with the love of Christ. In fact the Church, Marian in its essence, exists because it receives the love of Christ. Pius XII explains this beautifully as he writes:

...our Savior, by the outpouring of His blood, became wedded to His Church... Hence, from the wounded Heart of the Redeemer was born the Church, the dispenser of the Blood of the Redemption—whence flows that plentiful stream of Sacramental grace from which the children of the Church drink of eternal life...²⁵

The Church exists because of the love of Christ poured into it. She is the faithful spouse of Christ who can only proclaim her Beloved. The Church, like Mary, is the listening handmaid who stands before the love of her savior and utters *fiat*.²⁶ The Church stands like Mary at the foot of the Cross and receives from Jesus her very life, this love of Christ. Jesus, as the new Adam (Rom

²⁴ *Haurietis Aquas*, §106. Quoting Jn. 14:6.

²⁵ *Haurietis Aquas*, §76.

²⁶ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, “Thoughts on the Place of Marian Doctrine and Piety in Faith and Theology as a Whole,” *Communio* 30 (Spring 2003), 153.

5:12-18), gives to the Church part of Himself as Adam gave to Eve. Eve received her existence from the side of Adam. Now the Church receives her existence not only from the side of Christ, but in a more profound way, from the depths of His Heart. Adam and Eve's spousal relationship is fulfilled in the relationship between Christ and His Church. The spousal reality is not just a bond in this lifetime like Adam and Eve, but in an even more profound way, the Church and Christ become one Body in this spousal union with Christ as head and the Church as Body. This is a fulfillment of two becoming one (Mk 10:8). In this spousal union, everything that is Christ's becomes the Church. The Church receives from the fullness of grace that is in Christ (Jn 1:16). Therefore, in the overflowing of love found in the Sacred Heart, the Church is filled with love. The love of Christ is missionary by its nature and the Church is missionary by its nature because it came forth from this missionary love. The principle that gives the Church life is missionary, which makes the Church missionary. The Church, being faithful to its spousal relationship, is propelled into missionary activity. The Church pours out to the world from what it has received from the Sacred Heart, and then it gathers her children and brings them back to the Father through the Sacred Heart. If the Church ever stopped being missionary, it would mean that the Church had first become separated from her Spouse. The Church must continually be a vessel open to the outpouring of love that pours forth from the Sacred Heart of Jesus as it is pierced on the Cross.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus, being image of the three-fold love found in Jesus, helps to understand the Church as being visible and as missionary. It helps to understand the Church as visible because the Church is gathered around the love that is found in the Sacred Heart, which is visible. The Sacred Heart also helps to understand the Church as missionary because the existence of the Church depends upon the missionary love of the Sacred Heart being poured out

into it. Although the Sacred Heart is one of many approaches to understanding the nature of the Church, it is a valuable one for the heart of the Church is the Heart of Christ. The Heart of Christ so loves man that He desires all men of all history to know His love. He desires each and every person to be able to hear His voice in order to know His love. The mouth from which the Sacred Heart proclaims His love for the world is none other than the Church: “*In ore Cordis mei quod est Ecclesia* [In the mouth of my Heart, which is the Church].”²⁷

Eucharist

The Eucharist is the center of life for the Christian faithful. In the Eucharist, the Church gathers around her beloved Bridegroom in order to offer perfect worship to God the Father. In the Eucharist, the individual Christian comes to receive the Body and Blood of Christ in order to come into greater union with Him as He offers Himself to Father. In looking at the love of Jesus Christ, found in the Sacred Heart, three ways emerge that will illuminate in a deeper way what the Eucharist is: Eucharist as means by which He calls all nations into His covenant, the salvific nature of the Mass, and the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

The first way that the Sacred Heart of Jesus helps in understanding the Eucharist is that the love for all nations that is found in the Sacred Heart is the reason why God establishes the Eucharist. “God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man.”²⁸ This truth is highlighted throughout salvation history.

²⁷ Prosper of Aquitaine, *Expositio Psalmorum: A Centesimo Usque Ad Centesimum Quinquagesimum*, CVIII, §30, in *Prosperi Aquitani Opera*, pars 2. *Expositio Psalmorum, Liber Sententiarum*. Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina, vol. LXVII A, (Turnholt: Brepolis, 1972), 58. Quote found in Monsignor Jorge Mejía, “Born from the Side of Christ: An Orientation for the One Church,” in *Toward A Civilization of Love*, eds. Mario Luigi Ciappi et al. (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1985), 128.

²⁸ CCC, 1.

God is constantly drawing closer to man even though man continues to reject Him: He speaks to Abraham, He reveals His name to Moses, He brings His people into the promised land with Joshua, He builds them a kingdom through David, He builds a temple through Solomon, He sends prophets to convert the hearts of the people before the Babylonian Exile, He brings His people back to the promised land after the Exile. All of this is God's way of offering Himself to His people for no other reason than the pure self-giving love that is God. At the moment of the Annunciation, the love of God takes on a new dimension in salvation history. No longer is the love God has for man only expressed in a spiritual way, but now, through the Incarnation, the love God has for man can be expressed through human sentiments as well.²⁹ God now expresses Himself in a perfectly human way, that is, through words, deeds, desires, emotions, feelings, et cetera. Thus, by looking to the actions and desires of Jesus, a fuller understanding of His love is found in His Sacred Heart.³⁰

As mentioned earlier, the actions of Jesus manifest the love found in His Sacred Heart and flow from two motivating principles: His love for His Father and His love for mankind. All that Jesus does is the will of the Father: "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me (Jn 6:38)." He does the will of the Father because He loves the Father: "I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father (Jn 14:31)." Jesus loves mankind because the Father loves mankind: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him (Jn 3:16-17)." The love Jesus has for mankind drove Him to save the world. All His actions, flowing from His love, are ordered towards the salvation of

²⁹ *Haurietis Aquas*, §38.

³⁰ *Haurietis Aquas*, §59.

mankind: His preaching, teaching, healing, et cetera. It is His love that motivates Him to act the way that He did. It is His love that sheds light on the action that Jesus was most determined to accomplish: His passion and death in Jerusalem. Throughout the Gospels Jesus has a determination towards His passion in Jerusalem. “Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised (Mt 16:21).” Frequently, despite discouragement from disciples (Mt 16:22), Jesus continued to press on towards Jerusalem. When the hour of His passion arrived, even the passion of fear tempted Him away from moving towards His ultimate goal. Yet His love for the will of the Father, which was to save mankind, triumphed over that fear (Lk 22:42). Then on the cross, despite multiple rebukes by those He willed to save, the love that was in His Heart conquered and cried out, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do (Lk 23:34).” The Heart of Jesus, knowing His sacrifice on the cross to save humanity was complete, cried out “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit (Lk 23:46).” Christ gave His entire self out of love to satisfy the desire of the Father to save the world. After he breathed his last, a soldier pierced his side and “at once there came out blood and water (Jn 19:34).” The Sacred Heart of Jesus moved Christ to completely offer Himself on the cross for the salvation of Mankind.

It is within this context that the institution of the Eucharist occurred. The ultimate end of Jesus’ mission was to do the will of the Father by saving man through a complete offering of Himself on the Cross. All that occurred during His walk toward Jerusalem was also motivated by the same principle, namely the love found in the Sacred Heart for the Father and for man. Therefore the Sacred Heart, which motivated Jesus to the Cross, also motivated Him to institute the Eucharist: “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer (Lk 22:15).”

But why the Eucharist? Why is the Eucharist an expression of the three-fold love Jesus has for the Father and for mankind? How does the Eucharist aid in bringing Jesus to His ultimate end of doing the will of the Father by saving man? The Eucharist is the expression of the love of Jesus for the Father and for man because in the words of institution, Jesus “*transforms [his] death into the spiritual act of affirmation, into the act of self-sharing love; into the act of adoration, which is offered to God, then from God is made available to men.*”³¹ Jesus, by instituting the Eucharist, is declaring that He is freely offering His life (Jn 10:18). He shows to the whole world exactly what kind of offering He will give: His own Body and His own Blood. Through the words of institution, Jesus “*designating himself as the true and ultimate sacrifice*”³² that will satisfy God’s desire for complete love from man.³³ Jesus shows to the world that He, through His passion, will fulfill the great act of worship prefigured by the suffering servant.³⁴ Thus Jesus, moved by His Sacred Heart, institutes the Eucharist to begin His complete sacrifice on the Cross, by which He will offer to the Father perfect worship.

The Eucharist is not only the inauguration of the offering of the love of the Sacred Heart, but it also expresses the Sacred Heart in another way: The desire of Jesus to gather all nations to Himself (Jn 12:32) so that He might offer all to God (1 Pet 3:18). The Eucharist is the ratification of a new covenant between God and man (Lk 22:20). By gathering His disciples around Him and giving them His own Body and Blood, Jesus brings man into a new and everlasting covenant. This covenant can never be revoked because it is established in the Body and Blood of God Himself. The Eucharist is not meant to remain only in the upper room where it was established. The love of Jesus drove Him to offer Himself on behalf of all of mankind. If the Eucharist is the

³¹ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *God Is Near Us: The Eucharist, the Heart of Life*, trans. Henry Talor, eds Stephen Otto Horn and Vinzenz Pfnür (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2003), 29.

³² Ratzinger, *God is Near Us*, 32.

³³ Ratzinger, *God is Near Us*, 32.

³⁴ Ratzinger, *God is Near Us*, 33-34.

declaration of this love, then the Eucharist is to be the sacrament by which all men from all ages can now gather around Him and partake in His offering on the cross. The perfect icon of Jesus extending the Eucharist to all men of all ages is the blood and water flowing from the Heart of Jesus upon the Earth (Jn 19:34). This blood and water pours forth upon the Earth and does not remain void. Rather it accomplishes the will for which it was sent (Is 55:11) and becomes the offering of salvation for all men of all places. Jesus established the Eucharist because of His earnest desire to allow all nations to partake in this new covenant (Lk 22:15).

The second way that the Sacred Heart of Jesus helps in understanding the Eucharist is that the Sacred Heart reveals the self-sacrificial, and thus salvific, love of Jesus found in the Mass. It was love of the Father and of mankind that led Him to sacrifice His life on the Cross. The Cross becomes the perfect expression of the love Jesus has for the Father. One cannot separate the Sacred Heart from the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross.³⁵ To deny the self-sacrificial nature of Christ's love is to reduce His love to a superficial reality. To take away the motivating factor of His love from the cross is to take away the salvific nature of Christ's offering. It is these two points, self-sacrificial love and its salvific nature that I would like to expand on in this section.

Jesus, on the way to the cross, at the last supper reveals the nature of the love found in His Heart: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (Jn 15:13)." Jesus, in these words, was communicating to His apostles the love found in His Heart: a self-sacrificial love. This love, according to Jesus, is the greatest type of love. What is self-sacrificial love? In looking at the typical action of man, one of his fundamental motivations is to sustain his own life. From his eating to his sleeping, the principle of self-preservation governs his

³⁵ Hence why the devotion to the Sacred Heart has always shown the Sacred Heart as pierced and covered with thorns.

actions. Man, in a natural and good way, tends towards self-preservation. This self-preservation is ultimately a self-love. Self-love is not bad in and of itself. Why? Because man is good. Love, in the simplest definition, is the movement towards a desired good.³⁶ Thus, self-love is to love oneself because one is good. In fact, it would be contrary to nature to have a self-hatred because one, at least insofar as being created and willed by God, is good. Jesus, having two natures, had a good and natural human and divine self-love.³⁷

Self-sacrificial love comes into play only if there is such a thing as self-love. Self-love desires preservation of self because it finds oneself as good. Self-sacrificial love is to forgo some lesser aspect of self-love in order to acquire a greater good, even to the point where one is willing to give one's own life for that greater good. This self-sacrificial love does not negate or deny self-love. There is no such thing as self-sacrificial love that does not involve self-love. A person who lays down their life for a cause because they find their life as pointless or repulsive does not make an act of love. Rather this act becomes an act of evil because the goodness of things is no longer recognized (prudence) and is no longer brought to realization (justice).³⁸

This leads into a question: What makes self-sacrificial love the greatest? Self-sacrificial love is the greatest expression of human love because of the reality that one's own life is good, and yet one is willing to lay it down. It involves all of the cardinal virtues simultaneously: recognition of the good through prudence, brings the good to realization through justice with willingness to sacrifice oneself for the good through fortitude, and a proper ordering of one's self-love through temperance.³⁹

³⁶*Summa theologica*, II-I, q. 26, a. 1, 704.

³⁷*Haurietis Aquas*, §54.

³⁸ Josef Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, Lawrence E. Lynch, Daniel F. Coogan (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), 125.

³⁹ Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, 125: 148-149.

Did the Sacred Heart of Jesus have self-sacrificial love? The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the symbol of the three-fold love found in the person of Jesus Christ: divine love, infused charity in the human soul of Jesus, and natural human love. Of these three, the Sacred Heart had self-sacrificial love only in the latter two that are related to His human nature. Why does the divine love not have self-sacrificial love? Precisely because of the definition of self-sacrificial love: to forgo self-love and give one's life for a greater good. There is no greater good than the divine itself, thus the divine love of the Sacred Heart would have not had self-sacrificial love because there is no greater good than itself. Thus, it is impossible to say that the divine love of the 2nd person of the Trinity had self-sacrificial love. Only the love of the Sacred Heart that comes via its human nature had self-sacrificial love. Does this somehow reduce the love found in the Sacred Heart? By no means! The divine love found within the Sacred Heart is infinite! Words cannot express it. The divine love found in the Sacred Heart is greater than the self-sacrificial love found in the Sacred Heart in its human nature. By nature, self-sacrificial love is finite, meanwhile divine love is infinite and eternal. All of Jesus' human actions, including His self-sacrificial love, are perfect, finite, and human expressions of the infinite. What that means is the perfect, finite, and human expression of the infinite love of God towards man is self-sacrificial love. Therefore, the self-sacrificial love in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is the greatest human love, is merely a drop in the ocean of the love that is found in the Sacred Heart. By gazing upon the finite and human self-sacrificial love in Jesus, the Church encounters an opening to the infinite divine love found in Him as well.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus had two objects of self-sacrificial love: His Father and man. He was willing to give of His own human life for His Father and for His friends. The good that

Jesus was willing to forgo self-love for, while respecting the preservation of His human life, was principally His Father. Flowing from that love was His self-sacrificial love for man.

This love of Jesus, found in the Sacred Heart, was truly a self-sacrificial love. The Sacred Heart of Jesus was willing to forgo the natural self-love because He recognized the greater good of His Father and man and is said to have self-sacrificial love. He entrusted Himself completely to His Father, holding nothing back and became, as the Letter to the Philippians says, “obedient unto death, even death on a cross (Phil 2:8).” He loved man such that He was willing to die for man. With man, it is important to remember St. Paul’s words that speak of the profound depths of the self-sacrificial love that Jesus had for man:

While we were yet helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man – though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom 5:6-8).

This self-sacrificial love of the Sacred Heart led Him to that death on the cross. But love doesn’t stop at death. St. Paul continues: “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life (Rom 5:10).”

This leads into the next point: the salvific nature of self-sacrificial love. What is it about self-sacrificial love that it truly heals any division? Why must sacrifice, for it to be truly salvific, be a self-sacrificial love? Self-sacrificial love is salvific because it permanently unites the ‘I’ with the ‘Thou’, thus healing any division in the relationship. The ‘I’ no longer lives for the self, but his entire life serves and is given to the ‘Thou’ for it recognizes the other as good. This love permanently yokes the life of the “I” with the “Thou”. “I am my beloved’s, and his desire is for me (Song 7:10).” Without this love, the union of the ‘I’ and the “Thou” remains merely an external union, a declared state of unity. Although it may be union, self-sacrifice without love

does not heal all the divisions between the two. It no longer is salvific, that is, a complete restoration of life to all death. Rather, the self-sacrifice, because it is not motivated by love, is primarily self-serving. The “I” is united to the “Thou” only insofar as it is beneficial for “I”. The divisions between the two remain, thus is not truly salvific. Only self-sacrificial love can permanently unite the two and become salvific.⁴⁰

Two qualities found in the Sacred Heart ensure the salvific nature of Christ’s self-sacrificial love: tenderness and strength. “These two qualities of love are often separated in men’s hearts and yet they are completely interdependent. Tenderness without strength becomes merely languor and affectation. Strength without mercy becomes severity and bitterness.”⁴¹ Christ self-sacrificial love is tender. It draws all nations, it calls all peoples, and it is the Bridegroom beckoning His bride to come. “Come with me from Lebanon, my bride (Song 4:8).” His love is strong in that it is forever enduring, it is unbreakable, and it breaks man away from His false sense of self-reliance. Without tenderness, the sacrifice of Christ is no longer marked with the love found in the father of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32). The yoke of Christ no longer becomes easy and light (Mt 11:30) but becomes heavy and marked with servile fear. It is through the tenderness of self-sacrificial love that all who are burdened may find rest (Mt 11:28). Without strength, the sacrificial love neither has the power to offer salvation nor does it endure. Rather, it is because Jesus has all power on Heaven and on Earth (Mt 28:18) that His offering on the Cross can never be revoked and is poured out to all men of all ages (Heb 10:14). The tenderness and strength of the love found in the Sacred Heart will ensure any wound caused by sin is permanently healed in Christ’s self-sacrifice.

⁴⁰ Further reference for the “I” and “Thou” language: Martin Buber, *I And Thou*. trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1970).

⁴¹ Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *Our Savior and His Love for Us*, trans. A. Bouchard (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1951), 213.

Jesus, by offering His humanity on the Cross out of love to the Father, permanently restored the relationship between God and man. Man was no longer separated from God because Jesus perfectly gave His humanity to the Father. Thus man, while he was still an enemy, still away from God, was now reconciled to God in Jesus Christ. The division caused by original sin was reconciled in the blood of Jesus Christ. But this reconciliation does not end there. Jesus permanently gave His humanity to God, the One who is Life. Thus, in Jesus, man can now have everlasting life. Man can now live forever with God only if he is united to Jesus. It is in this context Jesus' words to His disciples come to life: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it (Mt 16:24-25)."

Man must partake in Jesus' own self-sacrificial love on the Cross if he wishes to have everlasting life, for the self-sacrificial love of Jesus is salvific. It perfectly unites God and man and heals all sin. The Eucharist is situated in this context. The sacrifice of the Mass, being the same Sacrifice of the Cross, now becomes the place where man is united to God. The Mass truly is propitiatory for in it man is yoked to God and the divisions of sin and death are healed. Not only that, but the self-sacrificial love of Christ is given through the reception of the Eucharist. By virtue of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, the same self-sacrificial love of Jesus is now truly present in the Eucharist.⁴² The Heart of Jesus, beating in the Eucharist, offers itself to the Christian to heal all wounds and division in the heart of the Christian. The Christian becomes more and more united to the self-sacrificial love of Christ, which heals all sin and becomes the

⁴² St. Ignatius of Antioch explicitly speaks of the presence of the love of God in the Precious blood: "I take no pleasure in the food of corruption nor yet in the pleasures of this life. I want the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, of the seed of David; and for drink I want his blood, which is incorruptible love." Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter to the Romans*, 7.3. In William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch*, ed. Helmut Koester, Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 181.

ointment of salvation. The Christian thus becomes whole and starts to live out salvation even while here on Earth. Thus, by looking to the self-sacrificial love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the salvific nature of the Mass becomes more understandable.

The third way the Sacred Heart helps in understanding the Eucharist is the nature of the love of Jesus as self-gift. In order to understand the self-giving love of the Sacred Heart, it is necessary explain the nature of self-giving love. Love is self-giving when a person, in the degree their intellect and will are properly ordered, freely gives of themselves to another for the sake of another, thus placing themselves at the complete service of another. This definition demonstrates that a person must have their intellect and will properly ordered in order to possess self-giving love. The person's will must be governed by reason because reason ensures the will chooses both a proper end and a proper manner to obtain that end. A man who gives himself in a way that is not ordered by reason often will error either in end or manner. Also, the proper ordering of the intellect and will allows man to freely give of himself to another for the sake of another. If man's intellect is darkened or it does not order the will, then he will not know how to give of himself nor will he know what the good of the other is. He is not able to freely give of Himself for the good of another. Christ, because His humanity is perfected and His intellect and will are properly ordered, is able to make of Himself as self-gift in the perfect human way. No other human self-giving love is as perfect as the love found in the Sacred Heart. Christ has full possession of Himself, and thus fully gives Himself away.

The self-giving love of the Sacred Heart gives itself completely to God the Father and to mankind. Jesus, in a perfect expression of self-gift, gives Himself to the Father throughout His entire life, culminating in the act of offering Himself upon the Cross. The self-gift of the Heart of Christ to the Father is not like man's self-gift to the Father. Man's self-gift is often lacking

because of lack of order in our faculties or because of self-preference. The Sacred Heart's self-gift was different than ours because the Sacred Heart, as Garrigou-Lagrance points out:

“...did not hesitate a moment to give itself entirely to His Father. From the first instant of His existence, His heart possessed the fullest generosity. As St. Paul says: ‘When He [Christ] cometh into the world, He saith: Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldest not: but a body Thou hast fitted to Me... Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God.’⁴³

The love found in the Sacred Heart is also fully given to all of mankind. “For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many (Mk 10:45).” Jesus, though He deserves the fullness of glory, humbles Himself, and places Himself at the complete service of the other. It is He who washes the feet of His disciples (Jn 13:3-17) and makes of Himself the servant of servants. Christ's self-giving love for mankind does not end at death but continues now that He has ascended into heaven. It is in heaven that He continues to give of Himself to man as He intercedes on behalf of man and prepares a place for man in the Father's house (Jn 14:3).

It is this self-giving love found in the Sacred Heart that gives the Eucharist to the Church. “Take this... This is my body which is given for you.... This chalice which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood (Lk 22:17,19-20).”⁴⁴ Jesus, wishing to give of Himself completely to all men of all ages, gives of Himself completely in the Eucharist. He holds nothing back. This then leads to an astounding point: The self-giving love of Jesus, who is forever reigning with His body in heaven, continues to give Himself in a bodily way. The real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist flows from the love found in the Sacred Heart. Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist because He wishes to continue to give of Himself to man. Therefore the Sacred Heart helps in understanding the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

⁴³ Garrigou-Lagrance, *Our Savior and His Love For Us*, 214. Quoting Heb. 10: 5-9.

⁴⁴ The primary meaning of this passage is the self-sacrificial love of Jesus. However, within this self-sacrificial love, one can find that this love is also self-giving and is thus what I desire to communicate here.

In conclusion, the Sacred Heart of Jesus helps in understanding the Eucharist in three ways. First, the Sacred Heart of Jesus established the Eucharist as means by which He calls all nations into His covenant. Second, the salvific nature of the self-sacrificial love found in the Sacred Heart aids in understanding the sacrifice of the Mass. The Sacrifice of the Mass is propitiatory because the essence of it is the same self-sacrificial love of Jesus on the Cross that is salvific. Third, the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist flows from the self-giving love found in the Sacred Heart. From these three it can be shown that the Eucharist is a gift of the Sacred Heart.⁴⁵ The Eucharist is an extension of the same love of the Sacred Heart that motivated Christ to offer Himself upon the Cross. The Church, whenever it offers the Eucharist, enters into the pierced side of Christ, into the Holy of Holies that is His Sacred Heart, “for the Heart of Jesus is the sacred temple of God from which there ascends to the eternal Father the expiatory sacrifice.”⁴⁶

Conclusion

By looking at the theology of the Sacred Heart, this chapter demonstrated more fully the role of Mary, the Church, and the Eucharist. Through studying the virginal and fruitful love of the Sacred Heart, the reality of Mary’s virginal motherhood over the Church shone forth. Through studying the visible and missionary nature of the love of the Sacred Heart, the visible and missionary nature of the Church was seen clearly. Finally, through studying self-sacrificial and self-giving love of the Sacred Heart, the salvific nature of the mass and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is brought into a deeper understanding. In all of these, this chapter demonstrated that the Sacred Heart is not a remote aspect of Christian life that has no bearing on

⁴⁵ *Haurietis Aquas*, §71.

⁴⁶ O’Donnell, *Heart of the Redeemer*, 275. Quoting Paul VI, *Diserti Interpretes*, 25 May 1965, Acta Romana Societatis Jesu, Vol. XIV, p. 585.

Christian theology. Rather, the Sacred Heart and its theology are at the core of and pumps life into the rest of theology.

Conclusion:

The Heart of Christianity

What is the mission of theology? The mission of theology is coming to a greater understanding of the mysteries of Divine Revelation and how these mysteries relate to one another. The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus seems, on its surface, seems to be mere emotional piety, used only to stir up love for the Lord and sorrow for one's sins, rather than a part of theology. It seems that it does not help us understand the divine mysteries but rather is an emotional aid in the spiritual life. However, as this thesis demonstrated, the Sacred Heart is at the very core of theology because it is a symbol of the three-fold love with which God loves and redeems the world.

This thesis began with a chapter dedicated examining the word “devotion” as well as examining what “Sacred Heart” means. This chapter showed that “devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, of its very nature, is a worship of the love with which God, through Jesus, loved us, and at the same time, an exercise of our own love by which we are related to God and to other men.”¹ The devotion to the Sacred Heart is both an *internal* and *external* response to God's Revelation of His own love.

If devotion to the Sacred Heart is to worship the love of God, then it becomes necessary to analyze how this love revealed itself to the Church. Thus chapters two and three examined how this love is revealed to us through Scripture and further unpacked in the life of the Church. Scripture revealed that namely Jesus' obedience to the Father, the depth of His love for mankind,

¹ *Haurietis Aquas*, §107.

and His desire to give us new life. The life of the Church revealed that the Sacred Heart of Jesus was filled with a three-fold love for God and for mankind.

Finally, this thesis concluded with a chapter dedicated to unpacking the theological significance that the Sacred Heart has in other areas of theology. The theology of the Sacred Heart helps to unpack Mary's virginal motherhood, the visible and missionary nature of the Church, and the salvific and self-sacrificial nature of the mass.

In short, this thesis demonstrated that studying the theology of the Sacred Heart, the core of theology is elucidated because, as Pope Benedict XVI said, "The very core of Christianity is expressed in the heart of Jesus; in Christ the revolutionary 'newness' of the Gospel is completely revealed and given to us: the Love that saves us and even now makes us live in the eternity of God."² There can be no doubt of the theological significance of the Sacred Heart since it is a sign of the very mystery of God and His redemption of mankind. Through studying the Sacred Heart, one comes face to face with the God who became flesh for our salvation.

² Pope Benedict XVI, Homily for the Opening of the Year for Priests on the 150th Anniversary of the Death of Saint John Vianney (June 19, 2009).

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