

# Grace Notes

Friday, June 4, 2021



Dear friends:

Once again, this epistle is coming out later than usual as the week was heavy with unforeseen items and I selfishly decided to be outdoors for as much of the weekend as I could. As we embrace June, this is a month of solemnities and feasts. This Sunday was Corpus Christi, the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. This recorded homily by Bishop Robert Barron is one of the best I have heard on this subject and well worth hearing, even after the fact. Bishop Barron also offers an explanation for the difference between designating a spiritual leader as a priest or a minister, as well as historical information about the Jewish traditions which give foundation to much of our faith practice which you may find interesting. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHpSXbVIYVM>

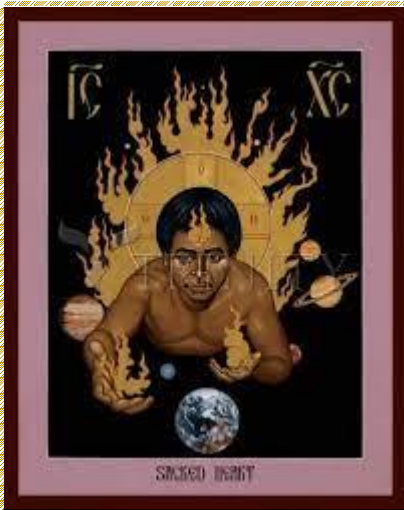
So much beautiful music has been written to help us reflect on the meaning of the Eucharist; an example is Mozart's "Ave Verum Corpus"

Ave, verum corpus  
natum de Maria Virgine,  
Vere passum immolatum  
in Cruce pro homine,  
Cujus latus perforatum  
unda\* fluxit (et)\* sanguine,  
Esto nobis praegustatum  
in mortis examine.

Hail, true body  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
Who truly suffered, sacrificed  
on the Cross for man,  
Whose pierced side overflowed  
with water\* and blood,  
Be for us a foretaste\*\*  
In the test of death.

For which I offer just one version: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDKCK\\_6WLTg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDKCK_6WLTg) I found when I went to listen to this that I had begun a cascade of wonderful, contemplative recordings which really fed my soul. Having been one of the fortunate people who, because of my role as cantor in our parish live-streamed Masses, have been able to receive communion over the past few months, I also led those participating at home in the Act of Spiritual Communion: **My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.**

Yesterday, I was "given a break" and watched from home as others provided the music, reminding me of just how much that prayer means, especially when one is missing the opportunity to receive the Eucharist.

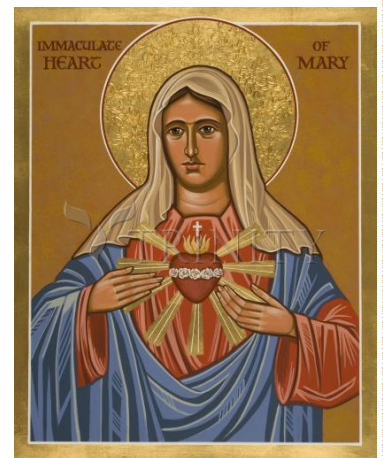


Sacred Heart Icon written by  
Bro. Robert Lentz, OFM

Traditionally, through a large part of Catholic history, June was observed as the month of the Sacred Heart. Although Vatican II attempted to discontinue the celebration of “months of”, the grassroots church has made it clear that tradition is not so easily dismissed. The Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus is one of those not transferred from a weekday to a Sunday and is celebrated on the Friday which follows the second Sunday after Pentecost – June 11 this year. Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is described in the writings of several Church Fathers – Origen, Ss Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine and Justin Martyr, to name a few – but was not formally celebrated as a liturgical feast

until 1670, and it was not until 1856 that it was established as an obligatory Feast for the whole Church by Pope Pius IX. **A prayer to the Sacred Heart:** O Sacred Heart of Jesus, living and life-giving fountain of eternal life, infinite treasury of the Divinity, and glowing furnace of love, Thou art my refuge and my sanctuary. O adorable and glorious Saviour, consume my heart with that burning fire that ever inflames Thy Heart. Pour down on my soul those graces that flow from Thy love. Let my heart be so united with Thine, that our wills may be one, and mine may in all things be conformed to Thine. May Thy will be the rule of both my desires and my actions.– **St. Gertrude the Great** (1256-1302), (adapted by St. Alphonsus Liguori)

The Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with which the Sacred Heart is often paired, follows on the next day, Saturday. An ancient custom, that Jesus appeared to Mary on the Saturday after his death – before the Resurrection – resulted in the dedication of Saturday as a day to honour Mary, and many Marian devotions have been assigned to that day. Many religious orders and communities have a tradition of honouring Mary on Saturdays and include special antiphons that evening, Notably, the Magnificat is always sung or recited at Vespers, in the Liturgy of the Hours. You may enjoy taking the time to listen to this beautiful Monteverdi Vespers of the Blessed Virgin: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqrTsxQgCt0> All true devotion to Mary is united with the primary worship of the Church, the Divine Liturgy, which is centred on Christ. You will note that icons which represent Mary and Jesus always have her pointing towards – deferring to – him. As Catholic Christians we are all called to love in the selfless, unconditional way modelled by Jesus and Mary.



With every blessing,

Gillian