

Friday, June 11, is the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The devotion to the **Sacred Heart** is one of the most widely practiced and well-known Catholic devotions. The **heart of Jesus** is a symbol of "**God's boundless and passionate love for mankind**".



Compassion asks us to **go** where it hurts, to **enter** into places of pain, to **share** in brokenness, fear, confusion, and anguish. Compassion challenges us to **cry out** with those in misery, to **mourn** with those who are lonely, to **weep** with those in tears. Compassion requires us to be weak with the weak, vulnerable and powerless with the powerless.

Jesus touched many people with his **compassion**. Some came to him for **healing** because they had **heard** of his power over demons and disease. Others, however, were **simply present** and Jesus **saw** them with his "**compassionate eyes**." He looked into their eyes, their lives, and their hearts and then he **acted** to make a difference in their lives.

One of the things that made Jesus so compellingly attractive was his **compassion** for people in **trouble**, his willingness to put **himself** in their place and **feel** what they were feeling. But He didn't stop there. It moved him to **reach out** to them - - to **do** something to meet their need or **say** something they needed to hear.

There is there a difference between "**sympathy**" and "**compassion**". **Sympathy** simply means that we **feel bad** for another. But **compassion** goes much further. It means that we **see** the hurt of others and seek to be **there** for them, encouraging them. We **enter into their sufferings and carry their burden with them**. It also means **allowing** the compassion of others to reach out to **us**.

And, what about us? Are we not called upon to have the same spirit of Christ and let it live in us and guide you in all we do? This means we need to stop looking at others through our eyes and **see** them as **Jesus** does. We need to do **more** than look at the pain of others and begin taking that pain upon ourselves so that we can begin to help them overcome their pain. We need to **stop ignoring** the loneliness of others and begin feeling that loneliness so that we can bear with them in their loneliness in order to relieve it. We need to allow ourselves to become vulnerable to all the suffering of the world, to take it upon ourselves, literally, so that we can begin the journey toward recovery and unity of spirit. We need to become filled with the **compassion of Christ**, for we, like all others, are just as much in need of being given compassion.

How many people could speak of the compassionate heart of Jesus they find in us?

Who are the people that have touched our life with their compassion?

I have a very special devotion to the **Sacred Heart**. My favorite prayer is, "**Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place my trust in you.**" Why? Because when I was at Loyola, taking a course in **Statistics**, the professor gave us a test. He put the numbers we were to use for the **entire** test on the blackboard. He wrote the number "7" with a line through it, so it **looked** like a "4" to me. It was at break time when we checked our answers that I realized **all** of mine were **wrong**, so I started praying "Sacred Heart..." Well, we got our tests back the **next day** and, of course, I **failed**, but I still **kept** praying, "Sacred Heart..." At the end of the class, the professor said, "Since this was your **first** test, I did **not** record the grades." That's why I call it my "miracle" prayer. I still use it today whenever I need **special** help. Just keep repeating it and let me know any miracles you experience.

Be compassionate as Jesus is.