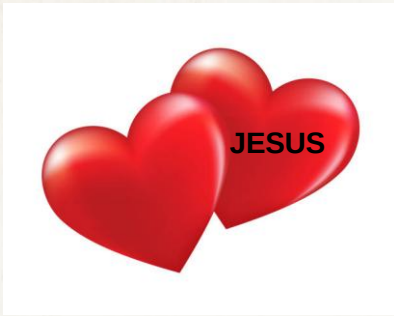

SPIRITUAL RETREAT

JULY
2025



Orden de la Compañía de María Nuestra Señora
PROVINCIA DEL PACÍFICO
| *Order of the Company of Mary Our Lady*



ENCYCLICAL LETTER "**DILEXIT NOS**"

on human and divine love
of the Heart of Jesus Christ.

Francis

Retreat for the month of July 2025

"Lord Jesus, I thank you for the opportunity of this retreat, a time to experience the depth your love and the mystery of your Heart. I ask you to fill my heart with your Spirit, so that I may truly appreciate your peace, your joy and your strength. Illumine my heart with your light, so that I may see the beauty of your love, the greatness of your sacrifice, and the depth of your compassion."



"DILEXIT NOS" is Pope Francis' fourth encyclical, which means **"He loved us."** It refers to Rom.8:37. This encyclical invites believers to deepen our devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, recognizing him as the center of human and spiritual life. The importance of human and divine love is emphasized, as well as the social dimension of this devotion, calling for fraternity, solidarity and mission.

We need to recover the importance of the heart

First of all, the Pontiff insists on the need to recover the importance of the heart, especially in a context in which the reality is the temptation to "become insatiable consumerists, enslaved by the trappings of a market that is not interested in the meaning of our existence."



Nothing, says the Pope, is worthwhile if it is built without the heart.

Appearances, dishonesty, and deception damage and pervert, and only offer emptiness. For this reason, he proposes that we ask ourselves the decisive questions: Who am I? What am I looking for? What meaning do I want my life to have? Why and for what purpose am I in this world? Who am I in the presence of God...?

What do we mean when we say heart? Do I have a heart?

If we take the heart seriously, what social consequences does that involve?

What does it mean to speak from the heart, to act with heart, to care for the heart?



In the Encyclical, Pope Francis highlights the place of the Sacred Heart in the history of the Society of Jesus. He points out that "the spirituality of the Society of Jesus has always proposed an 'inner knowledge of the Lord so that we may love him with a greater love and follow him more closely'" (*Dilexit Nos* 144). In the Spiritual Exercises, Saint Ignatius suggests that retreatants "enter into the Heart of Christ" when they contemplate the wounded side of the crucified Lord.



"Saint Ignatius invites us, in his Spiritual Exercises, to place ourselves before the Gospel and enter into the heart of Christ. This is the advice of a 'master of affections' to advance in maturing one's own heart.

"The human heart must learn from the Heart of Christ the true meaning of one's life and destiny, to understand the value of an authentically Christian life, to guard against certain perversions of the heart and to unite filial love of God with love of neighbor. This is the true reparation that the Heart of the Savior asks in order to heal the effects of hatred and violence and restore the long-desired civilization of love and build the kingdom of the Heart of Christ."

The Sacred Heart also has something to say in the mission of the Church, since this becomes a matter of love. In fact, the greatest risk, Francis points out, is that many things are said and done, "and yet, it seems to be so difficult to achieve the happy encounter with that love of Christ that embraces and saves."

PROLONGING HIS LOVE IN OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

We need to return to the Word of God to recognize that the best response to the love of his Heart is love for his and our brothers and sisters. There is no greater gesture we can offer him than to return love for love.

The whole Law is summed up in this precept: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Galatians 5:14)

Gestures that reflect the heart (p.24)

How Christ loves us is something He didn't want to explain to us too much. He showed it in his gestures. By watching him in his actions, we can discover how He treats each of us, even if it is difficult for us to perceive it. Let us then look where our faith can come to recognize him: in the Gospel.

Choose some texts from the Gospel, contemplate Jesus' actions and note how through his gestures He shows us his love.



At the same time, the heart is the place of sincerity, where deception and dishonesty cannot exist .It usually indicates one's true intentions, what one really thinks, believes and wants... the "secrets" that no one tells anyone and, in short, the naked truth itself. It is a question of that which is not appearance or lie but authentic, real, entirely "one's own". That is why to Samson, who did not tell the secret of his strength, Delilah complained: "How can you say that you love me, if your heart is not with me?" (Jc:15). It was only when he told her his hidden secret that she "understood that he had opened his whole heart to her" (Jc.16:18).

Devotion to the Heart of Jesus is markedly Christological, it is a direct contemplation of Christ that invites us to union with Him. This is legitimate if we take into account what the Letter to the Hebrews 12:12 asks: to run our race "with our eyes fixed on Jesus". However, we cannot ignore the fact that, at the same time, Jesus presents himself as the Way to go to the Father: "I am the Way... No one comes to the Father except through me" (Jn.14:6)

Why are love and heart not necessarily united?

In the face of so much war, could we say that people have no heart?

In his encyclical "*Dilexit Nos*", Pope Francis refers to Mary as the Mother of God and of men, a model of faith and love who guides us to Jesus. Her role as a woman faithful to God and as a sign of hope for the world, especially for those who suffer, stands out.

The Holy Father hopes that Christians today will allow Mary, as the first disciple and figure of the Church, to lead us to Jesus, open our hearts to him and set out to help those in need.

Jesus, as a human being, had learned from his mother, Mary. The one who contemplated everything carefully and "kept it in her heart". (Lk. 2:19, 51), taught him from an early age, together with St. Joseph, to be attentive.



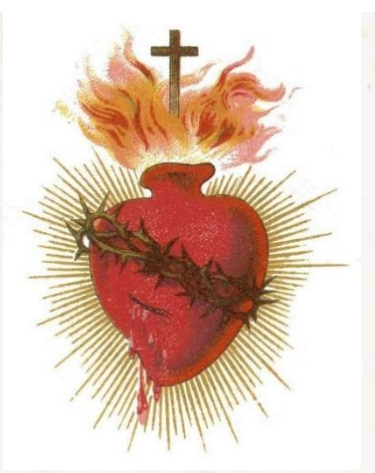
The heart of Christ is the masterpiece of the Holy Spirit and is the revelation of the Father's mercy.

Saint Augustine opened the way to devotion to the Sacred Heart as a place of personal encounter with the Lord.

Saint Augustine writes that John, the beloved, when at the Last Supper he rested his head on Jesus' breast, he reclined on the sanctuary of Wisdom.



Saint Francis de Sales often contemplated the open heart of Christ, dwelling within him in a personal relationship of love where the mysteries of life are illuminated.



Saint Vincent de Paul said that what God wants is the heart. God desires primarily the heart.

Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque heard: "Behold the Heart which has so loved men that it has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming itself, in order to testify its love".

Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, when she was 15 years old, found a way to summarize her relationship with Jesus: "The One whose heart beats in unison with mine."

Can it please the Heart that loved so much that we remain in **an intimate religious experience, without fraternal and social consequences? Why?**

The Encyclical concludes with this prayer from Francis: "I ask the Lord Jesus that rivers of living water flow for all of us from his holy Heart to heal the wounds that we inflict on each other, to strengthen our capacity to love and to serve, to spur us to learn to walk together towards a just, supportive and fraternal world. This is until we joyfully celebrate together the banquet of the heavenly kingdom. There we will be with the risen Christ, who will harmonize all our differences with the light that flows unceasingly from his open Heart." (220)

SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

SONGS: Eco-human heart. Clar. In God's hands. (Youtube)

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BIBLE.



