

# Memorial of St. Justin, Martyr

## Homily of Bishop Barres

### St. Agnes Cathedral

June 1, 2022

June is the month of the **Most Sacred Heart of Jesus** and we look forward to celebrating that Solemnity on Friday, June 24<sup>th</sup>.

In a moment of history when the nature of love is so often misunderstood and distorted, strong devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus strengthens us and grounds us contemplatively in the Catholic Church's moral teaching.

It is a wonderful time for us to pray the **Litany of the Sacred Heart** and to remember the **Twelve Promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus** as expressed to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. [Both the Litany of the Sacred Heart and the 12 Promises of the Sacred Heart can be found at the end of this homily on the diocesan website [drvc.org](http://drvc.org).]

June is also a month when we celebrate the witness of great Catholic martyrs. We celebrate the martyr philosopher and apologist St. Justin today June 1st, St. Charles Lwanga and Companions from Uganda on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, St. Boniface, the "Apostle of Germany" on June 5<sup>th</sup>, St. Barnabas the Apostle and Martyr on June 11<sup>th</sup>, the great English martyrs, St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More, the patron of statesmen, politicians and lawyers on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist on June 24<sup>th</sup>, St. Irenaeus from Smyrna on June 28<sup>th</sup>, the Solemnity of the great Martyrs Sts. Peter and Paul on June 29<sup>th</sup>, and the First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Martyrs of every age struggle to live the words of John 17 to be so deeply consecrated to the truth that they are willing to give their lives for the truth.

Their lives and deaths so often reflect the words of St. Thomas More in *A Man for All Seasons*: "I remain the King's good servant but God's first."

In his encyclical on the moral life *The Splendor of Truth*, Pope Saint John Paul II describes the relationship between the martyrs and their courageous witness in history to moral truth.

He writes: “By their eloquent and attractive example of a life completely transfigured by the splendor of moral truth, the martyrs, and, in general, all the Church’s Saints, light up every period of history by reawakening its moral sense.” (93)

We are called to follow in the footsteps of these martyrs in both our commitment to holiness and our commitment to reawakening society and the common good to objective and liberating truth.

As we know through our experience of history, the dictatorship of moral relativism enslaves. Objective moral truth liberates.

To be consecrated in truth makes us joyful and makes us one in Christ and one in communion and mission with the Church that Christ founded.

St. Justin, the martyr we celebrate today, lived from 100AD to 165AD.

St. Justin was an apologist for the Catholic Faith. As an apologist, he lived and meditated on 1 Peter 3:15: “Always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you.”

From St. Justin to Pope Francis, apologetics has always had an important place in the mission of the Church.

Pope Francis is a contemporary champion of what he calls “creative apologetics.”

For instance, in *Evangelium Gaudium* 132, Pope Francis writes:

“Proclaiming the Gospel message to different cultures also involves proclaiming it to professional, scientific and academic circles. This means an encounter between faith, reason and the sciences with a view to developing new approaches and arguments on the issue of credibility, a **creative apologetics** which would encourage greater openness to the Gospel on the part of all. When certain categories of reason and the sciences are taken up into the proclamation of the message, these categories then become tools of evangelization; water is changed into wine. Whatever is taken up is not just redeemed, but becomes an instrument of the Spirit for enlightening and renewing the world.”

As we celebrate today the memorial of the philosopher, apologist and martyr St. Justin, we stand with the Catholic apologists of every century in proclaiming with joy, compassion, mercy and freedom the truths of the Sacred Scripture, the truths of the Creed, the truths of the Sacraments, and the truths of our Catholic moral teaching.

We rejoice in giving a reason for the hope that is within us.

# Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

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Lord, have mercy

Christ, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

God our Father in heaven

God the Son, Redeemer of the world

God the Holy Spirit

Holy Trinity, one God

Heart of Jesus, Son of the eternal Father

Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the  
Virgin Mother

Heart of Jesus, one with the eternal Word

Heart of Jesus, infinite in majesty

Heart of Jesus, holy temple of God

Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High

Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven

Lord, have mercy

Christ, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, aflame with love for us	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, source of justice and love	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and love	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, well-spring of all virtue	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, worthy of all praise	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, king and center of all hearts	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, treasure-house of wisdom and knowledge	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, in whom there dwells the fullness of God	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, in whom the Father is well pleased	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, from whose fullness we have all received	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, desire of the eternal hills	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, patient and full of mercy	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, generous to all who turn to you	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, atonement for our sins	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, overwhelmed with insults	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, broken for our sins	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, obedient even to death	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, pierced by a lance	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation	have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection	have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, victim of our sins have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, salvation of all who trust in you have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, hope of all who die in you have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints have mercy on us

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world have mercy on us

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world have mercy on us

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world have mercy on us

Jesus, gentle and humble of heart.

Touch our  
hearts and make  
them like your own.

*Let us pray.*

Grant, we pray, almighty God,  
that we, who glory in the Heart of your beloved Son  
and recall the wonders of his love for us,  
may be made worthy to receive  
an overflowing measure of grace  
from that fount of heavenly gifts.

Through Christ our Lord.

*R/. Amen.*

# 12 Promises of the Sacred Heart

**Author:** St. Margaret Mary

The Promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to St. Margaret Mary

- (1) "I will give them all the graces necessary in their state of life.
- (2) I will establish peace in their homes.
- (3) I will comfort them in all their afflictions.
- (4) I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all, in death.
- (5) I will bestow abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.
- (6) Sinners will find in my Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
- (7) Lukewarm souls shall become fervent.
- (8) Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.
- (9) I will bless every place in which an image of my Heart is exposed and honored.
- 10) I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.
- (11) Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names written in my Heart.

(12) I promise you in the excessive mercy of my Heart that my all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the First Fridays in nine consecutive months the grace of final perseverance; they shall not die in my disgrace, nor without receiving their sacraments. My divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment."