



Izmir, 27/05/2024

Dear brothers and sisters,

God is love! Out of love he created us, out of love the Father sent his Son, Jesus, into the world so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (Jn 3:16), out of love the Word of God became flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary and shared in everything, except sin, our human condition. Out of love Jesus walked our streets making known to us what he heard from the Father, out of love he taught us to pray, out of love he proclaimed the Gospel of salvation to the poor, freedom to the captives and joy to the afflicted. Out of love he stretched out his arms on the cross destroying death, out of love he sent the Holy Spirit into the world so that, with his power, he might accompany the Church on the paths of time to the eternal joy of his kingdom. God is love! This is the revolutionary novelty of the Gospel, the most beautiful certainty of every Christian, the proclamation that the community of believers spreads to every part of the earth.

To all of us who, as human beings, need visible signs to understand realities beyond our senses and understanding, Jesus continues to show his Heart as an image of the love God has for us. In the pages of the Bible, the heart represents the whole person, the place where the human being is totally himself, without masks. So looking at the heart of Jesus we can contemplate all that he has done for us, we can remember his invitation: 'learn from me who am meek and humble of heart'. (Mt 11:29). The Heart of Jesus is a heart inflamed with love for every man, a flame of love that is not extinguished in the face of any sin, any distance, any infidelity. The Heart of Jesus is an open heart. Open because pierced by the lance after death on the cross. Open to bring forth the blood and water in which the Church saw its origin, the source of the sacraments through which the Lord continues to act in the world, to destroy sins, to give life. Open so that all may find in him a safe haven where they may experience the tenderness of God's love in every season and condition of life. The Heart of Jesus is also for us the call to change our hearts by living each day the new commandment He has given us: As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. (Jn 13:34). This means, for example, not closing one's heart to the needs of one's brothers and sisters, becoming instruments of reconciliation and forgiveness, but also, following the example of Jesus, offering prayers, reunions, labours, sufferings, everyday actions to God as small gestures of love that repair what is the opposite of love: sin. Both that committed by oneself and that of others. In summary, we can say that contemplating and venerating the Sacred Heart of Jesus means going 'to the heart', that is, to the centre of our faith and of the entire life of the Church.

As has already been announced, we will consecrate the entire Church living in Turkey to the Sacred Heart of Jesus during a solemn celebration to be presided over by H.E. Archbishop Marek Solczynski, Apostolic Nuncio in Turkey, as the representative of Pope Francis. We will do this important act in the midst of the Eucharistic Year we are living. It is no coincidence: the love we contemplate in the Heart of Jesus we celebrate, experience and

receive every time we participate in the celebration of the Eucharist, Sacrament of love because it is the memorial of Christ's death and resurrection, the source of unity for the whole Church.

Consecrating oneself and one's community to the Sacred Heart of Jesus means renewing and confirming the consecration that was already worked in us on the day of Baptism when we were made adopted children of God, living stones that build the Church. (Do not be afraid if you are reading these words and have not yet received the Baptism that you may desire and for which you are preparing: this act will be for you an anticipation of that day, an important step for your journey, a precious treasure for your future life). It means entrusting yourself to him and seeking communion with him, as did the beloved disciple (whom tradition identifies with St John) who bowed his breast over the Master's head at the Last Supper. It means crying out our repentance and our hope for mercy as the good thief did before the dying Jesus. It means wanting to be healed of our unbelief as St Thomas did by touching the wounds in the risen Jesus' body. It means wanting to have a heart more and more like his. It means believing and wanting the beating of his heart, living forever, to be the source of life for our whole Church. It means imploring the divine blessing on the whole nation in which the Lord has called us to live.

Profoundly convinced that this act will represent a very important moment in the history of our communities, as the voice of all our Bishops, I cordially invite you to be present at the solemn Eucharistic Celebration for the Consecration of the Church of Turkey to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which will take place on Friday, 7 June 2024 at 7 p.m. in the Cathedral of Izmir. All are expected and welcome. It would be very nice if all the communities of our country could be represented.

With the knowledge that various reasons may make it too difficult for many to physically reach Izmir, I enclose with this letter the text of the Consecration that will be pronounced at the end of the celebration. Each community may recite it that same day or at another community time deemed appropriate. Thus, even those whose health or other reasons prevent them from coming to church may recite the consecration formula in person. What is important is to do so in faith and with the desire to be spiritually united with the action performed in Izmir Cathedral. Finally, I would like to share with you that in the Archdiocese of Izmir it has been decided to prepare for this important moment with a special novena that will begin on Wednesday 29 May 2024 and will end on 6 June 2024, the day before the Consecration. During these nine days, the prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which I also transmit to you together with this letter, will be recited, asking the Lord, the merciful Father and good Shepherd, for the gift of the return home of all those brothers and sisters who, over the course of time, for various reasons, have drifted away from the Lord and the life of the Church. All those who wish may join, praiseworthy, in this journey of prayer. Just as everyone can choose other ways of preparation according to their own sensitivity and possibilities.

Thanking you for your attention, I fraternally wish that the Lord Jesus may always be your joy.

P. Alessandro Amprino

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National Delegate for Eucharistic Congresses

**CONSECRATION
OF THE CHURCH OF TURKEY
TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS**

Prostrate before your Sacrament of love, O Jesus, we adore, we praise, we love, your most holy Heart, substantially united with the Word of God. We bless and thank thy Heart, from whose fullness we have received all good.

O Heart of the Son of God, Heart worthy of adoration, Heart wounded for our sins, to you we consecrate ourselves and the whole Church living in Turkey.

We consecrate our bishops and priests to you: may they love you with all their hearts, may they proclaim the Gospel with meekness and courage, may they celebrate the Holy Mysteries worthily, may they lead every man to Paradise. Guard them in your love and comfort them in every trial. Inspire in us towards them feelings of gratitude and filial affection. Grant that our communities may never lack pastors who make of their lives a gift of love to you in the service of their brothers and sisters.

We consecrate to you our men and women religious: by renouncing all that belongs to the Earth, may they place themselves with a sincere heart at the service of your glory and be for all, by their life, a clear sign of your Kingdom.

We consecrate families to you: may they become true domestic churches, where you are the centre and source of unity.

We consecrate children and young people to you: may they not go astray from you, but grow in faith and Christian life. May they be the future and the joy of our communities.

We consecrate the sick to you: may they not fall into discouragement or despair, but know how to offer their sufferings as a sacrifice of atonement and salvation for themselves and for all.

We consecrate the elderly and lonely to you: may they find solace and comfort in your love and open their hearts to the joyful hope that awaits them. Teach us to value the treasure they are, their life experience, the wisdom they carry and the contribution they can make. Help us to build an authentic alliance between generations.

We consecrate to you our associations, committed groups and all our activities: may they flourish and bear fruits of Christian witness. Grant that by working together, each with their own talents, we may become builders of the fraternity that heals the world.

For our part, we promise you that we will strive to make our hearts similar to yours in purity and love.

May your blessing descend, O Lord, upon us, upon our communities, upon our entire nation: may it be light to us in our hour of doubt, support in our hour of trial, and comfort in our hour of death.

Amen

Pater, Ave Gloria

Prayer to the Heart of Jesus by St. John Paul II
29 May-6 June 2024

Lord Jesus, you are our Savior and our God! May our gaze never be fixed on any other star than the star of love and mercy that shines in your bosom.

Let our heart, O God, be the shining beacon of our faith, the support of our hope, the ever-present help in our weakness, the glorious dawn of unshakable peace, the sun that lights our horizon.

Jesus, we unconditionally entrust ourselves to your divine heart. May your grace change our hearts. Mercifully support families and keep them faithful in love. May your gospel be our law. May all peoples and nations of the world take refuge in your most loving heart and enjoy the peace you offer the world through the clear fountain of love and charity of your merciful heart. Amen.

Pater, Ave, Gloria