BEYOND THE FAÇADE

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH TOUR GUIDE HANDBOOK

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GENERAL GUIDELINES

This guided tour is designed to help visitors and pilgrims to grow in their understanding of the Catholic faith and get closer to God through the introduction of the design and special features of the church building, parish history, saints and their good deeds, and other resources.

The handbook is divided into two sections. The first section is the tour content which includes introducing visitors to the special features of the exterior and interior of the church building and their significance. The second section focuses on the parish, including parish history, chronology of events, a biography of our Parish Saint, an introduction to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and other topics.

This handbook only serves as a general reference for tour guides. The guides should use this handbook with suitable adaptation, having regard to the age and background of the visitors and the timing and purpose of these visits.

THE GUIDED TOUR - AN INTRODUCTION

Architectural and Historical Significance

The church was listed as a Grade I Historic Building by the Antiquities and Monuments Office of Hong Kong in December 2010.

Historical Interest

St. Margaret's Church laid its foundation stone in 1923 and was completed and consecrated in 1925. It was the very first church in the Orient named after St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. With a history of over 90 years, it has witnessed the growth and development of the parish and the local Catholic community.

The building of the church was associated with the civil wars in China which attracted a massive influx of immigrants to Hong Kong following the end of China's dynastic rule. This prompted Bishop Pozzoni, the third Vicar Apostolic of Hong Kong, to negotiate with the Hong Kong government for a parcel of land in Happy Valley for the building of a church in place of St. Francis' Church in Wan Chai. The site was granted by the government on January 14, 1922 for erecting the present church in order to serve the spiritual needs of the growing population.

The Church was intended to provide seating capacity for four times the number of worshippers at the old church, St. Francis' Church in Wan Chai, and to serve as the administrative centre for the Pontifical Institute of the Foreign Missions of Milan (P.I.M.E.) in China.

Architectural Merit

With a typical basilica plan, St. Margaret's Church is a good example of church architecture in the Classical Revival style in Hong Kong. The front façade resembles an ancient Greek temple with its use of giant columns, entablature, triangular pediment and sculptures. There are two towers: the nave tower, also pedimented, above and behind the entrance portico and the bell tower at the other end. The church has a semi-circular apse surmounted by the half-dome and a barrel vaulted coffered ceiling over the nave which has colonnaded aisles on either side. The interior is tastefully decorated in classical style. Paintings, sculptures, marble floors and stained glass windows add to the grandeur. Classical style balustrading and decorative stone urns decorate the main structure and parapet to the terrace.

THE GUIDED TOUR - AN INTRODUCTION

Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

St. Margaret's Church is a fine example of Classical Revival Style, and a valuable piece of built heritage. The church is authentic in appearance with only minor alterations. There are other churches in Hong Kong in this architectural style, but each church is unique in its design except for the basilica plan which is common to all, having been adopted by the early Christian Church from Roman architecture.

The church administers to the needs of the local Catholic community through its church services and St. Margaret's Parish Centre next door. Although now surrounded by high-rise buildings, the church is situated on an elevated site at the junction of Ventris Road and Broadwood Road, and is a well-known local landmark in the area.

THE GUIDED TOUR - MAIN FAÇADE

The ecclesiastical architecture of St. Margaret's is of Neoclassicism, designed by the Italian architect U. Gonella.

The broad ascent to the church is organized in two tiers, each with 17 steps paved in granite. The majestic entrance porch and monumental granite steps together form a highly solemn and richly sensuous backdrop, making St. Margaret's a popular venue for weddings of many Catholics.

The porch is composed of an entablature and a pediment, supported on four Doric columns in the manner of a traditional Greek-style entrance to a basilica. A round rose window is built into the pediment and below, set in the entablature, are four Chinese characters, *"The Church of God"*, embossed in gold. The porch provides protection from the elements, and is an ideal space for churchgoers to comfortably pause before entering the church.

THE GUIDED TOUR - MAIN FAÇADE

Standing on the porch and guarding the entrance are two over-sized statues.

THE GUIDED TOUR - MAIN FAÇADE

On the left is St. Peter, holding a book in one hand and keys in the other, signifying the promise made by Jesus in authorizing his role in leading believers into the Kingdom of God. *"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."* (Matt 16:19) The two keys which he is holding are for the earthly church and the heavenly kingdom.

St. Paul, on the right, is holding a book in one hand and a sword in the other, symbolizing his work in evangelism and martyrdom by the sword for preaching the Gospel. *"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."* (Heb 4:12)

THE GUIDED TOUR - MAIN FAÇADE

The crucifix and diadem on the main door is a Greek symbol of victory, signifying the final victory of God. Once you cross over the threshold, you enter a different world, the World of God.

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

Entering through the main doors, the most striking feature that greets the visitor is the Romanesque barrel-vault ceiling, adorned with neatly aligned, rectangular coffers. The vault conveys a soothing and harmonious feeling, while the rectangular coffers give a hint of orderliness.

Walking past the new baptismal font, one is reminded that one is entering the House of God through the gates of heaven by virtue of baptism. The original 90-year-old baptismal font has been moved to the altar of the Virgin Mary, which was its original location when the church first opened its doors in 1925. On both sides of the baptismal font are two shell-shaped vessels which were used to hold holy water.

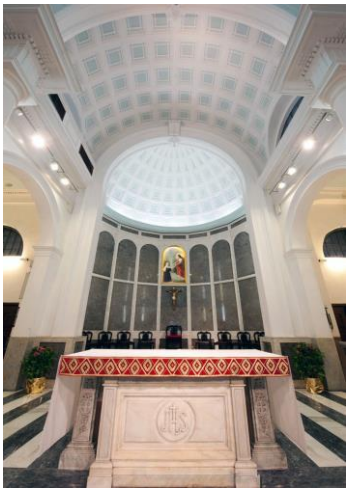
THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

The confessional room is nearby, offering individuals a space to confess sins committed after baptism. The grace of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation provides healing for the soul and lets us regain the grace of God.

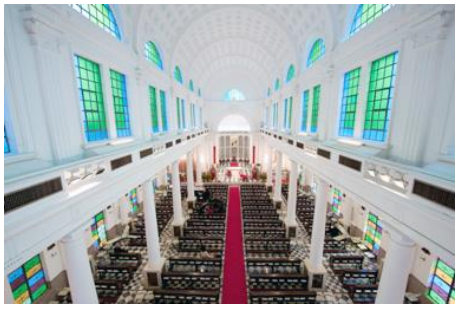
At the rear end of the barrel vault is a semicircular gridded window which lets in light, as if an eye were looking down from Heaven, with merciful affection, on the faithful congregated in the church. The cross by the window symbolizes Jesus' crucifixion on Mount Calvary. Every morning, the sun will shine through this window and enlightens the entire church, just as Jesus shines His light on the world.

St. Margaret's is oriented to the East so every day the sun rises, the church is flooded with light, symbolizing the profound light of life which Jesus gave us. At dusk, sunlight shines through the windows behind the pipe organ to continue to keep us in the light. When the sun finally sets at night, the chancel lamp before the Tabernacle perpetually burns to indicate and honour the presence of Christ, and to remind us that the pure light that is the source of all light, is always there to keep us from darkness.

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR



At the front end of the nave, towering above the main altar, is a hemispherical dome. A metal-ringed, stone spiral staircase to the left of the altar leads to the bell tower, like a stairway to heaven. Behind the altar is a painting of Jesus appearing to St Margaret, patron of the church. Throughout her life, the saint took it as her duty to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and was canonized by Pope Benedict XV in 1920.



Before liturgical reform, a high altar was centrally placed at the end of the apse; set in a marble portal, it gave a dignified and solemn image. In 1968, the church interior have been renovated in compliance with the liturgical spirit and norms as defined in the Sacrosanctum Concilium Constitution of the Second Vatican Council. Two rows of columns standing on waist-high pediments define the side aisles, which are enclosed by full-height windows with stained glass set in a geometric pattern of yellow, blue, red and green, imparting a measure of innocence and joy.

Parish Patron St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Feast Day: October 17
Born: 1647 Died: 1690

Prominently displayed on the wall behind the main altar is the portrait of Jesus revealing his Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, the Parish Patron.

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque was born on July 22, 1647 in L'Hautecour, Burgundy, France. Her parents, Claude Alacoque and Philiberte Lamyn, were both morally virtuous people commanding high respect amongst the local community. Margaret's father passed away when she was 8 years old, and as a result she was sent to Poor Clares school at Charolles to study. Even at a tender age, she was a quick learner and was a lively child, frequently spending time hiding in a chapel and making childly prayers. For five years, Margaret was bedridden with rheumatic fever. After making a vow of monastic life to the Blessed Mother, she was completely cured from her ailment. It was during her bedridden period that Margaret developed a deep devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

At the age of 17, she was encouraged by her mother to take part in social activities like any young adolescent of her time. Out of obedience to her mother, she started attending social gatherings whilst continuing to follow an ascetic life devoted to God.

One night, after returning home from a ball dressed in her finery, she saw the vision of Christ, scourged and bloody. In her vision, Christ reproached her for forgetting him; yet also reassuring her of His love for her, due to her childhood promise made to His Blessed Mother. Filled with remorse, Margaret was determined to fulfill her vow.

On May 25, 1671, at the age of 24, she entered the Visitation Convent at Paray-le-Monial with the intention of becoming a nun. Margaret went through a sequence of trials to prove the genuineness of her vocation. Finally, she was admitted to her religious profession on November 6, 1672. On that day, she set down for herself some sanctification rules, one of which was to "submit herself absolutely to God's will instead of her own, from then until her death".

On December 27, 1673, Jesus revealed to Margaret his sacred heart, and said: " *My Divine Heart is so inflamed with love for men and… it needs to manifest itself to them in order to enrich them with the precious graces of sanctification and salvation necessary to withdraw them from the abyss of perdition…*". These private revelations continued over the next year and a half, and in each of these revelations, Jesus revealed to her how she was to spread devotion to His Sacred Heart, including reception of

Holy Communion on the first Friday of each month, Eucharistic adoration during a "Holy Hour" on Thursdays, and the celebration of the Feast of the Sacred Heart. She was instructed to spend an hour every Thursday night to meditate on Jesus' Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. The Holy Hour practice later became widespread among Catholics.

Initially, Margaret was unable to convince her superiors and theologians of the validity of her apparitions, nor was she any more successful with members of her community. However, she eventually received the support of St. Claude de la Colombiere, the community's confessor, who declared the authenticity of her visions. In the year of 1683, opposition from the community finally ceased when the newly elected Superior named Margaret as her assistant. She later became Novice Mistress, and saw that the convent observed the feast of the Sacred Heart privately beginning in 1686. Two years later, a chapel was built at the Paray-le-Monial to honor the Sacred Heart; and soon after observation of the feast of the Sacred Heart spread to other Visitation convents.

St. Margaret Mary passed away at the Paray-le-Monial on 17 October, 1690. Before her death, she said: "*I only have the need of God and the need of immersing myself in the Sacred Heart of Jesus*." In 1864, Pope Pius IX declared her Blessed and in 1920, St. Margaret Mary was canonized by Pope Benedict XV.

The Lectern

Situated next to the altar is the lectern. The carving on the lectern is of the tree of life, signifying the Word of Christ growing within us like seeds planted in fields. Jesus taught us in parables, saying, *"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear."* (Matthew 13:3-9)

Altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Mary Help of Christians

Vatican II reaffirmed the Church's special love for Mary due to her role in salvation history and her important link to Christ's work. The final chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church is devoted to The Blessed Virgin Mary.

"This motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly from the consent which she loyally gave at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, until the eternal fulfilment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. By her maternal charity, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led into their blessed home. Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix. This, however, is so understood that it neither takes away anything from nor adds anything to the dignity and efficacy of Christ the one Mediator." (Lumen Gentium 62)

In his closing speech at the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pope Paul VI declared Mary the Mother of the Church and of St. Joseph, her glorious spouse, and of the Apostles. Catholics often seek shelter by Our Lady's

sacred altar praying for her protection. By her constant intercession, she continued to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation, and veils us with the consolation of her grace in the midst of the difficulties we encounter.

In this portrait of the Virgin Mary, she is surrounded by 12 stars. The narrative in the Book of Revelation describes, "*And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.* (12:1) *And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.* (12.2) *And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.* (12.5)

And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the great dragon was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him..And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (12:10)

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

The Woman of the Apocalypse in the Book of Revelation, clothed with the sun wearing a crown of twelve stars who does battle with the dragon and his powerful army of evil, is the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church. In her guidance, the Church will form part of her victorious army to fight this battle and attain in the end the greatest victory. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the Church represents the brilliant stars on her crown which spread the light, the grace, the holiness, the beauty and the glory of our heavenly Mother throughout every part of the world.

Placed on the Altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the relic of the Holy Cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified.

Altar of St. Joseph

The flower which St. Joseph is holding is the Lily, translated from Latin by the ancient Chinese Church as Jade Hairpin. In floriculture, Jade Hairpin is a different type of flower in the tuberose family. This name has been in use for a long time hence the name Jade Hairpin can still be seen in some Chinese church literature.

The Lily has been used by the Church as a symbol of virginity and purity. In the portraits of saints, such as St. Joseph, who observed the evangelical council of chastity, they are often seen with lilies in their hands.

There is a story about Joseph and Mary and the flowering rod in the book of the Apocrypha. When the priests saw that the virgin, holy and God-fearing, was growing up, they spoke to each other, saying: Let us search out a man, righteous and pious, to whom Mary may be entrusted until the time of her marriage. They immediately sent out, and assembled twelve old men of the tribe of Judah, and wrote down the names of the twelve tribes of Israel on twelve rods. The lot fell upon Joseph as his rod was the only one which burst into flower, thus identifying him as divinely chosen.

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel." When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus." (Mathew 1:18 – 2:23)

We learned from the gospels how Joseph followed God's special plan and became the head of the Holy Family, and how he protected Mary's virginity all his life. The holy relationship between Joseph and Mary remains a lesson of what marriage truly is, a life of self-sacrifice built over time by mutual love and a life of grace with God as the authority.

As head of the Holy Family, Joseph served and protected Mary and Jesus throughout his life and guarded Mary's virginity. He led Mary and Jesus on their flight to Egypt through the desert to escape Herod, and led them back to the land of Israel upon his death.

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

March 19, St. Joseph's Day, has been the principal feast day of St. Joseph in Western Christianity since the 10th century. In 1955, Pope Pius XII established the “Feast of St. Joseph the Worker". Celebrated on May 1, this reflects Joseph's status as what many Catholics and other Christians consider the "patron of workers" and "model of workers." Catholic and other Christian teachings and stories about or relating to Joseph and the Holy Family frequently stress his patience, persistence, courage, and hard work.

Pope Pius IX proclaimed St. Joseph the patron of the Universal Church in 1870. Having died in the "arms of Jesus and Mary" according to Catholic tradition, he is considered the model of the pious believer who receives grace at the moment of death, in other words, the patron of a happy death.

St. Joseph is the patron saint of a number of cities, regions and countries, among them the Americas, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Croatia, Mexico, Korea, Peru, the Philippines and Vietnam, as well as of families, fathers, expectant mothers (pregnant women), travelers, immigrants, house sellers and buyers, craftsmen, engineers, and working people in general.

The engraved crucifix above the portrait is a trait in classical architecture. The crucifix sits above the column, signifying our veneration for saints ultimately leads us to Christ.

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

Believers are walking towards the saving grace of Jesus every time they enter the church. Through Christ, Catholics find their direction in life. The high altar invites all to imitate Christ, using imitation of Christ's spirit of love and service as an infinite motivation in their search for perfection, and to strive to conform their lives to the mind of Christ. The altars on both sides of the church represent the two roles played by the Church. The Altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary represents the maternal role, abidance in the Divine will; and the Altar of St. Joseph represents the Church's role as protector and father.

Statues of other saints in the Church

St Anthony of Padua

Feast Day: June 13
Born: 1195 Died: 1231

St. Anthony of Padua is the most famous disciple of St. Francis of Assisi, and one of the Catholic Church's most popular saints. He is called so because of his long residence in Padua and the affection its people held for him. At Padua, a magnificent basilica was built in his honor, and his holy relics were entombed there.

St. Anthony, patron saint of lost and stolen articles, was a powerful Franciscan preacher, teacher and worker of miracles in his own day. From the time of his death up to the present day, countless miracles have occurred through the Saint's intercession hence he is known throughout the world as the Wonder-Worker. He is typically portrayed holding the child Jesus, or a lily, or a book, or all three, in his arms. Many people give alms to St. Anthony Bread in thanksgiving to God for blessings received through the prayers of St. Anthony.

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

This very popular saint was born in 1195 in Lisbon, Portugal in a wealthy family. He was baptized and named Fernando. Both his parents, ardent Catholics, were equally distinguished by their nobility and virtue. They placed their son while very young in the community of the Canons of the Cathedral of Lisbon, and from his tender years he advanced both in knowledge and devotion.

His journey as the servant of God began as a very young man when he entered the religious order of St. Augustine in Lisbon at age 15, giving up a future of wealth and power to follow God. Here he lived nearly eight years in close retirement and austerity, pursuing his studies in the Sacred Scripture and learning the Augustinian theology that he would later combine with the Franciscan vision. When the relics of St. Bernard and companions, the first martyrs of the Franciscan Order, went through the Portuguese city where he was stationed, he was seized with an intense desire to suffer martyrdom for his faith in Christ. So moved by their heroic example, he petioned to join the Franciscans, and after much opposition from his brethren, obtained the consent of his superior. He was sent to a small convent in Coimbra and took the name Anthony. In the same year, his earnest wish to be sent to the missions in Africa was fulfilled.

Anthony set off for Africa to preach to the Moors but was stricken down by severe illness and had to return to Portugal. Unexpectedly a storm came upon them and drove the ship to the east where it found refuge on the coast of Sicily. He was assigned to a quiet little Franciscan friary near Forli.

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

There Anthony remained nine months as chaplain to the hermits, occupied in the lowliest duties of the kitchen and convent, and to his heart's content he practiced interior as well as exterior mortification.

For the occasion of a ceremony of ordination, some of the hermits, along with Anthony, were sent to the town of Forli. When the speaker failed to arrive, Anthony was ordered by his Superior to give the sermon. He spoke with such eloquence, learning and unction that he impressed everyone at the ceremony. When St. Francis was informed of the event, he gave Anthony the mission to preach throughout Italy, and later in France. He was so energetic in defending the truths of the Catholic Faith that many heretics returned to the Church. This occasioned the epitaph given him by Pope Gregory IX "the ark of the covenant."

St. Anthony died at Arcella, near Padua, Italy, on June 13, 1231 when he was just thirty-six. He was canonized by Pope Gregory IX less than a year after his death. St. Anthony was one of the greatest preachers and theologians of his day. He was a man of great penance and apostolic zeal. But he was primarily a saint of the people.

The statue of St. Anthony shows him with Baby Jesus because Baby Jesus appeared to him. Other pictures show St. Anthony holding a bible. This is because he knew, loved and preached the Word of God so well. In fact, St. Anthony was so well educated especially in Sacred Scripture that Pope Pius XII proclaimed him the Doctor of the Church, attributing to him the title Doctor Evangelicus, or Doctor of Sacred Scripture.

Upon exhumation three centuries after his death, his body was found to be corrupted, yet his tongue was totally incorrupt, so perfect were the teachings that had been formed upon it.

St. Anthony is the patron saint of Lisbon, Padua and many places in Portugal and in the countries of the former Portuguese empire. He is especially invoked and venerated all over the world as the patron saint for the recovery of lost items and is credited with many miracles involving lost people, lost things and even lost spiritual goods.

The reason for invoking St. Anthony's help in finding lost or stolen things is traced back to an incident in his own life. As the story goes, Anthony had a book of psalms that contained notes and comments to help when teaching students and, in a time when the printing press had not yet been invented, he greatly valued it.

When a novice decided to leave the hermitage, he stole Anthony's valuable book. When Anthony discovered it was missing, he prayed it would be found or returned to him. The thief did return the book and in an extra step returned to the Order as well. And the stolen book is said to be preserved in the Franciscan friary in Bologna.

St. Thérèse of Lisieux

Feast Day: October 1
Born: 1873 Died: 1897

Thérèse Martin was the last of nine children born to Louis and Zélie Martin on January 2, 1873, in Alencon, France. Four died in infancy while the remaining five entered religious life as Carmelite sisters. Both devout Catholics, the couple was known to attend Mass daily, pray and fast, visit the elderly and the sick and welcome the poor into their home. St. Thérèse's parents were canonized by Pope Francis in 2015. Louis and Zélie Martin are regarded as an extraordinary witness of conjugal and family spirituality, and are the first-ever married couple with children to be canonized in the same ceremony.

From an early age, it was Thérèse's ambition and desire to be a saint. She was born into a pious and loving Catholic family. She remembers the idyll of her early childhood, spending time with her parents and five sisters in the un-spoilt French countryside. However this early childhood idyll was broken by the early death of her Mother from breast cancer. Aged only 4 years old, she felt the pain of separation and instinctively turned to the Virgin Mary for comfort and reassurance. The next couple of years of St. Thérèse's life was a period of inner turmoil. She was unhappy at school, where her natural precociousness and piety made other school children jealous. Eventually her father agreed for Thérèse to return home and be taught by her elder sister, Celine.

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

At the age of 14, on Christmas Eve in 1886, Thérèse had a conversion that transformed her life. From then on, her powerful energy and sensitive spirit were turned toward love, instead of keeping herself happy. Initially the Church authorities refused to allow a girl, who was so young to enter holy orders. They advised her to come back when she was 21 and “grown up”. However Thérèse’s mind was made up, she couldn’t bear to wait; she felt God was calling her to enter the cloistered life. Thérèse was so determined she travelled to the Vatican to personally petition the Pope. Breaking protocol she spoke to the Pope asking for permission to enter a convent. Slightly taken aback, Pope Leo XIII replied “Well, my child, do what the superiors decide.” At 15, her heart’s desire was fulfilled and she was able to join her two sisters in the Carmelite convent of Lisieux to give her whole life to God. She took the religious name Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face. Living a hidden, simple life of prayer, she was gifted with great intimacy with God. Through sickness and dark nights of doubt and fear, she remained faithful to God, rooted in His merciful love. After a long struggle with tuberculosis, she died on September 30, 1897, at the age of 24. Her last words were the story of her life: "My God, I love You!"

The world came to know St. Thérèse through her autobiography, "Story of a Soul". She described her life as a "little way of spiritual childhood." She lived each day with an unshakable confidence in God's love. "What matters in life," she wrote, "is not great deeds, but great love."

THE GUIDED TOUR - CHURCH INTERIOR

St. Thérèse lived and taught a spirituality of attending to everyone and everything well and with love. She believed that just as a child becomes enamored with what is before her, we should also have a childlike focus and totally attentive love. St. Thérèse's spirituality is of doing the ordinary, with extraordinary love.

She loved flowers and saw herself as the "little flower of Jesus," who gave glory to God by just being her beautiful little self among all the other flowers in God's garden. Because of this beautiful analogy, the title "little flower" remained with St. Thérèse. Her inspiration and powerful presence from heaven touched many people very quickly. She was canonized by Pope Pius XI on May 17, 1925. Had she lived, she would have been only 52 years old when she was declared a Saint.

"My mission - to make God loved - will begin after my death," she said. "I will spend my heaven doing good on earth. I will let fall a shower of roses." Roses have been described and experienced as St. Thérèse's signature. Countless millions have been touched by her intercession and imitate her "little way". She has been proclaimed "the greatest saint of modern times." In 1997, Pope John Paul II declared St. Thérèse a Doctor of the Church - the only Doctor of his pontificate - in tribute to the powerful way her spirituality has influenced people all over the world. She was the youngest and one of the only three female Doctors of the Catholic Church (there are 33 Doctors of the Church in total).

Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes

Adjacent to the church within its grounds is the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes which was revamped in 2015 with flowing water and greenery to evoke a sentiment of holy respect and peace. It provides worshippers a retreat from the busy streets to pray for the motherly intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

BACKGROUND

REFERENCE MATERIAL

PARISH HISTORY

Bishop Dominico Pozzoni,
P.I.M.E.
1861 ~ 1924

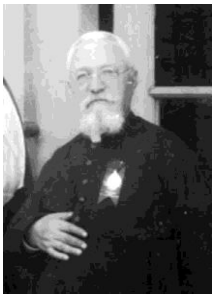
The Hong Kong community has been witnessing the development of St. Margaret's Church since 1920. In 1920, when Hong Kong was still an Apostolic Vicariate, the titular bishop Dominico Pozzoni wrote to the Hong Kong government, requesting for a parcel of land in Happy Valley for the building of a church in place of St. Francis' Church in Wan Chai, due to an increasing number of parishioners. In the same year, the Holy See was to canonize St. Margaret. The titular bishop decided to choose St. Margaret to be the Patron Saint of this church, the very first church in the East to have a female saint as her patron.

The lot at Happy Valley was bartered for the area of the church at western district with the government, while the money acquired for the lot of St. Francis' Church was used to build St. Margaret's, apart from a portion allocated for funding the building of the new St. Francis Xavier's Church.

PARISH HISTORY

On February 3, 1923, Bishop Pozzoni, together with the Parish Priest of St. Francis Church and Rev. Pietro de Maria, the priest to be appointed to St. Margaret's Church, took part in the ceremony laying the cornerstone for St. Margaret's Church.

Although St. Margaret's was not built by public subscription, many Catholics living in the neighbourhood made their contributions by donating furniture to adorn and embellish the church in response to a fundraising campaign ran by the church. This reflected their strong sentimental connection with the building.



Two years later, on January 25, 1925, titular bishop Giovanni Spada held the Tridentine mass and the opening ceremony. After the blessing, the church soon started to host Sunday Mass.

On January 2, 1949, St. Margaret's Church was raised to the status of a parish. Since then, the Catholic Church in Hong Kong has undergone significant growth, not only in terms of the number of active parishioners but also with regard to the number of vocations.

PARISH HISTORY

The parish used to cover the area between Wan Chai and Quarry Bay; the predecessor of St. Jude's Church, St. Jude's Chapel (located at No.2 Chung On Terrace, North Point) also fell under the St. Margaret's Church parish at that time. North Point developed rapidly into a residential district, and the number of Catholics had increased significantly. This created a lot of pressure for the Chapel, hence the Diocese established the North Point Parish and completed the building of the current St. Jude's Church in 1957, which became the St. Jude's parish.

The Happy Valley parish has had a close relationship with the Pontificium Institutum pro Missionibus Exteris (P.I.M.E.) since early on. Bishop Pozzoni who was instrumental in planning the building of St. Margaret's Church was a missionary of the P.I.M.E himself. The Italian Missionaries ran the church for the Diocese and appointed priests to it until 1988, when the position of Parish Priest has been held by local priests ever since. The only exception was during the absence of the parish priest in 1924, the pastoral work was under the joint care of Rev. John Situ, a local priest from St. Francis Xavier's Church in Wanchai, and Rev. Daniel Page, a P.I.M.E. priest.

PARISH HISTORY

Hong Kong was hit by the Great Depression in 1930 and church funding was affected. In response, P.I.M.E. allocated funds to aid the Hong Kong Vicariate. At the request of Bishop Valtorta, the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide gave approval for P.I.M.E. to establish a finance branch at the parish priests' residence at St. Margaret's Church in 1933. Pastoral work was also assigned to the priests at the finance branch. P.I.M.E. has provided much support throughout the years and has also been a great influence in the development of the parish.

Even after St. Margaret's Church was placed under the direct governance of the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong in 1971, Rev. Luigi Gambaro, a P.I.M.E priest, was assigned to our church right up until Rev. Peter Leung took office in 1988.

The Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres is an important partner in the development of St. Margaret's Church. Approved by the Convent, Christ the King (CTK) Chapel in Causeway Bay has been hosting masses which accommodate the needs of a large number of parishioners. Apart from the CTK Chapel, the chapels at Rosaryhill School and Wah Yan College also belong to St. Margaret's parish.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Date	Architectural Events	Parish Events
1920	The titular bishop Dominico Pozzoni wrote to the Hong Kong government, requesting for a parcel of land in Happy Valley for the building of a church in place of St. Francis' Church in Wan Chai due to an increasing number of parishioners. The lot at Happy Valley was bartered for the area of the church at western district with the government, while the money acquired from the sale of the lot of St. Francis' Church was used to build St. Margaret's, apart from a portion which was allocated to fund the building of the new St. Francis Xavier's Church.	
1923 **3 Feb**	The foundation stone laying ceremony was conducted by Bishop Pozzoni, the Parish Priest of St. Francis' Church and Rev. Pietro de Maria, the priest to be appointed to St. Margaret's Church.	
1924 **12 April**	Catholics living in the neighbourhood made their contributions by donating furniture to adorn and embellish the church in response to a fundraising campaign launched by the church. Documented donations included the altars from Mr. Evans, the tabernacle door from Mr. Souza, and the marble floor from Mr. Choi Bo Sin.	
1925 **1 Jan**	Construction of the church completed. Titular Bishop Giovanni Spada held the Tridentine mass and the opening ceremony.	

Date	Architectural Events	Parish Events
1930		Church funding was affected by the Great Depression. P.I.M.E. allocated funds to aid the Hong Kong Vicariate.
1933		At the request of Bishop Valtorta, the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide gave approval for P.I.M.E. to establish a finance branch at the priests' living quarters at St. Margaret's Church. Pastoral work were also assigned to the priests at the finance branch.
1940		Two Sunday masses were held at St. Margaret's, and one at St. Paul's. Only one mass was held on regular days at St. Margaret's and St. Paul's Convent.
1958		St. Margaret's Church experienced the fastest growth in this year. The Happy Valley parish used to cover the area between Wan Chai and Quarry Bay. North Point developed rapidly into a residential district and the number of Catholics had increased significantly. The Diocese established the North Point Parish and completed the building of the current St. Jude's Church in 1957, wh.ich became the St. Jude's Parish
1963		The church choir was established when St. Margaret's was founded 70 years ago. In the first 40 years, the choir sang purely in Latin at Sunday masses and at all the feasts in the liturgical calendar until 1963, when the Second Vatican Council addressed relations between the Catholic Church and the modern world. Changes included the widespread use of vernacular languages in the Mass instead of Latin which encompassed contemporary liturgical music.

Date	Architectural Events	Parish Events
1963		To accommodate the needs of the increasing number of parishioners, The Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres approved Christ the King Chapel in Causeway Bay to host Sunday Mass.
1966 **29 Jan**		Bishop Pirovano, Superior General of the Pontifical Foreign Mission Institute (P.I.M.E.) formally opened St. Margaret's College on Stubbs Road, the first specifically P.I.M.E. secondary school in Hong Kong. Rev. Luigi Bolis, who served St. Margaret's Church from 1955 to 1999, assumed the positions of Superior and Primary Principal.
1968	The church interior was renovated in compliance with the liturgical spirit and norms as defined in the Sacrosanctum Concilium Constitution of the Second Vatican Council.	
1970		The Communications Committee was formed. The first 125 issues of the parish newspaper ran commercials.
1970		The Parish Committee was incorporated to study and formulate plans on matters relating to missionary activities. The number of committee members ran into the hundreds, a record high in the parish.
1971		The Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide officially announced that St. Margaret's Church has been placed under the direct governance of the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong.

Date	Architectural Events	Parish Events
1985	Construction of the adjacent Parish Centre completed. Apart from the priests' residence and offices, the centre encompasses a chapel, classrooms, conference rooms, a kindergarten and an events hall that can host 700 people. The hall is an ideal multi-functional space for big ceremonies and an ever increasing number of parish activities. The newly completed parish centre can run up to 16 catechism classes for 200 catechumens, and conduct Sunday schools for 400 children.	
1986		St. Margaret Mary's Catholic Kindergarten was founded. Rev. Luigi Gambaro was appointed the first Superior and Principal. There were only 12 students in the first graduating class. The number of graduates rapidly rose to 90 in the second year.
1988		P.I.M.E., the Italian Missionaries, ran the Parish for the Diocese and appointed priests to it until 1988, when the position of Parish Priest has been held by local priests ever since.
1989		Children's Catechism Class was renamed Sunday School in 1989. Initially, the number of students was around 20 to 30 ranging from ages 5 to 13.
1990		In compliance with the instructions from the Diocese, the laity was included into the Parish Council, thus allowing lay persons to work closely with the pastoral team to more actively contribute to the parish. Six functional groups were set up: Liturgy Group, Faith Formation Group, Social Concern Group, Centre Maintenance Group, Publication Group, and Recreation Group.

Date	Architectural Events	Parish Events
1995		The Parish sponsored 16 young persons to participate in the Youth Festival held in the Philippines.
2004	Parish Priest Rev Gabriel Ortega organized a fundraising campaign for major improvement works to the church exterior, interior and rooftop, and to address the leakage problem in the sacristy. Electrical wiring, lighting, sound and public address systems in the church building were upgraded. In the Parish Centre, improvements were made to the drainage and piping systems, and the mosaic wall opposite the reception counter was refurbished. Maintenance work was carried out in the car park, driveway and granite steps, and underground soil survey performed at the church's main entrance.	
2011	Parish Priest Rev John Kwan petitioned to revamp the 25 year-old hall. His appeal was zealously answered by parishioners with donations. The renovation project greatly enhanced the safety, aesthetic and durability standards of the hall facilities. The central air-conditioning, sound system, audio-visual control room and stage have been updated, vinyl flooring re-tiled, and energy saving lighting installed.	
2015		The Church celebrated its 90th Anniversary.

Current Pastoral Team

Parish Priest	Rev. John B. KWAN Kit Tong	Appointed on October 1, 2009
Assistant Parish Priest	Rev. Edward CHAU King Fun	Appointed on September 1, 2009
Assistant Parish Priest	Rev. Joseph V. McCABE, M.M., J.C.L.	Appointed on December 1, 2015
Assistant Parish Priest	Rev. Francis Xavier WONG Kwan Yau	Appointed on August 2, 2017
Resident Priest	Rev. Francis Y.M. LI	Appointed on October 1, 1995
Deacon	Rev. Deacon Bernard TANG Bun	Appointed on July 25, 2010

CURRENT PASTORAL TEAM

Rev. John B. KWAN Kit Tong, J.C.L.

Parish Priest

Rev. Edward CHAU King Fun

Assistant Parish Priest

Rev. Joseph V. McCABE M.M., J.C.L.

Assistant Parish Priest

Rev. Francis Xavier WONG Kwan Yau

Assistant Parish Priest

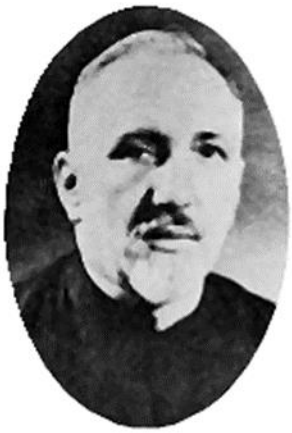
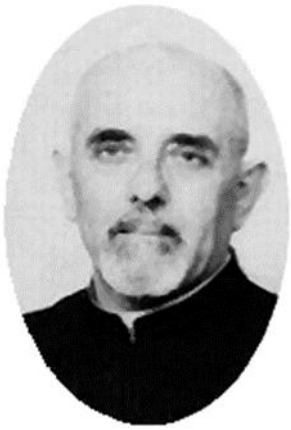
Rev. Francis Y.M. LI

Resident Priest

Rev. Deacon Bernard TANG Bun

Deacon

LIST OF PAST PARISH PRIESTS AND YEARS SERVED

 Rev. De MARIA, Pietro MEM Laid foundation stone of the Church in 1923	 Bishop VALTORTA, Enrico PIME Served from 1924- 1926	 Rev. PLACZEK, Agostine PIME Served from 1926 - 1928	 Rev. PAGE, Daniele PIME Served 1926 and 1928 – 1937
 Rev. GALBIATI, Umberto PIME Served from 1937 – 1940	 Rev. SPEZIALI, Cirillo PIME Served from 1940 – 1947	 Rev. LIBERATORE, Ottavio PIME Served from 1947 – 1950	 V.G. Rev. RIGANTI, Antonio PIME Served from 1950 – 1961

LIST OF PAST PARISH PRIESTS AND YEARS SERVED

 Rev. PITTAVINO, Giovanni PIME Served from 1961 – 1969	 Rev. GAMBARO, Luigi PIME Served from 1969 – 1988	 Rev. Peter LEUNG Served from 1988 – 1998	 Rev. Joseph YIM Served from 1998 – 2004
 Rev. ORTEGA Gabriel Altamirano, M.G. Served from 2004 – 2009	 Rev. John KWAN Kit Tong 2009 - Present		

Parish Patron St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Feast Day: October 17
Born: 1647 Died: 1690

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque was born on July 22, 1647 in L'Hautecour, Burgundy, France. Her parents, Claude Alacoque and Philiberte Lamyn, were both morally virtuous people commanding high respect amongst the local community. Margaret's father passed away when she was 8 years old, and as a result she was sent to Poor Clares school at Charolles to study. Even at a tender age, she was a quick learner and was a lively child, frequently spending time hiding in a chapel and making childly prayers. For five years, Margaret was bedridden with rheumatic fever. After making a vow of monastic life to the Blessed Mother, she was completely cured from her ailment. It was during her bedridden period that Margaret developed a deep devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

At the age of 17, she was encouraged by her mother to take part in social activities like any young adolescents of her time. Out of obedience to her mother, she started attending social gatherings whilst continuing to follow an ascetic life devoted to God.

PARISH PATRON – ST. MARGARET MARY

One night, after returning home from a ball dressed in her finery, she saw the vision of Christ, scourged and bloody. In her vision, Christ reproached her for forgetting him; yet also reassuring her of His love for her, due to her childhood promise made to His Blessed Mother. Filled with remorse, Margaret was determined to fulfill her vow.

On May 25, 1671, at the age of 24, she entered the Visitation Convent at Paray-le-Monial with the intention of becoming a nun. Margaret went through a sequence of trials to prove the genuineness of her vocation. Finally, she was admitted to her religious profession on November 6, 1672. On that day, she set down for herself some sanctification rules, one of which was to "submit herself absolutely to God's will instead of her own, from then until her death".

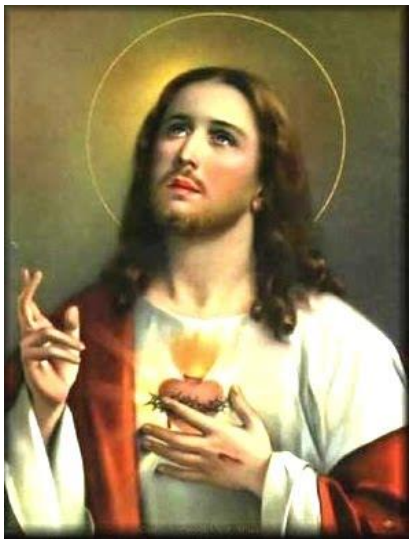
On December 27, 1673, Jesus revealed to Margaret his sacred heart, and said: "*My Divine Heart is so inflamed with love for men and ...it needs to manifest itself to them in order to enrich them with the precious graces of sanctification and salvation necessary to withdraw them from the abyss of perdition...*". These private revelations continued over the next year and a half, and in each of these revelations, Jesus revealed to her how she was to spread devotion to His Sacred Heart, including

reception of Holy Communion on the first Friday of each month, Eucharistic adoration during a "Holy Hour" on Thursdays, and the celebration of the Feast of the Sacred Heart. She was instructed to spend an hour every Thursday night to meditate on Jesus's Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. The Holy Hour practice later became widespread among Catholics.

Initially, Margaret was unable to convince her superiors and theologians of the validity of her apparitions, nor was she any more successful with members of her community. However, she eventually received the support of St. Claude de la Colombiere, the community's confessor, who declared the authenticity of her visions. In the year of 1683, opposition from the community finally ceased when the newly elected Superior named Margaret as her assistant. She later became Novice Mistress, and saw that the convent observed the feast of the Sacred Heart privately beginning in 1686. Two years later, a chapel was built at the Paray-le-Monial to honor the Sacred Heart; and soon after observation of the feast of the Sacred Heart spread to other Visitation convents.

St. Margaret Mary passed away at the Paray-le-Monial on October 17, 1690. Before her death, she said: "*I only have the need of God and the need of immersing myself in the Sacred Heart of Jesus*." In 1864, Pope Pius IX declared her Blessed and in 1920, St. Margaret Mary was canonized by Pope Benedict XV.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS



Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is devotion to Christ's sacred humanity. His Sacred Heart is an emblem of His divine love for humanity and exemplifies the completion of His salvation work for mankind.

St. John Eudes, a French priest from the 17th century, was an ardent proponent of the Sacred Heart and had been dedicating himself to its promotion and celebration. The spread of the devotion to the sacred heart followed the revelations to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in 1675 and upon the efforts of a Jesuit priest, St. Claude de La Colombiere. However, it was not until 1765, 75 years after the death of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, that a mass for the devotion gained the approval of Pope Clement XIII. The Feast of Sacred Heart of Jesus was instituted by Pope Pius IX in the year 1856. Since then, this Feast has become a solemnity in the liturgical calendar of the Roman Catholic Church and is celebrated 19 days after Pentecost, which always falls on a Friday.

On December 17, 1673, when St. Margaret was a nun of the Order of the Visitation of Holy Mary in the Burgundian French village of Paray-le-Monial, she received her first apparition of Jesus Christ. Whilst kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament, in her ecstasy, St. Margaret was invited by our Lord to rest her head on His Divine Heart, which she did.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

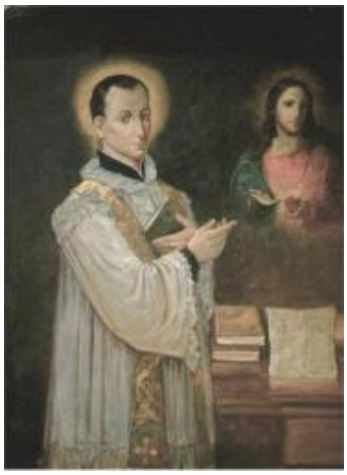
The Sacred Heart of Jesus was manifested to St. Margaret: a flaming heart shining with divine light, encircled by a crown of thorns, surmounted by a cross, and bleeding. Jesus said: "My Divine Heart is so passionate of love for humanity and in particular for you that it is not able to contain itself in the flames of this ardent love. It's necessary for you to be enriched with His precious treasures. I have chosen you."

Since that day the Sacred Heart appeared to her regularly, especially on First Fridays. Jesus said: "Here is the Heart which has so deeply loved men, it has spared nothing, even exhausted and consumed itself to show them my love and in return all I receive from the majority of them is ingratitude." As she experienced the comfort of His Presence, Jesus told her of His great love and explained that He had chosen her to make His love and His goodness known to all.

The following year, in around June or July of 1674, it was revealed to St. Margaret Mary in a vision that Jesus wanted to be honored under the figure of His Heart of flesh. He asked the faithful to receive Him in the Eucharist frequently, especially on the First Friday of the month, and to observe a Holy Hour of devotion to Him.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

And then in 1675, during the octave of Corpus Christi, around June 16, St. Margaret Mary received the vision which came to be known as the "great apparition." Jesus asked that the modern Feast of the Sacred Heart be celebrated each year on the Friday following Corpus Christi, in reparation for the ingratitude of men for the sacrifice which Christ had made for them.



With encouragement from her Spiritual Director, a Jesuit Priest called St. Claude de la Colombiere, St. Margaret Mary recorded all her apparitions in writing. In accepting the authenticity of St. Margaret Mary's visions, St. Claude de la Colombiere pledged himself to the mission of spreading the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He discreetly circulated the account of the apparitions to England and France. After his death in 1682, it was found in his journal of spiritual retreats his handwritten account of St. Margaret Mary's visions, together with his own reflections on the cruciality of the devotion. This journal, including the account – an "offering" to the Sacred Heart in which the devotion was explained – was published in Lyon in 1684. The little book was widely read, especially at Paray-le-Monial. Initially, St. Margaret Mary experienced "dreadful confusion" over the book's contents, but subsequently resolving to make the best of it, she approved the spreading of her cherished devotion. The reported apparitions thus served as a catalyst for the promotion of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Worship and Devotion

In modern times, the adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is practiced for two main intentions:

Consecration: To give our love in return for God's immense and sacrificial love.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life." (John 3:16) Jesus said: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

Reparation: To pray in recompense for the pierced heart of Jesus.

The greatest form of love was manifested when the spear pierced the side of Jesus upon his death on the cross for mankind. The image of the Sacred Heart reminds us of the boundless compassionate love and abundant grace which Jesus has for us. When we are able to appreciate the greatness of His love, the best way to make reparations for our ingratitude towards Christ is to return His love with love through the devotion to His Sacred Heart.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

The Compassionate Heart of Jesus

Jesus so loved the world that he sacrificed himself and died on the cross for the sins of mankind. His infinite love for mankind is generated by His most compassionate heart. He deplores seeing mankind in sorrow or being condemned to eternal perdition. The deeper His love is, the greater His sacrifice becomes. Indeed, the love in His Divine Heart sees no boundaries and burns like a flame in our hearts.

During his ministry life, Jesus preached the Gospel of Love. His life is a living proof of His love. During his travels around the Jewish cities, he drove out demons, healed the sick and saved those in need. Wherever he went, He attracted great masses of people who were suffering from illnesses or invalidities and sought His help. Driven by the compassion and mercy filled within His heart, Jesus never declined their requests. Jesus said: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15:13) Indeed, Jesus also put His words in action when he suffered his crucifixion in redemption of men's sins.

"But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead…one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out" (John 19:33-34). According to the interpretation of St. Augustine, there was a deeper meaning to this sentence, for the Evangelist did not say that the soldier wounded the side of our Lord, but that he ***opened*** it, indicating thereby that the wound of the side should be the

entrance to the Sacred Heart. In other words, Jesus wants to show us that it was out of His profound love for men that he had sacrificed His life. “To show my love for you, what more is there that I should do which I haven’t done?”

However, in return for His deep love for mankind, Jesus received only ingratitude and contempt. The Jews at that time scorned Jesus at His cross, saying, “Save yourself, if you are the Son of God, (and) come down from the cross!” Our current world is filled with heresy and schism which denies the existence of God and defies the true meaning of love. Even Christians take part in wounding the Divine Heart of Jesus by committing sins and turning away from God. “Insult has broken my heart, and I despair; I looked for compassion, but there was none, for comforters, but found none.” (Psalm 69 21). When the Sacred Heart of Jesus was revealed, it was surrounded by a crown with thorns, a visible sign of its deep sadness and agony.

By exposing His Sacred Heart, Jesus wishes to make known His abounding love for us and desires to see our reciprocation for it. The warmth of his flaming heart can refine a hardened heart and turn it into a gentle loving one. "I will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." (Ezekiel 36:26-27) Apart from comforting his Divine Heart, we should also abandon our lustful self, abide in Christ and lead a good Christian life. The Bible says: "Therefore, rid yourselves of everything impure and every expression of wickedness, and with a gentle spirit welcome the word planted in you that can save your souls."(James 1:21)

The Great Promise of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Jesus said to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque during her apparition on 13th October 1687: "In the excess of the mercy of my Heart, I promise you that my all powerful love will grant to all those who will receive Communion on the First Fridays, for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance: they will not die in my displeasure, nor without receiving the sacraments; and my Heart will be their secure refuge in that last hour."

To obtain this special blessing, one should:

1. Practice the devotion on the first Fridays of nine consecutive months.
2. On these days, attend Holy Mass and receive communion.
3. If the need arises in order to receive communion in a state of grace, one should also make use of the Sacrament of Penance (Confession).

Whoever practices the devotion once will receive the blessing of final repentance through the gracious kindness of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

However, repeated devotions is encouraged for reciprocating the love of the Divine Heart and also to recompense for the afflictions it has suffered. In addition to this, devotees should help promote the devotion to bring salvation to more souls through the compassionate Sacred Heart. By doing so, one is also fulfilling the two greatest commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:28-30) and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark12:31).

Promises of the Sacred Heart

1. I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life.
2. I will give peace in their families.
3. I will console them in all their troubles.
4. I will be their refuge in life and especially in death.
5. I will abundantly bless all their undertakings.
6. Sinners shall find in my Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
7. Tepid souls shall become fervent.
8. Fervent souls shall rise speedily to great perfection.
9. I will bless those places wherein the image of My Sacred Heart shall be exposed and venerated.

10. I will give to priests the power to touch the most hardened hearts.
11. Persons who propagate this devotion shall have their names eternally written in my Heart.

In the excess of the mercy of my Heart, I promise you that my all powerful love will grant to all those who will receive Communion on the First Fridays, for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance: they will not die in my displeasure, nor without receiving the sacraments; and my Heart will be their secure refuge in that last hour.

Jesus made known to St. Margaret these twelve promises for those who honor the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She was also entrusted with the mission of spreading this devotion. Not only should we keep a thankful heart, we should also reciprocate love with love, and heart for heart.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Prayer for the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Home

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, who did make known to St. Margaret Mary Your ardent desire to reign over Christian families, behold us assembled here today to proclaim Your absolute dominion over our home. Henceforth we purpose to lead a life like Yours so that among us may flourish the virtues for which You did promise peace on earth, and for this end we will banish from our midst the spirit of the world which You abhor so much.

You will reign over our understanding by the simplicity of our faith. You will reign over our hearts by an ardent love for You; and may the flame of this love be ever kept burning in our hearts by the frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist.

Deign, O Divine Heart, to preside over our meetings, to bless our undertakings, both spiritual and temporal, to banish all worry and care, to sanctify our joys and soothe our sorrows. If any of us should ever have the misfortune to grieve Your Sacred Heart, remind him of Your goodness and mercy toward the repentant sinner.

Lastly, when the hour of separation will sound and death will plunge our home into mourning, then shall we all and every one of us be resigned to

Your eternal decrees, and seek consolation in the thought that we shall all one day be reunited in heaven, where we shall sing the praises and blessings of Your Sacred Heart for all eternity.

May the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the glorious Patriarch St. Joseph offer You this our Consecration and remind us of the same all the days of our life.

Glory to the Divine Heart of Jesus, our King and our Father!

Glory to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for bringing us Salvation!

Glory to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, forever and ever. Amen.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Consecration of the family to the Sacred Heart

O my Jesus, humbly we kneel before your Sacred Heart, with gratitude for all your blessings and with adoration for your gracious kindness. Reminiscing on the words you said to St. Margaret Mary: "But what I feel the most keenly is that it is hearts which are consecrated to Me that treat Me thus", and in accordance with Your Holy Will, we offer the consecration of our family to Your Divine Heart. May Your spirit guide us, that we may always live fully with the three great virtues of faith, hope and love, through which You have promised peace; that we may be meticulous in our works and fervent in our prayers. Most compassionate Sacred Heart of Jesus, watch over our household as a parent.

O sweet Jesus, we offer and entrust You with all our undertakings, our joys, our trials and our labors. Bless and protect all in our family, wherever we may be. If ever one or other of us should have the misfortune to afflict You, remind him, O Heart of Jesus, that You are good and merciful to the penitent sinner.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, Your love for us is vast like the ocean, bestow blessings upon our family that we may forever abide in Your commandments and keep each one of us in your grace even in the final hours of our lives. May we all be united one day in Your Holy Kingdom and be forever thankful to your gracious and holy love.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Lord, have mercy on us
Christ, have mercy on us
Lord, have mercy on us
Christ, hear us
Christ, graciously hear us
God, the Father of heaven, have mercy on us
God the Son, Redeemer of the World, have mercy on us
God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us
Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us

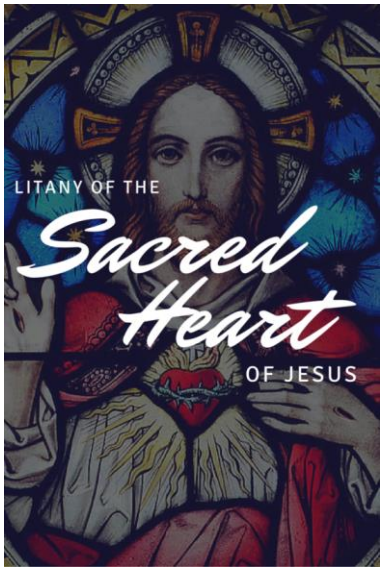
Heart of Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mother, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, substantially united to the Word of God, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, of infinite majesty, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, sacred temple of God, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, burning furnace of charity, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, abode of justice and love, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and love, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, abyss of all virtues, have mercy on us

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Heart of Jesus, most worthy of all praise, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, king and center of all hearts, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, in whom dwells the fullness of divinity, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, in whom the Father was well pleased, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, of whose fullness we have all received, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, desire of the everlasting hills, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, patient and most merciful, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, enriching all who invoke thee, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, propitiation for our sins, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, loaded down with opprobrium, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, bruised for our offences, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, obedient unto death, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, pierced with 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 for sin, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who trust in thee, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, hope of those who die in thee, have mercy on us
Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints, have mercy on us

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us

V. Jesus, meek and humble of Heart
R. Make our hearts like unto Thine

Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, look upon the heart of thy most beloved Son and upon the praises and satisfaction which he offers thee in the name of sinners; and to those who implore thy mercy do thou of thy great goodness grant forgiveness in the name of the same Jesus Christ, thy Son, who with thee lives and reigns world without end. Amen.