



The symbols of the Sacred Heart in the Liturgy

Summary notes on Canon Montjean's Faith Talk
17th September 2019

All objective revelation comes to us through Sacred Scripture and ceased with the death of St John the Evangelist and the Book of Revelation. 'Tradition' within the church is the constant teaching of this revealed truth. Tradition is thus an active thing and can never be contrary to that which is revealed in Scripture. The Magisterium of the Church continues to explain scripture with what is termed 'subjective developments'. The Liturgy is part of this tradition and can be seen as a faithful expression of revelation. The Liturgy has an inner power to express revelation and cannot be separated from Scripture.

Lex orandi, Lex credendi, - the law of prayer (liturgical) is the law of belief. The two are co-dependent on each other.

Reference to the Sacred Heart runs indirectly throughout the

Gospels. St Paul tells us when Moses struck the rock at Manassa in the desert to appease the people's thirst, the rock was a pre-figurement of the Sacred Heart, although an imperfect one as Moses was commanded to strike the rock only once. He lacked faith and struck twice and this lack of trust prevented him from entering the promised land.

In the New Testament, the Sacred Heart is most clearly revealed in the events of Calvary, starting with St John the Evangelist reclining his head on Our Lord's chest at the Last Supper.

The liturgy is where prayer from the Mystical Body (church) meets the Head (God). It is a meeting of human and divine nature. The heart symbolizes a summary of a person's entire personality, the soul being its invisible source.

The Church has always seen the Sacred Heart in the liturgy. The rubrics of the liturgy (all the details of gestures etc., written in red - hence 'rubric') in the missal are like the beating of the Sacred Heart.

The Fathers of the Church taught that the Blood and Water which flowed from Jesus' pierced Heart are symbols of the sacrifice of the Mass (Blood) and the Sacraments (Water).

The way churches are constructed with the baptismal font to the left side of the church reflects the position of the heart. Both the Sanctuary gate and the Tabernacle door are symbolic of the Sacred Heart. During Mass, either one is always open, symbolizing the eternity of the Pierced Heart. The Tabernacle key is also symbolic of the lance that pierced the Sacred Heart.