



Office for Catechetical Formation

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

As we celebrate our **Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus**, we invite every parish religious education program to make this beautiful tradition a visible and meaningful part of their year. To support you, we've gathered a variety of simple practices and ideas that can help keep the Sacred Heart at the center of your classrooms, gatherings, and prayer.

We encourage you to look through the list, choose the ideas that best fit your parish, and adapt them in ways that serve your community well. Whether you begin with one practice or try several, our hope is that these small, consistent moments will open hearts—helping students, families, and catechists grow in prayer, trust, and love for the Heart of Jesus.

FOR STUDENTS AND THE CLASSROOM

- † **Sacred Heart Prayer Corner** – Invite catechists to create a prayer corner or table devoted to the Sacred Heart that incorporates a statue or picture of the Sacred Heart, a battery votive candle, and a prayer bowl for intentions. Invite students to place prayer intentions in the bowl weekly and begin and end class by selecting a few intentions to incorporate into prayer with the promise that the catechist will pray for the remaining intentions during the week.
- † **St. John Neumann Prayer Guild** – Invite Catechists to pray the St. John Neumann Guild Prayer at the beginning of class, concluding with “Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place my trust in thee.” or “Sacred Heart of Jesus, make our hearts more like Yours.”
- † **Heart Check-In** – Begin class with “How is your heart today?” to help students connect emotions with prayer and Jesus’ compassionate Heart. Remind students that the wound on Jesus’ heart remains open as an invitation for us to share our heart with His and then provide students with a few minutes of silence to share their hearts with Jesus.
- † **Acts of Love Challenge** – Encourage students to perform small acts of mercy and love “for the Heart of Jesus” and track them on a classroom poster or on a blank block calendar.
- † **Sacred Heart Prayer Partners** – Create prayer partners in the classroom or among your families. Provide time at the beginning of each session for prayer partners to share their intentions with each other, and to prayer together for one another. Invite them to continue to pray for each other each day in between sessions. For younger students, a chart can be provided with the heart for each day of the month that they can color when they pray each day and return to their prayer partner at the end of the month.
- † **Saintly Story Moments** – Share short stories of saints devoted to the Sacred Heart (St. Margaret Mary, St. Louis de Montfort, St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. John Bosco, St. Pio, St. Faustina, St. John Eudes, etc.) and connect them to daily life.



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FOR CATECHISTS AND STAFF

- † **Catechist Prayer to the Sacred Heart** – Begin each catechist meeting or gathering with a brief prayer asking Jesus to make their hearts like His. You can utilize several existing prayers to the Sacred Heart or the St. John Neumann Prayer Guild's prayer to the Sacred Heart for Catholic Education.
- † **Monthly Heart Reflection** – Offer a short reflection on one attribute of the Heart of Jesus: mercy, patience, gentleness, courage, fidelity.
- † **Sacred Heart Badge or Pin** – Provide catechists with a small Sacred Heart pin as a reminder of their mission to teach with love.
- † **Formation Session** – Host a brief evening of reflection or retreat experience on the spirituality and imagery of the Sacred Heart devotion.
- † **Intercessory Prayer List** – Invite catechists to place names of students or families they're praying for at the Heart of Jesus.
- † **Sacred Heart Prayer Partners** – Create prayer partners among your catechetical staff. Invite them to connect with each other before or after each session to share their prayer intentions and to pray with and for each other.

FOR FAMILIES

- † **Enthronement of the Sacred Heart** – Provide families with a simple guide to place an image of the Sacred Heart in their home and pray together.
- † **Family Prayer Card** – Send home a prayer card with a short daily prayer to the Sacred Heart.
- † **Blessing of Hearts** – Encourage parents to bless their children with a simple prayer: "May the Heart of Jesus be your peace today and always!"
- † **Sacred Heart Dinner Conversation** – Offer monthly conversation starters about mercy, forgiveness, and compassion for families to use at meals.
- † **Acts of Mercy at Home** – Create a family-friendly list of ways to show love in the home: helping siblings, forgiving quickly, praying for others.
- † **First Friday Family Reminder** – Send home a short First Friday reflection or activity families can do together.
- † **Parish Holy Hour** – Host a simple Holy Hour for families and catechists with quiet music and guided prayer centered on the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
- † **Mercy Outreach Project** – Invite PREP families to participate in a parish wide service project "in honor of the Heart of Jesus."

The ideas above are just a small sample of ways in which to foster devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We invite you to pray with the Sacred Heart of Jesus asking Him to direct your heart to what will be best for your students, families, and catechists. If you have ideas that you'd like to share, please email them to us as phillyocf@archphila.org.