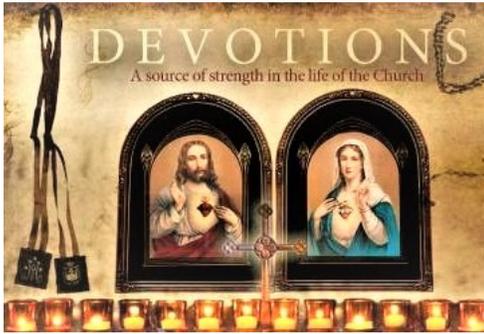


Faith in Five – Adults
Catholic Devotions
October 14, 2022



1. In the Catholic tradition, **devotions** are popular prayers, rituals and pious practices used by individuals or groups to worship God or venerate Mary and the saints. It is a willingness and desire to dedicate oneself to serve God, either in terms of prayers or in a



set of pious acts. They are external expressions of piety and not part of liturgical worship, even if they are performed in a Church, with a group or in the presence of a priest. Devotions may express a particular conviction about the object of the devotion. For example, Eucharistic devotions are dedicated to the real Presence of Jesus Christ. Devotion to Mary or the saints express confidence in their help and intercession.

(Image Source: www.trcatholics.org/catholic-devotions/)

2. The Catholic Church makes it clear that devotions do not take precedence over the Mass. Before the liturgical reforms of the 1960s it was not uncommon to see Catholics praying the Rosary during a Mass which was being conducted in Latin. The Church made a deliberate effort to recover a proper understanding of popular devotions. Devotions are a supplement to the official prayer and public worship of the Christian community. The Liturgy has a preeminence over any other legitimate form of Christian prayer, no matter how worthy or widespread a devotion might be. Moreover, the Congregation said, various forms of popular devotion, especially those associated with particular groups or regions, should not overshadow the common and universal nature of the church and its worship; nor should veneration of the saints take precedence over worship of the Divine Trinity. (Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy, link at end of post)
3. **Some Common Catholic Devotions or Customs** *Discussed in a previous post
 - a. **Advent** - Catholics have developed a variety of devotions and customs to help them observe the Advent season. Each in its own way contributes to the Advent experience of waiting and watching, listening and preparing for the celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas, for the advent of Christ's presence in our daily lives, and for the Lord's return at the end of time.
 - **Advent Wreath** –the four Sundays leading up to Christmas are depicted as candles on a wreath in anticipation of the coming of our Lord and the celebration of His birth.
 - **Jesse Tree** – beginning December 1st, it is a countdown to Christmas using ornaments to symbolize God's plan of redemption from the Old and New Testament. Stories and prayers are said each day, starting with Creation and ending with Jesus.
 - **O Antiphons** – According to the USCCB, "The Roman Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since at least the eighth century. They are the antiphons that accompany the Magnificat canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23."

They are called the "O Antiphons" because they all begin with the letter-word "O": addressing Jesus by one of His Old Testament titles and are fervent prayers asking Our Lord to come to us. The song "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" is simply a reworking of the seven O Antiphons. When it is sung, we join ourselves to a vast throng of Christians stretching back across centuries throughout the world, crying out in expectation, "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20). Here is an example of how to celebrate at home, following [an old monastic custom for each day](#). See the link for [Praying the O Antiphons of Advent](#).

-Midnight Mass – "an event of major liturgical significance" (CCC, 111), the joyful celebration of Mass to honor the Nativity of Jesus.

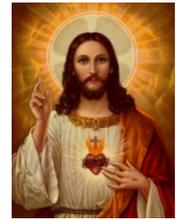
- b. **Chaplets** – a set of beads on a chain or knots on a cord used in prayer or meditation. The most popular one is the rosary, where the beads keep count of prayers as we contemplate and enter more deeply into our devotion. There are different chaplets dedicated to Jesus, Mary, the saints, or spiritual graces.
- c. **Lenten devotions** - Lenten practice combines prayer, fasting and almsgiving with reconciliation and personal renewal for a period of 40 days (not counting Sundays); it begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Thursday.

- **Stations of the Cross***

- **Palm Sunday, Holy Week, The Paschal Triduum***

- **Seven Meditations on the 7 Last Words of Jesus** – the meditations encourage us to reflect deeply on Jesus' thoughts, His suffering and great love for us.

- d. **Sacred Heart*** - This is a devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the love symbolized by the Lord's heart. Over the years, it was associated with attending Mass and receiving Holy Communion on the first Friday of each month. A picture of the Sacred Heart in the home is a sign of their faithful devotion. The feast of the Sacred is celebrated on the Friday after Corpus Christi. (Source Images, R and side L: Google)



- e. **Divine Mercy*** - feast day dedicated to Divine Mercy established on the Sunday after Easter. An image displayed in the home is part of the devotion. The Chaplet of Mercy is recited using ordinary Rosary beads of five decades and is a very powerful prayer. [See Heather's link to a copy of the prayer and her YouTube Post](#).



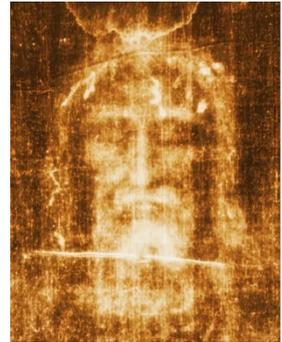
f. **Eucharistic Adoration** - The custom of adoring the Blessed Sacrament outside of Mass originated in an early liturgical custom of honoring the Eucharist while it was reserved on a separate altar or in a separate chapel during the Holy Triduum. Many graces can be obtained by regular visits with Jesus, present in the Eucharist.

- g. **Litanies** - Litanies are a form of prayer, led by a priest or deacon, containing a series of petitions to which people make fixed responses. One of the most beautiful features of a litany is the combination of invocations alternating with petitions in a rhythmic, repetitive pattern. An example is the Litany of the Saints.
- h. **Marian devotions*** - these are prayers directed to Our Blessed Mother. Devotion to the Virgin Mary does not express worship, which is reserved for God. Devotions to Mary bring us closer to Her Son, Jesus. Marian devotions have been based on events in Mary's life, miraculous events, apparitions or local culture.
- i. **Novenas** – generally, a nine-day prayer of devotion to obtain special graces. There are other novenas that may last longer than nine days, for example a 30 day or nine-

month novena. In the case of an emergency, one can pray Mother Teresa's "Flying Novena", consisting of 9 recitations of the Memorare in petition, followed with a 10th one said in thanksgiving.

- j. **Pilgrimages** - Pilgrimages are journeys of moral or spiritual significance, associated with important people or events. The purpose of making a religious pilgrimage is to renew one's dedication and commitment to the Lord. One can seek to fulfill a spiritual obligation, perform an act of devotion, live an experience of spirituality, or implore a grace, cure or miracle. The pilgrimage is not, and never should be, just "a journey to a place of religious interest." Alone or with others, it is a physical component of the path of one's heart toward God.
- k. **Relics** - Relics are objects which are honored in memory of a holy person, whose love and commitment to God serves as a powerful example for us. It is a tangible memorial used for veneration. There are three classes of sacred relics:
- **First class:** These may include pieces of the saints' body such as bones or teeth. It is this type which is placed in an altar stone.
 - **Second class:** a piece of the saints' clothing or something used by the saint
 - **Third class:** objects touched by the person, or which has been touched to a first-class relic.

Veneration of relics in the Catholic Church is carefully regulated. Genuine relics have authenticated documents, signed and sealed by the priest or bishop who issued them, with a matching seal placed on some part of the reliquary. The shroud of Turin is the most studied and best-known relic of Jesus. ([Shroud of Turin](#), [Face of Jesus](#), [Image Source](#))



"Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven"
Matthew 6:1

For further study:

[Directory on Popular Piety and Liturgy](#)
[Resource of Catholic Devotions](#) (ETWN)

This is a free resource! For more information, visit www.acatholicmomslife.com

We invite you to review the Faith in Five postings for Children (ages 3-8) and Children (Ages 8+) during the month of October. The weekly postings there will focus on the lives of the saints, in preparation for November's All Saints Day!