

How Jesus' Love Can Transform Your Life

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Welcome back to "The Pray More Novenas Retreat." My name is Emily Jaminet I'm very excited to be here with you today to be able to share with you about the love of Jesus Christ and how His love can transform your life. So, let's begin in prayer.

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen. Jesus meek and humble of heart, make our hearts like unto thine.

Luke 10-27

I want to open this up with scripture, Luke 10-27. It says, ***"He answered, love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself."***

I sure love that Gospel reading in Luke because it's a great reminder of the importance of loving God completely with our mind, our strength, our heart, and knowing that that response of loving God is always a response of Him first loving us. Jesus is always inviting us to love God, the Father. He's always inviting us to grow closer to the Lord to experience His love, so that we can go forth and share it with our neighbors.

Blessed Pier Giorgio

A saying that's very true in the spiritual world is "You can't give what you don't have." If we rely on our own strength, our own determination, we'll end up flat on our face. But the truth is the Lord wants to fill us up. He wants to strengthen us. He wants us to grow in holiness, so that we can better love God and love others. So, if you can't give what you don't have means you need to receive the love of God, live in that love, and then ultimately share it with others.

A great example of this is Blessed Pier Giorgio. He appeared to be what you would call an ordinary guy, an ordinary teenager, He loved life, He was very athletic and had a lot of friends, but there were something special about Blessed Pier Giorgio. He had extraordinary faith, and he lived his faith out in a way that impacted so many other people. He was known to be called "a man of the Beatitudes" because he thought of those who needed his help. He served others in very ordinary ways, like providing food and bread for the sick and the poor. He helped oversee medicines and getting those who needed medicines in his community.

He used his wealth and his influence for the good. His ordinary ways were extraordinary. And even how he interacted with his friends. They said he had a lot of friends. He was always climbing in the mountains, skiing, and playing sports and activities. But what is so extraordinary

about Blessed Pier Giorgio is he sought to influence other for the good. And what an inspiring saint for us as we desire to love God and to serve others. His parents were actually not practicing Catholics as we would say at this time. They struggled with the faith, and they didn't openly pray, but Blessed Pier Giorgio went about his faith in a way that was so inspiring to the community.

He did not let his family know that he would go to mass in the morning. And as a result, the gardener would tie a little string around his wrist and wake him up, so not to wake others up in the house. He would get up and go to mass in the morning before he would join his family for breakfast. Oftentimes he wasn't even able to openly bless his food in front of his family because they took offense. But when he died from polio in 1925, his parents were overwhelmed at his Christian burial of who came in the stories of how he influenced others. So influenced were they, that they came back to the faith, and they even have supported so many in opening his home in Turin to share the amazing story of Blessed Pier Giorgio.

So may we too influence others for the good, receive the love of God so that we can go forth and serve to be fed by the sacraments like Blessed Pier Giorgio always going out of his way to encourage others to come to know Christ more personally.

Ask the Lord to Fill Our Hearts

One of my favorite scriptures comes from Ezekiel 36:26. It states, *"I will give you a new heart, a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the hearts of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."* Who doesn't need a spiritual heart transplant? That's how I interpret that scripture. Jesus is offering us a new heart. And that reminds me so much of the importance of the Sacred Heart of Jesus devotion.

As Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in the 1670s, He held His heart out to her. He told her about the love that He has for all of humanity. And He reminded her that oftentimes people respond with coldness or even indifference. As in the scripture of Ezekiel 36:26, we can ask the Lord to fill our hearts with His love, to transform us through encountering His love, and to share that love with others.

Confession to Transform Your Heart

A great way to receive that transforming love is by to go to the sacrament of reconciliation, the sacrament of reconciliation, repentance, or even confession you might hear is a great way to transform our heart, to encounter the love of Jesus Christ, to be pardoned for our sins. And if it has been a very long time since you've gone to the sacrament of reconciliation, what better time than now? It's truly a gift. The seven sacraments, how they work together to feed us, to nurture us, to strengthen us when we need them the most. And the sacrament of reconciliation is being offered to you so that your heart can be set free from the sins of the past. Give you grace to go forth.

Sometimes we might be intimidated to receive the sacrament of reconciliation, but the graces that flow after you've received that sacrament are far greater than maybe any little bit of

intimidation. To reflect on the 10 commandments, to read an examination of conscience, and to even awaken your own heart to maybe some areas that you have grown cold, that you have held onto bitterness and anger. Tell the priest how long it's been since you've gone to confession. And even if you're nervous, let him know, so that he can be like the good shepherd and lead you.

The Importance of Hope

One of the greatest gifts as Catholics is to experience spiritual friendship, to walk along someone else's faith journey, just like Pier Giorgio did with his friends. To link arms and arms. In my book, "The Friendship Project," I talk about the importance of the virtue of hope, how much we can influence others by passing on the gift of our faith through this virtue. We are called to breathe hope to others, to hold and cling onto hope, even when life is hard.

The definition of hope is *"A theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven an eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Jesus' promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help and grace of the Holy Spirit."* That comes from the catechism 18:17.

So, hope is a gift to stabilize you when life is very challenging. Hope is something that we can spread to others in our words, in our deeds, in our actions. Praying for others that they can stay rooted in hope that serves like an anchor when those difficult times hit us is truly a gift. When we cling to hope, we are able to keep our eternal destination in mind, heaven. For no matter what trials, we bear on this earth, if we offer them up to Jesus, if we invite Jesus to strengthen us, and if we are able to grow in virtue, what greater gift as we journey to heaven. I've witnessed the hope of Christ in others as they journey a difficult road. I've seen it in my own life how hope, the virtue of hope has transformed what might be appeared as a tragedy, a difficult situation. Hope allows us to cling onto the will of God and to trust, even when times are difficult.

The Value of Jesus' Heart

One thing I would like to pass on to you as you seek to grow in the love of Christ is to see the value of His very own heart. To know that Jesus had the most wounded of all hearts. He was pierced by a lance. He had a broken heart from His disciples that left Him, but He was betrayed by Judas, and He died for our sins so that we could go to heaven. If you are struggling with a broken heart, if you are struggling with a past relationship that was so hurtful, I invite you to go to reconciliation. I invite you to experience the love of Christ in a new way, allowing His love in.

I have to say that there was a moment in my life I was struggling. And I kneeled down one evening and I prayed before my image at the Sacred Heart of Jesus. And I said, Jesus, you can have my marriage, my children, my future, everything, my heart, and that simple prayer with tears flying down my face in many ways is the day I waved that white flag of motherhood. The day I said, I can't do it all. I can't rely on my own strength. I need to rely on the strength of Jesus Christ. That day what might have appeared to be a difficult day in my life became a day of great transformation. And I hope that is the same for you.

Let Jesus in Your Life

The work I do at welcomeisheart.com, promoting the Sacred Heart of Jesus, promoting the enthronement into the Sacred Heart. When we invite people to welcome the reign of Christ in their home, to not leave Jesus just knocking on your door, but to let Him into the messiness of your life, you will never be the same. I remember as a child when we went through the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart, we went through a Christian ceremony of welcoming Jesus in. And I remember my dad saying later it was the greatest day in his parenting life because he no longer had to parent alone. And I think that's so true even in my own life with my family.

Welcoming the love of God into your family, handing over your trials, your difficulties, the messiness of life, you will never be the same. And you can always turn to the love of Christ and go deeper.

We're so blessed that we have opportunities to go deeper. Going to mass, going to reconciliation, spending time with Jesus before the Blessed Sacrament, praying the rosary, so that we can meditate on the life of Christ, receive grace and come away transformed. I want to close the session with a little story.

The Secret to a Happy Life

One day, my mother called my great uncle Bud, one of our just favorite uncles. He was always a joyful, happy man who lived a really full life. She says, what is the secret to living such a happy life? A life rooted in Christ and service to others, and Christian joy that you could hear from the next room. He said, well, I think it begins with the little prayer I pray every day to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. He shared that he did have his fair share of trials in his life, but this little prayer had helped him get through. My mom asked for a copy of that prayer and he did. He sealed it in an envelope, put it on his desk, and that was the last great act he ever did. He passed away from a heart attack that night. And when my mom discovered the envelope, she knew that that was part of their mission is to promote the love of Christ to others.

The work that they did in my own town has been tremendous. The amount of homes they've influenced to embrace Christ in a new way, to enthrone their home, to put an image up. The number of cards have been handed out up have been by the thousands, just because of one little act of love. So, you can read that prayer, access that prayer, welcomeisheart.com or just join me in this closing of the session of the prayer to the sacred heart of Jesus.

Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

In the name of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Amen. O most Holy heart of Jesus, fountain of every blessing, I adore you. I love you. And with a lively sorrow for my sins, I offer you this poor heart of mine. Make me humble, patient, pure, holy, obedient to your will. Grant good Jesus that I may live in you and for you. Protect me in the midst of danger. Comfort me in my afflictions. Give me health of body. Assistance in my temporal needs, your blessing in all that I do. And the grace of the holy death, Amen.