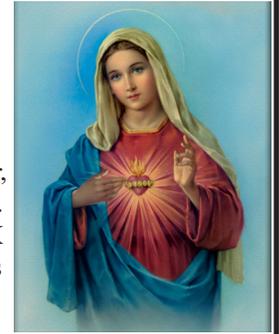


## The Catholic Practice of "First Saturday" Devotion to Mary's Immaculate Heart

On the first Saturday of every month, Catholics are called by the Blessed Mother (as relayed to us through many of her visitations, including Fatima), to honor her. We believe that on Holy Saturday, the eve of Easter, Mary, the mother of Christ, suffered terribly, yet had great faith.



Catholics believe that on these first Saturdays of each month, we help to console the sorrows of our heavenly father, our Lord, Jesus Christ and our Lady, Christ's mother . . . because we have sinned against Mary's Immaculate Heart. The First Saturdays devotion had already been an established custom in the Catholic Church. In 1905, Pope Pius X approved the devotion and granted indulgences for its practice of the First Saturdays of twelve consecutive months in honor of the Immaculate Conception.

For this devotion, whether alone or in a group, one can select any five success months, and engage in each of the following four (4) activities, each of which must be done with the sincere intention (in their minds and hearts) to honor Mary and for the reparation of the damage done to her Immaculate Heart:

1. Go to confession: This can be done one week earlier, however, the intention of reparation to the Immaculate Heart must be in one's mind and heart prior and during confession. 2. Attend Saturday Mass. 3. Receive the Eucharist with the necessity of offering it in reparation to Our Lady, and finally, 4. Pray the Rosary with a minimum of 15 minutes spent in the company of Mary while properly meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary (which represent Christ's life). One or more decades of the Rosary can be said. Our Lady promises us that she will be present to those who keep her company.

All of these spiritual elements of the five "First Saturday" devotions are unique in that the primary intention within the hearts of devotees is to repair the damages caused to her for blasphemies and offenses against her, her name and her holy initiatives.

In 1925, Sister Lúcia, the only Fátima visionary to survive into adulthood reported that the Blessed Mother came to her in her convent at Pontevedra, Spain with the following statement:

*"Look, my daughter; at my Heart encircled by these thorns with which men pierce it at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You, at least, strive to console me, and so I announce: I promise to assist at the hour of death with the grace necessary for salvation all those who, with the intention of making reparation to me, will, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, go to confession, receive Holy Communion, say five decades of the beads, and keep me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary." "You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace... I shall come to ask for... the Communion of reparation on the first Saturdays..."*

Five ways in which people offend the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

- 1.attacks upon Mary's Immaculate Conception, 2.attacks against her Perpetual Virginity,
- 3.attacks upon her Divine Maternity and the refusal to accept her as the Mother of all mankind,
- 4.for those who try to publicly implant in children's hearts indifference, contempt and even hatred of this Immaculate Mother, 5.for those who insult her directly in her sacred images.

Our Lady said to Lucia:

*"I shall come to ask... that on the First Saturday of every month, Communions of reparation be made in atonement for the sins of the world." It was there Our Lady completed her request for the Five First Saturdays and gave her great promise. Appearing with the Queen of Heaven in that apparition was the Infant Jesus, Who said to Lucia: "Have pity on the Heart of your Most Holy Mother. It is covered with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment, and there is no one to remove them with an act of reparation."*

Our Lady then spoke: *"See, my daughter; my Heart encircled by thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. Do you, at least, strive to console me. Tell them that I promise to assist at the hour of death with the graces necessary for salvation all those who, in order to make reparation to me, on the First Saturday of five successive months, go to confession, receive Holy Communion, say five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for a quarter of an hour, meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary."*

To those who faithfully follow Our Lady's requests for the Five First Saturdays, she has made a wonderful promise which she will certainly fulfill: *"I promise to assist at the hour of death with the graces necessary for salvation."*

Her presence at the hour of our death and giving us the final grace of perseverance is of paramount importance (the final gift of the grace of perseverance is second only to the gift/grace of Faith). After completing the Five First Saturdays, one may continue the devotion simply to console the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady and to atone for the sins of the world.