

The 12 Promises of the Sacred Heart as Given by our Lord to St. Margaret Mary

By James F. Gontis

Director, Department of Religious Education,
Diocese of Harrisburg

The following is a catechetical outline on the 12 promises the Lord Jesus gave to St. Margaret Mary for those who persevere in devotion to His Sacred Heart.

1. I will give them all the graces necessary for their state in life.

A. Universal Call to Holiness

1. Priests
2. Consecrated Religious
3. Married
4. Single

2. I will give peace in their families.

A. Ps. 33 – “Seek after peace and pursue it.”

B. First greeting of the angel to the shepherds when Christ was born was *Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.* – Luke 2:10-11

C. Jesus invokes this greeting twice when He says, “Peace be with you,” as He appears to the apostles in the upper room on that first Easter Sunday night, right before He instituted the Sacrament of Penance, cf. Jn. 20:19-23.

D. St. Augustine says peace is “the tranquility of order.”

E. Peaceful homes are marked by charity, kindness, obedience, and self-sacrifice.

F. The Holy Family is the model par excellence for family life.

3. I will console them in all their troubles.

A. We all have troubles, some greater and some smaller, but, as the *Salve Regina (Hail, Holy Queen)* says, we go to our Blessed Mother and through her to God, “mourning and weeping in this vale of tears.”

B. But our Lord tells us, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” – Mt. 11:28

C. We can find consolation especially in the Holy Eucharist.

D. We can find consolation in prayer – I suggest frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament and the recitation of the Rosary, as well as reading

- Scripture, particularly the Psalms (a treasure house of prayer that encompasses every emotion) and the Gospels?
- E. Through devotion to His Sacred Heart, Jesus gives us the grace of perseverance.
 - F. Christ knows what it is to suffer and longs to console us.
 - G. Devotion to the Sacred Heart helps us to unite ourselves to the Cross.

4. **They shall find in My Heart an assured refuge during life and especially at the hour of death.**

- A. Picture yourself, especially in hard times, crawling into the pierced Heart of Christ for His protection.
- B. Think of what refuge means. A refuge is a safe haven.
- C. The Sacred Heart is a refuge against our own sinful inclinations, against the temptations and evils of the world, and against the devil.
- D. It is a refuge at the hour of death (What is the grace of a happy death? Primarily it is dying in a state of sanctifying grace, which assures our entrance into heaven, either immediately or after a period of purification/purgation).

5. **I will pour abundant blessings on all their undertakings.**

- A. This refers especially to spiritual blessings, but also to temporal blessings, as long as those temporal blessings are for our greater good. This does not mean we will win the lottery.
- B. Our Lord promised St. Margaret Mary that, *It is certain we should experience every kind of help if only we had a true and genuine love for the Divine Heart. My loving Savior once assured me that He kept in eternal remembrance whatever a soul has done for the glory of His Sacred heart, and that not only would He recompense that person Himself, but also all his relatives and friends and those in whom he was in any way interested.*
- C. This promise does not mean we'll get rich, famous, etc. It does mean that Jesus will help us and bless us and our loved ones if we stay truly devoted to His Sacred Heart.
- D. In a letter to her spiritual director St. Margaret Mary wrote, *My Divine Savior gave me to understand that through means of this admirable devotion souls will experience the blessings of heaven in all their enterprises.*

6. **Sinners shall find in My Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.**

- A. Who is meant by sinners? All who are reading this have sinned, but this is most likely a reference to those who are in mortal sin. For a person to be guilty of mortal sin, three conditions must be met:
1. Grave Matter - It must be a sin of grave matter (in other words, it must be very serious), *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 1858.*
 2. Full Knowledge – It presupposes that the person committing the sin has knowledge of the seriously sinful character of the act, cf. CCC 1859. **Note:** Full knowledge does not mean encyclopedic knowledge.
 3. Deliberate Consent of the Will – *Implies a consent sufficiently deliberate to be a personal choice, cf. CCC 1859.*
- B. What does mortal sin do to those who commit it? ***Mortal sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God’s law; it turns man away from God, who is his ultimate end and his beatitude, by preferring an inferior good to him. Venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds it. – CCC 1855***

Mortal sin, by attacking the vital principle within us – that is, charity – necessitates a new initiative of God’s mercy and a conversion of heart which is normally accomplished within the setting of the sacrament of reconciliation. CCC 1856

- C. Mercy: What is it? If justice is giving each person his/her due, mercy means that we receive better than we deserve.
- D. Christ’s mercy is poured out in a special way in the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist
- E. Jesus, in speaking to St. Margaret Mary about his mercy, uses the terminology, “Ocean of Mercy” – Our Lord also uses this term several hundred years later in speaking to St. Faustina about His Divine Mercy.

7. **Tepid souls shall become fervent.**

- A. “Tepid” can be used synonymously with “lukewarm.”
- B. See Revelation 3:15-20 about what our Lord says through the Apostle John about the results of one being lukewarm.
- C. Lukewarmness is not mere weakness, but actually a lack of caring about grace and sin, good and evil. Many have said that the opposite of love is not hatred, but indifference. In her diary, *Divine Mercy in My Soul*, St. Faustina relates that it was the lukewarm that caused Jesus his greatest agony in his passion.

- D. In the *Life and Writings of St. Margaret Mary*, the Lord says to her, ***Behold this Heart which has so loved men to such a degree that It has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming Itself, to prove to them Its love; and in return I receive from the greater part of men but ingratitude, contempt, irreverence, sacrilege and coldness, which they show Me in this Sacrament of love.***
- E. Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus helps turn tepid souls fervent for Christ, enthusiastic for love of God and neighbor.

8. Fervent souls shall speedily rise to great perfection.

- A. Spiritual writers have often compared the growth in the spiritual life to the ascent up a mountain.
- B. The path up the mountain is none other than Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life and to following the commandments and precepts of the Church.
- C. Devotion to His Heart keeps us on the narrow road that leads to salvation, cf. Matthew 7:13-14.
- D. What is meant by perfection? Living out the two great commandments (love of God and love of neighbor) fully. This is not done through sentimentality, but through concrete actions, aided by God's grace. These concrete acts of love help bring about the fruits of freedom for God and freedom from sin and its attachments
- E. We must pray that our hearts resemble Christ's Heart. ***O Jesus, meek and humble of Heart, make my heart like unto Thine.***

9. I will bless the homes in which the image of My Sacred Heart shall be exposed and honored.

- A. Catholicism is centered around the Incarnation (God become man in the Person of Jesus Christ). The Catholic Faith is an Incarnational/Sacramental religion.
- B. We are not dualists. That is to say that we do not say that it is only the spirit that is important and that matter, including the body is bad or unimportant. No! We say that God makes both spirit and matter (including, of course, the human body), good! In fact, in the Incarnation, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity has taken to Himself human nature, so that Jesus is true God and true man.
- C. We are not iconoclasts. This heresy was condemned in Second Council of Nicaea in A.D. 787.
- D. We are not pure spirits like angels, but are body-soul composites. The Catholic Faith is a religion for spirit and flesh.

E. Sacred images remind us of God and comfort us and help bring about true devotion to God.

10. I will give to priests the power to touch the most hardened hearts.

- A. Through their own holiness of life.
- B. Through their devotion to and solicitude for their respective flocks.
- C. Through their love of the Holy Mass and the Eucharist.
- D. Through their strong fidelity to hearing peoples' Confessions in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and celebration of the Anointing of the Sick.
- E. Through their faithful praying of the Liturgy of the Hours.
- F. Through tender devotion to the Mother of God, who is, as St. Louis de Montfort and so many other saints emphasize, the most direct route to the Heart of Jesus, e.g. Wedding at Cana
- G. Through sound, faithful, and concrete preaching of the word of God so as to touch minds and hearts.
- H. Through solid doctrinal instruction of their people through their preaching, sacramental instruction, education of adults and children in the Faith, etc.
- I. Through works of charity including the visiting of the sick and dying and care for the poor.

11. Those who propagate this devotion shall have their name written in My Heart, and it shall never be effaced.

- A. This promise is especially for promoters of this devotion.
- B. It implies deep friendship with the Lord and the grace of final perseverance.
- C. Let us spread this devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and practice it.

12. The all-powerful love of My Heart will grant to all those who shall receive Communion on the First Friday of nine consecutive months the grace of final repentance; they shall not die under My displeasure, nor without receiving their Sacraments; My Heart shall be their assured refuge at the last hour.

- A. Of course, as with all the promises, it implies that one will persevere in trying to live the Christian life devoutly.
- B. It implies that one will receive the Eucharist with the proper dispositions, i.e. especially that one will be in a state of sanctifying grace when he/she receives Holy Communion.

- C. This promise really implies, in its essence, that persons who are devoted to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus during life will receive the grace of a happy death, i.e. death in a state of sanctifying grace, which would, in turn, assure one's eternal salvation.
- D. It implies that if we have true devotion to the Heart of Christ, we will persevere. This promise implies the grace of final perseverance and special graces for final repentance.

MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS, HAVE MERCY ON US!