



Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

BE STILL

Take a moment to allow whatever is in your heart to rise and offer your thoughts to the loving care of the Lord today.

Gathering Prayer

Loving God,
Draw near to us as we sit, think and reflect upon your word.
Open our hearts in order that we can hear what it is that you are whispering to us today.
Amen.

THE GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (19:31-37)

It was Preparation Day, and to prevent the bodies remaining on the cross during the Sabbath – since that Sabbath was a day of special solemnity – the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. When they came to Jesus, they found he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. This is the evidence of one who saw it – trustworthy evidence, and he knows he speaks the truth – and he gives it so that you may believe as well. Because all this happened to fulfil the words of scripture:

*Not one bone of his will be broken;
and again, in another place scripture says:
They will look on the one whom they have pierced.*

The gospel of the Lord.

Ponder

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) noted that in the presence of God, during a recollected reading of the text, it is good to practice *Lectio Divina* – the reading of God's word in prayer asking that it 'enlighten and renew' us. The following questions may help with this:

- Lord, what does this text mean to me?
- What is it about my life that you want me to change by this text?
- What troubles me about this text?
- Why am I not interested in this?
- What do I find pleasant about this text?
- What is it about this word that moves me?
- What attracts me?
- Why does it attract me?

Reflect

John O'Donohue was an Irish poet and writer. For him the heart is where the beauty of the human spirit comes alive. Further he writes that each of us carries the book of life in our hearts and that our heart 'dwells in unattended darkness.' The heart is concerned with who we are – if we ever feel lost or overwhelmed, all we have to do is become still and listen to our heart and we will find exactly where we are. The down side of this is that the heart absorbs everything that is happening to us – and our hearts can become hardened and burdened. The state of our hearts shape our lives. (*Benedictus*, p.121)

Perhaps the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus offers an opportunity to reflect upon and be inspired by the beauty of Jesus' heart. Jesus' heart was with God, and God was with Jesus. And this is the book of life offered to Christians: to live knowing that Jesus models a way of discipleship and to live, keeping God at the heart of all we do and say.

RESPOND

Pray

Reflect on the words of St John Paul II:

In the Sacred Heart every treasure of wisdom and knowledge is hidden. In that Divine Heart beats God's infinite love for everyone, for each one of us individually.