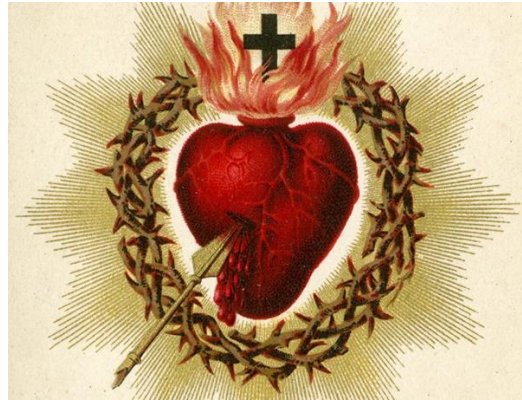


**“I Have Loved You with an Everlasting Love:
Biblical Reflections on the Sacred Heart of Jesus”**



When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, “Go, take to yourself a wife of prostitution and have children of prostitution, for the land commits great prostitution by forsaking the LORD.” So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. (Hosea 1:2-3)

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You are a people sacred to the LORD, your God; he has chosen you from all the nations on the face of the earth to be a people peculiarly his own. It was not because you are the largest of all nations that the LORD set his heart on you and chose you, for you are really the smallest of all nations. It was because the LORD loved you...that he brought you out with his strong hand from the place of slavery, and ransomed you from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. (Deuteronomy 7:6-8)

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You have seen for yourselves how I treated the Egyptians and how I bore you up on eagle wings and brought you here to myself. Therefore, if you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my special possession, dearer to me than all other people, though all the earth is mine. (Exodus 19:4-5)

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The LORD, the LORD, a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity, continuing his love for a thousand generations, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin. (Exodus 34:6-7)

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Jonah’s response to God’s mercy toward the people of Nineveh:
“O LORD, is this not what I said while I was still in my own country? This is why I fled at first toward Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in

kindness, repenting of punishment. So now, LORD, please take my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.” (Jonah 4:2-3)

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“Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you” (Isaiah 49:15)

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Some references to God’s heart in the Old Testament:

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. (Genesis 6:5-6)

The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart; and the LORD has appointed him to be prince over his people. (1 Samuel 13:14)

And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. (Jeremiah 3:15)

My heart recoils within me, my compassion grows warm and tender. (Hosea 11:8)

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“There can be no doubt that Jesus Christ received a true body and had all the affections proper to the same, among which love surpassed all the rest, it is likewise beyond doubt that He was endowed with a physical heart like ours; for without this noblest part of the body the ordinary emotions of human life are impossible. Therefore the Heart of Jesus Christ, hypostatically united to the divine Person of the Word, certainly beat with love and with [all] the other emotions.”  
Pope Pius XII, *Haurietis Aquas*

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Now since it was preparation day, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the sabbath, for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn one, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken and that they be taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may come to believe. For this happened so that the Scripture passage might be fulfilled: *Not a bone of it will be broken*. And again another passage says: *They will look upon him whom they have pierced*. (John 19:31-37)

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“From the side of Christ, there flowed water for cleansing, blood for redeeming. Hence blood is associated with the sacrament of the Eucharist, water with the sacrament of Baptism, which has its cleansing power by virtue of the blood of Christ.”

St. Thomas Aquinas

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“*There flowed from his side water and blood.* Beloved, do not pass over this mystery without thought; it has yet another hidden meaning, which I will explain to you. I said that water and blood symbolized baptism and the holy Eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born: from baptism, *the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit*, and from the holy Eucharist. Since the symbols of baptism and the Eucharist flowed from his side, it was from his side that Christ fashioned the Church, as he had fashioned Eve from the side of Adam.... As God then took a rib from Adam`s side to fashion a woman, so Christ has given us blood and water from his side to fashion the Church. God took the rib when Adam was in a deep sleep, and in the same way Christ gave us the blood and water after his own death.”

St. John Chrysostom