



FEAST OF THE SACRED HEART



Prayer-Reflection Guide



**"I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down...
I will search for the lost and bring back the strays.
I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak,
and those that are strong and sturdy
I will keep and feed in righteousness."**

(Ez 34, 15-16)

Song: [El Señor es mi pastor](#). (The Lord is my Shepherd) Nico Montero

Our Feast invites us to look at Jesus. In the Gospel, he shows himself to be a caring friend, a good shepherd, who watches over those of his own who are most in need. Jesus was a loving caregiver throughout his life. Today we celebrate the joy of being part of that care.

Faced with the suffering reality of our world, and at the same time filled with hope, we are aware that without caring for each other life does not grow. We need a contemplative and clear-eyed outlook, capable of perceiving how we ourselves are the fruit of nurturing by other people and how we have an impact on the lives of others. Pope Francis reminds us:

**"THE WORLD WILL ONLY HEAL
WITH LOVE THAT IS
OUTWARD-LOOKING".**

LIVES THAT GIVE CONCRETE EXPRESSION TO LOVE

PEPE RODIER, Son of Charity (*Madrid*):

"At 86 years of age, from a poor neighbourhood and in a small community, I ask myself if I really care for my nearest brothers and sisters and for the simple people, I meet every day... I can be a good religious, I can be an enterprising and creative man, I can be a good communicator... and I can pass by what is most important: caring for, protecting, and truly loving those who live close to me. I can turn a blind eye to the suffering that many people feel..."

We all know of communities where a certain individualism, even a certain indifference, prevails ... On the contrary, there are communities that know how to inspire a humble confidence. And this is so necessary in our suffering and bewildered world. We need to take care of our inner life and our feelings, even our "unconscious". In our disadvantaged neighbourhoods, in our families, in our small communities there are treasures of love, of peace, of serenity that spread the joy of believing, the joy of praying, the joy of the God of life, the joy of living the Gospel "even in darkness".

We take a moment in silence and let some images of care and real love come to us in the midst of the suffering of our world.

TWO PEOPLE WHO TEACH US TO CARE

ETTY HILLESUM

Writes in a letter from the concentration camp to her faithful friend Osias: *"I have so much love inside me, for Germans and Dutch, for Jews and non-Jews, for all mankind"*.

On one occasion, one of the soldiers shows a small gesture of humanity towards a young girl, and Etty says: *"I knew that tonight I would pray for the German soldier too. One of the many uniforms took on a face... He is suffering too. Borders do not exist between people who suffer. There is suffering on both sides of all borders, and we must pray for everyone."*

She is convinced of this: "One thing is certain: we must help to increase the amount of love in this world. The smallest amount of hate that we add to the excessive amount of hate that already exists makes this world more inhospitable and uninhabitable. When it comes to love, I have so much, so much...", and she will tell her friend Maria: "...once love for humanity has been sown in you, it will grow beyond measure." (*Essential Writings*)

CHARLES DE FOUCAULD

"First of all, in every human being see a sister or brother...Let us be infinitely delicate in our charity...Let us have that tender gentleness in the smallest of details, that knows how to bring healing to hearts through small things... Let us also make use of the smallest details with those who are close to us..."

(*Spiritual Works*).

Let these words resonate in us and let us take up this invitation.

Song: [Rhapsody of rest. Sara Thomsen](#)

CALLED TO MAKE GOD'S LOVE KNOWN AND TO BE PART OF THAT LIFE-HEALING CARE.



- ❖ From the experiences that emerge from our life and mission, we can share some lessons about taking care and about allowing people to take care of us.
- ❖ We will conclude by naming the rscj and the people who have gone before us in our Sacred Heart Family. We give thanks for them because, like the Good Shepherd, they have *"sought out, freed, gathered, cared for, accompanied, and nurtured..."* the most vulnerable of people.

**"And when he finds it,
he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home.
Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says,
'Rejoice with me!'"**

(Luke 15: 3-7)

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