The Immaculate Heart of Mary • Monthly devotion for August

Back in the Middle Ages, many Catholics began observing special devotions around a particular theme each month – the Holy Name of Jesus in January, for instance. Today, many families are reviving this practice as part of the way they observe the liturgical calendar at home. By practicing monthly devotions, the core values of the faith will become more alive within your family. The beauty of monthly devotions is that there is no set way to celebrate. So, be creative, make it fun, and adapt your celebration to your own family.

Here are some ways to celebrate the popular devotion for August, the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Talking with kids about the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary means to recall the emotions of joy and sadness that Mary experienced in her own life. When you look at an image of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, you see a burning heart surrounded with a crown of thorns and pierced with a sword. The Immaculate Heart of Mary shows us that despite the sufferings of Jesus (crown of thorns), he loves all of us, regardless of our sins, and spilled his blood (the sword) in hope that we would join him in heaven. It is for this reason that despite the trials and sufferings of Jesus, Mary's heart still burns with love and devotion.

As the mother of Jesus, Mary experienced all of the same feelings that your own mother has for you. Whether you are happy or sad, your mother shares in your feelings (even if she doesn't tell you). The Bible tells us that "and his mother kept all these things in her heart" (Lk 2:51). We can share in

Mary's emotions and constant love for Jesus by recalling the mysteries of the rosary and by praying the seven sorrows.

Feast Days & Memorials

The following days can be connected to this month's devotion. Click to learn more.

4	St. John Vianney
6	Transfiguration
11	St. Philomena
14	St. Maximillian Kolbe
15	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
21	St. Pius X
22	Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary
27	St. Monica, The Seven Joys of Mary
28	St. Augustine of Hippo
29	Passion of St. John the Baptist

Bible Verse

A take away for kids to memorize and/or include in their daily prayer.

"His mother kept all these things in her heart." (Lk 2:52)

Prayer Prompts

Questions to help propogate the faith with your children.

- How can I bring joy to Mary by honoring Jesus and glorifying God?
- In what ways do my sins hurt Jesus and cause Mary to be sad?
- What sorrows have I brought upon my own mother that I can pray for?

Live It

Incorporate this month's devotion with the virtues of faith, hope and charity.

Faith

Recite the following prayer as a family.

The "Memorare" prayer is one that asks Mary for her to interceded for us that God might bestow the graces and blessings that we seek. The "Memorare" can be prayed whenever you wish, but is most commonly prayed following the conclusion of the rosary.

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided.
Inspired by this confidence,
I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother;
to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me.
Amen.
— "Memorare" from The Catholic Family Book of Prayers

Hope

Learn about God's infinite mercy.

Did you know that the month of August occurs in what is called Ordinary Time? Ordinary Time lasts approximately 33 weeks of the liturgical year. The word "ordinary" does not mean it is an uninteresting time or that it is less important than other times of the year (such as Lent or Christmas). The word "ordinary" means "to order." It is during Ordinary Time that we are called to grow in our spiritual life in hope of becoming closer to God. The color green is worn during this

time to symbolize growth and hope in the salvation promised by Jesus.

Charity

Help the Church to grow within your own community.

Many times we are called to pray for the well being and spiritual conversion of ourselves and of those close to us. On September 8, 1840, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Sister Justine Bisqueyburo in France.

Mary appeared to Sister Justine holding a green scapular in one hand and her Immaculate Heart in the other. Mary asked Sister Justine to spread devotion of the Immaculate Heart to others by distributing the green scapular.

The green scapular (recall earlier that green symbolizes hope and spiritual growth), contains an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary on one side and an image of the Immaculate Heart on the other. When using the scapular to invoke Mary's help, we are called to pray, "Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us, now and at the hour of our death."

The church permits that we may wear the green scapular, give a scapular to someone, and/or place it in the vicinity of the person for whom we are praying. We simply need to pray what Mary had asked us to and have hope that our prayers will be answered by God.

For more information on the green scapular visit the Society of the Green Scapular.

For more information about monthly devotions, see the Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: #20, #32, #190-191 *and the* Catholic Encyclopedia: Special Devotions for Months.