

## Reflection for Day One

Christian love is sacrificial love.

It is fitting, therefore, that if we are to grow in love and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we must first consider how He loves us—that is to say, we must first consider the cross. And we must recognize that we, too, are called to the cross: in our public lives and in the stillness of our hearts, God calls each and every one of us to imitate His love.

God has given us everything. As we continue on through this Novena, we might begin to ask ourselves, what are we prepared to give Him in return?

There is, paradoxically, consolation in the cross. Christ's love is not aloof or ideological. Far from it: Christ, fully man, knew human suffering. "Are my tears not stored in your flask," the psalmist asks, "and recorded in your book?" (Psalm 56:9). We can look to the cross and know for certain that God is with us, even in our suffering.

*Let us pray...*

**O my Jesus**, you have said, "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you." You know the deepest longings of my heart. You know the burdens that I carry. Behold, I come before You now, asking only this: make me a saint.

In the midst of sanctifying trials, heed not my complaints, but remind me of eternity with You and give me courage. I give You my life, that every good gift You have given me be rendered back to You—for Your glory, for my sanctity, and for the good of Your Holy Church.

Thank you for the saints who built Your Church in St. Louis—those we know and honor, and those whose lives remain hidden in You. Transform our hearts, that we who have been entrusted to this Archdiocese, may one day merit to join them.

**O Sacred Heart of Jesus, we place our trust in you!**

*(Conclude with one Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)*