

Hints for prayer

Psalm 139

Psalm 139 is a hymn to God's omnipresence, omniscience, and love, which searches the depths of the human heart, knowing our thoughts and every movement.

LORD, you have probed me, you know me:
you know when I sit and stand;
you understand my thoughts from afar.
You sift through my travels and my rest;
with all my ways you are familiar.

Even before a word is on my tongue
LORD, you know it all.
Behind and before you encircle me
and rest your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
far too lofty for me to reach.
Where can I go from your spirit?
From your presence, where can I flee?

If I say, "Surely darkness shall hide me,
and night shall be my light"
Darkness is not dark for you,
and night shines as the day.
Darkness and light are but one.

You formed my inmost being;
you knit me in my mother's womb.
I praise you, because I am wonderfully made;
wonderful are your works!
My very self you know.

My bones are not hidden from you,
When I was being made in secret,
fashioned in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw me unformed;
in your book all are written down;
my days were shaped, before one came to be.

Prayer

O God, who in the Heart of your Son, wounded by our sins, bestow on us in mercy the boundless treasures of your love, grant, we pray, that, in paying him the homage of our devotion, we may also offer worthy reparation. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Collect Mass Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

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A profound inner life

with Count Baldassare Porta



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Allow me to introduce myself: I am Baldassare Porta

Monza, 1763 – Monza, April 22, 1833

A healthy tree can yield only quality fruit.

I can personally testify that the Hearts of Jesus and Mary have borne incredibly sweet fruits in my life, and ever since they began to take root in me, I have experienced the fullness of joy that comes from living charity in both heart and action. I first encountered this through the "School of Charity," which I founded in 1828 to help poor girls in the parish of San Pietro in Vicenza, where I was finishing my role as royal finance commissioner. I started it with the parish priest, Don Giovanni Orlando, and together we entrusted its management to Father Angelico Carlesso, a Franciscan. To ensure the school could operate freely and provide free education to the girls, a group of generous benefactors supported it financially. The beginning was promising, but soon, after my term ended and I had returned to my family in Monza, most of the benefactors and teachers began to withdraw. If an undertaking belongs to God, no one can stop it; and where weeds are sown, the wheat must grow fearlessly. With that confidence, we did not let the first obstacles stop us. Father Carlesso, along with the faithful Felice de Maria and Valentino Piccoli, stayed committed to the work, though I could no longer lead it—not just because of the distance, but also because I felt inadequate to make it flourish. Following the advice of my spiritual father in Vicenza, Father Gaetano de Luca, who shared my devotion to the Sacred Hearts, I turned to the young chaplain, Don Antonio Farina: a priest and teacher already involved in the Pia Opera of Santa Dorotea, gifted with the insight needed to reorganize the school wisely. The Lord generously prepares His servants! With great trust, I handed him the "torch" of Charity, knowing he would not carry it alone but with the team of friends who had already shared this mission with me. What mattered most to me was that the Hearts of Jesus and Mary remained the true leaders of this work, and that the new director's priority would be the education of the girls, beginning with their inner lives. And so I wrote to him:

Let our goal be nothing but the glory of God and the spreading of knowledge of His beautiful Heart—loved, revered, and made amends to wherever and however possible. Man should do all he can, and God will take care of the rest, as long as we do not cowardly distrust His infinite providence. If our efforts come from the heart, He will even bless our imperfections, making it so that what we cannot accomplish ourselves is completed by others.

(cf. Positio on the life and virtues of Giovanni Antonio Farina)

The countless good fruits gathered by the Sacred Hearts of my Lord and the Virgin Mary allowed me to experience the bliss of one who, full of days, is ready to return to the Father's embrace.



Founded in the Sacred Hearts yesterday... ...and today!

This profound core, present in every man and woman, is not that of the soul, but of the entire person in his or her unique psychosomatic identity. Everything finds its unity in the heart, which can be the dwelling-place of love in all its spiritual, psychic and even physical dimensions. In a word, if love reigns in our heart, we become, in a complete and luminous way, the persons we are meant to be, for every human being is created above all else for love. In the deepest fibre of our being, we were made to love and to be loved.

Pope Francis, *Dilexit nos*, 21

**Just as Count Porta rooted his heart in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary...
...so let us also let their Love reign in our hearts!**

Some questions to reflect on



- How can I internalize and live out the virtues of the Sacred Hearts in my daily life?
- How can I share the Love of the Sacred Hearts with the world today?

A practical step for today

- I will offer a smile to everyone I meet, letting my gaze convey the Love of Jesus and the Tenderness of Mary that I myself experience!

To discover more about our history,
please visit our website: sdvi.org.



We have no authentic portrait of Count Porta. However, as a symbol of his role in our history, we have this altarpiece that he himself commissioned for the School of Charity. It depicts the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, along with the three patrons—St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Charles Borromeo, and St. Francis Xavier—devotions that Giovanni Antonio Farina later made the foundation of the Institute's spirituality.