



Dehonians USA

PRIESTS OF THE SACRED HEART

June 7, 2024

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

On this Feast of the Sacred Heart, I am reminded of a story about the two seas in the Holy Land: the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Both seas (lakes, actually) are fed by the same river, the River Jordan. One is a freshwater lake teeming with fish and other forms of sea life whereas the other is a super-concentrated salt water that cannot support any living organism. If both seas are fed by the same river, why is one fresh and life-giving and the other dead? The answer is that the Sea of Galilee has an outlet for letting out water whereas the Dead Sea has no such outlet. In other words, the Sea of Galilee receives

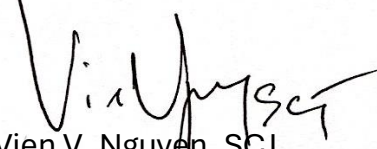


and gives out water continually, whereas the Dead Sea only receives water and does not give it out except through evaporation.

The Feast of the Sacred Heart is a profound invitation for us to reflect not only on the self-giving gift of the Son, expressed in the Sacred Heart, but also on the self-giving of the Trinity. God the Father gifts his very self to the Son. Jesus, in the Gospel of John, says, “All that the Father has belongs to me” (16:12-15). In a display of profound love, the Son took on the flesh and blood of humanity and offered his very self on the cross to reveal the depth of the Father’s love. The love of the Father and Son brings forth the Holy Spirit, whose role is to guide and teach believers and to point them to the Father and the Son.

By baptism, we are drawn into this Trinitarian self-giving love and invited to participate in God’s redemptive mission. As we celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart, I pray that we see the ministry in which we partake as a sharing of our gifts from God and as a participation in God’s redemptive love for the world. As St. Francis of Assisi reminds us, it is in our giving that we receive. And like the two seas, giving and receiving God’s love keeps us alive and life-giving. Receiving without giving renders us stagnant and dead.

Happy Feast of the Sacred Heart.


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