

of Mary for the offences committed against Her. Everyone who offends Her commits, so to speak, a two-fold offence, for those sins also offend her Divine Son, Jesus Christ, and so endanger our salvation. They give bad example to others and weaken the strength of society to withstand immoral onslaughts. Such devotions therefore make us consider not only the enormity of the offence as against God, but also the effect of sins on human society as well as the need for undoing these social effects even when the offender repents and is converted. Further, this reparation emphasises our responsibility towards sinners who, themselves, will not pray and make reparation for their sins.

6. FIVE CONSECUTIVE FIRST SATURDAYS:

The idea of the Five First Saturdays is to make us persevere in the devotional acts for these Saturdays and overcome initial difficulties. Once this is done, Our Lady knows that the person would become devoted to her Immaculate Heart and persist in practising such devotion on all First Saturdays, working thereby for personal self-reform and for the salvation of others.

To encourage Catholics to practise the devotion of the First Saturdays, Our Lady has assured us that She will obtain salvation for all those who observe the first Saturdays for five consecutive months in accordance with Her conditions.

At the supreme moment the departing person will be either in the state of grace or not. In either case Our Lady will be by their side. If in the state of grace, She will console and help them to resist whatever temptations the devil might put before them in his last attempt to take the person with him to hell. If not in the state of grace, Our Lady will help the person to repent in a manner agreeable to God and so benefit by the fruits of redemption and be saved.

TO MARY: IN TRUST

Holy Mary, my sovereign Lady,
to you and to your special trust and care
and to your merciful heart,
I commend myself in body and soul
this day and every day,
and at the hour of my death.
To you I commit all my hopes, my joys,
my sorrows and my needs,
my whole life and its end.
Obtain for me,
through your holy intercession
and your merits,
that all I do may be directed
and ordered according to your will
and the will of your Son. Amen.

St Aloysius Gonzaga



*The Five
First
Saturdays*



*“Immaculate Heart of Mary
– Pray for Us”*

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FIRST SATURDAYS

On July 13, 1917, Our Lady appeared for the third time to the three children of Fatima and showed them the vision of hell and made the now-famous thirteen prophecies. In this vision Our Lady said that: 'God wishes to establish in the world devotion to Her Immaculate Heart and that She would come to ask for the communion of reparation on the First Saturdays . . .'

Eight years later, on December 10, 1925, Our Lady came back and appeared (with the Child Jesus) to Lucia in the convent of the Dorothean Sisters in Pontevedra.

The Child Jesus spoke first:

'Have compassion on the Heart of your most Holy Mother, which is covered with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment, while there is no one to remove them with an act of reparation.'



THE PROMISE

Our Lady then said:

'My daughter, look at my heart surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You, at least, try to console me, and say that I promise to assist at the hour of death with all the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the First Saturday of five consecutive months go to confession and receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of The Rosary and keep me company while meditating on mysteries of The Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me.'

Why are there FIVE First Saturdays and not seven, or nine?

THE FIVE REASONS

Lucia once asked this question of Our Lord and received as an answer:

'My daughter, the motive is simple, there are five kinds of offences and blasphemies uttered against the Immaculate Heart of Mary;

1. Blasphemies against the Immaculate Conception;
2. Blasphemies against Her Virginity;
3. Blasphemies against Her divine Maternity;
4. Blasphemies of those who openly seek to foster in the hearts of children indifference or even hatred for the Immaculate Mother;
5. The offences of those who directly outrage Her in holy images.'

From the above, it can be seen that each of the Five Saturdays can correspond to a specific offence. By offering the graces received during each First Saturday as reparation for the offence being prayed for, the participant can hope to help remove the thorns from Our Lady's Heart.



WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

The devotion of First Saturdays, as requested by Our Lady of Fatima, carries with it the assurance of salvation. However, to derive profit from such a great promise of Our Lady, the devotion must be properly understood and duly performed.

The requirements as stipulated by Our Lady are as follows:

1. Confession; 2. Communion; 3. Five decades of the Rosary; 4. Meditation on one or more of The Rosary mysteries for twenty minutes; 5. To do all these things in the spirit of reparation to

the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and; 6. To observe all these practices on the First Saturday of Five Consecutive Months.

1. CONFESSION: A reparative confession means that the confession should not only be good (valid and licit), but also be offered in the spirit of reparation, in this case, to Mary's Immaculate Heart.

This confession may be made on the First Saturday itself or some days before or after the First Saturday, within the preceeding octave would suffice.

2. COMMUNION: The communion of reparation must be sacramental and duly received with the intention of making reparation. This offering, like the confession, is an interior act and so no external action to express the intention is needed.

3. THE ROSARY: The Rosary mentioned here was indicated by the Portuguese word '**terco**' which is commonly employed to denote a Rosary of five decades, which must be recited in a spirit of reparation.

4. MEDITATION FOR TWENTY MINUTES: Here the meditation on one mystery or more is to be made without simultaneous recitation of the Rosary decade. As indicated, the meditation may be either on one mystery alone for 20 minutes, or on all 20 mysteries, spending about one minute on each mystery, or again, one, two or more mysteries during the period. This can also be made before each decade spending three minutes or more in considering the mystery of the particular decade. The meditation has likewise to be made in the spirit of reparation to the Immaculate Heart.

5. THE SPIRIT OF REPARATION: All these acts, as said above, have to be done with the intention of offering reparation to the Immaculate Heart