



Metropolitan Archbishop of Izmir

Izmir, 27/5/2024

Dear brothers and sisters,

We are approaching the day of the Consecration of the Church of Turkey to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in the context of the Year of the Eucharist that we are living. From its origins, the Church has seen in the Heart of Jesus the sign that expresses the essential core of Christianity, the revolutionary novelty of the Gospel: the love of God. In this regard, Pope Pius XII stated that the cult to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in essence, is the cult of the love God has for us and is at the same time the practice of our love for God and for other people. To consecrate ourselves and the whole Church living in Turkey means to rediscover this immense love, to understand that it is the deepest desire and need of each one of us, to open the doors of all our hearts to Him so that our lives may be transformed and the Word of the Lord may be fulfilled in them.

Certain that this act will represent a moment of great importance in the history of our Church and will bring great spiritual benefits, I wish that each one of us may prepare to live intensely this important moment with a special novena that will begin on Wednesday, 29 May 2024 and will end on Thursday, 6 June 2024, the day before the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on which the solemn consecration is scheduled.

During these nine days, each community of our Archdiocese will recite at the end of the Eucharistic Celebration or at another significant community moment the prayer in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus written by Pope Saint John Paul II, which we are currently distributing. I ask that this same prayer also be recited during the Holy Rosary which is broadcast daily on the Archdiocesan Facebook page live from the Shrine of Meryemana Evi. Even those who for reasons of commitments or health do not participate in the church celebrations can experience this journey of preparation and prayer by reciting the prayer personally or in their families.

However, this novena will not only be an opportunity to contemplate God's love in the heart of Jesus and set out on the path towards the day of Consecration. During these nine days we wish to pray to the Lord for all those people who in the course of their lives have drifted away from God and the life of the Church. The Lord does not cease to love and seek them, and we also love them sincerely because, in Christ, they are our brothers and sisters. Together with God, the merciful Father and good Shepherd, we wish to experience the feast of their return home.



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I also invite you to be present at the solemn Eucharistic Celebration with the Consecration of the Church of Turkey to the Sacred Heart of Jesus that will take place on Friday, 7 June 2024 at 7 p.m. in the Cathedral of Izmir. I ask you from the bottom of my heart: make the decision to be present! Do not be conditioned by habits, change your plans, accept to make some effort! Any sacrifice you make to join the prayer of our community will be a sign of love for Jesus, a response to his love, which he will accept and which will not go unrewarded.

In communion of prayer, I cordially greet you and invoke upon each of you the Lord's blessing.

+ *Mart Kmetec*
+ Martin Kmetec OFM Conv.
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