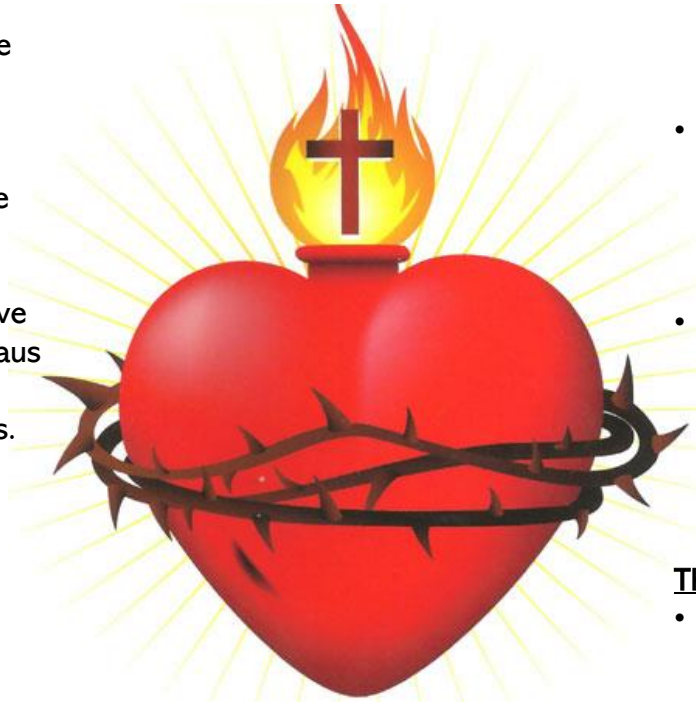


# *What do the flames, light and crown of thorns mean?*

## The Flames

- Links to the Old Testament: Burnt offerings were the highest form of sacrifice in ancient Israel. Christ offered himself as the final accomplishment of all the sacrifices of the Old Testament. Fire is always associated with God in the Old Testament (e.g. the burning bush that spoke to Moses, the cloud of fire that settled on Sinai, and the flames from above that consumed the sacrifice of Elijah.)
- The fire represents Christ's passionate love for us. The disciples on the road to Emmaus realized that their hearts had been "burning" after their encounter with Jesus.



## The rays of light

- In John 8:12, Christ declares that He is the "light of the world." Light, like fire, is a symbol of God (e.g. the Transfiguration and the blinding light that Paul experienced on the road to Damascus.)
- As the light of the world, Christ is also the one who "enlightens" us, revealing God to us.

## The crown of thorns

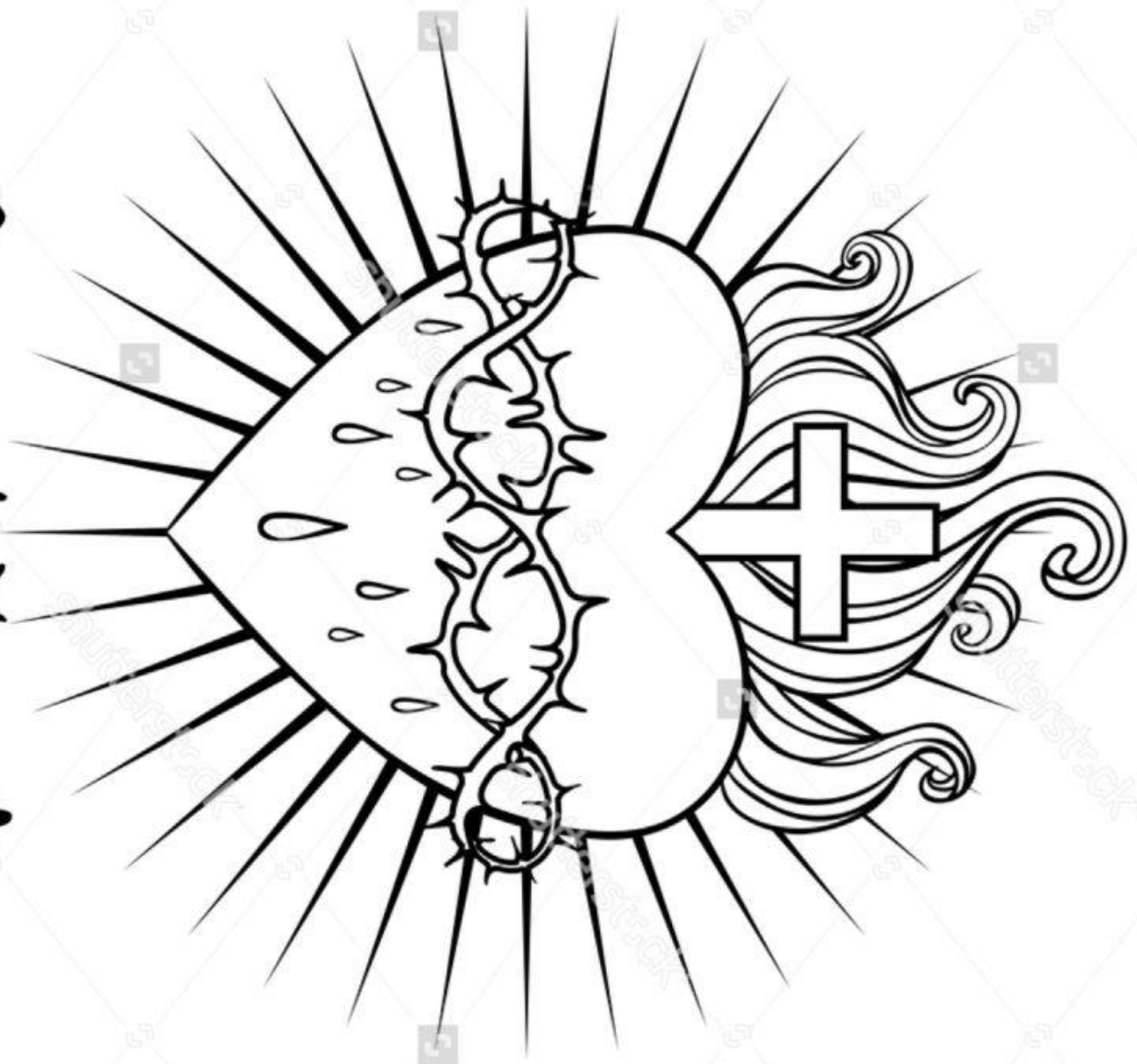
- It encircles the Sacred Heart, whereas in Scripture the crown was placed on Jesus' head. Wrapping the crown around the heart emphasizes the fact that Christ felt His wounds to the depths of His heart.
- After the resurrection, the crown of thorns becomes a crown of victory. In the Revelation 19:12, Christ wears "many crowns" and believers who are victorious over sin and Satan will receive the "crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).
- St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, the seventeenth century French nun who helped start the devotion, explained the points of the thorns are the many individual sins of people that hurt the heart of Jesus.

## The cross

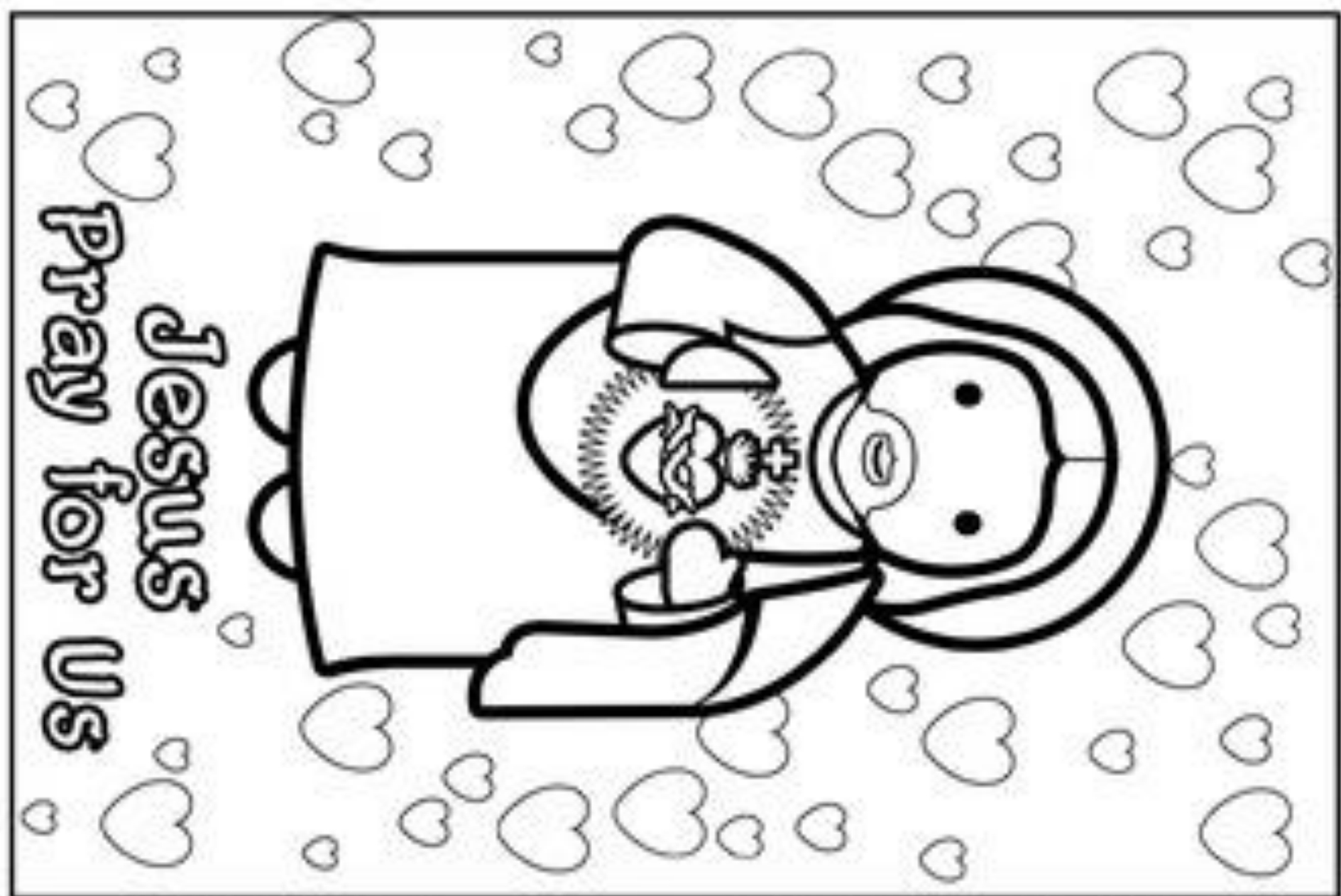
- Christ hung on the cross. The cross was large, his human heart small. But in images of the Sacred Heart, the heart is large, while the cross is much smaller.
- Rather than the heart being nailed to the cross, the cross now seems 'planted' in the heart—showing us that the entire meaning of the crucifixion comes from the heart of Jesus.
- The Heart forever supports the weight of a Cross. Truly, it is the heart of Jesus that makes the cross meaningful for us today.



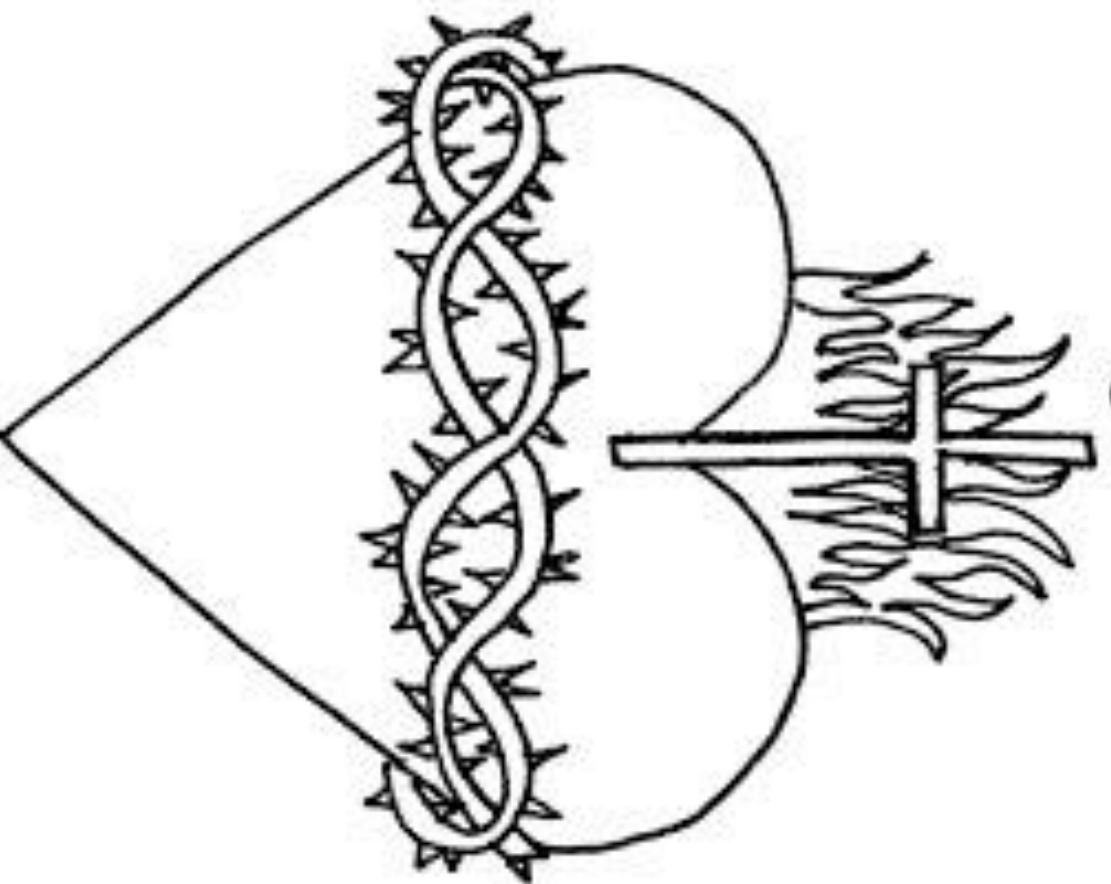
## The Sacred Heart of Jesus



*Sacred Heart  
of Jesus*



Sacred Heart  
of Jesus



Have Mercy on Us