One evening a father went shopping for a birthday present for one of his children. He visited several stores before finding the perfect gift. He brought it home, carefully wrapped it himself, and then attached a card: “I love you always! Love, Papa.” He tip-toed into the bedroom where his child slept, leaving it right next to the bed so it would be seen first thing upon awakening. How do you think that father felt when his child did not acknowledge the gift or make a return for his love by word or deed? What must that father have thought when encountering his child’s *ingratitude?*

“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the greatest Gift that our Heavenly Father could have ever given us! When we do not show our love and gratitude for the Gift of Jesus, or for any of the many gifts our Heavenly Father gives us each day, what must He think?

When we are baptized, we become adopted children into the great family of God! We can say with Jesus, “Abba! Father!” Jesus is not only God our Savior, but He is our brother. By God’s designs, the Blessed Virgin Mary is our mother. We are a family. As children of our Heavenly Father, we want Him to be acknowledged, thanked and loved! When some of our brothers and sisters on earth do not understand that God deserves all of our love, *we can love God for them*. This is what *“reparation”* means. We can repair for their neglect, indifference and ingratitude by offering our love to God not only for ourselves but for those who should love Him but don’t.

In 1917, Our Lord Jesus sent the Blessed Virgin Mary to earth to visit three little children in Fatima, Portugal. The names of the children were Lucia - age 10, (Saint) Francisco - age 9 and (Saint) Jacinta - age 7. There were many important things Our Lady came to remind us of through the children. One of the most important things was the great need in our world today for *reparation!* There are some saints - such as Saint Padre Pio - who were entrusted with a very special mission to make reparation in extraordinary ways, through extraordinary sufferings, but that is not what Jesus and Mary are asking of you and me. They want us to simply live our lives in gratitude and in love, daily offering up our prayers and our sufferings to our Heavenly Father *with trust*, knowing that He is working all things together for our good and for the good of the world.

Our Lord Jesus also saw that in our time there would be many of our brothers and sisters in the family of God who would claim Him as their Savior but they would reject the Blessed Virgin Mary as their sweet, heavenly mother. They would reject the dogma of Our Lady’s Immaculate Conception. They would reject the dogma of her Divine Maternity. They would reject the dogma of her Perpetual Virginity. They would not teach little children about Our Lady, therefore keeping them from truly knowing and loving her. Finally, they would reject displaying beautiful images of Our Lady, and at times even desecrate them. This is why Jesus requested that those who love Our Lady and understand her role in His perfect plan of salvation make reparation on the first Saturday of the month to repair for their errors. We do this by going to Confession and receiving Jesus in Holy Communion; also by praying 5 decades of the Rosary and spending 15 minutes meditating on some of the mysteries of the Rosary with Our Lady. As Saint Maximillian Kolbe reminds us, *“Never be afraid of loving Our Lady too much. You can never love her more than Jesus does!”*

ON THE FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH:

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