



SANTO: SACRED HEART

The symbol of the Sacred Heart represents the heart of Jesus, to which Christians – especially in the Catholic Church – direct their prayers and devotion. It consists of a stylized heart with a burning flame on the top (the transformative power of divine love), and often a small cross and bright rays that radiate from the heart. A crown or a circle of thorns surrounds the Sacred Heart. The concept being visualized here is the yearning for the spiritual transfiguration of the body and the soul.

The Sacred Heart is a heart that suffers, or at least has suffered in the past, yet is still alive, gives off light, brightens and provides warmth. During the Counter-Reformation, Franciscan monks readily adopted the symbol as an expression of the transformative power of the love of Jesus. It is a religious symbol but it can also serve as a more general symbol of fortitude, of rebirth and unconditional love.