

Reflection Saturday Week 10 Immaculate Heart of Mary 2023

Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary began in the 12th century. During the 17th century in France, St John Eudes popularised this devotion along with that to the Sacred Heart. St Luke's Gospel twice mentions that Mary 'kept all these things in her heart', pondering the word of God. Mary shows us how to listen to the words that the Holy Spirit speaks to us in the depths of our hearts, and how to respond in faith. To ponder something implies time spent in quiet reflection. As the Word of God became flesh within her, he inspired and challenged all her reflections from that moment onwards. This is the way in which the Word of God nourishes us. Storing things in the heart they will be in a continual state of evolution. What is true for Mary is true for us. It is something like photosynthesis. Plants breathe in the sunlight and turn it into nourishment for growth and flourishing. The time we spend in the presence of the Word does the same for us. From the moment the Archangel Gabriel greeted Mary, she pondered on his message for the whole of her life. It was a source of holiness for her and it will equally be so for us.

This prayer by Macrina Wiederkehr OSB presents a picture of Mary who, throughout her life, was full of openness, generosity, expectation and hope. Let us make this our prayer too:

On tiptoe we stand, Lord Jesus,
eagerly awaiting your full revelation,
always expecting you to come some more.
Our hands and hearts are open to your grace.
Our lives still waiting for the fullness of your presence.
We are those who have been promised the kingdom,
and we can never forget;
yet, we have a foot in both worlds and we stumble.
But, still we stand on tiptoe,
owning our kingdom-loving hearts
and our earth-eyes.
We lean forward and hope. . .

An archaeologist was digging in the Negev Desert in Israel and came upon a casket containing a mummy, a rather rare occurrence in Israel, to say the least. After examining it, he called Abe,

the curator of the Israeli museum in Jerusalem.

"I've just discovered a 3,000 year old mummy of a man who died of heart failure!" the excited

scientist exclaimed. Abe replied, *"Bring him in. We'll check it out."*

A week later, the amazed Abe called the archaeologist. *"You were right about both the mummy's age and cause of death. How in the world did you know?"*

"That was easy. There was a piece of paper in his hand that said, '10,000 Shekels on Goliath'."