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From the Editor: The Heart of Mary

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The Heart of Mary

Pat Fitzpatrick CSSp

“Spiritans” – yes, but we also place ourselves under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

I went to school in St. Mary’s College, Dublin for eight years – two years in the Junior School and six in the Senior School. “Saint Mary”? Saint Joseph, Saint John, Saint Elizabeth, Saint Teresa – yes. But “Saint Mary”? Some may find it strange to think of her under that title. Yet she was a saint – and the greatest of them all.

We don’t know the date of her birth – so the 8th September may or may not be really accurate. There would have been nothing special about her as she grew up and became a teenager in Nazareth.

Nothing really special – except that in God’s eyes she was very special. She was the teenager on whom God would depend. If she said Yes to what God had in mind, Jesus would be born. If she said No, God would have to look for someone else. Think of it – God depended on Mary to carry out the plan he had in mind. She was indeed special.

And believe it or not – through each and every one of us God wants to see Jesus come alive in our contemporary world. Mary gave birth to Jesus and God became God-with-us, God one-of-us. Mary’s wish now is that you and I bring the risen Jesus into our world.

Along the way Mary would like us to learn from her that in God’s eyes the proud are scattered, the mighty are cast down, the lowly are lifted up, the rich are sent away empty and the hungry are filled with good things.

Her son is the one who will save his people from their sins. Her son Emmanuel: “God-with-us” will be born in a barn a long way from home. Along with Joseph she would bring him up in Nazareth, a small town that had a reputation for producing nothing good or worthwhile or important.

She learned that the way you expect things to be isn’t the way they turn out to be. She learned that when God is at work you don’t fully understand what’s going on – you’re left with questions and doubts and hesitations. She learned that her husband wouldn’t always understand what she was going through. And both of them learned they wouldn’t always understand their God-given boy and his independent ways.

“A crowd was sitting round him when word was brought that his mother and brothers were outside asking for him. ‘Who are my mother and my brothers?’ he replied. And looking round at those who were sitting in the circle about him, he said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers. Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.’”

Yes – there were times when mother and father and relatives learned the hard way: the lost-and-found way, the gone-from-home way, the could-not-get-to-him way, the share-him-with-others way.

Finally there was the foot-of-the-cross way: “When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, here is your son.’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home”...

The-heart-of-Mary way.