

Love In Our Hearts

If we have love in our hearts we shall have God with us.

Mary MacKillop 1890

Listen to the song [Presence](#) (Jen Charadia)

A school, founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph, has the motto: *Love God, Love Others*. This simple, yet challenging Gospel message reminds us to keep in our hearts the command to *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.* (Deuteronomy 6:5)

It also reminds us to remain constant to the **new commandment** given by Jesus.

A reading from the Gospel of John.



*I give you a new commandment that you love one another.
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another,
by this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another. (John 13:34-35)*

Mary MacKillop's love for God and love of others.

Sr. Ignatius and Sr. Angela were two supposed mystics, who deceived Fr. Julian, the co-founder of the Sisters, into believing their experiences of visions were authentic. They admitted later to their deception. It was a dangerous, spiritual model of self-delusion that Julian was allowing, with the possibility of other Sisters following.

Mary resisted. Her commonsense and down-to-earth approach to spirituality would have none of it. To her, this was a distortion. What really mattered for Mary was not experiencing visions, but becoming the person God called her to be, the *utter fullness of God*. That meant living, not with visions, but in love, no matter what, in the mess of reality. (Leo Kane)

Mary's acts of care for others were deeply rooted in a belief that all she needed was to allow God to live in her heart, to be in a loving relationship with God so that she could action that love for the people she encountered.

Reflection

If we have love in our hearts we shall have God with us.

- Reflect now on Mary's down-to-earth and practical spirituality. How did she embrace this in difficult times?
- How is this kind of hands-on spirituality evident in your life?

Praying with Mary MacKillop

“God is love” (1 John 4:8) and what beauty there is in what we do for others if we have love in our hearts.

- Pray that you may know God and *Love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*
- Pray for the people you find most difficult to support.
- Pray that you will find love in your heart and sense God with you in the messiness of life.

Action

Keep a copy of Mary MacKillop’s words with you this week and reflect on them as you begin and end your day. *If we have love in our hearts we shall have God with us.*

In what simple ways can you live these words this week?

Conclusion

Sing or listen in prayer to the song [*Love In Our Hearts*](#) © Jen Charadia 2010

My reflections

Throughout this prayer you may wish to record your thoughts and prayers.