



Message from Patricia Pastrana-Mabanta

THY KINGDOM COME!

***In pondering prayer,
[Mary] constantly sought
the meaning of
occurrences in her life and
held the mysteries of God
deeply in her heart.***

August is, traditionally, a month dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. As we enter another few weeks of Enhanced Community Quarantine in Metro Manila, I believe God gives us this timely celebration of the most loving heart of His Mother as consolation and comfort for these particularly tumultuous times. I'm certain many of us are experiencing a deluge of negative emotions—overwhelm, frustration, fear, doubt, disappointment and anxiety. I myself feel very defeated,

exhausted and confused—in disbelief of our current reality. After a year of living in constant uncertainty at home (or out in a mask and shield), **we Filipinos have taken many steps backward: on lockdown, a dry, deserted wilderness with no oasis or manna in sight.**

Then God reminds us, here we are, with the Immaculate Heart of our Mother. What is her Immaculate Heart like? During the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, St. Luke says “Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart” (Luke 2:19). Once more, after three days of searching for the child Jesus and finding Him in the temple, St. Luke mentions again that “his mother treasured up all these things in her heart” (Luke 2:51). **In pondering prayer, she constantly sought the meaning of occurrences in her life and held the mysteries of God deeply in her heart.**

In the past years, my view of our heavenly Mother has evolved. From merely a pretty statue in Church to now a standard of holiness, our Lady has become a friend and a role model in my vocation as a wife and mother. I have learned to understand more deeply that **our Mother's heart is not only an open, receptive, faithful, gentle and loving heart, but also a very contemplative one.** Despite having experienced the greatest of sorrows, she paused, reflected and trusted in God's wisdom and providence. I'm sure, as our Mother, she understands the many worries and burdens that plague our minds and hearts.

In these difficult times, we can look to our Mother's example and find rest in her Heart. **Let us seek her face and discover her Heart.** Let her be our guide in understanding



and on what God has revealed to us through Christ and His Church. Let her be our support and pillar of strength. Let her teach us calm surrender and peaceful anticipation of seeing things in God's light. Let her meet us where we are in our struggles and in our joys. **Let her accompany us, hold our hands, embrace us and cover us in the mantle of Her loving protection.** Let her intercede for us. Let her draw us close to her son. Let her transform us. Let her bring us joy, hope and peace. **Let her be our Mother.**

I pray you continue to stay safe and healthy, but most importantly, to find the time to quietly ponder. **In this stillness, I pray you find solace in Our Lady and uncover the many gifts of her Immaculate Heart!**


PATRICIA PASTRANA-MABANTA, MD, MBA, DPDS
Director, RC Young Women's Section Philippines