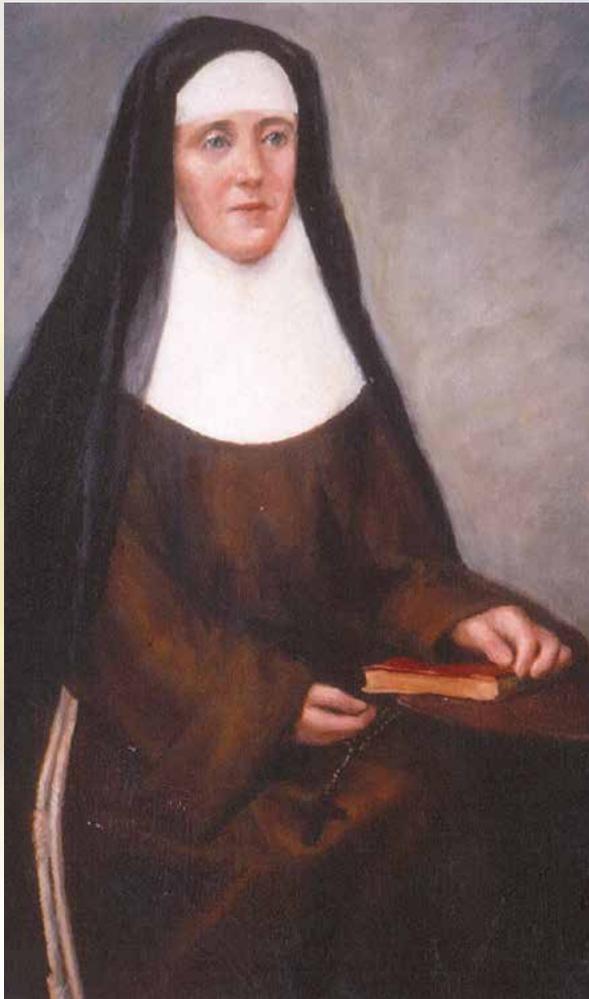


Faith Amidst Fear

So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples (Matthew 28:8).



The women, after encountering the angel at the empty tomb, utilised their fear and joy to get going and to tell others what they had seen and heard.

“Each of us encounters the power of destruction in our lives: the time when a loved one dies, or we are diagnosed with a serious illness, or we lose a dream, a job or an identity. Our temptation is to pretend it doesn’t hurt as much as it does. We want to run toward our favourite way to numb the pain. The paradox of the spiritual life is that this journey through destruction is necessary to reach any kind of resurrection or new life beyond it. We are rebuilt and reshaped through this process” (Christine Valters Paintner, 2012).

“The raising up of Jesus is the completion of his life and death in brightest joy; it is the confirmation and validation of the claim of Jesus that in his humanity he was always revealing the face of God; it establishes that for all time, the liberating grace of God can transform every human situation no matter how hopeless” (Daniel J O’Leary, 1998).

Elizabeth Hayes, founder of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, is a great exemplar of the belief that faith and hard work can transform the most challenging situations. Her work among the poor children in both Jamaica and the USA was led by the love and grace of God:

“I saw and felt it was from God that all the good came, not I who did anything. I was convinced that patience and the very sweetness of charity, the compassion for sinners which Jesus had and which Saints were full of, must be the spirit needed to work any good results...” (from the Diary of Sister Mary Ignatius of Jesus, Elizabeth Hayes).

Elizabeth Hayes’ Feast Day is celebrated on May 6.

REFLECTION

- > When has joy compelled you to share the good news of your faith journey?
- > In which situations has fear forced you to ‘get going’?