

Absolute Devotion

Description

Matthew 6:19-24.

The Catholic convent outside St. Viator's College* had a most holy entrance. There were two statues on either side: To the left was Mary holding the baby Jesus (the Madonna) and to the right was Mary holding His poor dead body just after it had been taken off the cross (the Pieta).

These depicted the absolute devotion of the nuns who lived in that place. They were fully and wholly devoted to one thing: Jesus. They had given up all earthly treasures and pleasures to serve the Lord in a life of prayer, their teaching in the grade school, and their compassionate ministries in the local community.

The magi brought treasures for the Christ child that showed they were truly wise: gold to fund the family's flight to Egypt; frankincense, which was a symbol of worship and prayer; and myrrh for His anointing at death. They understood who Jesus was and what He had come to accomplish.

Likewise, Mary understood. She wrapped Him in strips of cloth as was the custom for the dead. Lazarus was wrapped the same way, and the same word is used. Luke says that Mary "treasured" these things up in her heart (2:19).

*St. Viator College was a Catholic liberal arts college in Bourbonnais, Illinois. It is no longer in operation. Today, the site is home to Olivet Nazarene University.

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