





# THE FEAST OF MATER ADMIRABILIS



The feast of Mater Admirabilis is celebrated each year on October 20 and commemorates the unique place that Mary has in the life of a Sacred Heart student.

The term Mater Admirabilis (pronounced mah-tair ad-meer-ah-buh-lus, Latin for *Mother Most Admirable*) refers to a painting of the Virgin Mary in the Trinità dei Monti in Rome by Pauline Perdrau, a novice of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Her painting, a fresco finished in 1844, depicts Mary as a young woman in a rose-colored dress. Upon completion, the fresco colors were thought to be too vivid and it was covered by a curtain. Later, when the curtain was removed, the colors had softened and, to the Sacred Heart sisters, the change was nothing less than a miracle. When Pope Pius IX visited Trinità dei Monti, he was overwhelmed by the beauty of the fresco of Mary and exclaimed, “Mater Admirabilis!” giving the painting the title it bears today.

Every Sacred Heart school has a statue or painting of Mater. At Regis, our statue of Mater is located in the Kelley building. A small kneeler is available at the base of the statue for quiet prayer and all members of the Regis community may leave slips of paper with special prayer intentions.

Pauline Perdrau, a Sacred Heart novice, desired to create something beautiful to honor Mary, but her painting did not turn out as she had hoped. It is a common human experience to drum up the courage to do something that you feel in your heart but then to have your hopes dashed when things do not turn out as expected. The “in-between” moments from Pauline’s initial brush strokes to the final drying of the colors on the wall is particularly intriguing. She had wonderful intentions and tried her best and with each brush stroke she anticipated a beautiful result. Each time we decide to do something that takes courage, we put forth our best effort and then we have to wait with patience to see how things might turn out.

- Think about a time when you tried something new that did not turn out as you expected it to. How did that make you feel?
- Where do you find God in these “in-between” moments?

As we engage in these acts of courage and try new things, we have to trust in God that in the end our efforts might be transformed from something garish and unappealing to something that is beautiful and comforting to others and as extraordinary as Mater Admirabilis!