



Who is Mater Admirabilis?

Welcome to ‘October’s bright blue weather’ and welcome to the celebration of the Feast of Mater Admirabilis (October 20), the special patroness of the sophomore class.

Though it is not recorded in Scripture, tradition holds that Mary was presented in the Temple when she was about four years old. Her parents, Joachim and Anna took Mary to the Temple and left her there in dedication. The stained glass window at the front of Duchesne’s chapel (to the left as you walk in) depicts this event.

Mater Admirabilis (Mother Most Admirable) is the title of Our Lady as she is pictured in the Temple during her early teenage years. The original Mater is a fresco (a painting on wet plaster) on a wall in the Trinita dei Monte in Rome. It was painted in 1844 by a young Novice, Pauline Perdrau. The favorite color of Sister Pauline was pink, so she painted the young Mary in a pink dress.

Every Sacred Heart school has either a picture or a statue of Mater. Duchesne has a statue of Mater at the south end of the second floor and many pictures of her throughout the school.

Mary is about the age of our sophomores. Each sophomore studies the virtues of Mary in order to choose some woman in her own life that reminds her of Mater. This woman is invited to come to Duchesne and give the sophomore her Mater Medal during services on October 16.

Let’s look at this photo of Mater. She has stopped her work with the yarn; she has put down her prayer book; she has lowered her eyes and has turned to God within. Mater is known in the Society of the Sacred Heart as the Virgin of the invisible and the essential.

What a wonderful patroness for our sophomores, so busy with all the heavy classes, with sports, with social life and the hope for a coming driver’s license. Mater reminds them (and us) to stop a minute and spend some time with the God within.

Mary’s habit of turning to the God within helped her throughout her life. Luke tells us, “Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.” (Luke 2:19) When we do not understand all the events in our life, when we wonder if we can get through them, Mater encourages us to take these events to the God within and ask for help.

As children of the Sacred Heart, the sophomores have special access to the Heart of Jesus. Mater will show them the way.

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