

Friday was the feast of the Sacred Heart. The Sacred Heart isn't doctrinal, it's devotional. It isn't Church teaching, it's our devotional response to Church teaching. It's an important feast because the heart itself is important – not just the physical heart that beats in our bodies, of course – but the spiritual heart, which beats at the centre of our soul.

All Jesus' teaching, his stories and parables, are heart-based. He was a heart-based person. He responded to people first and foremost with his heart. This is because our spiritual heart, deep within, is the place where we meet God.

Everything begins in the heart. Think of how many projects our head can come up with, that fail because our heart isn't in it. That's one of the most common phrases to explain the failure of so many plans and projects in our lives: my heart wasn't in it. There isn't as single deed – good or bad – that doesn't first start in the heart. This is why Jesus tells us to guard our hearts. He tells us this because:

Only the heart can truly see clearly it sees what the eye can't and what the head doesn't know..

Because the only thing that counts is how much heart we invest in life, how far we can ignore our fears of being hurt or humiliated. In the end, the only thing we will regret is not having let our hearts love enough...

Because God sees hearts as we see faces...

Because there is a God-shaped hole in every heart that can only be filled by him...

I want to finish with two quotations – one beautiful and one funny, both by Christian writers who lived centuries apart. The first is from C.S. Lewis, who said:

“He who looks upon a plate of bacon and eggs with lust, has already committed breakfast with it in his heart.”

And from Blaise Pascal:

“The heart has its reasons which reason knows nothing of.”

All this... all this is what the Sacred Heart is about.