



*The kingdom of heaven is like
a treasure hidden in a field.
Matthew 13: 44*

3. Life force

In his letter to the Philippians, St Paul poetically describes the mystery of the Incarnation of Jesus:

*Being in the form of God, he did not count equality with God something to be grasped,
but he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,
becoming as human beings are;
and being in every way like a human being he was humbler yet,
even to accepting death, death on a cross.*

With these words, St Paul opens up our understanding of Jesus' spirituality. Out of compassion for us, and in order to save us, Jesus stooped down to the level of our human existence. Through this self-emptying, Jesus let go his privileges, his rights, his dignity as Son of God, and became hidden in our human nature, identifying with us so as to encourage us back to the Father. When Christians confront this mystery, they begin to understand one of the Christian paradoxes: that what is significant in God's sight is often hidden from human recognition. The life of Mary reflects a similar self-emptying. She did not cling to her privilege as Mother of Jesus. She submerged herself among the disciples, becoming hidden and unknown at the heart of the Church. Father Colin saw that living this Marian way of life was a very effective way of doing the great things we are called to do as followers of Jesus. So it is appropriate to speak of a "Marian Church". By that title we don't mean a Church focussed on Mary, but a Church that bears the features of this believer who was both mother and disciple of Jesus, and who was a hidden, compassionate presence in the Church Jesus founded. Karl Rahner writes of this Marian way of being Church: "The unnoticeable thing may be the most important; the snowball may become an avalanche; the archimedean point of leverage is not always located at the spot where the loudest talk is going on. Courage to make an unimpressive start, the humility of small beginnings, is the charism of a truly great apostolate."