

# New Beginnings

THE JOURNAL OF THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY  
OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL IN THE IRISH PROVINCE



Volume 1, 24  
SPRING 2021



*"Let us keep this Lamp  
always lit in our hearts."  
St. Vincent de Paul [XII:116]*

*Monika  
Mayer*

# Contents

**Foreword** *Sister Goretti Butler* ..... 3

**Editorial** *Sister Anne Neylon* ..... 4

**Activists and Advocates; The Face of the Young** *Dilinna Aniebonam* ..... 5

**DC Provincial Assembly Closing Mass August 2020 -**

**The Beatitudes** *Rev. Mark Noonan, C.M.*..... 6

**COVID-19: Some Wisdom from the Past** *Rev. Robert Maloney, C.M.*..... 7

**The Virtual Parish** *Gerard Reilly*..... 8

**Welcome Sister Marian to the role of Provincial Treasurer**..... 10

**Condolence Message to Sister Goretti Butler** *Sister Franca Edet*..... 11

**‘Savior of Zvenigorod’** ..... 11

**Deaths and Acknowledgements** ..... 12

**‘Step Out’- Sister MJ McCullen DC -1987** ..... 13

**‘Serving Soothes Souls’ (1589)** *Dee Mansi*..... 14

**Poetry Collection** *Sister Anna May O’Reilly*..... 15

**‘Together we can do more on Mission Sunday 2020’** ..... 16

**Every Pandemic has a Silver Lining** *Pat Collins CM* ..... 17

**My Insights into the Correspondence between**

**St Vincent and St Louise** *Sister Alice Daly* ..... 18

**A Menu for Easter** *Connor Johnson* ..... 20

**‘Stretch forth your hand to the poor’- World Day of the Poor 2020**..... 22

**Patsy and Mary Brothers** *Sisters Cabrini O’Connell and Anne Neylon* ..... 24

**The annual visit to the Vet** *Mary Tiernan*..... 25

**St Finnian of Clonard** *Caroline Teehan*..... 26

**The Acceptance of our Children’s millennial attitudes**

*Cristita Manzano* ..... 27

**The Feast of St Vincent de Paul Covid-19** ..... 28

**Vaccines for COVID-19 on the Solemnity of the**

**Immaculate Conception** *Cathy Burke* ..... 30

**Tribute to Sister Eileen Buckley DC** ..... 31

**‘I will be forever grateful’** *Susanne Plummer*..... 32

**Books of Interest**..... 33

**Welcome to the New Normal in Mt Prospect** *The Sisters in Mount Prospect* .... 37

**Building and Education in Kitale and Thigio, Kenya** ..... 38

**Climate Action Award 2020, Chepnyal, Kenya** ..... 40

**‘Co-incidence is God’s way of remaining anonymous’**

*Etáin Nic Cinnghamhna* ..... 41

**Shielding and Cocooning during Covid-19-A Belfast experience**

*The Sisters in Belfast* ..... 42

**‘Say Yes to the Light’** *Amanda Smith*..... 43

**‘Uyo: Nigeria-Sisters bring inclusive education to children with and without disabilities’** *Kechukwu Inuome* ..... 44

**Aware** *Sister Bride Lyng*..... 45

**A Significant Celebration in honour of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal**..... 46

**New Beginnings is published by:** Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, St Catherine’s Provincial House, Dunardagh, Temple Hill, Blackrock, Co Dublin  
Tel 00 353 1 2882896 E-mail anneneylon@daughtersofcharity.ie

Website: www.daughtersofcharity.ie Permission granted to insert photographs. Thank you to Sisters and colleagues who helped in the production of this journal, *New Beginnings*.

Published February 2021 **Designed & printed:** Levins Print

**QUOTATIONS** Quotations are taken from Chapter 6, ‘Dialogue and Friendship in Society’, Pope Francis Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (2020).

Images are copied from websites found on google

## COMMUNITY: PLAYING A PART

Neighbourly altruistic deeds of love  
Are praised for help,  
and what mercy reveals:  
Greeting elderly,  
taking meals on wheels,  
Raising potential of youth,  
To improve.

Humanitarian acts are Christian;  
Ancient societies were often brutal;  
Now, secular states learn  
from the Gospel,  
And Church members  
make profession.

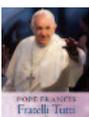
Of God, truth, faith,  
the Ten Commandments:  
God-inspired aims urge to persevere;  
In our life  
there must be full coherence.

We esteem goodness in each one,  
all ranks,  
But we must own the dignity  
we bear,  
And humbly, before all,  
we must say thanks.

Eamon Flanagan  
*(Saints, Scholars, Heroes, p.32)*



*The cover page shows a work of art painted by Weronika Majer to celebrate the feast of St Vincent de Paul on 27 September 2020. Weronika is a third year student in Caritas College, Ballyfermot, Dublin.*



*‘Approaching, speaking, listening, looking at, coming to know and understand one another, and to find common ground: all these things are summed up in the one word “dialogue.”’ (no. 198).*

## FOREWORD

Greetings to all readers of the *New Beginnings* journal. Thank you again to those who submitted articles and also, to those who encouraged others to contribute. May 'the Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace.' (Nm 6:26).

Though the pandemic is still with us, we live in hope. Spring is here and we thank God for the beauty it brings to the Planet. Let us recognise the 'goodness and beauty' and help us 'to create healthier societies.' (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, no. 287).

I take this opportunity on behalf of the Daughters of Charity to welcome Bishop Dermot Farrell in his appointment as Archbishop of Dublin. I also thank Most Reverend Diarmuid Martin for his leadership and service as Archbishop and his kindness to the Daughters of Charity and the Vincentian Family of the diocese for sixteen years. I also congratulate President Joe Biden and the Vice President Camela Harris as they take on the role of President and Vice-President of the USA.

I am grateful for daily blessings in the Province and express my gratitude to Sister Justine O'Brien whose term as Provincial Treasurer is complete. I welcome Sister Marian Harte to this new role. A new publication (2020) 'Saints, Scholars, Heroes' of poems, commentary and prose reflections written by Eamon Flanagan CM provides a hopeful and inspiring 'picture of today's world.' Congratulations Fr Eamon on this latest publication.

The current issue of *New Beginnings* in keeping with the tradition of the Company reflects an international flavour. Covid-19 weaves its way through the articles. Rev. Robert Maloney CM offers wisdom from the experience of St Vincent de Paul in the time of pandemic. There are accounts of the developments in Kenya in the field of education and housing. Congratulations to Dinah Chenangat the individual winner of the Climate Action Award 2020 in Chepnyal, Kenya.

Congratulations to the Daughters of Charity in Guatemala who received the medal of the 'Order of Monsignor Gerardi' in recognition of their 'support of the poorest of the poor and whose human rights are often disregarded.' From Uyo, Nigeria we read how the Sisters bring inclusive education to children with and without disabilities. Dee Mansi keeps us posted on the gallant work of the AIC. Sister Alice Daly draws insights from the letters between St Vincent de Paul and St Louise de Marillac.

Conscious also of the number of deaths due to the pandemic or other illness, I offer my condolence to all who are bereaved at this time. Sister Franca Edet shares her memory of Sister Elma Hurley. The staff of Henrietta Street School took the time to send a tribute on the death of Sister Eileen Buckley. May they rest in peace.

Reading each article one is keenly aware that the Church is missionary by nature and so is the Company. Sister Gertrude Foley DC, writes that everything in St Elizabeth Ann Seton's life story suggests 'a spirituality for mission is a spirituality developed in mission.'

<https://vinformation.org/en/st-elizabeth-seton-a-spirituality-for-mission/>

Dilinna Aniebonam inspires hope as she praises the work of youth as Activists and Advocates. The homily for the closing of the Provincial Assembly (August 2020) spurs on the Daughters to the dynamic theme of 'Ephata' and our life as beatitude.

God works anew through the events of this pandemic. Writers reflect how best to work, communicate and engage in present circumstances with creativity and joy. Pat Collins CM succinctly writes 'Every Pandemic has a Silver Lining'. The 'Virtual Parish' is the new normal for our time. This brings a challenge to all, not least to a mother, Cristita Manzano who writes on 'The Acceptance of our Children'. Whatever the changes in society, we rely on the support of one another in daily life recognising the guiding hand of Providence and coincidence.

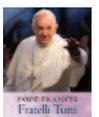


Sisters adapted to the changing life circumstances in creative ways. The experience of Covid-19 with the work of the Domestic and Provincial Assemblies and with Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter on 'Fraternity and Social Friendship' offer local communities the opportunity to practically live and experience 'the mystique of community.' The local communities in Belfast and Mount Prospect share their Covid-19 experiences, as does Sister Anna May O'Reilly in her poetry collection.

How wonderful to celebrate the Blessed Virgin Mary as the only Mother of the Company! A pilgrimage of prayer is currently taking place in Italy, as a statue of Mary Immaculate is brought to various churches.

There is more to read and encounter, than I have mentioned here! On the note of encounter, I encourage you in the words of Sister Francoise Petit, to 'be ever more a neighbour to others.. following the model of the Good Samaritan...' allowing 'our vocation... to be the eyes, arms and heart of God.' (Paris, January 1, 2021).

Yours sincerely,  
**Sister Goretta Butler DC**  
Provincial, Province of Ireland



# EDITORIAL

*‘Times like this teach you everything you need to know about yourself.’*



This radio advertisement for the ‘Electric Ireland’ campaign prompts one to self-awareness and knowledge. ‘What have these times and experiences of Covid-19 taught me about myself?’

These challenging words relate to a topic the Daughters of Charity studied and discussed to prepare for their Provincial Assembly (2020), namely, ‘the mystique of living together.’ The Sisters internationally reflected on the theme of ‘Ephata’, which invited them to ‘be opened, to break through the gate, to go toward and to encounter’ Jesus Christ.

The Provincial Council distributed extracts from Church documents for preparatory reading. Sisters prayed and reflected on the writings in the context of their personal and community lives. Human fraternity was a common theme throughout. Pope Francis’ Encyclical Letter on ‘Fraternity and Social Friendship’ (*Fratelli Tutti*) published months later (October 2020), copper fastened the vision presented in the chosen readings. Such, St Vincent says, is the work of Divine Providence.

Fraternity is a word commonly used by Pope Francis’, a word possibly considered obsolete today. St Francis of Assisi inspired Pope Francis to use this title for the Encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*. St Francis spoke these words to address ‘his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life marked by the flavour of the Gospel’ (*FT*, no.1). The Pope recalled St Francis’ counsel when he called for a [fraternal] ‘love that transcends barriers of geography and distance.’ He describes a ‘fraternal openness that allows us to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical proximity, regardless of where he or she was born or lives.’ (no.1).

So herein lies the challenge for all members of the Vincentian family, not least the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul. What inspired and

challenged Daughters of Charity from the prescribed and well-chosen readings in their preparation?

Firstly, the realisation that we are ‘a people made one with unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit’ (*Vita Consecrata*, 1996). St Louise de Marillac’s spirituality was strongly Trinitarian. She wished ‘to honour the three Persons separately and also together in the unity of the divine essence.’ St Louise valued unity in diversity. For St John Paul II the promotion of fraternal love was key to transforming ‘human relationships’ to ‘create a new type of solidarity.’ Our love in community is ‘for’ God and ‘from’ God. Most importantly community life witnesses to ‘being more than an instrument for carrying out a specific mission.’ Life in community, ‘in fraternal communion is a God enlightened space’ (*VC*, no. 42). The Sisters also explored *Starting Afresh from Christ* (2002). The focus was on the spirituality of communion, which leads the Sisters to see that ‘holiness and mission come through community because in and through it Christ makes himself present.’

Pope Francis (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no.88) chides those who renounce the ‘realism of the social aspect of the Gospel.’ He cautions against those ‘who want a spiritual Christ, without flesh or the cross and want their interpersonal relationships provided by sophisticated equipment, by screens and systems which can be turned on and off on command.’ Fraternal love calls the Daughters of Charity to see that ‘true faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others.’ Jesus summons us ‘to the revolution of tenderness.’ Their mission is joyfully ‘to bear witness to a constantly new way of living together in fidelity to the Gospel’.

In his *World Day of Peace* message (1 January 2014, no.1), Pope Francis emphasised ‘fraternity’ as ‘an essential human quality’ as ‘we are relational beings’. Our vocation as Daughters of Charity is ‘to form a community ...who accept and care for one another.’ If this is ‘denied or ignored’ they become ‘inured to the suffering of others’ and ‘closed in on themselves.’

In *Proclaim* (2016), Pope Francis notes that the sign of communion in ‘missionary witness and proclamation’ comes from the unity of the heart and soul of community (Acts 4:32).

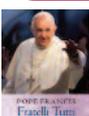
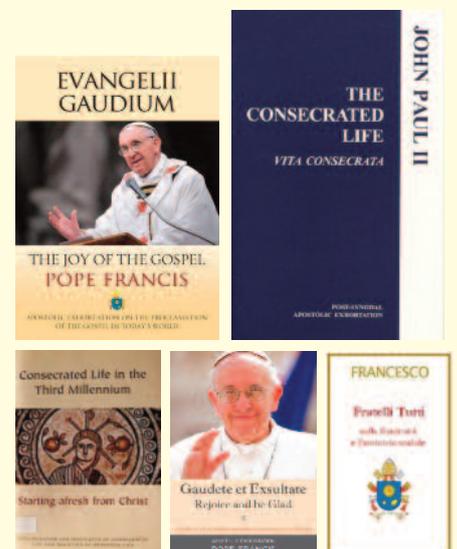
In *Gaudete et Exsultate* (2018), Pope Francis suggests means of living a life of holiness naming conversion, ‘living the present moment, filling it to the brim with love’, being ‘good stewards’, love with ‘the Lord’s unconditional love’, being joyful rather than sad and recognise God’s gifts in our lives.

Added to the prescribed readings for the Provincial Assembly 2020, the Daughters of Charity now have available, *Fratelli Tutti*, where ‘we as believers are challenged to return to our sources’ to the Gospel and the Vincentian charism ‘to concentrate on what is essential: worship of God and love of our neighbour’ (*FT*, no. 282). This inspires membership to reflect and consider how ‘Times like this teach you everything you need to know about yourself.’

Sister Francoise Petit wrote to the Sisters, ‘May we know how to live simply, pray together and... with God’s grace, quite plainly love.’ Quoting St Vincent, “God never fails to come to our rescue in our time of need, when we, for our part, have done what we could” (Saint Vincent, May 14, 1659, CCD VII, 564). (27 November 2020).

Let us imitate Mary, Mother of God as ‘she treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart’ (Lk 2:19).

*Sister Anne Neylon*



*‘Some people attempt to flee from reality, taking refuge in their own little world; others react to it with destructive violence.’ (no. 199).*

# Activists & Advocates: The Face of the Young



A few days ago, I listened to a podcast by a couple who were discussing these extraordinary times and where they felt their place in society was as young adults. Among the extended list of issues they spoke about, they mentioned their 19-month-old daughter, imagining future generations like hers reading perhaps even studying about these times.

It made me consider this year alone - 2020 summarised in a history book, much like the bulky, picture sparse ones I read at school. I imagine the chapters in this book: the largest civil rights movement of our time? The largest health pandemic the world has seen? Our final wake up call for climate change? Or the year the world unified to demand accountability from governments and representatives around the world.

When I turn on my tv or scroll through an app on my phone, I see vivid images of Hong Kong, Belarus, Thailand, Venezuela, India, Nigeria, the UK, and the US. I see masses of people marching, protesting, campaigning and speaking. I notice that the one commonality between these countries and the issues they advocate for is that most of them are young people. Young people speaking out, continuing to educate themselves on rights and

legislations that affect them and wanting to have an impact on this world. It is truly inspiring.

Recently with the finger pointed at young people concerning the spread of coronavirus, I am reminded that to be young comes with a lot of hope and aspiration, but also with a lot of scrutinies. I have seen it in the workplace where young adults are recognised as enthusiastic but consistently reminded of their inexperience; or in social situations where the presence of young people is quickly followed by the assumption of rowdiness, being wild or rejecting authority. However, when difficult times are upon us, notice that young people

are fearless, innovative, ready to face any challenge head-on, fighting in wars, braving protests and volunteering during a health pandemic.

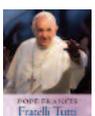
I am proud to immerse myself in the creativity and knowledge that young people have to offer. I am inspired by the likes of Yara Shahidi organising campaigns to encourage young people to vote in the US. Shamma bint Suhail Faris Mazru empowering young people to be active in society and government and Greta Thunberg representing a generation in the fight against an existential crisis at the United Nations General Assembly. Young people speaking out on podcasts and live streams, creating political art and music, teenagers organising and delivering peaceful BlackLivesMatter protests in capital cities.

As a young Catholic adult, I have a strong desire to continue learning and growing with these role models. In doing this, I am not only trying to live my life loving my neighbour but remembering that Jesus encourages us to go out and speak to people. Whoever and wherever we are, there are activists and advocates in our home towns too engaging on topics like religion, race, gender, identity, class, technology, etc. Despite what our parents and grandparents might think or say, it has never been a better time to be young!

*Dilinna Aniebonam*

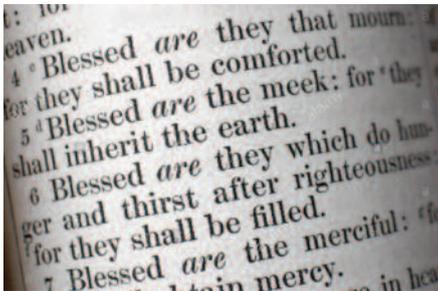


*"Yet 'between selfish indifference and violent protest there is always another possible option: that of dialogue. Dialogue between generations; dialogue among our people, for we are that people; readiness to give and receive, while remaining open to the truth.'" (no.199).*



## Closing Mass for the Daughters of Charity Provincial Assembly THE BEATITUDES (Lk 6:20-6).

The closing Mass for the Provincial Assembly took place in the Chapel, St Catherine's Provincial House, Dunardagh, Temple Hill, Blackrock, Co. Dublin on 9 August 2020. The celebrant was the Provincial Director, Fr Mark Noonan CM. The Mass was live-streamed to the houses in Ireland and to Chepnyal, Kenya, Africa.



Fr Mark submitted his homily notes.

*Fixing his eyes on his disciples Jesus said: How happy are you who are poor: yours is the kingdom of God. Happy you who are hungry now: you shall be satisfied. Happy you who weep now: you shall laugh. Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal. Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in Heaven. Luke 6:20*

The gospel reading is Luke's version of Matthew's beatitudes also called the Sermon on the Mount. The beatitudes are a **distillation of the thinking of Jesus**. They describe the **character of God** or the **way of God** better than anything else in the bible. When you look at the beatitudes you can say without fear of contradiction that **God is like this**.

The Beatitudes are very **revolutionary**. They were **revolutionary in the time of Jesus** and they are **still revolutionary**. The Jewish people at the time of Jesus believed that **riches and wealth were a blessing and a visible sign of how God had blessed someone**. Jesus teaches the

**exact opposite**- something quite revolutionary-Happy are you who are poor. This sermon of Jesus on the beatitudes is a **charter for holiness**. It's the **ideal** to which we all strive. The Beatitudes are the be-attitudes... the blessed attitudes. They are **attitudes to life and people** which if taken and worked on, become the **way of Jesus for us-the plan of God for each of us and for the church**.

The beatitudes go against the **normal way of looking at life and people**. The world would say: Blessed are the **strong**, blessed are the **powerful**, blessed are the **rich**. The beatitudes **turn that kind of thinking on its head**. Blessed are the poor, blessed are the meek, blessed are the hungry. How often does the wisdom of God stand human thinking on its head in the Bible? **David** was the youngest of his brothers and he was chosen to be King. Jewish thinking of the time would say it should be the **first born son**. A group of fishermen-**unversed in the ways of preaching and teaching and learning** were chosen to **carry on** the mission of Jesus. **Human thinking would say it was doomed to failure right from the start**. Paul, the Pharisee, who persecuted the church became the **great apostle to the gentile world**. He was a **most unlikely choice as he was persecuting the church at the time of his call**. Mary who was a **virgin** became the mother of God. **Pope John XXIII** at the age of 78 was elected Pope. **On paper** it was a bit crazy; yet he turned out to be one of the **great reforming popes**. **Oscar Romero defended the rights of the well to do in San Salvador**. After he became archbishop he grew into a champion of those on the margins and **gave his life for their cause**. You just never know with God. God is always different.

The beatitudes are revolutionary because they go against all human reason and thinking. The prophet Isaiah puts it like this:

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
My ways not your ways- it is Yahweh who speaks.  
Yes, the heavens are as high above the earth  
As my ways are above your ways,  
My thoughts above your thoughts.  
(Isaiah 55:8-9)*

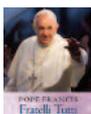
God is always **full of surprises**, always **new, always creative**.

Luke's version of the Beatitudes all hinge on **detachment from worldly values**. You could translate the first of his beatitudes *Happy are you who are poor* as **how lucky you are if you are not addicted to material things**. When **we place material things like money, control, prestige** in the centre of our concerns, we find ourselves caught in an **addictive pattern**.

*I saw that the Sermon on the Mount was the whole of Christianity for those who wanted to live a Christian life. It is that Sermon which has endeared Jesus to me. —Mahatma Gandhi*

The British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill was asked at the end of the second world war how was he going to **rebuild Europe** after the devastation of the war answered: **With the Sermon on the Mount of course**.

Theologian Robert Barron (now auxiliary Bishop in Los Angeles) writes: "Christianity is, above all, a **way of seeing**. Everything else in Christian life flows from and circles around the **transformation of vision**. Christians see **differently**, and that is why their **prayer, their worship, their action, their whole way of being** in the world has a distinctive accent and flavour, which



*'Dialogue is often confused with ...: the feverish exchange of opinions on social networks, frequently based on media information that is not always reliable. These exchanges are merely parallel monologues. But monologues engage no one, and their content is frequently self-serving and contradictory.'* (no.200).

flows from friendship with Jesus of Nazareth. Religion is **first and foremost a way of seeing**. It can't change the facts about the world we live in, but it can **change the way we see those facts**, and that in itself can often make a **difference**." Likewise, even if our own life circumstances might suggest otherwise, we may find the courage to believe that we too are blessed, fortunate to have the assurance that we are dear to God.

There has been a long succession of women and men who have come to see as Jesus saw, and have found the courage to act on what they saw. They have seen what is important, what matters, what needs to be addressed immediately. They are our saints, whether or not they have been given Church or civil recognition for their deeds.

Ajahn Brahm is a British-born Buddhist monk, who is abbot of a monastery in Serpentine, Western Australia. He has

compiled a book of stories about dealing with life's difficulties in ways that lead to peace and contentment. One of his stories illustrates what can come from living in tune with the Beatitudes:

A monk was asked to teach meditation at a nearby prison. Many of the inmates had never met a monk. After the first session, they began to ask him about his life in the monastery.

"We get up at four o'clock every morning," the monk began. "Sometimes it's very cold because our rooms don't have heaters. We eat one meal a day, all mixed together in the one bowl. There is no alcohol, and we live as celibates. Much of our day is spent in silence. We work hard, and sleep on our cell floor. We also spend a lot of time in prayer and meditation."

The inmates were stunned by the austerity of the monastic life. It made their high-security prison seem like a

five-star hotel. One prisoner, moved by what he heard, said: "Why don't you come in here and stay with us?"

The monk thanked the inmates for their kindness, but said he was happy as a monk. He had chosen this life in order to seek God in a community of like-minded men. The monastery was not a prison; it was a place in which, the monk said, he has never been as free. (*Who Ordered This Truckload of Dung?* Wisdom Publications, Somerville MA, 2004)

Anywhere we don't want to be, no matter how physically comfortable, is really a prison. It might be a workplace, a domestic situation, a group that does not share our values. But we can escape from such confinement by embracing the spirit contained in the Beatitudes of today's gospel. They have the capacity to transform our lives, to help us to see and live, inspired by the mind and heart of Jesus.

## COVID-19: Some Wisdom from the Past. The Experience of St. Vincent de Paul

Coronavirus  
COVID-19



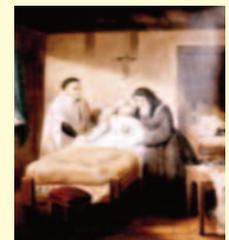
The following article, written by **Rev. Robert Maloney, C.M.** was submitted by Fr Mark Noonan C.M.

**Notations added and this text produced by the DePaul University Vincentian Studies Institute.**

St. Vincent was no stranger to pandemics. On perhaps no other topic were his emotions so deeply stirred. Outbursts of the plague ravaged Europe frequently during his active years, taking the lives of many whom he loved. Marguerite Naseau, whose story he often told and whom he always regarded as the first Daughter of Charity, succumbed to the plague at 27, even before the Daughters were recognized juridically. (1) Lambert au Couteau—of whom Vincent once said “the loss of this man is like having me tear out one of my eyes or cut off one of my arms”(2) and whom he sent to establish the Congregation of the Mission in Poland—died serving the plague-stricken in Warsaw in 1653. Antoine Lucas, much admired not only by Vincent but also by other founders of religious communities at that time, died from the plague in Genoa in 1656.(3)

Tragedies piled up in Vincent's life, especially in the 1650's. He often spoke of “war, plague and famine” as the scourge of the poor. In addition, there were persecutions in Algiers, Tunis, Ireland, and the Hebrides. The Congregation of the

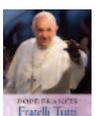
Mission's first martyr, Thaddeus Lye, a seminarian, gave his life in Limerick in 1652.(4) His persecutors crushed his skull and cut off his hands and feet in the presence of his mother. When in 1657, on top of hearing that three priests had died on their way to Madagascar, Vincent received news that six members of the house in Genoa had succumbed to the plague, he described himself as “overwhelmed with sorrow” and added that he “could not receive a greater blow without being completely crushed by it.”(5)



In his letters and conferences, Vincent mentioned the plague more than 300 times. He sent lengthy letters offering practical advice about helping plague victims to his friend, Alain de Solminihac, the Bishop of Cahors,(6) and to the superiors in Genoa(7) and Rome.(8) In his talks, he described the plague in France, Algiers, Tunis, Poland, and throughout Italy. To read the remainder of this article please follow this link to;

<https://blogs.depaul.edu/dmm/2020/04/01/covid-19-some-wisdom-from-the-past-the-experience-of-st-vincent-de-paul/>

**By Rev. Robert Maloney, C.M.**



# The Virtual Parish

**As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds, one thing that has become clearer is that we will not be returning to normal parish life any time soon. So, as we face a new set of circumstances and resulting challenges, how do we reach out to our parish communities to support them at this time of great need, using the different kinds of technology that are now available to us?**

## 1. Virtual meetings

Many parishioners have computers, smart phones and tablets. We should consider if we can run many of our parish groups using Zoom, Face Time, Facebook Live or other similar programmes. We can also host virtual meetings in our churches using the existing webcam. For example, a bereavement support group, a bible study class or faith sharing group for young people preparing for the sacraments next year could be held online. These meetings can help people to remain connected.

Some parish meetings such as the Pastoral Council or Finance Committee can take place in the virtual world. Of course, it will take more planning such as emailing resources to people in advance of the meeting or posting them on the parish website but this was a great way of keeping people in contact and maintaining an all-important sense of community.

## 2. Online Masses

As anticipated, not all parishioners have decided to return to our churches many for very good reasons, most importantly their health. And, of course, not all churches can now accommodate the numbers who may wish to attend.

I have heard it said that in some parishes only about 40% of the previous congregation has returned. This presents us with an immediate challenge about how to reach out to

our virtual congregation and to make them an important part of our liturgies.

Perhaps we can share Mass leaflets or the readings on our parish website before Mass begins. The Priest or Deacon giving the homily could post a copy of these remarks online as well. Where possible we should have music and if necessary a CD recording can be used when musicians are not available. The objective is to make our online Masses as welcoming and inclusive as possible and to use every opportunity to reach out to our online congregations as well as those present in the church.

My ninety-year-old uncle who lives in the UK has been delighted to watch Mass online from his old family home in Derry in recent months. He really feels connected with his original parish community.

The parish newsletter can also be a vital connection with people and can also be posted online. It can keep people in touch with the parish and can include reflections on the Sunday readings and other words of encouragement and inspiration to see people through these difficult times.

## 3. Other Sacraments and Prayers online

Many parishes have live-streamed the rosary or benediction online either directly after weekday Mass or later in the day if that suits the parish schedule better. Another suggestion would be to say the Morning or Evening Prayer of the Church live on

the internet for parishioners who would like to join in. This is the universal prayer of the church said by all religious priests and nuns and is a wonderful way of connecting with people of faith throughout the world.

## 4. Participation By All

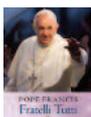
There is a concern that as a result of COVID-19, the church has become more clerical however unintentionally. When Masses were on webcam, often the priest was alone in the church. Now that Mass is being said publicly again, lay ministries are beginning to re-emerge. It's wonderful to see readers and Eucharistic ministers present again in some parishes and also cantors and musicians. The rich variety of lay ministers can be seen with stewards assisting people to their seats and ensuring the church environment is safe. There is also the vitally important ministry of keeping our churches sanitised and clean.

During the lockdown, some people got used to not being at Mass in person; they have adapted to the fact that access to some of the other sacraments (eg the Sacrament of Reconciliation) have been restricted and that many church groups such as bible study or youth groups have been unable to meet. As a result, those less committed who have got out of the habit of attending may choose not to return at all or remain connected to the church through online services only.

As we are all learning more about the new normal, we should welcome our congregations back to our parishes and also encourage new volunteers to step forward in our parishes.

## 5. Other Parish Events

We are more limited in terms of organising parish events but it's possible for clusters of parishes to group together and perhaps invite a guest speaker on a faith related subject in the parish church and then allow a certain number of people to be



*'The heroes of the future will be those who can break with this unhealthy mind-set and determine respectfully to promote truthfulness, aside from personal interest. God willing, such heroes are quietly emerging, even now, in the midst of our society.'* (no.202).



present while others can join online. Diocesan events can be also organised in this way. For example, the Archdiocese of Dublin is organising a virtual pilgrimage to Lourdes with Masses and other ceremonies being held in different churches during the time the pilgrimage would have taken place.

**6. Other online resources**

We can also avail of many useful church resources on the internet including the Jesuit website’s Sacred Space and Catholicireland.net

The Dominicans also have a very good scripture website called goodnews.ie

For those who are on social media such as Facebook or Instagram, you can follow Christian writers and film makers such as Bishop Robert Barron in the United States.

Thanks to webcam technology, its also possible to pay a virtual visit to many important shrines such as Lourdes, Fatima and Knock. It can be a good way to begin or end the day by paying a visit to one of these shrines.

**Conclusion**

Jesus tells us that: *“For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.”* Christian people in every age faced their challenges and it is no different for us now. But Jesus assures us that he is present with us when we gather together as a community of faith, whether in-person

or virtually. And while this can happen in a church, it can also be in our homes or online when this is the best option available.

As we journey through this time of pandemic, we have an opportunity to become a vibrant and authentic people of faith who are inspired by Jesus Christ, who can offer witness to the Christian way of life and who can support those who are most in need.

It is a good time for us to reflect on our own mission and ministry as we all have one. Saint John Henry Newman once said that we are led to think that we ought to be useful on a large scale and to move away from our usual “line of life”. But he tells us that this should not be the case. “We need not give up our usual manner of life, in order to serve God and “that

the most humble and quietest station is acceptable to Him, if improved duly.” There are many things that we can do.

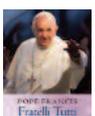
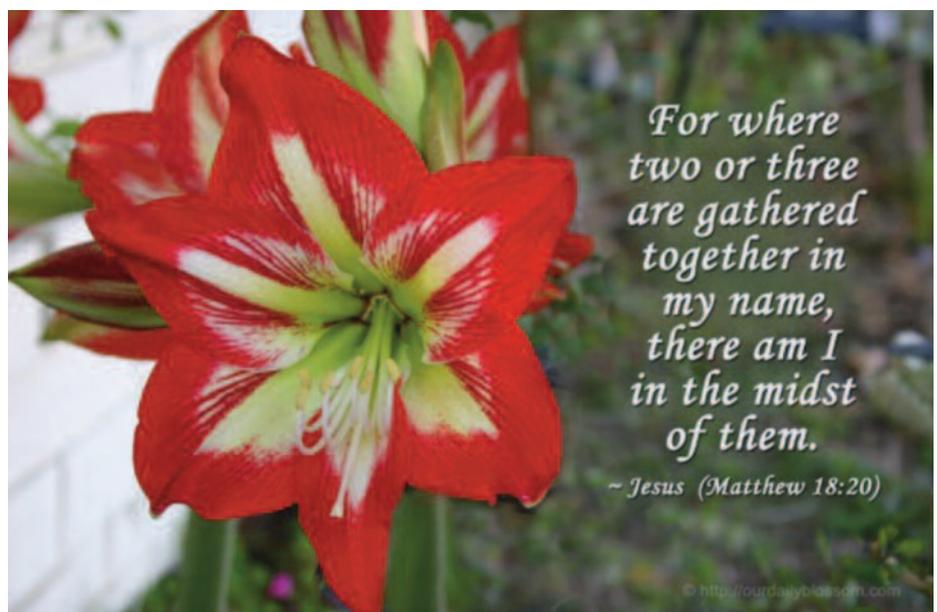
And let us be encouraged in our efforts by the words of Jesus himself where he assures us that he is present even when only two or three of us are gathered.

In these times of COVID-19, we have become accustomed to moving some of our personal and work lives online. This may be communicating with friends and family or doing work that used to be completed in an office environment.

We might also now consider how we can do the same with our faith lives and to use the modern technology now available to continue to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in these most challenging times. We must never underestimate the importance of using all means possible to reach out to support and encourage our parishioners during this time of COVID-19.

Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us as we try to find the way forward. To quote Saint John Henry Newman: *“Lead kindly light, lead gently on. I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step is enough.”*

**Gerard Reilly is a Permanent Deacon in the Archdiocese of Dublin**



## *‘Welcome Sister Marian Harte to the role of Provincial Treasurer... very special and graced moment in the Province’*

**On the 7 November 2020, Sister Goretti Butler Provincial appointed the new Provincial Treasurer of the Daughters of Charity to the Province of Ireland. Sister Eileen Browne, conducted a Prayer Service in the Chapel of St Catherine’s Provincial House, Dunardagh which is accessible on the following link**

<https://youtu.be/pbhIjC3v2Z8..Bursar>

Sister Eileen welcomed the Sisters from the Province, those living in Ireland and Kenya and the Provincial Director, Fr Mark Noonan CM.

The service began with the opening song ‘All are Welcome’, after which appropriate Scripture passages were read by Sister Sheila Ryan (Phil 4:10-13) and Sister Loretto Kelly (Lk 16:9-15).

Sister Goretti then introduced this time as ‘a graced moment in the Province’ as she introduced Sister Marian Harte as the new Provincial Treasurer.

She thanked Sister Justine O’Brien as outgoing Provincial Treasurer, having completed her term of office. Sister Goretti thanked her for her achievement in a demanding role, her commitment to the stewardship of the resources of the Company, her openness, welcoming manner, transparency, support, availability and her management of the temporal goods of the Province. Sister Goretti’s special gratitude was for the fact that Sister Justine was continuing her work as a member of the Provincial Council. She then made a presentation to Sister Justine.

Sister Goretti welcomed Sister Marian to the role of Provincial Treasurer. She thanked her for her gracious and open response to the offer of this role, after her long and dedicated service to people with intellectual disability. From the beginning of the Company of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, St Vincent de Paul and St Louise de Marillac saw the importance of the role of the Treasurer in each local house. Sister Goretti read from the

history of the role of the Treasurer. From the Act of the Establishment of the Company in August 1655, it was seen as one of the list of officers after the Superioress General and her Assistant as vital for the Company.

Sister Goretti quoted from the ‘Guide for Treasurer’ saying in relation to the role, ‘she is a Daughter of Charity; her spiritual life, her relationships and her service are therefore driven by this commitment.’ She recognised the role as more complex in recent times with computerisation, because economic transactions take place rapidly, society has become more litigious and there are so many bureaucratic procedures. There is a positive aspect to this too. Every phase of the life of the Province passes through the Treasurer’s office from initial formation to the care of the ageing, to burying the dead. Sister Goretti assured Sister Marian that she wouldn’t be bored as the job is many faceted and would require the use of different skills including book-keeper, investor, counsellor, listener, giving guidance and practical support. In all, Sister Goretti offered Sister Marian every support in the role.

Finally, she read the paten from the Constitutions and Statutes of the Daughters of Charity (C. 77 and Ss 58 and 60), dated the 7 November 2020,



*Sister Goretti Butler appoints Sister Marian Harte in her role as Provincial Treasurer.*

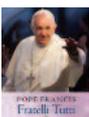
formally appointing Sister Marian as Provincial Treasurer. She also gave her the ‘Guide from Paris for Provincial Treasurer.’

The Prayer Service continued with the Prayer of the Faithful read by Sister Kevin McAlinden and Sister Marie Fox. Sister Eileen concluded the service as she read a Final Blessing Prayer in which she invited all present and those watching livestream to extend the blessing by raising their right hand.

On behalf of the readers of *New Beginnings* we pray for Sister Marian, ‘May the Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, And give you peace (Numbers 6:24-26).



*Sister Eileen Browne invites the Sisters and Fr Mark to extend a hand of blessing on Sister Marian in her role as Provincial Treasurer*



*‘There is a growing conviction that, together with specialized scientific advances, we are in need of greater interdisciplinary communication.’ (no.204).*

## Condolence Message to Sister Goretti...

**On the occasion of Sister Elma Hurley's death in Immaculate Conception House, Mount Prospect, Clontarf, Sister Franca Edet, formal Provincial of the Province of Nigeria wrote to Sister Goretti Butler to extend her sympathy. May Sister Elma rest in peace. We especially remember Sister Elma for the love and devotion she had for Mary, Mother of God. Her work in the Virgo Potens helped her to distribute numerous miraculous medals and she lived by the directive 'The Daughters of Charity promote Marian devotion. They inculcate it through simple means such as the miraculous medal, a genuine summary of the history of salvation.'** (C.26, S. 14).

Dear Sister Goretti,

Greetings from the provincial house in Eleme, Nigeria where I am still at lockdown as a result of the Covid- 19 policy. I wish to use this opportunity to express my deepest sympathy to you and all the Sisters of the Province of Ireland over the loss of our dear Sister Elma Hurley. I also wish to include the family and friends of Sister Elma as I send this condolence message.

I should be writing the same from London but, by God's providence I am in Nigeria where we are all grieving together. I have some loving and fun memories of Sister Elma. I visited Elma both in [the community houses of] Henrietta Street and Mount Prospect since I have been on mission in London and anytime I had the opportunity to visit Ireland. When she lived in Nigeria, we had great fun teasing Sister Elma about her love of coffee and a good bowl of freshly made fruit salad with pineapples. 'That will keep me going for the day' she would always say.

Her gentle presence and simplicity of lifestyle always stood out for us as a great model. She committed herself totally to the development of St. Louise's Provincial house from the time it was a regional house until it became a province in 2001.

Along with all our other missionary sisters, Elma contributed to the formation of the young Nigerian sisters, training us into self-confidence, responsibility, stewardship and responsible leadership. The chapel, retreat block, Conference block, the priest's apartment and a walkway around the compound of the provincial house are among the lovely legacies she meticulously supervised and developed.

She didn't just do it by herself but trained the young sisters into responsible purchase of the building materials and knowing how to differentiate the fakes from the "original" products. In her quiet ways, she accompanied the sisters in their spiritual growth and service of those who are poor just by her lived example. Sister Elma was always for us an elder sister companion. The beauty and elegance of our present Provincial house is a legacy left for us to enjoy. In heaven, she will be proud to know that we have not let her down as far as keeping the standard is concerned.

As well as having a peaceful time in God's Kingdom, I pray that there will be lots and lots of cups of coffee and freshly made fruit salad with pineapple and mangos to enjoy with all our loved ones who have gone before us. A big thank you to all our Sisters, family and friends who accompanied Sister Elma in the difficult days of ill health. May God bless and reward you all and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hands.

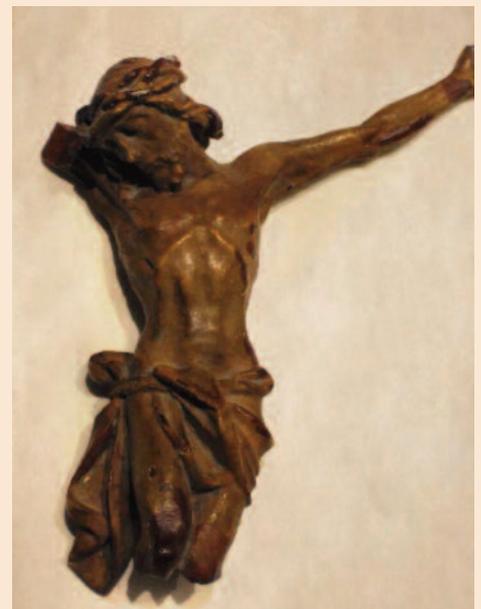
With loving affection from  
*Sister Franca Edet*



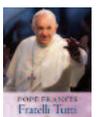
## "Savior of Zvenigorod"

In his Lenten 2021 Letter, Fr Tomaž Mavrič, invites the members of the Vincentian Family to gaze on the icon, "Savior of Zvenigorod" during the Lenten season. Fr Tomaž writes, 'If the Icon of the "Savior of Zvenigorod" invites us to contemplate the face of Jesus, this Lenten reflection invites us to a dialogue with the disfigured Jesus.' Fr Tomaž tells about 'a book written by a Spanish Jesuit, Ramón Cué, called, *My Broken Christ*. The cover of the book pictured a broken crucifix. Christ was missing a leg, His right arm, and the fingers of His left hand; He had no face, and not even a cross. That image caught my attention, and its story made me desire such a figure for myself...

*My Broken Christ* is about a priest who loved artwork. One day, while visiting an antique shop, he saw a sculpture, among many beautiful sculptures, pictures, and other pieces of art, that right away attracted his attention. It was this broken crucifix. The work of a well-known artist, it still had its market value despite the damage.' The sentiments of this letter are enlightening during Covid time.

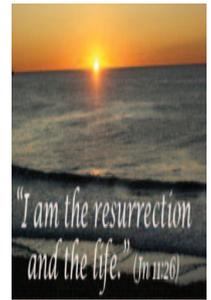


*'In today's globalized world, "the media can help us to feel closer to one another, creating a sense of the unity of the human family which in turn can inspire solidarity and serious efforts to ensure a more dignified life for all... The media can help us greatly in this, especially nowadays, when the networks of human communication have made unprecedented advances.'"* (no. 205).



# DEATHS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**‘My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?’ John 14:2**



- Sister Eileen Buckley DC, Mount Prospect, Clontarf, Dublin
- Sister Catherine Ryder DC - St Catherine's Provincial House, Blackrock
- Margaret McSweeney - niece of Sister Agnes McSweeney
- Yvonne Hunter-Jess - aunt of Sister Brenda Hunter DC
- John Curran - brother in law of Sister Louise Duffy DC
- Kathleen Moloney - sister of Sister Josephine Flynn DC
- Nellie McSweeney - sister to Sister Cairtriona McSweeney
- Catherine Steltar - sister of Sister Paula Ronayne
- Pat Cunningham - brother of Sister Kathleen Cunningham DC
- Sister Mairéad Hayden DC - Mount Prospect, Clontarf
- Fr. Jim Duffy, former CM who later joined the Diocese of Westminster
- Sister Lucy Cunningham DC -Mount Prospect, Clontarf.

## Sister Agnes McSweeney wrote:

I wish to acknowledge all those who sympathised with me on the death of my niece, Margaret. I deeply appreciate the messages and calls on the phone, letters and Mass Cards. In thanksgiving, Mass will be offered for your intentions.

## From the Staff of Caritas College, Ballyfermot:

Michael Tierney, beloved colleague, mentor, friend and teacher, started in Caritas College in September 1980. He taught Business and Maths from 1st to 6th Year and was highly respected and deeply loved by all of his students, colleagues and those who had the pleasure of meeting him. Michael was due to retire in August 2020 after five decades of loyal service to the young women of Ballyfermot. His sudden and untimely death has left us all heartbroken.

Students described Michael as being a source of inspiration for them, a teacher with a calm listening ear, loved for his kindness and good humour. A true professional, Michael epitomised integrity and respect for all.

Our thoughts are with Una, his wife and their three children, Leah, Sarah and Cormac and his extended family.

We will forever remember Michael as one of life's quintessential gentlemen and for the unique contribution, he made to the spirit of Caritas College.

Ar dheis Dé do raibh a anam dílis.

## Sister Brenda Hunter wrote:

Thank you for thinking of our family after the sudden and tragic death of my aunt, Yvonne Hunter-Jess. On behalf of the family, I express my appreciation for your sympathy cards, Mass cards and phone calls.

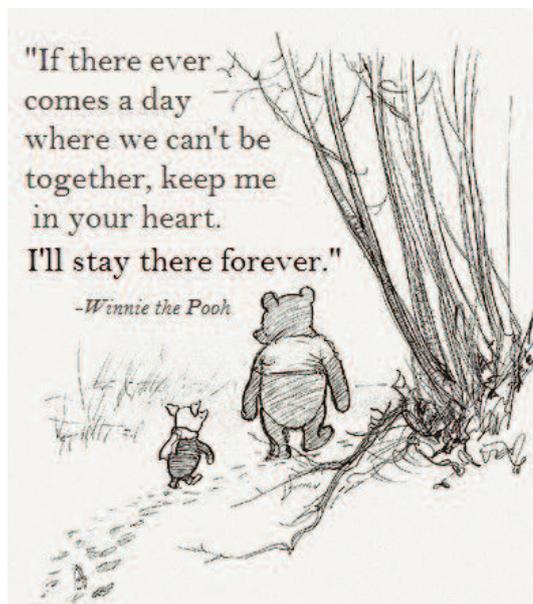
## Sister Paula Ronayne wrote:

Sister Paula Ronayne would like to thank the sisters for their prayers and Masses for her sister Catherine Steltar. May she rest in peace,

## Prayer to St Vincent de Paul

Father,  
I thank you for what I've got;  
help me to think of those less fortunate than myself.  
Many are poor in spirit as well as in pocket.  
Inspire me to do something for them,  
just as Vincent would have done.  
This week, let me find at least a kind word,  
a smile, a handshake,  
for someone who is lonely.  
I ask this through Christ Our Lord.

Amen.



*'The internet, in particular, offers immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity. This is something truly good, a gift from God.'* (no. 205).

## “STEP-OUT”... Sr. Mary J McCullen D.C. 1987

*Sister Maura (Mary McCullen) currently lives in a local community of 19 Daughters of Charity in Mount Prospect, Clontarf.*

**Sister Maura lived in St Louise’s, Ballyfermot in the 1970’s-80. While in ministry there, she taught in the Senior College. Maura had a burning desire to develop the ministry of the laity in the Church. In 1987, she conducted the Regis programme and wrote her thesis entitled, “Step-Out.” This inspirational work shows how, through breaking new ground in adult education, Sister Maura used the Vincentian skill of collaboration to inspire, enable and empower her students.**

Sister Maura began her thesis with reflection on her fourteen years in Ballyfermot. She describes how Ballyfermot was like ‘a pimple on an elephant’s back’ and how it grew and developed in the 1980’s. The close-knit community of residents formed ‘street and area committees to take care of the social life of the area’ and to ‘fight for education and employment’. The 1980’s also saw the area decline with ‘drugs’ and ‘vandalism’. The spiritual life of the people concerned Sister Maura. Parish personnel introduced sacramental programmes to assist parents/guardians in the preparation of their children to receive the sacraments. They also led Scripture courses but there was little interest in any of these initiatives among the people. Maura wisely saw ‘this was all above their heads.’

The Ballyfermot people desired to belong to their parish community. Meanwhile Maura felt ‘the Regis programme seeping through [her] veins’ and noticed the people were ‘lying like sheep without a shepherd.’ Just to add at this point, there are powerful illustrations sketched by one of the participants of the course dotted throughout the text, not least the significant opening image of the door ajar revealing a threshold.

Maura experienced challenges on advertising the Adult programme. She submitted the title for the flyer, ‘Are



you having difficulty with your religion?’ Without consultation, the printer returned the flyer, which read, ‘Lay people in the church.’ No response from the people! Next, the Church advertised the programme on the church notices. The priest read the notice between the football and boxing notices and again with no response! Maura’s third attempt to advertise the programme was to have the notice read at the end of Sunday Mass and subsequently 20 people enrolled. Eventually eighteen people attended the course. The venue was the Senior College, which was more people friendly than the Church.

From the outset, Maura’s interaction with the participants was upbeat and cordial. She asked for suggestions for course content and wrote emerging ideas on a flip chart. Some people had literacy difficulties. This was no deterrent and Maura felt, ‘I had the type of people Jesus would love to have round him...’ Over time, people’s hopes and dreams were expressed and fulfilled. The people had concerns; their children’s faith and the absence of parish community. They sought to develop ways to enhance a sense of belonging for all.

Systematically, Maura describes the journey with the people through the programme. Commitment was extraordinary and participants

weathered the seasons to attend each night. Maura’s plan for course content varied. Each section lasted 10, 15 or 20 minutes. Maura noticed, acknowledged and accepted the participants’ giftedness and enthusiasm. Negativity towards the Church and lack of consultation of the people were major challenges for group members. Maura responded by using questionnaires and developing within the people courage and confidence.

Background reading for this work came from Sr Mary Collins OSA whose article, ‘Women Invisible in Church and Theology’ stimulated discussion and action. Maura motivated the women and men with prayer and faith activities. Other authors who inspired Maura were, Yves Conger and Rosemary Haughton. The role of the laity was the key topic. The eighteen participants continued their journey in faith and Maura recorded their experiences succinctly.

In addition, Maura set up a mentor community of four people, modelled on the Emmaus story. She outlined her numerous organisational skills copiously in her thesis notes; summaries of reflection sheets, summaries of nine sessions, handouts to participants, sample Gospel reflections, letters from participants and mentors and more.

This piece of work “Step-Out” is amazing and those who know Sister Maura see her bright, gentle, personality bursting through as she engaged with participants. No surprise to hear there were eighteen graduates! “Step-Out” has still potential years later as a blueprint for adult faith formation. What is special about this piece of work is it was done ‘by the people for the people’ under Sister Maura’s skilled leadership.

*Sister Anne Neylon*



# VOLUNTEERING: VINCENTIAN STYLE, IN A TIME OF FUNDRAISING FEARS



**“Two Irish soda breads please, and four pizzas.” Francesca’s Food is up and running – alongside the AIC Food Bank! An online recipe swop, lack of bread and favourite food spawned my idea to raise funds for Vincentian charities.**



Here in the UK, we have an annual London Marathon which has become one of the main fundraising opportunities for all UK charities. This year, the 26th April came and went with no 26 mile Marathon and millions of missing £pounds! Globally, in the shutdown, fundraising has dwindled, and many charities are in crisis – including those of our Vincentian Family. **So, the 2.6 challenge emerged to help save the UK’s charities.**

Our “Vincentian Fun” (VF) What’s App Group, what I call “distant socialising”, 100s of miles apart, greet, pray and connect each day. Like you, we find ways to daily encourage each other in this time of crisis, continuing to work and volunteer within the Vincentian Family. Zoom work meetings continue amid plans for a post-pandemic world. **St Vincent’s advice is within us; “Everyone says that the missionary spirit is one of humility and simplicity – take hold of it!” VINCENT – 1:518. We would take hold of the 2.6 challenge!**



**Two UK Vincentian homeless charities have evolved their practice, with Depaul UK taking on two hotels to house the previously street homeless.**

**The Passage has volunteers to cook and deliver food to where the homeless are now housed.**

In the first weeks of the pandemic, our stores were stripped with panic buying. People’s normal goodness was quickly overtaken by the “me-first” norms of mainstream culture. **However, the next stage evolved into something deeper.** People, sought connection with others, and stories of generosity, courage, compassion and sacrifice for the sake of “others” became news. **By osmosis, people realised that without a love of justice, we are just serving ourselves – and it feels hollow inside!**



**My inventive VF Group friends, wife and husband, Moira and Kevin taking on a daily 2.6 mile walk while composing poetry and song raising over £1200 for SVP**



Siobhan writes of SVP local conferences daily with food parcels as well as keeping persons with mental health issues safe and well – with restricted health services available. All eyes, and resources, are on virus victims – much of other health treatment is suspended. Fr. Ged says solitary Mass for us daily – as well as tormenting us with brain-teasers! Sr Maria continues with faith formation design and Teresa’s SVP Youth 18-33 micro-site is developing.

St Vincent himself said “the poor are our teachers”, and yes, we learn about ourselves when we walk with others in their shoes. **The “mutuality” of service teaches us that we are healed by committing ourselves to others, particularly those on the margins of society. Connect with others - Connect with ourselves.**



**Katherine’s challenge of reading 26 children and adult books from her collection has been completed. Bromsgrove Mini-Vinnies grow fresh vegetables and take groceries to grateful housebound.**



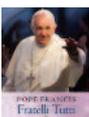
In the past, this type of service was considered solely an act of faith. **Faith and science now concur with evidence that serving others is a healing balm to our own souls.** Alcoholics Anonymous, and other addiction support groups, recognize this in their 12 step programmes that consideration of others creates a Oneness – wholeness – a completeness. **Hindu belief is that we seek the Divine in each other, echoed by the African Ubuntu – I AM because WE ARE. SERVICE – SOOTHES – SOULS. The generous gaze is returned in kind. Both are givers and receivers.**

Next steps? I’ll continue caring, praying, connecting, writing, reading, singing, dancing, baking and cooking – “my imprint”. I turn my “gaze” on the 13 Houses Campaign; a little goes far - **join me in donating the cost of a cuppa and a cake!** [www.justgiving.com/campaign.13Houses-Campaign-coronavirus](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign.13Houses-Campaign-coronavirus)

**God gave you a fingerprint that no one else has, so you can leave an imprint that no one else can.**

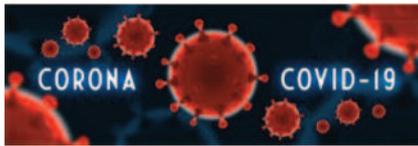


Dee Mansi



*“The solution is not relativism. Under the guise of tolerance, relativism ultimately leaves the interpretation of moral values to those in power, to be defined as they see fit.” (no. 206).*

# Sister Anna May O'Reilly's Collection of COVID-19 Poetry 2020



## Coronavirus, Covid-19

*You've stolen my summer, you've  
shattered my dream.*

*I had plans in place for  
the long days of June,  
a nice summer break...  
not as a 'cocoon'!*

*I had thought about travel,  
some long scenic drives,  
now I just walk in circles to get  
exercise.*

*I know I am lucky,  
I'm healthy and safe,  
but it's hard to get used to each day  
being the same.*

*No visits to Lidl, nor even to Church;  
No meeting with friends,  
no hugs and no touch.*

*To make conversation two metres apart  
is a test of endurance while wearing a  
mask!*

*Still it's best not to dwell  
on the negative side-  
that's really not helpful  
and not very wise;  
it will only cause loneliness,  
sadness and fear-  
so I'll cherish the present  
and hope for next year!*

Anna May



*'Someone I loved  
once gave me a box  
full of darkness.  
it took me years to understand  
that this too was a Gift.'*

Mary Oliver:  
The Uses of Sorrow

## The Darkness of Covid

*Life in the shadow of Covid-  
It's awful, but this is reality,  
I struggle to cope, to keep up my hope  
and to give my life some quality.*

*Some people ask...and I ask myself,  
"Where is God in all of this?"*

*I don't have ready answers  
Except I believe that He is!*

*People are sick and people are dying,  
Freedoms are lost and our lives are  
controlled*

*People are sad and people are crying,  
This virus targets the young and the old.  
Is there any light at end of the tunnel?  
Will this Pandemic ever end?  
Will the cloud hanging over us  
ever be lifted?*

*Will life ever return to normal again?  
I find the whole situation depressing,  
And yet there are moments that might  
break through this terrible darkness  
and lift up one's heart with delight.*

*When I make use of my senses,  
When I take time to be quiet,  
I'm aware of the beauty of Nature;  
I study, observe and enjoy it.  
So, yes, I can find God in Nature-  
and know it's the work of His hand,  
the flowers and trees the birds and the  
bees,*

*all part of His wonderful plan.  
On a walk yesterday I happened to see  
a hedge with red ablaze;*

*it spoke to me then of the Burning Bush  
and God's presence in ancient days.  
Family and friends are so precious....  
Front line workers are keeping us safe;  
They are working so hard and giving  
their best.*

*In these I am seeing God's face.  
In the warmth of the sun, in the cool of  
the evening-*

*I look for His presence in these,  
And, as he was for the Prophet Elijah,  
He's here in the small gentle breeze.*

*And so, in the midst of the darkness,  
despite all the sadness and fear,  
there is still a lot to give thanks for  
as we hold the whole world in our  
prayer.*

Anna May



## The Language of Covid

*This Covid has altered our living,  
indeed it has changed the whole world,  
it has even affected our language,  
And the way that we make use of words.*

*We 'sanitise' now,  
we don't wash or clean,  
We no longer stay home, we 'cocoon';  
most meetings are now 'incorporeal',*

*with discussions on  
'WhatsApp' or 'Zoom'.  
'Peaks' are no longer  
just mountain-tops-*

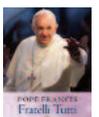
*'Waves' are not always at sea,  
and we hear talk of 'phases'  
and 'clusters',*

*and 'cough etiquette' if you please!  
We have 'lockdown', 'restrictions'  
and 'tracing',*

*'Isolation', perhaps 'quarantine';  
Our holidays now are 'staycations'...  
as we all still await a vaccine.*

*So whatever language you're learning,  
be it Latin, or Irish or Greek,  
be sure to include in your study  
A course in the new Covid-speak!*

Anna May



# 'TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE.'



Annually, in the month of October the Church celebrates Mission Awareness. In 2020, the theme was 'Together we can do more. Blessed are the peacemakers (Mt 5:9).' World Mission Sunday was celebrated on 18 October 2020. A special Mass was broadcast in RTE studio at which the Papal Nuncio, Most Reverend Jude Thaddeus Okolo, presided. World Missions Ireland provided a 'Mission Month Toolkit' (resources and tips) to help God's people 'celebrate Mission Month and World Mission Sunday.' Mission is central to the life of the Church.

When God sent Jesus on mission, Jesus proclaimed the Good News, healed the sick and forgave sinners. Jesus' followers continue that mission today.

The Daughters' of Charity mission is to continue the mission of Jesus. The Constitutions state that 'The Company is Missionary by Nature' (C. 25). The Sisters' call to mission is rooted in Baptism and is at the heart of their vocation. All the baptised are called to continue the mission of Jesus.

It is worth taking time to read the 'Mission Development Office Report for the Provincial Assembly 2014-2020,' written by Sister Geraldine Henry DC. This report describes the fourfold work of the Mission Development Office for the Daughters of Charity in the Province of Ireland:

- Overseas/Capacity
- Mísean Cara
- Fundraising in Ireland
- Overseas Volunteers

So as Daughters of Charity in the light of the 2020 theme, what might have been their focus for the Provincial Assembly, prayer, reflection and action?

On reading Constitution 25, one is struck by the challenges of the implications 'of being missionary' which is understood as retaining 'the flexibility and mobility' to respond 'to the calls of the Church in the face of every form of poverty.' The motto of the Company reads, 'The Charity of Jesus crucified urges us' (C .p.15). By the gift of God's grace, each Sister strives to live her vocation 'given to God, in community for the service of the poor.' From the foundation of the Company (1633), established by St Vincent de Paul and St Louise de Marillac, availability for mission is a key characteristic. The 'missionary spirit' remains animated in Sisters through prayer and reflection and through a desire to 'serve wherever they are sent.' St Vincent and St Louise are ever aware of the challenge for Sisters to remain in the missionary spirit of 'flexibility and mobility.'

Special attention is given 'to the seeds of the Word', wherever the place of mission, so that all will grow in the light of the Gospel. All are called to mission but God calls 'to carry the message of salvation to people who have not yet received it.' Many Sisters respond generously to 'make themselves available for mission Ad Gentes.' By thus responding to this call, a Sister helps to 'foster the growth and development of the young Provinces of

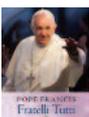
the Company.' In responding, the Sisters are supported in prayer from their country of origin and are helped in every way possible.

This year's theme 'Together we can do more' is at the heart of the vocation of a Daughter of Charity. Sisters know that togetherness in prayer, community and service is necessary. In the Provincial Assembly for 2020, Sisters spent time reflecting, praying and discussing 'The Mystique of Community' with unity and togetherness in mind. St Louise modelled each local community on the Trinity, emphasising the spirit of unity, diversity and complementarity.

The World Mission Resources for 2020 are a valuable asset to faith formation for members of parish communities. Appeal for financial help together with prayer are essential to support overseas missions. Parishioners are informed of how finance is vital to enable communities to build schools, clinics, churches and parish halls; how future leaders are supported, educated and trained and how programmes are initiated to protect and care for children's education, healthcare and to give hope for the future.

So let's keep alive the missionary spirit of the Church and the Company by exploring these World Mission resources together, so through prayer and financial support we may be more in solidarity with the 'hardship and suffering' in the world. 'Together we can do more.'

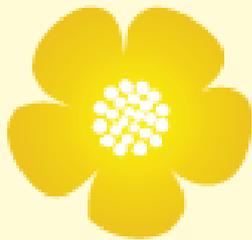
*Sister Anne Neylon*



*'We need to learn how to unmask the various ways that the truth is manipulated, distorted and concealed in public and private discourse. What we call "truth" is not only the reporting of facts and events, such as we find in the daily papers. It is primarily the search for the solid foundations sustaining our decisions and our laws.'* (no.208).

# Every Pandemic Has a Silver Lining

Pat Collins C.M.



newspringtime  
COMMUNITY

In mid-June 2008, four members of the Alpha board in Ireland suggested that interested people be invited to join them on four successive Sunday nights to pray for a Spirit filled revival in the Church. When the four weeks had passed the meetings continued by common agreement. Sometime later, the eighteen or so participants acknowledged that they were becoming a community with a common sense of purpose. As a result, they wrote a mission statement, which expressed their core vision in these words:

“With the help of the Holy Spirit, we will engage in evangelisation ourselves, as well as teaching, training and equipping others who also desire to evangelise those who have not yet developed an intimate personal relationship with Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.”

In May 2009, the Spirit led the members to call themselves the New Springtime Community and to choose the buttercup as their logo. Sometime later, a selected team of four led the community for a fixed period. In 2011, the members agreed that they would commit their energies primarily, though not exclusively, to one or other of three interconnected streams; evangelising; formation for evangelisation; and intercessory prayer for evangelisers.

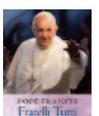
In order to progress their stated aims, the members of the community engaged in the following activities.

- Firstly, they created a six session course entitled, Parish Evangelisation, which describes evangelisation in simple terms, while proposing some practical means of engaging in it.
- Secondly, they conduct a yearly Summer School on a relevant aspect of contemporary evangelisation, e.g., the use of the media in the new evangelisation.
- Thirdly, they run a 26-week long certificate course on Formation for the New Evangelisation; a twenty-week long course on Healing and Evangelisation; a ten-week long course on Deliverance and Healing; and a Life in the Spirit Seminar, which lasts for seven weeks. Apart from these activities, the members are involved with evangelistic outreaches such as Alpha Courses, Street Pastors, Ireland4Jesus and work with ex-prisoners.
- Fourthly, the community published, wrote and provided electronic resource materials to do with the new evangelisation. It also has a website, accessed by Googling New Springtime Community, Dublin.

When the pandemic began in March 2020, the community not only had to cease meeting on Thursday nights in the convent of the Religious Sisters of Charity in Donnybrook, it had to suspend its teaching courses, attended

by thirty to forty people. At about the same time the community members heard about Zoom and the possibility of conducting online webinars, talks and courses as part of an Online School of Evangelisation. The newly formed school, which was a dream come true, began by offering single talks on different aspects of evangelisation, two courses and a Life in the Spirit Seminar. A small group of priests and about one hundred and eighty people, from Ireland, Britain, and Slovakia attended the course. In 2021, the community intends to recruit new speakers from Ireland and Britain who will offer extra courses. If any Daughters of Charity are interested, see the New Springtime website, or contact [janeforde@gmail.com](mailto:janeforde@gmail.com) for information.

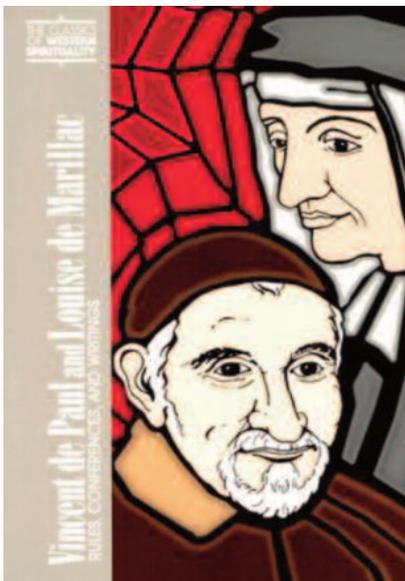
As providence would have it, the current pandemic turned out to be a blessing in disguise in so far as it urged the members of the New Springtime Community to explore new ways of evangelising and training evangelisers. When the corona virus is finally brought under control, the New Springtime Community not only intends to offer a wider range of courses, it is also determined to keep the school of evangelisation online.



## *My insights into the Correspondence between St Vincent de Paul and St Louise de Marillac from...*

*Vincent De Paul, Correspondence, Conferences, Documents, Volumes 1-8*, Newly translated, edited, and annotated from the 1920 edition of Pierre Coste, C.M. (New City Press, USA).

During the pandemic, I read through the correspondence between St Vincent and St Louise, spending time each day going through Volumes 1 to 8, and really enjoying it. There are over 400 hundred letters from St Vincent de Paul to St Louise de Marillac in these Volumes, with only a handful of replies from St Louise.



I found reading the letters helped me to get to know the Founders in a new way and I got a sense of the relationship between them, of their deep spirituality laced with humour, and the comings and goings that were features of their day-to-day life.

St Louise met St Vincent as she came out of her time of mourning the loss of her husband. She had to leave her home, get settled into another place to live, and find a school for her son. St Vincent became her spiritual director and got to know her well.

When St Louise was sad, he wrote:

‘It just rained very hard and is thundering dreadfully. Is the weather less beautiful for that? Let the tears of sadness drown your heart and let the demons thunder and growl as much as

they please. Be assured my dear daughter, that you are no less dear to Our Lord for all that.’ [Vincent de Paul Correspondence Conferences Documents, Vol.1, no. 36, p.62.]

He was very tender and concerned about her:

‘May God be praised because He humbles and refreshes, because He has brought you so low, and because you are now in a better state of mind. I beg Him to let you feel the joy in my heart with as much tenderness as I experienced because of your letter ... I could not have seen you in that state and not run to you...’ [CCD, Vol. 1, no. 253a, p. 356].

I became aware of St Vincent setting out on his many travels, some near Paris, some many miles distant. It was a daunting task for the missionaries to reach the out-lying parishes, and deal with many needy people. Communication and modes of travel were poor; sometimes they went on foot, at other times on horseback, coach or boat. Very often Vincent left in a hurry without telling Louise. He wrote to her, ‘Your dear heart will forgive me on my return ... we will talk about everything.’ [CCD, Vol.1, no.67, p.106].

Before leaving a parish, having given a mission, the missionaries set up a small Confraternity of Charity for women, to care for the sick and needy in the area, making sure they had some means to do so and that a leader was appointed who would continue to organize meetings and the distribution of food and medical care.

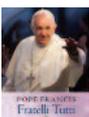
St Louise had some experience in caring for the poor in her local parish. She had contact with Ladies of rank who were widows and had time on their hands. Some of these became involved in the Confraternities in Paris. As St Vincent came across girls and young women who volunteered to help poor people in the Confraternities in Paris, he directed them to St Louise. He sent Marguerite Naseau and another good eighteen year old girl ‘who has common sense and an intelligent mind ... do not scruple about letting her take care of the girls. A good

mind is better at that age than a poor one at the age of fifty’ [CCD, Vol.1, no. 86, p. 129]. St Louise undertook the mentoring of these village girls when they came to assist the Ladies of the Confraternities. She taught them skills in caring for the sick, coping with needs of young children, good management, and general education, as well as deepening their spiritual formation. You can imagine her house becoming a beehive of activity. She had to move into a bigger house to deal with the growth of the work. This took a lot of time and energy, prayer and advice, laying down solid foundations for each of the works.

St Vincent and St Louise were often in communication about the organisation of the Village Girls. On one occasion when they were discussing how a ‘good young woman’ was to go the nine leagues to Mademoiselle Poulaillon, St Vincent writes, ‘will she be able to go on foot or, if it is convenient, would you lend her your little horse?’ [CCD, Vol. 1, no.185, p.261].

St Vincent spoke to St Louise about the plight of poor people living in the rural areas, and about how he was setting up the Confraternities to deal with the problems they had met on their Parish Missions. He soon realised he needed someone to supervise the work of the Confraternities. He invited St Louise to get involved. This entailed quite a lot of travelling to the countryside, and was a challenge for Louise - going by coach, horseback, boat or walking. She often stayed at an Inn, or in a good woman’s house in the parish she was visiting. There were many dangers on the way, but she went forth with the blessing of Vincent:

‘Go therefore, Mademoiselle, go in the name of Our Lord. I pray that His Divine Goodness may accompany you, be your consolation along the way, your shade against the heat of the sun, your shelter in rain and cold, your soft bed in your weariness, your strength in your toil, and, finally that He may bring you back in perfect health and filled with good works’. [CCD, Vol.1, no. 39, p. 64).



*‘What is now happening, and drawing us into a perverse and barren way of thinking, is the reduction of ethics and politics to physics. Good and evil no longer exist in themselves; there is only a calculus of benefits and burdens.’ (no.210).*

St Louise gained a wealth of experience working alongside and supervising the work of the rural women. But she had plenty of problems as she went from place to place and she would discuss them all with St Vincent. His support and advice was always forthcoming: 'It is very difficult, Mademoiselle, to do any good without conflict.' [CCD, Vol. 1, no. 46, p. 75]. Again he writes:

'Be at peace concerning the little difficulties you mentioned to me yesterday. I have about twenty-five years' experience regarding the extent to which interior and exterior direction should go and the difficulties of both. I shall acquaint you with all that. Take care of your health and remain cheerful.' [CCD, Vol.2, no. 601, p. 302].

St Vincent was at hand to guide and direct. He consulted with St Louise on the drawing up of rules and directions. Louise was working at and building up this small group who would eventually be formed into the first Daughters of Charity. St Vincent was involved in deciding the location of the new house for the village girls. Louise was concerned that he had not visited her to discuss the matter. He gives this explanation:

'The reason, rather, is this: we are among people who watch everything and pass judgement on everything. They would not see us go into your house three times without finding the opportunity to talk, to draw conclusions which they ought not to draw and to repeat them wherever they go.... If you can do so conveniently, come for a walk this far one of these mornings.' [CCD, Vol. 1, no. 215, p. 308].

St Louise was also a woman of deep prayer. St Vincent sent some of the Ladies, 'Madame Goussault, the President's wife, and Mademoiselle Lamy,' to her for a few days retreat, guiding and advising on what format this should take, sharing and discussing their prayer etc. He told Louise 'to take care that they do not drive themselves too hard during these exercises', but for them 'to go for a little walk after dinner.' [CCD, Vol.1, no.264, p.372].

Matters of health and mutual concern

play a big part in the correspondence between them. She is always concerned about his health and wellbeing. He is concerned that she take care of her health and eats well! St Vincent writes to reassure her:

'My slight indisposition is not my usual little fever but a sore leg caused by a kick from a horse and a small tumour that had begun a week or two before that. It is so trifling that, were it not for a little tenderness it is causing, I would not fail to go into town. Thank you for your solicitude, but please do not worry about it at all because it is nothing.' [CCD, Vol.1, no. 69, p.108].

In another place he writes, 'I have played the sick man a little these days to free myself from a large number of visits...' [CCD, Vol.3, no. 1103a, p. 433].

In turn he writes to Louise: 'Take good care of your health and spare nothing in order to eat properly during your hard work. I still think that you do not eat enough.' [CCD, Vol.1, no.198d, p. 283].

What was it that drove St Vincent during his busy life, given all the people he dealt with on a daily basis, keeping the various projects going, and his constant correspondence? It was his great love of God in Jesus Christ, his deep prayer life, his love and compassion, his deep insights into human nature. His Faith in the Providence of God was unshakeable. Nothing was too much of a challenge for him. He writes to Fr Antoine Portail who was away on a mission:

'Remember Monsieur, we live in Jesus Christ through the death of Jesus Christ, and we must die in Jesus Christ through the life of Jesus Christ, and our life must be hidden in Jesus Christ and filled with Jesus Christ, and in order to die as Jesus Christ we must live as Jesus Christ.' [CCD, Vol.1, no.197, p. 275].

Of course he was a Master at getting others involved, especially men and women who had the means to help. He would invite, cajole, and maybe berate them into collaborating with him in his vision and care for the poor.

The picture evolves of St Vincent and St Louise collaborating with others, being available to encourage them in all this great enterprise. St Louise was far-

sighted in looking at ways in which young children should be nourished and finding the means to do so. She was away ahead of her time in trying to improve the health of the young children in her care, teaching others to do the same. She realised the importance of milk for these children and discussed this with Vincent. In 1638, he writes to her, 'About the little foundlings - I am being pressured in an unimaginable way.... Would there be any objection to your buying a goat and continuing your experiment further?' [CCD, Vol. 1 no. 290, p. 410]. Surely a modern trend in nutrition! In Africa, goat's milk is used all the time! Another development in nutrition was when a farmer gave the Sisters barley and they mixed it with wheat - the beginning of wholemeal flour. Interesting!

Confraternities started by St Vincent are still in existence, known now as the International Association of Charity [AIC]. AIC is alive and active all over the world. We have groups in Dublin and Belfast and the UK. The material and spiritual needs of poor people are always there. We are always looking for new members. Leading by example, Vincent was of the opinion that we should never give up helping those in need. He wrote:

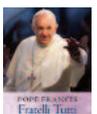
'Nobody is ever too old or too young to love and help those in need today.... Despite my age, and before God, I do not think myself at all excused from the obligation I have to work for the salvation of the poor. For who would stop me from doing so? If I could not preach every day, I could do so twice a week. I could speak to everyone I meet about God.'

So if you have some time on hand, read a few of the letters and I'm sure your life will be enriched. It's not only about what Vincent and Louise accomplished, but who they were, the depth of their faith, their love, courage and trust in the Providence of God. I hope you enjoy the reading as much as I did.

Or if you are a person with a bit of time on your hands and would like to join us in AIC, the contacts are:

[annemccormackcaritas4@gmail.com](mailto:annemccormackcaritas4@gmail.com)  
[claireajsweeney@gmail.com](mailto:claireajsweeney@gmail.com)

Sister Alice Daly



# A MENU FOR EASTER

Readers of *New Beginnings* occasionally suggest the inclusion of recipes. Mr Connor Johnson, Sister Brenda Hunter's nephew, Head Chef at 'The Meat Locker' in Belfast prepared the following recipes.



## PEA AND SMOKED BACON SOUP



**Ingredients:**

- 500g frozen peas
- 6 rashers/ smoked bacon
- 1 onion
- 500ml of vegetable stock (or cube )
- 40g butter
- 100g double cream
- 30g Crème fraiche

**Method:**

Chop the bacon into lardons. Cook off in a pan with a little oil. When cooked, add the onion and cook until translucent. Add the peas and vegetable stock. Bring to the boil for 5 minutes. Add the cream and allow to boil. Blitz while adding the butter. Season and serve with a little of the crème fraiche.

## ROAST LEG OF LAMB, ROASTED SEASONAL VEGETABLES AND HASSLE BACK POTATOES (1 tray roast)

**Ingredients:**

- 1 whole or ½ leg of lamb
- 2 red onions
- 1 red pepper
- 1 green pepper
- 1 aubergine
- 2 courgettes
- 8 garlic cloves
- 12 olives
- 8 baby potatoes
- sprigs of rosemary

**Method:**

Prepare the leg of lamb by punching holes in the flesh using a sharp knife. Slice two of the garlic cloves and push into the holes along with a piece of rosemary. Wash and prepare all vegetables by chopping roughly and rolling in olive oil. Place them on a baking tray and set the lamb on top. Take the baby potatoes and cut multiple slices in them around 2/3 deep. Place these around the outside of the lamb. Roast in the oven at 200°C for 20 minutes. Turn the oven down to 180°C. Roast for 20 minutes per 500g.



## GRILLED JOHN DORY, TOMATO GAZPACHO & WARM CRAB

You can substitute such fish as cod, turbot, halibut, Dover sole for John Dory.

Did you know? John Dory known also as St Peter's fish, due to the black spot on the side of the fish, which supposedly represents the fingerprint of St Peter when he lifted it from the sea!

- 8 John Dory Fillets
- 1 red pepper
- 1 red onion
- 6 plum tomatoes
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 tbs tomato purée
- 1 cucumber
- 200ml of tomato juice



- 20g coriander
- 20g mint
- 20g basil
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp cumin

**CRAB**

- 100g Fresh Crab
- 10g extra virgin olive oil
- ½ lemon zest & juice
- 10g capers

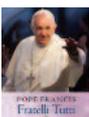
**Method:**

Grill the John Dory for 6-8 minutes. Allow the skin to crisp. Turn over to ensure cooked. Blitz all the ingredients for the gazpacho in a blender using a little water until there is a soup like consistency. Add salt and pepper to taste. Heat the crab in a pot with the olive oil and lemon juice. Add the zest and capers. Season and serve.

## CHOCOLATE BROWNIE

**Ingredients:**

- 200g flour
- 225g butter
- 275g dark chocolate
- 400g sugar
- 5 whole eggs



*'In a pluralistic society, dialogue is the best way to realize what ought always to be affirmed and respected apart from any ephemeral consensus.'* (no.211).



**Method:**

Melt the butter and chocolate over a bain-marie of water. Whisk the sugar and eggs until double in size. Sieve the flour. When the eggs and sugar have ballooned to double in size, fold in the melted butter and chocolate. Fold in the sieved flour. Pour on to a lined baking tray spreading it out evenly. Bake in the oven at 180°C for 25 minutes. Allow to cool before eating.

**SCONES**



**Ingredients:**

- 500g plain flour
- 25g baking powder
- 125g butter
- 100g caster sugar
- 300ml buttermilk

**Method:**

Combine dry ingredients and sieve into bowl. Mix with the soft butter until you achieve a breadcrumb consistency. Add the buttermilk and work until you have a smooth dough. Pin out on a lightly floured surface. Cut out with cutters. Place on a preheated baking tray. Brush with a beaten egg and bake at 180 degrees Celsius for 10-12 minutes.

These are plain scones, but you can add apple and cinnamon ingredients to suit your requirement.

To make apple and cinnamon scones, finely dice one apple, add 1tsp of cinnamon to the dry ingredients and add the apple with the buttermilk.

**PEA AND HAM HOCK RISOTTO**

Serves 4



**Ingredients:**

- 280g Arborio rice
- 3 shallots (diced)
- 1 clove of garlic (minced)
- 80ml white wine
- 1/2 sprig of rosemary
- sprig of thyme
- 1.3 litres veg stock

**Method:**

Sweat shallots, garlic, rosemary & thyme in a little oil and a small knob of butter. Allow to cook until translucent. Add the 80ml of white wine and cook until it evaporates for 30 seconds approximately.

Add the Arborio rice and add the vegetable stock 1 ladle at a time stirring continuously. Reduce the heat to simmer so rice does not cook too quickly on the outside.

When you have added all the stock, and the rice has absorbed the stock, check it is cooked. To recognise that the rice is cooked the grains of rice are tender but still firm to bite, without being crunchy (el dente).

*Tip: When you add a ladle of stock or wine to the risotto, make sure you wait until the risotto completely absorbs the liquid and the rice is nearly dry before you add the next ladle. It is important to stir constantly while the hot stock gets absorbed to prevent scorching. If you run short of stock and the risotto is still crunchy, finish cooking with hot water, a ladle at a time, stirring while it is absorbed.*

**Pea purée**

- 320g frozen peas
- 1 small onion
- 50g butter
- 500ml veg stock

In a saucepan, cook the onion in the butter. Once cooked, add in the 300g of the peas, keeping 20g back for garnish.

Add vegetable stock and simmer for 3 minutes.

With a stick blender (or transfer to a jug blender) blitz the peas to a smooth consistency. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Blend briefly to combine. You might require the extra vegetable stock to get the purée to the right consistency.

**Ham hock**

- 1 ham hock will be enough to feed 4
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 peppercorns
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 sprig of rosemary & thyme

Firstly, wash off the ham hock by allowing cold water to run on the ham hock for 5 minutes.

Once washed, place in a pan big enough to cover the ham in water.

Add the bay leaf, peppercorns, garlic, rosemary and thyme.

Boil for one 1.5 hours, checking to make sure there is enough water over the ham hock. You will know the hock is cooked if you can move the bone with ease.

Allow to cook and peel the meat away from the bone trying to keep the lozenges as big as possible

**Crème fraiche**

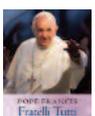
- 30ml of crème fraiche
- 1/4 lemon zest
- 6 leaves of mint

Mix the crème fraiche, lemon & mint and season with a little salt to taste

**To serve**

While your risotto is hot, add the purée you have made to turn the risotto green giving it that nice spring pea flavour. At this stage, add the remaining 30g of peas left back from making the purée.

Place 1/4 of the risotto into a bowl. Using the ham hock you have just flaked, place a 1/4 of this on top of the risotto. Drizzle the crème fraiche around the risotto and serve.



# “Stretch forth your hand to the poor.” *(Sirach 7:32).*

The World Day of the Poor was marked on 15 November 2020. Pope Francis initially celebrated this day on the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time in 2017. He established this Day of Prayer for the Poor in his Apostolic Letter, *Misericordia et Misera*, issued on 20 November 2016, to celebrate the end of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. The theme for this Fourth Year is “Stretch forth your hand to the poor.” (Sirach 7:32). The address of His Holiness Pope Francis is accessible on <http://www.vatican.va>

Popular images associated with Pope Francis show him with outstretched hand to those he meets, especially to persons who are poor. He constantly advocates for such persons and prioritises their plight. He describes the manner in which ‘an outstretched hand can help or exploit’ another (no. 6, 9).

St Vincent de Paul and St Louise de Marillac, founders of the Company of the Daughters of Charity (1633), followed the ‘age old wisdom’ and the action of Jesus by reaching out to those who lived in poverty; because they saw through faith, Christ in the person of the poor and the person of the poor in Christ. In presenting a conference to the Daughters of Charity in 1657, Vincent indicated the means to serve Christ in His suffering members, ‘with compassion, gentleness cordiality, respect and devotion.’ (X, Conf.85).

St Vincent often reminded the Sisters of their identity as a response ‘to a divine call.’ He said in 1647, ‘you are poor Daughters of Charity who have given yourselves to do good for the service of persons who are poor.’ (C. 7).

One way to acknowledge this special World Day of the Poor day might be to read Pope Francis’ message and reflect on its implications for the life of the Daughters of Charity in this



time of pandemic and in the context of the Constitutions. Where and how does Pope Francis speak to the vision, thoughts and ideas of the life of the Daughter of Charity ‘given to God in community for persons who are poor’?

What can the Daughters of Charity glean from Pope Francis’ message in 2020 that resonates with their specific vow (C. 8b, c; C. 28) of the service of Christ in those who are poor? Pope Francis’ teaching echoes loudly and concretely with the spirit of the Founders. This is no surprise as the Pope’s message and the Vincentian charism are rooted in the Gospel. Jesus had a special and unique love for every poor person. St Vincent animates the Daughters of Charity in their vocation to ‘do what the Son of God did when he was on earth; worked constantly for his neighbour, visiting and healing the sick and instructing the ignorant in their salvation.’ (IX, Conf. 2)

## ‘Poverty...in a variety of guises’

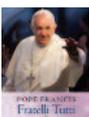
Pope Francis states, ‘Poverty always appears in a variety of guises, and calls for attention to each particular situation. The Daughters of Charity ‘learn that no type of distress should be foreign to them.’ (C. 11a). ‘In order to help the poor’, Pope Francis writes ‘we ourselves need to live the experience of evangelical poverty’ (no. 4). In a recent edition of *Intercom* (November 2020), the editor John Cullen wrote, ‘there isn’t one way to define poverty.’ He defines particular situations of poverty.

## ‘Encounter the Lord’

Pope Francis writes, ‘We have an opportunity to encounter the Lord Jesus, who has revealed himself as present in the least of his brothers and sisters’ (cf. Mt 25:40). The Daughters of Charity ‘see those who suffer, those stripped of human rights and dignity, and those in poor health as children of God and brothers and sisters with whom they are in solidarity.’ (C. 16 c). St Vincent described those who were poor as our lords and masters. St Louise de Marillac held those who were poor in so high a regard that her advice to the first Sisters was, Oh! What a happiness it would be, if, without offending God, the Company could be employed only in the service of those who are destitute.’ (C. 11b).

## ‘Prayer to God and Solidarity with the poor’

Pope Francis states ‘prayer to God and solidarity with the poor and suffering are inseparable.’ Time and prayer go hand in hand. The Pope says, ‘Time devoted to prayer can never become an alibi for neglecting our neighbour in need’ (no. 2). Vincent spoke to the Daughters of Charity about prayer and time. He said, ‘A Daughter of Charity will visit a poor person ten times a day and she



‘...There is no need, then, to oppose the interests of society, consensus and the reality of objective truth. These three realities can be harmonized whenever, through dialogue, people are unafraid to get to the heart of an issue.’ (no. 212).

will find God there.’ He urged them to leave God for God. The Constitutions advise the Sisters ‘to consider it their responsibility to pray with and for those who are poor and in their name.’ (C. 24f).

**‘Divine charity’**

For Pope Francis ‘fine words’ are not adequate but ‘a concrete commitment inspired by divine charity’ (no. 3). Charity is one of the virtues for which the Daughters of Charity strive. St Vincent reminds them ‘charity is a heavy burden.’ In this year’s theme, Pope Francis encourages us to bear the burdens of the weakest, in accord with the words of Saint Paul: ‘Through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself... Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ’’ (Gal 5:13-14; 6:2) (no. 8). He suggests concrete ways for men and women ‘to support the most vulnerable.’

**‘The Church and her....gestures of charity’**

While Pope Francis admits that ‘the Church certainly has no comprehensive solutions to propose, but by the grace of Christ she can offer her witness and her gestures of charity.’ In line with that Mother Guillemin, Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity instructed the Sisters, ‘each gesture of a Daughter of Charity is truly at the service of the poor, since it is the entire Company that is dedicated to them, and



everything within it is conceived with this end in view.’ (C. 24a).

**‘The Church feels compelled to speak out...’**

Pope Francis outlines the Church’s compulsion ‘to speak out on behalf of those who lack life’s basic necessities’ (no. 4). Absence of peace is a form of poverty and the Daughters of Charity are called to ‘openly affirm respect for and the defence of human life in all its stages, and the right to peace for all peoples and nations. They denounce situations that exploit and exclude people.’ (C. 24, Statute 8c). Their Constitutions also call them to ‘plead the cause of the underprivileged, who do not have the possibility of making their legitimate demands and aspirations heard.’ (C. 24e).

**‘Acts of respect and generosity’**

Pope Francis notices that ‘life is interwoven too with acts of respect and generosity that not only compensate for evil, but inspire us to take an extra step and fill our hearts with hope.’ Respect is one of the dispositions that Daughters of Charity must have in the service of those who are poor. The Constitutions state, ‘Respect... is the first step to take: respect for individuals, for their way of life, for the socio-cultural and socio-political realities of peoples, and for the Spirit of God at work in the world.’(C. 24c). Daughters of Charity are also called to work with others, ‘in loyal collaboration...in a spirit of sharing, living the values that the Company professes.” (C. 24, Statute 9a,b,c, Statute 10).

**‘Constant organization and training’**

Pope Francis recognises that ‘constant organization and training is needed, based on the realization of our own need for an outstretched hand’ (no.7). In the life of each Daughter of Charity, one’s own vulnerability requires an utter and total dependence



on Divine Providence. Addressing the mission and ministry, the Company addresses the requirements of ‘technical and professional competence, familiarity with current legislation and a concern for social justice inspired by charity.’ (C. 24b).

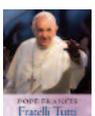
**‘Love’**

Pope Francis says, ‘the “end” of all our actions can only be love’. Love, ‘is the ultimate goal of our journey, and nothing should distract us from it.’ This love is one of sharing, dedication and service, born of the realization that we were first loved and awakened to love (no. 10). Love is at the heart of the service of those living in poverty for the Daughters’ of Charity. We are reminded that the forms of poverty and the forms of service are multiple. However, ‘one is the love bestowed on those whom God has called and assembled.’ (C. 32).

With these convergent thoughts in mind from Pope Francis, St Vincent de Paul and St Louise de Marillac, the Daughters’ of Charity challenge is to return constantly to the source and dig deep to continue the journey with Christ to serve him in the person of the poor. With Pope Francis, the Daughters of Charity believe ‘the Mother of God is ever on our side’ and as we pray to Mary, ‘may that prayer enable outstretched hands to become an embrace of shared and rediscovered fraternity.’

*Sister Anne Neylon*

*‘The dignity of others is to be respected in all circumstances, not because that dignity is something we have invented or imagined, but because human beings possess an intrinsic worth superior to that of material objects and contingent situations. This requires that they be treated differently.’ (no.213).*



# Patsy and Mary Brothers

These words on our friends Mary and Patsy are the result of a collaborative effort by two of us Daughters of Charity – one of whom knows Patsy for many years, while the other in the short time she has known him has had a rich experience of his support, generosity and presence. Together we hope we have done them justice!



*'And though the years may differ each time around, I'll forever be an autumn leaf upon the ground.'* jamesmcinerney

Friendship is a gift and over time artists, musicians and writers expressed this theme in multiple ways. A few songs come to my mind.

The Beatles sing, 'We get by with a little help from our Friends.' James Taylor also assures the listener, 'You've got a Friend.' Other songs, 'That's what Friends are for', 'You're my Forever Friend' and 'Thank you for being a Friend' are those that urge one to sing and appreciate the gift of friendship.

'Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter: whoever finds one has found a treasure. Faithful friends are beyond price; no amount can balance their worth' (Sirach 6: 14-16). So the Good News of the Bible proclaims.

Patsy and Mary Brothers and family are long-time, faithful friends of the Daughters of Charity in Ballyfermot and Cherry Orchard. They are both Dubs and proud of it! Patsy was born in Bow Lane and at five years of age, he moved to Ballyfermot. He went to school in Whitefriar Street because there was no school in Ballyfermot at the time. In 1973, Patsy married his wife Mary, who hails from Walkinstown. Patsy is a family man with all the goodness, gentleness and kindness of husband, father, brother, friend and a wonderful sense of humour.



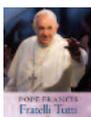
*'How I long to sit a while under whispering leaves in the shade of a green tree.'* pinterest.com



*'Prune the branches that no longer belong to the future.'* Dr Joe Dispenza

Patsy is proud of his wife Mary and family. He has two sons and two grandsons who love his company and he theirs. The family are good neighbours to all and bring kindness and goodness wherever they are. In 1988, the family moved to Cherry Orchard. Patsy worked with the Company 'Road Makers' for many years. On his retirement from there, he worked in the Orchard Centre. God was certainly on the side of the Daughters of Charity when Sister Bridget Callaghan worked in the 'Bungalow', a hive of activity in the Cherry Orchard area where Patsy was on the CE scheme. Then, the Sisters in St Louise de Marillac Primary School invited Patsy to maintain the grounds and those of the Sister's residence. Eventually, Patsy as well as doing wonderful work on the grounds, took on maintenance of the Sister's house.

The Sisters of our local community recognise Patsy as a loyal and treasured friend. We enjoy his company and



*'As believers, we are convinced that human nature, as the source of ethical principles, was created by God, and that ultimately it is he who gives those principles their solid foundation. This does not result in an ethical rigidity nor does it lead to the imposition of any one moral system, since fundamental and universally valid moral principles can be embodied in different practical rules. Thus, room for dialogue will always exist.'* (no. 214).



*Time to sit down and relax....*

presence in our house in Drumfinn Road. You know what it means to realise its Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday and Patsy is coming. He always brings an atmosphere of calm and joy. Patsy himself knows what needs to be done in our house. He loves the outdoors and keeps the grounds meticulously, throughout the seasons. Patsy is a multi-tasker and gifted in so many ways as he does general maintenance, decorating and gardening. He is ever respectful and obliging, going to the ends of the earth... to file that key when the locksmith failed or to seek out a bulb for an antiquated lamp! Patsy is a great witness to all who know him in his trustworthiness, generosity and courteous manner. It's good to sit and enjoy a cup of tea mid-morning in the kitchen with Patsy and admire the work he does in the garden and his great sense of humour. Unfortunately, during the pandemic social distancing we miss Patsy's presence!

Patsy loves sport and is a Manchester United fan. He played football but nowadays this activity takes place at the back of his house where his opponents are his two dogs, Betsy and Bonny. One stops the ball, while the other pushes it back to Patsy for another kick! Patsy also enjoys golf and spends well-deserved time in his mobile home in Wexford with Mary and family, relaxing and enjoying time out breathing in the sea air.

*Sisters Cabrini O'Connell  
and Anne Neylon*

## The annual visit to the vet

*Mary Tiernan writes through the eyes  
of her cat, Toby...*

It's just over a month, but I still wake up during the night with nightmares, then I realise I'm at home on my comfy cushion. Why the nightmare you ask? Well, 1 August was the day appointed to visit the vet for the annual check-up. Nuala was asked if she would accompany us, really to keep me calm in the back seat as I have a history of bad behaviour and escaping during the journey. Yes, I call it a journey even though it's only ten minutes to Kilmainham. Nuala looked at her calendar that morning and saw an entry called CAT, and wondered if it was an appointment for Tommie and a Cat scan but she should have written Toby instead. Well, the appointment was for 2:00 p.m. and She had me fasting for hours in case I got stressed and did nasties in the cat basket. Nuala came out her front door wearing her garden gloves, a wise choice just in case a white sharp clawed paw shot out of the basket.

On entering the surgery the basket was put on the examination table and the lovely vet Caitriona took the roof off. WELL, I freaked out.....it was like lying asleep in your bed and the roof being torn off. I was so stressed that I lost it completely and turned into a savage. Caitriona managed to examine my heart, which I'm sure was thumping, and had a quick look at my teeth noting that I have one crooked tooth. I thought for an awful moment that she was going to suggest braces, but thankfully no. She also gave me my annual cat flu jab, but before any other procedures could take place, I jumped on a cupboard and tried to look fierce. It worked, and She was given my flea and worming meds to administer at home. They are liquids which are put straight on to my skin just behind my ears. A weighing scales was produced but there was no way I was turning into a Weight Watchers cat. As I had no intention of being handled and shoved back into my basket, Caitriona left the room and returned wearing big green gauntlets up to her elbows. They

looked as if they were made out of carpet remnants and like those big gloves used by police to train dogs to catch criminals. She was already thinking of my 2019 appointment and asked if there were chill pills that I could take beforehand. I think she wanted some for herself also but was too embarrassed to ask. The answer was yes, and a few little pills were handed over to be given one hour before my next visit. Well, to her credit, Caitriona did say 'I'm sure he's like an angel at home' ...how right she is.

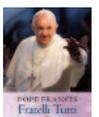
Now, I hear that Lorraine in Carlow was fostering a big beautiful ginger cat called Hime whose owners were Japanese and returned to Japan two years ago and hoped to send for Hime when they settled in. Well, the time went by and of course Lorraine fell in love with Hime, but the summons came from Japan. Yes, Hime was going home. He had to be brought to Dublin Airport and put in a crate for his flight to Hamburg and onwards to Tokyo. Well, I wouldn't like to be that poor fellow as I can't even endure the ten minute journey to Kilmainham. I'd be so stressed I'd shed all my fur and arrive bald and furious in Japan. Hime arrived safely and a new kitten took his place in Lorraine's affections. She's called Cosette, Cosy for short.

Well, poor Screech was killed on the road in early August. Tween (short for Teeny-weeny) still visits daily and makes straight for my nut bowl. (Toby is afraid of her even though he's about five times bigger than her; when she sees him she gives a loud screech and fluffs out her tail like a toilet brush. He just slinks away to a safe distance. M). Those cats are left to run wild and not minded and kept in at night like me.

Well, thank goodness it's a year until my next dreaded vet visit. Hopefully with thoughts of Christmas and maybe the Ugg boots this year, or maybe they have gone out of fashion, I will no longer wake up to those awful nightmares.

Toby

*Mary Tiernan*



# St Finnian of Clonard



The community of Clonard Co. Meath includes the parish of Kinnegad and Coalstown, in the Diocese of Meath, Ireland. It celebrated the 1500th anniversary of the foundation of St Finnian's monastery in Clonard in 2020. Clonard is located about 62km west of Dublin, between the towns of Enfield and Kinnegad on the N4.

## St Finnian's Early Life

St Finnian was born on the slopes of Mount Leinster in Co. Carlow, in a town land called Myshall. His father was Rudaigh, an Ulster noble and his mother was Telach of Leinster. He was born in the last decades of the fifth century, the time of establishment of Christianity in Ireland. In the early decades of the sixth century AD, Finnian founded a monastery in Clonard Co. Meath. At the time, Clonard was part of the kingdom of Leinster. This monastery would be one of the most important religious foundations in Irish history. Important bishops studied under Finnian in Clonard. Patrick and other British and English missionaries established a diocesan system to govern the church in Ireland.

Many regard Finnian as the father of Irish monasticism and call him the 'Masters of the Saints of Ireland'. For a period of at least 700 years, Clonard was one of the most important and most

influential ecclesiastical centres in Ireland. As a young man Finnian, founded three Churches in Ireland before his attraction to monastic life in Wales. He studied under St Cadoc at Lancarfan in Glamorganshire. Finnian later went to Tours in France for further studies. He founded his first monastery at Aghadoe in Co. Wicklow.

## St Finnian visited St Brigid

Finnian went to visit St Brigid of Kildare and she presented him with a gold ring. At first, he refused to take it until Brigid assured him of its future value! Shortly after his encounter with St Brigid, Finnian went on to meet his friend Caisin. He told him that he needed an ounce of gold to pay a ransom to the King. Finnian gave Caisin St Brigid's gold ring who in turn presented it to the King, who granted Caisin freedom.

## St Finnian and Clonard

Eventually Finnian went to Clonard in Co Meath, decided to settle there, and founded his most important monastery around 515 AD. It became the most significant monastic school of the sixth century. History states that Finnian and his monks lived in individual huts or cells made of wood or wattles, which they constructed. The monastic buildings included a Church. At Clonard, the monks learned the art of writing old Irish in Latin script. Many monastic founders came to Clonard to learn from Finnian. His influence spread across Ireland, Britain, and Celtic Europe. At one time more than three thousand monks studied in Clonard. Finnian became known as the 'Tutor of the Saints of Ireland'.

The Irish Church governed along monastic lines under Finnian's influence, rather than under the rule of a Bishop. Finnian himself was an Abbot as well as a Bishop, and lived the order of day daily similar to the monks. Twelve famous Bishops educated in Clonard were; St Ciaran of Offaly, St Ciaran of Clonmacnoise, St Colmcille of Iona, St Brendan the Navigator, St Brendan of Birr, St Colum of Terryglass, St Molaise of Devenish, St Cainnech of Aghadoe, St Ruadhan of Lorrha, St Mobhi of Glasnevin, St Suinnell of Cleenish and St Ninnad of Inishmacsaint.

Finnian trained these young men and sent them out to proclaim the gospel message to other areas. As a result,

monasteries sprang up in Clonmacnoise, Iona and Glasnevin because of Finnian's influence at Clonard.

Finnian died of the plague at about 549 AD. On Finnian's deathbed, he requested Colum, regarded one of the twelve apostles of Ireland to come to see him. After Colum left Clonard, he spent some time on the Island of Cealtra in Lough Derg. From there, he went on to Terryglass in Co. Tipperary and founded a monastery. He attended Finnian on his deathbed where he received Communion and the last rites.

St Finnian's students continued to found other monasteries throughout Ireland with Clonard as a major influence. Clonard survived the Viking invasions and the quarrels of the Irish Chieftains. The great monastery was destroyed during the suppression of the monasteries in the sixteenth century.

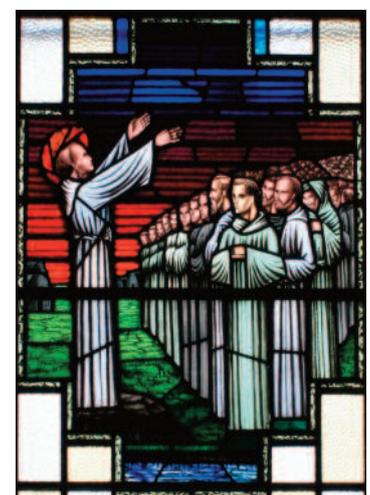
## St Finnian today

The magnificent stained-glass windows depict events from the life of St Finnian. Life-sized wooden statues of St Finnian and St Etchen, carved in Italy, stand in the Church. In addition, a marble statue of St Finnian, located at the entrance to the graveyard, carved by the Italian sculptor Carol Nicole, demonstrates St Finnian holding a torch, which is a symbol of his ministry.

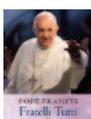
Finnian made his contribution to the development of Church discipline and theology in Ireland. His role as tutor and teacher distinguishes him.

The Church in Clonard celebrates St Finnian's feast day on 12 December with a three day Novena of Prayer.

*Caroline Teehan*



*Stained glass window, Clonard*



*'The image of a polyhedron can represent a society where differences coexist, complementing, enriching and reciprocally illuminating one another, even amid disagreements and reservations. Each of us can learn something from others.'* (no.215).

# “...The acceptance of our children’s millennial attitudes”

*Cristita, Jojo and their family are from the Philippines.  
Cristita is a frontline worker in a hospital in South Dublin.*

This is my story of how Covid time affected us in different ways; instead of fear, we find our Faith grows stronger and bigger than this Virus.

During the time of lockdown, I use my time to connect and reflect on the Word of God. My desire is to reflect God’s blessings to people around us especially to my family.



First is the acceptance of our children’s millennial attitudes...even in the most challenging moments of their lives when sometimes they think they know everything.

Second is to love them unconditionally as God’s love is limitless... in all they do even if we do not agree. Love takes away fear especially from a mother.

Third is Faith. God increases our faith during this time of hardship. We pray together at night-time. My husband and I talk about the words of God. We surrender everything to our merciful God. Through the intercession of our Blessed Mother, we pray the rosary together.

Moreover, from two people praying the rosary, we have five friends who joined our rosary though the internet using zoom. One young parent from Cork and the other parents are my colleagues from work. The faith is growing without a doubt even to the point that one of our prayer members is not a Catholic. However, she is so interested that she is leading one decade of the rosary. Our Blessed Mother is very close to our hearts. We find peace, strength, love and happiness in doing this every week and bring the blessings to our families. We called our prayer group “Friends Rosary Crusade”. We normally meet up on zoom three times a week.

I want to tell everyone how great the Lord is and Our Blessed Mother. Prayers are so powerful. A couple of nights ago in the middle of our zoom rosary, Sarah, a front line worker with Covid transferred to the ward, she came off oxygen and is no longer on close monitoring. Two frontline workers are improving in health. We sang praises last night. God is so good.

When the second wave of the virus arrived, four members of the group got it and one was brought to the hospital where she was admitted for nine days. Our group did not stop praying the Rosary every night. One in her hospital bed, some at home in isolation. They were in the zoom meetings praying and listening with us.

I am pretty sure that this was the only way that we found strength, healing, love and hope. On the ninth day, she was discharged and we thought we will just have to continue on our own private prayers with the family for a little while. We sang praises and hymns. God is so good.

At the same day, another member of our group received news that she too has contracted the virus. The Crusaders were back! We did not stop the rosary and this family is now part of the meetings.

We witnessed the healing. Our prayers were heard through the intercession of the Blessed Mother. The Novena of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal after the Rosary was great.

## My experience on the Covid ward

I have a short story: One day, I was told to work at the COVID unit due to shortage of staff. I paused to say a short prayer and visited the chapel for the second time that morning. I prayed hard “Lord, be with me today in all that I do.” With full PPE gear on me, it is hard to breathe during long shifts. I kept singing hymns;

“You are my hiding place.

You always fill my heart with songs of deliverance

Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you.

I will trust in you. Let the weak say, I am strong in the strength of the Lord I will trust in you”

I sang repeatedly, which helped me to focus and do the right thing. Thanks be to God and the Blessed Mother, it’s as if time flew by.



## Receiving the Vaccine

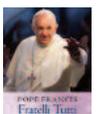
I had my vaccine today. We prayed last night. There was no fear- instead, trust and surrender this vaccine to the Lord. It was a strange feeling waiting in the queue in the big turnout of students and agency staff. I was looking at everyone when it was nearly my turn. I felt like raising my hands, lifting them to God praising him. You are here and we are going to receive your blessing.

*Cristita Manzano*



*‘O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you.’*

*‘No one is useless and no one is expendable. This also means finding ways to include those on the peripheries of life. For they have another way of looking at things; they see aspects of reality that are invisible to the centres of power where weighty decisions are made.’ (no.215).*



# The Feast of St Vincent de Paul... 27-9-2020

*What insights did St Vincent give to the Daughters of Charity in 1655 that are helpful for today?*

The customary greetings for the feast day of St Vincent de Paul arrived prior to the feast from Fr Tomaž Mavrič, CM and Sister Francoise Petit, Superiors of the Company. Included with the greetings were the latest updates on the plight of persons who live daily in extreme poverty internationally. The only consolation in reading about such situations reveals how members of the Vincentian Family endeavour to bring solace to those who suffer intensely. Such suffering is constantly the subject of the Daughters' of Charity prayer and reflection.

This feast offered time, even more so during lockdown to reflect and gain new insights on St Vincent de Paul's (1581-1660) writings. Rules and restrictions are household words during these days of pandemic. This prompted spiritual reading on a conference, which Vincent de Paul gave to the Daughters of Charity on 29 September 1665. It is entitled 'Explanation of the Common Rules.' (Vincent de Paul, Correspondence, Conferences, Documents, 10, pp.86-99). St Vincent spoke regularly to the Ladies of Charity, the Daughters of Charity and to the priests of the Congregation of the Mission of the importance of the Rules. The rules for St Vincent de Paul were a means to liberate the Ladies, Sisters and Priests to serve. He said, 'All your rules tend to this: they serve you as wings help birds to fly...Daughters of Charity...have their rules...and, far from weighing them down, their rules, when carefully observed, enable them to fly.' (SV X, Conf.69, quoted in the Constitutions). Vincent explained that at that stage in the Company they were working on the Rules for 25 years. They were not to be taken lightly.

## About the Conferences in general

St Vincent's Conferences to the Daughters of Charity follow a particular structure. Though each conference

follows a somewhat similar pattern of repetition, Vincent de Paul's teaching style was never boring. In general, on reading a conference these points are familiar:

- The reader situates oneself in the presence of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac with a group of Sisters gathered
- Vincent's style is unique and he spoke directly of the subject matter
- Vincent addresses the Sisters and invites them to dialogue during the conference
- He offers moments of catechesis through the conference
- He draws on the Sisters previous knowledge and information as he presents to them
- Vincent praises the Sisters and challenges compassionately
- Vincent uses images and comparisons to hold the Sisters' attention
- Vincent regularly quotes Sacred Scripture
- Vincent is practical and emphasises the important virtues
- Vincent ends each conference with a prayer allowing for a summary and intercession with God.

So what is the practical application of Vincent's presentation of the Conference of 1655, 'Explanation of the Common Rules?'

## 'Explanation of the Common Rules.'

When Vincent presented this conference in the month of September 1655, the Little Company of the Daughters of Charity was 22 years old. One can imagine the Sisters gathered around with Louise de Marillac as they listened to Vincent and one another. The spirit is relevant today, as it was in 1655. At the heart of the conference, Vincent speaks of the aim of the Rules of the Company, 'to help you [the Sisters] to improve and

to assist you in carrying out God's Commandments.' Later in the conference, he said the aim was for the Sisters 'to help to save yourselves more easily.'

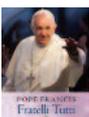
## Vincent introduces the Conference

Firstly, Vincent tells the Sisters the subject of the conference, '...on the reading of your Rules.' Then he explains why he chooses the feast of St Michael to present the conference. On this day, the Church proposes 'in the Gospel the imitation of little children... an occasion for' them 'to ask God through the merits of the Archangel to put' them 'in a special frame of mind to benefit from the conference.'

Going to the heart of the conference, Vincent proceeds with the obligation we have 'to give ourselves to God' to observe the rules well. He urges their fidelity and outlines four reasons to do this. Firstly, it is to please God, to do God's will and for God's goodness, joy and pleasure. Secondly, he explains that when rules are kept that 'things go very well in a house.' Such rules he named as, 'charity, mutual forbearance, humility and cordiality', which help the Sisters to love God and their neighbour. Thirdly, the Sisters keep the rules because they are easy. Fourthly, the rules are from God and the church has accepted them.

## Vincent praised, encouraged and challenged

Inviting them to keep the rules, he acknowledged the joy and pleasure they gave to God. Vincent praised the senior sisters who worked so hard 'to acquire graces for the Company.' Then, he challenged them 'to be more faithful to God.' On another occasion, he pointed out the disorder that exists in monasteries where rules are not kept. He speaks plainly, as he addresses laxity setting into a community, 'Then you may well say, "Farewell to the



*'The word "culture" points to something deeply embedded within a people, its most cherished convictions and its way of life. A people's "culture" is more than an abstract idea. It has to do with their desires, their interests and ultimately the way they live their lives.'* (no. 216).

Daughters of Charity, Yes, Sisters as soon as you begin to ignore your Rules, you'll have to have the funeral of your Company." While Vincent spoke about sin in the conference, his greater emphasis was on the love of God and God's unconditional love for each one. Rather than thinking they were committing a sin by not keeping the rules he encouraged them; 'to motivate them to do their best' and to please God. He encouraged the Sisters in their spirit of availability, 'So get ready, Sisters and give yourselves to Our Lord to go wherever it may please him.'

***Vincent catechises***

In a moment of catechesis, Vincent speaks of the Commandments and the Rules that complement each other in Sisters' personal lives. As always, Vincent emphasises the importance of doing God's will, pointing always to the action of the Son of God.

***Vincent uses images and comparisons***

In looking after the sick poor spiritually and corporally, Vincent likened them to 'pastors and mothers' by getting to the heart of his subject. He compares the sisters who live together in community who live well and respect one another in carrying out their responsibilities, to families in the country, whom the sisters visit. When the children are obedient and respectful to their parents, other people edified by their behaviour, admire them. He used comparisons when he wanted to explain things. Vincent compares the lives of the Daughters of Charity to the Sisters of St Thomas and the Carmelites. While the focus for these communities may be high Mass, a particular diet, fasting and vigils, the Daughters of Charity prime focus is on visiting the sick and poor person. Vincent said the sisters 'must

take on the role of pastors and mothers...pastors have the care of souls... you have to serve the sick poor as pastors, fathers and mothers, procuring for them for soul and body all the good you can because they have no one else to care for them.' In praise of their availability and mobility, he further encourages them, 'Continue as you've begun Sisters...you've acted like children who trust their father.'



***Vincent's love for Company of the Daughters of Charity***

Vincent because of his great love for the Company admonishes any bad behaviour that might cause destruction to it. He warned them of discouragement of one another; murmuring; criticising; causing laxity in the Company.

***Vincent quotes Sacred Scripture***

Because the Vincentian charism is rooted in the gospel, Vincent reminds the sisters of the words of Jesus (Mt 11:28-30). God is always present and encouraging them to lives of holiness in accord with St Paul. Vincent warned the Sisters about trying to interfere with Our Lord's plan. In stating how easy the Rules were, he said this was in conformity with what Our Lord said in the Gospel (Mt 11:28-30).

***Vincent's respect for people***

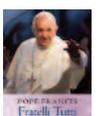
Vincent praised the great leadership of Mlle Le Gras (Louise de Marillac) for her observation of the rule, 'by the mercy of God and good leadership.' During the Conference Mlle Le Gras 'whispered to Vincent' that she had never seen any Sister disobey the rule of obedience 'and that they had always been ready to come and go as soon as they were told.' To which Vincent replied, 'Blessed be God, Sisters, I'm really consoled.'

***Vincent concludes the Conference with a summary and prayer***

In conclusion, Vincent says, 'That's all we are going to say today.' He asked for the Sisters' prayers and asked the Lord for the grace for the Daughters of Charity to remain faithful to their vocation. On this occasion Vincent prayed.

"O Lord, grant that Your poor Daughters, whom we receive into our Company as being sent to us by You, may strive more and more to be pleasing to You by the practice of the virtues You ask of them. This, dear Sisters, is what you must often ask of God, and I entreat him to give you the grace of granting it to you."

***Sister Anne Neylon***



# Vaccines for COVID-19 on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary



*A traditional depiction of the Immaculate Conception.  
(Credit: Stock image.)*

The feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary is probably the most misunderstood celebration as more often than not, it is confused with the feast of the Annunciation!

The Immaculate Conception of Mary carries many messages for us and one that stands tall for me is the fact that God provides when we need to deal with anything that will be asked of us in life. Mary was born with a natural disposition to receive God incarnate into her being. This disposition was then nurtured by St Anne and St Joachim within her devout Jewish heritage and their humility before God.

In this year, which will always be remembered as the year of COVID, we have not arrived in this moment required to take the challenge on without skill, knowledge and endurance! We live in a time when education equips society to have more than an adequate number of scientists, doctors and caring/healing professionals to lead us out of this 'plague'. Prophets and leaders live in every culture with the ability to deal with adversities and to show the way towards the true light for the particular time and issue. The task for prophets and leaders is enormous and daunting when the risk to human life is great and responsibility for preservation of same is on their heads. Acknowledged or otherwise, they are not alone. As God prepared Mary for her responsibility, so God continues to gift us with all that we need to be brave and forthright.

From the moment that COVID-19 was announced as a pandemic the striving for effective vaccines was already under progress having commenced in the pre-cursor of SARS-1. The scientific gift needed was already inherent; it was already conceived where needed, was built on the heritage derived from SAR-1! The new, unborn life of the vaccine was being formed within a culture where it could be supported, tested and brought to fruition. It arrived at fruition and full inception in

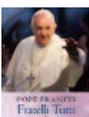
the UK and Northern Ireland on 8 December 2020 when the first batch of vaccines were administered to those in greatest need. In almost symbolic gestational terms, the vaccine arrived nine months after the outbreak of the pandemic!

Bringing forth new life and growth hurts and causes a shift in what has been in order to make space necessary. Such changes have not occurred in the world since World War II in terms of the necessity to grind so many aspects of life to a total halt in order to preserve life and to protect the most vulnerable in society. This has caused an enormous toll on the economic world and devastating toll on some industries. As every vehicle or war needs both a driving and carrying force that was found in intelligent leadership and a skilled and dedicated workforce. The burden laid on both of these bodies has been enormous with the reward being solely intrinsic. The rewards for international society, for the work of frontline workers and the support of general society is evident in the growing control of infection and disease, even if with fluctuation throughout, alongside the work of scientists that will lead us out of this desert.

Mary became worthy of the incarnation at conception unknown to both herself and her parents. She was given choice at the annunciation to become the mother of our incarnate God. Mary chose to bring Jesus into the world by the will of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. Her ability to do so was inherent through the gifts received at her conception.

We have been gifted suitably to deal with the challenges of our time. Scientists are the vehicles that are providing the light that will bring us into a new space, not back to what we were or have known as there is no going back! We do not need to plot the shape of the future ahead of what is necessary, but if we, like Mary believe that we have the gift and ability we will find it on the path formed by each present moment, without the need to rush forward. I'd like to think that there is a promised land in which we will arrive if we journey gently together from COVID and resist the temptation to return to where we came from! There is no going back!

*Cathy Burke*



*'Social peace demands hard work, craftsmanship. It would be easier to keep freedoms and differences in check with cleverness and a few resources. But such a peace would be superficial and fragile, not the fruit of a culture of encounter that brings enduring stability. Integrating differences is a much more difficult and slow process, yet it is the guarantee of a genuine and lasting peace.'* (no. 217).

# Tribute to Sister Eileen Buckley DC

24 September 2020.



*Henrietta Street School is an integral part of the Daughters of Charity Community Services.*

Mr Fergus Carpenter, Principal of Henrietta Street School on the occasion of Sister Eileen Buckley's death in 2020, sent a tribute to the Community of the Daughters of Charity. Management, staff and students offered, 'Our sincerest condolence to Sister Eileen's family and friends. She was the founding Principal of the school. Her generosity, kindness and good humour are remembered by all.' This tribute is accessible online by following this link and it was compiled by Ann Ruane and Fergus.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z-HX7XXFuinkmbqIhuOfM7\\_gyzUrVB/L1/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z-HX7XXFuinkmbqIhuOfM7_gyzUrVB/L1/view?usp=sharing)

Sister Eileen spent many years in the ministry of Education within the schools under the Trusteeship of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul. Most of Sister Eileen's teaching career was

spent working with and advocating for people with intellectual disability to whom she was very committed and dedicated. Prior to her retirement, Sister Eileen worked as Principal of St Vincent's Trust, Henrietta Street.

The video contains interesting and significant footage of Sister Eileen, the staff and pupils and the life of Henrietta Street School. It also gives the background to the school's foundation. In 1990 the Daughters of Charity, whose St Vincent's Trust provided a Fás Community Training Workshop for older teenagers found there were so many 13 and 14 year olds being referred to them that they approached the Department of Education for funding to start a school for the younger age group. The Department of Education was increasingly concerned at the time about the problem of early school leavers. So in 1995, 'two teachers, (Sister Eileen and Fergus Carpenter), a *bean an tí* and 12 children came together for classes in a cramped classroom and kitchen at the

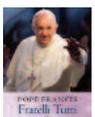
back of the Daughters of Charity house behind Henrietta Street's crumbling facades'. Two years later the Department asked for an extension of the project for another two years. They said 'yes' to the initiative, pending the appointment of a 'full time social worker and some part time teaching help with literacy, craft and other subjects.' Today the school continues with many success stories and pupils continue to be nourished, educated and nurtured in a stimulating environment. For the current work of the school and an account of the training and education please logon to

<http://doccs.ie/henrietta-street-school/about>

Fergus requested that this video be distributed to anyone who knew Sister Eileen. The Daughters of Charity are very grateful to Ann and Fergus for this loving tribute. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h-anam dilis.*



*Sister Eileen Buckley with the school community of Henrietta Street School*



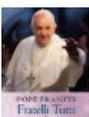
*I will be forever grateful... to share my wonderful photos.*

Hi there, my name is Susanne Plummer and I will be forever grateful to get this opportunity to share my wonderful photos. I live very close to Corkagh Park, Clondalkin and I try to capture some very special things while I am out with my camera; as you know a picture is just a moment in time. I know this pair of swans for the past number of years and I never get tired watching them. Did you know that when swans mate they do so for life? They started building their nest this year in March. The female swan laid eight eggs. Both Mammy and Daddy incubate the eggs, which hatch out about 35-41 days later.

During lockdown, I noticed that there were lots more people in the park and most of them throwing bread all around the nest. I was worried about the Swan because the bread attracted rats and the Heron was constantly hanging around the nest. I was there one day and I asked Archangel Michael to pour his blue light into her and surround the nest for protection to keep all safe. The Swan was staring at me and I really do believe she understood everything I was saying. Although I don't own these Swans it's the very same as someone talking to and about their pets. Every chance I got I went over to see her with some porridge oats. Most days when I arrived she would get up and move her eggs around and I think she felt safe to do this while I was there talking away to her. Friday the 1st May the first cygnet was born and over the weekend, another five followed; two eggs were infertile. They all remained on the nest and went into the water together on Monday 4th May. This to me is fascinating to witness.

The swans are so elegant, graceful and very clever like all animals and if you are respectful towards them, they will give you a glimpse of their simple magical way of living. The welcome I get from them each time I see them is amazing. I have always said to my nieces Megan, Hannah, Lucy, Martha, Connie and my nephew Tom that the best things in life are free. I am extremely proud of them and can honestly say they all have a great appreciation for nature and all living creatures that surround us.

*Susanne Plummer*



*'What is important is to create processes of encounter, processes that build a people that can accept differences. Let us arm our children with the weapons of dialogue! Let us teach them to fight the good fight of the culture of encounter!'* (no. 217).

# BOOKS OF INTEREST

## CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE PAPERS OF CANON SHEEHAN OF DONERAILE 1888-1913

Smenos Publications, 2017

James O'Brien



Correspondence from the papers  
of Canon Sheehan of Doneraile  
1888-1913

JAMES O'BRIEN  
Copyrighted Material

Fr James O'Brien, Diocese of Cloyne, author of 'the Correspondence from the papers of Canon Sheehan of Doneraile 1888-1913' sent a gift of a copy of his book to Sister Goretti for the community library. The book is dedicated 'In appreciation of Sister M. Vincent O'Sullivan and to the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, Maynooth College' (1905-1995).

Fr James writes about the Daughters' of Charity 'much valuable work for the clergy of Ireland for almost a century and which sometimes might go unseen or unsung-in itself a tribute to the success of their Vincentian vocation.'

We look forward to a review of this book in the next edition of *New Beginnings* and Sister Goretti is very appreciative of Fr James' kind words.

## 'GROW IN LOVE, IN THE PARISH -

A Bridge between Home,  
School and Parish  
Communities for First  
Holy Communion Children' and  
corresponding newsletters.

Elaine Mahon

Veritas Publications (2020)  
7-8 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1,  
ISBN 978 1 84730 976 1

*A fresh parish resource to enhance  
sacramental preparation*

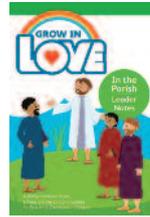
A significant and joyful day in family life is one where a child receives the Body of Christ for the first time when he/she encounters the Risen Jesus in Holy Communion. Jesus says, 'Let the little children come to me' (Mt 19:14). Jesus comes to the child, accompanied by the communities of family, parish and school.

Why might this parish resource be of interest to the Daughters of Charity?

Family life and sacramental life hold personal and communal priority in the life of the members of the Vincentian Family, including the Daughters of Charity. The Church annually celebrates the feast of the Holy Family, highlighting the importance of family. From reading the lives of our Vincentian saints, one recalls the family stories of St Vincent, St Louise, St Catherine and many others and the significant moment of receiving the Eucharist in their lives. Pastoral ministry including accompanying families in faith is an important ministry in the life of the Vincentian family over time.

The Vincentian charism always valued home/school/parish partnership. St Vincent de Paul in the Charter reminds the Sisters that they have, 'for monastery only the houses of the sick... for chapel, the parish church...' (St Vincent, 24 August 1659, "The Perfection Required for Sisters in Parishes, etc.", "X, Conf.111).

The parish is traditionally a key place for the presence of the Daughters of



Charity. This has been so from the foundation of Company in 1633. The Constitutions spell this out for their life today. It speaks of 'the participation of the Little Company in the Church's pastoral plan determined by the local Ordinary and in the life of the local Church' (C.1d).

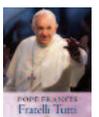
The Statutes define Religious Education as a priority of the Company. Daughters of Charity are reminded that the 'Marian message of 1830 confirmed this mission, which the Sisters bear in mind in all their activities' (S.8e).'

Speaking of the presence of the Daughters of Charity, the Constitutions explain, that the 'local community, a living cell of the Church renders the Company present wherever a Daughter of Charity, united with her Sisters, lives out her vocation' (C.81).

St Louise de Marillac, co-foundress of the Little Company with St Vincent de Paul saw prayer, meditation and catechism as a priority. In her writings she explained to the Sisters that 'the children's parents give her this responsibility', that is to learn from the Sister 'the means to attain their salvation' (SWLM, A.91B). St Louise regularly spoke about the importance of instruction of the young in their faith.

This new parish resource is valuable to those interested in the new evangelisation. The pack comprises a series of 8 Parish Newsletters and an explanatory book for leaders. The Church invites the collaboration of the three communities of parish, home and school. The pack is user friendly and attractive as it follows the Liturgical Year. Prayer and faith activities outlined in the newsletters invite families to prayer and active participation in their parish community. Ongoing prayer and reflection help families to build up the domestic church and prompt them to respond to Jesus' call to discipleship.

The Daughters of Charity might support this programme in pastoral ministry and most especially in their prayer ministry to families, remembering Pope Francis' words about the Church being the 'Family of Families'.





**DUBLIN NATURE ON OUR DOORSTEP**

*SUSANNE PLUMMER*

**Ballyfermot and Festival Committee for assistance and publication (2020)**

Between the covers of this book there are not too many words, just a Foreword and some Acknowledgements. Words may not even do justice to the photographs taken by the talented photographer, Susanne Plummer. In the Foreword, Susanne writes of ‘natural beauty’ as ‘God’s everlasting gift to us.’ The outdoors brings ‘happiness’ and ‘inner peace’ to her day. She dedicates the book to her ‘favourite people in the world’. Susanne names the locations of the captured images. One can only enjoy the colour and beauty of the birds and the animals in their respective environments. Some of these photographs are submitted by Susanne to this issue of *New Beginnings*.

**ONE FOR EVERYONE**

**More Poems I Love**

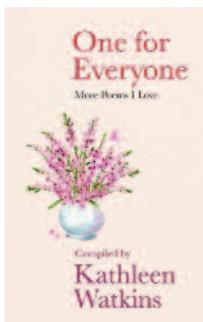
**ISBN:**

**978-0-7171-9023-2**

*Compiled by Kathleen Watkins*

**Gill Books (2020)**

This book dedicated to her husband Gay Byrne is a second collection of poetry compiled by Kathleen Watkins. Nikki Howard from Gill Books invited Kathleen to undertake this project of selecting poems during cocooning time in 2020. The book cover is attractive, displaying a spray of purple flowers in a white vase. The title ‘One for Everyone’ reflects the well-known chant on the ‘Late Late Show’ where Gay regularly said, ‘one for everyone in the audience.’



The book contains a wide selection of poetry. On reading the poems, one can imagine the love and memory that accompany each. Some poems are familiar and some not so. Kathleen Watkins acknowledges her love for poetry to the Dominican Sisters with whom she was educated. Kathleen is also a well-known harpist and folk singer and in the short bio, the reader learns that Kathleen was the first continuity announcer on Teilifís Éireann in 1960. She is also author of the children’s’ series *Pigín in Howth*. ‘One for Everyone’ will not go astray on any bookshelf. On first glance, a poem that caught my eye was ‘Friendship’ by Sean Brophy. It is good to read and recall as a tribute to those who died in Covid-19 ‘My Sister is not a Statistic’ by Dorothy Duffy.

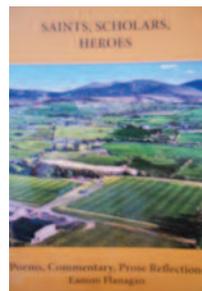
**SAINTS, SCHOLARS, HEROES**

**Poems, Commentary, Prose Reflections**

*Eamon Flanagan*

**Kolbe Publications (2020), Cork, Ireland.**

**ISBN: 9-780952-962724**



This book is valuable in a school, College or Church library. The poems written from the heart in a spirit of true hope permeates throughout. A remark on this publication describes the poetry, ‘The poems are scholarly and need to be pondered, but they do bring the reader to new depths and insights.’ A second observation on the wide variety of themes states it will ‘enhance the appeal of the book to people of different generations and backgrounds.’

Fr Eamon Flanagan CM, author is a Vincentian priest living in Dublin. He lists all his publications at the end of the book.

This book, with its attractive cover of ‘Kilcoo, Co Down, with the Church to the right of the picture and Gaelic games pitches in the foreground’ will surely be of interest not least to the people of Co Down and those interested in the sporting field.

There is value for money here. Each line of poetry is loaded with meaning, in addition to the copious endnotes the author provides. The Deliberations reflect the work, study and prayer of the author on the lives of the saints. The simple lay out and style make the book reader friendly, as the content motivates and guides and challenges the readers to lives of holiness. Fr Eamon provides a reading list to encourage additional reading. The poems are in three sections.

Poems are reader friendly and span the centuries to the present time. They are numbered; titled and some have a sub heading. Throughout, the call to remember people, events, sport and cultural events, Scripture and the life of the Church gives an insight into the reflective life and experience of the author. He structures the poems in a way that encourages one to hear the call to the new evangelisation, to an appreciation of the Gospel and the Catholic Church. For example, the hope expressed in ‘Turning Point’ reads,

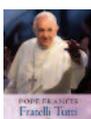
‘Though runners in the stadium may seem few...

Yet, trust in the promise of a crown is  
On fire in new heroes who are  
undaunted.’

It is hopeful that change comes ‘as a sense of rolling evolution, as sunlight touches softly... silent footsteps’ (Looking Towards a New Dawn). In this poem also, hope is expressed as ‘hungry seekers... burning hearts admit famine in the wilderness, of mere machine rule, drugs and traffickers.’ Within the cultural challenges including Covid, ‘Scholars... bring direction amid the waves of the deep.’

Hope is reflected in these lines, ‘But faith can rise once again to the top; Reason, virtue, sound truth, prayer will make vice stop’ (Decline, Fall, Hope).

The author is widely read and the simplicity of style reflects his ability to teach. The reader gleans knowledge and wisdom in each poem. Gospel values, right to life, human rights, love, creation, community, faith and mercy permeate individual poems. The catechesis on the Eucharist is inspirational (Mass the Centre of Life). The pandemic and isolation find place and the author is ever grateful in his isolation for



*‘If we want to encounter and help one another, we have to dialogue.’ (no. 198).*

‘...prayer, hope, versions of Greek, Friends, phone contact, programmes on Lyric.’

Mary, Mother of God is close to Fr Eamon’s heart as is the Marian Shrine at Knock. Simply, he says of the pilgrim who was led there, ‘a place where all can pray, and feel her outstretched hand’ (Knock, Sign for a New Era). The poems continue full of life, energy, hope, love, gratitude and enthusiasm.

It is difficult to select a favourite poem from this compilation. The poem ‘Remedy for Deepest Ills, Desire for Good’ speaks to me of the presence of God. It reflects the author’s own relationship and encounter with God, ‘At all moments the Master is here, delighted to greet us;

Without appointment, we have the key to his door,

There his friendship of life-likeness begins, and continues

To horizons of beauty, and new land of virtue to explore’.

Congratulations Fr Eamon on this unique work and as you walk may ‘divine light’ rest on you. (True Fullness of Catholic Life).

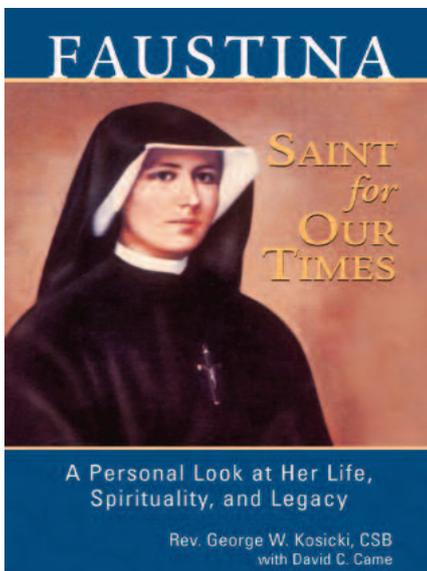
## FAUSTINA

**SAINT FOR OUR TIMES**  
A Personal Look at Her Life, Spirituality, and Legacy

Rev. George W. Kosicki, CSB with David C. Cam

Marian Press 2016

ISBN: 978-1-59614-226-8



This personal look at St Faustina’s life is an asset to accompany St Faustina’s Diary. It is an easy and engaging read. It relates her life story and the story of her vocation, during which she travelled like many saints, ‘the royal road of the cross’. Her Diary explains the sufferings she endured as she lived her spiritual and community life. People doubted her and rejected her. God offered her consolation through her spiritual directors. She endured much suffering as she tried to replicate the vision of the image of Divine Mercy. The struggle she experienced is similar to that of St Catherine Labouré experienced as she responded to the call of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1830 to have a medal struck, which subsequently became known as the miraculous medal.

The book is structured in short sections and the text is interspersed with quotations from the Diary. Jesus speaks directly to Faustina throughout her life as he explains her mission to her. All Jesus asks for is Faustina’s trust in his mercy.

The author writes an outline of Faustina’s Life, Spirituality and Legacy. She is a modern saint of the twenty first century. There is a comprehensive section on the spread of the Divine Mercy and Devotion and an account of St Faustina’s influence on the life of St John Paul II. In response to this call of Divine Mercy and Devotion, the reader learns that trust in God is key. The Divine Mercy prayers are included in the book, which encourages the reader to keep it at hand daily.

The book is especially relevant during this time of Covid. Many people can only attend Mass on the webcam and receive a spiritual communion. For many, not receiving the Eucharist at Mass leaves a void in life. St Faustina drew ‘all her strength and consolation’ from the Eucharist and so she teaches us how to pray more fervently to Jesus, how to treasure the Body of Christ and to appreciate the grace she received to fulfil her mission.

This book is an interesting read and a source for prayer and reflection for one whose heart is open to Jesus, Divine Mercy.

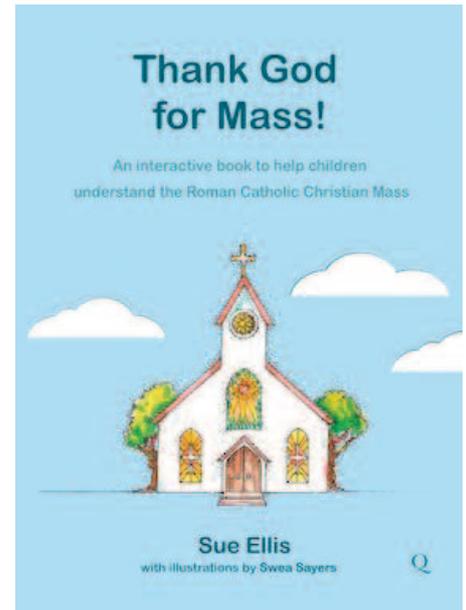
## THANK GOD FOR MASS!

An interactive book to help children understand the Roman Catholic Christian Mass

Sue Ellis

Published and Printed by Quacks Books, York

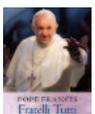
ISBN: 978-1-912728-20-6



‘Thank God for Mass’, written by Sue Ellis teaches about the Mass in a child-friendly way. It confirms God’s unique and personal unconditional love and the positive impact the gift of faith can have on one’s life. This interactive book helps children and family to understand the Mass. The book divided in sections and subsections helps children to see progress on the journey by engaging in various activities. A proportion of profits of the sale of this book will go to Youth SVP and the Mini Vinnies at the SVDP Central Office in London. The book is attractive, written in A4 size with just 10 pages, the tenth page being a summary page.

‘Thank God for Mass!’ is suitable for age range 5-11 years. The author reminds the readers that ‘helping somebody else along the spiritual journey helps you too.’ The book is a support to families in Ireland who accompany their children in faith in using the *Grow in Love* Religious Education programme for Catholic primary schools.

*‘Some people attempt to flee from reality, taking refuge in their own little world; others react to it with destructive violence.’ (no. 199).*



The book encourages an active participation in the Mass with the focus on a 'Look', 'Listen', 'Things for you to do' structure. The illustrations are apt and placed strategically on each page. The angel emoji used as bullets provide motivation for activity. Individual images represent the 'Look' and 'Listen' features.

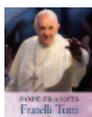
A word of welcome introduces the Mass. Readers listen to God's Word and give thanks. Instructions are simple, clear and concise. Activities are child and family friendly and it is a fact that we all learn best by doing. Prayer is central, both the prayers of the Mass and additional prayers. This book will help develop skills of religious literacy as outlined in the Glossary and highlighted in red throughout the book.

The book has possibility to foster an interest in the Mass. To enhance the skills of religious literacy further vocabulary might be included e.g. use of the word 'lectionary' in Section 3. Instead of using the words 'Offertory Procession' maybe the 'Presentation of Gifts' relating to offering oneself with Jesus to the Father might be introduced. It may be possible also within the range of vocabulary to introduce 'The Eucharistic Prayer' and the 'Dismissal Rite.'

We wish the author Sue Ellis every good wish, as she desires 'to nurture my [her] own faith and the faith of all the children in our parishes across the world.' It would be beneficial for copies of this book to be available for purchase by families. Sue is also the author of other children's books. You can contact Sue at [sueellisbooks@btinternet.com](mailto:sueellisbooks@btinternet.com)

## CALENDARS

A year rarely passes that one does not get at least one calendar as a gift or a Christmas stocking filler. Three came my way this year and all three are valued.



*"Yet "between selfish indifference and violent protest there is always another possible option: that of dialogue. Dialogue between generations; dialogue among our people, for we are that people; readiness to give and receive, while remaining open to the truth." (no.199).*

## GUIDING LIGHTS CALENDAR 2021

Blue Mountain Arts

ISBN 5-059-105-048955

This colourful and attractive calendar engenders positivity for each month of the year. During this time of pandemic one might spend time admiring the colour and reflecting on uplifting messages. Douglas Pagels wrote the reflections using a personal handwritten style of font. The reflections and images will motivate a person to live each day to its fullest. There are challenges for each month to keep one in a mind frame of positivity and to build self-esteem.

## IRELAND NEEDS FATIMA 2021 CALENDAR

365 days with Mary



This freely distributed A4 calendar is produced by 'Ireland Needs Fatima' [www.isfcc.org](http://www.isfcc.org)

The calendar seeks to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to Our Lady of Fatima and family life. It is colourful and each month shows a picturesque scene from various places in Ireland. On each scene an image of Our Lady of Fatima is superimposed and a quote from a popular saint. Two images of the Sacred Heart of Jesus are on display. A reflection for each month is quoted from, 'Sacred Heart of Jesus: Salvation of Families and Society' by Guido Vignelli. Also included are The 12 Promises of the Sacred Heart and a quote from Pope Pius XI Encyclical, Quas Primas.



## CHURCH ART CALENDAR 2021

Virgo Potens Office

Daughters of Charity

10 Henrietta Street

Dublin 1, D01 VP11.

Christmas or New Year wouldn't be the same without a copy of the 'Church Art Calendar.' This simple A5 calendar fits neatly into an envelope for postage. It follows the same format year in year out and yet, that feature is what makes it most attractive. All may not agree. However, the image of Mary Immaculate on the front cover reminds readers of the first day in January being a special day in honour of Mary, the Holy Mother of God.

The first pages of the calendar explain the history of the miraculous medal, both its historical and spiritual side. The two sides of the miraculous medal are displayed. The stories of the Green Scapular and the Red Scapular make interesting reading and reflection. This is a call to members of the Vincentian Family to stock up with medals and scapulars for blessing and distribution- a great means of evangelisation. In addition to having all the feast days, holidays of Obligation and Bank Holidays marked, the calendar includes twelve Scripture passages accompanied by Church Art images. These Bible passages might encourage further Bible study, prayer or reading. The Church Art images are suitable for a *Visio Divina* prayer session.

The back cover of the calendar advertises the Association of the Miraculous Medal (AMM). A notice also printed invites pilgrims to the annual pilgrimage to Our Lady's Shrine, Knock, Co Mayo on Saturday 11 September 2021. Hope to see you there!

# Welcome to the New Normal.... at Mount Prospect.

Greetings from the Community of Sisters here in Mount Prospect, Clontarf. This community comprises 19 Sisters who strive each day to live out their vocation as Daughters of Charity 'given to God, in community for the service of the poor.' Many of the Sisters have spent their lives in a variety of active ministries. They now enjoy their retirement in community and are very focused on their prayer ministry.

To quote from St Paul to the Romans 8:35-37, 'Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution, or hunger or peril or the sword or Covid-19 - Yet in all this we are conquerors through Him who has granted us His love.'

Since the end of February 2020, the community of Sisters in Mount Prospect experienced solidarity with the Province even though the Covid restrictions were in situ. Each day we participate in Mass on the webcam. We are fortunate to travel virtually to many churches nationally and internationally! We receive Holy Communion daily, thanks to our Vincentian brothers from St Paul's, Sybil Hill who consecrate the ciborium of hosts each week during their daily Mass in the chapel. A Sister then collects the consecrated hosts from St Paul's. We also reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the Chapel in Mount Prospect. Each day, the Sisters thank God for all the blessings they receive in community. They also pray for the intentions of the Sisters at home and internationally. Most especially, prayer is offered for frontline workers and for scientists, that they may soon find a vaccine to rid the world of the pandemic.

Our Lady is patron of the house, called Immaculate Conception House. The Sisters show devotion to Mary, Mother of God by praying the Rosary each day and by celebrating her many feasts. A beautiful statue stands in the chapel, which came for Dunmanway, Co. Cork a former house of the Daughters of Charity. Sisters recite the Novena, in honour of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal.

Every resident in the house knows the following mantra at this stage and all are very compliant: 'wash your hands, use your tissues, maintain good coughing and sneezing etiquette, keep a



safe distance, wear your mask when attending appointments.' All the Sisters are grateful to the Covid team for instilling the mantra in the consciousness of all. In addition, this Covid team supports the sanitisation of all areas throughout the house several times a day with great earnestness, keeping the virus suppressed.

Gratitude is the only the word we can express to the dedicated Sisters and staff who are untiring in their efforts to keep everyone safe. This is a challenging time and particularly as some Sisters tend to forget the information after a few minutes.

The community is fortunate to enjoy adequate space and they can easily maintain a 2-metre distance in the chapel, dining room and sun lounge. To facilitate this space, the daily routine has changed with two meal settings for dinner and supper.

The beautiful landscaped gardens have enabled the community to cope with lockdown. God's creation is alive in the changing seasons, yielding beautiful colours, sensory plants, shrubs and flowers yielding magnificent scents. Many Sisters enjoy a daily walk of 120 steps in a full circle; quite a lot if one has mobility problems. The birds serenade the community through the day and with interest and excitement, the Sisters identify the variety of birds in the garden as they fly to the bird feeders.

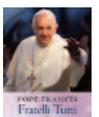
On dry, sunny days, some Sisters enjoy morning coffee and afternoon tea in the garden. Occasionally, when a strong blast of wind comes it plays havoc with the now long hair!

Up to the month of November 2020, the Sisters have accompanied six of their companions through the end of life journey. Each one had an underlying medical condition. The time of death is always a sacred time. Sisters experience the sacred space as they walk on holy ground to await the Lord's call. It is a privileged occasion to accompany Sisters in their final hours. What has been most difficult is that none of the Sisters can attend their companions' funerals.

Sisters appreciate the ongoing support and visits offered by Sister Goretti Butler, Provincial and the leadership team. They also welcome family letters and phone calls. Sisters from local communities also offer support. God blesses our community with people who work on our behalf, such as, a great staff, the HSE, Public Health in Clontarf and of course the GP.

We continue to pray for all of you who read this article as we reflect on the words of Scripture, 'For who can separate us from the Love of God?'

*The Sisters in Mount Prospect*



# Good News of House Building and Education in Kitale and Thigio, Kenya...

*Good News of House Building and Education in Kitale and Thigio, Kenya...*

*'The Famvin Homeless Alliance is a Vincentian Family global initiative supporting established and emerging homelessness initiatives across the globe.' The Alliance understands 'homelessness as those living on the street, refugees and those displaced from their home, and slum dwellers in inadequate housing.' To read more about the Homeless Alliance see [famvin.org](http://famvin.org)*

*Latest news from the Association of International Charities (AIC)*

In November 2020, Dee Mansi, updated the ongoing work to combat homelessness in Kitale, Kenya. She summarised the collaborative work of Kiroho International with the Association International Charities, (AIC) UK and the Irish DCs in Kenya. Dee reported this good news also to the 13 Houses Co-ordinator of the FAMVIN Homeless Alliance. A photo of the completed house in Kitale and a summary of the beneficiaries follows. News from Sister Deborah in Thigio told of the delay of building 2 houses because of the pandemic. The community and collaborators look forward to starting the building.

Sister Mary Holland reported on student fees for education. This continues to be a challenge in less well-off countries.

### **A new house for M. and her family**

M. is a mother of 5 children and a guardian of her sister's daughter. She separated from her husband who left her in a rented house. The Daughters of Charity community first heard of this lady through one of the mobilisers who saw her struggle to pay her house rent. She lived in a small house with her children. The house was in a poor condition and almost falling down.

The roof leaked in the rainy season. Her landlord asked her to find another house because she was unable to pay her house rent of 1000/- monthly.

Since M. had nothing to pay for a new house; her house was locked. She was forced to move to her sister's house in a nearby village. Her family was too big to join with her sister's family and this caused her great stress. The Sisters did an assessment and found that she had a piece of land where she could build a house for her family. Because she had no money the community built her a three roomed house of 20 iron sheets that fits her family well. They also helped her to dig a pit latrine and built a slab on it. She is now a happy woman with her children well accommodated. The community supports her also with food during this pandemic. M and her family are so grateful.



*M's house*



*The flooring is underway.*

### **A Young Man's desire for education**

S. is a second born son in a family of 5. The Daughters of Charity helped S's mother A. a widow, to start selling vegetables in town. The Sisters came to know about A. and her family through a

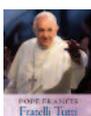
pastor who saw her struggling with paying house rent, buying food and paying fees for her children. The pastor referred her to the Daughters of Charity and after assessment, they discovered that A. had a small piece of land where it was possible to set up a small house for her family and so be relieved from paying house rent. The pastor offered to support her with posts and labour, while the Daughters supported her with iron sheets and nails. The Sisters also supported her to build a descent latrine because her land is in a marshy area. In such a situation, latrines are dug locally and are very shallow and fall easily. Normally people living in this area build more than two latrines in a year. A. was very happy on three accounts; she no longer pays house rent, she received training in income generating activity and she received startup funds to start small business.

S. and his siblings are very hardworking in school. S. sat for his final examinations in secondary school and attained a C+, which enabled him get an admission into Maseno University, to do a degree of Bachelor of Science (Biochemistry). S's mother is unable to pay for his fees. She requested help for S. to continue his education. The community supported her. This family is in a big need and S. might miss this opportunity.

*Mercy Kashagira  
Youth social worker.*

<b>SAMPLE FEE BREAKDOWN FOR ONE STUDENT</b>	<b>KENYAN SHILLING</b>
FIRST SEMESTER	28,250
SECOND SEMESTER	20,000
THIRD SEMESTER	20,000
FOURTH SEMESTER	20,000
ACCOMMODATION/ other expenses	88,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>176.250</b>

*Note: 1 Kenyan Shilling equals 0.0077 Euro*



*'Lack of dialogue means that in these individual sectors people are concerned not for the common good, but for the benefits of power or, at best, for ways to impose their own ideas...Round tables thus become mere negotiating sessions.' (no.202)*

***In the Bakery with Sister Rosemary Awor and Nancy***

Nancy and I work in the bakery with some young people. I work there two days a week, Tuesday and Thursday on the baked products. Nancy works five days. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday they prepare doughnuts. We opened a shop in town, which is a joint business with the Women's Empowerment Project selling materials for different uniforms.



*'It's all about a balancing act between time, temperature and ingredients: That's the art of baking.'*



*'A basic rule of baking is that, in general, it's almost impossible to make an inedible batch of brownies.'*



*'Baking is done out of love, to share with family and friends, to see them smile.'*



*'Ready for sale!'*



*'Bake the world a better place'*



*'Cake is the answer.'*



*Fresh Swiss Roll...*





# Inaugural Misean Cara Climate Action Award



**Dinah Chenangat, the Women's Empowerment Coordinator, for almost four years, received the Individual Inaugural Misean Cara Climate Award (2020) through the Daughters of Charity. Dinah's project entitled 'Chepnyal Development Project' is located in West Pokot, Kenya (Project Portfolio Code: D01/KEN/2012/02). We are grateful to Sister Geraldine Henry who submitted this informative and inspiring article.**

Dinah's nomination arose for her achievements for work in the interior village. The project continues in a second village for a duration of three years. Follow up continues in both interior villages:

- To monitor and assess the outcomes;
- To monitor the impact of inputs given
- To recognize profits made and how they are spent. The women are motivated to pay back a small amount of money loaned to them to sustain the project.

The Women's development project is situated interiorly in Sook location villages, West Pokot County, Kenya. Dinah worked with women in these interior villages by highlighting the effect of climate change in relation to biodiversity. She is a committed worker, has great integrity and assists women in advocating for their rights through the local government and through the Chiefs. She is compassionate, a good listener and always ready to go the extra mile. She seeks justice with/for the women. The women have high regard for Dinah, as she is a Pokot lady herself.

Dinah is a married woman with four children and well understands women's needs. She was successful in sensitizing women in relation to the importance of planting trees, terraced farming methods, using drip irrigation, water harvesting and knowledge on climate change. In addition, Dinah gives input on the importance of food security and

best farming methods to gain a good harvest. She is dedicated to making follow up visits that entail long walks to reach families in interior places, as the motor bikes have drop off points. She completes the rest of the journey on foot. Dinah has also worked practically with the women to demonstrate planting tree seedlings, preparing kitchen gardens and constructing chicken houses.

In Sook Division, there were four landslides recently due to torrential rains. Following the landslides, people saw the need to plant trees, and not to cultivate on sloppy areas to prevent soil erosion and further landslides. When women joined the Income Generating Activity (IGA) groups, their concern grew about the loss of trees for charcoal production.

## Tree Nurseries

Dinah introduced other methods of earning a living rather than destroying trees. She met the women twice a week, for three years and the impact of inputs given on climate change motivated 14 women to plant tree nurseries. The women became advocates for climate change by encouraging other women in their local communities to plant trees. Fifteen women gave feedback relating to other women who planted trees, though are not members of the group. The total number of tree seedlings planted in the tree nurseries was 33,750. They sold 30,180 tree seedlings and planted the rest in their farms. They received twenty shillings per seedling and got Kshs 603,600 equivalent to 6,036 Euro. These women were motivated to plant trees to replace all the trees they had cut down to burn charcoal. Through inputs on climate change, they realized they could get more profits through tree seedlings. The outcome was 79 women in the IGA groups have taken initiative to plant trees in the farms, planting 9,220 tree seedlings. The impact of this project for one woman (who has a nursery of 20,000 tree seedlings, and who sold

5,000 seedlings at Kshs 20) was that she gained Kshs 1 00,000 equivalent to 1,000 Euro. From the cash earned, she purchased a posho mill (flour milling machine) by adding the balance from her other IGA. Burning trees for charcoal was one of the means to earn a living for women and the impact now is that no women in this area are burning trees for charcoal.

## Harvesting Rainwater

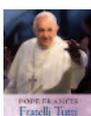
The women know the importance of harvesting rainwater and have small Ken tanks to store water from the roof gutters into their tanks. Forty women harvest rainwater in this way and purchased their tanks from their IGA profits. Other women collect water from streams and 70% are now boiling their water prior to drinking. The impact is they have seen a reduction in water borne diseases. Climate change, i.e. too much rain or severe drought caused economic disruption in local communities leaving people with little or no yield. Too much rain has caused soil erosion reducing the fertility of land under cultivation.

## Better Farming Methods

The women in interior villages learned to use better farming methods, i.e., terraced farm to prevent soil erosion and to use safe fertilizer using chicken manure, manure from cows, sheep and goats. Some people breed rabbits and use their urine as a natural chemical fertilizer. Annual crop rotation allows for food security. Now, they utilize their farms to plant local vegetables, potatoes, onions, tomatoes and sweet potatoes. Rains are now harder to predict as climate change has affected reliable rain. Local radio advises women to listen to weather updates.

## Income from fruit and vegetables

Women gain an income by selling fruits like mangoes, oranges, lemons and avocados. They never realized this could provide an income. One woman

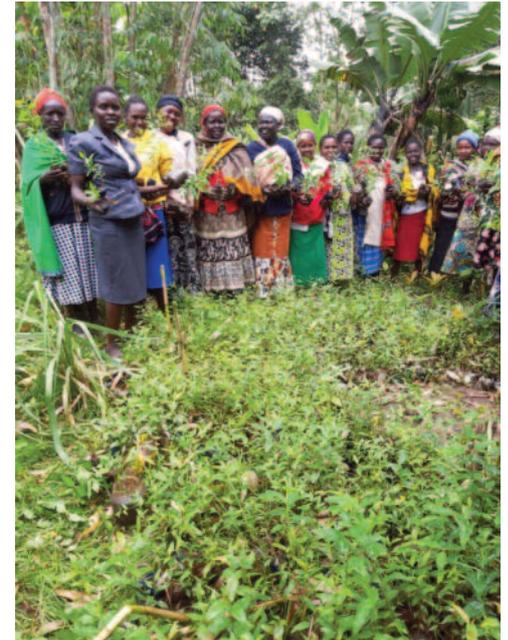


*'Authentic social dialogue involves the ability to respect the other's point of view and to admit that it may include legitimate convictions and concerns. Based on their identity and experience, others have a contribution to make, and it is desirable that they should articulate their positions for the sake of a more fruitful public debate.'* (no.203).

said, ‘I never knew lemons could give me an income as I gave them out to my neighbors and children who came to take what they wanted. Last year I looked for a market and I received Kshs. 8000 from my sales. This assisted me to pay school fees for a child in secondary school.’ Seventy-seven women are engaged in kitchen gardening to earn a living and to improve the nutritional status of their families. During drought periods, the women use sprinkle irrigation. This ensures a continuous produce when vegetables are scarce and demand is high, and prices increase, making them gain more profits. Seventy-nine women are engaged in multiple IGAs that enable economic stability. If one IGA is not effective, they gain from the other.



*Dinah-Women’s Coordinator*



*Dinah and the Women*

*Well done Dinah!*

**‘Co-incidence is God’s way of remaining anonymous.’**

*Albert Einstein*

St Lawrence of Brindisi (1559-1610), feast day celebrated on 21 July, was from Brindisi, in Southern Italy. His parents died when he was young and he was educated by his uncle in St Mary’s College, Venice. At 16 years of age he joined the Capuchin Order of the Franciscans. He studied theology and philosophy at Padua University. Ordained a priest at 23 years old, he was gifted and capable and was fluent in 6-7 languages. Pope Clement VIII asked Lawrence to preach to the Jews in Italy. This he did using the Hebrew language. His Hebrew was excellent, hence the Jews thought he was of Jewish origin! He was also renowned for his sense of compassion and his administrative skills.

On researching the life of St Lawrence, I learned in the daily news that archaeologists in Spain were doing a dig in the ruins of a Franciscan Church there to find the remains of Red Hugh O’Donnell. Looking at dates, I realised St Lawrence (1559-1619) and Red Hugh O’Donnell (1572-1610) were contemporaries. Whilst they didn’t know one another, they had much in common. Both stood up to the empires of their day. Red Hugh stood up to the empire that was bullying Catholic Ireland (to know what that was like, read the lives of the 17 Irish martyrs especially that of Bishop Dermot O’Hurley who was Bishop of Cashel at that time). He suffered an appalling death and now buried in Dublin in the ruins of St Kevin’s Church, located in St Kevin’s Park between Camden Street and what was the Meath Hospital.

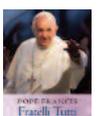
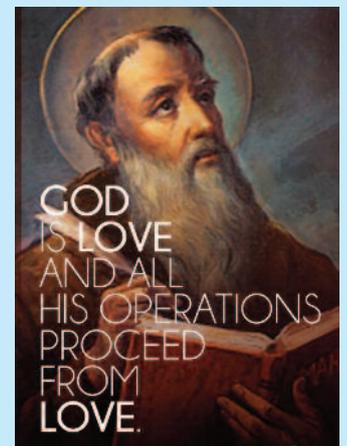
St Lawrence stood up to the Ottoman Empire, which was threatening to overrun Europe, bragging that the altar in St Peter’s Basilica in Rome would be turned into a manger to

feed their horses! Pope Clement VIII asked Lawrence to get help from the princes of Europe to form a crusade to protect Catholic Europe. The German princes managed to muster 18,000 men, but when they learned their fight would be against 80,000 on the opposing side, they balked, believing they couldn’t possibly have a victory. St Lawrence, having faith that could move mountains, said that victory would be theirs and he led the troops into battle in Hungary (where at the time the Ottoman Empire had a holding) against the 80,000 riding his horse against the troops while holding a large crucifix aloft, and his faith was rewarded! The opposing side lost 30,000 men and retreated to the other side of the river Danube.

The next amazing coincidence was that this battle was fought in 1601: the same year as the battle of Kinsale, in which Red Hugh took a courageous stand even though this battle was lost. Success accompanied any battle led by St Lawrence!

The next coincidence: After the Battle of Kinsale, Red Hugh went to Spain to ask King Philip III to send more military aid to Ireland. Red Hugh died on this mission at 29 years of age. King Philip afforded him a royal funeral. In 1619 also, St Lawrence went to Spain to request aid from King Philip for the people of Napoli who were also suffering from oppression (not from the Ottomans but from the Duke of Osuna). St Lawrence also died on his similar mission on his 60th birthday.

*Etáin Nic Cinnghamhna*



# Shielding and Cocooning during Covid 19 - a Belfast Experience.

*In Belfast we experienced at first hand the effects of the corona virus when Alice's sister-in-law, Rose, contacted the virus in England and sadly passed away. Due to restrictions, Alice was unable to travel to London but we joined her brother Frank and the family for the Funeral Service online. This was a very difficult time for Alice.*

During the first lockdown, we each decided to undertake some activity/hobby that would give us new life during these unprecedented days of Covid 19. We greatly appreciated the fine weather which allowed us to enjoy walks in the Falls Park, Lady Dixon Park and other beauty spots in Belfast.

We offer you some of the fruits of our labour ... knitting and crochet, painting, cooking, planting seeds and growing vegetables. Our apple tree produced much fruit this year. We spent hours picking, and peeling apples but it was worth it when we produced the most appetising apple tarts. Our neighbours were also the recipients of apple tarts and they were very appreciative of the kind and unexpected gesture.

We even tried our hand at hair cutting! (The hair salon will not open until 2022)

Being on lockdown gave us the opportunity to keep in touch with people, both in the local parish and Corpus Christi, who were living on their own, and many joyful and sad conversations took place. It was amazing what a simple phone call meant to people. Through our contacts with Depaul, the Peoples' Kitchen, the A.I.C. and the primary school we reached out to families who needed help.

Every evening we had a Holy hour to pray for all those affected by the Corona virus, and we joined our neighbours in the street on Thursday evenings to applaud our front line workers.

On a lighter note, we had a film night (without the popcorn) once a week having taped a repertoire of films from the television. These varied from

detectives to comedy to environment and we travelled the world in a couple of hours which brought light relief.

Church services on the internet gave us the privilege of sharing in the Eucharist in many parts of Ireland and beyond and we acknowledge appreciation.

On four consecutive Wednesdays we had a 'crash' course on Reality Therapy. This was a totally new subject for us and we learned much, so much so, that we were presented with certificates at the end of the course ... no external examiners!

One member of the community decided to re-read the letters of Vincent and Louise and shared her insights with all of us, this was enlightening. We heard details of correspondence between them we either never heard of or had forgotten about. We appreciated that sharing.

Early in the lockdown, the parish priest of Corpus Christi embarked on a traditional custom of taking the Blessed Sacrament around the streets of the parish. We were in the car behind the open car carrying the priest with the Blessed Sacrament. One sister drove while the others sang the hymns and recited the rosary via the loud speaker. It was very moving to see the people outside their houses, kneeling or standing - showing such reverence as the Blessed Sacrament passed by. Many families had prepared altars and joined in the rosary and sang the hymns. On a sunny Sunday it was a grace - filled occasion and no doubt was a spiritual boost for the parish at such a depressing time.

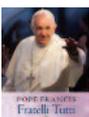
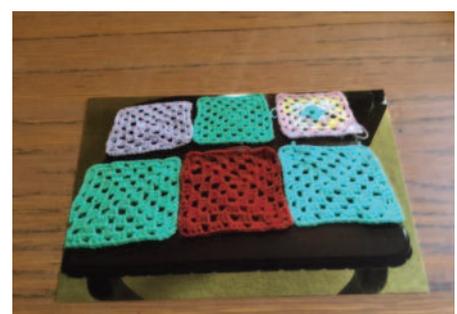
Like so many people, we became familiar with the workings of Zoom and Facebook. This enabled us to attend meetings, give a retreat, deliver and participate in courses online. We prayed Compline, did *Thought for the Day* and gave a Presentation on *Laudato Si'* with members of St. John's parish in the Falls Road.

For the feast of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal we organised a Triduum in St Teresa's parish.

It's been a difficult few months for everybody and we continue to pray every day for all those affected by the virus and for those working on a vaccine. We each have our part to play, especially during these unprecedented times as Pope Francis so aptly puts it:

*"I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am in the world. We have to regard ourselves as sealed, even branded, by this mission of bringing light, blessing, enlivening, raising up, healing and freeing".*

## *The Sisters in Belfast.*



*"In today's globalized world, "the media can help us to feel closer to one another, creating a sense of the unity of the human family which in turn can inspire solidarity and serious efforts to ensure a more dignified life for all... The media can help us greatly in this, especially nowadays, when the networks of human communication have made unprecedented advances." (no. 205).*

## 'Say Yes to the Light'



Image taken from the revjs.com

As the nights close in we have to dig deep to keep hope alive in the midst of this pandemic. Level five restrictions coupled with less hours of day light, will further challenge us to see God in all this mess. We learned from Fr. Brendan on his Zoom session entitled 'Ten Ignatian Tips to Survive Lockdown' that we must find the nuggets of gold in each day and be grateful for them. How can we find the nuggets of light as the water muddies and we all must fight the darkness and hold on until the dawn where the light calls us outside? Trouble is, it is always darkest just before the dawn.

We as a family have had our share of suffering or desolation as Brendan mentioned. It was already a bumpy year with a painful miscarriage and our family and marriage was on rocky ground as a result of all the trauma of grief.

When the first lockdown hit it was almost a relief to step away for the world to the safety of our home. Looking back, on lessons we learned that were helpful as a family when bedtime descended in to bedlam as our children were not tired enough to sleep. As the days lengthened we were at the exact opposite to the time we face into now. No school, or playschool, no structure so we tried to get out at least once a day in the afternoon whatever the weather and exercise as a family. We cycled together and discovered new places to spend time in our neighbourhood. A water hen down a little cul de sac on a meander in the River Tolka nested and laid her eggs. We counted daily as the eggs increased.

But it was the 'Corona Friendships' or seeing God in the people we met also outside trying to get some fresh air and exercise that kept us going. Eamon was also watching the water hen on his cigarette break from the office. The Grandad bringing his grandchildren up to exercise in the grounds of Corpus Christi Church. His wife Mary and I often prayed the Angelus at six o' clock. The children climbing trees once they were free, the tightrope walker giving turns to the children on his practice rope, the little kindnesses that kept us going. The day a neighbour rang the bell and dropped in a colouring book with magic markers. Another neighbour dropped off freshly harvested potatoes, green beans and peas. The conversations on the road. The day in May when my Dad landed up from Cavan with Easter eggs for his grandchildren. When we met at the front door I cried as the children grabbed the Easter eggs. Then while devouring them at the table asked Grandad, 'Can we hug you? But what about the Corona Virus?' 'Ah go on' he replied. I cried as I watched them embrace. On a trip to town on the bus with Anna in August 'Mammy I don't like your mask. I can't see your smile.' Will we emerge anew from the masks or will this virus sully our smiles?

We are an Easter people who will rise again as Jesus did. The early apostles were afraid in the room yet the Holy Spirit gave them the courage to go out and spread the good news. We have grown in appreciation of our interdependence on

each other and nature to sustain us. Love Your neighbour as yourself. Who lives within five km of your home and is this where you want to be for the rest of your life?

Births, deaths and marriages have continued in a simpler way. Had life become bigger and better or all a bit too much? There is a simplicity now to life that must have been what life was like in our 80's childhood. Simpler times, simple pleasures, happier with less, and I don't think that is a bad thing. No one rushing anywhere. No grand plans to boast off. We must find and relish the simple joy in each day and be in the moment as children are. Slowing down has made us a better people. It has forced us to stop and take stock. As we bubble up there is a newness in the old routine. We took so much for granted in our hurry to be always going somewhere.

The Declan Nerney song surmised my first weeks of lockdown, 'Oh stop the world and let me off, I'm tired of going round and round!' For this second phase as we again slow down our lives we will remember in November those who have gone before us in this last year and past years and get out in the daylight before coming in to hibernate and rest in the solitude of the November nights. Let us reach out with a doorstep call, or drop off a warm meal, or slice of homemade cake, write a card or letter to keep the love flowing between us as we share our struggles and experiences of living in the second wave of the pandemic. Connect to a zoom Mass or exercise class and say yes to the light as Jesus knocks on our hearts and is the leading light in this strange time.

*Amanda Smith*



# Uyo: Nigeria-Sisters bring inclusive education to children with and without disabilities

This article was first printed on the Global Sisters Report website <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/ministry/news/sisters-bring-inclusive-education-children-and-without-disabilities>

The Global Sisters Report (GSR) website is educational and popular. <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/content/about-global-sisters-report>

The website describes GSR as ‘an independent, non-profit source of news and information about Catholic sisters and the critical issues facing the people they serve. Our network of journalists report about their lives and works, and sisters write commentaries from their perspective.’ Regular bulletins are accessible through social media platforms. These bulletins are well worth browsing and reading to keep readers in touch with the lives of people who live in poverty and those who serve them. The following article printed on 5 November 2020, includes photographs and is the work of journalist, Kechukwu Inuome.

## Sisters bring inclusive education to children with and without disabilities

‘Uyo, Nigeria — On a cloudy July morning in 2019, Sr. Scholastica Achinkumbur stands at the entrance of St. Vincent's Centre for Inclusive Education to welcome students accompanied by their parents.

Soon to arrive are Mfoniso Akpan, 10, and Done Kufre, 5, who both have cerebral palsy, a group of permanent movement disorders that appear in early childhood. Achinkumbur collects Done from a man who had carried him into the centre and seats him on a couch in the reception area. She calls Sr. Martha Oko, who picks up the 5-year-old in her arms to go to class.

Achinkumbur then takes Mfoniso, positions his hands on a scooter and walks him down to the assembly for the morning devotion.

There the sisters will lead students in prayers and songs, employing sign language for those with hearing



Sister Scholastica Achinkumbur sings for the pupils at St. Vincent's Centre for Inclusive Education

difficulties. Done and Mfoniso cheerfully join in.

Done, Mfoniso and others like them benefit from an inclusive education offered by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, whose mission is to exclude no one on grounds of disability, language, gender, ethnicity or any other barrier to a full education.

Nigeria offers few schools for children with disabilities. As a result, many of them end up staying at home while some resort to begging on the streets. Society makes matters worse when it struggles to accept them.

"The essence of making this school inclusive is to meet the educational needs of children with disabilities," said Achinkumbur, who is also the administrator of the center, "and help children [without disabilities] at their tender age to learn how to live together



Sister. Martha Oko uses sign language to teach pupils at St. Vincent's Centre for Inclusive Education,

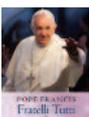


Sister Scholastica Achinkumbur, the administrator of St. Vincent's Centre for Inclusive Education

with those children that have challenges. So as they grow, what they meet in the society will no longer be a new thing." (Please continue to read the wonderful work of Sr. Scholastica Achinkumbur and Sr. Martha Oko following this link). <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/ministry/news/sisters-bring-inclusive-education-children-and-without-disabilities>



Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul and children living with disabilities gather outside the school administration block in Uyo



‘We need constantly to ensure that present-day forms of communication are in fact guiding us to generous encounter with others, to honest pursuit of the whole truth, to service, to closeness to the underprivileged and to the promotion of the common good. As the Bishops of Australia have pointed out, we cannot accept “a digital world designed to exploit our weaknesses and bring out the worst in people.”’ (no. 205).

# Aware®



## Your supporting light through depression

Aware is a voluntary organisation founded in 1985, by Dr Patrick McKeown in St Patrick's Hospital, which aims to assist people affected by depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and related mood conditions. The organisation also works to promote mental health and stability. The Support Line is the development of the helpline set up by Dr McKeown.

I came in contact with Aware in 2015. I studied and worked in All Hallows College and when the College closed, I discerned and prayed about where best I could use my skills. I saw an advertisement on the back page of the Irish Times newspaper and felt drawn to investigate it more deeply. Then I took time to pray and reflect on this work in the light of the context of the time and spirituality of Vincent and Louise. Sensitivity, commitment and compassion; I thought were important attributes for such a ministry.

The charism of St Vincent de Paul urges us to reach out to those on the margins of society in the most gentle of ways. On one occasion, Vincent wrote to Antoine Portail 'against a backdrop of unrest and turmoil' when 'Paris was under threat by the Spaniards.' He was aware of the support needed by those who were afflicted in their minds. In his compassion, Vincent wrote, 'Sick minds need to be cared for more delicately than people who are physically ill' (CCD, Vol. 1, p.330, ft.3).

Today, Aware has grown as a nationwide organisation and uses a variety of ways to support people who are distressed:

1. The provision of support groups for clients, relatives and friends
2. Free call support line

3. Access to the website [www.aware.ie](http://www.aware.ie) which offers information and support
4. The Life Skills online programme is free and based on the principles of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) using group and online options. The programme is designed to help people learn more about how one thinks and how this can influence one's actions in helpful or unhelpful ways. It is delivered through a virtual classroom setting as an online self-directed programme. Programmes are available which relate to managing stress, sleep, resilience and currently, space from Covid-19. As courses are all self-directed, there are no waiting times and a person can begin immediately
5. Aware Life Skills for Schools is a free educational programme offered to students (15-18 years), designed to help them learn new ways to deal with challenges in life. The programme uses an approach based on the principles of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) which focuses on thinking and behaviour
6. The Beat the Blues programme aims to educate young people about mental health and how to take care of themselves and seek help for concerns they may have. This programme also introduces the Coping Triangle (Hayes, 2011, 2006), a useful tool which students can use in everyday situations to help relieve stress and understand what is going on for them.

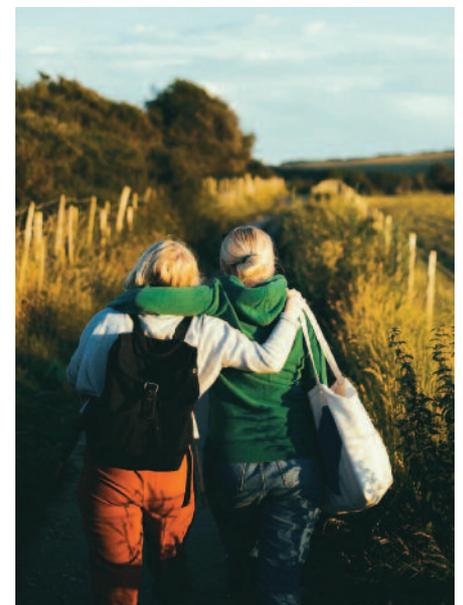
My involvement is generally a volunteer on the Support Line but with Covid-19 bringing greater needs, volunteers engage in new individual online programmes. The Support Line is a non-directive listening service. I find the work very fulfilling and challenging.

There are aspects about Aware which I like and find satisfying. The training is deep and extensive, covering all aspects of mental health. I receive regular feedback about my work which is essential and helpful.

Training and preparation for the work are essential for the volunteers who undertake the work of Aware. Training consists of a mixture of lectures, small group sessions and role play. Pending completion of training, each volunteer must complete a number of sessions shadowed by a staff member of Aware or a senior volunteer. Volunteers use a template when speaking on the phone line.

One of the most important rules throughout the different services offered by Aware is confidentiality. However, there are limits to confidentiality according to norms and standards, such as when a person has immediate plans to end their lives or the lives of others or when there is information that a child is at risk of harm, neglect or incidents of historical abuse.

*Sister Bride Lyng*



## ‘A Significant Celebration to mark the 190th Anniversary in honour of ‘The Manifestation of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal...’



*‘Nov 12, 2020 — Pope Francis blessed a statue of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal as it was to begin a pilgrimage throughout Italy to mark the 190th anniversary....*

*The statue will travel around Italy as part of an evangelization initiative by the Vincentian Congregation of the Mission. The pope met with a delegation of Vincentians, led by their Superior general, Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, on Nov. 11.’*

In her greeting to the Sisters of the Province of Ireland for the 27 November 2020, feast of ‘The Manifestation of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal’, Sister Goretti, Provincial sent the above photograph of Pope Francis with the emboldened caption.

She also invited us to, ‘renew our devotion to Our Lady’s intercession for the protection of all people especially during this time of pandemic.’

Our Lady has a central place in the lives and hearts of the Daughters of Charity. Prior to the Blessed Virgin’s appearance to Catherine Labouré in the rue du Bac in 1830, St Louise de Marillac (1591-

1660), co-founder of the Company of the Daughters of Charity (1633) showed a remarkable devotion to Our Lady. In her spiritual writings, Louise expresses a great love for the Blessed Virgin for example, ‘On the Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary’ (A.32 SWLM 1656, p.815). St Louise also describes a dream she had on the vigil of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (M.35 B, SWLM, 1636, p.734).

### ***What do we celebrate on the 190th anniversary?***

This year, 27 November 2020, as the Daughters of Charity distributed miraculous medals in honour of Our Lady, they recalled the Blessed Virgin’s second apparition to Catherine Labouré (the first being on 18 July 1830). This second apparition to Catherine was the first apparition of the medal of the Immaculate Conception to her. This took place in the chapel at rue du Bac, Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity during evening prayer at 5.30 p.m. Catherine recorded what she saw and what she experienced. Her confessor, Fr Jean-Marie Aladel (1800-65), also recorded the experience as told to him by Catherine.

During prayer Catherine ‘saw a picture representing the Blessed Virgin... customarily portrayed under the title of the Immaculate Conception... full length... and holding out her arms... dressed in a white dress and a silvery blue mantle with a veil, the colour of the dawn. From her hands came rays of light... [the Sister] heard a voice saying, “These rays of light are a symbol of the graces that Mary obtains for [people]. Surrounding the picture she read ...in golden letters: *O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.*”

Fr Aladel continued, ‘A few moments later, this picture turned around and on the reverse side she could make out the letter M surmounted with a little cross and at the foot of it, the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary...the voice said to her: A medal must be struck on this model, and those who carry one with an indulgence attached and who piously say this short prayer will enjoy the special protection of the Mother of God.’

The Blessed Virgin appeared a third time to Catherine in December 1830. The Constitutions of the Company remind the Sisters of the devotion ‘the founders inculcated in the Daughters of Charity (C.15).’

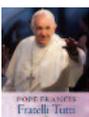
In relation to the celebration of this feast in 2020, the Constitutions remind the Daughters of Charity of ‘the Marian character of the Company.’ In promoting ‘Marian devotion’, they inculcate it ‘through the Miraculous Medal, a genuine summary of the history of salvation.’ (C.26, S.14).

**Reminder:** Miraculous medals may be purchased from the Daughters of Charity, 10 Henrietta Street, Dublin D01 VP11

Contact person: Sister Anne O’Neill

Email: [virgopotensdublin@gmail.com](mailto:virgopotensdublin@gmail.com)

Phone: 087 329 6171



*‘If society is to have a future, it must respect the truth of our human dignity and submit to that truth...A society is noble and decent not least for its support of the pursuit of truth and its adherence to the most basic of truths.’ (no. 207).*

You are invited to browse the updated website of the Chapel of the Miraculous Medal. Please follow this link.

<http://www.chapellenotredamedelamedaillemiraculeuse.com/langues/english/histoire-dune-famille-gbl>

## A few words with Sister Anne O'Neill in the Virgo Potens office

### 'It's a Silent Privilege'

One day recently during lockdown, I spoke on the phone to Sister Anne O'Neill who works in the Virgo Potens Office, Henrietta Street and I asked her a few questions about the work of the Virgo Potens, centre for the distribution of the miraculous medal. From here, Sr Anne Neylon is referred to as AN and Sister Anne O'Neill is identified as AO'N.

**AN: Just so people might know a little about you and the work of Virgo Potens where are you from and how long are you working here?**

**AO'N:** Well I actually came to work in the Virgo Potens office, before I came to live with the Henrietta Street community and that was in 2016. Initially, I commuted from the community house in Killinarden, Tallaght to work with the late Sister

Elma Hurley and Carol and they showed me the work and all that needed to be done. Carol worked in Virgo Potens since 1996 when the office was located in North William Street. The plan was that I would replace Sister Elma. Both helped me greatly as this work was very new to me. It is very convenient for me to live and work here and to have the Virgo Potens centre in the house. Carol does fantastic work and her office hours are on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10.00 a.m. to 2.00p.m. She is highly committed to the Marian Apostolate and the spread of the miraculous medal.

**AN: What is attractive about the work located here in Henrietta Street?**

**AO'N:** Well, it's a silent privilege. I meet so many people that have such a great love for Our Lady and they love to pray and hear the story of how Mary appeared to Catherine Labouré and asked her to have a medal struck. It amazes them when they hear it was the people of the time gave the name of miraculous medal to the medal. That was because there were so many miracles, cures and conversions among the people in the nineteenth century. In fact the cholera of the day spread like wildfire, just as the Covid is today. Many people are praying to Our Lady and praying the Novena to her in order to rid the world of this pandemic. I enjoy listening to peoples' stories and am so touched by their prayer requests. I also write to people and send them

blessed medals. This is an ongoing work and very satisfying.

**AN: You mentioned the silent privilege Anne. Of course we know that St Catherine Labouré is known as the 'Saint of Silence'. It must have been very difficult throughout her life to keep silent about the story of the apparitions and her mission to have the medal struck**

**AO'N:** Yes, she suffered greatly in maintaining this silence among the sisters, but that what was the Blessed Virgin asked her to do. She lived her life of service as she worked in the hospice where the men who were poor, lonely and abandoned lived. Her work and life are so well described in that book 'The Life of St Catherine Labouré' by Renée Laurentin. It's a classic and the author quotes so much of St Catherine's thoughts and dialogue with the Blessed Virgin throughout her life. It also describes Catherine's family and how she remained close to them and helped them when possible.

**AN: How do people order the medals and scapulars?**

**AO'N:** They phone the office to make an order or they write or they order online. We sell thousands of medals nationally and internationally annually.

**AN: What else do you sell in the office?**

**AO'N:** We sell Green Scapulars, Red Scapulars, Rosary beads, Mass cards and cards for various occasions, mementoes for the sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation, framed pictures of Our Lady and the Sacred Heart and other bits and pieces.

**AN: Why do people like the miraculous medal so much Anne?**

**AO'N:** They have so much faith in God and Our Lady and they love her because they see her as their mother. Through the centuries it is amazing the devotion that mothers especially had to Our Lady and that they just kept bringing them into the family and asked for protection. Our Lady asked that people would wear the medal around their neck and St Catherine reminds the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin's request. She also



encouraged the Sisters to pray the Rosary daily. I believe in this time of pandemic that if we intercede with the Blessed Virgin that she will continually ask her Son, Jesus to help us.

**AN: I think you are correct there Anne. We continue to hope and pray for those on the frontline and those who are sick. Who else distributes the miraculous medal besides this office?**

**AO’N:** Mainly the Legion of Mary and the members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. And so many people distribute the Liturgical Calendar at Christmas. People like to give and receive as a Christmas gift.

**AN: Thanks Anne for this chat. May God continue to bless your good work.**



*The Green Scapular*



*The Red Scapular*



## NEWSLETTER FROM THE PROVINCE OF ROSALIE RENDU

Readers of *New Beginnings* welcome the newsletters from the Province of

Rosalie Rendu. ‘On 11 March 2020, the Australian and British Provinces came together to form the new Province of Rosalie Rendu in a special Eucharistic celebration and ceremony at the Sacred Heart Church, Mill Hill’. In her introduction, Provincial Sister Ellen Flynn said: “This ceremony formally authorises the beginning of something new, something that we pray today will breathe fresh vitality to our lives as Sisters and most especially to our mission to reach out to those experiencing poverty today, the only reason for our existence.”

One of the new ventures is the publication of this Newsletter which we in the Province of Ireland are glad to receive.

This third colourful newsletter (January 2021, Issue number 3) describes the ongoing ministries of the Province. In her opening letter, Sister Ellen Flynn recognises the challenges that COVID-19 presents but each ministry presented is full of life and energy. In every face there is a sense of joy.

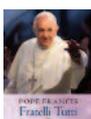
The ministries outline the services in which the Daughters of Charity are engaged in the Province of Rosalie Rendu. Blessed Rosalie Rendu (1786-1856) was a Daughter of Charity whose heart was on fire with love for people who lived in poverty. Sister Louise Sullivan DC in her book, ‘A Daughter of Charity on Fire with Love for the Poor’ captures Rosalie’s life and one can see the same ‘indomitable’ spirit is alive today as readers scroll through the pages. It is Sister Ellen’s hope that the Vincentian spirit will continue to flourish. That surely is happening thank God.

Young people who witness and read the accounts of these ministries might be inclined to hear God calling them to give their lives to God in

community for the service of those who are poor.

### Facts about Blessed Rosalie Rendu (1786-1856)

- Jeanne Marie Rendu, born in France, was the eldest of four daughters
- When the French Revolution broke out some priests hid in their family home. They ministered to French Catholics
- Jeanne received Holy Communion for the first time in her basement at a Mass celebrated by one of the priests in hiding
- When she was nine years of age, her father died. Shortly afterwards, her sister died. She joined an Ursuline Boarding school in Gex, France for two years
- As a young woman, she began to work with the Daughters of Charity at the local hospital
- On May 25, 1802, she joined the Company of the Daughters of Charity in rue du Bac. There, she took the name Rosalie
- Rosalie lived in community in the Mouffetard District where she worked serving people who lived in poverty for 54 years. She taught young girls their catechism and how to read
- She founded a free clinic, pharmacy, school, orphanage, a child-care centre, and a home for the elderly poor. She was later awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honour by Napoleon III in 1852 for her charitable work
- She worked closely with Blessed Frederic Ozanam, Founder of the Society of St Vincent de Paul
- During her last two years, she became blind.



*‘Relativism always brings the risk that some or other alleged truth will be imposed by the powerful or the clever. Yet, “when it is a matter of the moral norms prohibiting intrinsic evil, there are no privileges or exceptions for anyone. It makes no difference whether one is the master of the world or the ‘poorest of the poor’ on the face of the earth. Before the demands of morality we are all absolutely equal.”’ (no. 209).*