



Adorers of the Sacred Heart
of Jesus of Montmartre OSB

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Christmas Newsletter 2023



Dear Friends,

Reflecting on the approaching celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ this year, and the message we would like to extend to our friends here in Ireland and around the world, the image of the tiny figures of Mary and Joseph, and the hidden presence of the Saviour, journeying on their way to

Bethlehem through a vast dark expanse, with a single star from heaven lighting their path, seems to touch the experience of those seeking or holding on to Faith in our troubled world today. Under the light of that star it is a small, seemingly insignificant family, humbly carrying out God's Will under the circumstances of the times in which they live, who are destined to change the course of history and overcome all the evils of various kinds that oppress our fallen race.

"O God, who have made this most sacred night radiant with the splendour of the true light, grant, we pray, that we, who have known the mysteries of his light on earth, may also delight in his gladness in heaven." (Roman Missal, Collect, Midnight Mass)

Centenary of the death of the Servant of God Mother Marie Adele Garnier

1924



2024

17th June

Led by a Star is the title given to the positio (collection of documents submitted to the Church for the cause of canonisation) of our Foundress, Mother Marie Adele



Marie Adèle in the first habit

Garnier. From her many spiritual letters to her directors and close friends, we see that she understood her star to be the Will of God, and his Gifts of Grace helping her to accomplish it. By the end of her life, this was very evident to those around her. Mother Agnes who was the first and most intimately involved of the sisters who joined Mother Marie Adele at the beginning of the Foundation wrote:

“Our Mother saw and followed. She did not create anything. The broad lines, she knew right from the beginning. I was always struck in considering the development of our religious life to see that there were extensions, additions, perfecting, but never a break in continuity.” (Congregation Archives, quoted by Mother M Xavier OSB)

Much of Marie Adele’s life was lived in the obscurity of various forms of darkness, the first being the death of her Mother at a young age. She knew illness, war, financial hardship, spiritual desolation, and being driven from her homeland by religious persecution. Yet by following her guiding star, each of these sufferings expanded her capacity to live in the radiant light of God’s Holy Presence, with complete abandonment to His Providence and trust in His Love. Often in her letters she repeated the word found on the lips of our Blessed Mother: “Fiat” – “Let it be done to me”... In the lives of the Saints we see how God transforms darkness into a light which illumines others, and their very paths to holiness become like a constellation of stars for us, who are still on the journey.

A Eucharistic Saint

Mother Marie Adele found her star through her living encounters with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. In early adulthood she began to experience deep hunger for union with the Heart of God, and this desire was reflected in her remarkable ability to give herself completely to whatever tasks or duties He placed before her, while deriving all her strength from Eucharistic prayer and communion. This obedience and devotedness in small things prepared her for the greater sacrifices which would be asked of her as a Religious, a Foundress, and above all a Spiritual Mother.

The graces Mother received while at Mass (which she called the Sun of her life) or in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, are well documented in her letters to her Spiritual Fathers. These graces first humbled and purified her, then enlightened her as to the working of God in her Soul and her particular vocation within the Church.

The Sacred Heart revealed to her the nature of what she called her “interior apostolate”. Here is an excerpt from a letter written to Abbe Courtois dated Christmas 1888:

‘It is as if Jesus in a purely spiritual manner was holding the whole of my poor person in his Heart, my hands in his hands, my eyes illumined by his eyes, my lips consumed by the flame of his love and by his power. And thus held, held fast, I hear him say to me: “It is in me and through me that you live, that you give yourself, that you sacrifice yourself. Your Soul is all mine, and I render it sacerdotal: offer yourself at all times with me, and offer me to my Father, with yourself; you have all power over me, and I deliver myself to you, that you may glorify my Father and that you may be at the service of Souls, of the souls of Priests especially.” ‘

A steady companion and guide

Even before she had departed this life, Mother was seen by many as a spiritual companion, and she has continued to be so for those who turn to her for assistance. She says to us, just as she wrote while still a young governess in some spiritual directives to her 13 year old charge:

Our Lord loves you, he wants you to be good, perfect, happy; he is entrusting your soul to me anew. His grace will never fail you; my fraternal affection will never fail you; do not fail yourself....my heart asks this of you.”

(The Raphael Document)



Adèle Garnier, aged 35

Our community has received numerous testimonies from those who pray to Mother Foundress, of her closeness to them, their experience of being cared for and guided by her, of having her as a friend, the consolations she has brought them in suffering and bereavement and of physical and mental healing.

Days of Recollection and Dublin Prayer Group.

For those who would like to delve deeper into the life and spirituality of Mother Marie Adele, we hold a Day of Recollection here at St Benedict’s Priory on the last Saturday of every month, exploring different aspects of our Faith in the light of her wisdom. Please contact us for more information.

A group devoted to Mother Marie Adele meets at 6pm on the second Tuesday of each month at the Poor Clare Convent in Ballsbridge, Dublin, for Mass and Adoration. Please contact Liam Murphy for more information: 0872526829

Centenary Celebration.

Mother Foundress passed to the Lord on 17th June 1924. There will be a celebration of her centenary in June 2024, with details still to be finalised. If you would like to be invited and are not on our email list, please either email or send a stamped addressed envelope to the address above requesting an invitation.

News from our Community

Boiler Installation



As many of you know, we have been praying for several years to be able to replace our ancient boiler with something more efficient and effective. God has provided, and thanks to all your support over the years and a generous benefactor, the work has now taken place under the direction of Cork firm Charles McCarthy Plumbing Ltd. The old boiler was carefully removed piece by piece, asbestos first, the pit filled in with concrete, and the pipework cut back. New pipework was then skilfully connected complete with numerous valves, filters and pressure gauges for easier maintenance of the system. Two new heating boilers and a hot water boiler, manufactured in Ireland, were then installed. We are very happy with the system

which is now quickly heating areas of the house which had been without proper heating before, and the cast iron radiators are heating to a temperature which makes them more effective.

It now seems very important to us to insulate our extensive attics, so as to conserve as well as possible the heat generated. Unfortunately, during the course of the work other urgent matters were brought to our attention: Our 100 year old water tank is now extremely rusty and needs to be replaced. The total cost of this work including necessary plumbing alterations, electrics and necessary improvements to accessing the attic, is estimated at €15,000. Any help you are able to give will be greatly appreciated.

Roof repairs



At the beginning of the year we successfully applied for a government heritage grant which has enabled us to begin urgent repairs to the house, beginning with the roofs and gutters. Local Carpenter Aidan Moran has performed high quality repairs on our disintegrating parapet walls and some of the chimney surrounds, which we believe has eliminated 80 or 90% of the

water ingress which was damaging the extension wing and making it less and less habitable. Work has now begun on the East gable of the main part of the building. Thanks to your generosity we have been able to meet the expenditure necessary to claim the grant, and we are in a good position to apply for further grants in the coming year. We also received a generous grant from the Esme Mitchell Foundation. We would like to thank the many, many people who provided testimonies recommending St Benedict's for funding. We also thank those who frequent our retreat house and spread the word.

Tearoom and Bible Garden activities

We thank the increasing number of customers supporting our little tearoom and Bible Garden and the wonderful staff and volunteers who help us keep these aspects of the Priory running. The months of November and December saw us once again preparing for our annual Christmas fayre, with the making of jam and marmalade, candles and cosmetics, sweets and deserts. Meanwhile our staff were making beautiful cards, decorations and Christmas cakes as well as sorting and pricing piles of interesting bric-a-brac items. Many of the materials came from the retiring owner of the little craft shop in Cobh by the name of "Jane's". We were overwhelmed by Mary's generosity and the help she gave us to produce a spectacular craft fayre. We understand that she was delighted to be able to hand over the contents of her shop to a good cause! The day was held on 9th December and was the most successful we have ever had: Another big thank you to all involved!

Please be assured that we keep our friends and benefactors, visitors, staff and volunteers in our daily prayers at Vespers.

Visit of Mother General and Jubilareans!



In November we were delighted to receive a surprise visit from our Mother General and 2 General Councillors: Mother Joanna and Rev.Mother Ines (who is also the Prioress of Tyburn Convent). Both are celebrating their Silver Jubilees this year and as everyone knows, Tyburn Nuns never miss an opportunity for a celebration. Our Conventual Mass on 21st November celebrated by Fr Aquin Casey was solemnised with special hymns, the *Suscipe* sung by the two Mothers, and an Offertory Procession. Later in the day...we celebrated in other ways!

May the Christ child be born anew in your hearts and homes this Christmas bringing you hope and consolation where it is needed and invigorating your lives with the Divine Presence.

The Tyburn Nuns at St Benedict's Priory



The following literature on the Servant of God Mother Marie Adele Garnier is available from us on request:

The Path of Marie Adele (Hardback book) -spiritual Biography by Don Gianmario Piga: €20+€11p&p(Ireland)

Sacrifice of Praise (paperback) biography by Dom Bede Camm OSB – friend of Mother Foundress: €12+€7p&p(Ireland)

Journey in the spirit (booklet) The story of Mother Marie Adele by Mother John Baptist Brennan OSB – late archivist at Tyburn Convent: €2.50 (Ireland) €3.50(Int.) p&p included.

Leaflets and prayer cards for distribution – free of charge (Donations welcome).

If you would like to donate to St Benedict's Priory please send a cheque made out to **St Benedict's Priory** to the above address or go to www.benedictineadorerscobh.ie and follow the link or make a bank transfer to: Account Number 12884-131, Sort Code: 93-40-62 IBAN: IE61 AIBK 9340 6212 8841 31 BIC: AIBKIE2D