



# Sacred Heart Newsletter 2023



Dear Friends,

## June is the month of the Sacred Heart

In the not-too-distant past, every Irish home had above the mantelpiece or in some other special place, a picture of the Sacred Heart. Often a candle would be burning before it, keeping alive the Faith that people had in the love of God, and the promises made centuries earlier to St Margaret Mary Alacoque:

- 1. I will give them all the graces necessary in their state of life.*
- 2. I will establish peace in their homes.*
- 3. I will comfort them in all their afflictions.*
- 4. I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all, in death.*
- 5. I will bestow abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.*

*6. Sinners will find in my Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.*

*7. Lukewarm souls shall become fervent.*

*8. Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.*

*9. I will bless every place in which an image of my Heart is exposed and honoured.*

*10. I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.*

*11. Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names written in my Heart.*

*12. I promise you in the excessive mercy of my Heart that my all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the First Fridays in nine consecutive months the grace of final perseverance; they shall not die in my disgrace, nor without receiving their sacraments. My divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment.*

How quickly, it seems, that this devotion has all but disappeared along with so much else. Yet our hope lies in the truth that the flame of love did not begin in the hearts of men but in the Heart of God. It is still burning, and the smallest contact is enough to set any human heart on fire. How, in our days, can we courageously rekindle this devotion, overcoming all the attempts of the evil one to destroy it by suggesting that it is of no value and replacing it with other expressions of human desire, not founded in Truth or in Divine Charity?

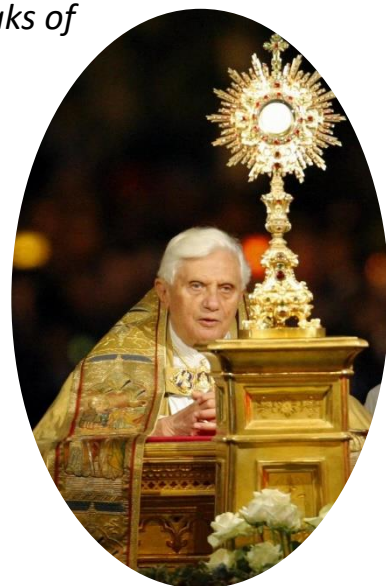
Our Foundress, Mother Marie Adele Garnier, understood that as the world becomes more hardened in sin, more ferocious in its' attempts to drown out the loving voice of God, the Heart of Jesus increases the power and even the visibility with which he draws Souls towards Himself. As, in a moment of grace for France, the Sacre Coeur Basilica was being built in Paris in reparation for the sins of the French Commune, our Foundress received the revelation from Our Lord, by means of an interior locution, that He wanted His Eucharistic Heart to be exposed in the centre of the Basilica day and night. Thus began the great movement of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration that we have seen develop in Europe and around the world over the past century, so that now as never before the words of Jesus are being fulfilled: "and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself".

This month of June, aglow with the radiance of Christ's resurrection and vibrant with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, let us each do what we can to make it once again the Month of the Sacred Heart. Beginning with ourselves, let us accompany our devotional practises, (such as the veneration and enthronement in our homes of the image of the Sacred Heart and a novena beginning on 7<sup>th</sup> May leading up to the Solemnity on 16<sup>th</sup>), with deep and silent encounters in the presence of the loving, living and beating, Eucharistic Heart of Jesus. We should allow our times of Eucharistic Adoration to transform our hearts to be so much one with His, that we will also become a means of drawing others back to God.

## **125 years of Eucharistic Adoration and Worship**

On 4<sup>th</sup> March this year, in union with our entire Religious Family, we celebrated 125 years since the foundation of our Congregation in 1898. It was a day richly graced with peace, prayer, and goodwill manifested in the generosity of our friends who helped us in so many ways, in the crowd that gathered (we estimate about 150 people joined us) and the many messages of love and support we received from all over Ireland and beyond.

Our Bishop William Crean honoured us by presiding at the Solemn Votive Mass of the Sacred Heart, assisted by a number of clergy. His homily celebrated the gift of our Foundress to the Church. Quoting Archbishop Vincent Pelvi's preface to "The Path of Marie Adele" by Don Gianmario Piga, he said: *"Therefore, Mother Adele speaks of the adoration of the Sacred Heart having recourse to the use of attributes that harmonize feelings, sentiments and affectivity ... She translates the language of lovers into the language of mystical love"*. He then continued: *By God's grace gifted to Mother Marie Adele Garnier another branch was added to the Benedictine monastic family –it emerged by way of her charism and intuition for the power of Perpetual Adoration an act of which the late Pope Benedict observed "prolongs and intensifies all that takes place during the liturgical celebration itself. Indeed, only in adoration can a profound and genuine reception mature. And it is precisely this personal encounter with the Lord that then strengthens the social mission contained in the Eucharist"*.





*Votive Mass of the Sacred Heart*



As you see both laity chapel and choir were full. There was also some overflow into the parlour where the Mass was livestreamed.



*Benediction after returning from prayers at Mother Foundress's shrine*

**Bishop Crean and Community at the cutting of the cake during the reception in the marquee: A copy of the document of approbation signed by the Archbishop of Paris on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1898 was on display. Mother Prioress read aloud an account from our archives, while Bishop Crean spoke about all the symbolism present on the cake, which featured a picture of Mother Foundress, butterflies and our Congregation Medal!**

## Building Appeal

Thank you to all of you who continue to support us and have been contributing to our building restoration appeal. With your help we have been able to contract the professional consultant and surveying services needed to secure some heritage funding and make a comprehensive plan going forward. Thanks to a first successful grant application, work is due to start this month to tackle the main causes of water ingress in the Sisters' sleeping quarters, namely the parapets and chimneys on the flat roofs along with failed guttering and cracks on the east gable of the main house. This is an encouraging start and we are working hard on further applications for funding to restore the remaining roofs, walls and gutters and the verandas. Meanwhile with your help we were able to commission a full drains survey, and are aware that there are leaking drains beneath the building which will need to be repaired over the next year or two. The CCTV survey and modern techniques will minimise the costs involved, and again thanks to you we will be able to make a start this year. Another achievement this year was the painting of our choir which has to be done fairly regularly due to the smoke from the candles which burn constantly before the Blessed Sacrament exposed. Once again: **Thank you!**

## Gardens

Work in the Bible Garden continues with the latest project being the restoration of the paths with a concrete base which will prevent weeds from taking over without the use of chemicals. This is being sponsored by the Cobh Credit Union. The garden continues to increase in popularity, especially now that we are blessed with glorious sunny days! A new avenue of miniature fruit trees leading down to the Garden of the Song has been planted, with memorial plaques placed discreetly next to each one by local families, for their loved ones. Last year, **again with your help**, the large brick shed was re-roofed, preventing serious water damage to the structure and the garden machinery it contained, not to mention an electrical fire! This was done just in time to house a newly purchased ride on mower sponsored by Cork Council Town Development fund.

The enclosure garden is a hive of activity, with our glasshouse and two polytunnels planted with fruit and vegetables, sacristy garden springing up with cut flower plants and two new rows of fruit bushes planted. The goats bred well this year and we have enjoyed watching six kids playing together, while some of the mothers produce milk for us daily which we have now learned how to turn into cheese, not to mention ice cream! After another mishap with our hens and a night time predator, and a generous donation of replacements, we are again collecting over 3 dozen eggs daily, and our quail breeding has also begun, as the poor birds recover from the winter cold and begin laying again. Two sheds have been erected in the old basketball court as workshops to facilitate craft and carpentry work.

## Events

Apart from our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary we have hosted various groups and events in recent months. In January we recommenced our monthly Days of Recollection on the last Saturday of each month, studying and praying with the writings of our Foundress, Mother

Marie Adele Garnier. This year we have been focussing mainly on various aspects of her Morning Offering (Act of Consecration to the Holy Trinity). The next of these days will be held on **29<sup>th</sup> July beginning at 10.45am** with accommodation available.

The newly established Cobh Women's Shed have held some of their meetings in the Oliver Plunket room here, and on 5<sup>th</sup> May Mother Prioress gave them a presentation about our history and way of life. We have also had visits from three school confirmation groups for their retreat days. Our growing Faith Discussion Group meets **each Sunday at 5.30pm** to study and discuss the Catechism of the Catholic Church and there is an enriching mix of participants: some familiar with and some new to the treasures of the Church's teaching.

During the month of May, four stimulating evenings were held when V.R.Fr Tom McDermott gave a brilliantly concise yet profound introduction to St. John Paul II's Theology of the Body. Several participants commented on how helpful the concepts spoken of were, in bringing clarity to their thoughts about gender and relationships, and helping them appreciate the beauty of the Church's wisdom. Not a few expressed the hope that there would be further opportunities to learn about the subject. As well as pointing them in the direction of online courses, Fr Tom indicated that he will be available for further talks in the future, so watch this space!

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February we once again invited religious to join us for Vespers and Benediction for the Day of Consecrated Life. Dom Basil Mary OSB, Prior, of Silverstream Priory, presided and preached for the occasion, and the celebration was followed by a very joyful gathering for supper.

Our weekly all night **Adoration vigils** with the special intention of prayer for peace and an end to the war in Ukraine continue each Wednesday. All are welcome to join us. Also the monthly vigils for unborn children in danger from abortion continue on the last night of each month. The Alliance of the Two Hearts prayer vigils continue each First Friday.

### **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bl. Columba Marmion**

On 30<sup>th</sup> January we celebrated the centenary of the death of Bl Columba Marmion – the Dublin Priest who joined the Benedictines of Maredsous in Belgium. He authored several spiritual masterpieces such as "Christ the ideal of the Monk", and "Christ in His Mysteries". In 1908 became the spiritual director of our Foundress and was influential in guiding her nascent Congregation towards incorporation into the Benedictine Order. In 1909 he was elected Abbot of Maredsous having previously led a foundation of a new monastery in Louvain. In honour of this notable date in the life of the Church and our Congregation, we celebrated the Votive Mass of Christ the High Priest and had a festive recreation! Bl. Columba's Feastday is on 3<sup>rd</sup> October.



## 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Fr Dermot Fenlon RIP

Time seems to have passed very quickly and we are now thinking about our late chaplain's first anniversary. This will take place on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023 in the evening, and we hope to conclude with a Eucharistic Procession through the Bible Garden which Fr Fenlon loved to walk in each day. We will finish with Benediction in the Garden of the Resurrection, where he would daily say his Divine Mercy Chaplet having completed the Stations of the Cross.



As our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary took place during Lent, the many beautiful flower arrangements had to be removed from the chapel at the end of the day, so we took the opportunity to take some of them to Father's grave, accompanied by his first cousin, Pauline Tutty!

We have just concluded our Annual Retreat, preached by Fr Vincent Twomey SVD, who was introduced to our community by Fr Fenlon and presided at his funeral. How privileged we have been to be guided through the encyclical Spe Salvi, by a former theology student and close friend of Pope Benedict XVI himself. Our last conference took the form of a presentation on the Pope's life and legacy, giving us a rare opportunity to know the more homely details of a life we admired so much. We all remember his homily at the funeral of Pope John Paul II, when he spoke of the Father's House. As this year began with the journey of Pope Benedict to join his predecessor and gaze upon us from the window of that Eternal Home, **we pray that the hope he ever spoke of and inspired will reign in the hearts of all our friends and benefactors**, giving joyful witness to the Love of God for each one of us his children.

The Tyburn Nuns at St Benedict's Priory

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