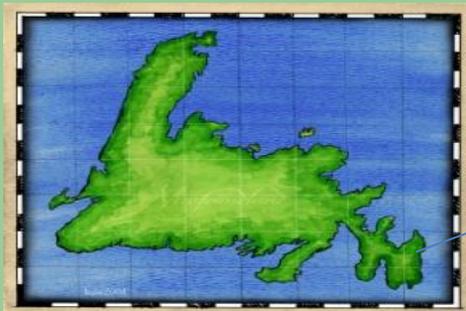


Our Pilgrimage Honouring Nano Nagle

Newfoundland to Ireland
Presentation Sisters and Associates
August 11-24, 2018



Memories



August 11 – Depart from St. John’s Airport

August 12 – Arrive Dublin Airport – travel to Mt. St. Anne’s

August 13 – Kildare/Monasterevin

August 14 – Clonmacnoise, Athlone

August 15 – Knock

August 16 – Galway and Limerick

August 17 – Ballygriffin

August 18 – Nano Nagle Place

August 19 - Thurles

August 20 – Kilkenny and Waterford

August 21 – Baggot Street and George’s Hill

August 22 – Free day

August 23 - Knowth

August 24 – Homeward bound!



Memories from our Pilgrimage

Tercentenary Pilgrimage

Newfoundland to Ireland

11-24 August 2018

*"I remember, I remember the house where I was
born, the little window where the sun came peeping in
at morn . . . "* *Thomas Hood 1799 - 1845*

Archbishop Martin Currie

Doris Walsh pbvm

Kay Rex pbvm

Kathleen Fahy pbvm

Riona McHugh pbvm

Mary Kenny pbvm

Paulette Nugent pbvm

Marie Furey pbvm

Fran Molloy pbvm

Marilyn Doyle pbvm

Margaret Mary Gosse pbvm

Denis Martin

Eileen Coombs

Dolores Hall

Stella Galway

Helen Martinez pbvm

Sandy Butler pbvm

Patrice Bourgeois pbvm

Gerry Marshall

Betty Quinlan pbvm

Danielle O'Donovan

Carmel Griffith pbvm

Nano Brennan pbvm

Bernadette Breathnach

Bernadette Doherty pbvm

Kieran Seaward pbvm

Clo Martin pbvm

Seana Lee

Frances Pennell pbvm

Emma Rooney pbvm

Mary Molloy pbvm

Marie Roche pbvm

Brenda Phelan rsm

Elizabeth Whelan pbvm

Joan Gibbons

Peggy Roche

Paula Delahunty pbvm

Sharon and Harold Evans

Barry Lynch cfc

Anne Fox pbvm

Bernadette Joyce pbvm

Rick Fowler cfc

Jean O'Neill

Margie Byrne pbvm

Liz Kennedy pbvm

Laurane Pittman pbvm

Betty Daniels pbvm

Brenda Holden

Diane Smyth rsm

Greg Noonan

Margie Lannon

Sheila Leonard pbvm

Roisin Gannon pbvm

Ursula Brophy

Phyllis O'Keefe

My Pilgrimage to Ireland was a very moving experience for me. I learned a lot of history and was moved and honoured to walk on the same ground that had been made holy by footprints on Nano, Catherine and Edmund. In my opinion much of what is good in the church of Ireland is because of impact these three people had on the church in the 18th century. They are all saints.

+Archbishop Martin Currie



The words “*Standing on the Shoulders of the ones who came before us*” took on added meaning for me as we visited Nano’s birthplace, Thurles where we explored the home of Nano’s aunt on her mother’s side, and the places Nano and her followers ministered.

God must have touched her life very deeply in order for Nano to have the courage and love to leave her fun, free and rich life to give it all over for the needy. Yes, she had wealth but it did not possess her heart. She used it as a means to care for the poor and needy.

The influence of one woman is remarkable. Nano’s life and ministry gave courage to her three friends as well as Catherine McAuley, Edmund Rice and many others. It was her example that carried the message of love.

Some things that stood out for me were: the fields where Nano played as a child, her room at the former Ursuline Convent, the chapel in Galway, the kneeler that Catherine McAuley knelt on as she made her first vows, and the map in Nano Nagle Place that showed the spread of the Presentation Sisters, and the highlight of touching Nano’s tomb.

The hospitality of all the people we met and who attended to our every need was remarkable. The Sisters at the various Convents served us royally. Our Bus Driver was fantastic- humorous, well informed, and friendly.

The Pilgrimage was certainly well organized and I am truly grateful to Betty Rae, Roisin and Bernadette for giving us this opportunity. It was a memorable spiritual pilgrimage.

And an added bonus: Sheila took the photos, thus we did not need to carry our camera or iPad. Thanks, Sheila.

Doris Walsh pbvm



I have many lovely memories of our Pilgrimage to Ireland. Everything was so well planned and I appreciated and delighted in the surprises of each day. Nano Nagle came alive for me as we encountered her remarkable devotion to the poor.

Touching Nano's coffin is another precious memory I have and I remember having a conversation with her and asking her to help me to have the courage and spirit she had as she ministered to the poor of Ireland. I also thanked her for the presence of Presentation Sisters in Newfoundland. It was one of the highlights of my trip. She is alive within me since our Pilgrimage.

Another memory is as we travelled on the bus I always tried to get a window seat so that I could admire the green fields and the cows and their calves resting beside each other. They were so peaceful and I never tired of gazing at them.

Each day had its surprises and visiting Convents and meeting the Irish Sisters who welcomed us with open arms. Thank you, Bernadette ... you were always so calm and peaceful and so much time and energy went into the planning. It was special to have our two Irish Sisters with us. Thank you for the experience of a lifetime. ❤️🙏😊

Betty Quinlan pbvm



~ Sweet Ireland ~

Hello Sweet Ireland... it's me your long-lost daughter. You have lived in my soul since before I was born and I knew you were mine and I belonged to you.

To embrace you, breathe you, taste you and experience the tantalizing tidbits of past and present have left me full of ideas that will forever dwell in the green of my eyes!

Farewell Sweet Ireland ... thank you for wishing me there!

Sharon O'Neill Evans and Harold ~ ♥



Thank you to each one of you for giving me the opportunity to experience Nano's Ireland. I continue to say it was "pure gift"! The financial cost of the Pilgrimage had to be exorbitant, but the experience you gave each one of us cannot be measured monetarily. The whole experience was so emotional and enriching!

The preparations made by Bernadette and Roisin re Lunches at the various Convents were more like 3 Course Meals and the hospitality was super. We experienced Nano's "hospitality of the heart" wherever we went. Having two Irish Sisters on the Leadership Team paid off big time. Our own Emma was so proud to share with us her ministry in the ongoing development of Nano's story in Ireland. Everything from beginning to end was flawless! Every day brought new experiences, but if I had to choose the one that really touched me beyond the beyond, I would choose Galway Convent. To be there in the very place that our four founding Sisters left behind to cross the Atlantic in turbulent seas to begin Nano's work in Newfoundland was so emotional and mind boggling. How brave and selfless they really were! That's why we, as Presentation Sisters, exist today, and why this Pilgrimage was instrumental in helping us experience these roots.

May God bless and reward you for giving us this opportunity and continue to guide you in future deliberations! God love you!

Kay Rex pbvm



I really hope your group enjoyed their time at Nano Nagle Place. It was lovely to meet them.

They visited in the midst of our busiest day to date ... we had 1535 visitors through the door on the day. (18 August 2018)

I hope you enjoyed the rest of your stay.

Danielle O' Donovan (*Director of Nano Nagle Place*)



An important moment for me during our Nano Nagle Pilgrimage was our visit to Nano Nagle Place in Cork. Nano had a profound influence on Edmund Rice, his call to serve poor youth and his decision to found our Brotherhood. Edmund and the early Brothers embraced the Presentation spirit as they founded ministries and communities to be attentive to the educational and the faith needs of poor young people in Waterford, Cork and Dublin. I was aware of Edmund's heart and Nano's vision of living the gospel of Jesus as I took time to reflect on Nano's life and the foundation of the Presentation Sisters at Nano Nagle's Place in Cork.

Barry Lynch cfc





The four founding Sisters set out from Galway in 1833

Memories from the Sisters in Galway in 2018

August 16, 2018 will be etched in my memory for a long time. We were so excited here in Galway on hearing of your trip. Personally, I was curious who might be in the group! The day finally dawned and there was excitement, joy and emotion! There were some familiar faces and some new, but friends all. I am always amazed when you visit Galway that we are so connected. There is such a wonderful bond of friendship between us and a spirit of gratitude for those pioneering women who left here in 1833. I experienced the same when with you in August 2015 for the Ritual of Fusion. Just realized that it was in August the Sisters left Galway for Newfoundland and you have visited in August. How amazing! The Ritual "Blessing our Mothers" was very special for me. I was so moved by what actually happened so long ago, since and it still continues today. The greetings, chats and conversations that took place on your arrival and during your time with us were a joy to behold. There was unrestrained chat and fun while the group photo was being taken. The spontaneous sing-song in the parlour was such a joy, Irish songs and Canadian songs mingling, all lifted us in heart and spirit. It was an unforgettable experience!

Many thanks for coming and for all that was entailed in organizing such a large number of pilgrims. Truly an experience of a lifetime! Please God we will look forward to future meetings in the future.

Sincerely

Kathleen Fahy pbvm Galway



It was lovely meeting you all. Dr. Sheila Mangan was delighted to meet her Newfoundland friends again. She is forever singing your praises. Her heart is in Newfoundland. She just loved you all.

Carmel Griffith pbvm Galway



I loved every moment you spent with us on 16 August 2018. They were moments of joy and delight, of being family, sisters and brothers to one another, joining in conversation, music, song, dance, laughter, reflection and the usual cuppa. Every moment was truly special but I picked out one of them that came up as a surprise that day.

Today I happened to read the following from Nano 300th Commemorative Book: "The Celts believed in 'Thin Places', geographical locations where a person experiences a very thin divide between past and present times; places where a person is somehow able, possibly only for a moment, to encounter a more ancient reality within the present time." (Sellner) In hindsight I see ourselves in that reading. When we gathered to read from the Annals of 1833 and 1846 in the peace and quiet of the chapel, leading on out into the cemetery and garden, the ground on which we stood offered us one such 'thin place'. A moment spontaneous, profound, awesome, beautiful, unforgettable!

Thank you very much for coming on pilgrimage, enabling us together to continue to savour precious memories and deep ties as sisters and brothers.

Anne Fox pbvm Galway



I wish to sincerely thank you for organizing such a memorable pilgrimage and giving us such joy in Galway.

It was exciting for us as 16 August 2018 drew near and more so when the day itself dawned and I was welcoming you on the coach and been greeted with your excitement and joy at having arrived. We know Galway is special to you. The celebrations had really begun!

I enjoyed every moment, being together and chatting over a cup of tea, settling ourselves for the group photo, taking part in the sing-song in 'Canadian' and 'Irish', which filled the air, along with the music and dance. Deeper connections were further felt among us during the prayer and reflection in the chapel, at the cemetery and along the river walk. Most memorable! It was special to close the day with more conversations over the meal in Galway Bay Hotel.

The only downturn was saying 'good bye' but it comes with a wish and a hope that we will meet again.

Riona McHugh pbvm Galway



'Where Love is born': Moments

The door through which Sisters Bernard, Magdalen, Xavier and Xaverius passed on their way to Newfoundland; passing through that door henceforth will ever be a blessed moment.

The poignancy and reality behind the factual statement ‘: *After many dangers they arrived in Newfoundland on 21st September*; dangers indeed but heartbreak too; like that of Columcille as he left his family and native home.

The woman emerging from the description of Mother Mary Power ‘*well fitted to guide... being a woman of strong character, courageous, intelligent and endowed with a kindly nature*’; reminding us of the courage and steadfastness of Nano Nagle.

And now 185 years later, Presentation people – sisters and colleagues – came through the same door. And we, as we awaited their arrival, felt the hard-to-articulate joyful oneness of a shared vision, desire and hope.

The visit to the garden and graves; time and distance fell away as we reflected on the great Gathering, of which death is the gate, the reunion, the feast of which all our feasts are a symbol and promise.

And thanks to the Presentation sisters in Galway we did have a feast to commemorate this wonderful home-coming and gathering.

Nano Brennan pbvm Galway



Sleight of Shoulder

Fran was excited when she opened her gift. Not a Gucci, or a Channel but a very practical purse, beige in colour with shoulder straps just right for the journey. Examining it she discovered that it had pockets for Passport, tickets and money. Excited at the thought of the comfort she would have on this memorable journey. This bag is an organized one, a place for everything and everything in its proper place. No more rooting in deep bags where the item required always seem to be right at the bottom under a whole lot of unnecessary junk.

Arriving in Galway the bus stood outside their Alma Mater where the first four Irish Sisters left to set up a foundation in St John's, Newfoundland one hundred and eighty-five years ago. It was an emotional moment. The Sisters had come to see, to hear and taste the atmosphere of the place and appreciate the courage that sent those sisters so far away. No doubt they were inspired by Nano's maxim 'If I could be of service in any part of the world I would willingly do all in my power' They were the first Irish sisters to sail on mission to another country.

There was a lot of kissing and hugging and Fran got so excited when she noticed two sisters she stayed with in 2015. She hugged them indiscriminately and they responded with equal enthusiasm. Afterwards she was heard to say, "I can't find my purse, my beautiful purse". A little panic in her voice. Sisters searched the grounds and outside the gate. The bus was gone and wouldn't be back 'til afternoon. It must be in the bus others said but Fran insisted that she had it getting off the bus. Fran tried to hide her unease despite her anxiety about her documents and money. The group photos were taken for the local paper, after which there was another distress call for the purse. Two walked her to the Church to see if it might be left there. That was when one of her hugging hosts miraculously discovered it on her shoulder!!

Was it a case of absentmindedness mixed with excitement or simply 'sleight of shoulder?' The jury is out on that one.!

Bernadette Joyce pbvm Galway



I live in the Presentation Convent, Shantalla, Galway. Sr Riona invited us to send a few lines in response to your e-mails.

I was delighted to meet so many of you when you came to Galway in August. I felt you were so much part of us here in Galway and it was lovely to meet Sr. Kieran who had stayed with us some time ago. She fitted into our little group and even helped us with the jigsaw! We also remember the visit of Emma.

I was moved by the prayer service in the chapel and I remembered especially the four Sisters who went from there to Newfoundland so many years ago. The time in the cemetery, for me, was very moving. I was moved to see all of us going quietly from grave to grave and praying with such reverence. That was a special time for me.

I was delighted to be at table with a lovely group of women and I admired the courage of so many to come such along way - in spite of age.

Thank you all for visiting with us and may god bless each one of you.

Mary Kenny pbvm Galway



Bernadette Breathnach pbvm Galway



I have many very fond memories of the pilgrimage this past summer to Ireland. The Nano Nagle center in Cork was very impressive. When thinking back on it, one thing that comes to mind is that all three founders, Presentation, Christian Brothers, and Mercy had a very strong commitment to the poor and neglected people of their day. At the Presentation Center, seeing the conditions in which Nano worked, at Waterford, the scene of Edmund surrounded by street children and the man in front of him begging for help, at Mercy International the scene of the Sister talking to the woman and children in their "home". In all cases the poverty of the people was evident and very graphically displayed. The fact that people lived in those conditions! Conditions that we cannot really comprehend in our lives today! Yet, that is where our Congregations started; those were the people for whom they were started. The scenes are still very vivid in my mind.

Pick Fowler cfc



300th Anniversary Pilgrimage

How does one describe an experience of unforgettable moments - nostalgic; breathtaking; awesome; spirit-filling; heartwarming etc. etc...

The 300 Anniversary Pilgrimage was for me a rewarding and enriching experience of living in the Now, while truly experiencing our richness of the Past!

The creative, Reflective Symbols used throughout our Journey were most life giving. The camaraderie we shared was super. The feeling of walking through the gate, through which Nano walked daily, was quite emotional. I felt we were not mere Pilgrims Traveling, but rather we were Traveling Pilgrims, experiencing a culture that was full of Presence.

My heart is overflowing with gratitude - gratitude to God for the opportunity of this experience and gratitude to our provincial Leadership Team, for making it all possible. Love and Presentation Hospitality, as well as that of the Mercy Sisters and Christian Brothers, was warmly expressed by all those who welcomed us

among them on our Nano Nagle Pilgrimage. We were fed both Spiritually and Physically.

A special word of gratitude to Bernadette and Roisin for the excellent Planning, Preparation, and Delivery of *Life Time Memories*, and to Denis our Newfoundland Guide and our Professional, Seasoned Coach Driver Guide Gregory, who “wowed” us with his Irish Wit, Humour and Stories.

To God be Glory and Praise.

Paulette Nugent pbvm



I remember thinking *what if* ... what if a group of us might consider travelling to Ireland from Newfoundland to celebrate Nano’s 300 birthday? That was in December 2016 and I was in Newfoundland three months! The little seed was planted. It grew and grew. August 2017, I was with my family in Ireland when we made a visit to Cork, the first stop being Ballygriffin. As we were leaving, Mary Hoare arrived and our conversation included another *what if*. What if we brought a group here to Ballygriffin? At first, Mary thought we were coming in 2017! The Leadership Team in Newfoundland was always very much in favour of our pilgrimage. That little seed was watered regularly. Denis Martin joined our planning team. He took charge of flight arrangements as well as our hotels, our coach and our driver, Greg. Over the following months we connected with the Presentation Sisters in Ireland. Cyber space was extra busy for those few months, as it got nearer August 2018.

A special memory for me in the planning was when we decided to invite not just sisters and associates, but also Archbishop Currie, two Mercy Sisters and two Christian Brothers and they said yes. Nano was so connected with her people, her church. She inspired Catherine McAuley and Edmund Rice and now years later we come together on pilgrimage to Ireland to celebrate her 300th birthday.

Many of the people and places we visited stand out for me. Being born in County Kilkenny, it was a going home visit, plus. That day, 21st August, the Kilkenny Community had treated us to a beautiful lunch in the Cathedral Chapter Room. Sr. Lillie asked if a small group might be interested in visiting the sisters in the convent. Well that small group turned out to be at least forty of us, walking along the streets to the convent. Home away from home! What a joy to experience the hospitality of the sisters and that special welcome, during our very short, unplanned visit. Just image yourself sitting in your home, the door bell rings and in walk not one, not two, but over forty people you have not seen before. Feel the Presentation spirit! "Love one another as you have hitherto done ..." Nano Nagle.



Planning with Emma, I remember saying, we must get to visit Miss Nagle's parlour. The last two years I went to Cork, I could not visit her parlour for various reasons and when Danielle informed us, it was an open day in Cork City that day, I thought oh no... We must try to visit where Nano received her people. Yes, it was possible. We were among the 1535 visitors in Nano Nagle Place on 18 August 2018.

I would also like to mention seeing Nano's letters and her signature. Her handwriting was not new to me but sitting there in Georges Hill, reading her letters and seeing her signature, it felt as though she was writing to me, talking to me. It was such a privileged time. Thank you to all.

Bernadette Doherty pbvm



A pilgrimage that will remain with me for the rest of my life. I will treasure the memories, renewed relationships, connections and all the moments in between.

It was a time to pause, reflect and open myself to the mystery of God in my life, Nano's life and all who followed and continue to follow in her footsteps. I feel so gifted and honoured to be a part of the unfolding story.

Thank you so much

Jean O'Neill



My special memories of Ireland were visiting Nano's grave to tell her how grateful I was for her intercession on Sarah's behalf. Sarah, now fully recovered, is back in Nova Scotia, finishing her fourth year for her degree in nutrition.

The tour of Nano Nagle Place with Emma in Cork, especially the Nano Nagle room with its artifacts was a memory I will always cherish. I felt Nano's presence as I stood there looking at the showcase.



Visiting Inch House, the home of Nano's grandparents was a wonderful experience. As we walked up the stairs, I was carried back in time seeing the four poster beds, dawned with canopies. Also looking out the windows at the top of the house and seeing an amazing panoramic view of the area. Nano would come here often with her family and played constantly with her little cousins. I am sure they played many, many games together with lots of laughter and fun, probably counting one to ten in Gaelic! Ready? A haon, a do, a tri, a ceathair, a cuig ...

We had an amazing family time, Presentation Sisters, Associates, Archbishop Currie, Mercy Sisters, Christian Brothers and people of Ireland. Denis and Greg were the icing on the cake. Thank you.

Marie Furey pbvm



August 2018, honoring Nano's 300th birthday, was for me a pilgrimage of a lifetime, a time to hold dear forever. I enjoyed every day, no one day better than another, each day was different and each held a lasting experience.

Yet, one memory deep in my heart, and I am full of gratitude to all who made it possible, was the day we spent in Galway. After the warm welcome by the sisters we were invited to have our group photo taken on the church steps. That completed we returned to the convent for a cup of tea. We then found ourselves in the chapel, thinking this is where they prayed together 185 years ago and discerned their journey to a new land, a new life, a foundation in Newfoundland. The Ritual in the chapel reminded us of all of this. We walked through the doors, the same doors our four sisters walked through in 1833, never to return. We found ourselves in the beautiful garden by the river and in the convent cemetery where Mother John was buried. Mother John was the superior at the time the four sisters departed for Newfoundland. That day was filled with emotion, being in the place where our first four sisters lived and prayed was a special graced moment, a wonderful awareness of mission. I thank God for the opportunity of being one of the pilgrims.

Each stop on the journey was special, but of course we would not be there without the planning and the driving. Denis met us at St John's International airport and travelled with us. He made it his policy to be with us for breakfast in the mornings, all during the day and in the evenings. If we needed anything, he was there. He devoted all his time to the pilgrimage, the people and the places. Greg, our driver, had many stories to relate, some true, some maybe not so true! He was a true Irish storyteller, always in very good form and very proud of his country. I thank both Denis and Greg for their openness to being part of the Presentation family.

To our Leadership Team, to all the sisters in Newfoundland, especially to Bernadette for so much of the planning, preparation and implementation in making all of this possible for us, a very special thank you.

Blessing on all who have made this pilgrimage a very memorable time in all our lives and mission.

Kieran Seaward pbvm



My first memory is sitting there in the departure lounge and seeing the group wearing the Newfoundland tartan scarves. I discovered later the scarves were created courtesy of Bernadette, Marie and Marilyn. A thank you for the buttons with our 300 logo goes to the Perlin Vocational Group in St John's. I remember we presented one of those scarves with a button to the sisters in Galway.

Galway held another memory. This was the place our four foundresses came from in 1833 across the Atlantic to a place they had never seen. We received a wonderful Presentation welcome from beginning to end. To be standing in their home, walking into their garden, visiting the cemetery (I read on one grave stone the name Byrne and wondered if we were related!), picturing the four sisters saying their good byes, never to return. I can feel goosebumps even now. I thank God for them, for their courage and zeal in leaving all to follow Christ.

So many memorable people and places, Galway, Kilkenny, Inch House, Ballygriffin, Cork, Dublin. Becoming familiar with the Nagle and Matthews families. Walking in Nano's footsteps was such a privilege. Sitting on the bus in different places each day enabled us to spend time with each other. What about that social time before dinner! Gathering for a glass of wine and or a Guinness, another time to meet and greet. Listening to our Irish guide, Greg, as he introduced us to his country in story, song and provided that double rainbow for



us on that final evening. Our beautifully prepared Rituals and Eucharists along the way, helped to pray us on our pilgrimage journey.

Cows, cows and more cows, walking like novices in a straight line!
Sheep, sheep and more sheep, green fields and more green fields reminding us of words of the song “from the green of the shamrock to the green of the pine”. I continue to revisit these places and people daily. I never really wanted to go outside of Newfoundland. I was happy as a stay at home person. This was my first visit to Ireland and what a memorable visit to Nano’s homeland. Thank you.

Margie Byrne pbvm



I am deeply grateful for being a part of the Pilgrimage to Ireland, a sacred journey touching holy ground, filled with warm welcomes, rituals, storytelling, history, panoramic views, delicious meals, fun and laughter. Each day of the Pilgrimage brought its own blessings!

Day 6, August 16th brought a special memory for me when we journeyed to Galway where our four founding sisters began their journey across the Atlantic. The readings from the archives and the prayer time spent at the graves were very emotional! It was in Galway that I panicked when I lost my purse containing my passport and visa card. Having searched the bus and the pathway that led to the convent, I was so relieved to find out that a heartfelt hug had transferred my purse to the shoulder of one of the Galway sisters! Our bus driver, Greg commented as I entered the bus “we have learned a new way to steal a woman’s purse”.

Fran Molloy pbvm



I have many memorable moments and memories from our August Pilgrimage to Ireland. The visit to Inch House in Thurles, Co. Tipperary, was very special. Inch House was the home of Mary and John Ryan. Mary was the sister of Nano's Aunt Mary. There is no doubt that Nano's mother would have taken her to visit her Aunt Mary and her cousins. As we toured the house, I could imagine young Nano and her cousins running and playing through the large hallways and stair cases. It is the usual activity of young cousins when they gather for a visit. It was my very first experience of visiting a place that is directly connected to Nano's maternal side of her family.

Clo Martin pbvm



The most impressive memory for me was the convent in Galway, when I walked out the door and heard that the four sisters who came to Newfoundland in 1833 walked through those very same doors the day they departed for the journey to Newfoundland. Walking in the same footsteps that they walked, there was a sacred and awesome feeling. I stood in the doorway and remained for a few minutes, imagining how they felt leaving their home 185 years ago and travelling into the unknown. Every time I sit and recall, I have that same feeling one I can't explain only experience again and again.

In Kilkenny by the castle, I saw this little family on the sidewalk waving Canadian and Newfoundland flags. I went up to them and asked if they were visiting from Canada. The little boy, wearing a Newfoundland top, waved the flag and Grandad said, "We are here to greet Sr. Bernadette and the people from Newfoundland."

The statues by the River Liffey in Dublin ... I ask myself, were they for real? The sad history of people leaving their homeland and going to a land they did not know. I can picture them being uprooted and going, but going where?

In the parish Church, Killavullen, Cork, I remember seeing the baptism font in which Nano was baptised and hearing some of the story of the penal times. Back

in Cork in the cemetery, I stood and prayed at the graves of the Presentation Sisters, the Ursulines Sisters and noticed the grave stone with names of the Presentation Brothers. Moving on to Nano's grave, I knelt in front of her casket and placed my hand with my request for her. I have always had great faith in Nano and I know she will answer my request.

Journeying on the bus in Dublin we stopped to view the tree, not just any tree, but the one in Clontarf in St Anne's Park. It was an amazing piece of wooden sculpture by Tommy Craggs. The carved animals were so real, you could feel and see the wonderment on peoples faces. What talent!

I am not sure what the bus driver thought of us when he picked us up at Dublin airport after 8:30 am on August 12th. He appeared very quiet, probably summing us up! It did not take him long to crack the ice. By the end of our pilgrimage he was one of us.

Liz Kennedy pbvm



"Oh my God" Moments!

This big bus, that little space, are we going to make it? Close your eyes, hold your breath and gasp "Oh my God!" Then open your eyes release your breath on "Thank-God we made it!" You did it again Gregory! You are a wonder!

I was struck by the intertwining of the three stories, Presentation, Mercy and Christian Brothers, brought to the fore by the presence of all three group on the pilgrimage. All three, Nano Nagle, Catherine McAuley and Edmund Rice spent themselves and their resources for the good of others made poor and not for personal glitter. I was curious but unclear about the place of the Presentation Brothers in this story. Some of the fog cleared during the trip to Ireland.

I was overwhelmed by the sight of a group of sculptures by the River Liffey in Dublin. When not expecting something and it appears in front of you as an assault on your senses, it takes your breath away! It was a stark representation of a group of people emaciated, poverty stricken, about to embark on a journey not of their own choosing, across a treacherous ocean into the unknown. Their spirit seems to sigh – I don't know if I have the strength to make it but I must try!

The little scene, suddenly and unexpectedly appearing before us, tore a hole in the fabric of time to let me glimpse through it into another time and the dramatic moment it presented of human suffering leading to a new beginning. For those who made it, sew up the seam in time and pick up their story in Newfoundland, as the story of the early Irish immigrants.

Marilyn Doyle pbvm



The memory that stands out for me is the Ritual at St. Anne's where we received the lanterns.

This was so significant and personable. I have mine in a prominent place in my home and it has become a wonderful conversation piece.

The funny memory is when I was getting my picture taken next to what I thought was a monument. When I laid my hand on the horse's side, I felt hot flesh and I said out loud, "Oh my, you are real " and the horse turned his head, looked back at me and made a response that sounded like a chuckle.

Thank you.

Seann Lee



As I reflect on our Pilgrimage journey and read again the outline of the sites and shrines we visited, I am once again brought back to our roots and history and calling, yet one more time, Nano's story and her history.

Many times I have heard the tale of the first four sisters leaving Galway and setting sail for Newfoundland – a truly remarkable venture.

I think for me the highlight of our pilgrimage was seeing the actual point of their departure and to find myself being drawn again into the story of my own place in that whole narrative.

Laurence Pittman pbvm



When I reflect upon our Pilgrimage Journey, the first thing that comes to mind is deep gratitude to the Provincial Team for sponsoring such a blessed event and especially to Bernadette and Roisin for the impeccable organisation. It was flawless! To arrange visits to so many places, sacred and historical, was quite a feat. May God bless you all!

Now about some of my memories... I was overwhelmed by the hospitality and generosity displayed at every venue.

It was a blessing to meet so many of our sisters who had so much experience of life and ministry behind them and were so actively involved. It felt good to be part of such a family. Our sense of unity was deepened.

Each place we visited was a story in itself, especially the places in connection with Nano - Ballygriffin and Cork. For me these were spiritual experiences. Reflecting on Nano's call and her response evoked gratitude and challenged. What a marvel to think that one woman could do so much under such circumstances!

Seeing the connection between Nano, Catherine and Edmund who, inspired by the Holy Spirit and one another, founded religious communities to respond to the needs of the time, and there were many, was truly awe-inspiring.

The final item that is indelibly imprinted on my memory is the vision of the beautiful green fields which we passed going to and from our daily events. The beauty of nature was food for the soul. These scenes evoked a psalm of praise.

I was particularly happy that the Archbishop, representatives from the Mercy and Christian Brothers Congregations as well as our many Associates joined us for the pilgrimage. In addition to sharing the news about Nano, our group was enriched by their presence.

A heartfelt Deo Gratias for all!

Margaret Mary Gosse pbvm



Open day at Nano Nagle Place, Cork City, 18 August 2018



Front row: Cllr. Mick Finn, Lord Mayor of Cork, with *Frances Pennell, Mary Molloy*

2nd row: *Eileen Coombs, Margie Byrne*

3rd Row: *Stella Galway, Seana Lee*

Frances Pennell pbvm





Betty Daniels pbvm

Thank you, Bernadette. I truly enjoyed reliving these wonderful days in Ireland.

Blessings, peace, and a big thank you for this unforgettable experience.



Thank you very much for the videos yesterday. Weren't they extremely well done!!?? I found once I started watching I couldn't stop. Such a well-done memento of the trip.

I have thought about the invitation to send memories many times, but I can't really say which stands out as a more important one. I think perhaps our visit to Brigid's well might be the one. It was our first major site visit, but mostly because it's my daughter's name, so it held a special significance to me. So many beautiful and spiritually uplifting sites and visits. Even dinner every evening was special.

Denis Martin



Welcoming the Pilgrims from NL to Nano Nagle Place

I will always remember my emotions when I saw a Coach pull up to the front plaza of Nano Nagle Place on August 18. It was about 9:00a.m. - the time the NL Pilgrimage was due to arrive. Could I trust my sight? On Heritage Day, could I trust that this was the Coach bringing the long-awaited pilgrims?

I couldn't find Danielle, who had planned to join me for the "Welcome". How could I keep "my people" from NL waiting, so I made a solo leap up to the Coach. When I saw the smiling faces I was moved to tears. Some inner strength helped me to express the joy of the moment with a heartfelt welcome!

As the pilgrims disembarked, I am grateful we took time to warmly greet each other because there was little time during the day for chatting.

As that same Coach departed Nano Nagle Place after 7:00pm, I had a deep feeling of the impermanence of all things. We cannot hold the River of Time. My final task was to silently pray a blessing on those whom I loved and were continuing the journey to further graces and enrichment.

Emma Rooney pbvm



Summer 2016 I remember going to Ballygriffin with Sr. Bernadette to check out the possibility of bringing a group on pilgrimage to Nano's Birthplace. That was the beginning of a great experience. I had been to Knock and Clonmacnoise and Newgrange but not to all the Presentation places and met all the Presentation people along the way.

October 2017, I had 10 days in Newfoundland and attended some of the preparatory meetings for the Pilgrimage. I met and became friends with many of the Sisters there, in particular Sr. Kieran and Sr. Paula who could not do enough for me during my stay with them and so it was our privilege to return their hospitality in a very small way by having them stay with us for their first few nights in Ireland.

I could not pick a favourite event of the pilgrimage there were so many. Going to Ballygriffin and then on to Cork city where Nano's whole story comes together is

always enlightening. The Masses and Rituals were so different from the Parish Masses. The visit to the Edmond Rice Centre was a wonderful experience and the chapel there very calming. The welcome and blessing we received from the Mercy Sisters in Baggot Street was beautiful. You feel the peace wash over you. Seeing all the personal items belonging to Nano and being able to read her letters written so long ago was something I could have done all day. I loved the sung blessing to the Galway Sisters and of course it was a great day when everyone arrived in Kilkenny and we had the blessing of grandmothers, standing on the shoulders of those who went before us (not to mention seeing my own grandchildren arrive dressed in their Newfoundland t-shirts and waving the flags).

The memories are wonderful and will stay with me for a long, long time. Thank you all for the privilege of joining you on this Tercentenary Pilgrimage of Nano's Birthday. I should also say thank you to Denis who looked after us all so well and also to Greg who kept us greatly entertained and shared his vast knowledge of Ireland with us. Thanks also to my sister and yours, Sr. Bernadette. God Bless her and you all.

Brenda Holden Portlaoise, Kilkenny Ireland



Our visit to the Nano Nagle Heritage Centre in Galway was a dream come true. I first became aware of the development of this centre during my RUAH 2015 Retreat in Ireland. One of the activities was viewing videos of Presentation Sisters in various ministries around the world. I watched a video of an elderly sister from Ireland who responded to her call to minister to the people of Pakistan. I almost dropped dead as I was exiting the centre I saw that very sister entering it. After attending Mass at St. Finbarr's Church, I crossed paths with this sister again. We exchanged greetings; this sister is still working in Pakistan.



Another unexpected blessing from this pilgrimage was I reconnected and had lunch with a friend I met in Ireland during my RUAH 2015 experience.

This pilgrimage to Ireland will be an experience that will be long remembered.

I thank the Presentation Sisters for this opportunity to celebrate with them the Tercentenary of Nano Nagle 's birth. Shalom

Eileen Coombs



As I was about to leave the Motherhouse on August 11 to join the group to begin our Pilgrimage to Ireland, I recalled the scene where the Apostles and Jesus were on the road to Emmaus! Jesus opened the scriptures and broke bread with them! We, too, all 45 of us prayed the Scriptures and broke bread together many, many times!

The Pilgrimage for me was a daily prayer as it always pointed to the HOLY along with episodes of joy and much laughter! There was great camaraderie among all 45 pilgrims including our Archbishop Currie who was a good sport, our very pleasant bus driver, Greg, and our kind tour guide, Denis!

The words of John O'Donohue rang true to me all through the Pilgrimage!
"When you travel, a new silence goes with you. If you listen you will hear what your heart would love to say".

I experienced the silence of the sacred in a new way! Walking in Nano's very footsteps filled my heart, spirit and soul.

TOUCHING HER TOMBSTONE WAS PROFOUND FOR ME!

What a WOMAN, what A WOMAN! Nagle Place will never leave my spirit!

I relished the opportunity to visit the Blessed Edmund Rice, and Mercy International and Mother McCauley! WOW, THE HOSPITALITY WAS SUPERB!

My very sincere gratitude to our LEADERSHIP TEAM for the planning and bringing it to PERFECT FRUITION!

Gratefully,

Mary Molloy pbvm



Gratitude for Pilgrimage to Ireland in Honor of 300th Anniversary of the Birth of Nano Nagle

August 11-24, 2018

From the depths of my heart I express deep joy and gratitude for being part of the wonderful group who travelled from Newfoundland on August 11, 2018 to Ireland in order to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the birth of Nano Nagle. Not many of us get to celebrate 300 years. I was one of two Sisters of Mercy invited to join the pilgrims as we visited places and sites in Ireland that were of significance to the Presentation Sisters with special emphasis on the Irish and Newfoundland connections. Every day was filled with sights and sounds, with prayer and play, with travel and rest, food and friendship. While spending much time together we each had personal space and time – a wonderful balance in each day. Most days we had two nights in a first-class hotel, a full Irish



breakfast and three course dinner. Our first two nights were spent at Mount St. Anne's, a Presentation Retreat and Conference centre where we experienced the pastoral atmosphere of Dublin County. During the daylight hours of each day we were on the move to spend time at the significant sites. There we learned about the history of Nano Nagle and the Presentation foundations and ministry. At each site we met the different communities of Presentation Sisters and learned of their life and ministry in that corner of Ireland. There we were treated to lunch or morning coffee, or both. We spent time in reflection and prayer. We were able to see, touch and explore artifacts, rooms, buildings, museums, documents and



cemeteries that held part of the story of Nano and the Congregation. There we learned of the connection with Newfoundland.

All of our visits were focused in places that were highly significant in the life of Nano Nagle and the Presentation Sisters. Topping them for me were a few sites: First was our visit to Galway Convent out of which the four daring women set off for the unknown and distant island of Newfoundland to found a convent and to teach children. Next was our visit to Nano's place of birth in Mallow, County Cork, to a beautiful agricultural property bounded by the Blackwater River that runs through County Cork, Kerry and Waterford. There, Martin Currie, Archbishop of St. John's Newfoundland, presided at the Eucharist in front of large windows looking out over the pastures and the Nagle Mountains in the distance. Our third big visit was to Cork and to the recently established Heritage Centre of the Presentation Sisters. Here we were blessed to be able to pray in the cemetery where so many of the early Presentation Sisters are buried including the Founder, Sister Nano Nagle. We were able to touch the casket so beautifully entombed in a place of honor and beauty.

Because of the historical and collegial relationship among the Presentation

Sisters, the Mercy Sisters and the Irish Christian Brothers, especially in our own history in Newfoundland, we were privileged to visit the founding 'house' of each community. We first visited Waterford and the home of Edmund Ignatius Rice, Founder of the Christian Brothers. We visited the heritage centre and the beautiful chapel where the body of Blessed Brother Rice is laid in a visible tomb. We spend a good part of one day at the Mercy International Centre on 64A Baggot Street, Dublin. This was the building erected by the founder of the Sisters of Mercy for the care of women and girls in 1827, then called the House of Mercy. Martin Currie, Archbishop of St. John's, presided at the Eucharist there in the chapel, which was followed by lunch in the dining room and visits to the museum and archives, the room where Catherine McAuley died and her grave which is located in the garden of the property. From there we went to George's Hill, a former Presentation Convent, now a large public housing project for those of low income. Here I was very privileged to see and touch (white cotton gloves, of course) the Profession Register of those professed at the beautiful convent chapel. My deeply moving experience was to see and touch the Act of Profession and signatures of Catherine McAuley, Anna Marie Doyle and Elizabeth Harley who were professed there as Sisters of Mercy on December 12, 1831. This date is the foundation date of the Sisters of Mercy. On the table too, there were letters from Nano Nagle that we could touch and read.

I am so grateful to the Presentation Sisters in Newfoundland and in Ireland who gave so much of their time and rich hospitality to make our visit the best it could be. We had a wonderful guide, Denis, who kept us on time and well directed to the different places we would visit. Our driver, Greg, was very respectful and helpful, well informed and entertaining, as well as a perfect driver who could easily maneuver a large bus through narrow roads and towns. I am grateful for the privilege of spending twelve exciting days and evenings with a wonderful group of men and women in the Presentation, Christian Brothers and Mercy tradition. How many get the opportunity to spend so many days with their Archbishop! Thank you to those who carefully and expertly organized the trip and the events.

Diane Smyth, rsm



Hello from Ottawa,

I've been feeling the challenge of your request for memories and your "gentle reminders", but I'm finding it very difficult to do. My memories of our Irish pilgrimage are many and rich, but they run like a bit of a slide show, rather than a narrative for sharing, and so I'm having some difficulty with that.

Much more than memory, my soul was deeply touched by grace, as I re-discovered the depth of my Presentation identity still so alive and well in the depths of my being. To re-unite with so many of my sisters of 42 years and some newer members of Nano's Presentation family was a joy, an affirmation, and a deeply felt grace, and I am soul-touched with love and gratitude. So, you see, deeply personal and not exactly a memory.

I can name some times and places where I was most deeply touched, but then it's back to the slides: the deeply meaningful opening liturgy at Mount St Anne's, the wonderful visit to St. Brigid's well, the energy of our Eucharistic liturgy at Ballygriffin, visiting with Emma and Sharon who now belong "there", your thoughtful inclusion of the Mercies, the Brothers and the Archbishop, and the powerful impact of both Nano's grave and the Famine Cross.

All I can say is grace, gratitude, and soul re-connections within myself, with others, with the holy places.

And, once again, I send along my profound thanks to each of you, and my love and blessings too.

Dolores Hall



A heart full of gratitude to our leadership team for this wonderful opportunity and making this Pilgrimage a reality. A special thank you also, to Bernadette who put her heart, soul and many hours into the preparations.

Our Pilgrimage to Ireland in August 2018, was one of my most meaningful and inspiring experiences. It was such a privilege to walk the 'holy ground' where Nano walked and ministered to the poor of Ireland.

My most moving moments happened when we visited Galway. I found myself going back in time, and picturing the sisters who volunteered for the mission in Newfoundland. Such faith, trust and courage in leaving their own native soil, for a remote and unknown land, required great strength of character. Tears began to well up as we continued to move through these 'Sacred spaces', especially the cemetery.

There were many touching and inspiring moments throughout the whole Pilgrimage. The hospitality and kindness of the sisters in the various convents we visited was truly heartwarming, as we were welcomed with big smiles and open arms, as well as treated to a scrumptious lunch or dinner.

My heartfelt gratitude again to all who helped make this special Pilgrimage an event to celebrate and remember.

Marie Roche pbvm



I was requested as a driver/guide on a tour of Sisters from Newfoundland and as I accepted I knew I would have to adjust my personality to suit same. I arrived at Dublin airport and greeted my latest flock with both my late Mother and Father whispering over my shoulder saying Gregory behave. I grew up in Dublin Ireland with my Father's aunt a Nun and two of my Mother's sisters Nuns. Frankly I was terrified.

Within a few hours I suddenly realized that these women wore two hats very well at all times and boy did my eyes open throughout that tour as we traveled the highways and byways of the Emerald Isle.

Who was this Nano Nagle that had sent her representatives to put me back on the correct pathway of life? I listened and I learned so much during those wonderful days that I am still smiling weeks later as I have realized that both of my parents are giggling away at my rekindling of faith in the Catholic Church. Some things occur in life that cannot be explained and I will mention one that meant so much to me.

I was schooled with the Christian Brothers and suddenly one day I was standing at the final resting place of one Edmund Ignatius Rice, the founder of same. As I was standing there, it dawned on me the wonderful upbringing that I had when I was at school and frankly it was because of this great man. I quietly thanked him and reflected on the years gone by. I was so at peace with myself at that moment in that place that it will stay with me until my last breath. I met a Brother who on his first day teaching happened to be teaching in the school that I attended. He knew my Principal and we got on like the proverbial (provincial) house on fire. I am thankful and I am grateful for every day on that tour but I learned something that I was not aware of and that isNuns in reality are human like the rest of us.....and not at all terrifying.

Greg Noonan



REFLECTION ON THE PILGRIMAGE

During my trip to Ireland on the Pilgrimage I felt humbled to be a part of this excursion. There was so much going on and different events happening that I didn't get it all processed until I got home. To actually be in the place and in the city where Nano was born, grew up and had a life of grandeur was like a dream. I saw first hand the richness, the opulence and the beauty of her and her family's estate and to realize she had given all this up because she felt that seeing the poor people on the church grounds waiting for the doors of the church to open so they could go to mass was God talking to her.

I realized how many times do I miss the opportunity to hear God speaking to me. Seeing everything that Nano had given up because of her strong faith in the Providence of God is such a contrast to my life where I collect and hold on to my possessions. It was such an eye opener to see what she came from and what she was willing to give up because of her love for God. It was a very humbling experience to walk on the grounds that Nano had stood and to touch things that Nano had touched. My possessions don't seem to be important to me now. To be on sacred ground in the many places that we journeyed was humbling and uplifting. Being with a group of like-minded people - people I had not met before - people who cared for me and took care of me - during those moments I felt the hand of God and looked into the eyes of God. We also laughed and joked and sang and danced—my spirit soared, my soul was free. I feel so privileged to be part of something bigger than me. I also felt so sad to realize how Catholics were treated but I also realize that God didn't abandon them or leave them to fend for themselves. I did not fully understand until now the gift that was given to us by God, given me when the Presentation Sisters came to Newfoundland. I was taught by the Presentation Sisters and until now I didn't fully realize the impact and the depth of their courage and faith that they had to have to leave their homeland and come to a strange land knowing they would never go back home again. The love and passion for God and also for what they believed is slowly opening my eyes to what I am capable of with God at the helm. I am so thankful and so blessed to have been given this gift of the Pilgrimage. The final impact of the Pilgrimage was our Prayer and Reflection at St. Vincent de Paul and stood around the Statue of Our Lady of the Universe and realized what this holy lady, Nano, had accomplished. The Presentation Global Presence was so evident at that moment— **THE ACORN HAS BECOME THE GREAT OAK.**

Stella Galway



One of my most memorable moments of the PBVM Pilgrimage 300 occurred on Thursday, August 16, 2018 when we visited the Sisters at the Galway convent. Their very warm welcome and delicious morning coffee/tea made me feel right at home among them. The ritual in chapel and the account of the first sisters being

asked to become missionaries to Newfoundland really moved me to reflect on how courageous and generous these women were – their willingness to travel across the Atlantic Ocean with the very real possibility of never returning to their own homeland and families again.

But I think it was our time in the cemetery just behind the convent, where the Superior of the community who sent these first four Sisters off to Newfoundland is buried, that I realized how real the spirit of these brave religious women was. Their presence was almost palpable there as I sat in deep quiet and reflection.

Our delightful dinner at Galway Bay Hotel was a time of celebration for sure. But when Paula Delahunty was thanking our host Sisters, I was brought right back to these four young women as Paula invited us to take a few moments to remember them again. They truly were the founding four PBVM's in Newfoundland. To them we all owe a big debt of gratitude.

Brenda Phelan rsm



One word describes my Pilgrimage to Ireland in August - "TEARS". From the get-go, tears of "gratitude" came when I received the lantern - to keep! There was the oak tree on the Nagle property in Ballygriffin; the same tree Nano enjoyed, I touched. The signage at the Christian Brothers peace garden apologizing to victims harmed by members of the Congregation; and the cemetery at Galway; four nuns left there for NL and never returned to their families. Because of their sacrifice, I became part of Nano's vision for the poor worldwide when I entered Presentation in 1968. Unfathomable! Leaves me speechless! So many other moments; too many to mention. Overall, I was moved by the seamless flow of kindness and compassion from everyone on the bus to every person we met. Tremendous blessings in the people leave me tears of gratitude even now.

The clincher for me was the City of Cork. On a sunny day with about 22 degrees Celsius, Nano's City was scary for me as I peered down its alleys and



laneways. Nano taught all day and tended the sick and poor at night. She walked in the dark of night - lantern in hand - in those places I feared in full sunshine.

There was the story of Nano sitting on rawhides at the Butcher Shop waiting hours to request a donation for her school! Imagine the smell! The small door to what was a convent in the North of the City where the nuns nearly starved to death has a huge impact.

Nano obviously was an extraordinary soul. There were two of them for sure; she walked with the Spirit. I cannot do anything near what she did. But Nano is a pointer to God and what God can do. I, too, am a "Lantern". And what a dilemma - it's really tough to live a messed up, sloppy life given what Ireland showed me. I will pay more attention in my own neighbourhood walks.

When I returned to Nano's tomb on my own, I heard with great clarity a voice say: "WALK ON!" That leaves me with a lifetime for reflection and mission. I humbly receive and listen.

Blessings to all,

Margie Lannon



Memories of the pilgrimage linger ever gently on my mind. I loved the quiet and the stillness of Ballygriffin. My mind wandered back to the child I was in grade two at Presentation Elementary School and being told the story of this wealthy young girl coming home from the ball in the early hours of the morning. It must have been in November but I could not recall who she was. When I was in grade 6, Sister M. Perpetua gave me *Lantern Beams on the Lee* to read and it was then that I recalled the story that Sister M. Xavier (Belle Dalton Kelly) told the class. The story and the inspiration stayed with me for a long time and to think that I was

here gazing at the scenes she saw, the hills. I touched the gate of her ancestors that she herself would have touched. I feel blessed to have been here with Nano's dream being fulfilled with so many others. The pilgrimage was a time of mixed feelings for me - strongly rooted in the stillness and being with others who shared a common vision.

On another note, at the Dublin airport, I was able to bring home something from West Cork - Durrus farmhouse cheese - semisoft cheese made and cured by hand on a family farm. I first tasted it at Swords where we stayed for the Gathering deliberations. I felt very excited and am delighted to have another Irish taste in the refrigerator.

Thank-you for being my companions on the journey.

Selen Martinez, pbvm



Once in a life time experience to walk in the steps of Nano!

Elizabeth Whelan pbvm



One
Woman
A vision
Dreams unfolding
Beckoning
From our
God

Her
Spirit
Undaunted
Celebrating
300th
Coming
Home

Awe
Wonder
Connecting
Greening of hearts
Memories
Oneness
Joy

Thurles
A side
Maternal
Our Grandmothers
Touching
Beyond
Words

Blessed
Grateful
Companions
On a Journey
To the heart
Holy
Ground

Created with love and gratitude to so many for so much!

Sheila Leonard pbvm



My sister, Joan, and I have talked much about our Pilgrimage to Nano's homeland and what a privilege it was to take part in such an event with great people! One of the things that stood out for both of us was the growing sense of community we felt as we travelled from place to place ... a community that grew and evolved to include all those with whom we met along the way ... people so much like ourselves, it felt like home everywhere we went. And how could it not with all the cups of tea, which often turned out to be grand feasts!!!! It is hard to pick a memorable moment. Every place had that "something special" which connected us again and again to Nano and to those who took up the Lantern to follow in her footsteps. However, a poignant moment for me was crossing the threshold of our Galway Convent and remembering the courage of Bernard, Magdalen, Xavier and Xaverius so many years before, who carried the flame of Nano's lantern to us here in Newfoundland and Labrador. Galway Convent was filled with laughter, song, prayer, and so many conversations that day ... all made possible because of these four courageous women. I think their spirits were very much present with us, connecting past with present. Joan and I are grateful for the memories created and which we will hold in our hearts for a long time to come. To our fellow travellers ... thank you for being pilgrims on that special journey!



Joan Gibbons and Sandy Butler pbvm



Our pilgrimage in Nano's footsteps this year was very special. The camaraderie and the great love of Nano within the group made a deep impression on me.

All the sites we visited were so meaningful but the one that stands out for me was Thurles ... the home of Nano's maternal grandmother. To walk through her maternal ancestral home, to walk the surrounding fields, the gardens, the courtyard was just profound. We always spoke of the Nagle wealth of which Nano benefited, as did her schools, but the wealth she would have inherited from the Matthews side of the family is not emphasized enough. Nano was indeed a woman of means from both sides of her family. And this made me think of her great generosity. She gave all she had for the sake of the children and their impoverished families ... so much so till she had nothing left and then went on the streets begging for them. Such remarkable generosity! Nano spent herself, her inherited fortune, renounced the high life all because she believed in her calling and mission. The harsh Penal Laws, the authorities, did not stop her. She courageously followed what she knew deep within her was her mission in life. What a woman! I am called daily to follow Nano ... and that is what I felt in Thurles.

Roisin Cannon pbvm



I have so many wonderful memories of our Tercentenary Pilgrimage to Ireland. The one that stands out for me most, takes me back to 18 August in Cork. We gathered by Nano's Grave for our ritual. I can picture all of us standing there with our foundress Nano Nagle, a very moving time. At the end of the ritual we were invited to place our hand on the casket. Standing there, placing my hand on Nano's casket was the most wonderful moment for me. A memory that will stay with me forever. Thank you for the opportunity.



Venerable Nano Nagle was laid to rest in the graveyard of the Ursuline Convent, Cork in 1784. Today her grave slab, has been set in a beautifully designed landscape next to flowing water. Beside Nano's tomb is the Sisters' Graveyard, which houses the graves of both Ursuline Sisters and Presentation Sisters.

Patrice Bourgeois pbvm



The fact of so many of us travelling together and so compatible and we did it so well! Everyone made us feel so comfortable, so part of the scene, so part of living the memory. Nano's grave, her birthplace, reflecting afterwards. Cork. George's Hill with the documents we could hold and read. Closing ritual in the Church yard around Mary's statue so powerful! Knew you eventually had to go home and went back home so enriched!

Peggy Roche

It was amazing ... such a blessing! I enjoyed every minute of it. The Sisters and associates were so amazing. And the Convent which Nano built in Cork ... and the Sisters there ... and the bridge we walked on which Nano had walked on! I feel so blessed to be part of Nano's work. Thanks to everyone, especially the unbelievable planning and the photos and videos! Lots of love!

Ursula Brophy



I'm keenly aware of the attention to detail that is characteristic of the Presentation Sisters when they're planning a project. I barely remember signing on for the Pilgrimage, but my interest grew as the departure date approached. This was my first "tour" and I felt some apprehension about the whole idea. I needed a rest and from the moment I walked into St. John's International, I felt a sense of peace. This experience has set a very high bar for any future tours, that's for sure. I loved the unrushed atmosphere, in spite of a very full schedule. We had plenty of time in the mornings to "catch the bus" and the two-day stops in most of the hotels provided some much needed down time. Added to that, I was surprised to discover the huge value of a reduced menu at the end of a long day - no stress about choices when there are only two!

The moments that stood out for me are varied. I'd be less than honest if I said the convents stand out vividly because they all blend together, albeit in a magnificent manner. The richness of our own Newfoundland history was laid out before us; I had no idea that Nano had such influence on our Mercy Sisters and Christian Brothers. The numerous convents are a warm, welcoming blur of friendly smiles and enchanting accents. I remember Inch House, the glimpse into such wealth was staggering. I remember the morning we forgot Laurane and Margaret Mary, and how we laughed so often afterwards. I remember Cork and seeing Emma again after so many years. Emma was my first run-in with the Sisters when I took PET from her in the early 90's, other than when Dolores tried to teach me to sing in the early 1960's. We laughed about that on the bus too. I loved how the group kept switching up seats on the bus because it made the travelling parts so unique. I remember the ritual at St. Brigid's Well and the closing ceremony at Greg's childhood Parish Church. That seemed to bring things full circle somehow. It was unsettling to experience a dark moment when myself and Sharon encountered the "travellers" in Limerick, yet I find myself almost boasting when I share that memory. And lastly, the Irish Sisters were the icing on the cake for me, because I feel so connected. We are one people, with one vision. May

Nano's spirit live on in each of us. Thank you for the whole, full, enriching experience. It's one I'll never forget.

Gerry Marshall



Wow! What a pilgrimage/holiday. It was organized brilliantly from beginning to end, with great hotels, superb food, and marvellous company, plus so many places of beauty and historical interest.

Sister Roisin had told me that NEWFOUNDLANDERS were a lovely people which proved to be true.

They were always ready to burst into song while the conversation never waned.

The generosity of the carious Presentation Sisters was truly amazing.

Well done to the people involved in the mammoth task of organising the trip. I feel deeply honoured to have shared the complete experience.

Phyllis O'Keefe



OUR NEWFOUNDLAND TRICENTENARY PILGRIMAGE

HONORING NANO NAGLE'S 300th BIRTHDAY

AUGUST 11-24, 2018

In preparation for our Pilgrimage to Ireland we had some moments to reflect on what this pilgrimage would or could mean. In one of our gatherings we spent some time looking at the practice of pilgrimage. The following reflection was like a starting point for our journey.

*Pilgrimage is an ancient religious practice.
The journey to the sacred place is just as important as the arrival.
A pilgrim is a traveler who has come from far away.
When you travel a new silence goes with you
and if you listen you will hear what your heart would love to say.*

-John O'Donohue

Our Newfoundland Presentation Pilgrimage honoring Nano Nagle's 300th Birthday, will go into our annals as a highlight and most memorable one of 2018. It was a walk with Nano through her ancestral history as well as our Presentation History in Ireland. Walking through the lanes of Ballygriffin and following the flow of the beautiful River Blackwater, with the Nagle Mountains in the background, where Nano grew up, gave us new insight into her childhood. Seeing where her great-grandmother and her mother grew up brought us back in time to the kind of life in which she was born and the wonderful people who nurtured her through her growing-up years. Only by experiencing these places of her youth could we appreciate the depth of her love for the poor – a love that led her to give up everything that she had and become “poor with the poor” whom she loved.

As we readied to board the flight to Ireland on the night of August 11, there was an air of expectancy among the group, not really knowing what to expect, but excitement abounded. There would be lots to learn about ‘our Nano’, and many places where we would experience the wonders of her world and the influence she had on so many in her lifetime.

Beginning our Pilgrimage

What thoughts flooded the minds of the Pilgrims as we left for Ireland on that night of August 11, 2018, we do not know. However, there was sense of “going on a pilgrimage” as well as excitement and enthusiasm among the group. It would be a time of learning, praying and reflection, filled with fun and companionship as we experienced the ancestral home of our foundress and walked in her footsteps in Ballygriffin and Cork.

Setting out that first night with a blessing from Sr. Betty Rae, we all anticipated the trip and where it would take us. Some of the 45 participants had been to Ireland but none had gone on a Pilgrimage like this before. We were told there

would be some surprises along the way and we were all eager to take up any challenges that might come.

Arrival on the 'Holy Ground' of Ireland

We arrived in Dublin on the morning of August 12 to an awaiting coach that had been hired for our journey and were whisked off for Killenard to our first stop at Mount. St. Anne's – a Retreat and Conference Centre run by the Presentation Sisters. This Centre is nestled in a magnificent pastoral setting rich with green grass, trees, and animals that graze peacefully in the meadows. There we were warmly welcomed by Sister Elizabeth Maxwell and her team and right away we felt 'at home'. Then in the bustle and excitement of greetings, Sister Roisin appeared to greet us as well. She had been already in Ireland on her holiday. Amid this excitement and the 'bags and baggage', we registered for our two-day stay at this beautiful facility. As we entered this warm and bright building we were introduced to the rich green land that flows through this beautiful country. Having settled into our rooms we were treated to a gorgeous Irish breakfast, so welcome after our flight. Feeling the lack of sleep, as we hadn't slept the night before, we were made our way to our rooms, and everyone caught up on some much-needed rest.

Opening Ritual at Mount St. Anne's

Our Opening Ritual, was prepared by the Newfoundland PLT. (Provincial Leadership Team) On that first evening from the beautiful Chapel that looks out on a vast field of green and blue sky we sat as we remembered, celebrated and gave thanks. The stillness and beauty of this Chapel served to bring together our connection with all of creation. In this place we were aware of the Presence of God as with Mother Nature we were provided a peaceful and prayerful setting to begin our prayer. Sister Roisin presided over the ritual during which Sister Elizabeth carried the lantern as we processed to the Conference Room where we reflected on the many symbols of our Presentation history. A touching moment was when we had a visit from 'Nano' - the Woman of Welcoming Heart, - a fitting way to begin this journey. As part of the Ritual, we each received a lantern, our strong symbol of Nano – the Lady of the Lantern - to guide us as we would walk

with her on this pilgrimage journey and experience some of what her life might have been like. It was a time to marvel at what has come about because she took the risk to follow where God would lead her. Hearing her story and later visiting the places where she lived and worked made the story come alive. It certainly was a privilege to walk in her footsteps and appreciate more fully, her becoming “poor with the poor” giving her whole life in service for them.

Kildare

The next day Sister Mary Rossiter joined us to be our guide for a day in Kildare. There we visited St. Brigid’s Well. Did you know Brigid had been made a bishop? A bishop had prayed the wrong prayer over her for profession and did the prayer of ordination instead! It happened when Brigid went with some other women to Bishop Mel ‘to take the veil’ and become religious Sisters.

It happened like this:

Brigid had stayed behind out of humility, so that she would be the last to whom the veil should be given. The Bishop noticing her, asked who she was and learning her name called her forth saying: “Come, O holy Brigid, that the veil may be imposed on your head before the other women”. Then it happened through the grace of the Holy Spirit that the prayer that was read over Brigid was the form of ordination for a bishop. Though there was protest about the authenticity of the action, the Bishop declared: “This lies outside my power because it was through God’s doing that this honour that transcends every woman was given to her.” He concluded that “It was meant to be.”

On our way back to Mount St. Anne’s, where we stayed that second night, Sister Mary took us to a statue of St. Brigid that had a half moon in the stone. Known as the Mother-Goddess of Fertility, Brigid is identified with the changing moon. We were scheduled to visit Monasterevin, the main building of our Generalate team, and where Sharon will spend the next six years, but road construction prevented our making that part of the trip.

On the evening of the second day of our stay at Mount St. Anne’s, we had a surprise visit from Sisters Mary Deane and Fatima Rodriguez, two Sisters from the out-going Leadership Team, bringing their support and prayers to our Pilgrimage.

We later discovered that they had brought chocolate snacks for us all that we would enjoy along our way. It was at Mount St. Anne's that we 'picked up' two more Irish pilgrims – Friends of Nano – who would join us for the rest of the Pilgrimage. Leaving Mount St. Anne's, we were 'waved off' with blessings as we began our journey to Clonmacnoise.

Clonmacnoise

At Clonmacnoise we visited the 6th century ruins of St. Ciaran's (pronounced 'Kieran') Abbey. This is a 'Place of Pilgrimage' located on the River Shannon, (the longest river in Ireland). This site includes the ruins of a cathedral, and seven churches dating back to the 10-13 century, two round towers, three high crosses and a large collection of grave slabs. It is thought that there was once a hospital there as well. Our guide gave us the history that is inscribed in the crosses and we heard stories of healing taking place by people who visited the site. It was here on the banks of the Shannon River that Pope St. John Paul II celebrated Mass when he visited Ireland in 1979. Then we were off to Athlone, the main town in the centre of Ireland and one of the crossing points on the River Shannon. Athlone was our first hotel stop. There we dined in fine style – something that would become a regular part of our trip.

Knock

On August 15, our Pilgrimage brought us to Knock, the National Shrine of Our Lady in Ireland. As we approached the Shrine, Sister Roisin related to us the story of the apparition and played the beautiful hymn to Our Lady of Knock. That hymn we would hear several times as pilgrims came and went to the Masses that are continually offered during the day. It was made extra special by the fact that Archbishop Currie, who traveled with us, celebrated Mass at one of the Chapels. An awesome place with an awesome story of Our Lady's apparition. What a privilege to touch part of the little chapel where the apparition took place. Near this site we viewed the 'Golden Rose' gifted to the Shrine by St. Pope John Paul II in 1979 on display there. Spending the day at Knock was like a retreat day when we felt the very prayerful atmosphere of this 'holy ground'. In the Cathedral we

saw the beautiful Mosaic of the Apparition, an amazing work of art; drank the water of the Fountain and had the privilege of time spent in the little Chapel where the apparition occurred. It left us with a sense of wonder and awe at the gift of this 'blessed place' where, each year, approximately 1.5 million people come to visit and pray. It was awe-inspiring to walk on this Holy Ground where Our Blessed Lady once stood. Initially we had hoped to be here when Pope Francis visited but we missed it by just two days as the date of his visit was changed to 26 August 2018. Now looking back, it seems we had more freedom to see more as we roamed around and enjoy the site that day, than we would have had if we had been there for the Pope's visit.

Galway

As our coach drove up to the gate of the Galway Convent, the Sisters were out to meet us. Galway is considered our 'Motherhouse' in Ireland. It was from there that the four Sisters left for Waterford on their way to Newfoundland in 1833 – 185 years ago. The Sisters had arranged to have a group photo taken for the local paper, so the first 'order of business' was to have us assemble on the steps of the Church for this "photo op". Then we went back to the Convent where the Sisters welcomed us in fine style with "a cup of tea" and many trimmings. On entering the house, we saw on display a 'Newfoundland' table – a table that held items that connected them to the mission in Newfoundland. On the wall above this table was the tapestry created in Newfoundland, for the 200th Anniversary of the foundation in Galway, depicting the Sisters coming to Newfoundland. In the Chapel we had a very meaningful Ritual prepared by the Galway Sisters during which we had readings from the Galway Annals of 1833 and 1846. After this time in the Chapel we were invited to spend time in their beautiful garden and visit the cemetery where Mother John was buried. She was the superior at the time the four Sisters left for Newfoundland.

Without much ado and on this holy ground place of remembering, a book written by Brother Darcy, cfc, for the 175th Anniversary of the coming of the Presentation Sisters to Newfoundland, was presented to Sister Riona, the superior of the Convent by Brother Rick Fowler, cfc. This book contained letters that the Sisters had sent to Ireland and letters they received from 'back home'. It was another

strong connection to the place from which our Congregation in Newfoundland began. As we were leaving Galway, it was with awe that we learned that the school in Galway, still in operation, had originally been a Charter school. Its significance cannot be underestimated.

Any visit from Newfoundlanders would not be complete without some music. Before we left the Convent for the welcoming lunch at the Galway Bay Restaurant which the Sisters had arranged, we had a short sing-song which included "Galway Bay" and the "Ode to Newfoundland". The Sisters met us at the restaurant and introduced us to Dr. Sheila Mangan, an Irish lady, who had lived and worked in Newfoundland for 47 years and was very familiar with our Newfoundland history.

Galway was an emotional experience especially as we walked through the door our first Sisters to Newfoundland had walked on their mission to the 'new world'. These brave four would never see their homeland or family again. We took a moment after the meal to 're-member' them, in ritual, back to their homeland and their people. Our final act of gratitude at the restaurant was to leave a little memento - the Newfoundland tartan scarf, (like the one each one of us wore during our Pilgrimage), to add to the 'Newfoundland table, along with the CD "A New Dreaming" by Sister Miriam Martin, pbvm, one of our Sisters from our Newfoundland unit.

There was a deep feeling of connection on this wonder-filled day of emotion as we saw first-hand the beautiful place our pioneer Sisters departed from, and realized what missionary hearts they must have had to set out on such a perilous journey.

Limerick

Limerick was another point of interest on our trip. Limerick is situated at the mouth of the River Shannon and played an important part in bringing peace to Ireland. Years of hardship and injustice followed the enforcement of the Penal Laws in the mid-1690's. These laws would also be in effect throughout Nano's early years. So, it was into these years of struggle and poverty that Nano would have been born and grown up.

Ballygriffin

On our 6th day of Pilgrimage we drove to Ballygriffin, Nano Nagle's birthplace. As this pilgrimage was planned around the celebration of Nano's Tercentenary Year, it was important for us to visit and spend quality time in the home of her childhood. There was so much to learn and do in Ballygriffin. Seeing the field where her house once stood and walking through the very lanes that Nano walked as she made her way to the beautiful River Blackwater, we could easily be transported back in time to her childhood. We could almost feel the joy and playfulness of her childhood as she basked in the beautiful backdrop of the Nagle Mountains that was her home and which belonged to her ancestors.

Upon our arrival the Sisters had prepared a 'cup of tea' and a great display of other goodies which we all enjoyed. Here, as in the other places we visited, we enjoyed the hospitality that is so much like 'home' here in Newfoundland. We were never lacking warmth and food all during our trip, as all the while we felt we were being treated like kings and queens.

As we made our way to the Chapel for the Ritual to honour Nano's life, we noticed a Sister making a fire. As our Ritual unfolded the fire was seen as a symbol of 'Nano Aflame' – the theme of the 2018 Chapter. As the fire burst into flame, seemed to go out and re-ignite, we could enter into the struggle that was part of the beginnings of our Congregation. We each received, during this prayer time, an acorn from the oak trees that surround the place. It was like being with and 'playing with Nano' as we imagined her climbing the trees and harvesting the acorns that would become one of the symbols for the Congregation she would begin. We could almost hear, echoed in the trees, the 'worried-some' words of her mother, "What is going to happen to our Nano?" and the reassuring words of her father, "Our Nano will be a saint yet."

And who would forget the wonderful lunch prepared for us that day. None of us could ever say that we were hungry on this trip. Thanks to the Sisters and their staff who prepared this 'feast' of nourishment and joy.

Our visit to Ballygriffin was a nostalgic and reflective moment of our trip, as on reflection we caught a glimpse of the wonder of our God, whose ways cannot be

fathomed and of which we, as her daughters in Presentation, are a part. 'A little girl grew there' and who would think what greatness she would bring to our world! It was an amazing moment to experience celebrating Mass with Archbishop Currie in the little chapel with the background of the Nagle mountains facing us. Could Nano ever imagine such an event happening on the grounds of her home where, in her early years, the practice of her faith was being stifled by the Penal Laws that governed Ireland. No wonder we felt a closeness to Nano and the wonder with which God graced her even in her childhood.

A special treat was still in store for us as we left Ballygriffin. Along the way we stopped at the Parish Church. We learned that it was there that Nano was baptized. As we stood around the baptismal font that has survived over more than 300 years, there were no words to convey what we must have felt. The words of Isaiah 43: "I have called you by your Name, you are mine." could not be more appropriate. Even in the simplicity and ordinariness of the moment, we could hardly fathom the wonder surrounding us. Claimed by God and loved into life by her parents and now her faith community, who could imagine the influence that this little child would have on the world! It was with deep reverence and wonder that we left this simple little church that in an invisible way, had seen the grace of God at work in a little child. We needed some time to reflect and take in the wonder of it all.

Nano Nagle Place – Cork

Nano Nagle Place was the next stop on our tour. Danielle, the director of Nano Nagle Place, invited us to come a little earlier so they could give us the tour as it was 'Heritage Day' in Cork City and all such centres were open to the public. Our own Sister Emma Rooney met us and divided us into two groups for the tour of Nano Nagle Place. Our first visit was to the heritage area. There was displayed the history of the Religious Orders that Nano inspired and much of the history of Nano's journey through the streets of Cork as she ministered to the poor and later founded the Society of the Sacred Heart of Charitable Instruction later to be known as the Presentation Order. It helped us get in touch with the woman who is our inspiration as we journey in Presentation and try to keep her spirit and charism alive today. Visiting Nano's grave, we had a special ritual prayer and then

some time to pray. Once again, we walked in her footsteps, saw 'Miss Nagle's Parlor' where she taught some children; viewed some relics and touched the banister of the stairs that Nano touched. There was so much to wonder at, and to be grateful for, for this Great Woman who knew no limit to her zeal in bringing the light of faith to the poor of Cork. At the Parish Church of St. Finbarr's, we knelt where Nano knelt to pray as she spent so many long hours on her ulcerated knees before the Blessed Sacrament. We realized that she must have been a mystic as she never gave any indication of the suffering she must have endured. This would not be discovered until after her death. Before leaving Cork, Archbishop Currie and the parish priest celebrated Mass in St. Finbarr's. Truly Nano was walking with us all the while.

Another treat was to walk the narrow lanes where Nano walked in Cork carrying her lantern that dimly marked her way. Though the walk would have been dangerous, Nano gave no thought to her own safety as she visited the poor and sick that needed her help - sign of her faith in the Divine Providence which was guiding her every step of the way. Pointed out during the walk was the spot where Nano collapsed on one of her walks, only a few days before she died.

Thurles

We visited Thurles, Nano's maternal home – the home of the Mathews family. The only evidence of their home is a wall that still stands as part of another building on the estate. Sister Evelyn, a wonderful and interesting guide, first showed us the ruins of the castle where Nano's great-grandmother (Lady Thurles – Elizabeth Pointz) lived. Though it is presently in disrepair, plans are underway to restore it to its original state. Lady Thurles, herself, was a woman of faith, keeping the light of faith alive in the hearts of her children who would pass it on to the next generation. It was her wish that her body *"be laid and buried in the little chapel called Our Lady's Chapel near the Parish Church of Thurles ..."* a true testimonial to her faith. We then traveled on to Inch and were given a tour of Inch House – the home of Nano's Auntie Mary. It would have been there that Nano spent her summer vacations. Driving through the narrow lanes and seeing the fields that surround the area, we could imagine Nano skipping through the meadows as she enjoyed the freedom of life lived in joy and blessed with love. It

was an extra special treat to visit the home that was built for her Auntie Mary at Inch. There we were given the 'full run' of the house imagining where Nano might have slept and seeing her play on the immense lawns that surrounded the home. The Egan family, who now own the home, honor Nano by displaying her picture on the wall leading to the upstairs area. On the tour Sister Evelyn told us about Nano's great-grandmother, Lady Thurles, who would have influenced Nano's Mother and prepared the way for Nano's upbringing. We read in Scripture "the life and death of each of us has it's influence on others". How true this is in Nano's case! We again 'met' Nano's uncles, David and Joseph, who also were influential in Nano life and must have been part of fitting her out with the 'tools' she would need in making her decision for the poor and her life's work. Of her Uncle Joseph, whom Nano greatly loved, was given the following epitaph:

"He was a man truly religious, so conversant in goodness and bountifully charitable that his integrity and name deserve to be perpetuated."

Such a person as this would have to have had great influence on Nano. It was because of his generosity with his wealth, that Nano could bring the Ursulines to Cork and build schools for the children so much in need of instruction. Even today her influence is felt in the strong Faith of the Irish people.

Kilkenny Castle

In Kilkenny Castle – a key moment was when we stood before the portrait of Lady Thurles (Elizabeth Pointz) in the portrait gallery of the castle. As we viewed this great-grandmother of Nano we realized that she is revered as an Icon of her day. While there our guide related to us the history of the castle and how it had been restored to its present beauty.

Kilkenny – Cathedral and the Convent

Following our visit to the Castle we drove to the Cathedral where the Sisters had invited us to a delicious lunch at the Chapter room of St. Mary's Cathedral. Before the meal we had a special moment of blessing for grandmothers, remembering that "we are standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before us.". The

historic significance of this visit was that it was from this foundation that Galway was begun. So, Kilkenny – our ‘Grandmother House’ has a very special interest for us as Presentation Sisters. An unplanned moment, very special for us, was the visit with the Sisters who live at the Convent. It was thought that a few of us would go but it turned out that we all went and had a wonderful enriching moment with them.

The Edmund Rice International Heritage Centre

When we arrived in Waterford at the Brother Edmund Rice Centre, we were welcomed by the Christian Brothers who divided our group into two. This was to make sure we could get the most out of the tour. It was most inspiring to learn more about this wonderful man who also had been influenced by Nano. The same spirit that drove Nano in her work was also displayed in the greatness of the work of Edmund Rice who was a widower, shoemaker, tailor and baker. We learned of his compassion for the poor and the imprisoned, to whom he gave a half-crown every Christmas. We learned of his love for all people including immigrants of his day. It was he who gave a home to the first black person to come to Ireland. It seems that so much similarity is part of our world today. The two Christian Brothers who travelled with us led their ritual in the Chapel at Edmund’s tomb. A memorable moment indeed!

Baggot Street

Baggot Street was the highlight for the two Mercy Sisters who journeyed with us. It brought together the spirit of our Foundresses and the work for which both women spent their lives. Here the Sisters provided a welcoming ritual when we were blessed with ‘the oil of gladness’ as we entered their home. We then processed to the Chapel where Archbishop Currie celebrated Mass. Again, the hospitality shown was warm and wonderful as we were treated to a delicious meal followed by a special cake that had been made just for us. At Mercy International Centre another treat was in store. Here we would be in the very room where Mother Catherine McAuley began her Congregation and kneel at the Prie Dieu where she made her vows at George’s Hill in 1831. This Prie Dieu was moved from George’s Hill when it was given to the Sisters. It was a sacred moment to visit the room in which this great and holy woman died. During the

rest of the visit we were free to wander about the displays that told Catherine's story and our Newfoundland story. It was only eleven years after founding her Order that Mother McAuley would send Sisters to Newfoundland, joining in ministry with the Presentation Sisters who had come nine years earlier. The 'oil of gladness' would fill our hearts as we journeyed together through these Pilgrimage days.

George's Hill

On the afternoon of August 21st, we made our way to Dublin to the Presentation Convent at George's Hill. Dublin is the capital city of Ireland and is situated on the River Liffey. It was here on George's Hill we felt a deep connection with Teresa Mullaly, a woman much like Nano. She was considered "the Nano Nagle of Dublin". She and Nano became friends as their dream of educating the poor became a reality. Both were pioneers of education and seeing how Nano's work had flourished in Cork, it was her wish that the Presentation Sisters would come to Dublin. However, it was only after her death that it actually happened. In 1794 the Presentation Sisters arrived in George's Hill. The Convent, where some Sisters still reside, was built on land Teresa purchased. The Presentation Primary School in George's Hill is one of the oldest schools in Dublin. There is evidence in the love that the people in George's Hill have for Teresa and the way the Sisters, too, keep her memory alive, that both Teresa's and Nano's spirit are very much alive in the people of that area. While Teresa never became a religious sister, she devoted her life to helping the poor of Dublin. During our short visit we viewed the letters that capture the wonderful spirit and friendship of these two amazing women. Teresa died in George's Hill and rests in the vault beneath the Convent Chapel. A 'sacred moment' was when we made a visit to the vault which is her 'resting place'.

It was a kind of Newfoundland tradition that met us during this visit when we enjoyed the Irish Presentation hospitality of 'a floating cup of tea' as we sat with the Sisters and listened to their stories adding so much enrichment to our time there. The 'floating cup of tea' is much like our Newfoundland 'cup of tea in your hand' when we sat and enjoyed conversation with friends rather than sitting to the table for a full meal.

Free Day

Every trip needs some time out for rest and reflection and so on this second last day of our Pilgrimage we were given time to do 'our own thing.' Some spent the day shopping, others exploring, taking the 'hop-on hop-off' bus or just resting up and taking some time for reflecting on all the things we had seen and experienced as we readied ourselves to 'come down from the mountain' of our privileged moments of journeying. That evening Sisters Sharon and Frances Murphy joined us for our evening meal where we shared with them our wonderful experience.

The Burial Place of the First Bishop of Newfoundland

On the morning of our departure from Clonmel we stopped at St. Mary's Chapel, Irishtown. A very special moment for Archbishop Currie and us, was to find the crypt where the first Bishop of Newfoundland, Bishop James Louis O'Donel, was buried. It was in this church the bishop discovered a plaque which noted that beneath it was the tomb of Bishop O'Donel, the first Bishop of Newfoundland. It was inscribed with an epitaph he himself is alleged to have written. Being the first Bishop of Newfoundland, he had to travel to Quebec to be ordained as Bishop.

Knowth/Newgrange

At Knowth / Newgrange we visited a World Heritage Site in the Boyne Valley. At over 5000 years old, it is older than Stonehenge and the great Egyptian pyramids and to this day it has not lost any of its wonder. Here we could not visit the real tombs, but in the Interpretive Centre we had a virtual tour of the site. It is not known if the monument was designed for a tomb or temple. It will be shrouded by mystery forever. The wonder surrounding it has to do with the winter solstice illumination. On the 21st of December a shaft of light can be seen snaking 19 metres up the passageway of the tombs, ultimately bathing the chamber in light. This is the only time of the year that this happens. In our 'virtual tour' we were shown how this occurs. How the site was designed is a wonder to behold when with the eyes of technology today, we look back and wonder what feats of technology we lost along the way.

Closing Ritual

On the return journey from Knowth we stopped by the Parish Church of the Good Shepherd, near All Hallows in Dublin. Our driver/guide informed us that this was where he went to school and was an altar boy. In the grounds of his Parish Church we assembled around the statue of Our Lady of the Universe for a special closing Ritual. This Ritual brought together all Presentations people around the world in the display of flags of the countries in which we live and serve. We were touched to the heart with an Irish Blessing composed by an Irish actress, Roma Downey. She was popular as one of the actresses on "Touched by an Angel" that had been a very popular show on television. Part of the blessing was:

“...may you come to realize that insignificant as you may seem in this great universe, you are an important part of God’s Plan...”

An Irish Night Out

We knew that 'Nano Aflame' was walking with us all through this wonderful journey in her ancestral land. On our way for our Irish Night Out, we had a surprise in the sky - a double rainbow - a sign of blessing on us and our journey. It is amazing how God shows us care and love not only on this Pilgrimage but on our pilgrimage through life.

The Abbey Tavern at Howth was the venue where we would celebrate and bring to a close this wonderful Pilgrimage journey. There we were provided with a most delicious meal followed by entertainment in the adjacent room, in the form of song and dance. Opening the entertainment part of the evening was a wonderful group of three singers and three dancers. We surprised them by our participation in the music and dance. We left them wondering who we were. Were we a Choir or??? In the end we decided that we had entertained as much as we were entertained. A special dessert and Gaelic coffee topped off the evening. A true Newfoundland/Irish night indeed!

Other Memorable Moments

The Famine Memorial

Our trip also included a few unexpected stops. One was the “Famine Memorial” on the Dublin dockside which depicts people going to the boat as they left Ireland for Australia during the famine. These boats would be called ‘coffin ships’ because many of these people would never make it to another land as they would die on the way. The artist really captured the tragedy associated with the famine. As we viewed these sculptures we could feel the sadness and the pain that must have been in the hearts of these emigrating people.

The Rock of Cashel

We were also given a ‘distant’ view of the Rock of Cashel - an old castle that dates to 1101. It is also known as Cashel of the Kings and St. Patrick’s Rock. It is a historic site located at Cashel, County Tipperary. Though we did not get the opportunity to go to the castle, we had some pictures taken at a distance that gave us a good view of the castle. This Castle is visited by many tourists as stories abound about how it came about.

The Jack Lynch Tunnel

Imagine driving under the River Lee! Some of us may remember the little book “Lantern Beams on the Lee” when we first learned about Nano. Today a tunnel – 1.8 km long has been built under the river. It is called the Jack Lynch Tunnel. It took about five years to complete. We had the privilege of not only seeing the River Lee but driving under it - via the tunnel.

The Tree Sculpture

A landmark tree in St. Anne’s Park is a 10m-tall sculpture celebrating the wildlife in the area. Tommy Craggs, the tree sculptor, didn’t want this tree to be cut down and with the approval of the Dublin City Council turned it into a beautiful piece of art that turns heads on Clontarf Road. The piece was completed in 2016.

Journey Home

We were all on the bus at 5 a.m. August 24th, the morning of our departure from Ireland and our wonderful Pilgrimage. Some of us were feeling a bit sleepy but all

were ready to return to our 'Home Soil' of Newfoundland and spread the 'good news' of our trip. In our hearts we will hold the memories and the new learnings we had about Nano and her ancestors. In the days that follow we will be relating our stories and remembrances of this "trip of a lifetime." Truly a trip 'back in time' as we walked with Nano and her ancestors on her homeland Irish soil. There we breathed the same air where they worked and prayed. Together we experienced and remembered the wonderful missionaries on whose "shoulders we now stand." Though each of us will have our own reflections of these wonder-filled days, they will continue to be inspirations for us all. Truly a trip and experience of a lifetime!

Thanks and Acknowledgments

We thank God for this opportunity to be part of 'the mystery of it all' and for bringing us safely home. To the Sisters in Ireland who provided such warm welcome and hospitality, we are most grateful. We also acknowledge the gift of our Presentation Family for providing this experience and the stellar work that Sister Bernadette put into the planning and preparation of this unforgettable Pilgrimage. Thanks to all the participants who took this journey with us. May Nano continue to walk with you all as you journey with us. We cannot forget our Sisters at home who journeyed with us through prayer and who enjoyed our 'little reflections' and pictures that we sent home each day. Thanks to all who participated in making this a life-long memory enriched with the wealth of blessings and wonder of Nano's life and work as we celebrated Nano's Tercentenary Year. We asked God's blessing on all who took such care in it all.

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

Paula Delahunty pbvm



Painting on The Lantern wall, St. John's, NL - by Ella Yates 2018



Irish Blessing

A Thiarna dean trocaire. (Lord have mercy)

A Chriost dean trocaire. (Christ have mercy)

May the blessing of light be upon you, light on the outside and light on the inside.

With God's sunlight shining on you may your heart glow with warmth like a turf fire that welcomes friends and strangers alike.

May the light of the Lord shine from your eyes like a candle in the window, welcoming the weary traveler.

May the blessing of God's soft rain be on you, falling gently on your head, refreshing your soul with the sweetness of little flowers newly blooming.

May the strength of the winds of Heaven bless you, carrying the rain to wash your spirit clean, sparkling after in the sunlight.

May the blessing of God's earth be on you and as you walk the roads may you always have a kind word for those you meet.

May you understand the strength and power of God in a thunderstorm in winter, the quiet beauty of creation and the calm of a summer sunset.

And may you come to realize that insignificant as you may seem in this great universe, you are an important part of God's plan.

May He watch over you and keep you safe from harm.

-Roma Downey

Prayer for the Canonisation of Nano Nagle

*Gracious and loving God,
we place before you the cause of Nano Nagle.*

*Bless the Presentation family and the church
by declaring Nano Nagle's sainthood.*



*With her lantern light for her
journey, may we be blessed with
the vision courage and fidelity that
stirred Nano to passionate service
to those made poor and
abandoned.*

*We ask this in the name of Jesus, in whom she found light
and strength.*

Amen.