



DIVINE ILLUMINATION

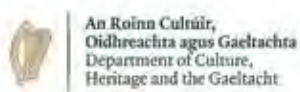
THE ORATORY OF THE SACRED HEART
DÚN LAOGHAIRE 1919-2019

**11 October 2019 -
4 January 2020**

dlr LexIcon, Level 3, Haigh Terrace,
Moran Park, Dún Laoghaire



Comhairle Contae County Council





ST MARY'S CONVENT

KINGSTOWN/DÚN LAOGHAIRE

Following a series of shipwrecks off the Dublin coast, an area to the east of the small fishing village of Dunleary was selected as the site for an asylum harbour during the early nineteenth century. Construction work began in 1817 and the new town, known as Kingstown from 1821, developed quickly. The opening of the Dublin and Kingstown railway, Ireland's first passenger railway, in 1834 further established the area and the local population grew rapidly. The rise in residents led to an increasing need for schools in Kingstown.

In 1847, the nuns of the Dominican Convent in Cabra were approached by a wealthy resident of Kingstown, Mrs Harriet Daly, who requested they make a foundation in the new port town. Mrs Daly offered a large villa off Lower George's Street, the main thoroughfare, for their use. Known as Echo Lodge, the house dated to the early years of the nineteenth century.



On 10 July 1847, six nuns left Cabra to establish St Mary's Dominican Convent in Kingstown. A fee-paying day school and boarding school were quickly opened. From 1848, the nuns took charge of the national school and provided an education to the poorest children of the area. During the famine years, the Dominicans provided food and clothing for many local children and taught them skills like needlework to increase their chances of finding employment.



The nuns extended Echo Lodge throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, adding large wings to the building containing a chapel, classrooms and dormitories.



St Mary's continued to provide secondary education in Dún Laoghaire until 1991, when the school was closed. After the sale of the historic convent site in 1991, the nuns relocated to a new convent in Dún Laoghaire. Over 170 years since its opening, St Dominic's Primary and Montessori School remains in operation with a board of management acting on behalf of the Dominican Sisters.

1. The Dominican motto is *Veritas* or Truth. The white and black of the Dominican crest are the colours traditionally associated with the Order. They represent purity, penance and the brightness of truth shining through the darkness. The star above the crest lights the way for those who seek the truth.
2. The entrance to St Mary's Dominican Convent on Lower George's Street, Dún Laoghaire, c. 1990 (Courtesy Irish Architectural Archive)
3. Hand-coloured photograph of St Mary's Dominican Convent, Kingstown, c. 1900 (Courtesy National Gallery of Ireland)
4. Interior of chapel at St Mary's Dominican Convent, Dún Laoghaire, showing stained glass window, created by Harry Clarke Studios, featuring St Dominic, founder of the Dominican Order, c. 1990 (Courtesy Colin Scudds)
5. Our Lady's Parlour, St Mary's Dominican Convent, c. 1990 (Courtesy Irish Architectural Archive)
6. St Mary's Dominican Convent, Dún Laoghaire. Echo Lodge, the original house on the site, is visible at left. The chapel and bell tower can be seen at right (dlr Local Studies)





EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

St Mary's Convent celebrated its golden jubilee on 10 July 1897. William Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin was present for the occasion and a large number of clergy gathered to celebrate High Mass in the chapel. Afterwards, a theatrical performance featuring pupils from the boarding school took place in the concert hall. In the evening, bonfires were lit and bands played on the streets surrounding the convent as 'tokens of Kingstown's congratulation and rejoicing'. A stained glass window, commissioned by past pupils of the school, was placed in Echo Lodge to mark the occasion.



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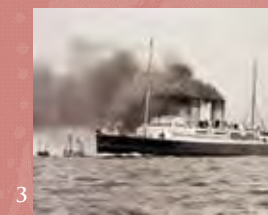
The centenary of St Mary's was celebrated in 1947 with a special Mass followed by a tea party on the lawns. In 1954, the centenary of the Children of Mary Sodality at the Dominican Convent was celebrated with an event for past pupils. The Pope also sent a special acknowledgement on this occasion.

Past pupils came together in the main hall at St Mary's for the last time in 1990. Within the next two years, the secondary school was closed and the historic convent buildings awaited demolition.



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By 1935, St Mary's had over 1000 pupils on the school roll and a past pupils' union was officially formed during this year.



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EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS, 1932

The Eucharistic Congress of Dublin took place in June 1932. The event occurred just ten years after independence and coincided with the 1500th anniversary of St Patrick's arrival in Ireland. The congress marked the Irish Free State as a proud Catholic nation.

Cardinal Lauri, the Papal Legate arrived in Dún Laoghaire on-board the *Cumbria*. Martin Gillet, Master General of the Dominican Order, was one of many visitors who travelled to Ireland with the Papal Legate and he paid a visit to St Mary's on his arrival. The pupils lined the convent avenue to welcome Gillet and the esteemed guest was greeted with a wave of miniature flags and an open air concert in the playground. Many individuals visited the oratory at St Mary's during the week-long celebrations for the Eucharistic Congress. Pupils from St Mary's were among the one million people who travelled to the Phoenix Park for an open-air mass.



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1. Boarders at St Mary's Dominican Convent, Kingstown, c.1882. Some of the girls wear Children of Mary medals (Courtesy Colin Scudds)
2. First Holy Communion group, 1931 (Courtesy Colin Scudds)
3. Fishing boats from Howth escorting the Papal Legate to Dún Laoghaire Harbour, 1932 (dlr Local Studies)
4. The arrival of the Papal Legate at Dún Laoghaire, marking the beginning of the Eucharistic Congress, 1932. The Irish Air Corps provided a fly-past in cruciform formation (dlr Local Studies)
5. The Papal Legate, disembarks at Carlisle Pier, Dún Laoghaire. The legate was greeted by Ministers of State including Éamon de Valera, President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State (dlr Local Studies)
6. Stained glass window, a gift from past pupils of St Mary's to celebrate its golden jubilee in 1897 (Courtesy Colin Scudds)
7. Members of the crowd atop the Victoria Fountain in Dún Laoghaire during the arrival of the Papal Legate, 1932 (dlr Local Studies)



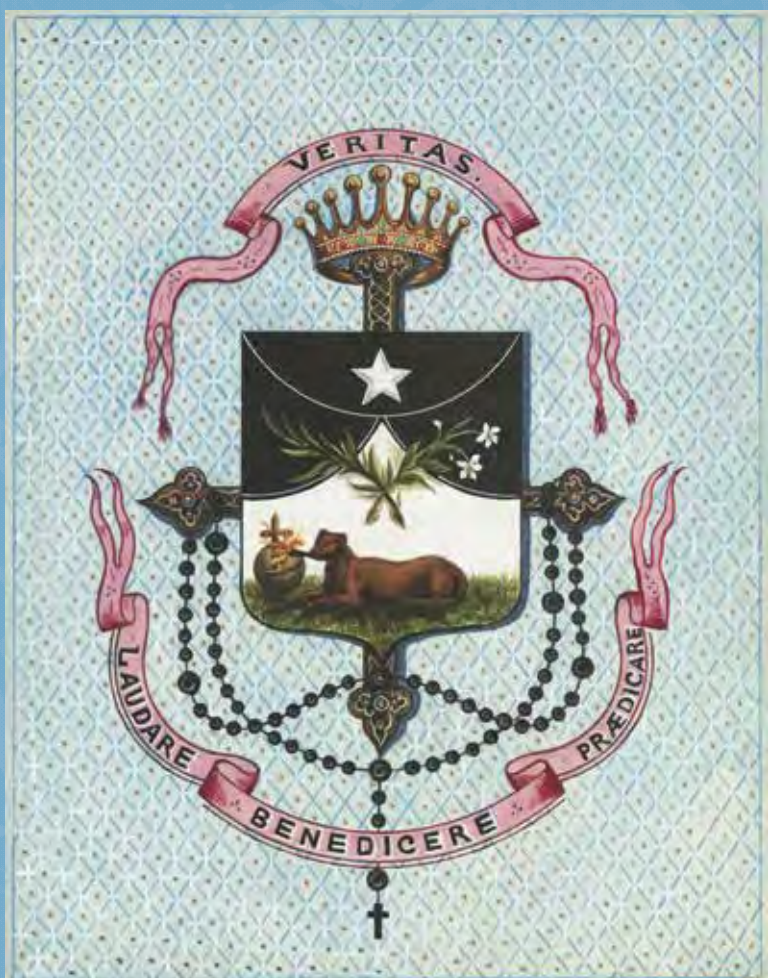
THE ANNALS OF ST MARY'S DOMINICAN CONVENT

KINGSTOWN/DÚN LAOGHAIRE

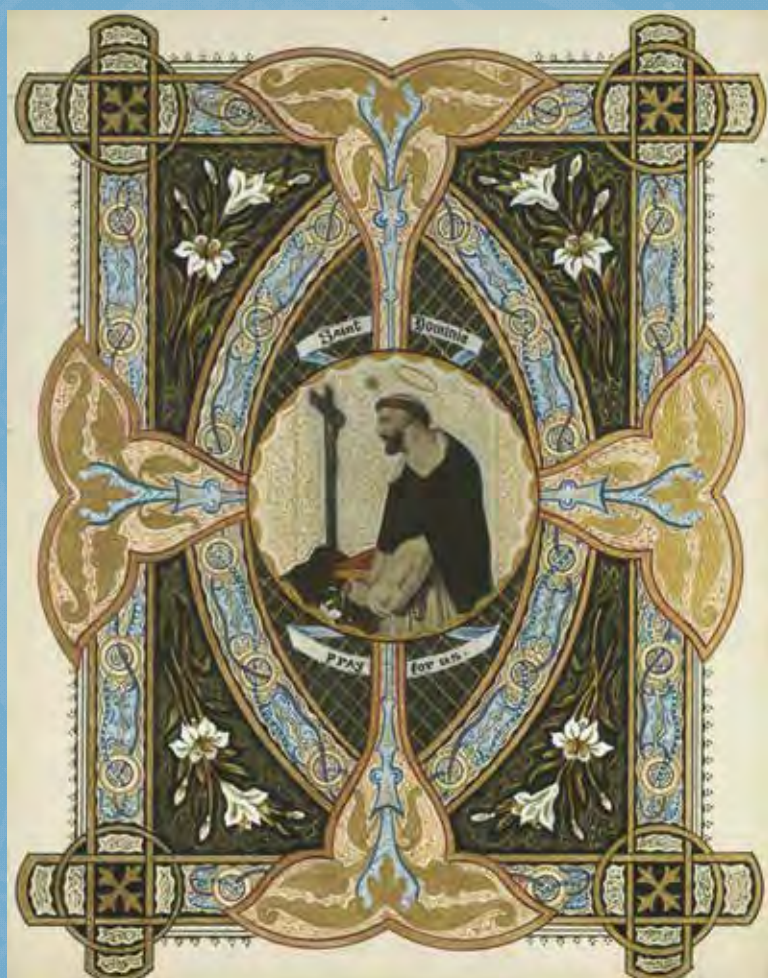
Every Dominican convent selects a nun to act as annalist or recorder. The annalist is required to keep an annual record of feast days, significant events and important celebrations. The Dominican nuns recognised Sr Concepta's artistic talent and she was asked to compile and illustrate a special edition of the annals after she entered St Mary's, possibly for the golden jubilee of the convent in 1897. Her work on the annals and on a number of illuminated addresses to mark the jubilees of different nuns shows her acquaintance with aspects of publications like Owen Jones' highly

influential *The Grammar of Ornament* (1856).

Her confidence with Byzantine, Moorish and Egyptian design fed into her consummate skill and knowledge of the 'grammar' of Celtic illumination, ensuring that she was not just reviving an older art form but creating her own unique language which found its greatest expression in the Oratory of the Sacred Heart.



The Dominican crest and motto, Annals of St Mary's Dominican Convent, Kingstown. The unofficial motto of the Dominican Order is *Laudare, Benedicere, Praedicare* – to Praise, to Bless, to Preach. The hound with flaming torch is a reference to the story that St Dominic's pregnant mother dreamt a black and white dog leapt from her womb carrying a flaming torch in its mouth. The hound then used the torch to set the world alight. This vision was subsequently fulfilled when her son and his followers went out into the world, wearing white habits and black cloaks, enlightening the people by preaching the truth of the scriptures (Courtesy Cabra Dominican Archives)



St Dominic, founder of the Dominican Order, Annals of St Mary's Dominican Convent, Kingstown. The official name of Dominic's Order is the Order of Preachers, and its members are officially known as the Friars and Sisters of the Order of Preachers. However, they would come to be more widely known as the Dominicans. The Latin word for Dominican is *Dominicanus*, which also sounds like *domini canis*, meaning 'hound of the Lord'. This provides a playful reference to the dream of St Dominic's mother (Courtesy Cabra Dominican Archives)



1. Front page of the Annals of St Mary's Dominican Convent, Kingstown. This image and the other images on this panel are from the Annals of St Mary's, compiled and illustrated by Sr Concepta (Courtesy Cabra Dominican Archives)



THE DÚN LAOGHAIRE ARTS CENTRE (DLAC)

In 1987, a highly successful Dún Laoghaire Arts Week was held from 18-27 September. The need for a space to showcase and support the wealth of artistic talent living and working in the area became paramount and Dún Laoghaire Arts Centre was founded that month. It was a voluntary organisation and its mission was to 'promote and facilitate the highest standards of artistic achievement... encouraging the maximum number of people to engage directly in the creation of works of art'. DLAC was run by artists for artists.

Veronica Heywood was at the forefront of the Dún Laoghaire Arts Centre from the start and it is thanks to her archive, now at dlr Lexlcon, that the history of this group can be recounted. The Arts Centre expanded and moved to 5A Park Lane close to the People's Park and then in 1991 to 114 Lower George's Street to The Sail Loft opposite the old Carnegie Library.



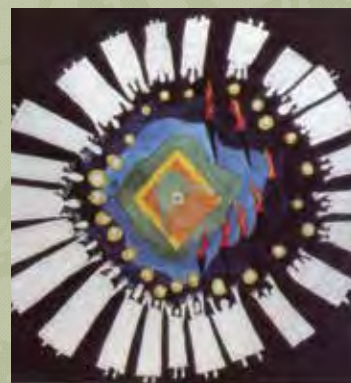
In 1992, the nuns of the Dominican Convent kindly facilitated their temporary residence at St Mary's until the property changed hands. Veronica described the nuns as their guardian angels. Within a few weeks, the new residents were running a full visual and performing

arts centre for artists, sculptors, poets and composers. In its heyday, over 140 artists were working away in the old Dominican Convent.



The group lived in hope of a permanent base in the new Bloomfields site. However, this was not to be and in 1994, the group moved to St Helen's in Booterstown (now the Radisson Blu) and then to the Carlisle Pier for a time in 1995. In subsequent years, the newly reorganised Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council established an Arts Office that managed the programme throughout the County, frequently working with a variety of members of the Dún Laoghaire Arts Centre.

Many of the artists in the group were influenced in their creative work by Sr Concepta's art, including Veronica Heywood and Michael Connaughton. According to Sr Frances Lally, the oratory was 'the quiet place at the heart of all this creative energy, a place for contemplation, meditation and renewal'.



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KINGFISHER IN FLIGHT

The nineties proved to be a time of great change in Dún Laoghaire with major infrastructural developments throughout the town. By the end of the decade, a new shopping centre and cinema would replace the Dominican Convent along Lower George's Street.

A small group of dedicated people fought to ensure the preservation of the Oratory of the Sacred Heart during these tumultuous changes – chief among them was Sr Frances Lally, custodian of the oratory who had arrived in St Mary's in 1962. She witnessed many changes in Dún Laoghaire in the decades following Vatican II. She recalled when St Michael's Church burned down in 1965, the construction of Dún Laoghaire Shopping Centre on Marine Road in 1976 and the dramatic changes that took place after St Mary's was sold in 1991.



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In 1992, the National Gallery agreed to accept a donation of Sr Concepta's lesson plans, artworks, stencils and other material related to the decoration of the oratory. Responsibility for the Oratory of the Sacred Heart was transferred initially to the Office of Public Works (OPW) and ultimately to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

In 1995, Veronica Heywood joined forces with Sr Frances and, with support from Edward Sweeney of Monarch Properties, made an application for funding from the European Commission entitled *Kingfisher in Flight*. Irish politicians, including Minister for Education, Niamh Breathnach and the then Minister for Arts, Michael D. Higgins lent their support and encouragement to the project. The application was a success and restoration of the oratory began in 1996 with some £150,000 worth of funding from the EU and the Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht.



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The newly enclosed oratory was launched on 19 October 2008 during Open House weekend in Ireland. Since then, thousands of visitors have flocked to this exceptional building, inspired and often overawed by the sheer beauty and originality of Sr Concepta's vision within.



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Sr Frances wrote a short book about the oratory which helped to raise awareness of Sr Concepta's work. When Monarch Properties acquired the convent land, the sisters included a clause that the oratory be retained and protected and great care was taken during demolition of the buildings nearby.



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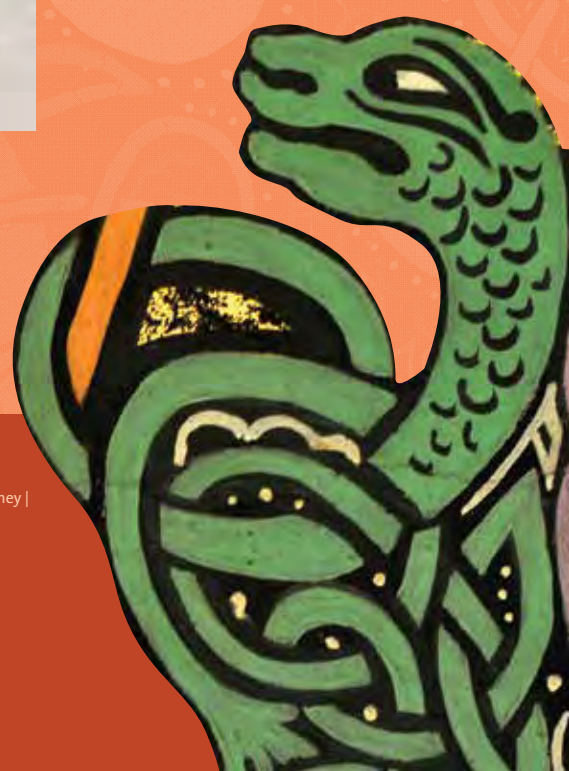
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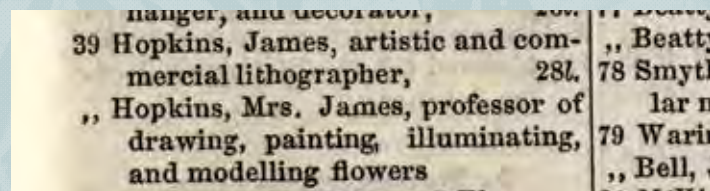


THOMAS J. LYNCH 1852-1887

'The Illuminating art is one of the few precious relics which remain of Ireland's ancient glory. ... Thank God, year after year, Irish talent and native work is more appreciated – the dark cloud is passing away and the bright dawn beams once again on our native land'. Thomas J. Lynch, 1876



Lily Lynch referred to her father as 'A Dublin Artist' and he received his artistic education at Mrs J. Hopkins' Academy, 39 Great Brunswick Street (now Pearse Street) during the 1860s. Thomas received extensive artistic training for his later career from Anne Warren Hopkins, née Gonne, a prize-winning artist. She provided lessons in painting, pencil drawing, printing and watercolour. Together with her husband James, Mrs Hopkins ran an illuminating and heraldic artistic business, similar to the one that Thomas himself established in 1871 at the age of 18. Though Mrs Hopkins died in 1873 aged 32, Thomas remained close to the Hopkins family.



eager to have their name associated with the decorative document. They could be in scroll or book format, often running to many pages and invariably presented in beautiful oak and gilt frames, or in some instances in a casket of bog oak.

At the height of his career, Thomas employed four staff who assisted him in the production of these elaborate illuminated addresses. Some of the addresses could take up to six months to produce as it was detailed and exacting work.



Thomas was quickly recognised as an accomplished artist and illuminator, noted as a colourist and for his use of Celtic art motifs. He specialised in creating formal presentation addresses which were fashionable in late nineteenth century Ireland.

Within the form of these illuminated addresses, he utilised the Celtic Revival design of interlace, triskeles, spirals and zoomorphic motifs to express the various civic, religious, local and national identities of Ireland for ceremonial or formal public occasions. These addresses were produced to mark significant individuals or occasions, and frequently included a long list of subscribers and donors

Thomas Lynch evolved his own system of working entitled the Lynch Method. This was a personal technique used to construct the complex Celtic interlacing, which his daughter Lily was to use later in her own work. A central rule of the Lynch Method was to never finish a whole row at a time, but to keep the pattern in a state of constant accumulation. This approach was utilised by Sr Concepta in her decoration of the oratory.

His studio was based for many years at 82 Middle Abbey Street but a fire in July 1885 meant the loss of many of his treasured works and designs. In the last months of his life, he moved his business to 31 Grafton Street. He died there in 1887 after a debilitating battle with tuberculosis.



1. Memorial portrait of Thomas J Lynch, completed by his daughter, Lily, 1895 (Courtesy National Gallery of Ireland)
2. Entry for Thom's Directory, 1866, showing address for Hopkins Studio at 39 Great Brunswick Street (dlr Local Studies)
3. Display of artwork created by Sr Concepta and her pupils using the Lynch Method, 1932 (Courtesy National Gallery of Ireland)
4. Photograph showing 82 Middle Abbey Street, centre left, following the destruction of the Easter Rising (dlr Local Studies)



THE KING OF CELTIC ART

Thomas J. Lynch was hailed as the 'King of Celtic Art' by *The Art-Journal* in 1880. His career and commissions were widely reported in the nationalist press of the time. While little of Thomas' portfolio survives today, it is possible to partially reconstruct some of his work from press reports together with glass plate copies of his illuminated addresses which were stored safely by his daughter.

A selection of these addresses are listed below. They demonstrate a fascinating cross section of religious, corporate, royal, titled, military and political figures:



1876, AUGUST

Address from People of Ballinasloe to the Archbishop of Tuam, John McHale on the occasion of his recent visit to that town.

1876, SEPTEMBER

Address from Harold's Cross residents to the President of the United States.



1877, JULY

Address as condolence presented by the employees of the late Mr Boland, Capel-street, to his sorrowing wife.

1877, DECEMBER

Charles Brenan Testimonial from Phoenix Brewery Employees.

1877, DECEMBER

O'Leary Presentation from the Vintners' Society.

1878, MAY

Leo XIII Address from Holy Family Confraternity of St Catherine's.

1878, MAY

Address to Mr Kenny from the Irish Mercantile Clerk's Association.

1878, SEPTEMBER

Lord and Lady Clanmorris Address from the tenantry of his Lordship's Mayo and Galway estates on his marriage.

1879, FEBRUARY

Duke of Connaught Address. Presented 'by his friends in Ireland' to Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught and Strathearn on the occasion of his marriage to Princess Louise Margaret of Prussia, great-niece of the German Emperor, and Arthur's godfather, Wilhelm I, 13 March 1879.

1879, AUGUST

Address to Empress Eugénie on the death of the Prince Imperial, Louis Napoleon from the Board of Guardians of North Dublin

1880, FEBRUARY

Charles Stewart Parnell Address, from the Tenant Farmers of Ireland. Presented following the occasion of his address to the House of Representatives of the United States.

1880, APRIL

Address presented to Cardinal Henry Newman.

1880, APRIL

Address to the Viceroy, The Duke of Marlborough, on his leaving Ireland from the Commissioners of the Township of Kingstown. ... 'which met with the general approval of Mr S. C. Hall, the veteran art critic, and of the London journals'.

1880, MAY

Freedom of the City of Dublin to Captain Potter, U.S.N., of the United States frigate *Constellation* on a mission to assist the famine stricken people of Ireland.

1881, JANUARY

Testimonial from The 26th inst. The Abbey Masonic Lodge No. 242, Boyle, to Brother Major Robertson.

1881, FEBRUARY

Duchess of Marlborough Address. Ceremonial presentation in recognition of the Vicereine's charitable works during the 1879-80 famine.

1881, JULY

An address of congratulation to The Rev B Dennon on his elevation to the position of Parish Priest of Baldoye.

1881, SEPTEMBER

Address from the Balingarry branch of the Land League to the Most Rev Dr Croke.

1882, MAY

Address to the Archbishop of Dublin, Edward McCabe, from the Commissioners of the Township of Kingstown. A resident of the town he was appointed Cardinal in that year.



1882, JUNE

Portrait of Cardinal McCabe in oils.

1884, MARCH

Testimonial Album presented to Mr Patrick Egan by his Irish friends.

1884, MARCH

Dr Kelly, late of Dublin, and now of San Francisco.

1884, OCTOBER

Address to Mr Gabriel Montgomery. Farewell dinner. 'The commercial staff [of] the Irish Times entertained Mr Gabriel Montgomery to dinner on Saturday evening prior to his departure for Australia'.

1885, FEBRUARY

Presentation address to Mr E. D. Gray. 'Last week from the Dublin Corporation, officers presented Mr E. D. Gray .. [a] memorial of his services in onnection with the improvement of the Coombe area and the Artisans' Dwellings movement'.

1885, SEPTEMBER

Presentation to 'his Grace the Most Rev Dr Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, from the Catholics and Nationalists Blackrock and the surrounding districts'.

1886, JUNE

Address from the people of New Ross to the Rev J. Aylward, P.P.



THE PARNELL ADDRESS: A STUDY IN THE LYNCH METHOD

One of the most striking examples of Thomas J. Lynch's illuminated addresses is held by the National Library of Ireland. The *Illuminated Address to Charles Stewart Parnell from the Tenant Farmers of Ireland, 1880* was given to Parnell by the leadership of the National Land League to commemorate the occasion of his address to the United States' House of Representatives in February 1880.

Romanticised notions of the past are often inevitably drawn upon in commemorative practice and the Celtic Revival provided recognisable symbols from a medieval 'golden age' to assert present identities and future aspirations. While Lynch employed many of these signs and symbols, his work demonstrated contemporary relevance through other decorative imagery, such as landscape views and medallion portraits including images of a modern Ireland in the midst of the Land War. His use of the eviction scene and the modern smokestacks in this example is particularly striking.

Celtic designs and patterns copied from the Book of Kells are employed by Lynch in the Parnell Address, with edges of Celtic interlace and the employment of zoomorphic symbolism. The evolution of his art can be discerned by comparing the somewhat blocky gothic medievalism of his first commission for Archbishop McHale in 1876 with this exquisite example of nineteenth century illuminating art, created four years later in 1880. Shamrocks, acanthus, forget-me-nots, and violets are employed reflecting the popular imagery of the period. Contemporary observers praised his chaste and tasteful approach to his subject matter and the minute and elaborate detail evident in his work. They also celebrated his harmonious use of rich colour in the miniaturist form.

It is important to note Lynch's unique bird motifs utilised in the Parnell Address. Thomas' signature bird was adapted and widely used by his daughter in later years, most notably in the Oratory of the Sacred Heart.



Illuminated address by Thomas J. Lynch, presented to Charles Stewart Parnell by the Land League on his return from the United States, 1880 (Courtesy National Library of Ireland)

- a Parnell Portrait: The top of the address is embellished with a likeness of Parnell, painted from a photograph. This portraiture in a medallion is surrounded by the Irish and American flags and by forget-me-not and acanthus foliage.
- b Calligraphy Example of the Uncial lettering form in the initial lettering, in this case 'P', executed in rich brown with use of spirals and interlacing.
- c Arabesques These reflect the patterns of the old Moorish style found in the ornamentation of the Alhambra. Travel writer and artist James Cavanah Murphy's *The Arabian Antiquities of Spain* (1816) created a revival of interest in Europe's forgotten Islamic heritage including an appreciation of the arabesque style.
- d Miniature Irish scenes: The address includes a variety of Irish scenes dotted throughout, including this idyllic harvest scene. Other images evoke the oppression of landlords and evictions from the Land War 1879-1882. Romantic images of Ireland past, the shamrock, round towers, harps, wolfhounds and the Maid of Érin are joined by less typical depictions such as the smoke-stacks from industrial furnaces.
- e Lynch bird motif A signature feature associated with the Lynch Studio and utilised by his daughter in later years including in the Oratory of the Sacred Heart
- f Zoomorphic ornament and Celtic border interlacing Examples of the fantastic birds, beasts and fishes and borders enriched with wreathed shamrocks.
- g Signatories Names of principal signatories including A.J. Kettle, a leading Irish nationalist politician and father of Tom Kettle, the poet and politician who died during the Great War.
- h Tracery This is intricately entwined with shamrocks and heraldic devices.
- i Armorial bearings Another feature is the 'armorial bearings' that Lynch employs. Trained as a heraldic artist, it was an important and expected element of his addresses.
- j Calligraphy Examples of the Uncial form in the initial lettering, in this case 'A', executed in rich brown, with detailing in crimson, gold and blue, with use of spirals and interlacings.



THE SPIRIT OF ST MARY'S

Thank you to all those who shared anecdotes about their school days and their connections with St Mary's Dominican Convent, the Oratory of the Sacred Heart and memories of Sr Concepta. This panel showcases a selection of photos received when dlr Libraries put out an open call to the community to send in their stories or photos about the Dominican Convent in Dún Laoghaire. Further details can be found in the publication *Divine Illumination*.



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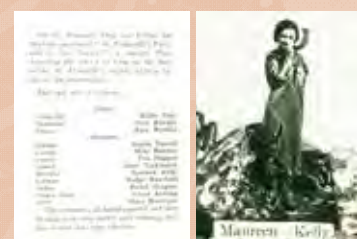
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Mary O'Rourke with her husband, John Philip Clarke, c. 1925. Mary taught at St Mary's Dominican Convent and arrived as a junior teacher in 1919, the year the oratory was dedicated. Her sister Kathleen was in the boarding school at the same time. She taught in the day school until 1921, when she met her future husband. Mary had a great fondness for Sr Concepta and she described how Sr Concepta gave her a few singing lessons and reminded her to 'whistle as it would be good for my voice, but added, for goodness' sake don't let the older nuns hear you!' Mary also took art lessons from Sr Concepta. Three of Mary's grandchildren attended the day school at St. Mary's (Courtesy Brian Clarke)



Mary and Michael Bowen at their wedding in the chapel of St Mary's Dominican Convent, 15 January 1966, with Sr John Grimes. Following the devastating fire in St Michael's Church in 1965, the Dominican Sisters allowed their chapel to be used for weddings before the opening of a temporary parish church. The concert hall in the secondary school was used for Sunday Mass. Mary was married to Michael Bowen in the convent chapel and remembers walking up the aisle 'in that wonderful little church with great pride'.



Fr Myles Healy's mother Maureen Kelly knew Sr Concepta very well. She performed in her plays and pageants, took her art classes, helped her to buy paint and assisted her in her stencil work. She stayed in touch with her after she finished school. Sr Concepta knew that Maureen was expecting her first child in 1939, following her marriage to Nicholas John Healy in 1937. Despite being seriously ill with cancer, Sr Concepta willed herself to live until the birth so that she could see the baby.

Sr Imelda Connery, one of Sr Concepta's closest friends, smuggled Maureen's baby boy into the convent under her scapular as only the nuns were permitted to enter the inner confines of the convent. Myles was only one day old. Several days later, Sr Concepta died.



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DIARY OF A BOARDER

Brigid Kavanagh attended school at St Mary's Convent in Dún Laoghaire from 1926-27. This panel features a diary she wrote in 1927 and includes a number of photos of Brigid and her classmates.

Her daughter Rita Larkin, also a pupil at St Mary's from 1965-66, shared these treasured items belonging to her mother, recounting invaluable insights into school life during the 1920s.



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Brigid's lively diary entries provide an account of daily life for a boarder in 1927, full of references to classes and code names for nuns. Mother De Ricci or 'Dickie' taught English, 'Pie' was Sr Pius and even Sr Concepta is referenced in her diary on 2 October 1927 when Brigid notes that 'Con gave us Little Flower pictures.' The feast of St Thérèse of Lisieux, the 'Little Flower' was celebrated annually on 1 October since her beatification in 1925.



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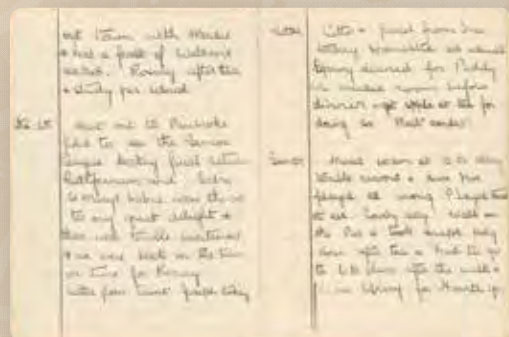
Brigid's diary alludes to the many sports the girls played – chiefly hockey and tennis – classes such as music and domestic science and countless entries about walks on the pier, the daily constitutional for pupils at St Marys.

Rita enjoyed her schooldays in St Mary's from 1965-66. She was from Loughmore in Tipperary and had gone to the Sisters of Mercy in Templemore up until her Intermediate Certificate. She remembered Sr Benvenuta (Margaret Mac Curtain) who was in University College Dublin at this time and not at St Mary's. Rita recalled that Sr 'Ben' referred to many of the boarders in St Mary's as 'the railway girls' as it suited numerous families who lived close to the main railway stations around Ireland.

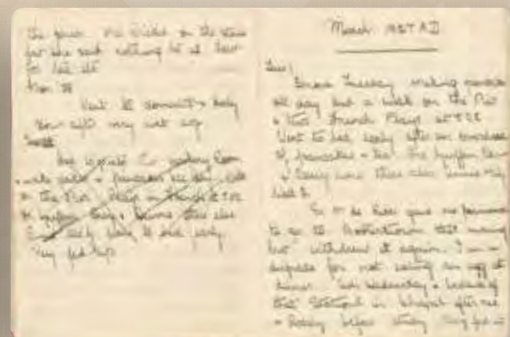
Rita loved St Mary's and described how well 6th year boarders were treated. They had a free period from 3.30-4.30pm daily during weekdays when they invariably walked the pier or enjoyed tea and a bun at Fuller's cake shop on the corner of Marine Road. Rita and two of her cousins, Bridie and Mary O'Meara attended a school reunion in 1989.



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1. Aerial view of Dún Laoghaire, c. 1940. St Mary's Dominican Convent is visible at centre foreground, beyond the spire of St Michael's Church (dir Local Studies)
2. Margaret Kavanagh, Mary O'Callaghan, Bridie McCarthy, Rosemary Tierney and Rita Larkin on the front steps to St Mary's Dominican Convent, 1966 (Courtesy Rita Larkin)
3. Mary O'Callaghan, Rita Larkin, Bridie McCarthy and Vivienne Evans, wearing their blue Sunday jumper, St Mary's Dominican Convent, 1965 (Courtesy Rita Larkin)
4. Unidentified Dominican nun with two pupils standing outside the Oratory of the Sacred Heart, March 1927. Note the tympanum has yet to be decorated (Courtesy Rita Larkin)
5. Group photograph at statue on the grounds of St Mary's Dominican Convent, Dún Laoghaire, June 1927. Brigid Kavanagh sits on left with tennis racquet (Courtesy Rita Larkin)
6. Four pupils of St Mary's Dominican Convent, with hats, seated at the pier in Dún Laoghaire, 1927 (Courtesy Rita Larkin)
7. Winners of the Junior Hockey League 1926-27, St Mary's Dominican Convent, Dún Laoghaire. Names listed on back include: Una O'Donnell, Nora Breen, Frances Boylan, M.J. Keenan, Peggie Hennessy, Lily Fleming (goal), Betty O'Dwyer, Gladys O'Sullivan, Iris Kavanagh, Lilla Brennan and Winifred O'Dwyer (Courtesy Rita Larkin)
8. Entries from diary of Brigid Kavanagh, 1926-27 (Courtesy Rita Larkin)

EARLY LIFE OF LILY LYNCH

Sr Concepta began life as Lily Lynch, daughter of Thomas Joseph (1852-1887) and Anne Marie Lynch (née Burke, 1854-1889), who had married in Booterstown on 7 January 1874. Lily was born later that year in Paradise Row, a lane of cottages to the side of 87 Booterstown Avenue in the Township of Blackrock. The house was close to her mother's family home. She was baptised Bridget Mary Lynch on 4th November but was always known as Lily to her family.



Anne Marie Lynch was the daughter of Mr John Burke, businessman, auctioneer and proprietor of The Phoenix Hotel, a centrally located commercial hotel, tavern and coffeehouse at 17 D'Olier Street, and

2 Hawkins Street. The establishment was popular with press-men, printers and lithographers. John Burke also owned the Queen's Hotel in Dalkey for a time. Thomas J. Lynch was a rising artist who conducted his illuminating and heraldic business from various properties on Middle Abbey Street before establishing himself at No. 82. The Lynch family lived on the premises and moved along with the business. Anne Marie appears to have suffered from chronic ill-health and struggled to take care of the household. She gave birth to five children between 1874 and 1879. Lily was her only surviving child; all her other children died between the ages of two and five months.



Lily spent much of her childhood in the Lynch Studio where her father taught her the art of illumination and heraldry. Thomas nurtured his daughter's natural artistic talents and encouraged her development as an illuminating artist. Together, they studied ancient Irish manuscripts like the Book of Kells, drawing inspiration from what they saw. Lily idolised her father and kept a box of treasured memorabilia relating to him for the rest of her life.

Lily was educated first at the Dominican Convent, Eccles Street in Dublin city before moving to St Mary's Dominican Convent, Kingstown during the 1880s.

1. Portrait of Anne Marie Lynch from memory, by Lily Lynch, c. 1895 (Courtesy National Gallery of Ireland)
2. The box which Sr Concepta Lynch made to store memorabilia relating to her father, now in the care of the National Gallery of Ireland.
3. Image of the Holy Family, from stained glass window in the oratory, commissioned by Sr Concepta and dedicated to the memory of Thomas Lynch and family.

SR CONCEPTA LYNCH

Lily Lynch was the sole beneficiary of her father's estate on his death in 1887. However, it took two years for the business to return to a proper footing. Lily continued her schooling at St Mary's Dominican Convent, Kingstown leaving the operation of the business to a sister of her father's. Almost two years later in 1889, Lily's mother died and the business suffered a second fire in 1891 following relocation to 24 Sackville Street near the Gresham Hotel.



It wasn't until late 1892, after completing her schooling, that Lily became directly involved in the business and began taking commissions. She assumed control for the next four years.

In 1895, Lily painted a triple portrait of herself and her parents. In retrospect, this important memento may be seen to mark a turning point in her life, looking back to her early life whilst wrestling with a major decision regarding her future. By 1895, she was acknowledged as a gifted and highly promising young artist as well as celebrated for her 'delicious' singing, musical compositions and mastery of the piano. The following year, to the surprise of many, she closed the Lynch Studio permanently and entered St Mary's as a postulant nun.

Lily entered St Mary's on 5 July 1896. She brought a dowry from her father's bequest and this went towards a marble communion



rail for the convent chapel. Shortly before the convent celebrated its golden jubilee in July 1897, Lily adopted her new religious name 'Concepta' referring to the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. The following year, on 9 November 1898, Sr Concepta took her final vows.



Sr Concepta taught oil painting and illumination to the girls in the boarding school. At one stage, she was given charge of the day school. She celebrated her silver jubilee at the convent with her religious sisters, her family and her musician friends in 1923.



Following a diagnosis of breast cancer, Sr Concepta suffered ill health for a number of years before her death on 30 April 1939.





A CURIOUS ORNAMENT

The decoration of the Oratory of the Sacred Heart developed gradually over a period of nearly 20 years and the broad sequence of events can be demonstrated as follows:

- a. The oratory is built by Louis Monks, contractor, 1918.
- b. The alcove behind the statue of the Sacred Heart is painted with Byzantine and Moorish designs, 1919-20.
- c. Sr Concepta's cousin Shaun Glenville and his wife visit the oratory in 1920, and remark that the building is 'like a plain Connemara stable'. They offer to assist financially.
- d. Sr Concepta has a dream in which she sees the oratory 'alight with colours in serpentine bands'. Permission is given for commencement on larger scheme of design.
- e. Bullet holes from attack by Black and Tans are worked into design, 1920-1921.
- f. Layout and stencilling of walls and ceiling 1921-22, including Cross design, 1922.
- g. The original stencil design is embellished 1921-1936.
- h. Windows commissioned from Harry Clarke Studios, Medieval border work is completed on the window surrounds.
- i. The wall behind the statue of the Sacred Heart is reworked, after 1925.
- j. Dedication lettering painted over door 'Togadh Séipéal an Croidhe Naomhta 1919', and tympanum decoration completed after 1927.
- k. The exterior door is decorated, after 1927 and before 1937. Decoration no longer visible.
- l. Placement of small portrait of Saint Thérèse, the Little Flower, 1936-39



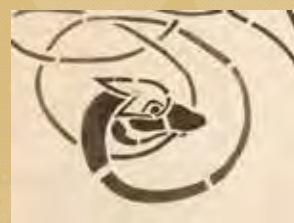
The painting of the oratory was a labour of love and devotion. Sr Concepta often worked long hours in isolation, in cold, ill-lit conditions. She painted directly onto the plain cement

wall, drawing out the major details on paper, strips of old wallpaper and old window blinds that she found in the convent. Sr Concepta cut these into stencils.

Using the stencils as templates, she lightly mapped out the design, later enlarging on the stencilled result with freehand brushwork. The stencils facilitated easy duplication and reverse duplication of the various designs, resulting in a mirror image of each figure. One of her pupils remembered her sitting in the hall at break time cutting stencils from a roll of paper with a small scissors while Bobbins, the convent cat, sat at her feet.



Sr Juliana Tutty, a past pupil of St Mary's, recalled going to see Sr Concepta in the oratory one day and her saying, 'Do you see that square there? It took me two hours to paint the dots in it!' Sr Concepta saw her work as a great form of devotion and meditation. On occasion she also let the children paint the dots. Bunty Phibbs one of Sr Concepta's favoured students described her brush technique as: 'Make brush strokes as if you are stroking a cat, saying "poor pussy".' She noted that Sr Concepta always wore a paint-smear habit as she wiped her hands and her brushes on it. When she arrived back to the convent after a painting session, the sisters could smell the strong odour of paint as she arrived into the refectory.





WHAT IS AN ORATORY?

The word 'oratory' is derived from the Latin *orare* meaning 'to pray'. The first oratories came into existence as small structures or shrines built over the tombs of martyrs. Early Christians used these structures as places of prayer and worship. Later, oratories were built in the castles and residences of kings, lords and bishops. While the term 'oratory' is often interchangeable with 'chapel', oratories are generally defined as small, one-roomed spaces set aside for private worship, often erected to commemorate or celebrate a specific event.

Michael off the coast of County Kerry. The best known and best preserved oratory on mainland Ireland is the Gallarus Oratory on the Dingle Peninsula.



2

Oratories may be free-standing buildings or housed within a larger structure. Interiors are most often simply-decorated and include an altar, windows and sometimes a shrine. In modern times, the official definition has been simplified and oratories and private chapels are classed as one of five sacred places in the Catholic Church, the others being churches, shrines, altars and cemeteries.



4

The word for oratory or chapel in medieval Ireland was *dairthech*, meaning 'oak house'. The first Irish oratories were built of wooden material and do not survive. The earliest extant oratories are found in the southwest of the country. These include two oratories on the monastic settlement of Skellig



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A large number of oratories are located within Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, on the grounds of private houses, religious communities, schools and even shopping centres. These include another, lesser-known Dominican Oratory of the Sacred Heart, erected by the nuns of the Dominican Convent, Sion Hill, Blackrock in 1873.



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STATUE OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

The story of the statue of the Sacred Heart, and how it came to rest in the oratory is shrouded in mystery. The significance of the statue is connected to the dedication of the universe to the Sacred Heart by the pope in the aftermath of the First World War. The symbol of the Sacred Heart was adopted as a way to mark those who had lost their lives in the great carnage.



2

The statue follows the popular devotional Sacred Heart form; Christ stands with his heart bared, displaying a wound, encircled by a crown of thorns and topped by a small cross surrounded by flames representing the transformative power of God's love. The statue was placed on an altar in a niche decorated in the Early Eastern Christian style. On the wall behind the statue, the presence of stylised fleur-de-lis as well as the national colours of France may serve as a subtle reference to the French origins of the sculpture.

An undated photograph shows that the design of the wall changed as well as the colour of the cloak on the statue. It is unclear when these changes were made. It is interesting to note that the robe on the statue is not the traditional red associated with the Sacred Heart, but a dull brown or beige colour. It has been suggested that this was a purposeful association with the colour of the khaki uniform worn by British soldiers.



3

Different accounts state that the statue was donated by a grateful town in France or Belgium to the parish of Kingstown to commemorate all the local men who had fought and died on the side of the Allies. A number of locations were considered but

the oratory was selected as the most appropriate place given the changed political climate in Ireland following the War of Independence. It was also noted that the IRA would not cross the nuns!



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1. The altar frontal, Oratory of the Sacred Heart.
2. Lettering above door to Oratory of the Sacred Heart with inscription in Cló Gaelach which translates as 'This oratory was dedicated to the devotion of the Sacred Heart, 1919' ie 'Togadh an Séipéal an Croidhe Naomhta 1919.'
3. Detail from Oratory of the Sacred Heart showing French national colours.
4. Fleur-de-lis detail from stylised Corinthian column on either side of statue of the Sacred Heart.
5. Stained glass window depicting Sacred Heart of Jesus from the Oratory of the Sacred Heart, donated by Joseph and Margaret McGreevy, Eden Quay, Dublin.
6. Interior of the Oratory of the Sacred Heart showing statue of the Sacred Heart above the altar c. 1925. Note the dark colour of the cloak on the statue and the altar frontal in the early stages of decoration (Courtesy National Gallery of Ireland)



STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

The oratory features seven stained glass windows produced by Clarke Studios during the 1920s. The windows are not the work of Harry Clarke himself but they were designed in close consultation with Sr Concepta. To complement their design, she painted the surrounding window niches with medieval tracery. The windows were commissioned by individual patrons but two windows have direct associations with Sr Concepta and her family:

The first window depicts the Holy Family and commemorates Sr Concepta's mother and father. Grafton Street is given as the address for Thomas J. Lynch. The Lynch Studio was based at 31 Grafton Street for less than six months. Thomas died there while at the height of his career.

The second window depicts Christ holding the Eucharist. The date recorded, 21 March 1920, suggests the day when Shaun Glenville committed to financing the decoration of the 'plain Connemara stable'.

Both of these windows appear to have been paid for by Shaun Glenville. He raised funds through vaudeville performances in Liverpool and other towns.

Another window is dedicated to all donors to the oratory and features the Virgin and Child passing a set of Rosary beads to St Dominic, founder of the Dominican Order. The fourth window depicts the Sacred Heart and was donated by Joseph and Margaret McGreevy, Eden Quay, Dublin.



A diamond-shaped window above the entrance to the oratory commemorates a young drummer boy, Joseph G. Walsh of Cahir, County Tipperary, who died in the First World War.

Two plain diamond-shaped windows were placed in the wall on either side of the altar. These windows were later replaced after vandals smashed them.

It is possible that the original building had plain windows throughout at the time of its construction in 1918. During the War of Independence, the Black and Tans fired shots through the windows into the oratory wall. This may have encouraged the installation of stained glass windows through sponsorship as the interior design became more elaborate.



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CHRISTIAN CROSSES

The oratory features a number of different forms of Christian crosses. The dominant cross feature is visible in the centre of both the left and right walls, between the two window apertures. These crosses are decorated with circles as prominent elements. They are based on earlier Irish sculpted crosses. The cross and circle represent Christ's victory over death while acting as a reminder of Christ as the saviour to whom the oratory is dedicated. The stencil for the cross was created in 1922, demonstrating that it was an early intention of Sr Concepta in her design scheme. Some commentators have drawn parallels between Sr Concepta's cross and the symbol of the Eucharistic Congress in 1932. If this is the case, Sr Concepta's design predates this motif by a decade. The crosses are similar in that they are made up of four arms equal in length.



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A medieval cross pattée, a type of Christian cross which has narrow arms at the centre that often flare in a curve or straight line shape to be broader at the perimeter, features as a motif behind the statue of the Sacred Heart and also on the window surrounds. The crosses and their interlacing

tracery behind the statue were a later elaboration of the wall design.

The exterior entrance to the oratory was originally surmounted by a simple stone Celtic cross. The cross later fell from its perch above the doorway and lay in the long grass below for a period. It was missing by the time the Office of Public Works were working on the outer casing for the oratory during the late 1990s so space was not factored in to allow for its return. The cross was subsequently located in the convent graveyard.



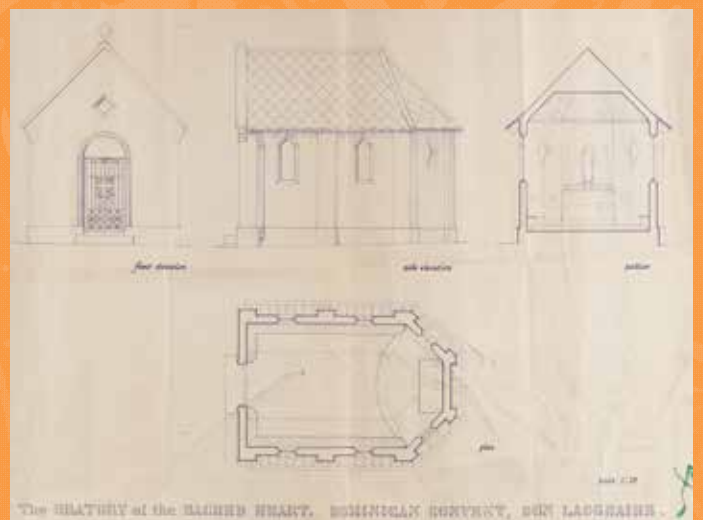
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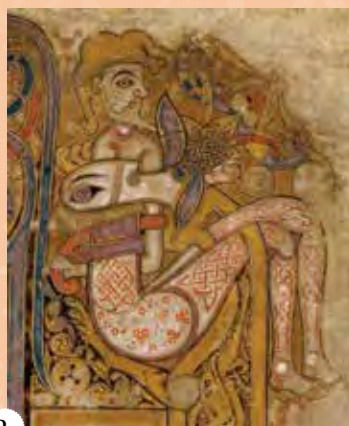
INSPIRATION FROM THE BOOK OF KELLS

Both Sr Concepta and her father were profoundly influenced by the imagery they saw in the Book of Kells. Father and daughter studied the manuscript closely and it informed and inspired their work throughout their lives.



Sr Concepta was fascinated with the lives and art of early Irish monks. She identified with the idea of art as devotion to God and applied this to her own work.

While the decorative artwork in the oratory is Sr Concepta's own original design, it draws on the spirit of the Book of Kells in addition to her father's interpretation of the art of illumination. Sr Concepta merged her deep faith with her artistic talents, creating a unique and sacred three-dimensional illuminated space dedicated to prayer and meditation.



2

The most evident reference to the Book of Kells is found on the wall below the main cross symbols. Two seated stylised monks with long beards wrestle with a monster. Each monk grasps the creature's tongue in one hand while holding his beard with the other. When the beards of the monks who illuminated manuscripts grew long, they would twist them over their shoulder to prevent them from smudging the work.



3

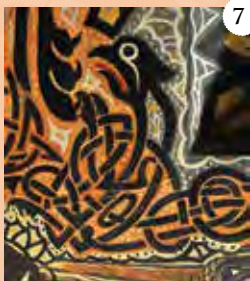
The monk in this image is preparing to commence work and, to prevent errors from creeping into the word of the gospels, he symbolically silences the false tongue that tells lies. Interestingly, the beards of Sr Concepta's monks are shaped as if a musical symbol. This slight modification may be a playful reference to her work as a music teacher.



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A beardless man with long, flowing blonde hair, said to be St Kevin, is also inspired by imagery from the Book of Kells.



Triskeles, including examples with three spinning men and Celtic patterning, are also inspired by the Book of Kells. These reinforce the religious concept of the power of three: the ancient Celtic view of the tripartite form of the world - land, sea, sky; the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as well as birth, death and resurrection.



THE SPLENDOUR OF ALL LIVING THINGS

The oratory features a wide array of fantastic creatures and monstrous beasts. The medieval monastic scribes sought to represent all living things in their work, and serpents, lizards and elongated and interlaced birds are found throughout their manuscripts. Emulating their creativity but injecting her own distinctive style, Sr Concepta used the natural forms of quadrupeds, fish, reptiles, birds and men combined in a zoomorphic manner. These figures appear as three distinct bands on the walls.

The lowest level is dominated by dull browns and muted earthen colours, depicting recognisable and silent creatures associated with the ground – wriggling snakes, worms, lizards – possibly encouraging sombre thoughts of mortality albeit with friendly playful faces for children to enjoy.



The colours brighten as the eye rises. Here men and beasts are entwined in the central band of sumptuous Celtic interlaced decorations, representing the world of humankind.



As the eye rises to the frieze, birds of the air create a cacophony of avian splendour. There is a sense of vibrancy and noise in this flock - squawking, singing, biting and calling – as they

roost and stretch. The distinctive Lynch Studio bird is included here, a hybrid kingfisher-phoenix-pelican painted in magnificent red, green and golden hues.



In amongst the birds and directly above the altar is a singular quadruped, with small fin, which may symbolise the resurrected Christ in the iconographical form of a crouched cat with his head looking over his shoulder.



Another unique creature is found on the opposite east-facing wall, the traditional direction a Christian burial faces. It is a grotesque giant earthworm-like monster with tentacles spreading out on each side. These eventually transform into two glorious phoenix-like birds above the entrance door. It has been noted that these may represent resurrection and triumph over death, a symbol of eternal life for the fallen soldiers of the Great War.



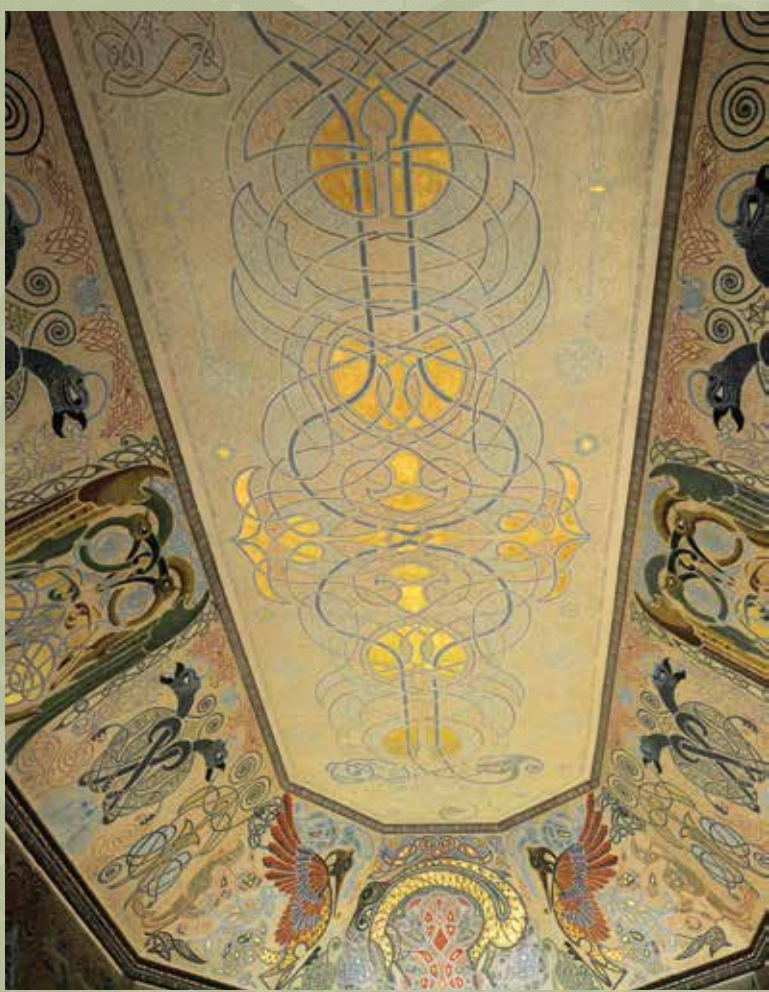
1. The Lynch Studio bird, a hybrid kingfisher-phoenix-pelican, in frieze below ceiling and directly above altar.
2. Frieze below the ceiling and directly above the altar portraying a zoomorphic quadruped flanked by kingfisher-phoenix-pelican hybrids.
3. Cheerful, friendly-looking creatures of the earth at lower level of oratory.
4. Interlaced bird design, with biting detail, on wall at side of altar.
5. Giant earthworm-like monster with flanking hybrid kingfisher-phoenix-pelicans, facing outwards, above the entrance to the oratory.





FINISHING TOUCHES

Sr Concepta worked for sixteen years on her scheme of decoration in the oratory. For eleven of those years, she suffered from serious ill-health. Eventually she had to suspend the decoration of the ceiling design that she had first sketched out in 1921 as she was unable to mount the ladder to the plank she lay on to work. Nonetheless the unfinished ceiling displays a graceful arrangement of linear decoration evoking the heavenly light of the next world. It also provides an insight into her method and how she developed her designs elsewhere in the oratory.



Even though she was unwell, Sr Concepta was determined to keep going for as long as she could and at times she asked her pupils and fellow sisters to help guide her brushstrokes. One of the last features she added to the oratory was a small medallion portrait of the Little Flower, St Thérèse of Lisieux, to whom she was particularly devoted.



After Sr Concepta died in 1939, Sr Theodora was charged with taking care of the oratory before her transfer to the Dominican Convent in Sutton. With help from her sixth year pupils, she designed and created a carpet for the altar which picked out the cross pattée motif on the walls.



Sr Theodora also arranged to replace the plain cement floor, which had been covered with cardinal red polish, with a parquet floor modelled on the pattern found on St Patrick's Bell.

A decorated board, maintained by Sr Concepta, remains attached to the back of the entrance doors. It lists those who helped support the decoration of the oratory with contributions and offerings. Sr Frances Lally continued the entries in later years.



She also kept the building clean and opened the doors daily to air the small space. Sr Frances promoted the oratory and facilitated numerous visitors to the building including Professor Etienne Rynne. He equated the oratory with the Ardagh Chalice and other Celtic masterworks in the National Museum, and together with Sr Frances, he promoted the building and brought a wider appreciation of this hidden gem of Celtic revival art.

Literature on St Thérèse of Lisieux, sent to Sr Concepta by Pauline, sister of Thérèse, in 1912 (dlr Local Studies)





IN MEMORY OF WAR

When a statue of the Sacred Heart was placed in the small plain oratory of St Mary's Dominican Convent, Kingstown in 1919, it became the centrepiece to a unique memorial, commemorating the young men from Kingstown who died during the Great War. Sr Concepta had taught art and music to many of these men when they attended the Dominican school as young boys. She sang songs with them and they played the gazoo in her music classes.

The oratory performs a sublimated act of memorial. Its dedication to the Sacred Heart offered a neutral way of recognising a great loss without getting mired in the political implications of memorial.

The horror and devastation of the First World War was on a scale never seen before. Over 210,000 Irishmen served in the war with casualties in the region of 50,000. It has been calculated that some 490 men from the wider Kingstown area died in the conflict. The war transformed the Irish political landscape and while the implementation of the Home Rule Act of September 1914 had been suspended until the end of hostilities, the



Irish relationship with Britain and the hopes for the small nations of Europe were raised by the call to arms.

Over the next four years, the Western Front, stretching south from Belgium, through France and into Germany became the main theatre of fighting. Between 1914 and 1918 almost 9 million men were mobilised in the armed forces of Britain and Ireland.



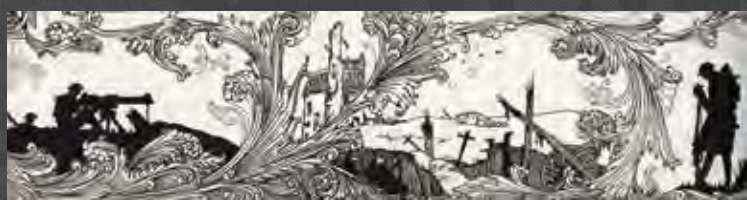
James Connolly, the socialist revolutionary, said that employment opportunities were so bad in Ireland that men had no choice but to enlist. It was, he asserted, 'economic conscription'. An unskilled worker might more than double his pay by joining up, but as German writer Ernst Jünger noted, the work for the 'day labourers of death' could be precarious. The labour in the trenches was also casual; employment in the job of death could come to an untimely end all too suddenly and too frequently.

Kingstown soldiers and sailors entered many branches of the services including The Irish Guards, the Royal Irish Fusiliers, the 7th (South Irish Horse), Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, Royal Navy Reserve and the Merchant Marine. As Kingstown was a port town, many of the men found work at sea and later joined the Royal Navy.



IN MEMORIAM

Soldiers and sailors from Kingstown entered many branches of the armed services during the First World War. The Irish Guards, the Royal Irish Fusiliers, the 7th (South Irish Horse), Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, Royal Navy Reserve, and the Merchant Marine. The following list is a selection of men from the streets around St Mary's Dominican Convent who were lost in the conflict:



WILLIAM JOHN BRENNAN

Service No.: --

Death of death: 10 October 1918, sinking of the RMS Leinster

Age: 35 **Rank:** Seaman

Regiment: Mercantile Marine

Unit: R.M.S. Leinster

Cemetery: Tower Hill Memorial

The son of Richard and Fanny Brennan; husband of Anne Brennan (nee Kinch) of 135 Lower George's Street. Born at Kingstown

CHRISTOPHER DARCY

Service No.: 10184

The son of Patrick and Annie Darcy, 8 Convent Road, Kingstown

Death of death: 3 September 1914

Age: 23 **Rank:** Lance Corporal

Regiment: Royal Dublin Fusiliers

Unit: 2nd Battalion

Cemetery: Bethencourt Communal Cemetery, France

JOHN HOBBS

Service No.: 25376

The son of James and Matilda Hobbs of 3 Convent Terrace, Kingstown

Death of death: 21 March 1918, killed in action

Age: 22 **Rank:** Private

Regiment: Royal Irish Regiment

Unit: 7th (South Irish Horse) Battalion, No. 1862

Cemetery: Pozieres Memorial in France

JAMES KAVANAGH

Service No.: 8640 A (Po)

His mother lived at 17 Convent Terrace, Kingstown

Death of death: 8 January 1917, killed as a direct result of enemy action, body not recovered

Age: 29 **Rank:** Seaman

Regiment: R.N.R.

Unit: S.S. Androni

Cemetery:



JAMES KELLY

Service No.: 1888

The son of Peter and Mary Kelly of 34 Convent Road
Death of death: 14 September 1914, killed in action during the Battle of Aisne

Age: 30 **Rank:** Private

Regiment: Irish Guards

Unit: No. 5 Company, 1st Battalion

Cemetery: La Ferte-Sous-Jouarre Memorial in France

THOMAS KELLY

Service No.: 1889

Another son of Peter and Mary Kelly of 34 Convent Road; husband of Mary A. Kelly of 18 Cross Avenue, Kingstown. His brother James was killed in September, and Thomas in November leaving a wife Mary on Cross Avenue. In later years, Mary, widowed ever since the First World War, had only a cigar case with Thomas' gun carriage embossed on the lid by which to remember her husband. Thomas died in the First Battle of Ypres and his grave and memorial is in Poperinghe Old Military Cemetery in Belgium

Death of death: 9 November 1914

Age: 32 **Rank:** Private

Regiment: Irish Guards

Unit: 1st Battalion

Cemetery: Poperinghe Old Military Cemetery in Belgium

HENRY LONGMORE

Service No.: -

Death of death: 10 October 1918, Sinking of the RMS Leinster

The son of Thomas and Margaret Longmore; husband of Mary Longmore (nee Dondall) of 50 Convent Road, Kingstown

Age: 32 **Rank:** Able Seaman

Regiment: Mercantile Marine

Unit: RMS Leinster

Cemetery: Tower Hill Memorial

WILLIAM TRESTON

Service No.: --

The son of later John and Mary Jane Treston; husband of Elizabeth Treston (nee Archbold), of 5 Convent Road, Kingstown

Death of death: 20 February 1918

Age: 48 **Rank:** Greaser

Regiment: Mercantile Marine

Unit: S.S. Huntsmoor

Cemetery: Tower Hill Memorial



STATUE OF THE SACRED HEART





PEACE GARDEN

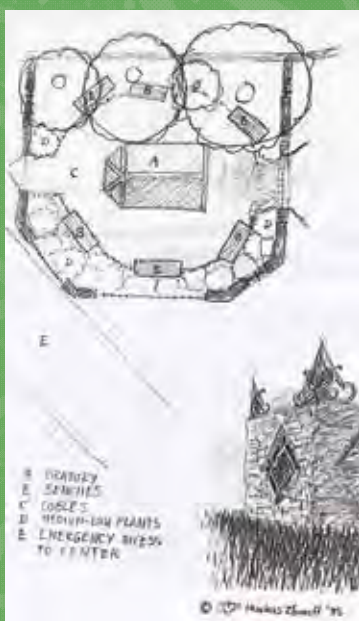
In my opinion, the idea of a Peace Garden adjacent to the oratory is an excellent one... It certainly is consistent with the idea that the oratory was built in 1919 in commemoration of the end of the First War, and with the fact that Sr Concepta Lynch died in the year of the beginning of the Second World War. A flower garden, perhaps a rose garden which would allow colour from nature throughout the year would be a lovely solution.

Letter from Brian P. Kennedy, Assistant Director, National Gallery of Ireland to Veronica Heywood, dated 1 May 1997



1

The thinking behind the Peace Garden was to create an outside space for the enjoyment of all members of the local community in Dún Laoghaire. According to Veronica Heywood, the Peace Garden would 'complement the very ethos of the oratory'. Along with the new housing in the area and the children's playground next door to the oratory, the Peace Garden would be 'an ideal living, leisure and spiritual environment for all'.



3



4

The concept for the garden was developed by the German artist Markus Thonett, a 3D artist working with Dún Laoghaire Arts Centre and formerly of the local College of Art and Design. He completed his designs in 1995. The garden was to be planted with a Celtic tree alphabet, the word 'peace' spelled out as Síocháin created from different plants and shrubs. In Ogham lettering, the Willow is Saille or the letter 'S', Yew is Iodhadh or letter 'I' and so on, the plants a living embodiment of the textual resonance.



2

In recent years, the garden became somewhat overgrown and in autumn 2019, dlr Parks restored it to bring out the original design and concept behind the Peace Garden.





THE WAR EFFORT IN KINGSTOWN

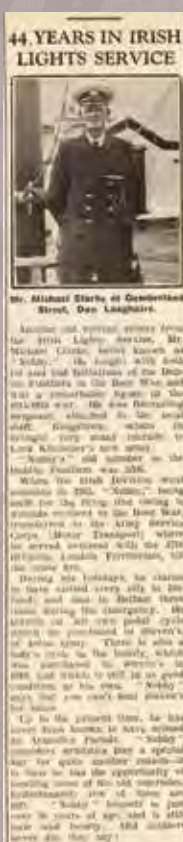
Extraordinary efforts in support of the British war effort were made on the home front. Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) played an important role in the Irish war effort. Kingstown maintained a free refreshment buffet for travelling military personnel from March 1915 to October 1919, and also operated a Wounded Soldiers' reception committee.

on the first anniversary of the war. The new training grounds of this Company of the 5th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers were opened later at Tivoli Fields in Kingstown.

The Easter Rising came as a general surprise in 1916 and the British Army took over the town as a base of operation. In the final weeks of the war, the town was hit by an event which resulted in the greatest ever loss of life in the Irish Sea. On 10 October 1918, the RMS *Leinster* mail-boat was torpedoed, a devastating tragedy for the town.



On Monday 2 August 1915, a large recruitment meeting was held at Victoria Wharf in Kingstown. The hope was expressed that the 'Kingstown and South Dublin Company would soon be enlarged into a battalion. Kingstown had already sent 900 men into the ranks, but it would send more'. Michael 'Nobby' Clarke was a recruiting sergeant in Kingstown at that time. Lieutenant Tom Kettle, a former nationalist MP and Professor of National Economics at University College Dublin, serving with the 16th Division spoke at this meeting



DIVIDED LOYALTIES

The end of the war was a time of divided loyalties. In 1919, the War of Independence began and Kingstown became involved in the fight for Irish independence. The impoverished township council took the stand of changing the name of Kingstown to the original Irish name of Dún Laoghaire in 1920.

By the early 1920s, as Sr Concepta was working on the oratory, the great mass of Irishmen who had served in the First World War were being conveniently forgotten in a sort of Irish 'national amnesia'. Their history and their experiences did not fit in with either the Republican legacy of southern Ireland or the Unionist tradition of the North. However, they were quietly and faithfully remembered in the small oratory, tucked away safely in the grounds of St Mary's Dominican Convent.