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"Transitioning" Reflections

Submitted by: Sisters Annmary Andrews, Bernadette Doherty, Lois Greene, Miriam Martin and Sandy Butler

Journey to Dominica During the Pandemic

- Sr Annmary Andrews

I went to India for my mother's death anniversary in the month of March 2020, combining it with my home holidays. The day after I reached home, the lock-down started in Kerala. Little did I know that I would be held up at home for one and a half years! I must say that the pandemic changed all my plans. In spite of all that was happening, I felt called to return to Dominica to continue the mission entrusted to me.

During my stay at home there were different suggestions from different people about what I should do and how I should go about my stay, travel etc. I kept listening to my own heart and decided to do what felt right deep within me, given the circumstances I was placed in. At the same time, I kept communicating with my companion, Mary Therese in Dominica and the Leadership Team in Newfoundland.



The travel agents in Kerala and Chennai told me that since I already had the visa for the USA, I would easily get it renewed. So, in the hope of renewing my visa I went to Chennai. Very soon the agents realised that my US visa could not be renewed as it was applied for from Zambia. I must say I am deeply grateful to the Leadership Team of South India Unit and all my dear Sisters in Chennai for their hospitality, love and care during my stay with them.

While in Kerala both the US and Canadian visa's of mine expired and the renewal date for my work permit in Dominica was coming up. So, I contacted the secretary of the

Bishop in Roseau to do the needful. The work permit was renewed with no hassle, and I felt relieved. As I was waiting, I was given the suggestion to take a different route to Dominica that was via Delhi, Paris, St Maarten and Dominica. This meant that I had to apply for a Schengen visa. So, I travelled to Delhi. Sr Lizzy and the team and all the Sisters in the North India Unit went out of their way to make my stay comfortable and enjoyable.

With the help of an agent, I managed to get my Schengen visa and the ticket was finalised for 9 September. The Sisters from Prernalaya community accompanied me to the airport. When I went to check-in, I realised that the agent had not gotten all the necessary documents for my travel. I was heartbroken and felt let down by the agent. I contacted the Sisters and they came back to pick me up around 2am. I felt very sorry for them. I felt like contacting another agent yet deep inside me something said that I should give him another chance. This time the agent promised me that he would do everything correctly. So, a second time the agent applied for the Schengen visa and the ticket was finalised for 2 October. This time, because of my last experience, I was anxious even though all the documents were in place. The Sisters again accompanied me to the airport and told me that they would wait till I was checked in. At the check-in counter in Delhi I was kept a very long time, being told that I didn't have a valid document to travel to Dominica. I tried to call the Bishop but could not get him. The man at the counter went onto Google and found out that Indians visiting Dominica do not need a visa, they can get one on arrival to the Island. So, he let me check-in my baggage. I really wondered what God was really asking of me?

The flight to Paris was delayed for 3 hours so I was anxious again about my connecting flights. In Paris the staff, after going through all my documents, with much difficulty allowed me to check-in. I was the last passenger, so I went down to the basement to board the plane. When I reached the gate everything was closed and I could not see the plane outside. I could not help but cry loudly. Hearing my cry, one of the staff came and helped me to board the plane. When the plane landed in St Maarten's airport, I felt relieved and at home when I saw the people at the airport. I said to myself thank goodness at last I was on the Caribbean Islands. At the boarding gate for Dominica I asked the staff about my suitcase and they told me that all the luggage will be loaded onto the plane. So along with 12 others I boarded the plane to Dominica.

As we left St Maarten the visibility was very poor, and the plane started shaking as there was turbulence in the air. People started crying and the co-pilot asked us to secure our seat belts as they were finding it difficult to manage the flight. Soon we landed on an island and I was overjoyed thinking it was Dominica. Very soon we came to realise that the situation was not so good. The staff called all the people going to Dominica together and collected all our baggage tags from us and we were asked to follow them without giving any explanations. After a long procedure of going through immigration and the security check, we were told that we would have to stay in a hotel in Guadalupe for the night and our next flight to Dominica would be the following day at 3pm. At the baggage collection area, I realised that my bag was missing. I was once again disturbed and asked myself what was God really asking of me?

We were then taken to a hotel named Arawak. The stay at the hotel was a welcome one. The lady who was driving us to and from the airport told us that more than a hundred and fifty thousand people died of Covid on the island and that she lost her own mother during that time. That made me think how little I knew of the struggles and challenges of the people around me. I was made to realise that people have greater problems than I have. When I looked at myself, I felt I received so much prayer, best wishes and support as I started my journey from my home, people and the Sisters. Among the 13 of us travelling to Dominica, there were ladies who were single mothers worried about their children back home, one man who was from Portugal, presently staying in the Bahamas, was visiting his girlfriend in Dominica. So, I said to myself, there are people who are suffering much more than I am. I wondered what and how would they be praying to God? How do they discern about what God really wants them to do and be?

When I reached the airport in Dominica on the third evening, I was happy that the antigen test was negative and that Mr Joey, a very close friend of the Sisters in NL was waiting outside for me to take me home. The airport staff too were very helpful in writing out a complaint for my missing bag. As I reached my house in Salisbury, I felt very happy that at last I was home. The next day I found myself feeling lost and my mind was blank. When the project team contacted me, I told them exactly how I was feeling. They told me to take a few days break and after that they would update me on the project. On the fourth morning Mr Joey came shouting and calling out to me saying "India"! He enquired about what I immediately needed. He went and got a sim card for my phone, made sure that there was enough food, prepared for me by Joey's partner with the direction given by Sr Mary Therese. A neighbour came late in the evening to find out if I needed any food or any other help. I thanked God for all the people around me.



I spent the whole day in quiet, listening to my own heart, as I sat and watched the waves lashing out on the shore, the gentle rain that was falling, the trees swaying in the wind and the setting sun. I thanked God for the day. When it got dark, I remembered my Canadian companions who were with me when I first arrived in Dominica. In remembrance of our time together, I prepared an Indian steak and ate it with a glass of wine.

The supper was so meaningful to me and I really enjoyed recalling that experience I had with Marie and Jean. With thanksgiving in my heart, I had my steak and wine.

I was reminded of what Jesus did during the last supper with his disciples. The meal was such a memorable one for them that they continued to do it in remembrance of Jesus. I wondered what their feelings would have been then. I experienced so much joy and peace at the end of the day. There was a card from Lois which showed a caterpillar turning into a butterfly. I must say I feel like a butterfly today as I start my life and mission back in Dominica. A rainbow appeared this morning to welcome me back to Dominica. I remember that in 2018 when I came here along with Betty Rae, a rainbow had appeared in the sky on my first day in Salisbury. A rainbow assuring me of hope, colours, love and peace for my journey through life.



Transitioning from NL, Canada across the Big Pond with Three Cases!

- Sr Bernadette Doherty

In December 2020, I packed three cases and bid a fond farewell to all in Newfoundland, having spent the last four years as part of our NL Leadership Team, including being Team link with our Motherhouse community, with our myriad cups of tea and celebrations!

Toronto airport was low in travellers with very few flights but there was one to Dublin! I arrived in Dublin, was picked up by my sister and quarantined in her home...this time led up to Christmas. The little ones were coming to Grandma's for Christmas and Aoibhe's big problem; *we must write to Santa and tell him we will not be in Kilkenny; we will be at Grandma's and he can leave the presents there and we need a map for him!* Santa needed a new map for me too! Happily he has international GPS!!



On 3 January I was driven to Lucan, *three cases* deposited on the doorstep and a quick turnaround for home, no stopping enroute by the Gardai! In Lucan I was welcomed by my new community of four, Josephine I had known from the England Unit before she went to work in Zambia. Then I was given a tour of the house. In 2020 the date for Lucan to be refurbished kept being pushed back, 2021 was no different. We were to leave for Bagenalstown in May, packing to be completed and left ready for the removal trucks. During this time, we received lots of support from the CLT and NL Unit.



Two community members left for Bagenalstown, Co Carlow in June with the first truck. More packing to complete! The final truck left at the beginning of August, leaving the house totally empty. The Mission House became a building site.

Immediately the roofers were in, no time to spare! What beautiful Summer weather for re-roofing! Most of the work took place inside the house during the following months.

Lucan community settled in Bagenalstown. In September, Joan officially joined our community, Josephine James transferred to Blanchardstown, Josephine Murphy (NE Unit) and Thainese Anthony (India) continued their Mission House ministry. As the weeks went by our numbers increased for a while. We welcomed two new Sisters from Zambia - Sheila and Angela, two from Latin America - Regina and Catherine with her sister Anne who were with us from the beginning of the year. In October, Mary from the US Unit came to stay with us.

Now it is time for picking, peeling and storing apples, pears and plums. It is amazing what comes to mind when you sit at the kitchen table peeling apples!



Transition is the in word for everyone here in the Mission House and we are not finished yet. We hope to move back to Lucan in the Summer of 2022. By then my *three cases* may have become four!

Cead Míle Fáilte!

Transitioning from NL to Nano Nagle Birthplace

- Sr Lois Greene



I moved to Nano Nagle Birthplace from the Newfoundland and Labrador Unit at the end of October 2020 in the height of Covid-19 and in some ways, I have been in isolation ever since. The community situation is a blessing and most days I appreciate the space around me, cognizant of Nano's spirit and remember those many people on our planet who are in refugee camps or crowded cities where real isolation is an impossibility.

So far, I have much more regular time to reflect, to read what I often planned to read and did not reach on and to prepare classes for virtual audiences.

Since Christmas we have done *Pondering*, based on the writings of Jan Richardson, *Mary of Nazareth, Painting the Stars* (a programme on 'Science, Religion and an Evolving Faith') and currently, we have just begun the *SDGs and Laudato Si'*. This last one is being co-hosted by Claire Genest from NL, a doctoral candidate in Global Development at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. There are about twenty-five people who are availing of the opportunity to partake in our sessions presently. They are a diversified group and that makes for spirited conversation. Making connections is the most difficult part as obviously not everyone looks for such information on the website.



Lois with exchange students on site from Italy



Last month my niece and her family from Dublin, who for most of my time here have been restricted to travel within their county, visited before school opened and we spent a day in Kinsale. To be near the salt water was "a taste (and smell) of heaven", for which I was most grateful. With the exception of one mission, I have lived next to the sea all my life and some days I am missing the ocean! If I cannot have the ocean I have the River Blackwater, and on really

good days, an email from home!

Transitioning - Letting Go and Welcoming the New

- Sr Miriam Martin

Transitions! Here, in this northern hemisphere we are either welcoming or reluctantly acknowledging that Summer is past and will give way to the brilliance of Autumn which will in turn pass to Winter's cold. The whole of creation, including ourselves, sense this changing season.





I am feeling that transition experience in another way as in June I completed nearly twenty-seven wonderful years of ministry as a university professor at Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Canada. I have been embracing a sabbatical year slowly and yet with joy and anticipation.

An exciting aspect that continues for me is the joint venture between the Providence School of Transformative Leadership and Spirituality through Saint Paul University and our Union of Presentation Sisters. We have just completed our first cohort of the *Presentation Sisters Transformative Servant Leadership Program* and are preparing to begin a second cohort with twenty new Sisters.

What a wonderful experience of mutual learning that has been and will be.

There is a complex energy in transitions, both of letting go and welcoming the new. This is such a deep and organic part of the paschal mystery lived out in every living thing. So let us let go and embrace what is emerging for us in this intricate and beautiful season.



Transition Time - New Jersey, USA to Newfoundland, Canada

- Sr Sandy Butler



Leave-taking...
Heart strings bursting...
Sadness, joy, gratitude for all that has been,
anxiety around the unknown,
trusting in God's providential care.
Saying goodbyes to amazing 'wounded healers'...
companions on the journey... "till we meet again".

Holding on to last minute snuggles with four-legged
fur friends...Teea, Emma, Bailey...
worthy of mention...
God's wonderful threesome
who brought delight to my days.



Home-coming...

The Breath of God gently surrounding me...

whispering, caressing, holding,
wrapping me round in love...steading me.

Becoming more grounded.



The smells of 'home' rooting me...the evergreens,
the salt air, freshly mown grass,
'jigs dinner', the clay from the vegetable gardens.

Familiar sounds...like music to my soul...
morning birds, wind in the trees,
the steady rhythmic sound of wood being sawed,
neighbour calling to neighbour.

Back home with community, family, friends...
island people... people with welcoming hearts,
steady people, salt of the earth people.

Amid great change...a deep sense of all will be well.

How can it not be?

The Universe holds all.



A Christmas Reflection - India North Unit

- Sr Shalini Mulackal

Sophia put her hand on her growing belly. She felt the movement of her little babe. She closed her eyes and made a small prayer for its safety and well-being...just a few weeks more and she will have the joy of seeing her babe...her hands longed to hold, to embrace, to feel the softness of the new-born...Will the child be a girl or a boy? That thought did not bother Sophia much. She just longed for the baby to come into this world.

Since the Corona pandemic swept its sway, life drastically changed for Sophia. She lost her parents and her father-in-law due to the deadly virus. Being poor they could not afford to take them to

private hospitals. The nearby Government hospitals did not have enough beds or oxygen. Even now she dreads to think about her parents' sudden departure. She did not even have the consolation of seeing their faces for the last time.

Lawrence, her husband lost his job during the lock down. He was employed in a small company. The company has not yet reopened. They had been borrowing some money to pay the rent of their one room dwelling. They were barely able to survive all these months by the free ration provided by the government, the occasional help that came from NGOs and other church organisations. Her two children Savio and Tina aged seven and five are out of school. They could not afford a smart phone for them to attend the online classes. Sophia took a deep breath as memories of the past rushed in like the flood waters.

A short time ago when Lawrence found a small job in another company, a sigh of relief came into their lives. But their joy did not last long. The unexpected heavy showers came flooding the little room they occupied. For days they were literally in the dirty water barely managing to keep them alive. God, when will this all end? Sophia's thoughts went heavenward for a moment. Christmas will soon be here. Suddenly Sophia remembered her childhood days. Christmas was very special. She remembered how she enjoyed going for the midnight Mass with a new dress, kissing baby Jesus, putting one rupee coin in the box and enjoying a lot of special sweets.

Sophia's thoughts switched over to Savio and Tina. Will I be able to give them that joy which I had during Christmas? She mused within. Even the little money Lawrence brings home is not enough to pay back the debt and the day-to-day expenses of the house. With the unexpected flooding, even the little amount of belongings they had were destroyed. They have to slowly purchase each item on a priority basis. Sophia could not see any possibility of buying new clothes for her children or making a few sweets at home. Perhaps the parish may arrange for a piece of cake after Mass and they can at least taste the Christmas cake.



She thought of Mary going to Bethlehem with Joseph. Oh how Mary managed that journey with her full term pregnancy she wondered. She felt sad that Mary did not have any place to give birth to Jesus. She would have loved to give her a place in her home even though it is so tiny. But Mary would have forgotten all her sufferings and pains once she took the new-born in her hands and looked into his tiny eyes trying to open. Suddenly Sophia felt the presence of someone. She looked all around...She felt a sudden closeness to the pregnant Mary. An unexpected excitement enveloped her. For a brief moment she forgot all her struggles and anxiety. She felt Mary standing in front of her hut looking for a place to give birth. Sophia could not believe her eyes...she invited Mary to come in. There is room in her hut and heart for Mary and Jesus. God's promises are ever new and fresh, thought Sophia as Mary walked inside carrying Jesus in her womb. An unspeakable joy filled Sophia's heart.

With the sound of her children coming back from play, Sophia returned to the harsh reality of her present as she heard them ask, "Amma, is there something to eat? We are hungry." Handing over a packet of biscuits which someone had given to her, Sophia continued to feel the presence of Mary

in her little hut carrying baby Jesus, just as she is carrying her third baby and eagerly longing for its birth.

The Migrant Crisis in Chile

- Submitted by Sr Mary Moloney, written by Solange Benedetti

The following article was written by Solange Benedetti, and translated by Sr Mary Moloney. Solange worked in Casa Nano Nagle in Alto Hospicio and has been a Friend of Nano for many years. Several years ago, she was invited by the Government of Michelle Bachelet to become the director of PRODEMU, a government organisation promoting women's rights.

In 2020, the Covid-19 Pandemic worsened the multidimensional crisis that Venezuelan society is experiencing, thereby increasing emigration. According to OAS, it is estimated that the number of migrants and refugees could be equivalent to 7,000,000 people internationally this year. According to information from the Jesuit Migrant Service, in 2020 4,226 Venezuelans entered Chile illegally. And so far in 2021, more than 13,000 have entered illegally, a figure that increases daily.



The conditions of vulnerability with which Venezuelans arrive and live in host countries are increasingly more critical and urgent action is needed. International experience gives us good examples to follow. In Brazil and Costa Rica, new care centres were opened for Venezuelan migrants and refugees, which provided assistance to people in vulnerable conditions. In Columbia, where nearly 1,000,000 have taken refuge, they are recognised as refugees.

The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has called for guaranteeing through fair and effective procedures, the recognition of refugee status for people who have a well-founded fear of persecution if they return to their country of origin or who consider that their life, integrity or personal freedom would be threatened due to the situation of violence, massive human rights violations and serious disturbances of public order, in the terms of the Cartagena Declaration of Refugees of 1984. In this sense, the countries receiving the migrants must rapidly strengthen and mobilize the staff and resources that are necessary to respond adequately and effectively to requests for asylum and complementary protection that are submitted.

Venezuelan migrants are protected by International Human Rights Law, international instruments ratified and that are in force in Chile, in accordance with article 5, paragraph 2 of the Constitution. Internationally they have been recognised as the second largest group in forced displacement, after Syria.

Migrants enter Chile through Colchane, a small town located 3,650 meters above sea level and with just 1,500 inhabitants. It does not have enough services to attend to all this flow of people, since in the town itself, they



do not have basic services such as electricity and water, nor hostels for overnight accommodation. In addition, this arrival of migrants coincided with restrictive measures established in response to the pandemic, and that delayed the transportation to Iquique, the regional capital.

Thus, a series of factors converged that caused the number of migrants circulating in Colchane to grow significantly, many of them without having a place to take refuge. So, they use the streets as a place of shelter until they find a way to travel to Iquique, the regional capital. To arrive in Iquique, they must travel more than 250km, a journey that they travel on foot or pay drivers who take advantage of the need and charge migrants a high price for this transfer. A logjam of immigrants exists in Iquique where due to sanitary requirements, they are stranded in street camps hoping to regularize their situation or raise the necessary money to continue traveling.

Thus, an atmosphere of high tension has been generated that has been accumulating in sectors of the resident population in Iquique. A march was organised on Saturday, September 25, with the main objective of demonstrating against irregular migration. This march took place the day after a massive eviction of immigrants from Plaza Brazil in Iquique, a place where the migrants had erected tents and had been living for several months. This operation was carried out by the Carabineros (Police) of Chile. There were clashes between the police, Iquique residents and migrants.

Those attending the march the following day arrived with flags and posters, made xenophobic threats, criticized immigration policy, pointed to a lack of measures by the central government and called for the resignation of the current presidential delegate. In addition, they requested the closure of borders. A group of those attending the march set fire to the tents and other belongings of the migrants and heart-rending images were broadcast on international media outlets.

Given the above, guarantees of minimum conditions of health, food, security and order are necessary, but especially Chile must guarantee the recognition of the principle of no return, declared in the Cartagena Convention. It is of the utmost importance that the authorities ensure the protection of the right to life; the physical and mental integrity of all people, without distinguishing between Chileans and foreigners.

Today, the migrants have received much support, mainly from civil organisations, who have been working in anonymity through a deployment of volunteers preparing and distributing food, medicine, payment for housing in hostels and shelters, buying bus tickets to continue their journey to families and friends who await them in other big cities. These are the people who have shown solidarity in the face of human pain without distinction of nationality or origin.

There is a humanitarian issue here that cannot be set aside, and everyone's action is needed. The country has to be able to solve in a serious and efficient way the issue of migrants who seek opportunities and assure that they are given dignified treatment, so that they can have job opportunities and the right to health and education.

The Postulator's Diary

- Submitted by Sr Anne Lyons

Greetings once again from Rome. It's been some time since I have been in touch with you all, so allow me to offer an update. Covid-19 impacted on all our lives. My plans for study and attendance for the Studium 2020-2021 were put on hold as I returned to Ireland. Over that period, I was busily engaged promoting Nano Nagle through a variety of invitations, requests for interviews and engagements, mainly online; a consequence of the publication of the Booklet: *Nano Nagle - A Life Lived on the Razor's Edge*.

September Return to Rome

I returned to Rome in early September to begin again! Initially I had accommodation with the Teatini Fathers, at Piazza Vidoni. However, this proved short-lived and once again I was in search of a more 'permanent' place to live and to study. I must honestly say that Divine Providence provided me with the best of accommodation for now, at the Villa Irlanda, on the grounds of the Irish College in Rome.

The early weeks of September was a busy time: a few visits to the Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi. I am now officially named as Postulator for the Congregation. The Vatican Bank was another interesting place to visit. As I received an invitation as the Postulator for our Congregation to attend the Golden Jubilee Mass for Cardinal Semeraro, the cardinal for the Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi. I saw this as an opportunity to meet up with other Postulators, but the opportunity didn't arise.



Birth of the School of Higher Formation in the Causes of Saints



The most challenging event in September was attending the required interview at the Lateran University on 18 September. In mid-July 2021, I received news that a school of higher education by the Vatican dicastery and the Lateran University would soon begin! Highlighted as a School of Higher Formation in the Causes of the Saints, it would replace the previous Stadium course, which was instituted in 1984. The curricular time to obtain the 'Diploma of Specialization in the Causes of Saints' will be two

academic years ordered in four semesters. The new course promotes the study of Theology, Church History, Canon Law and the Theological-Juridical Foundation of Canonized Holiness. It includes a total of 19 courses, a written essay and a final exam. A daunting scenario for any Postulator. The first year's focus consists of introductory subjects to Theology, Church History and Canon Law, while the second year will be entirely dedicated to the specific subjects concerning the causes of saints and practical exercises.

As you can appreciate dear reader, it was with some trepidation that I attended the required interview at the Lateran University, my transcripts in hand. Fortunately, I received an exemption for 3 of the 8 required courses for year 1. My study began on 4 October 2021. Suffice to say that there is no shortage of challenges as the Lateran University lectures conducts all areas of study in Italian. Oh, to have the gift of tongues! My level of the Italian language for ordinary every-day communication leaves a lot to be desired and now I am faced with the added challenge of faithfully turning up for lectures but lacking totally in the required proficiency! I sit there trying to look intelligent and am delighted when I grasp a phrase or the occasional word or two! Google Translate has become my 'best friend' of late. My modus operandi now is to translate texts into English and then return to the Italian! Exams will be in Italian! Prayers are most welcome! I continue daily to

apply myself to the study of the language online. Meanwhile, the beauty and history of Rome are on hold for now, until I get some handle on my present workload!

God Turns up Disguised as People

In all this reality, I try to pay attention to notice how God is providing for me. Nano was strong on Divine Providence at work in her life and since September I have noted plenty of such moments of Divine Providence. God has turned up through unexpected kindnesses and surprised encounters with significant people. In these situations, I have noted how interested people are as to why I am here and who is this woman, Nano Nagle! So, whatever about the study side of things, the opportunity to make Nano Nagle known doesn't pass me by!



Pope Francis Visits the Lateran



October 7th was a red-letter day for the Lateran University. Pope Francis, in the company of Patriarch Bartholomew and a member of UNCHR addressed the student body. A new chair of study 'Ecologia e Ambiente' – a new degree course dedicated to our Common Home was launched. I was fortunate to be in the Aula Magna and not too far away from Pope Francis. However, due to his recent surgery, Pope Francis entered from the side-entrance. There was no opportunity for the student body to meet him.

I had secretly nurtured the hope that I might just be at the right location should Pope Francis enter through the doors of the Aula. To this end, I'd discreetly carried the humble booklet published last year on Nano. My hope was that it would serve as a reminder to him of October 2013 when he had declared her Venerable.

However, that would not be. But Divine Providence stepped in once again. I was most fortunate to meet with Cardinal Tagle. He assured me that he would personally deliver the humble booklet to Pope Francis. A fortunate encounter indeed.



Bishop Fintan Gavin

Another 'unexpected' encounter was with Bishop Fintan Gavin, Bishop of Cork and Ross, here at the Irish College. We had a very interesting conversation. He shared how since taking on his new role, he has grown in his knowledge and appreciation for Nano Nagle, the woman she was, her legacy and the vision she inspired in so many hearts. He assured me of his help in any way he can be of service!

Two Wings

You will recall in an earlier communication, I used the image of a bird, who to fly needs both wings. You are one very important wing and I need all your help! I reach out to you once again to continue

the great work that you are all doing in the various parts of the world in promoting devotion and making Nano Nagle known and loved.

Recently I returned to resume my studies at the Lateran University after the death of my mother. Nano's words spring to mind these days: *the best works meet with the greatest crosses*. I am depending on the Lord and Nano to see me through this challenging passage of time and to keep me undaunted regarding the course demands.

Thank you for your interest and being with me on this journey. Together we carry the great work of beaming the lantern flame of Nano's courageous spirit throughout the world. Please do feel free to keep in touch with me with any news of favours or even a miracle. Remember, record keeping is always vital.

My email addresses are in the Congregation Address Book.



The Prayer Tree

- Submitted by Sr Elizabeth Maxwell



Having completed a tour of the 'Heart Aflame' Centre in Mount Saint Annes, visitors are invited to sit in a relaxation space and ponder on what they have learned about the story of Venerable Nano Nagle. They read of her dream to be of service in any part of the globe in saving souls. They marvel at her influence in laying the foundation of educational opportunity in

Ireland and throughout the known world by her followers in the 19th and 20th centuries. She was one woman, faithful to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in her life, whose influence is captured graphically on the charts showing foundations in Ireland and across the five continents from 1775 until this century.

Anne Scroope and Associates (four professional women) who designed the Centre thought it appropriate that visitors be encouraged to write a response, request a prayer, ask a question, make a comment, express thanksgiving to God for the blessings in their lives, before hanging them on the *Prayer Tree*. These are written on paper in the shape of coloured oak leaves and placed at the writers' discretion on its branches.



After some weeks these oak leaved prayers are gathered in a basket and brought to a celebration of the Eucharist in our Chapel where they are offered with the Prayers of the Faithful in response to the request. The prayers reflect the concerns of the visitors for physical and mental health, for success in examinations, for employment, for harmony in family relationships and cure of addictions. Many are prayers of thanksgiving for blessings in life, for the Presentation Sisters worldwide.

Others pray for vocations, for environmental protection, for wisdom in our leaders. Not all are in English, reflecting the nationality of the groups who come to visit. But God understands!

Responding to these requests for prayers in part of the ministry of Mount Saint Annes. For us who live and minister here, the oak leaves on the *Prayer Tree* keep us in touch with the reality of people's lives in a busy and demanding environment. 'Heart Aflame' Visitor Centre is not a commercial venture. It serves to remind all who walk through it that great things are accomplished by individuals who are responsive to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and that their good deeds live long after them.



Significant International Dates in January

There are many important dates throughout the month of January that hold both ecumenical and humanitarian importance. Read about them here.

4 January - World Braille Day



Even under normal circumstances, persons with disabilities – one billion people worldwide – are less likely to access health care, education, employment and to participate in the community. They are more likely to live in poverty, experience higher rates of violence, neglect and abuse and are among the most marginalized in any crisis-affected community. For the visually impaired, life under lockdown has posed several issues in terms of independence and isolation, especially for people who rely on the use of touch to communicate their needs and access information.

The pandemic has revealed how critically important it is to produce essential information in accessible formats, including Braille and audible formats. Otherwise, many persons with disabilities could face a higher risk of contamination due to a lack of access of guidelines and precautions to

protect and reduce the spreading of a pandemic. Covid-19 has also emphasised the need to intensify all activities related to digital accessibility to ensure digital inclusion of all people.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/braille-day>

24 January – International Day of Education

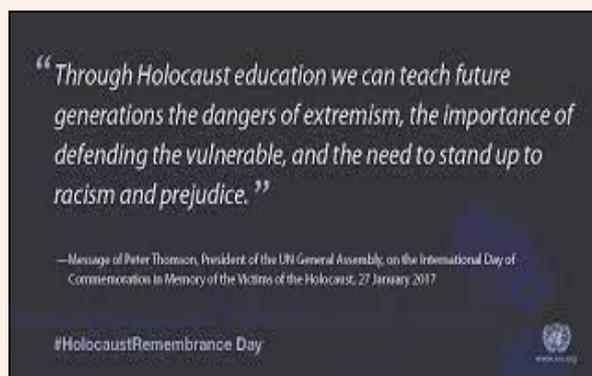


The International Education Day occurs in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic that led to a global learning disruption of unprecedented scale and severity. The closure of schools, universities and other learning institutions, as well as the interruption of many literacy and lifelong learning programmes, has affected the lives of 1.6 billion students in over 190 countries. As a new year begins, now is the time to step up collaboration and international solidarity to place education and lifelong learning at the centre of the recovery and the transformation towards more

inclusive, safe and sustainable societies. The right to education is enshrined in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The declaration calls for free and compulsory elementary education. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, goes further to stipulate that countries shall make higher education accessible to all. When it adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015, the international community recognised that education is essential for the success of all 17 of its goals. Sustainable Development Goal 4 in particular, aims to *ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all* by 2030.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/education-day>

27 January – International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust



United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/7 that established the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme, also designated 27 January as an annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust – observed with ceremonies and activities at United Nations Headquarters in New York and at United Nations offices around the world.

<https://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/observance/>

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