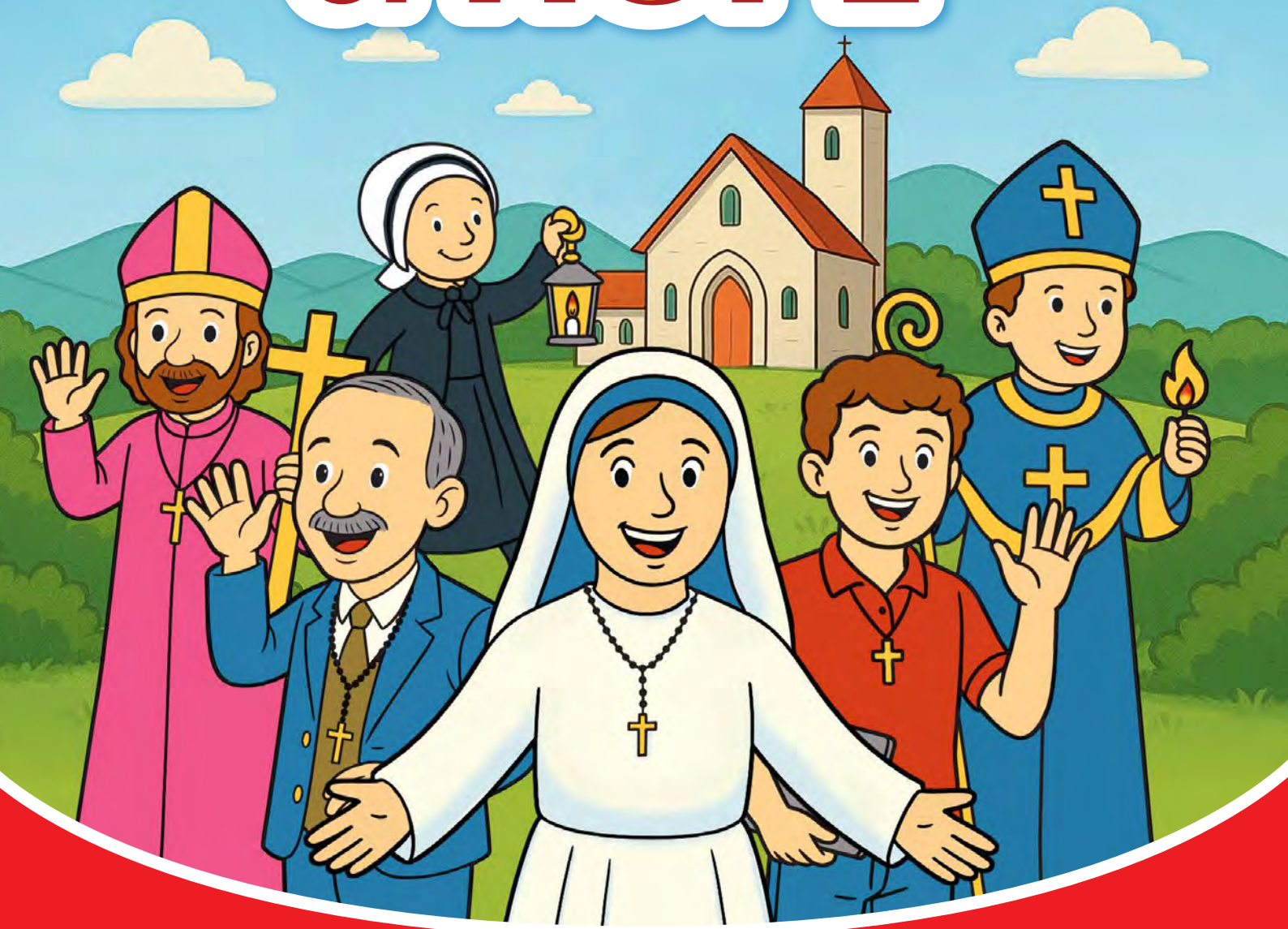


PILGRIMS of HOPE

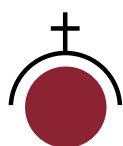


Teacher's Resource Book



Archdiocese of Dublin
Education Secretariat





Dear Principals,

The Primary Diocesan Advisors of the Education Secretariat in the Archdiocese of Dublin would like to share with you the inspiring lives of several remarkable people, true **Pilgrims of Hope**, who have now gone to their eternal reward. Three of these individuals are canonised Saints, two have been declared Venerable, and one is recognised as a Servant of God.

These **Pilgrims of Hope** loved God wholeheartedly and lived out Gospel values in the way they cared for others. Their lives shine brightly as examples of faith, courage, and hope. As Jesus reminds us, we are not to hide such light “*under a bushel*” (Mt 5:14). Their stories deserve to be passed on, echoing the prophet’s call: “*Tell your children about it, and let your children tell their children and their children the next generation*” (Joel 1:3).

In this booklet we highlight:

- The life of **Venerable Matt Talbot** (1856-1925) as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of his death. See Archbishop Dermot Farrell’s homily <https://dublindiocese.ie/matt-talbot-2025/>
- **Saint Laurence O’Toole**, patron of Dublin City, who was canonised on the 11 of December, 1225. We also celebrate the elevation of St. Mary’s Pro Cathedral to Cathedral status during its bicentenary celebrations on St. Laurence O’Toole’s feast day, 14 November 2025, when Archbishop Dermot Farrell announced the elevation of St. Mary’s Pro Cathedral to mark the bicentenary of the church’s dedication in 1825. See Archbishop Dermot Farrell’s homily <https://dublindiocese.ie/cathedral-bicentenary/>
- **Sister Clare Crockett** (1982-2016), whose cause for beatification opened on 12th January 2025.
- The 400th anniversary of the birth of **Saint Oliver Plunkett** (1625-1681).
- The beatification of **Saint Carlo Acutis** (1991-2006) by Pope Leo XIV on 7th September 2025.

The **250th anniversary of the Presentation Congregation** begins on **24 December 2025**, marking exactly 250 years since the founding of the congregation. **Nano Nagle** founded this remarkable congregation. This booklet also highlights aspects of the extraordinary life and legacy of **Venerable Nano Nagle**.

The religious education programme, *Grow in Love*, for Fifth Class/P7 has a section exploring how Nano Nagle responded to God’s call - Theme 3: Lesson 2 “We respond to God’s Call.” www.growinlove.ie

We hope this booklet helps you share these powerful stories with your pupils in a way that nurtures curiosity, faith, and a sense of connection with the wider Church. May the activities and reflections support children in seeing the Saints as real people who can inspire and guide us.

Thank you for all that you do to support the faith journey of the young people in your care.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Mgr. Dan O’Connor,
Episcopal Vicar for Education.



The Story of Matt Talbot, a friend of God (1856-1925)

What is significant about Matt Talbot?

Matt Talbot collapsed and died of heart failure in Granby Lane on Sunday 7 June 1925. Nobody who was present was able to identify him. The people took his body to the nearby Jervis Street Hospital. When they examined Matt at the hospital, they noticed that he wore a chain around his waist. He also wore chains around one arm and one leg and cords around his other arm and leg. These he wore as symbols of devotion to Our Lady. He wished to give himself to Mary, Mother of God, totally as a slave.

Matt Talbot had huge struggles with alcohol, but the turning point in his life came when he made a promise not to drink alcohol, and take the pledge.

Early Life

Matt Talbot was born on 2 May 1856, to parents Charles and Elizabeth Talbot. Matt was the second eldest of twelve children. When Charles and Elizabeth married in 1853, they lived at 2 Lower Rutland Street. Matt was born at 13 Aldborough Court. Nothing remains of the house. It, along with 300 houses were mistakenly bombed in the Second World War 1941. The family lived in poverty in the North Strand area. Matt was baptised in St. Mary's Pro Cathedral on 5 May 1856. A number of Matt's siblings were baptised in Saint Agatha's Church, North William Street.

Education

From 1864 - 1865, Matt spent one year in St. Laurence O'Toole's Christian Brothers' School. Next in 1868, at age twelve, Matt left O'Connell School, having spent a few months there. Records show his very poor attendance. There was no compulsory education and he was unable to read and write.

Matt's Working Career

He went to work as a messenger boy with Burke's who were wine merchants. It was here he began to drink, starting with the dregs of the bottles of wine. He became a chronic alcoholic at 13 years of age. Next, he went to the Port and Dock's Board where he worked in the whiskey stores. He spent all his wages on drink. He borrowed and scrounged money from others. He pawned his clothes and boots to get money for alcohol. On one occasion he was so broke, he stole a violin from a street entertainer and sold it to buy drink.

Life Changing Experience

One evening in 1884, when Matt was 28 years old, with no money and out of credit, and hung-over, he waited outside Cusack's pub (formerly O' Meara's) with his brother, in the hope that somebody would invite them in for a drink. A few of his friends passed by, went into the pub, and ignored them. Matt was 'cut to the heart' and he went home to his mother and told her that he was going to take the pledge. A pledge is another name for a promise. His mother said to him, 'don't take the pledge unless you are going to keep it.' He went to Holy Cross College, Clonliffe, where he took the pledge for three months. At the end of three months, he took the pledge for six months and then for life.

Sign of Hope

Having drunk consistently for 16 years and taken the pledge, Matt Talbot remained sober for the following forty years. The first seven years off the drink were very difficult for Matt. He found his strength

in prayer. He attended daily Mass and read religious books and pamphlets. He repaid all his debts. He searched for the violinist from whom he had stolen the violin, but failed to find him. He gave the money he owed to the Church and had Mass offered for him.

In those days before Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), it was a lonely struggle. Matt increasingly turned to his faith and a life of penance, prayer, Mass attendance and mysticism.

Matt the Man

Matt Talbot, in spite of his drinking, was always a hard worker. He joined Pembertons, building contractors and his work ethic was so great that the boss had him set the pace for the other workers. Later, when Matt worked in Martin's Timber Yard, he took on the meanest and hardest jobs. Matt treated his bosses with respect and stood up for his fellow workers.

On 22 September 1911, Matt Talbot joined the builder labourers' branch of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU). When the Dublin Lockout of 1913 led to sympathy strikes throughout the city, the men who worked in Martin's Timber Yard, including Matt, came out on strike. At first, Matt refused his strike pay, saying he did not earn it. Later he accepted it and asked that they share out the money among other strikers. After Matt's death, a rumour spread that he was a strikebreaker in 1914. Evidence contradicts this.

Matt Talbot – Devout and Generous

Matt Talbot continued to live a life of prayer, fasting and service. His role models included the sixth century Irish monks. Fr. Michael Hickey, Professor of Philosophy in Clonliffe College, guided him most of his life. Matt Talbot began to read a lot more. He read Scripture, the lives of the saints, the Confessions of Saint Augustine and the writings of Saint Francis de Sales. When he needed guidance and clarification, he asked the priest. Fr. Hickey also gave him a chain to wear, as a form of penance. He became a Third Order Franciscan in 1890. He also joined other religious associations and sodalities.

Matt was poor but he generously gave to neighbours and co-workers, to charitable institutions and the Church. He ate very little. After his Dad's death in 1899, he lived in 18 Upper Rutland Street until his Mam died in 1915. He then moved upstairs to an attic room in that house. It was a small flat with little furniture. He slept on a plank bed with a piece of timber for a pillow. He lived his last years here until he died on 7 June 1925. At work, whenever he had spare time he knelt down in a quiet space to pray. On Sundays, he attended several masses. He walked from one church to the other with his head down in case anyone would see him.

Matt died suddenly in Granby Lane while making his way to Mass in St. Saviour's Church, Dominic Street, on the Feast of Corpus Christi (the Body of Christ), 7 June 1925. He had already attended an earlier Mass in the Jesuit Church of St. Francis Xavier. His funeral took place in Glasnevin Cemetery. In 1972, the Church authorities removed his remains from Glasnevin Cemetery to the shrine in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Seán McDermott Street, the area where he lived.

Road to Sainthood

On 6 November 1941, Edward Joseph Byrne, Archbishop of Dublin, opened a sworn enquiry into the alleged claims of holiness of Matt Talbot, the former dockworker. The Apostolic Process began in the Vatican on the 28 November 1947, granting the title Servant of God to Matt Talbot. On 3 October 1975, Pope Paul VI declared him Venerable Matt Talbot, which is a step on the road to beatification and canonisation. This process needs a physical miracle in order to be successful.

Matt's Devotion Internationally

- 1 North American Catholics have a particular devotion to Matt Talbot.
- 2 In Australia, there is devotion to Matt Talbot among those involved in the ministry to achieve or maintain sobriety.
- 3 A Carmelite Priest, Rev. Albert Dolan, founded the Matt Talbot legion "to aid alcoholics through prayer and the inspiration of Matt Talbot's example." Fr. Dolan wrote two books on Matt Talbot - 'We Knew Matt Talbot: Visits with his relatives and friends' (1948) and Matt Talbot, 'The Alcoholic: The Slave to Alcohol who became a Comrade of Christ (1947)'.
- 4 People named addiction clinics, youth hostels and statues after Matt Talbot, throughout the world.
- 5 Pope John Paul II as a young man wrote a paper on Matt Talbot.

Matt Talbot in Contemporary Ireland

- 1 Matt Talbot features in Brendan Behan's autobiography '*Confessions of an Irish Rebel*'.
- 2 The Dublin City Council named the Custom House and the Matt Talbot Memorial Bridge, Dublin after him
- 3 Matt Talbot rapidly became an icon for Ireland's temperance movement i.e. the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association
- 4 The civil authorities of the time erected a statue of Matt Talbot on Sir Rogerson's Quay in 1988.
- 5 There is a small plaque in Granby Lane at the site of Matt Talbot's death.
- 6 In August 1971, Archbishop Charles MacQuaid unveiled a plaque of Matt Talbot at a block of flats known as '*Matt Talbot Court*' as it is situated on the same site as one of Matt Talbot's residences.

Questions on Matt Talbot

What is significant about Matt Talbot?

- What was unusual about Matt Talbot's body when they examined him in the hospital after his death?
- I wonder why Matt Talbot wore chains.
- Why did slaves wear chains in the past?

Early Life

- Where was Matt Talbot born?
- What were the names of his parents?
- How many children were in the family?
- What was the address of the house where Matt Talbot was born?
- What happened the houses in the North Strand area, including Matt Talbot's house during the Second World War, 1941?
- Can you name any place in the world where there is war and where houses are bombed daily?

Education

- Matt Talbot attended two schools. Can you name them?
- Why do you think Matt Talbot had poor attendance at school?
- Did Matt do well in school? Why? or why not?
- I wonder if Matt lived in Dublin today, what educational opportunities would be provided for him?
- Why did Matt leave school early in life?

Matt's Working Career

- What was the name of the wine maker's store with whom Matt Talbot got his first job?
- When did Matt become an alcoholic?
- How did Matt start to drink alcohol?
- Matt spent all his wages on alcohol. He still found money for drink. Where did he get the money?

Life Changing Experience

- Why did Matt and his brother stand outside Cusack's (formerly O' Meara's pub)?
- How did Matt expect to get drink standing outside the pub?
- Why was Matt 'cut to the heart' by his friends?
- I wonder why Matt's friends ignored Matt and his brother.
- Who did Matt turn to when he was in trouble, that day?
- What is a pledge?
- What promise did Matt make?
- What did his mother say to Matt about taking the pledge?
- When do children of 12 years and 13 years make a pledge today, about taking drink and drugs?
- Where did Matt go to take the pledge?

Sign of Hope

- When would you describe a person as sober?
- What did Matt do to help him remain sober?
- Why did Matt search for the violinist?

Matt the Man

- Why did Matt at first, refuse his strike pay?
- What rumour was spread about Matt?
- Have you heard of a group of people that went on strike recently?

Matt Talbot – Devout and Generous

- How did Matt grow strong in his faith?
- Who was Matt's guide?
- In what way did Matt try to live like a 6th century monk?
- When Matt went to Mass on Sunday why did he keep his head down?
- Where did Matt die suddenly?
- On what feast day did Matt die?
- What is special about the feast of Corpus Christi, the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ?
- Where did Matt Talbot's funeral and burial take place?
- When did the Church authorities remove Matt's remains from Glasnevin, to Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Seán Mac Dermott Street? Why?

Road to Sainthood

- People knew and reported that Matt was a holy man. Whom did they tell?
- What was the Archbishop's name at that time?
- Who is the Archbishop of Dublin today?
- When did Matt Talbot become a Servant of God?
- Who declared Matt as Venerable? When did this happen?
- Why would people pray to Matt Talbot today? For what would they hope? Can you think of anyone who is addicted to drink or drugs? If so, will you promise to pray to Matt Talbot for them? '*Miracles do happen.*'
- Name the steps in becoming a saint.

Matt Talbot Activities

Glossary

Slave: A person who is forced to work for and obey another and is considered their property.

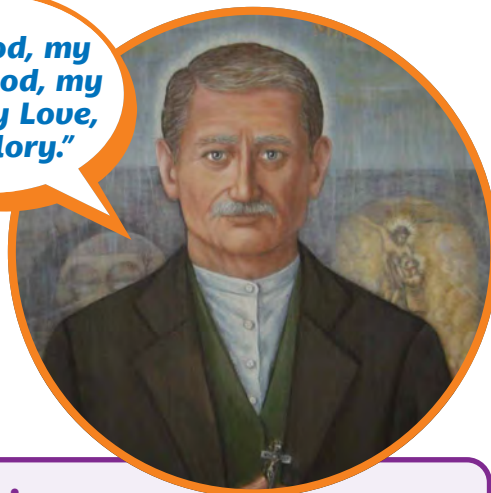
Alcoholic: A person who is dependent on alcohol and drinks too much.

Pledge: A pledge is a promise.

Sober: When a person is not drunk, he/she is sober.

Becoming a Saint: The Church outlines four steps in becoming a saint. The steps are, Servant of God, Venerable, Beatification and Saint.

"My God, my great God, my Life, my Love, my Glory."



Prayer for the Canonisation of the Venerable Matt Talbot

Lord, in your servant, Matt Talbot, you have given us a wonderful example of triumph over addiction, of devotion to duty, and of lifelong reverence for the Holy Sacrament.

May his life of prayer and penance give us courage to take up our crosses and follow in the footsteps of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Father, if it be your will that your beloved servant should be glorified by your Church, make known by your heavenly favours the power he enjoys in your sight.

We ask this through the same Jesus Christ Our Lord.



Amen

"The Heart of Jesus is with me."

About Saints

Can you name a 'Servant of God', someone who is at the first stage of being a saint?

Can you name anyone who is a 'Venerable', at the second stage of becoming a saint?

Can you name someone who is at the third stage of becoming a saint? This person is waiting to be canonised and he/she has the title 'Blessed'.

Can you name three Irish Saints?

Quotes

"God will not ask us how eloquently we have spoken, but how well we have lived."

"I ask you O God to blot out all my sins in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

"I should be the last one to talk to you about religion because I was very fond of the drink when I was young and I broke my mother's heart."



Word Search

MATT	DUBLIN	VENERABLE
TALBOT	SAINT	MARY
HOLY	JESUS	GENEROSITY
POVERTY	WORK	PRAYER
CHURCH	FAITH	PIONEER
SOBER	HUMILITY	
ROSARY	MASS	
DEVOTION	CHAINS	



H X F P I O N E E R Y L P M V
O C H U R C H M A R Y C R A E
L Y D U B L I N V G Y T A S N
Y Q I P P R O S A R Y F Y S E
P O V E R T Y W O R K A E O R
P G E N E R O S I T Y I R B A
M V L C H A I N S P D T E E B
A H U M I L I T Y Z A H I R L
T J E S U S D E V O T I O N E
T C T A L B O T S A I N T E K

General

Name the four provinces of Ireland.

In which province of Ireland is the city of Dublin?

In what diocese is Dublin?

Name the current Archbishop of Dublin.

Today people who take a lifelong pledge from drink and substance abuse join the Pioneer Abstinence Association. They wear a pioneer pin and they say a special prayer every day to help them abstain from drink.

The Pioneer Total Abstinence Association

The Pioneer Total Abstinence Association of the Sacred Heart (PTAA) is an international organisation for Catholic teetotallers that is based in Ireland. Fr. James Cullen S.J. founded the Association in 1898 in Gardiner Street, Dublin. Pioneers are members of the Pioneer Association. The emblem that pioneers wear is called a pioneer pin.

Did you know?

- Pioneers, who abstain from alcohol, wear this pioneer pin.
- The shield represents Christ.
- The heart belongs to Jesus. The crown of thorns surrounds the heart of Jesus.
- The drops are a reminder of the blood and water that flowed out from Jesus' side on the cross when the soldier pierced him with a lance.
- The Cross represents the Cross on which Jesus died.
- Rays of love come from Jesus' heart. Jesus' love fills the whole world.
- The rays are symbols of the new life of the Resurrection, showing that Jesus is alive and present with us today.
- Jesus gives hope and new life to the pioneers.
- Make a class poster of the Pioneer Pin.



How can the story of Venerable Matt Talbot give guidance to people today?

- 1 Venerable Matt Talbot (1856- 1925) teaches people never to give up trying to live a Christian life.
- 2 Venerable Matt Talbot stood up for what was right. He had a keen sense of justice.
- 3 Venerable Matt trusted his parents. He turned to his mother when he was 'cut to the heart'. He told her he wanted to take the pledge to help him stop drinking alcohol.
- 4 Venerable Matt Talbot had great devotion to Our Lady. He prayed the Rosary every day.
- 5 Venerable Matt Talbot was faithful to his pledge. He gave up alcohol and stayed off alcohol. His life of prayer, penance, devotion to Mary and her Rosary, and his service to others helped him keep his pledge.
- 6 Venerable Matt Talbot was an honest, hard and conscientious worker.
- 7 Venerable Matt Talbot's cause is ongoing, and devotion continues to grow to him, especially among those affected by addiction.

Activities

- **Make a paper chain.** On each link of the chain draw/write the key moments of Matt Talbot's life.
- **Visit the Matt Talbot Shrine** in Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Seán MacDermott Street.
- **Pray the prayer to Matt Talbot.**
- Browse the following website to find out more about the **Pioneer Total Abstinence Association**.
www.pioneers.ie
- Find out more about walking tours from the **'Matt Talbot Walking Tour Committee.'**

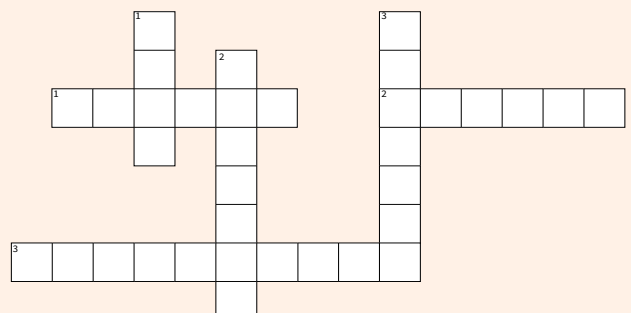
Crossword Puzzle

Across

1. Daily Prayer used by Matt (6).
2. Capital city where Matt lived (6).
3. A gift we share with others (10).

Down

1. A holy gathering Matt attended daily (4).
2. Opposite to slavery (7).
3. Virtue of being modest (7)



The Story of Saint Laurence O'Toole (1128-1180) (Lorcán Ó Tuathail)

Who is Saint Laurence O'Toole?

St. Laurence O'Toole is the Patron Saint of the Archdiocese of Dublin. The Church celebrates his feast day on the 14 November.

The Early Life of Laurence O'Toole

St. Laurence O'Toole was born in Castledermot, Co. Kildare, in 1128. His parents' names were Murtagh and Inian Ivrien. Laurence's mother, Inian, influenced him. Laurence imitated her prayer life and her love for her neighbour. Laurence loved to pray and meditate on God's Word. He was a bright student, taught by the bards.

When he was ten years old, Laurence was sent as a hostage to the King of Leinster, Dermot MacMurrough. Laurence was badly treated and his master kept him in chains. For two years, he lived in poverty. He was hungry and though he suffered, he remained patient and silent.

The King released Laurence and sent him to Glendalough monastery. When his father came to Glendalough to take him home Laurence said, 'For many months I have intended to become a priest.' Murtagh left his son in Glendalough to pursue his vocation.

Life in Glendalough

Laurence joined the community of monks there. He enjoyed the life of prayer, work and community of the monks. At twenty-five years of age, he became Abbot of Glendalough. The monks saw Laurence as a kind father.

Laurence built new churches and encouraged learning in the monastery. He brought monks from the Continent to Glendalough. In the time of famine, Laurence looked after the poor. He sold many of the monastery's treasures to buy food for those who were starving.

Archbishop Laurence O'Toole

Laurence became the first Archbishop of Dublin in 1162. As an Archbishop, he continued to care for the poor.

Laurence never forgot the life of prayer in Glendalough. He rose early in the morning, sang the psalms, and read Scripture in Christ Church Cathedral with the monks. He often stayed there, praying fervently when the other monks had left the Cathedral. He walked around the graveyard and watched and prayed over Dublin city. He was eager to reform the Church. His priests were required to live by stricter rules. Laurence visited the Augustinian monastery, ate with the monks, observed silence with them and prayed the Divine Office with them.

He preached about error and laxity. He brought the poor people to share at his table and he served them personally.

When Archbishop Laurence's nephew became Abbot of Glendalough, Laurence visited Glendalough and spent a few days of peace and solitude there. He stayed in a hermitage on the lake, which he could only reach by boat.

Saint Laurence lived a frugal life

When Archbishop Laurence lived in Dublin, he lived a frugal life. He abstained from meat, and on Friday's he only ate bread and drank water. At night, he slept little. He knelt in the darkness praying. He continued his mission daily. He preached, lectured, instructed children, reformed monasteries, and convents, visited the sick and he pleaded for money for the poor and for the orphans.

The Church in Dublin began to grow and develop because of Archbishop Laurence O'Toole's hard work and life of prayer. He loved music and he introduced Gregorian chant in the liturgy.

Saint Laurence - Peacemaker

The Normans attacked Dublin in 1171. From that time on, Laurence worked for peace. He travelled to England working for peace. In those times, travel by sea was very dangerous. More than once, his ship was caught in violent storms. Laurence and his fellow companions who travelled together, believed the power of prayer saved them.

In 1180, Laurence left for England for the last time to act as a peacemaker in a row between Henry II of England and the Irish kings. Laurence followed Henry to Normandy, France and became ill there. He died in the monastery at Eu on the 14 November, without having met the king.

Burial

St. Laurence O'Toole was laid to rest in France. His relics remain in a crypt at Notre Dame Church at Eu. St. Laurence O'Toole Church, in Seville Place, Dublin, holds one large relic, dedicated to the saint.

His tomb in Eu quickly became a place of pilgrimage and the story goes that many miracles took place there through the intercession of Laurence.

Laurence O'Toole was canonised on 11th December 1225.



Questions on St. Laurence O'Toole

Who is Laurence O'Toole?

- 1 Who is the Patron Saint of the Archdiocese of Dublin?
- 2 When does the Church celebrate the feast day of St. Laurence O'Toole?

The Early Life of St. Laurence O'Toole

- 1 Where was Laurence O'Toole born?
- 2 Who influenced Laurence to pray and to love others?
- 3 What age was Laurence when he became a hostage to the King of Leinster?
- 4 What kind of life had Laurence as a hostage?
- 5 Do you know any countries where people are held hostage?
- 6 When the King released Laurence, where did he send him to stay?
- 7 Who is the current Archbishop of Dublin?

Life in Glendalough

- 1 What is a monk? Where do monks live?
- 2 As an Abbot, how did Laurence develop the Church in the Archdiocese of Dublin?

Archbishop Laurence O'Toole

- 1 When did Laurence O'Toole become Archbishop of Dublin?
- 2 When Laurence O'Toole became Archbishop of Dublin, he never forgot the life of prayer of the monks in Glendalough. How did Laurence begin each day?
- 3 In what Church in Dublin did Archbishop Laurence O'Toole pray with the monks?
- 4 Where did Archbishop Laurence like to go for some peace and quiet when he lived in Dublin?
- 5 What is a hermitage?

St. Laurence O'Toole lived a simple life.

- 1 Describe how Archbishop Laurence lived a simple life.
- 2 How did he live out God's call to help the people of Dublin at the time?

Burial

- 1 Where did Laurence O'Toole die?
- 2 Where is the body of St. Laurence O'Toole buried?
- 3 What is a crypt?
- 4 Can you name any place of pilgrimage in Ireland?
- 5 When was Laurence O'Toole canonised?

Colour the picture of Saint Laurence O'Toole



St. Laurence O'Toole Activities

Prayer to St. Laurence O'Toole

St. Laurence O'Toole, MAN OF PEACE, you were in the middle of family and political conflict from your earliest days. Give the gift of peace and hope to all who experience the trauma of division in families, in communities and among nations.

St. Laurence O'Toole, MAN OF PRAYER, you recognised the call to serve the Lord a particular way at Glendalough. Give the gift of perseverance to all who are discerning their Christian vocation at this time.

St. Laurence O'Toole, MAN OF FAITH, you had the openness to accept a position of leadership in your community at an early age. Bless our young people with a spirit of generosity to offer themselves in the service of the Gospel.

St. Laurence O'Toole, MAN OF PRAYER, you inspired people by your commitment to the spiritual life and the recitation of the Prayer of the Church. Fill us with that desire to pray in communion with each other throughout each day.

St. Laurence O'Toole, MAN OF FAITH, you opened your heart and your doors to those who were poor. Increase our awareness of those in need and inspire us to always act with justice and charity.

St. Laurence O'Toole, MAN OF PRAYER, you were respected for your commitment to your Church and to your country. Grant us the grace to live in this world while always reflecting the eternal values of the kingdom.

St. Laurence O'Toole, MAN OF PEACE, you gave your last ounce of energy in the cause of peace. Give us the gift of tirelessness as we try to live as instruments of Christ's peace, love and tolerance.

Amen

Make a Card

Think about Archbishop O'Toole as a man of faith, peace and prayer. Make a thank you card and write a message of thanks to him for the way he loved God and loved people who lived in poverty.



Make a Poster

Make a class poster and write down one way as a class you will show peace and one way you will show love to people in need. Decide on one prayer you will say together to build peace in the world.



Find on the Internet

- A parish Church whose Patron Saint is St. Laurence O'Toole?
- A school whose Patron Saint is St. Laurence O'Toole?
- A sports club whose Patron Saint is St. Laurence O'Toole?



How Many?

How many small words can you make out of this word 'SAINTLAURENCEOTOOLE'?



Word Search

LAURENCE	LOVE	DUBLIN
TOOLE	NEIGHBOUR	FAITH
PATRON	GLENDALOUGH	MONASTERY
SAINT	EU	
CASTLEDERMOT	SHARED	
MURTAGH	PRIESTS	
INIAN	POOR	
PRAYER	CATHEDRAL	



A Q T O O L E L W P S F Y X D
O E H P A T R O N P R A Y E R
O U D U B L I N Z Z F A I T H
P S I J L A U R E N C E N N G
R H N C A S T L E D E R M O T
I A I M M U R T A G H L O V E
E R A C X K C A T H E D R A L
S E N E I G H B O U R P O O R
T D X A B M O N A S T E R Y B
S W Q G G L E N D A L O U G H

The Story of Sister Clare Crockett, Servant of God (1982-2016)

Early Life

Clare Teresa Crockett was born on 14 November 1982 in Derry, Northern Ireland, into a working-class Catholic family. She was the youngest of six children. From childhood, Clare was known for her lively personality, sense of humour, and dramatic flair. She dreamed of becoming an actress and often entertained family and friends with impressions and comedy.

By her teenage years, Clare was actively pursuing her dream. She was involved in acting, writing, and even worked as a TV presenter in the UK. Friends described her as someone full of life, with an “all-or-nothing” spirit. However, although she had a Catholic upbringing, her faith was not the centre of her life at that time. She later admitted that she had been drawn toward worldly pleasures and ambitions more than to God.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0LKZm2BqZo>



Conversion and Call to Religious Life

The turning point in Clare’s life came when, at age 17, she reluctantly went on a Holy Week pilgrimage to Spain in 2000. She had signed up largely because it promised a cheap holiday in the sun. Yet during the liturgical celebrations, she had a profound spiritual experience: the realisation of Christ’s total self-giving on the Cross.

She later described how, in that moment, she felt deeply called to give her life completely to God. After returning home, she wrestled with this sense of vocation. Initially, she tried to resist it and continue her acting career, but the call only grew stronger.

In 2001, Clare encountered the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother, a relatively new congregation founded in Spain with a charism focused on the Eucharist, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the defence of the youth. Their mission resonated deeply with her, and she eventually gave up her career aspirations and embraced religious life.

Religious Life

Clare entered the Servant Sisters in 2001, beginning her formation in Spain. She took the name Sister Clare Maria of the Trinity and the Heart of Mary, though most knew her simply as Sr. Clare.

Her life as a sister was marked by joy, humility, and zeal for souls. Those who knew her testified to her deep love for the

“It’s all or nothing! We can’t remain in mediocrity.”



Eucharist, devotion to Our Lady, and readiness to give herself completely to the mission. She was also noted for her ability to connect with young people, drawing them to Christ through her humour, authenticity, and fervent witness.

Sr. Clare worked in Spain, the United States, and Ecuador. Wherever she went, she dedicated herself especially to youth and children, teaching catechetics, leading retreats, and using her natural talents in drama and music to evangelise. Despite struggles and sacrifices, she embraced her vocation wholeheartedly, often saying she wanted to be “all or nothing” for God.

Mission in Ecuador

In 2012, Sr. Clare was sent to Ecuador. She lived in Playa Prieta, Manabí province, serving as a teacher and missionary. She was beloved by her students for her joy, dedication, and approachable manner. In addition to teaching, she guided girls discerning their vocations, sharing her own testimony and encouraging them towards holiness.

She is remembered for her intensity in prayer, her tireless service, and her insistence that nothing in the world could compare with living for Christ. Her spirituality was grounded in a desire to imitate Christ’s total self-gift.

Death

On 16 April 2016, a 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck Ecuador, devastating the coastal region. Sr. Clare was at the community’s school and convent in Playa Prieta with several young aspirants of the order. The building collapsed, and despite efforts to escape, Sr. Clare and five postulants were killed. She was only 33 years old.

Her death was seen by many as a martyrdom of fidelity, since she died serving in a missionary land where she had freely given her life to God. Her sisters recalled that she had often prayed to die as a total gift to Christ, without half-measures. That prayer was fulfilled.

Legacy

After her death, Sr. Clare's story spread rapidly. The Home of the Mother produced a documentary titled *All or Nothing: Sr. Clare Crockett* (2018), which has been viewed around the world and inspired countless young people to rediscover their faith.

Her witness resonates because of her radical conversion, her joyful and wholehearted embrace of her vocation, and her authenticity. Many who encounter her story see her as a modern example of how to live with zeal, joy, and complete surrender to God.

Today, devotion to her memory continues to grow. While she has not yet been formally recognised as a saint by the Catholic Church, many view her life and death as an extraordinary example of holiness in the modern world.

Sr. Clare Crockett is not yet officially a saint. She's currently at the "Servant of God" stage of the canonisation process in the Catholic Church, which is the first step.

Questions on Sister Clare Crockett

Early Life

- 1 Where and when was Clare Crockett born?
- 2 How many brothers and sisters did she have?
- 3 What was her dream job when she was young?
- 4 What kind of personality did people say she had as a child?

Teenage Years and Conversion

- 1 What career did Clare start working towards as a teenager?
- 2 Why did she go on a pilgrimage to Spain when she was 17?
- 3 What happened during that pilgrimage that changed her life?
- 4 What decision did she make after this experience?

"I love ending the day tired, but filled with an interior joy, knowing that if I am tired, it's because I have served the Lord."



- In November 2024, the Church declared Sr. Clare Crockett Servant of God.
- On 12 January 2025, a formal ceremony was held in Alcalá de Henares (Madrid, Spain) to open the diocesan phase of her cause for beatification.
- A postulator has been appointed (Sr. Kristen Gardner from her order) to gather testimonies and evidence about her life and virtues. (A postulator is a person who presents a case for the canonisation or beatification of someone in the Roman Catholic Church).

In the canonisation process, after being declared Servant of God, these are the usual next stages:

- 1 **Venerable** — when the Church judges that the person lived a life of heroic virtue.
- 2 **Blessed (beatification)** — generally requires confirmation of a miracle attributed to the person's intercession after death.
- 3 **Saint (canonisation)** — usually requires a second miracle after beatification, and the Pope formally declares them a saint.

Religious Life

- 1 Which religious order did Sr. Clare join?
- 2 What name did she take when she became a sister?
- 3 What were the three focuses (charism) of her order?
- 4 In which countries did Sr. Clare serve as a missionary?
- 5 How did she use her talents to bring people closer to God?

Mission in Ecuador and Death

- 1 What year did Sr. Clare move to Ecuador?
- 2 What happened on 16 April 2016 in Ecuador?
- 3 How old was Sr. Clare when she died?
- 4 How do people describe her way of living her vocation? (e.g., "all or nothing")

Legacy

- 1 What is the name of the documentary about her life?
- 2 How have people around the world reacted to her story?
- 3 Why do many young people today look up to Sr. Clare?

Sister Clare Crockett Activities

Word Search

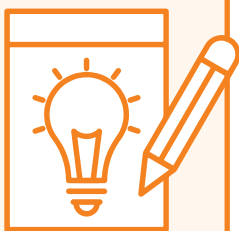
CLARE	MOTHER	PRAYER
CROCKETT	EUCARIST	LEGACY
DERRY	MARY	JOY
ACTRESS	YOUTH	
HOLYWEEK	MISSION	
SPAIN	ECUADOR	
SERVANTSISTERS	EARTHQUAKE	
HOME	ALLORNOTHING	



Q S J M I S S I O N R F E E A
A L L O R N O T H I N G A S C
P H O L Y W E E K J O Y R P T
R L H U E U C H A R I S T A R
A M O T H E R Y O U T H H I E
Y G M A D E R R Y M H Q Q N S
E N E E M H L E G A C Y U A S
R E C U A D O R P R C L A R E
C R O C K E T T Q Y I Q K I N
X S E R V A N T S I S T E R S

Creative Writing

Imagine writing a letter to Sr. Clare.
Ask her questions or tell her how her
story inspires you.



Artwork

Create a small artwork or collage
inspired by Sr. Clare's love for the
Eucharist, Our Lady, and youth
ministry.



Colour the picture of Sister Clare Crockett



The Story of Saint Oliver Plunkett (1625-1681)

Oliver Plunkett's Life Story

Saint Oliver Plunkett (1625-1681) was the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland in the seventeenth century. He was the first Irish saint canonised in Ireland for almost seven hundred years.

Early Life

Oliver Plunkett was born in Loughcrew, Oldcastle, Co. Meath, on 1 November 1625. His parents' names were Thomasina and John. Oliver had an elder brother Edward, and three sisters, Katherine, Anne and Mary. During the time of Cromwell and his conquests in Ireland (1649-1653), Oliver Plunkett's family, who decided to remain Catholic were consequently dispossessed of the estate in Loughcrew. Edward and his family moved to Co. Louth.

St. Oliver Plunkett's Education

Patrick Plunkett, Abbot of St. Mary's, Dublin, educated Oliver until he was sixteen years of age. Oliver heard God's call to become a priest. In 1647, he went to Rome to study for the priesthood, and he was ordained in 1654. He continued his studies in Rome and worked there. Ireland was in a tough political situation at the time with wars and tension between Irish Catholics and English Protestants.

The Irish Bishops appointed him to be their representative of the Catholic Church of Ireland, in Rome.

Return to Ireland

In 1669, Pope Clement IX, chose Oliver as Archbishop of Armagh. The Pope wanted him to reform the Church in Ireland. The Archbishop of Ghent consecrated Oliver as Archbishop in Ghent on 30 November 1669. Oliver returned to Ireland on 7 March 1670.

Upon his return to Ireland, Archbishop Oliver based himself in north Louth. He feared for his life as a bishop, so he dressed in disguise as an army captain. He identified as Captain William Browne, complete with sword, wig and a pair of pistols. This disguise helped him to reach out to north and south of the country, so to help Catholic and Protestants reconcile their differences.

A distant relative of Oliver Plunkett, a Catholic Baron, owned some property. He offered Oliver the use of a sheltered room. Sometimes Oliver had occasion to hide in the icehouse and thick undergrowth near the main house.



Archbishop Oliver served his people in Ballybarrack and Ardpark through the 1670s. He ordained priests and he organised an important Ulster Church Synod at Ardpark in 1678. He lived in a thatched house, where he welcomed strangers and visiting priests. He travelled around Co. Louth, coming and going to Ballybarrack and Ardpark. He collected and delivered post from the other dioceses around Ireland, travelling on a four-horse carriage as he engaged in his mission.

Archbishop Oliver worked tirelessly to reform the Catholic Church in Ireland. He met with resistance, but he persevered in his efforts. He worked cautiously as spies were on the lookout for him. He wanted priests to be good witnesses to the people. He visited the priests in the dioceses of the Northern Province, the schools, and he frequently visited Dublin.

He opened a Jesuit College in Drogheda in 1670 where 150 students attended. The College was unique as it was the first school in Ireland to welcome students, both Catholics and Protestants. Within four years, he administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 48,000 Catholics.

In the 1670's life became increasingly difficult for Catholics in Ireland. Laws against Catholics became stricter. The Jesuit College he opened in 1670 had to close. Oliver himself went into hiding and he travelled in disguise.

While on the run in 1674, Archbishop Oliver drifted from North Louth to South Armagh, where he hid in caves, attics or in some safe houses.

The Popish Plot

Unfair Trial and False Accusations

In 1678, a false story called the 'Popish Plot' started in England. Titus Oates told lies about Catholics, that they were planning to kill the King and invade England. This brought more trouble for the Catholics.

There were several accusations made against Archbishop Oliver, none of which were true. The authorities accused him of plotting to bring French soldiers to Ireland and of raising money for a rebellion.

One man, the Duke of Ormonde, who was in charge in Ireland knew these accusations were false. In 1679 the authorities in Dublin arrested Oliver Plunkett. The first trial in Ireland stopped, because his accusers were afraid to show up.

Oliver's trial in London

In October 1679, the authorities brought Archbishop Oliver to Newgate prison in London, England. Despite the pain he suffered through the harsh winter, he spoke to the jailors whom he impressed by his fasting, constant prayer and his good humour. On the day of trial at Westminster Hall, the jury came up with a guilty verdict.

This second trial was very unfair on two accounts. Archbishop Oliver wasn't allowed to have a lawyer to defend him. The authorities did not give time to gather authentic witnesses to give adequate evidence to prove his innocence.

The judge, Sir Francis Pemberton, did not listen to Archbishop Oliver Plunkett's complaints. Many people at the time believed he was innocent. Among them was a Scottish clergyman, named Gilbert Burnet, who said that Archbishop Oliver Plunkett was a wise and calm man, who only wanted to live peacefully and tend to his congregation. Later, a judge named Sir James Comyn, called the trial 'a grave mistake.'

Execution and Legacy

The jury found Oliver Plunkett guilty of treason in June 1681. The judge said he was guilty for 'promoting the Roman faith.' Oliver Plunkett replied, 'Deo Gratias' (which means 'Thanks be to God' in Latin).

King Charles II knew that Oliver Plunkett was innocent. However, he would not take the risk of telling the truth, because of the political situation.

Authorities put Oliver Plunkett to death by execution in Tyburn Prison on 1 July 1681. Before the execution, he forgave all his accusers, including the judges, and those who gave false evidence against him at the trial. He said, 'I beg of my Saviour to grant them true repentance, I do forgive them with all my heart.' He prayed the Act of Sorrow, Psalm 50 and he prayed to Jesus on the Cross-'Into Your hands, O Lord, I commend my Spirit.' After Oliver's death, the authorities buried his body in the courtyard of St. Giles in the Fields Church.

Mosaic of Saint Oliver Plunkett in Westminster Cathedral, London.

Links with the Benedictine Order

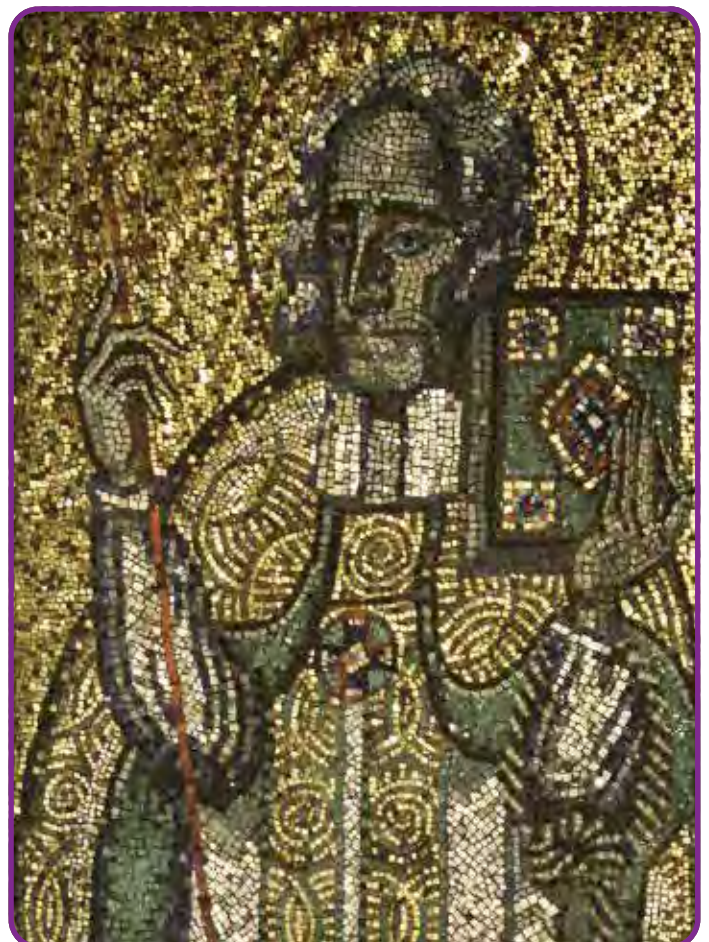
While in Newgate prison, Archbishop Oliver befriended an English Benedictine monk, Fr. Manus Corker, who became his 'faith friend'. He supplied Oliver with Mass requisites, and he heard his confession before his death. In 1683, Fr. Manus Corker had Archbishop Oliver's remains exhumed and smuggled to the Benedictine Monastery, Lamspringe, in Germany. Two hundred years later, the Church authorities brought the remains from Lamspringe to the Benedictine Abbey at Downside, Somerset, England in 1881. This community continues to venerate the martyr saint in a major shrine dedicated in his honour. Around the time of St. Oliver's canonisation, the monks of Downside Abbey generously gave gifts of relics to a variety of locations, including one relic to the Parish Church in Oldcastle, Co. Meath.

The relic of St. Oliver's head was brought to Rome and from there to Armagh and eventually to Drogheda where since 1921, it has rested in St Peter's Church. Most of his body is now at Downside Abbey in England.

Becoming a Saint

Pope Benedict XV beatified Oliver Plunkett on 23 May 1920, with the title of Blessed Oliver Plunkett. He was canonised in 1975 as the first new Irish saint, for almost 700 years. He was the first Irish martyr beatified.

In 1997, the Church named Saint Oliver Plunkett, as patron saint for peace and reconciliation in Ireland.



Questions on Saint Oliver Plunkett

St. Oliver Plunkett's life story

- 1 Why is Oliver Plunkett a well-known Saint?
- 2 In what century did Oliver Plunkett live?
- 3 Who was the first Irish Saint canonised in 1975, after 700 years?

Early Life

- 1 When and where was Oliver Plunkett born?
- 2 Name his parents, brother and sisters.
- 3 Why was the Plunkett family dispossessed of their big estate?

St. Oliver Plunkett's Education

- 1 Who educated Oliver Plunkett up to age 16?
- 2 What year was Oliver ordained a priest?
- 3 Why did Oliver not return to Ireland after ordination in Rome?

Return to Ireland

- 1 When did the Archbishop of Ghent consecrate Oliver Plunkett as an Archbishop?
- 2 Who is the current Archbishop of Dublin at this time?
- 3 Why did Archbishop Oliver Plunkett disguise himself as Captain William Browne?
- 4 What mode of transport did Archbishop Oliver use as he travelled around Co. Louth?
- 5 What did Archbishop Oliver do to develop the Catholic Church and the faith in Ireland?
- 6 Why did the Jesuit College have to close?

The Popish Plot - Unfair Trial and False Accusations

- 1 What is the 'Popish Plot'?
- 2 What accusations did the accusers make against Oliver? Were they true?
- 3 Did anyone stand up for justice for Archbishop Oliver at the trial?
- 4 Was it a fair trial?

Oliver's Trial in London

- 1 When and where did the second trial take place?
- 2 Why was this an unfair trial?

Execution and Legacy

- 1 The judge found Archbishop Oliver Plunkett guilty of treason in 1681. What is treason?
- 2 Why did Archbishop Oliver say 'Deo Gratias' (Thank God) when he was found guilty?
- 3 Whom did Archbishop Oliver Plunkett forgive before he died?
- 4 What prayers did Archbishop Oliver say before he died?



Links with the Benedictine Order

- 1 Name the Benedictine monk that accompanied Archbishop Oliver Plunkett as a 'faith friend' while he was in prison.
- 2 Look at the word Benedictine. From this name, who is the founder of the Benedictine Order?
- 3 After his execution, where did the authorities bury Archbishop Oliver Plunkett?
- 4 When the body was exhumed, where did they take the remains of Archbishop Oliver Plunkett?
- 5 What was the connection with Downside Abbey?
- 6 Where is the relic of Archbishop Oliver Plunkett's head held today for veneration?

Becoming a Saint

- 1 When did Pope Benedict XV beatify Blessed Oliver Plunkett?
- 2 When did the canonisation of St. Oliver Plunkett take place?
- 3 Who is now the Patron Saint of peace and reconciliation in Ireland?



Saint Oliver Plunkett Activities

Glossary

Archbishop: In Christian denominations, an archbishop is a bishop of higher rank or office.

Martyr: A person killed or forced to suffer, because of their religious or other beliefs.

Saint: A person acknowledged as holy or virtuous and regarded in Christian faith as being in heaven after death. There are four steps to sainthood. Steps include, Servant of God, Venerable, Blessed, Saint.

Relic: Apart of a deceased holy person's body or belongings, kept as an object of reverence.

Venerate: To honour (an icon, a relic, etc.) with a ritual act of devotion.

Ordain: To make (someone) a priest or minister; confer holy orders on.

Synod: An assembly of the clergy and the laity in a diocese or other division of a particular Church.

Word Search



ROME	POISH
ARMAGH	DROGHEDA
CANONISED	LOUTH
OLIVER	BENEDICTINE
ARREST	ARCHBISHOP
OLDCASTLE	TRIAL
PLUNKETT	BEATIFIED
CROMWELL	DOWNSIDE
RELIC	RECONCILIATION
PEACE	MARTYR
IRELAND	PLOT
TYBURN	

L T Y B U R N Z F B U Y Z R R
S F V I S C R O M W E L L O E
D O W N S I D E P E A C E M L
B B E N E D I C T I N E J E I
H Z G E M C A N O N I S E D C
D R O G H E D A P O P I S H Z
L I U F I R D X I H S U H O U
A R R E S T I R E L A N D L A
C J A R C H B I S H O P X I R
S D A H O L D C A S T L E V M
B E A T I F I E D Z W K M E A
P A M F T R I A L O U T H R G
L Q P L U N K E T T A X N Z H
O R E C O N C I L I A T I O N
T F H F M A R T Y R O C L Y L

Prayer to Saint Oliver Plunkett

Glorious martyr, Saint Oliver Plunkett, who willingly gave your life for the faith, help us also to be strong in our faith.

By your intercession and example may all hatred and bitterness be banished from the hearts of men and women.

May the peace of Christ reign in our hearts as it did in your heart even at the moment of your death.

Amen (from Athboy parish, Co. Meath)

Find on the internet



- 1 Browse the internet to find the primary Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Dublin who have St. Oliver Plunkett as their patron.
- 2 Who is the Patron Saint of your school? How did your school receive that name?
- 3 Browse the internet to find out how many sports clubs have St Oliver Plunkett as their name.

Did you know?

That Church celebrates the feast of St. Oliver Plunkett on 1 July annually.

That St. Oliver Plunkett is the Patron Saint of peace and reconciliation in Ireland.

New resource for your School Library: A New Book

'The Captain and the Saint' The Story of St. Oliver Plunkett - Fintan Tracey 2024. ISBN 978-1-7399507-5-0.

This is an easy read of the life and times of St. Oliver Plunkett, disguised as Captain. It is a beautifully illustrated book and brings the story of the saint to life.



The Story of Saint Carlo Acutis (1991-2006)

When Pope Francis recognised a second miracle attributed to the intercession of Carlo Acutis, an Italian teenager, it paved the way for his canonisation by the Catholic Church. A gamer and computer programmer who loved the Eucharist, he is the Church's first millennial saint.

Early Family Life

Carlo Acutis was born May 3, 1991, in London, where his father worked. He received Baptism in Our Lady of Dolours Church, Chelsea. Four months later, he moved with his parents, Andrea Acutis and Antonia Salzano, to Milan, Italy.

Carlo loved playing video games. His mother recalls that he liked Nintendo Game Boy and GameCube as well as PlayStation and Xbox. He had conversations with his gaming buddies about the importance of going to Mass and Confession and limited his video game playing to no more than two hours per week. Carlo also liked Spiderman and Pokémon. He led an ordinary life in an extraordinary way because he loved Jesus.

Carlo always had a special love for God, even though his parents weren't especially devout. His mother said that she only went to Mass for her first Communion, her Confirmation, and her wedding. Carlo loved to pray the Rosary. After he received his first Communion he went to Mass regularly. He wrote a diary of his thoughts and prayers. He wrote, 'This is my life plan. To live forever with Jesus.'


Love for the Eucharist

Carlo's love for the Eucharist also inspired a deep conversion for his mother. It is said that he urged his parents to attend Mass; it was not the other way round.

In 2023, Antonia spoke of Carlo's devotion to the Blessed Sacrament; "He used to say, 'there are queues in front of a concert, in front of a football match, but I don't see these queues in front of the Blessed Sacrament' ... So, for him the Eucharist was the centre of his life."

Witness to Faith

Carlo's witness to faith as a child led adults to convert and be baptised. Rajesh Mohur, who worked for the Acutis family as an au pair when Carlo was young, converted from Hinduism to Catholicism because of Carlo's witness. Carlo taught Rajesh how to pray the Rosary and told him about the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Rajesh remarked that one of the things that most impressed him as a non-Christian was the witness of



"The more we receive the Eucharist, the more we will become like Jesus."

Carlo's love and concern for the poor — how he interacted with the homeless man who would sit at the entrance of the church and would bring Tupperware dishes filled with food out to people living on the streets. The saints were his role models.

Devotion to Mary, Mother of God

Carlo first visited Lourdes when he was eleven years old. He bought lots of gifts in Lourdes for his friends. He prayed the Rosary every day. The story of Fatima fascinated Carlo. On his website he showed the importance of the Eucharist in Our Lady's message to the children in Fatima in 1917. Carlo loved Mary, Mother of God and it affected how he related with his female classmates and the way he talked about girls with his friends.

Defence of Church Teaching

Carlo wasn't afraid to defend Church teaching, even in situations when his classmates disagreed with him. His high school classmates remember Carlo giving a passionate defence for the protection of life, when there was a classroom discussion about abortion.

Faithful Friend and Advocate for Justice

Carlo was a faithful friend. He stood up for pupils at school who got bullied, especially colleagues with disabilities. When a friend's parents were getting a divorce, Carlo made a special effort to include his friend in the Acutis' family life.

Interest in Computers

Carlo was fascinated with computer coding and taught himself some of the basic coding languages, including C and C++. He used his computer skills and internet savvy to help his family put together an exhibition on Eucharistic miracles. This display has travelled to thousands of parishes on five continents. His spiritual director attested to Carlo's personal conviction that the scientific evidence from Eucharistic miracles, would help people to realise Jesus' real presence in the Eucharist and would encourage people to attend Mass.

Diagnosis of Leukaemia

Carlo was diagnosed with leukaemia as a teenager. Before his death in 2006, he offered his sufferings for Pope Benedict XVI and for the Church, saying: "I offer all of my suffering to the Lord for the Pope and for the Church in order not to go to purgatory but to go straight to heaven."

Death of Carlo Acutis

Carlo died on October 12, 2006, and was buried in Assisi. His body lies in repose in a glass tomb in Assisi where he can be seen in jeans and a pair of Nike sneakers. Thousands came to pray at his tomb at the time of his beatification in October 2020.

Questions on Saint Carlo Acutis

Early Family Life

- 1 Why did Pope Francis think that Carlo Acutis should be canonised?
- 2 When was St. Carlo Acutis born?
- 3 Why is Carlo called a millennium saint?
- 4 What is the name of the Church in which Carlo was baptised?
- 5 What were Carlo's parents' names?
- 6 Name the video games Carlo liked to play.
- 7 Why did Carlo spend only two hours per week on game playing?
- 8 What was Carlo's life plan?

Love for the Eucharist

- 1 How did Carlo's love for the Eucharist influence his mother?
- 2 What did Carlo notice about the queues of young people?
- 3 I wonder what it meant for Carlo to have Jesus at the centre of his life.

Witness to Faith

- 1 What was the name of the young man who acted as an *au pair* for Carlo?
- 2 What faith had Rajesh?
- 3 Why did Rajesh convert to become a Catholic?
- 4 In what way did Carlo influence Rajesh in his faith?
- 5 How did Carlo help the people who were hungry and poor?
- 6 Who were the role models for Carlo?

Devotion to Mary, Mother of God

- 1 What age was Carlo when he first went to Lourdes?
- 2 How did Mary, Mother of God influence Carlo in his relationship with his female classmates?

Saint Carlo Acutis, a Saint for our Time

The day Pope Leo XIV canonised St. Carlo Acutis was a great cause of celebration for Carlo's family and the whole world. This occasion was a call to action. St. Carlo witnessed a life of holiness in his love of God and love for the poor. He showed that 'holiness is not about retreating from the world but transforming it. With a laptop in hand and a heart anchored in the Eucharist, Carlo reminds us that technology, when consecrated, becomes a vessel of grace, and that creation, when honoured, becomes a liturgy of praise.' <https://laudato-youthinitiative.org/2025/09/07/carlo-acutis-friend-of-st-francis-canonised-saint-on-september-7-2025-by-pope-leo-xiv/>



- 3 What prayer did Carlo say to show honour to Mary, Mother of God?

Defence of Church Teaching

- 1 How did Carlo support the pro-life movement?
- 2 How do you think Carlo showed he was a faithful friend?
- 3 How did Carlo show he was inclusive of others?
- 4 Why might Carlo have thought it was important to go to Mass?

Interest in Computers

- 1 How did Carlo show he had a keen interest in computers?
- 2 How does your interest in computers match up with Carlo's interest?
- 3 What was Carlo's personal conviction about Eucharistic miracles?

Diagnosis of Leukaemia

- 1 What year did Carlo die?
- 2 For whom did Carlo say he would offer his suffering?
- 3 Who was Pope in 2006?
- 4 Who is the current Pope?

Death of Carlo Acutis

- 1 Where is Carlo Acutis buried?
- 2 Why do people visit Carlo's tomb?

Saint Carlo Acutis, a Saint for our Time

- 1 Why do you think that Carlo Acutis is a saint for our time?
- 2 How did Carlo live his life of holiness?
- 3 In what way could Carlo influence young boys and girls in their use of technology?

Saint Carlo Acutis Activities

Glossary

Eucharist: The word Eucharist means thanks. Other names for Eucharist are Mass, Holy Communion, the Blessed Sacrament and the Lord's Supper. The priest celebrates the Eucharist in the Catholic Church. It is one of the seven sacraments. At Mass, the bread and wine under the action of the priest, are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Jesus Christ first instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper. At the Last Supper, Jesus told the disciples, 'Do this in memory of me.'



Prayer for Children to Saint Carlo Acutis

Dear St. Carlo,
You were a great friend to Jesus.
Please be my friend too and guide me every day.
Help me to love Jesus as you did.
Help me to be patient,
Honest and kind to everyone I meet.
Show me how to use my gifts to bring joy to everyone.
Stay close to me and help me always choose what is right.
I ask you to obtain for me (mention your request).
Help me when I am sad and remind me that Jesus is always with me.
Saint Carlo, pray for me!

Amen

Activities

Carlo Maris Antonio Acutis was baptised on 18 May 1991, in the Church of Our Lady of Dolours, in Chelsea. What is the date of your Baptism? In what Church were you baptised? What are the names of your sponsors?

After a pilgrimage to Lourdes, where Carlo received Rosary beads, he wished to pray the Rosary. Can you invite a group of friends to pray a decade of the Rosary?

Carlo received First Holy Communion on 16 June 1998. When did you receive Holy Communion for the first time? What memories have you of the day you received Holy Communion for the first time? How has your love of God grown since that time?

Carlo included Mass in his daily timetable. Find out the times of Mass in your parish church.

Quotes

"Everyone is born as an original, but many people end up dying as photocopies."

"To Christ, I can always confide something and tell Him what I do not understand. And then within me, I find a word that He sends me: a moment of the Gospel that fills me with conviction and certainty."

Colour the picture of Saint Carlo Acutis



Websites

Browse Carlo's website on Eucharistic miracles

www.miracolieucaristici.org

Download some colour photographs from Carlo's childhood

www.carloacutis.com



The Story of Venerable Nano Nagle (1718-1784)

The 250th Anniversary
of the Presentation
Congregation in Ireland

begins on 24th December 2025

Early Life

Honora 'Nano' Nagle was born in 1718 at Ballygriffin, near Killavullen, County Cork, Ireland, into a wealthy Catholic family during the era of the Penal Laws - laws that severely restricted education and religious freedom for Catholics. Despite the harsh environment, the Nagle family valued learning and ensured their children were privately educated at home.

As a teenager, Nano was sent to France, where Catholic education for Irish children was secretly arranged. Living abroad opened her eyes not only to academic learning but also to the spiritual and social possibilities that existed outside Ireland.

A Pivotal Experience in Paris

While living in Paris, Nano encountered the stark poverty of the city. Early one morning, as she returned from a ball, she saw a group of poor people lining up for work. This contrast between her privileged life and their suffering left a deep and lasting impression.

This moment became foundational in her later decision to devote her life to the poor.

Return to Ireland

A Deepening Sense of Mission

Nano returned to Ireland after the deaths of her parents. She found the rural poor of Cork suffering from deep poverty, little education, and no opportunities for advancement under the Penal Laws. She felt called, spiritually and morally, to help.

At first, Nano considered joining a convent on the continent, but through counsel and reflection she realised that her mission was in Ireland, among her own impoverished people.

Founding the Hedge Schools

In 1754, Nano took a bold step:

She opened her first secret Catholic 'hedge school' in Cork. Teaching Catholic children was illegal, punishable by imprisonment or fines. Nano defied these laws, quietly, courageously, and with absolute determination.

Her schools grew rapidly. Soon she was teaching:

- Reading, writing, arithmetic.
- Sewing and crafts.
- Christian doctrine.
- Practical skills to help them earn livelihood.

Nano funded all of this herself, walking through the streets to solicit donations from wealthy families or using her own inheritance.

The Lady with the Lantern

Nano became a familiar figure walking through the narrow lanes of Cork at night, carrying a small lantern to guide her as she visited the sick, the elderly, and the poor after long days of teaching. This nightly work gave her the title by which she is still remembered: 'The Lady with the Lantern.' Her compassion was radical, fearless, and practical.

Founding the Presentation Order

As the demand for her schools grew, Nano realised that her mission needed continuity beyond her own lifetime. She gathered a small group of dedicated women and on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1775, she founded what would become the Presentation Sisters (Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary). This was the first order of women religious founded in Ireland since the Penal Laws.

Nano shifted some of her work from teaching to establishing the new religious community, forming them in prayer, discipline, and service to the poor.

Final Years and Death

Nano suffered ill health but continued her relentless work. She oversaw seven schools in Cork, caring for hundreds of children, managing funds, and guiding the new religious community. Nano Nagle died on 26 April 1784, leaving behind:

- 7 schools.
- A founding community of Presentation Sisters.
- A legacy that would spread worldwide.

Legacy

Nano Nagle is recognised today as:

- Venerable by the Catholic Church.
- One of the founders of modern Catholic education in Ireland.
- An icon of courage under oppression.
- A champion of the poor.
- The inspiration behind thousands of Presentation Sisters and educators around the world.

The lantern remains the symbol of her mission:

To bring light where there is darkness.

