

COLLOQUE

Journal of the Irish Province of the
Congregation of the Mission

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Editorial

By kind permission of the Provincial, this edition of *Colloque* is given over to articles dealing with All Hallows College. The first two, by John Flynn and Fr William Purcell, set the scene; Flynn's offering a concise pre-history of the site and Purcell offering a short biography of St Vincent de Paul, founder of the Vincentians, whose history has been intertwined with that of the College since they arrived to take on its direction and stewardship in 1892. Both of these articles are taken from past editions of the College's *Annual* and are worthy of recollection and viewing by a new generation.

It should, of course, be noted that the great work on the early years of the College itself is the masterful *The Missionary College of All Hallows 1842-1891* by Kevin Condon CM and published by the College in 1986. Some day, it is to be hoped, another student will continue Fr Condon's work.

Fr Tom Dalzell has kindly adapted a piece which he had earlier published and which is a synopsis of the more recent history of the College.

Dr Sighle Breathnach-Lynch's article on the art collection in All Hallows appeared in an earlier edition of *Colloque* but has been updated in part. It reminds us that the Church, in the early years of the emerging nation state in Ireland, was a key patron of art and artists.

Some time ago, I commissioned Fiana Griffin to write a piece that would focus on the great Evie Hone Rose Window in the College Chapel. There had never been a written description of the window nor an exploration of its themes and designs. Fiana's article is followed by some letters, taken from our archives, of Fr William Purcell, who commissioned the window, which give his intentions and reactions to this most wonderful of works.

We are privileged to have a number of excellent artworks in the College but two of the most cherished are those by Donie Keohane, himself a PastMan of the Seminary.

Finally, we have a reflection on the life of Fr Joe Leonard CM; it is particularly appropriate as we mark the 50th anniversary of the death of John F Kennedy, since Leonard and Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy corresponded for many years. There is, indeed, a great deal of work that could be done exploring the correspondence of Fr Leonard with many of the notable people of his time. As the leadership of the College has been taken on by Dr Patrick McDevitt CM, originally from Chicago, the Leonard piece reminds us also that the links between the College and the United States are not of recent date and are not only institutional and ecclesial but also deeply personal.

All Hallows; the Old and the New

John E Flynn

Taken from the *All Hallows Annual* of 1902

It has been often said that history repeats itself, and that the scenes and events of one age, are but the echoes of the scenes and events of another. This is fully illustrated in our own All Hallows of the present day. Few readers of the ANNUAL are aware, perhaps, that nearly eight hundred years ago there stood on the outskirts of, what was then, the city of Dublin, an All Hallows, in which the daily round of labour and study went on, as it goes on in the All Hallows of the present day. When we add that this old All Hallows stood on the site of the present Trinity College, it cannot fail to receive thereby an additional item of interest. It is of this old All Hallows that we purpose to give a short sketch in the following pages.

Dermot Mac Murrough

Our narrative goes back to the time when Dermot Mac Murrough reigned in Leinster, and when the saintly Laurence O'Toole sat in the see of Dublin. It is not necessary here to give any account of the vices of the one or of the virtues of the other. Suffice it to say, that the ill-fated Dermot left many a blot upon his memory. Amongst the rest, he is charged with having despoiled and burned many monasteries and churches throughout the land, and of putting their priests and monks to the sword. But if this be true, it must be added to his credit, that Dermot did penance, and, as far as possible, made reparation for the crimes he had committed. This he did by founding many religious houses in different parts of his kingdom. We find mention of the Abbey of St Mary, for monks of the Order of St Augustine, founded at Ferns, in the County Wexford; of a Cistercian Monastery at Baltinglass, in the County Wicklow; of a convent of Nuns established in Dublin, known as St Mary de Hogges, and having dependent upon it foundations at Kilcheelen and Athady, the former in Kilkenny, the latter in Carlow. But of all the religious houses that owe their foundation to the penance of Dermot, the most famous was the Prioratus Omnium Sanctorum, the Priory of All Hallows. As we have seen, it stood on the ground at present occupied by Trinity College. When we consult the maps of Dublin of that period, we find that a large portion of the southern bank of the Liffey was then outside the city boundary. There was a city gate standing somewhere about the site of the present City Hall at the end of

Dame Street, and the ground stretching on to the sea, from the present College Green to Ringsend, was an open space, known by the name of the Steyn. This spot was well known to the Danes, for here it was that, under Hasculf, they prepared to assault the city in 1171. Here, then, just outside the city, Dermot founded the Priory of All Hallows in 1166, and established there the Canons Regular of St Augustine.

His grants to All Hallows

The old Chronicler tells us that Dermot brought the Canons of All Hallows from the old All Hallows Church of the daughter of Zola; but what or where this Church was cannot now with certainty be determined. The canons followed the rule of St Augustine as it had lately been reformed in the Convent of Aroasia. It is an interesting fact that St Laurence O'Toole first introduced this reformed Order into his Diocese. We have no trace, however, of where their monastery was, prior to their being established at All Hallows. They must have stood high in the favour of Mac Murrough, for, we find that not long after their establishment, he conferred upon Bishop Edan, his confessor, for the use and benefit of All Hallows, a large tract of land called Ballidubgail (the present Baldoyle) with its men, that is "with Melisu Macfeilccan, his sons and grandsons free and released from any procuration or expedition", and, moreover, "he charged the men of Dublin and Leinster to maintain the Canons in the possession of the said land, in all liberty, without any exaction of tithes, as fully and honourably as any college of canons or monks in Ireland was possessed of any royal endowment." This was a very special privilege in those early days, for the exactions then made on Church lands and property were very exorbitant. Hence we find an ancient Synod of Cashel formulating a special decree against them "that all the Church lands and possessions throughout all Ireland shall be free from all secular exactions and impositions, and especiallie that no lords, earles, nor noblemen, nor their children nor familie shall exact or take anie coine and liverie, cosheries, nor cuddies nor anie other like custome from thenseforth, in or upon anie of the Church lands and territories." (Stanyhurst.)

The grant of land made by Dermot to the newly established Priory of All Hallows was confirmed by Royal Charter, and, it is an interesting fact that, amongst the witnesses to this Charter, appears the name of Kevin, then Abbot of Glendalough.

Henry II

In 1171, Henry II came to Dublin and established his Court at the old "Thengmote" or place of assembly of the Danish Colonists. This was on the rising ground above the Hoggen (the present College Green)

and would correspond with that now occupied by St Andrew's Church and the surrounding district. It was consequently in close proximity to the old Priory of All Hallows. Here, we are told, Henry passed some six months and, about Christmas of the year 1171, entertained the Irish Princes with royal magnificence. The close proximity of royalty may have been a mixed blessing for the Canons of All Hallows. However, it brought them one very substantial benefit. Before leaving Dublin, Henry confirmed to them the grants of land already made them by Dermot. After events proved the advantage of this important concession. The successors of Henry had little respect for Irish monastic property, and for centuries the English robbery of Church lands was an ever-recurring source of bitter hostility.

The first English Archbishop of Dublin, John Comyn, was appointed in 1181. Shortly after his arrival in Dublin, he became the patron of the Priory of All Hallows, and we find this patronage confirmed to his successor, Henry de Loundres, by a Bull of Innocent III in 1216.

Papal Grants

Prior to this date, however, the Priory of All Hallows had become the object of Papal favour. There is extant a Bull of Urban II in 1186, in which he exempts from tithes the tillage lands of the Priory which the Canons should have cultivated with their own hands or at their own expense. He confirms to them all their ancient liberties and immunities. He forbids any ecclesiastical authority to presume to pronounce against them, without most manifest cause, sentence of interdict or excommunication, and, finally, by Apostolic authority grants to their houses and granges the privilege of freedom from arrest.

Later on, Gregory IX, by a Bull given in 1234, prohibited the erection of new chapels or oratories within their parish without their consent, though in the same Bull he enjoins them to receive Holy Orders, the Holy Oils, and the Consecration of their Churches and Altars, from the Bishop of their diocese. From this it would seem that the Canons of All Hallows were claiming exemption from Episcopal jurisdiction. This claim they probably based on the fact that, in the time of Bishop Edan they were independent of the See of Dublin.

Finally, about 1276, Innocent V conferred additional privileges; the Canons were now to be protected against all new and undue exactions of Archbishops and Bishops, and all other persons, whether secular or ecclesiastic, and it was specially provided that the monastery was to be under the government of a prior.

Glendalough subject to All Hallows

Such were some of the temporal favours bestowed on old All Hallows and its monks. But this was not all. It enjoyed also great spiritual authority. The first and most important was that exercised over the old Abbey of St Saviour of Glendalough. Prior to 1152 Glendalough was a separate diocese containing an important city. Laurence O'Toole had been Abbot of Glendalough before being transferred to the See of Dublin and Kevin was Abbot at the time of the foundation of the monastery of All Hallows. In 1152, in a Synod held at Mellifont (at which the Bishop of Glendalough was present), the See of Glendalough was divided, and a portion added to the See of Dublin, which up to that time was confined within the walls of the city. In 1192 the privilege of nominating the Bishop of Glendalough was conferred on John Comyn, who, as we have seen, was the first English Archbishop of Dublin. Finally, in 1216, Innocent III confirmed the union of Dublin and Glendalough, on condition that with the revenues of the latter, a religious house or hospital should be established. It was in fulfilment of this condition, that Henry de Loundres had a large hospital built on the sea shore, then close to the Priory of All Hallows. This hospital was intended as a refuge for pilgrims on their way to St James of Compostella, who might be detained by stress of weather on the Eastern Coast. Thus Dublin became first not only in temporal, but also in spiritual importance. There is an old tradition that St Patrick had foretold this superiority of Dublin. He came on one occasion as far as Finglas, and looking over the land that lay before him he blessed it, and, in the spirit of prophecy, said: "Pagus iste nunc exiguus, eximius erit, divitiis et dignitate dilatabitur, nec crescere cessabit donec in regni solium sublimetur". (Jocelin, *Vita S. Patr.*) (*"This place, now tiny, will become distinguished, expanding in riches and dignity, nor will it cease to grow until it is elevated to the throne of the kingdom"*. Ed.) *

It was shortly after the union of the two dioceses that the Abbey of Glendalough was subjected to the Priory of All Hallows; and we find in the Charter of Subjection that the monks of Glendalough are commanded to be obedient to the wise and wholesome admonitions of their new Priors.

Gifts of Land

As time went on additional grants of and Gifts of Land were made to the Priory. In 1234, forty acres in the territory of Dovenachbroc (now Donnybrook) were bestowed upon it, for which the Canons were to pay yearly one pound of pepper for pottage.

In 1240, the Lord of Offaly conferred upon them the parish of Tughadoc in Kildare; William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, made a grant

of the church of Rathmackne in the diocese of Ferns, and Theobald Fitzwalter bestowed upon the Priory two acres and a half of the land of Steyn quite close to the Priory itself. There is also mention about this time of a curious gift of John, son of Dermic. By a formal deed he gives and grants to the Canons of All Hallows a boat to catch salmon and other fish in the Liffey, in return for which he was to receive a rose, on every St John the Baptist's Day, in the Church of All Hallows.

The Present Site of All Hallows

It is at this time that we find mention of that grant of land to the Priory which was to have such deep and lasting interest for All Hallows of the present day. There is extant a deed bearing date of the fifteenth year of the reign of Henry III, by which Thurstan, son of Vincent de la Strande, grants in perpetuity to the Prior of All Hallows and to the Canons serving therein, his estate of Kenturk or Clonturk near Dublin. This is no other than the ground on which our College of All Hallows now stands. We shall see later on, how this land came into the possession of the founder of the College, the saintly Father Hand.

Serfs

Passing now from the various grants of land thus made to the ancient Priory of All Hallows, we find mention of a very extraordinary, and, in our days, of an almost incredible gift made by one Richard de Pheypo. There is no longer question of a grant of land, it is now a grant of serfs or slaves, with all the issue and progeny of their sept. We may remember, that Dermot Mac Murrough, when conferring on the Canons of All Hallows the lands of Ballidubgail, granted, together with the land, all its men. The gift of Pheypo seems to be the renewal of the former grant of Mac Murrough. That some form of serfdom existed in Ireland down to a comparatively recent period cannot be questioned. But in the grant here made, as far as can be gathered from the Charter of Concession, it seems certain that there is question of slaves in full sense of the word. They are given independently of the land, and might be removed or sold independently of it.

It does not appear, however, that they were used for any other purpose than the cultivation of the land, and there is no suggestion of any harshness in their treatment. On the contrary, they seem to have been thoroughly devoted to their masters and to have served them with perfect freedom and alacrity.

It is a remarkable fact that almost invariably in the grants of land made to the Priory, the donors declare that they make the grant '*pro salute animarum*' as well of themselves as of their parents, children, relations, and friends, but never do they look for any temporal advan-

tage from their generosity. Sometimes, indeed, a rent was exacted, but it was merely nominal, and was imposed only to give the Priory greater security in its possessions.

Decadence of the Priory

The period which we have now reached, seems to have been the brightest and most prosperous in the history of the old Priory of All Hallows. Its spiritual authority was acknowledged far beyond its own walls, and its temporal possessions were scattered largely over the land.

But, like so many other religious institutions, its decline set in, just when it was at the height of its prosperity. Not that the decadence is in any way to be laid to the charge of the Priory itself, or to the infidelity of its Canons. But the times were changed. New masters reigned in Ireland. The spirit of lawlessness was abroad, and little respect was shown to the property of the Church. So great was the feeling of hostility that existed between the natives and the strangers that we find in the Statute of Kilkenny an enactment that "no Irishman should be admitted into any religious house within the land of Ireland," while at the same time the Irish Bishops were ordered by Innocent IV to revoke a statute they had made that "no Englishman should be received into their religious houses as a Canon." Moreover, as a result of this hostility between the two races, mutual incursions were being constantly made by them into one another's territory. In this state of things it was difficult indeed for the old Priory to maintain peaceful possession of its more distant lands, and more difficult still to secure the revenues they should bring in. Hence, in 1305 we find the Prior complaining of a "*rescue of distresses which had been made in the fee of Tipperary*." In 1318, he was obliged to put forward the plea of poverty as the grounds for not paying a fine that had been levied upon him, and seventy years later, the same plea was put forward for a similar purpose.

Things must have gone from bad to worse, for in 1423 the Canons drew up a statement which was vouched by Archbishop Talbot, to the effect that, owing to the unjust and hostile occupation of its lands, the ruin of its buildings, and various other oppressions, the Priory was reduced to such a state of misery, that what remained of its goods was not sufficient for its support. They, moreover, ask a remittance of two marks payable to the Archbishop so that they may be able to maintain the divine service and their other works of piety.

Prior of All Hallows appointed Admiral of Baldoyle in Perpetuity

Little more of interest is recorded of the ancient Priory till the reign of Edward IV. In that reign, in the years 1472 and 1474, we find the Canons once again the objects of Royal favour. In the former year the

title of William Stewnot, Prior of All Hallows, to all wrecks in the manor of Baldowell was conferred by Act of Parliament (sic), while in 1474 a new and unheard of privilege was conferred upon the Priors of All Hallows for all time to come. The Canons had complained that the inhabitants of their land of Ballidubgail were being daily troubled and molested by the King's admirals, who levied inordinate *amercements* upon them. The complaint was heard and a strange remedy applied. The King's admirals were removed, and by authority of Parliament it was enacted, that the Prior of All Hallows and his successors for all time should be admirals of Ballidubgail, and should enjoy that office without any molestation from the King or his heirs or successors.

In the same year an Act of Parliament was passed in Dublin by which the Prior of All Hallows was empowered, "to send and carry to the Irish *enemies*, victuals and other necessities, to let out to them the lands of the Priory, to treat and be conversant with them in war and peace, and to be godfathers to their children without any breach of the law."

The next mention we find of the ancient Priory is in the year 1506, when the masters and wardens of the Church of St George in Dublin agree to pay to Nicholas, Prior of All Hallows, the sum of four marks yearly "for the sustentacion and wages of a honnest chapleyn to say Masse and other divine service in the said chapell." The last grant of land of which we have any record was in the year 1507. That was the year in which one Margaret White surrendered to the King for the use of the Prior and Canons of All Hallows her lands and tenements in the barony of Newcastle in the County of Dublin.

Confiscation of the Old Priory

From this time little more is known of its history till, some thirty years later, it shared the fate of so many other monastic institutions and fell a prey to the licentiousness and greed of Henry VIII. One interesting event, however, is recorded in the meantime. In 1528 the Lord Deputy Butler, Earl of Ossory, was received and entertained by the Prior of All Hallows. Portion of this entertainment consisted in the production of two plays – one representing the Passion of Christ, the other the several deaths of the different Apostles. These plays must have been on a very large scale, for they were enacted in the open air on a large stage erected in Hoggen Green (now College Green) in front of the Priory. So far we have endeavoured to gather together whatever information was available concerning the old Priory of All Hallows. Its history may be said to end here. The day of doom was not far distant. Within ten years the decree of confiscation and dissolution had gone forth, and All Hallows, whose Canons had for nigh 400 years daily sung the divine praises, whether within their own Priory, or in the old Cathedral of Christchurch,

was to be silent for ever.

On the 16th November, 1538, the farce of surrender was gone through. The last Prior and Canons of All Hallows were gathered together, and in presence of the Royal Commissioners were made to declare that “they did of their own free will, seal, sign and deliver to the King, their ancient Priory with all its goods and possessions”.

Confiscated Priory becomes the property of Dublin Corporation

The work of confiscation was complete and the old Priory, as such, ceased to exist. Its after history is easily told. In 1534 Lord Thomas Fitzgerald had revolted against the King. The loyal citizens of Dublin had supported the Royal cause, and now in 1539 as a reward of their loyalty, the King granted to the mayor, bailiffs and citizens of Dublin the Priory of All Hallows with all its lands and advowsons just as they had been surrendered only a year before into the hands of the Royal Commissioners. Thus the Priory, with all its possessions, became the property of the Corporation of Dublin, and such it has remained till this day.

Foundation of Trinity College

Some fifty years later, Elizabeth founded the “College of *the Holy and Undivided Trinity, near Dublin*”. A site for buildings was required. In their effusive loyalty the Corporation of Dublin came forward, and in 1592, made over to Adam Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, Chancellor of Ireland, and Provost of the New College, the ground on which the old Priory stood. The old buildings were all soon demolished, and Trinity College was raised on that spot, which, more than four hundred years before, Dermot Mac Murrough had freely given to the Prior and Canons of All Hallows. It may be said with truth of the old Priory that, in the work of demolition, not a “stone was left upon a stone,” and indeed no trace of it now remains. The old steeple of the chapel did remain standing for some years after the work of destruction was completed, but that too is gone.

Relics of Ancient Priory

Some of the stones were used in the Relics of building of Trinity College and some are still preserved as relics of the past. Built into the south wall of the old church of St Werburgh is the tomb of the Fitzgerald family. This tomb first stood in the ancient Priory of All Hallows, from which it was transferred to the Church of St Mary del Dam, and finally, found a resting-place in its present position. However, all trace of the past is not lost. One silent witness of old All Hallows still remains. In the garden of the Provost of Trinity College stands to-day an old mulberry

tree which has seen at least four hundred summers. Tradition has it that this tree was planted by the Canons of old, and grew and flourished in the days of their ancient glory. By the kind permission of the present Provost of Trinity College, we have been able to secure a photograph of this old and historic tree. We reproduce it in the ANNUAL. Standing under its shade are the Provost and one of the oldest and most revered Directors of the new All Hallows, Dr O'Mahony. (Unfortunately, it was not possible to get a copy of sufficiently good quality to reproduce it in Colloque).

The New All Hallows.

Such, then, is a brief account of the All Hallows of old. The history of the new All Hallows has already been written. Suffice it to recall here its main details. As we have seen the lands of Kenturk or Clonturk, on which the new All Hallows now stands, had been granted to the Priory of All Hallows in 1229. These lands, therefore, with all the other possessions of the Priory passed into the hands of the Dublin Corporation in 1539.

The first reliable record we have after this date tells us that the lands of Clonturk were leased to James Coghill, a member of a Yorkshire family. This must have been early in the eighteenth century. We find that the old Mansion house now standing was built in 1750 by the Earl of Charleville on the estate of his wife, who was the only daughter and heir of James Coghill. How long it remained in the possession of the Earl of Charleville does not appear. It next passed into the hands of one of Dublin's most famous or infamous citizens, John Claudius Beresford. Famous indeed he was, because no man did more to extend and beautify the Dublin of his day than he did. He conceived the design of widening and extending the quays. He connected Sackville Street with the new Parliament House by the building of Carlisle Bridge, and finally, the present Custom House, one of the most imposing buildings in Dublin, owes its origin to him. In so far, he deserved well of his ancient city. But his name is held in execration for his cruelty during the dark days of 1798. He was captain of a corps of Yeomanry during the Rebellion, and so many and so cruel were the deeds of blood and vengeance they perpetrated that they were commonly known as "Beresford's Bloodhounds."

When Beresford passed away, the house and grounds came into the possession of Sir Guy Campbell. He does not seem to have retained possession for any considerable time, for we know that they were unoccupied in 1842.

Purchase of the Lands of Clonturk

This was some three or four years after Father Hand had conceived the idea of establishing a missionary college which would send forth priests to minister to the wants of the poor exiles of Erin, in whatsoever quarter of the globe they were to be found. He had already laid his plans before the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Rev Dr Murray, and had received his cordial support. He had gone further still and obtained the blessing of the Holy See on his undertaking. Nothing remained but to commence the work. A house was necessary. Father Hand looked around him and fixed his eyes on the old manor and grounds of Clonturk. They were in every way suited to his purpose. No time was to be lost in securing them. He approached the Dublin Corporation on the subject, and, mainly through the influence of O'Connell, who was then Lord Mayor, he became their legal possessor. This was in September, 1842. On the first of the following November the College was opened. Remembering that the lands now in possession of Father Hand had been the property of the old Priory of All Hallows, Archbishop Murray suggested that the new College should bear the old name. The suggestion was gladly adopted, and All Hallows College began its noble work.

What that work has been during the past sixty years it is not for us to chronicle; it is written in those indelible characters that eternity itself shall not efface.

For us, let it suffice to join with the sons of All Hallows scattered over the earth, and in the words of one of our country's greatest orators to cry out, "All Hallows, in thy new character we hail thee, and bowing down in thy august presence, we say, *"Esto Perpetua"*.

* It should be noted that Jocelin's life of St Patrick was not written until the twelfth century by which time the city of Dublin was well-established (ed).

A Brief History of All Hallows and some of its more recent Presidents

Tom Dalzell SM

We are grateful to Tom for permission to publish this piece
which is an adaptation of a contribution he made to
Leahy and Ryan, *Treasures of Irish Christianity*, Veritas, 2012.

The missionary college of All Hallows has sent several thousand priests on mission since its foundation and in creative fidelity to the vision of its founder it now sends mainly laymen and laywomen to “teach all nations”. All Hallows College was founded in 1842 in Drumcondra on the northside of Dublin by Fr John Hand. It has been in the care of the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentians) since 1892. The lands originally belonged to the priory of All Saints on the southside of the city where Trinity College now stands (Guihan & McQuinn, 2011, p 2). Fr Hand had left Maynooth in 1835, as a deacon, to join a small group of former Maynooth priests and students with the intention of forming a missionary community which would revive in Ireland the missions of St Vincent de Paul. The group initially opened a school on Usher’s Quay in Dublin and later secured a property in Castleknock, in the chapel of which Fr Hand was ordained a priest along with three others in 1835 (MacDevitt, 1885, pp. 84-87).

The Castleknock group had decided on becoming Lazarists, or Vincentians as they came to be known in the English-speaking world. But by the time they had made formal approaches to Paris, Fr Hand, who had been transferred from Usher’s Quay to St Peter’s Church in Phibsborough, had come up with a new idea. He had been greatly impressed by M Choiselat-Gallien, who had come to Dublin to establish the Propagation of the Faith in the country, and he became convinced that a college for the foreign missions was sure to succeed. So with the support of only the Archbishop of Dublin and the Bishop of Meath, he set off to France in 1841 in search of a model for his missionary college (Condon, 1986, pp. 14-18). While still in Phibsborough, he had consulted the Marist Fathers and the Paris College for Foreign Missions, but found their rules of life and mission policies unsuitable to his purpose (Greiler, 2009, pp. 14-15). Fr Favre, the second Superior General of the Marists, would later visit both Maynooth and All Hallows (Laracy, 1997, p 189). A long stay at Saint Sulpice in Paris allowed Fr. Hand to investigate a number of institutes and he found the Sulpician formation

system of training priests, as well as the College of the Holy Spirit's practice of sending priests to the French colonies, more promising. In fact, the All Hallows rule would turn out to be almost identical to the Sulpician one, although it would not be applied so formally (Condon, pp. 38-39; 215). Since the tragedy of the Great Famine began in Ireland only three years after Fr Hand had received approval from Rome and acquired Drumcondra House for his college, All Hallows priests would be sent mainly to Catholics who had been displaced by the famine throughout the English-speaking world.

More than 4000 priests have been sent to the English-speaking missions since those early days (Murphy, 1992, p 445). A good number of them became bishops, such as James Moore who became a bishop in Ballarat, Australia, in 1884; Jeremiah Doyle was the first bishop of Lismore, New South Wales, in 1887; John O'Reilly became Archbishop of Adelaide in 1895; and Patrick Delany, a former professor at All Hallows, was appointed Archbishop of Hobart in 1903: John Joseph Glennon, Archbishop of St. Louis from 1903-1946, was made a Cardinal. And while many others have become bishops, the most recent is Fr John Sherrington who studied and taught Moral Theology at All Hallows in the 1990s and has recently been appointed an auxiliary bishop in Westminster. Indeed the photographs of hundreds of All Hallows ordinands still are still proudly displayed in the College. But the photographs also demonstrate that the classes began to decrease in size after the Second Vatican Council.

In the 1980s, it seemed that the well was beginning to run dry. But a new president of the College, Fr Kevin Rafferty CM (who succeeded Fr Tom Lane CM, a man who had successfully implemented the vision of the Council in the 1960s and 70s) applied his imagination and came up with a new vision for All Hallows. It would still be Fr Hand's missionary college, but its doors would now be open, not only to candidates for the priesthood and to Religious, but to laymen and laywomen seeking training in pastoral ministry for the contemporary world. Today, the majority of All Hallows' students are lay, but they are still sent out on mission to all nations. All Hallows re-invented itself under Fr Rafferty while remaining true to Fr Hand's desire. New, more modern, facilities were built and imaginative new courses in pastoral ministry for men and women were introduced (Balfe & Spring, 2008, p. 131) and validated by the State. Sadly, Fr Rafferty died in January 2008 and Fr Lane in August 2011.

Under Fr Mark Noonan CM, president from 1998-2011, another new development was All Hallows becoming a linked college of Dublin City University, along with St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, and the Mater Dei Institute. A whole suite of Masters degree courses were launched,

from social justice to spirituality and also management. The local Church continued to be served with conferences and seminars, such as the annual “Developing Parish” seminar. The John Hand Library was built, and badly needed renovations to the property were carried out. And so that theology could hold its own in the university, research by staff and students was promoted to an unprecedented degree in the college. In addition to research carried out by its many postgraduate students, All Hallows still has a large cohort of research students for its size and there is a growing staff research community. And if there had been an emphasis on adult education in the college since the 1980s, with half the undergraduate classes in theology and philosophy or literature being composed of mature students, All Hallows has established its own Adult Learning programme which offers degrees in personal and professional development so as to meet new needs in society and in the Church.

The college has a new president since the end of 2011, Fr Patrick McDevitt CM, an American Vincentian. Fr Eugene Curran, an Irish Vincentian, has become a vice-president, and a number of other Vincentians still teach in the college. Fr McDevitt has raised the Vincentian profile of the college. His leadership has been marked by a drive to clarify the college’s identity now, to strengthen its financial viability and make its structures fit to purpose. All programmes now focus on leadership and service and so, drawing on his experience at DePaul University in Chicago, he has introduced community-based service learning, among other things, as an essential component of the curriculum. All Hallows is more international than ever before and a new strategic plan, *Aisling* 2017, promises great things for the future.

Much has changed since the idea of the missionary college of All Hallows was conceived by Fr Hand, not least in our theological understandings of Church and mission and their relationship to society. All Hallows is faced with new challenges, particularly in terms of uncertainties in the higher education landscape in the country. But its success to date has been due to its ability to adapt to changes in the world it has sought to serve. It remains committed to the mission it had in 1842, but it continues to re-invent itself.

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St Vincent de Paul

William Purcell CM

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When he was about fourteen years of age, Vincent de Paul was sent away to school in the hope that he might become a priest. He pursued his studies first in Dax and, after a few years there he went on to the University of Toulouse where, four years after his ordination to the priesthood, he graduated a Bachelor of Divinity in 1604. In all, some nine or ten years had elapsed since he began his humanities in Dax. The help his family was able to afford him covered the cost of only about two of those nine or ten years; for the rest, he had to provide for himself. While yet in Dax, he had begun to do so by acting as tutor to a couple of younger boys, and some time after his arrival in Toulouse, he was fortunate enough to find himself in charge of a small school, a charge which allowed him and enabled him to carry on his own studies for the priesthood at the same time.

Vincent de Paul was not the first, nor has he been the last, to work early and late in order to pay for his own education. Nevertheless, the fact that he did so is indicative, as it would be in any similar case, of initiative, courage and perseverance. And the work that came to his hand is revealing too. Normally parents are careful about their children and do not entrust them to the care of the first stranger that comes along. Monsieur de Comet, a lawyer in Dax, was no exception to the rule. He knew Vincent's family and, realising that there was something in the boy, encouraged his parents to send him to school. After a year or so, when he saw how Vincent was getting on he took him into his home to teach his own two little boys. He knew, of course, the straitened circumstances of the de Paul family and was anxious to help, but he wanted to do so prudently and without hurting anybody's pride. Obviously, Vincent was making a good impression. And now that he had him in his own house and was able to observe at close quarters the promising youth he had taken under his patronage. M de Comet's confidence increased. When therefore the time came to go to Toulouse, the good opinion of M de Comet went with his protégé, and, in due course, we find Vincent with a group of pupils around him. There was that in him, apparently, which inspired confidence in people like Monsieur de Comet and his wife. He was intelligent and reliable, even though he had the schoolboy's dread of ridicule: he had a way with him and the work that had fallen to him on his father's farm had matured him beyond his years. In short, during his time at school in Dax and at the University

in Toulouse, he seems to have given evidence of that firm, sensitive and charming character which so distinguished him in later life.

Strength of character and charm of manner do not always go together. A determined character may easily be, or may easily become a forbidding character: one has but to compare Richelieu with St Vincent de Paul. On the other hand a charming manner may be a mere facade with nothing behind it. When however the qualities are happily blended in the same person, we may say that the two great virtues of temperance and fortitude are working together to give that man the mastery of himself and enable him gradually to face the world "with wide eyes calm upon the whole of things, in a little strength". (1)

The young priest, Vincent de Paul, soon had need of all the strength he could muster, for in July, 1605, he was captured by pirates in the Gulf of Lions and sold into slavery in North Africa. Knowing, as we now do, that he escaped two years afterwards and got back to France, we are inclined to assume that he was aware of all this beforehand; and in consequence, we are inclined to overlook the ordeal he underwent during those two fateful years. In fact, when he was sold as a slave he faced a life sentence, and this bleak prospect must have tormented him as the weeks and months went slowly by. There were thousands of Christina slaves in North Africa at the time. Most of them left their bones there and who was Vincent de Paul that he might expect a better fate? As he was being sold like an animal and passed from one master to another, each of whom had the power of life and death over him, his heart cannot have been very high. The sea was on one side and the desert on the other: he knew nobody and nobody knew him: he was lost. And in the renegade to whom he was finally sold, we may sense the hell that screamed all around him. Like the three young men in the fiery furnace, however, Vincent remained unharmed and in the end emerged triumphant, leading captivity captive (Eph 1:8). Speaking humanly, it was his stout heart that upheld him until such time as his high integrity and personal charm had won for him the co-operation necessary to plan and carry out his escape. But the letter he wrote soon afterwards from Avignon to M. de Comet in Dax admits us to the real secret of his deliverance:

All the while, God wrought in me the belief that I should be delivered on account of the earnest prayers I offered to him and to the blessed Virgin Mary. I firmly believe that I owe my deliverance entirely to her intercession (I, 7).

Here we have first hand evidence of the strong faith and simple piety which constituted the citadel of his soul. The ordeal in North Africa

had but served to strengthen that citadel while reducing to ashes the youthful illusions and worldly vanity that could only serve as cover for the enemy in a more determined assault. The more determined assault was made some years later; but without avail; for as in Africa so in Paris: "The Lord his God was with him and the sound of the victory of the king in him" (Nm. 23:22).

After his searching novitiate in North Africa, Vincent spent a year in Rome in the Italian household of his patron Pietro di Montorio, whom Vincent met as Papal Legate in Avignon. He went to school again in Rome; but for an observant Gascon in contact with a member of the Diplomatic Corps, Rome itself must have been the great school. The *Congregatio de Auxiliis* had just concluded. How the echoes of North Africa must have jostled in his mind with the echoes he now heard of the famous controversy! It was in the middle of its course when he was in Rome in 1600; and now he returns to find that while he and so many others were in slavery just across the Mediterranean, the great debate had continued as if they did not exist. Was he amazed at the contrast, or did he think to himself that, while the ordinary soldier is at the front, the supreme command has to safeguard the grand strategy upon which so many fronts depend? He certainly was no lover of controversy in later life, but he did not forget the slaves. Whatever his thoughts may have been during that year in the Eternal City and whatever wisdom he may have acquired there, the expected benefice did not materialise, and so, towards the end of 1608, we find him in Paris. By that time, he was well schooled in adversity. He had gone deeper than Dante into exile and knew at least as well as Dante how salt the savour of another's bread; but still he hoped that fortune might smile on him in the shelter of *Notre Dame*. It was perfectly natural that he should be concerned about his future. He had to live, and to live as a priest; and it soon becomes evident that we should be altogether misjudging him were we to think that in labouring for the meat which perishes he was forgetting that which endures unto life everlasting (Jn 6:27).

As such the Wars of Religion in France were over. In the good providence of God, they served to give a rude awakening to the Catholic conscience of the country, and the Eldest Daughter of the Church was now hurrying to work, to the work of reform. Vincent got to Paris during the rush-hour of the new morning. There was no fanfare at his coming however significant his entry may seem to us now. And it was to be always thus where he was concerned. His coming was never heralded, but as he was leaving, people realised who had been with them, as did the disciples at Emmaus. Soon after his coming to Paris, he realised that Father Pierre de Berulle was looked upon as a leader in devout circles in the capital. Vincent was attracted to the great reformer and Berulle

became his spiritual director. Their mutual acceptance of one another does credit to both of them. Neither of them could foresee the future, but “to the Lord was his own work known from the beginning of the world” (Acts 15:18) and while Vincent was engaged in the milieu to which Berulle had introduced him, he discovered the path which the Lord would have him follow, though little did he think where it was going to lead him or what a wide and crowded thoroughfare it was going to become.

He was about two years in Paris when he suddenly found himself in a rather unpleasant situation. A gentleman with whom he was sharing a room missed his purse and accused Vincent of having stolen it. And the accusation was not whispered in a corner; it echoed through the house and down the street. Beyond calmly saying that he was innocent and knew nothing about the matter, Vincent made no attempt to clear his name. It was not in fact cleared until several years afterwards when the real thief confessed.

This incident throws an interesting light on the spiritual development of Vincent de Paul. Five or six years previously, just before he was captured and sold into slavery, he had been so ready to assert his rights that he had had a man clapped into jail in order to recover a debt from him; now the same Vincent allows himself to be injured and insulted and says nothing. It was not that he did not feel it or that his spirit was broken. He felt it keenly but kept himself in hand, and did so from the highest motives. Many years afterwards, in June 1656, when speaking to his community on fraternal correction, he referred to the incident, and the vividness of his reference after so many years would seem to show that here was a milestone in his spiritual life. Using the third person in order to conceal his identity, he said:

A member of the community was once accused of having robbed his companion, and that before the whole house (where they were staying). The charge was not true. Finding himself falsely accused, although he never meant to justify himself, the thought nevertheless did occur to him: “See here; you are going to justify yourself, are you not? You are being falsely accused, you know!” “Oh no”, he said, as he lifted up his mind to God; “it is necessary that I suffer this patiently” (XI, 337).

It is necessary that I suffer this patiently. From the natural point of view, it was not at all necessary. The necessity was imposed by higher considerations; he had lifted up his mind to God. “The just man liveth by faith” (Rm 1:17). Again, the victory goes to the faith and prayer of Vincent de Paul. And this brings us to the crucial period of his life,

to that time when he crossed the mysterious watershed that seems to divide ordinary living from great sanctity and found his life thereafter to be such as the Psalmist prayed that life might be for God's chosen people, "like a torrent in a south land" (Ps 126).

While he was attached to the household of the ex-Queen, Margaret of Valois, one of his fellow chaplains there was a learned divine who, before he came to reside in Paris, had been prominent in his diocese as a controversialist defending the Catholic faith against the Huguenots. After some time in his sinecure in the capital, the learned Doctor found himself troubled by temptations against the faith. He confided in Vincent, who advised and helped him as best he could. Despite these kind offices, the temptation continued, and with such virulence that the demon seemed determined to capture the soul of this good priest. As a result of all he suffered he fell ill and was in danger of dying in despair. Vincent was deeply affected by the critical situation and took the heroic step of offering himself to God as a substitute for this tormented soul. God heard his prayer and took him at his word. The mysterious temptation assailed him while immediate and unutterable peace rejoiced the heart of its previous victim. For three or four long years, Vincent was harassed by the diabolical vehemence and suggestiveness of this strange visitation. He wrote out the Creed and placed it as a shield over his heart, and whenever the temptation seemed to be redoubling its fury, he would place his hand on this shield in token of his firm adherence to the true faith. He carried on as usual, never arguing with the tempter but diverting his mind from the temptation by devoting himself more and more to works of charity. The temptation persisted; until at last he made up his mind to devote himself wholly and irrevocably to the service of the poor out of love for his divine Master and in order to imitate him more perfectly. He had no sooner determined to do this than the temptation disappeared. He became a new man; the depression lifted; his heart sang for his new-found freedom; and as grace informed his soul and the Holy Spirit gifted him, the world of faith became his real home. de Berulle, playing Philip to his Nathaniel, had helped him to become ultimate with Jesus of Nazareth, and St Francis de Sales was later to confirm his faith by telling him: "Feed my lambs" (Jn 2 I : 15); but dwelling as his spirit now did at the feet of his divine Master, he had no further need of tutelage; he had himself become, as it were, an original disciple of the Incarnate Word.

Apart from recording it, writers on St Vincent have not paid over-much attention to this temptation. Purification of the Christian spirit by trials and temptations of one kind or another is a commonplace in the lives of saints. For all that, these are very personal experiences and highly relevant to the labours with which divine providence would

honour the labourer in question. It is significant, if not prophetic, to see the future Apostle of Charity taking over another man's burden, and such a burden. It is understood that he consulted his spiritual director about it, and we can only conclude that Berulle must have thought very highly of Vincent to allow him become David to this Goliath.

In addition to its immediate importance in the spiritual life of Vincent de Paul, this temptation would seem to have had a wider relevance. As we have seen, it reached Vincent through a priest who had been prominent in controversy with the Calvinists. The wounds he received in the arena as champion of the faith and which later proved to be so nearly fatal were, therefore, wounds inflicted by the spirit of Calvinism; and his condition when Vincent came to his aid exemplifies the danger still hanging over the Church in France because of what we might now call the fall-out of Calvinism. In view of Vincent's important role during the next forty years or so, it is significant to find him standing so squarely in this gap of danger at the outset of his career. St Francis de Sales had been there before him. Each in his own way had met the challenge and prevailed by opposing to the madness of the age the humble "faith that worketh by charity" (Gal 5:6). But although in each case the temptation was, at a given time, over and done with, both Francis and Vincent were to spend the rest of their lives furnishing detailed and heroic proof of the faith that was in them. The Church has set the seal of her approval upon the sanctity of their lives; the piety of Catholics may however go further and see in the revelation of the Sacred Heart to St Margaret Mary the confirmation of heaven for the spirit of St Francis de Sales; it may also find that the delicate and all embracing charity of St Vincent de Paul is most graciously acknowledged in the radiance which streams down upon this globe from the open-handed gesture of the Immaculate as depicted on the Miraculous Medal.

The dark night of his soul coincided more or less with Vincent's first term in the de Gondi household (1613-1617), and his determination to devote himself to the poor explains sufficiently why he left the de Gondis in order to become Parish Priest of Chatillon-les-Dombes in the diocese of Lyons. It does not explain why he left without taking leave of the family; but the energetic and successful measures which Madame de Gondi immediately took in order to bring him back are sufficient indication that she would not have allowed him to go had she known he was leaving. According to the proverb, what a woman wills God wills. It would seem to have been so in the present instance even though what she willed was not all that God willed. It is obvious that the large de Gondi estates covering, as they did, a number of parishes in different dioceses offered a better starting point and more scope for the exercise of Vincent's real than a rather derelict parish far from the capital. And,

of course, the See of Paris at the time was occupied by a de Gondi. Nevertheless, the four months or so that Vincent spent in Chatillon-les-Dombes established him in his vocation. It was really the first prolonged mission he gave; it was given without any suspicion of intrusion; it enabled him to begin his charitable enterprises; so that when he returned to the de Gondis, he had a good idea of what to do and how to do it. And he returned not as a tutor, tied to the education of a couple of young aristocrats, but as a chaplain to the household, with an *entree* to every parish on the family estates. By the time he was through with the work to be done in those parishes, his good name was established in a number of dioceses and the ground prepared for the foundation of the Congregation of the Mission in 1625.

To get a glimpse of what was behind the activity of those years from 1617 to 1625, we may turn to one of the conferences he gave to his community in St Lazare in 1655:

It is certain that charity, when it dwells in a soul, completely occupies all its powers. There is no rest; it is a fire which is unceasingly active, keeping the person it inflames always keyed up and always in action (XI 215).

He goes on to warn his hearers about the danger to health arising from the indiscreet zeal that would do violence to nature and try to force the hand of God. It is obvious that in August, 1655, he was speaking from a wide experience; but there can be little doubt that when he says charity sets the soul on fire the most decisive experience in question was his own. [It was this fire of charity that powered the drive of his whole active life. It became intense as his soul was purified by the mysterious temptation against the faith, and its intensity, as manifested in the conferences given in the last years of his life, takes one's breath away. He was seriously ill, but the inner flame seemed to mount as the outer frame was crumbling.

In the early days of his conversion, from 1617 onwards, Vincent may very possibly have committed some of the indiscretions against which he later warned his young community. The way in which he more or less took the law into his own hands in order to get to Chatillon could be read in that light. The actual work done in Chatillon seems however to have been little short of the miraculous. In a little over four months, a neglected parish in which heresy was showing its ugly head was transformed. The Vincent of Chatillon is a more memorable figure than the Vincent of Clichy. In Clichy (1612-1613), he proved himself a good pastor; in Chatillon (August-December, 1617), he proved himself more than a good pastor. To all appearances, he was the same Vincent, but in

Chatillon, things began to happen around him. As it were, “virtue went out from him” (Lk 6:19). The ice of prejudice cracked and crumbled. A general thaw set in and a new spring seemed to have come with the new pastor. It was a “showing of the spirit and of power” (1 Cor 2:4).

In such circumstances, one might naturally expect that Vincent would remain in Chatillon. He was but human and had his own feelings certainly; but these were now at the command of the charity which had set his heart on fire. When therefore it was made clear to him that in leaving Chatillon, he would not be deserting his vocation but rather gaining better opportunities for fulfilling it, he no longer hesitated, and Christmas, 1617, saw him back with the de Gondi family. As time passed and he realised his freedom to attend to the larger harvest now opened to him, he must have had second thoughts about the wisdom of hurriedly trying to determine where the divine vocation was leading him; and these thoughts must have received unexpected confirmation from a new experience, a most valuable one, and one that he would hardly have known in Chatillon; he met St Francis de Sales in Paris.

St Francis de Sales was in Paris from November, 1618, to September, 1619. Vincent saw him often and had a number of private talks with him. Their mutual accord must have soon become obvious to themselves; it became obvious to a wider circle when, early in 1622, the Bishop of Paris, at the request of St Francis de Sales and St Jane Frances de Chantal, appointed Vincent superior of the recently established Monastery of the Visitation there. The fact that he knew himself to be acceptable to those two holy people must have been a great consolation to him during the years 1618 to 1623. These were trying years for him. He had come back from Chatillon more convinced than ever of the necessity of missions to the people of the countryside. He also realised that one man alone could accomplish comparatively little; it was necessary that some religious community should be found to undertake the work. With the approval and support of Madame de Gondi, he endeavoured to find such a community. He sought in vain. This was discouraging but perhaps understandable; religious communities usually have their sphere of operation already delimited. But what was far more discouraging and not at all understandable to Vincent was that Berulle was opposed to the idea. Berulle thought that the clergy should be first reformed and that in due time this reform would reach the people; Vincent was eager that something should be done immediately for the people. These divergent views may to some extent represent the different backgrounds of the two men; Vincent was a man of the people, Berulle's family was higher up in the social scale. But such considerations apart, the principal difficulty that now confronted Vincent was that he had either to give up this idea of missions or part company with his

spiritual director, Berulle. Eventually he and Berulle parted company, but in the meantime he was a worried man. And the worry manifested itself; he seemed to have become aloof and over-sensitive. His attention was drawn to this, and so, while leaving his main problem in the hands of God, he set about regaining his composure. In reference to a retreat made in 1621, we find him saying:

I turned to God and earnestly besought him to change my austere and distant manner into a mild and friendly one, and by the grace of our Lord and a little care in suppressing the ebullitions of nature, I have to some extent got rid of my ill humour. (2)

Not very long after he had thus braced himself against depression Vincent found that he had to do the opposite and restrain himself lest he should become overjoyed. For when it became clear to Madame de Gondi that there was no prospect of finding a community to give missions on the scale that was necessary, it began to dawn on her that it should be made possible for Vincent to establish such a community. We have his word for it that this was none of his prompting; he had not thought of establishing such a community. But his humility could not prevent him seeing that Madame de Gondi's idea offered a way out of the impasse with Berulle; for the approval or otherwise of what she had in mind would, in the first instance, be a matter for the diocesan authorities in Paris. With his spiritual problem thus referred to a higher and, as he had reason to believe, a more favourable court, Vincent was free to envisage the realisation of his dream. He was naturally delighted and full of eagerness to begin. Then the second thoughts came again. Whether Berulle's frown had anything to say to them or not, we do not know; we are fortunate however in that these second thoughts found their way into a letter written hurriedly to one of his priests in 1642:

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I beg of you to beware of natural enthusiasm in the matter about which you write to me. The Spirit of God proceeds gently and always goes hand in hand with humility. Do not forget that both you and I are subject to a thousand sallies of nature. When the project of the (Congregation of the) Mission was first mooted, I found myself so continually preoccupied with it that I became distrustful lest the whole idea should be but a prompting of nature or of the evil spirit; so much so that I made a retreat in Soissons expressly in order that it might please God to deliver me from the spirit of pleasure and bustling zeal which had taken such a hold on me. It pleased God to hear my prayer; with the result that in his mercy he took away from me both the one and the other and allowed me to lapse into the contrary disposition. And if God had given any blessing to the Mission, and if I am less of a

scandal to it, in my opinion, it is due under God to this change of heart and to my desire to adhere to the practice of not making a decision or undertaking anything so long as I am all eagerness about it and full of hope that it will produce great results (11 246).

The retreat mentioned in this letter was made, it would appear, in the summer of 1622. On evidence of this retreat and of the one made the previous year, it would appear that about this time Vincent achieved firm command of himself before God and man. And the weapons of his successful struggle are obvious, namely, prayer and self-discipline. From North Africa to Soissons, and beyond that, to the day he died, the routine remained the same: "Watch and Pray" (Mt 26:41). Of the maturity and the rock-like steadiness of character now attained, he gave abundant proof as the years went by, and in a number of his letters the basis of his strength can easily be seen. Here is an extract from one written in 1644:

Other things will follow in their own time. Grace has its moments. Let us abandon ourselves to the providence of God and be very careful not to go beyond it. If it pleases our Lord to give me some consolation in our vocation, I am inclined to think it is that we have endeavoured to be faithful to the supreme government of Providence and to confine ourselves strictly to what it has marked out for us (11 453).

The deep spiritual root of this vigilant and sensitive attitude to the ways and the will of God is evident in the conference on charity which Vincent gave to his community in 1655. Referring to the danger of presumptuously trying to force one's way, as it were, into the Interior Castle, he quoted St Francis de Sales:

A propos of this subject, [recall some words of His Lordship of Geneva, godly words, and well worthy of so great a man: "Oh, I should not wish to go to God if God did not come to me." Admirable words! He would not go to God if God did not come to him (XI 221).
(3)

St Francis de Sales died in December 1622. When St Jane Frances de Chantal died in 1641, Vincent was favoured with an unusual vision. He saw a small globe of fire rising from the ground and ascending to join a larger and more luminous one in the upper regions of the air. Then the two globes, now become one, rose higher, and entering into an infinitely greater and more luminous globe, shone resplendent there. While this

was happening, Vincent was told interiorly that the first globe was the soul of Mother de Chantal, the second was the soul of Francis de Sales and the third was the divine essence. A short time after he had had this vision, he received the news of Mother de Chantal's death and offered Mass for the repose of her soul. When he came to the Memento for the Dead, he saw the same vision again and felt that his prayers were not needed. He concluded his account of the incident by saying that he was inclined to regard the vision as genuine since he was not subject to visions and, apart from this one, never had another (XIII 127). There was no vision when St Francis de Sales died, but when giving evidence for his beatification, Vincent did not hesitate to say that he believed Francis de Sales to be more in the likeness of Christ than anyone he knew. One would like to think then that in leaving him the care of the Visitandines in Paris, St Francis bequeathed to him some of his spirit also. At any rate, we shall not be far wrong if we take it that the influence of His Lordship of Geneva on Vincent, in his first fervour, was a calming one, and one that helped him to develop that supernatural prudence in discerning the will of God and that worshipful adherence to the divine good pleasure which characterised him. By the end of 1622, then, his spiritual formation was complete. He had definitely reached his majority and henceforth, as a faithful disciple of divine providence, he faithfully lived the prophetic word: "In silence and in hope shall thy strength be" (Is 30:15).

From this sketch of Vincent's spiritual formation, it emerges that the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity assumed in his life the primacy which is their due. They did not exist in splendid isolation; the tone of his moral life answered to their high imperative and the gifts of the Holy Ghost helped them to make Vincent in his time and in his degree an angel of the Incarnate Word of God. By his exemplary bearing in the spiritual combat, he had grown in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Pet 3:18); in the words of St John of the Cross, his house was now at rest. If one may presume to say so, it rested facing God as he presents himself to us in the neighbourhood rather than as he is in himself: but at rest it was. One does not need a large acquaintance with the life of Vincent de Paul to know that he did not live in an ivory tower. He was acquainted with grief; and he was acquainted with it not as the priest and the Levite in the parable, who seeing the wounded man lying half dead by the wayside, saw and passed on; he was acquainted with it as the Good Samaritan was, who, seeing the same tragic sight, "came near him and seeing him was moved with compassion. And going up to him bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine" (Lk 10:33). Vincent, the Good Samaritan of his day, bound up the wounds of a nation, pouring the balm of his charity upon the

victims of war, famine, pestilence, social injustice and religious neglect and offering the poor of Christ the chalice of salvation. It was an overwhelming task; but as one studies his life or goes through what is left of his correspondence, one cannot help a growing feeling of amazement at the steadiness of the central figure in the drama. The angry waters of the Sea of Galilee offered our divine Lord calm and firm footing as he was overtaking the bark of Peter; the frightened apostle did not, however, find them such firm ground. The historic incident comes to mind somehow and makes one presumptuous of an apostolic smile of understanding as one tries to hold on to Vincent, so calmly pursuing his simple way over the uncertain waters around Richelieu and Mazarin. In the official summary of his life given in the Roman Breviary for his feast-day, July 19th, it is stated that he was “always intent on God, always himself, and affable with everybody”. *Deo jugiter intentus* – always intent on God; this was the great simplicity of his life. It was the great purity and complete dominance of this pursuit that streamlined his days, mortifying any and every selfish motive out of existence. He had steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, (Lk 9:51) thus assuring the tranquility of order in the house of his soul; and the calm horn in him of this high purpose hallowed his humble presence with such majesty that for those about him, the Christ of the Beatitudes and of the Sermon of the Mount seemed to be speaking through him.

One who has steadfastly set his face to go to the holy city of God may have yet a long way to go to reach his goal. It was so with Vincent de Paul; but whether the way prove long or short, it goes through Jesus Christ, our Lord. “I am the way and the truth and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me” (Jn 14:6). Vincent may be presumed to have been quite well aware of the capital importance of the mystery of the Incarnation when he met Berulle – the Imitation was a “golden book” for him – but it may be also presumed that in the ten or twelve years, from 1608 to 1620, during which Berulle was Vincent’s spiritual director, this awareness became more native to Vincent’s religious character and much better articulated as a governing principle in his spiritual life. It could hardly be otherwise. Vincent was, by the grace of God, progressing rapidly and his director was, in the words of Urban VIII, “an apostle of the Incarnate Word”. For all this, “star differs from star in glory” (I Cor 15:41). Berulle and Vincent de Paul were two very different men. Berulle was a writer, given to probing deeply into the sacred mysteries of our faith. Vincent never wrote a line for publication. His was practical genius; the yardstick of his practice, however, was not just sweet reason, but sweet reason illumined and governed by a spirit of faith and prayer. For both of them, the mystery of the Incarnation was “the power of God unto salvation” (Rm 1:16), but while having

the same mystery at heart, each of them applied it in his own way. At his best, Berulle reminds one of the High Gothic as he soars into the empyrean in his effort to win men to worship and adoration. Vincent, on the other hand, seemed bent on bringing the vault of heaven down, like the Byzantine dome, to shelter man while its magic is at work upon him. Curiously, however, Berulle's high tone and aristocratic quality suggest the aloof majesty of Byzantine decoration, while the Christian humanity of the West speaks in Vincent's more homely accent. He began his education, indeed, with the Sons of St Francis, and, when he was better able to read, Providence allowed him to read *The Rule of Perfection* by Benet of Canfield, OFM Cap. He took what suited him from Father Benet, as he did from Berulle and Duval and others, refusing, nevertheless, to be immersed in a theory or shut up in a School. Like the busy bee, he collected the nectar of heaven where God had it hidden for him, in the ample fields of experience over which his life ranged, but under God the honey of his wisdom remained quite definitely his own.

As a sample of this wisdom, we may take the advice he gave to Father Durand, CM when making him superior of one of the new seminaries. The year was 1656; Vincent was then seventy-five, and Father Durand was twenty-seven. Obviously the old man was not afraid of giving to young men posts of responsibility; he was well aware, quoting the example of David to prove his point, that a younger man may have a talent for the government and direction of others which an older man, however holy, may lack. Nevertheless, he thought it well to give a fatherly talk to this particular young man and Father Durand was wise enough to go and put the talk on paper while it was fresh in his memory. He laments, however, that he could not put on paper the zeal and vivacity with which Vincent spoke, even in a private talk such as this; it is a lament for which there is much more reason now. Even so, while we cannot catch his voice or gesture, Vincent's line of thought is clear. He was not attempting a treatise on the spiritual life; the talk was quite impromptu; yet, as from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, he enunciated, as a matter of course, the faith that was in him and how one might answer in life to the supernatural vocation with which God has honoured us in Christ. Here, then, is Vincent speaking to Father Durand:

How great a work is that to which God has called you, the government of souls. What a life, think you, is that of the priests of the Mission who are obliged to treat souls properly and guide them aright, a work fully understood by God alone. *Ars artium regimen animarum*. This was the occupation of the Son of God on earth; it was for this that he came down from heaven, was born of a Virgin,

lived his life here below and died a most painful death. You should therefore have the highest conception of the work you are about to undertake. It is not the work of a man; it is the work of God. *Grande Opus*. It is the continuation of what Jesus Christ was given to do, and consequently human industry can but spoil everything if God does not mingle himself with man's labour. Neither philosophy nor theology, nor preaching is effective with souls; it is necessary that Jesus Christ associate himself with us; that we work in him and he in us; that we speak like him and in his Spirit as he himself was in his Father and preached the doctrine his Father taught him; this is the language of Holy Writ. You must, therefore, empty out self in order to be clothed in Jesus Christ (XI 342).

For Vincent, then, the spiritual life was, quite simply, the Christian life, the life indicated by Christ when he said to his apostle: "I am the vine you are the branches" (Jn 15:5). Whether it was a question of this life as a whole or in part, Vincent's first care was to secure the predominance of Christ, or, as we might say nowadays, the Kingship of Christ. The mingling sap of the Word made Flesh should vitalise all flesh with its supernatural life; "I am the vine, you the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without me, you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). This vital link with Christ or this continuation of the Mystery of the Incarnation into our days is secured to us through the Church and the Sacraments. And in this connexion, it will not be inappropriate to mention that, in 1628, when Vincent was giving evidence for the beatification of St Francis de Sales and had to give some information on oath about himself, he told the Commission among other things that he used to go to confession several times a week and that, by the grace of God, he said Mass nearly every day. (As he was liable to attacks of tertian fever, not to mention other ills, he was sometimes unable to say Mass). Later on, not only did he go to confession several times a week; he went every day. This was his practice for about the last twenty years of his life. As there was never any question of scrupulosity, this is a forcible reminder to us of the purity of conscience he maintained amid overwhelming public responsibilities. It is also a sufficient commentary on his love for the Blessed Sacrament and his great reverence at Mass. In this all-consuming devotion to the Saviour of the world, we may also see the source of the Mission; for the whole idea of the Mission was to bring people to their Saviour in the most holy sacrifice of the Mass and in the Sacraments. For Vincent de Paul, then, as for St Paul, it was true that: "To me to live is Christ" (Phil 1:21) ; or as Vincent himself was heard to say: "Nothing pleases me but in Jesus Christ".(4)

After some further elaboration of his basic theme, that nothing pleased him save in Christ, Vincent went on to say to Father Durand:

An important matter, to which you must carefully apply yourself, is to have a wealth of communication with our Lord in prayer. That is the reservoir where you will find the instructions necessary in order that you may acquit yourself properly in the office to which you are going. Whenever you find yourself in doubt, have recourse to God saying: "O Lord, Thou who art the Father of lights, teach me what I must do in this turn of events". I give you this advice not only for the occasions you will find distressing, but also in order that you may be enlightened by God in what you will have to teach . . . And I have to tell you that in contributing to the salvation of others one may get lost. Wherefore, in order not to fall into the misfortune of Saul or Judas, it is necessary to attach yourself inseparably to Our Saviour, and, lifting up to him your heart and soul, to say to him often: "O Lord, do not permit me to lose myself miserably as I try to save others; be thou my shepherd, and do not deny me the graces you communicate to others through my intervention and through the functions of my ministry."

You ought also to have recourse to prayer in order to ask Our Saviour for the things which those in your care have need of. Believe most certainly that you will reap a better harvest in this way than in any other. Jesus Christ, on whom you could model your whole conduct of affairs, was not content with preaching and good works, nor with fasting, nor with shedding his blood and dying for us; for to all this he added prayer. He had no need to pray for himself; it was for us then that he prayed so often, in order that we might learn to do the same, both in what concerns ourselves, and in what concerns those of whom we should be the saviours along with him (XI 344).

In these few passing remarks on prayer, Vincent managed to outline his mind on the subject and to give us some hint of his practice. One has to remember that he was speaking to a young man who had graduated in the spiritual life under Vincent's own teaching and influence. Father Durand did not need to be told that Vincent's life was summarised in his opening sentence: "You must carefully apply yourself so as to have a wealth of communication with our Lord in prayer". *Avoir grande communication*: the phrase is not one that lends itself to translation, but if a saint's views on prayer may be caught in a phrase, it would seem that St Vincent's views as well as his practice are here. The attitude revealed is simple and the scope is ample. It is not a question of praying now and doing something else by and by; it is rather a question of free and open

communication at all times. One is reminded of what our Lord said to the Apostles when “he spoke a parable to them that we ought always to pray and not to faint” (Lk 1H:1).

Vincent’s first biographer, Abelly, whose work appeared in 1664, four years after Vincent’s death, tells us that the nature of his prayer was not known; at least those who survived him could not say whether it was ordinary or extraordinary. Reading through his letters and conferences, one does not get the impression that he was a mystic in the accepted sense of the term. One does, however, get the impression of a man to whom prayer had become second nature, the impression of a man who found prayer to be an infinite treasure whence he could draw forth new things and old with consummate wisdom. If one may so express it, his book of meditations contained on one page the life of our Lord and, gradually developing on the opposite page, the life he himself was called upon to live from day to day. In his prayer, then, he was mainly concerned that the life appearing in the mirror of the second page should, as it developed, be in the image and likeness of its divine model, for the greater glory of God. And if one were privileged to look over his shoulder while he was at prayer, it would soon become evident to such an observer that the Gospel page most frequently pored over by Vincent was the narrative of the sacred Passion of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This was so, primarily, because in his great love for our blessed Saviour he had, like all the Saints, a tender devotion to our Lord suffering and dying for us as he did. But there was an added reason why he stood by the Cross of Jesus; there was the frightening narrative of human suffering that kept on writing itself into his life with such an iron hand. How could he prevent it from becoming a meaningless horror, save by relating it to the sufferings of the Man-God and teaching its victims, in so far as he could, to make it the Good Thief of their souls’ salvation. Speaking then in summary fashion, one might say that every one of the Christ-like activities that distinguished his life, as time went on, might well borrow the words of the twenty-second Psalm in order to say to his prayer:

Though I shall walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they have comforted me. Thou hast prepared a table before me against them that afflict me. Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and thy chalice which inebriateth me, how goodly it is. And thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life that I may dwell in the house of the Lord forever and ever.

Whatever may have been the nature of Vincent’s own prayer, his teaching on prayer was quite ordinary: meditation in one form or

another, leading on to affective prayer and prayer of greater simplicity. As he said in later life, when we may presume he had most of his thinking done: *Il faut peu raisonner, mais beaucoup prier, beaucoup, beaucoup* (XI 357).⁽⁵⁾ He did not treat of contemplation, but there is an interesting reference to it in one of his conferences to the Sisters of Charity:

The other kind of prayer is called contemplation. In this prayer the soul, present to God, does nothing else but receive what he gives it. The soul is inactive and without its taking any pains, God himself inspires it with all it could seek for and a great deal more. Have you not, my dear daughters, experienced this kind of prayer? I am sure that it has been quite often so in your retreats, and that during them you have been yourselves astonished because, without any contribution on your part, God himself has filled your heart and given such insights as you have never had (IX 420).

One surmises that, without making any fuss about it, Vincent wanted to encourage those who may have had the experience he referred to, by letting them see that he understood them, while on the other hand, by assuming that all might have had the same experience, he was discouraging anybody from thinking that they might be in a class apart. He was the friend and counsellor of some of the great contemplatives of his time, but he was too well aware of the current dangers of false mysticism to make an unguarded reference to contemplation. Restricted and guarded as it is, this reference nevertheless intrigues one about St Vincent himself. Obviously, he knew what he was talking about, but just as obviously, he was not giving away any secrets. And this brings us back to Father Durand's account of what Vincent said to him; for after having spoken about prayer, he went on to speak about humility:

Another thing which I recommend to you is the humility of our Saviour. Often say: "what have done, O Lord, that I should have such an office? What have I done that reveals any fitness in me for the responsibility placed on my shoulders? Oh, my God, I shall but spoil everything if you do not yourself take charge of all my words and actions." Let us keep constantly in mind all that there is in us of what is human and imperfect and we shall have at hand only too much cause for humbling ourselves not only before God but also before men and in the presence of those who are of humbler rank. Above all have no ambition to appear superior or play the master. I do not agree with what somebody said to me recently, namely, that in order to govern well and maintain one's authority one should make it quite

clear who is the superior. Dear Lord! Our Saviour Jesus Christ did not speak like this; he has taught us quite the contrary both by word and example, telling us that he himself came not to be served but to serve others and that he who would be the master must become the servant of all. Be then among them *quasi unus ex ipsis*.

Furthermore, we should always refer to God the good done through our instrumentality and, on the other hand, attribute to ourselves all the evil that occurs in the community. Yes, remind yourself that all the disorders stem principally from the superior, who, by his negligence or bad example, introduces irregularity just as all the members of the body languish when the chief member is not well.

Humility should also bring it about that you avoid all complacency, which slips in mainly where the office is of some distinction. What a dangerous poison to good works is vain complacency. It is a pest that corrupts the most holy actions and soon causes God to be forgotten. In the name of God, be on your guard against this fault; it is one of the most dangerous I know to progress in the spiritual life and to perfection. Give yourself to God, therefore, in order that you shall speak in the humble spirit of Jesus Christ, confessing that your doctrine is not yours, that it does not come from you but from the Gospel. And be particularly careful to imitate Our Lord in the simplicity of the language he used and of the comparisons he drew when speaking to the people, as is obvious from sacred scripture (XI 346).

It will be noted that when Vincent came to speak about humility, he recommended not just any humility, but the humility of Christ. This reflects his insistence on supernatural virtue. Like all the saints, and in accordance with the Church's teaching, he was not satisfied with merely natural virtue; he insisted on Christian virtue. Drawing waters with joy from the Saviour's fountains (is 12:3), his favourite exhortation was: "Let us honour Our Lord by taking after him in virtue". Berulle had been his guide during an important period of his spiritual formation and ever afterwards he was translating in his own way what St Paul had written to the Ephesians: "We are his (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus in good works, which God has prepared that we should walk in them" (Eph 2:10).

Humility is the truth, the truth of our position in relation to God. "What have you that you have not received? And if you have received, why do you glory as if you had not received?" (1 Cor 1:7). We are all God's creatures, and were the creator to withdraw his sustaining hand, we should no longer exist. As of ourselves, then, we are nothing and, because of sin, less than or worse than nothing. It is easy to agree with this in theory and pay lip-service to humility. But when the theory

comes alive and we find ourselves confronted with the Crucifixion, it is another matter. Yet we cannot evade the Crucifixion, for it is we that are on the Cross in our representative Jesus Christ. Many things are stated in the mystery of the Cross and much that passes our comprehension: but the Christian humility that allows God to take possession of the soul and man to hear: "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise", stands plainly revealed in the thunder and lightning of that afternoon air. Faced as we are with death and dissolution and harassed by so many miseries, no lesser voice could calm the quaking heart and bid us go in peace. It should come as no surprise to us then, when the saints, with their sixth sense of ultimate reality, do and say things that have the shock of Calvary in them. In this respect, Vincent shocks more than most. His remarks above about vain complacency give us a little taste of his mind.

"If we have not humility, we have nothing" (XI 440), he warned as he insisted that he was the greatest sinner in the world and that anything good said about him was but chastisement for his hypocrisy. He was as desirous of humiliation as a miser of gold and lost few opportunities of increasing his store, both because he believed that virtue needs practice and because he wanted to share in the humiliation of Christ. "Do you really understand that we are worse than demons?" he asked of his community:

Yes, worse than demons: because if God had given them a tenth part of the graces he has given us, great heavens! what use would they not have made of them. As for me, I have no difficulty in seeing this, because I see as clear as daylight that I am worse than the devil; for if the devil had received the graces God has given me (I do not mean extraordinary graces, I mean just ordinary graces), there is no devil in hell that would not be better than I am (XI 439).

As indicated in this outburst, he was anxious not merely that he himself and individual members of the Congregation should be humble; he was anxious too that the Congregation as such should sit down in the lowest place.

Do you not see that one who is willing to be despised in his own person but cannot tolerate that the Congregation as its body should be despised in any way, and wishes that it be praised and highly esteemed, do you not see, I repeat, that such a one is finding himself again in the Congregation and taking back what he has given? (XI 323).

He usually referred to himself as "this miserable wretch", and his references to the Congregation as a whole were just as flattering. He

would allow no publicity to be given to the work of his spiritual sons or daughters because, as he said, the world's way of doing business is not God's way. One of the missionaries, back in Paris after having been through the siege of Limerick by the Cromwellians, asked if he might commit some of his experiences to paper; the answer he got from the saintly old man was: *Leave it to God!* Nor would he allow vocations to be sought after for the Congregation; he even hesitated about praying for them. Writing to one of his priests in November, 1655, he said:

For more than twenty years, I did not even dare to pray for the success of the Congregation. I considered that as it was God's own handiwork, its growth and increase should be left entirely to the care of his providence; but the injunction given us in the Gospel to ask him to send labourers into his harvest convinced me in the end of the utility and importance of this devotion (V 463).

The counterpart of Vincent's humility was his attitude towards divine providence; self was to be got rid of in order to make way for God. In his talk with Father Durand, therefore, the next thing we find him treating of is trust in divine providence:

Another matter to which you should pay very close attention is the maintenance of a great spirit of dependence upon the government of the Son of God... This attitude of confidence and readiness to obey should be loyally extended to those who, as your superiors, take Our Lord's place in your regard and represent him to you. Believe me, their experience and the grace that Jesus Christ, of his bounty, communicates to them on account of their responsibility, have taught them a great deal about the conduct of affairs... Do not, I pray you seek to distinguish yourself or affect any peculiarity. Follow the royal road marked out by the rules and customs of the Congregation; and take care not merely to observe them yourself but also be exact in having them observed, for without this, everything would fall into decay (XI 347).

The loving worshipful submission of his life in detail to the sovereign Lord of all was Vincent's practical translation of St Paul's instruction: "With fear and trembling work out your salvation, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to accomplish" (Phil 2:12). Vincent did not, however, vex himself with theories about the integration of human action with the divine assistance. In his own deliverance from evil, he had learned the supreme power of charity and this remained his guiding star. But not very long afterwards, he had learned another lesson; he had

learned that one does not throw consideration to the winds in one's zeal to make the star of Bethlehem shine in all men's eyes. The Incarnation took place in the fulness of time, and what is true of the Incarnation itself remains true of its extension among men: there is always this mysterious fulness of time to be reckoned with in the divine economy. "The works of God are not done when we wish it but when it pleases him" (III 626). Vincent's fidelity to this principle may be said to characterise his spirituality. Here it is, expressed in more definite terms and also related to the Incarnation:

The works of God have their (opportune) moment; his providence arranges that they take place then, and not sooner or later. The Son of God saw the loss of souls and, nevertheless, he did not anticipate the hour ordained for his coming (V 396).

Vincent, obviously, was not talking about trifles when he gave such clear and weighty expression to what was, at that time of his life, 1655, the wisdom of a saint. He was in fact referring to the approval his agent in Rome was seeking for the vows to be taken in the Congregation of the Mission. The agent, one of his own priests, had written telling him of the opposition he was encountering and the consequent delay. But when Vincent was sure of his ground he was not deterred by opposition, and so, to encourage his subordinate in Rome, he wrote advising him not to worry but to keep knocking patiently and the door would be opened in God's good time.

The question is how could Vincent be sure of his ground? It was easy enough at this stage for it was only a question of completing what was begun thirty years previously. The real question is how could he be sure of his ground when founding the Congregation in 1625. History offers only too many examples of people, great and small, who brook no interference – so convinced are they that they have a divine mission and that what they want is therefore what God wills. Vincent was not so full of himself; he and presumption dwelt far apart. He was sure of his ground in 1625 for the simple reason that he acted only in obedience to the wishes of his superiors. As has been mentioned already, when the project of the Mission was first mooted, he was all eagerness to begin, but suspecting that this eagerness was much too human, he choked it off, and by the grace of God remained inactive and indifferent about the matter until those placed over him beckoned him to begin. He rigorously maintained this attitude in regard to the inception of all his undertakings, never putting himself forward, but always waiting for the opportune moment and the authoritative signal. It was not always easy to keep things in line with this ideal, for zealous men are sometimes

impetuous; and more than once he had to curb impetuosity and had to express himself firmly in order to do so:

You object that I take too long and that you sometimes wait six months for a reply that could be given in one: that, meantime, opportunities are lost and everything is at a standstill. It is true that I take a long time to reply and that I am slow about getting things done. Nevertheless, I have never yet seen anything spoiled by my restraint. Everything is done in its own time and with the consideration and precautions that are necessary. For the future, however, I propose to answer your letters more speedily after having considered the matter before God, who is greatly honoured by the time taken to give mature consideration to the things that concern his services, such as are those with which we are dealing. You will then, please, correct yourself of your readiness to make up your mind and go into action, while I will endeavour to correct my nonchalance (11 207).

As a result of this prayerful spirit and this nonchalance, as he calls it, or this waiting for things to ripen and the will of God to become more evident, Vincent could assure himself that he was not building upon sand but that what he undertook sprung from and was supported by the divine good pleasure. Then, with the devastating intuition or logic of the saints, he thought and spoke of the undertaking as the work of God; and thought and spoke of it as owing nothing to him but the deficiencies occurring in its execution. On this he was adamant; so much so that, in addition to the very mortified life he led, he regularly took the discipline in order to make some atonement for such deficiencies or, as he preferred to call them: “the scandals and abominations of my life”. Despite this humility or, more truly, because of it, his conviction that a work of God had been entrusted to him made him tenacious in the extreme when he undertook any such work. The works of God should obviously be done. Difficulties were indeed to be expected, and he doubted the success of any undertaking that did not meet with difficulties; but in general he regarded such difficulties as obstacles to be overcome and as being allowed to exist in order to exercise the servants of God in virtue.

All our happiness consists in the accomplishment of God’s will, and true wisdom in desiring this alone. God often wishes to establish upon the patience of those who undertake them the good works that are to endure, and for that reason he allows such people to suffer many trials (IV 289).

This calm confidence in “the government of the Son of God”, which sufficed not merely to keep himself serene but to give heart to so very many others, reminds us that the Vincent we are now dealing with is the Vincent of hope, Christian hope. He is remembered as the great organiser of Christian charity; Christian hope becomes such an organiser. Voluntary organisation implies mutual confidence. If this is merely human confidence the organisation remains on a merely natural level. To elevate it to the supernatural level, the mutual confidence in question must become an exercise of Christian hope. As in loving the neighbour properly we are loving God, so in trusting the neighbour properly, our trust will be some extension of our confidence in God. Above all others, the leader is responsible for inspiring the members of the organisation with this ideal and for maintaining their spirit at this level. More than the others then he must set the example and see to it that the organisation is not built around himself but that it is centred on God. As the Precursor said in reference to our divine Lord: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (Jn 3:30). This axiom of the saints was faithfully adhered to by Vincent de Paul. He employed all the virtues, or, might one say, all the tactics of the spiritual life in order to make sure that, while the work of God increased he would decrease. And so well has he succeeded in demeaning himself and keeping himself in the background that, despite all the publicity about what he achieved, he has defeated the historians of his life. He does not impose himself and the impact of his personality is not conveyed. This presumably is as it should be; at least it is as he would have it; for if one sets out to understand a saint, one should find God.

He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom who standeth and heareth him rejoiceth with joy because of the bridegroom’s voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled (Jn 3:29).

The familiar picture of an old man with firmly shut mouth and mysterious youth in his eye might well have these words of the Baptist inscribed around it. When heresy and false prophets were flattering troubled minds with pride and presumption on the one hand and threatening them with despair on the other, Vincent de Paul, by word and example, was directing them on to the highway of Christian hope, and though he would decrease, the age-old work, which the Spirit of God made use of him to emphasise and exemplify anew, goes on increasing as men feel more responsible for their fellow-men before God and find hope for themselves in bearing one another’s burdens in Christ.

At this point, we come to an interruption in Father Durand’s narrative. It was a homely interruption, and it was a fortunate one because

it led Vincent to express himself on temporal matters. His remark may have more point for us if we remember that in certain circles there was a tendency to treat man as if he were an angel. A high flown spirituality was preached, seductive to pride but really inhuman and quite out of harmony with the Incarnation. As Vincent speaks and rounds off for us his approach to the spiritual life, we can see how firmly his feet were on the ground while, as a disciple of the Word made Flesh, he linked heaven and earth and joined the humblest with the highest in the great *Exultet* of his heart.

After Monsieur Vincent had thus spoken to me with zeal and charity such as I cannot put on paper, a lay brother happened to come along seeking a directive on some domestic matter. When he had gone, Vincent took occasion to say to me:

You see how from the things of God about which we were just speaking I must turn to temporal matters. This should bring home to you that it is a superior's business to look after not only spiritual but also temporal affairs. Those of whom he has charge are composed of soul and body and he should attend to the needs of the one as well as of the other. In doing this, he will be following the example of God. From all eternity he was occupied with the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Ghost; and then, apart from these operations *ad intra* he created the world *ad extra* and occupies himself continually in conserving it and all belonging to it, producing thus year after year new grain upon the earth and new fruit upon the trees. The care of his adorable providence extends itself so far that a leaf does not fall off a tree, save by its disposition; by it the hairs of our head are numbered and the most insignificant forms of life are fed. This seems to me a very effective way of bringing home to yourself the fact that one should apply oneself not only to what is noble and elevated, as are the functions concerned with spiritual matters, but that a superior, who in some fashion represents the range and expanse of God's power, should also concern himself with the humblest temporal details and should not consider that attention to such things is beneath him.

In the beginning, when the Son of God sent out his Apostles, he recommended them to carry no money; but afterwards when the number of his disciples increased he wished that there should be a purser among them who would not only attend to the needs of the poor but who would also provide what was necessary for his *familia*; furthermore, he allowed women to be of the company for the same purpose: "who ministered unto him" (Lk 8:3). And if in the Gospel he directed us not to take thought for the morrow, this

should be understood as deprecating too much anxiety and worry about worldly goods. It certainly does not mean that we should neglect the ordinary means of livelihood; otherwise crops should not be sown. Give yourself, therefore, to God for the purpose of ensuring the temporal welfare of the house to which you are going (XI 349).

The reference in this last paragraph to the holy women who ministered to our Lord is interesting in that it reveals the bed-rock in the Gospel upon which Vincent founded the Sisters of Charity. Our blessed Lady was of course, the one who, beyond all others, ministered to her Son. Vincent's devotion to her was part of his life. Apart from saying the rosary every day, he wore the rosary beads at his cincture, and the attribution of his deliverance from captivity to her intercession may be taken as symbolic of his constant attitude towards her. His greatest act of homage to our Lady was, however, in the foundation of the Sisters of Charity. By successfully organising dedicated women in the charitable service of the poor and the afflicted, he opened up a new world in the name of Mary. His God-given associate in this great voyage of discovery was St Louise de Marillac. And it would seem that our blessed Lady has on more than one occasion signified her approval of their very practical devotion. It is not inappropriate then that, when after many trials and tribulations Vincent had emerged from the shadows to fulfil his manifold mission of charity, the first letter we should have from him as a spiritual director is a brief note written to St Louise in 1626. Brief as it is, it sums up fairly well what he had learned in the school of Christ and what he so faithfully exemplified in his own life:

I received your letter here in Loisy-en-Brie (Marne), about seventy miles from Paris, where we are giving a mission. I did not let you know I was leaving because we left sooner than I expected...Be of good heart; our Lord will know how to turn this little mortification to good account, may it so please him, and will himself act as director. Certainly he will do so, and in such fashion as to make you see it is he himself. Be you then, his dear daughter, utterly humble, submissive and full of confidence; and always wait with patience for the evidence of his holy and adorable will (126).

When this vigilant patience was rewarded and the adorable will of God became sufficiently manifest, Vincent moved thoughtfully and prayerfully forward towards its fulfilment with a great heart and a willing mind (2 Macc 1:3). Even when death was near and the once busy feet refused to support him any longer, his heart was on fire and he was

urging his community forward. We must go forward, he admonished them; *il faut aller toujours avant, plus ultra* (XII 77).(6)

It is certain that charity, when it dwells in a soul, completely occupies all its powers. There is no rest; it is a fire which is unceasingly active, keeping the person it inflames always keyed up and always in action (XI 215).

NOTES

(Notes 4, 5 and 6 added by the editor)

1. Francis Thompson: *Anthem of Earth*.
2. Abelly: Bk. I II, ch. I2.
3. The original text of the quotation from St Francis de Sales reads: "If God came to favour me with the sense of his presence, I would also go to receive him and to correspond with his grace; but if he did not wish to come to me, I would keep my place and would not go to him: I mean to say that I would not try to have this sense of his presence but would content myself with the simple apprehension of faith". *Conferences of St Francis de Sales* (French ed.) p. 459.
4. From the Second Nocturn of Matins in the office of the Feast of St Vincent, 19 July, in the old breviary.
5. "There should be little reasoning but lots of praying, lots, lots".
6. "We must always press forward, still further on".

Church Patronage in the New State: The All Hallows College Collection

Dr Sighle Breathnach-Lynch

Former curator of the National Gallery

Text of talk given at All Hallows on 17 July 2010

This talk centres on a fascinating although relatively unknown topic, that of the art commissioned for All Hallows College in the first half of the 20th century (painting, sculpture and stained glass). In considering these works I'd like to put them into the context of church patronage in general in Ireland with a view to evaluating the quality of the College collection.

All Hallows College was one of Ireland's first missionary seminaries. It was founded in 1842 and first graduates ministered to emigrants who left Ireland during the Potato Famine of 1845-47. In 1892, it was put under the direction of the Vincentians. Up until the 1960s, All Hallows sent more than 4,000 ordained priests to every continent in the world. Today, the college is one of six linked colleges of Dublin City University.

Given the amount of art works now on view in the college it is worth noting an account of the opening day in 1842. Patrick Moran, later to become cardinal-archbishop of Sydney recalled:



On that ... day the first student entered; Mass was celebrated in borrowed vestments; the furniture of the house consisted of a three-legged table and two or three broken chairs; the mansion itself was in the first stage of ruin. Such were the beginnings of the college.

The fact that it went on to acquire some notable works is testament of the appreciation for fine art within the institution. This I learned from trawling through the *All Hallows Annuals*; lectures on art were given here during the period that I'm talking about and an arts and crafts society, as well as a drama and music society, was established for the students. However, one man, above all, is responsible for the quality



of much of the collection; Fr Tom O'Donnell who was the seventh president of the seminary.

He was very interested in the arts and keen to promote a high quality Irish religious art (incidentally, this is not mentioned in the obituary in the 1950-51 as if it was unimportant!) O'Donnell was well-connected, not only with artistic circles in Dublin but also mixed in political circles (he was a great friend of WT Cosgrave, first Taoiseach in the Free State.



The first work I want to talk about is the *Madonna and Child* in the grounds. This was commissioned to commemorate two distinguished past members, Monsignor Sylvester Barry and Dr Fortune. It was paid for from the bequest of the late John D'Arcy who had worked in All Hallows for fifty years. It consists of a half-length Madonna holding the Christ-child. She is wearing a simple, unadorned cloak which falls loosely over the plinth. Her long hair with its centre parting is brought behind her shoulders, recalling a veil. The Christ child is presented as a bonny healthy baby. One hand clutches the collar of his mother's cloak as if needing to feel her protective presence.

It was completed in 1922. The sculptor was a well known Dublin artist, Albert Power, of which more later.

Here is the statue being unveiled by Archbishop Byrne with Fr O'Donnell beside him. Above on the right is a photograph of the sculptor.

What is especially noteworthy about this memorial statue is that it is carved to the sculptor's own design (most likely in consultation with O'Donnell). Because of that, it is quite unlike the usual representations Madonna and child to be found all over the country at that time. Most were painted plaster statues, loosely based on the great images of earlier Italian artists especially the work of Michelangelo or Raphael, both Renaissance artists of the highest artistic calibre. Many of these statues were ordered from catalogues. The catalogues advertised French, Italian and German manufactures of mass-produced religious objects. In spite of the fact that they had to be imported they tended to be much cheaper than statues made in Ireland. Equally there were Irish and Italian firms, mainly based in Dublin, who produced statues as well as altars, baptismal fonts, rails, stations of the cross etc., for the many new churches being built throughout the country since the end of the nineteenth century.





But, again, these works almost always conformed to the style of work in the catalogues. While some were of low quality, others were of quite fine artistic quality; a good example is the sculpted Madonna and Child on the side wall of the chapel here. It is a convincing three dimensional figure which is well carved; it has a sense of real presence unlike the more vapid painted statue we looked at



earlier. There were, finally, works commissioned from an individual artist. Yet usually the patron was happy that this work would be in the conventional Renaissance model. Innovation was not often expected. This can be explained by that fact that in a relatively poor country where art education was almost non-existent, seeking out religious art of the highest artistic quality was not top of the agenda. Most patrons were satisfied with catalogue or off-the-shelf goods. They were also far cheaper than commissioning an individual artist to do work. But in All Hallows thanks to Fr O'Donnell's personal interest in art a hugely innovative statue of Madonna and Child was carved and when it was unveiled it was admired and appreciated.



Let us look at the statue more closely; its most unusual feature is that the Madonna is wearing a Munster cloak. There was a tradition in this part of the country of presenting young women on their marriage with such cloaks. The wearing of these cloaks distinguished the married women from the unmarried and, in doing so, provided them with a distinctive visual status. But the sculptor has added the head of an angel in order to distinguish the Madonna from 'ordinary' Irish mothers.

A second interesting aspect of the work is the choice of stone. The usual choice of stone was an Italian marble from Carrara; a



soft milky white stone from which was quite easy to carve a figure. This statue is carved instead from an Irish limestone from Durrow which incidentally would have been more expensive to get in spite of its being Irish. The choice of location for the stone, Durrow, was deliberate on the part of the artist. It had associations with early Irish Christian art and he wanted his Madonna to directly relate back to this important period in Ireland's religious past.

Thirdly the sculptor used his wife and one of his sons as the models for the group. They were Irish born and bred, so for him represented the quintessential Irish mother and son. This is a *real* mother and her baby.



The gaelicizing of the group was stressed by Fr O'Donnell at the unveiling. He commented, 'As our mothers and sisters have always loved Mary, it was appropriate to represent her as a daughter of Erin, clad in the mantle of the country and bending over her child with Ireland's maternal affection'. These sentiments reveal much about the aspirations of the new state in terms of establishing its own distinctive identity. Ireland was keen to promote itself as a very different nation from its erstwhile ruler, Great Britain. It was perceived as being industrialized, English speaking and Protestant.

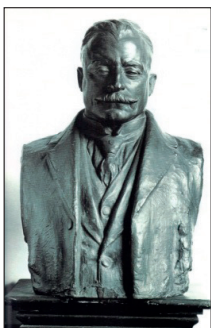
Not surprisingly the 'new' Ireland promoted itself (both at home and abroad) as rural, Irish speaking and above all Catholic. Much emphasis was placed on the spiritual nature of Irish society especially on women. They were encouraged to see Mary as their only role model and follow her example in being mothers and homemakers rather than engage in the public affairs of the country. To this end her maternal virtues were actively promoted as also represented in this small virgin and child, in the All Hallows collection and by the same artist, Albert Power. (This is a bronze cast of an early maquette for the outdoor statue (see above). It is interesting to note the similarities and differences between it and the, much larger, completed work. ed)

Albert Power (1881-1945)

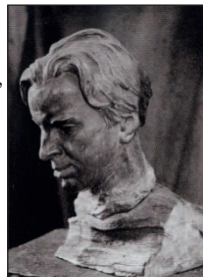


He was born in 1881 in the Benburb Street area of Dublin city and showed early artistic promise. After he finished his primary education he was apprenticed to the well known firm of Edward Smyth who was a direct descendent of the 18th century sculptor responsible for many of the fine carvings on the Four Courts and Custom

House.

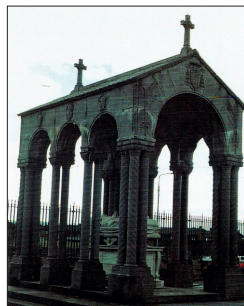


While working in Smyth's he also attended the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, then in Kildare Street, first as an evening student. Proving to be a very gifted student he abandoned the day job in 1906 and became a full time student until 1911. During his years at the School he won an impressive number of prizes and medals for modelling and carving.



From 1911 onward Power gained a reputation as a fine portraitist. Many of these were exhibited at the annual Royal Hibernian Academy exhibitions in Dublin and attracted critical acclaim. Among those were literary figures of the calibre of *WB Yeats* (see image), *James Stephens* and *Lord Dunsany* and an important early patron was Oliver St John Gogarty.

From 1920, initially thanks to St. John Gogarty, he became the favourite portraitist for both Free State governments. *Arthur Griffith* and *Michael Collins* were commissioned from the Cumann na nGaedhael government and during the Fianna Fáil period a bust of *Austin Stack* was commissioned and medallions of Stack and *Cathal Brugha* joined those of Griffith and Collins in the Taoiseach's office. Already by 1922 when the Hallows



'Madonna and Child' was being carved, Albert Power was not only a successful portraitist but also called on to execute numerous religious commissions.



Headstone of Fr O'Donnell

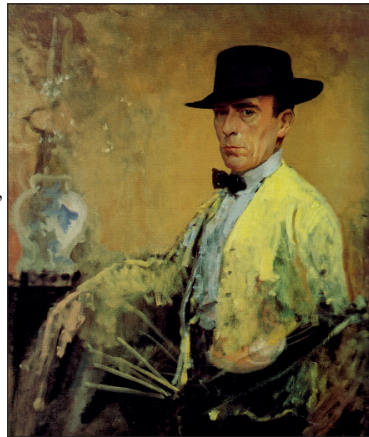
The proximity of Glasnevin cemetery to his studio and yard in Geraldine Street (and from 1930 at Berkely Road) meant a steady flow of commissions for tombstones while the increase in the building of new Roman Catholic churches ensured a continuous supply of religious furnishings; everything from statues to altars, baptismal fonts and altar railings. Power for instance was responsible for the tomb to Archbishop Walsh in Glasnevin.

Interestingly the likeness of the late Archbishop relied on a death mask taken by

Power when Walsh died in April 1921 (to be found in Maynooth College). This was at the instigation of Fr O'Donnell. It is no surprise then to find that after the priest's death a delightful tombstone was sculpted by Power which is in the graveyard here. In comparison to the other headstones it is a most unusual headstone for an illustrious president of an important missionary college. In the *All Hallows Annual* for 1957-8 a Fr Thomas Leen of Sydney mentions it as a 'delightfully chosen headstone informed with that all-prevailing characteristic of his [Fr O'Donnell's] youthful fire and buoyancy and unblemished innocence'.

Leo Whelan

Another important Irish artist involved in commissions for All Hallows from Fr O'Donnell was the painter, Leo Whelan, a contemporary and friend of Power. Like the sculptor, Whelan was born in Dublin just eleven years later in 1892. And, like Power, he too showed artistic talent from a young age and seemed destined for a career as an artist. In 1907 he became a day student at the DMSA and that is where he met Albert Power who became a friend of the painter. Whelan remained there until July 1911. After that he attended as an evening student



until 1915. In 1912 he rented his first studio in Dawson Street. That incidentally was the year that Power set up his carving business. While at the School of Art he won many awards including the prestigious Taylor Art competition which was run and still is today by the Royal Dublin Society.

Like his friend Power, Leo Whelan benefited greatly from the life drawing classes run by William Orpen whose self portrait attests to his prowess as portraitist. Orpen expected complete aptitude, ability and proficiency and encouraged his best students while studiously ignoring the weaker ones! As a result of a sound academic education especially in life drawing, Whelan emerged as one of the most successful and prominent portrait painters from the 1920s onward. As it was customary in Dublin from the 1920s to the 1950s for middle-aged businessmen, academics, politicians, medical and leading churchmen to have their portraits recorded from posterity, Whelan was constantly in demand. By the late 1940s he was charging between 200 and 300 guineas for

individual portraits; an indication of his reputation as these sums were high in this period.



During Fr O'Donnell's tenure at All Hallows, Whelan completed twelve paintings of distinguished people associated with the college, including O'Donnell himself. Indeed, the priest and the artist became firm friends. By 1913, Fr O'Donnell thought it prudent to record

the history of the College with portraits of some of the great men who had originally trained as seminarians at All Hallows and who had subsequently gone abroad as missionaries. The idea behind the commissions was that seminarians would be imbued with a sense of pride and achievement as they looked upon the various portraits of these eminent men which would hang around the walls of Woodlock Hall. Among the portraits are those of the founder Fr Hand; William Fortune, former President; James Moore CM; Joseph Sheehy CM, Professor of the College; as well as seven prominent alumni, namely: Bishops



of Armidale, Australia; Thomas Grace of Sacramento; Richard Scannell of Omaha; Archbishops Patrick Clune of Perth; Edward Roche of St. John's, Newfoundland; Walsh of Dublin and Cardinal John Glennon of St Louis Missouri. All the portraits are characterized by a smooth application of paint which is very reminiscent of the style of William Orpen. The portraits convey not only a convincing physical likeness but also something of the strength of the men's personality. Each portrait is imbued with a sense of power and of leadership. In an interview in 1940, Leo Whelan explained that for him the essence of a good portrait lies in its likeness to the subject because practical experience has shown that a sitter will never come to life unless the



artists has caught those characteristics which delineate the mine. To talk of a good likeness suggests more than a copy of the outer shell. Similarly, a painting which accentuates a certain feature of a man, an emphasis of one of his many facial expressions, will not be a portrait, it will be a caricature.



He also stressed that there needed to be a rapport between the sitter and the painter. 'It is almost impossible for the painter to succeed if he is out of sympathy with the person he attempts to paint'. When the All Hallow commissions are placed side by side it is obvious that the portrait of Fr O'Donnell shows a huge bond of affection between the two men. The priest is so life like he seems to reach out to the spectator. He exudes warmth and kindness and the spectator is made to feel that he was a person of great wisdom and counsel.

Yet this portrait was done after the death of his friend. It is much easier for an artist to produce a convincing portrait of a living person. Whelan must have used photographs as a guide. It is testimony to Whelan that he achieved such a persuasive representation in paint on a flat surface. At the bottom of the painting is inscribed 'In memory of my dear friend Fr O'Donnell from Leo Whelan'. One 'old boy' writing in the *Annual* for 1953-4 described the portrait of being 'so characteristic of him, the smiling eyes, so penetrating yet so kindly. You would almost think he had just welcomed you back and wants to see how the years have been treating you...'

A highly unusual portrait of O'Donnell also in the All Hallows collection is the portrait of him by Leo Whelan's sister, Lilian. Both she and his other sister, Frances, made and sold dolls, modeled down to the finest detail in figure and dressed in hand made clothes. Even O'Donnell's stiff leg (arthritis) is not left out of the depiction! This model along with a number of others including Sean T O'Kelly, Eamonn de Valera, Bernard Shaw, Jack B Yeats and Winston Churchill were exhibited at the United Arts Club in 1958.



Of the formal portraits, his desire to go beyond painted likeness and suggest something of the internal character of the sitter is especially evident in the portrait of Archbishop Walsh (above, with John Hand's portrait). Geraldine Molloy in her most informative thesis on the artist (a copy of which is in the All Hallows Library) suggests that Whelan was unhappy with the portrait which is treated in a very realistic way. He is treated as a down-to-earth type of person with a sharp intelligence and alertness. In fact it is these qualities that make it so memorable a portrait.

John Lavery



Another important Irish painter associated with All Hallows is Sir John Lavery (1856–1941). Lavery, along with Orpen, is regarded as perhaps the finest portraitist of the 20th century. Born in Belfast, he trained initially in Glasgow and London and spent time in France studying at the Academie Julien in Paris (where a number of



other Irish artists trained). It was in France he met his future wife, Hazel Martin, whose face is so familiar to everyone in Ireland over fifty!

Although based in London he and wife were sufficiently interested in their Irish roots to maintain links with Ireland. The rebellion in 1916 inspired Hazel Lavery to suggest to her husband that he become a visual recorder of contemporary political events. This resulted in him painting portraits of the main players on both sides of the political divide in the period covering the War of Independence, the Treaty negotiations and the Civil War.

The splendid portrait in the college (of Cardinal Hayes of New York, above) is striking for three reasons. One is the placement of the figure; the sitter faces the viewer directly so he/she is immediately conscious of the magnificent robes and the cross; themselves highly symbolic of his powerful status within the Roman Catholic Church. Next, the eye is drawn to the face (specially the glittering eyes) and the hands that reinforce the personal forcefulness of the man. Last but not least, the portrait is rich in colour and texture. (note; The portrait of Cardinal



Hayes is currently (2014) on loan at St John's University, New York)

Editor's note; it should be noted that, in an earlier print of this article, the sitter was incorrectly identified as Cardinal Healy.

Evie Hone

The final great artistic name is that of Evie Hone. Eva (Evie) Sydney Hone (1894-1955), artist and craftswoman was born at Roebuck Grove, Mount Merrion, Dublin on the 22 April 1894. Hone was the daughter of Joseph Hone, a successful distiller and a director of the Bank of Ireland. The family lineage included the artists Nathaniel Hone the Elder (1718-84) and Nathaniel Hone the Younger (1831-1917) whose estate was in nearby Malahide. In 1905, Hone suffered partial paralysis after a fall while decorating her local Church of Ireland church for Easter. A semi-invalid for the rest of her life, her



childhood was one of prolonged medical treatment and of visits to England, France, and Italy with her governess. In 1911 she was deeply impressed by a visit to Assisi, which fostered her profound interest in Art and the Christian faith.

Hone was determined to become an artist. She trained in London at the Westminster School of Art and in 1920 she travelled to Paris, where she joined her lifelong friend, Mainie Jellett, as a pupil of the radical cubist artist Albert Gleizes, working with him intermittently until 1931. He was absorbed in purely abstract painting and mural decoration. He was a cubist and an ardent evangelist, organising its first exhibiting centre and writing the first treatises on this kind of modern art.



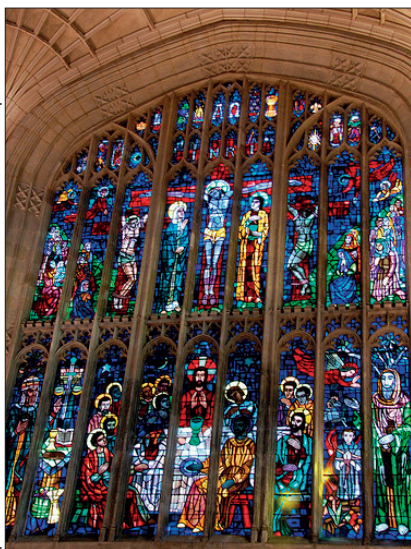
In 1924, Hone and Jellett held a joint exhibition at the Dublin Painters' Gallery. Their paintings were almost indistinguishable from each other. The works were described by critics as 'Cubist' and 'in the



modern manner', and there can be no doubt that Hone and Jellett were the pioneers of abstract painting in Ireland. They revolutionised the thinking about art. In November 1925, Hone had been considering religious life and entered an Anglican convent in Truro, Cornwall. Although the nuns of this convent were sympathetic to Hone's talent, they regarded it as a distraction and prohibited her from painting until she became a "sister if she does become one". Hone remained

in Truro for about a year, and decided to leave the convent and resume painting. She had further exhibitions in Paris in 1925, in London during 1926-7 and in a solo exhibition in Dublin in 1929.

At the beginning of the 1930s Hone became interested in stained glass. A stained glass art movement in Ireland had been inaugurated at the turn of the century by the painter Sarah Purser and by the writer and patron of the arts, Edward Martyn (who founded the Palestrina choir). The work produced in the first half of the 20th century from the co-operative *An Túr Gloine* as well as



individual artists such as Harry Clarke and Evie Hone resulted in Irish stained glass becoming widely known and appreciated throughout Europe.

In 1933 she joined 'An Túr Gloine', run by Sarah Purser. It was Hone who introduced a new, expressionist intensity into stained glass painting.

Evie Hone was influenced by the strong colours of the windows in Chartres Cathedral as can be seen in her Eton College window (see image) But she was also deeply influenced by the paintings of a French contemporary artist, George Rouault. In his early career he had been a stained glass artist and that remained an influence in the manner in which he painted afterwards. From 1917, he dedicated his life to painting and a deep religious faith informed his work as it was to do

for Evie Hone. He was a friend of the philosopher Jacques Maritain and was excited by his existentialism. Rouault's highly expressionistic religious art perfectly reflects the fervour of his religious beliefs. It is a million miles away from the realistic religious art of the Renaissance which still held sway throughout Europe and especially in Ireland where modern styles like Rouault's were treated with suspicion and as we shall see, on occasions with open hostility. It was much easier to relate to the more illustrative realism of the Renaissance.

Other influences on Hone were the medieval Irish carvings and the pre-Renaissance Italian primitives, as well as the glass of her French contemporaries, which she saw on regular visits to the Continent. In 1937 Hone converted to Catholicism and was accepted into the Roman Catholic Church by her friend and mentor, John Charles McQuaid, who was the Archbishop of Dublin. Her work became more religious in character.

In 1938 she was commissioned by the Department of Industry and Commerce in Dublin to design a window for the Irish Pavilion at the New York World's Fair of 1939. The result was a large upright rectangular window on the theme of the four provinces of Ireland, *My Four Green Fields*, which was a great success.

From 1944 all her windows were produced in a studio beside her residence, the Dower House, Marlay Grange, Rathfarnham, Co Dublin.

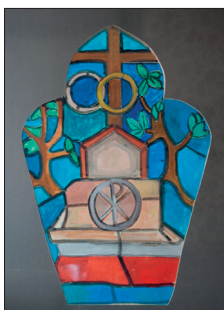
It was Hone's design for the east window of Eton College Chapel that brought her international recognition and ranked her among the best stained glass artist of her time. She also completed windows for Farm Street Jesuit Church, London and the new national Cathedral of Washington D.C. which was built in the Gothic style.



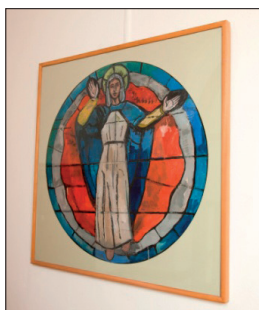
The All Hallows' Rose Window in All Hallows dates from 1954, the year before her death. She died while attending mass in her parish church on 13 March 1955 and was buried at St Maelrun's Church, Rathfarnham, on 15 March. Today her work is on display in Churches and museums in Ireland, England and America.

Soon after the war, All Hallows received a sum of money towards the erection of a stained glass

window in the chapel (money left by Rev David Shanahan DD who died in 1944 a priest of Diocese of Pittsburg, PA; he was a relative of Fr John Shanahan CM). The Doctrine of the Assumption of the Virgin was

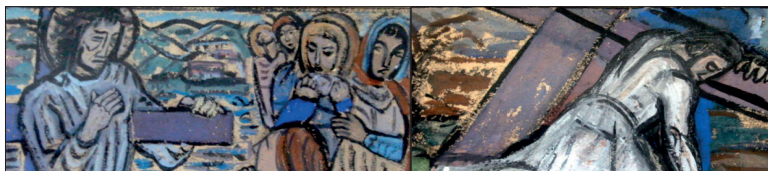


defined on November 1st 1950 by Pope Pius XII. Before the end of that Holy Year, Evie Hone was approached to know if she would fill the Rose window. She was unable to start the work for some time as she had other commitments and was in ill health. But the



window was finished and put in position for Eastertide, 1954.

The window honours the Blessed Virgin in the crowning mystery of her Assumption. In the centre piece she is seen being assumed into heaven. Around the figure are two concentric circles of symbols. The



outer circle contains familiar symbols of the Virgin, drawn principally from the Old Testament; the inner circle contains symbols of the seven sacraments and some pre-figurations such as the sacrifice of Abraham. The general idea behind the design was to show the Blessed Virgin in relation to the work of the Redemption of mankind and in particular in relation to the Priesthood of her own Son.

The figure of the Virgin and all the symbols stand out against a general background of blue. Blue is the colour of the heavens and also directly associated with her garments. Her gesture is that of a queen; of someone in command. It is reminiscent of the conductor of a great orchestra. As the newly ordained priests proceeded out of the Chapel each year, they walked towards this window: a reminder that their lives as priests was under the patronage of Virgin.



Hone had already completed three other windows when she went to work on the designs for All Hallows. Here she had certain advantages. The chapel is

long and tall, the organ hardly obscures the light. The Assumption implies that upward sweep which banishes all thought of earthly settings. Here the rising figure of the Assumption is shown thus in contrast to a rich claret. The rhythm of tone and form made by the series of trefoils and barrel lights in reds and golds in greens and yellows is a satisfying counterpart for the symbols.

Hone produced over 150 small stained-glass panels and a number of oils and watercolours. A small number of the watercolours are here in the College. But there are a number of other works on paper, not connected with the window. They include drawings for the stations of the Cross series. Two are very probably from the same series, the third, *Christ before Pilate* from a separate commission.

What is particularly noticeable about them is the use of a very strong outline and the lack of academic realism, reminiscent of the art of Georges Rouault. But then both artists shared a deep religious faith which resulted in this very direct, personal interpretation of religious themes.



If Hone's Stations are compared with more traditional art types of Stations of the Cross, you can see instantly how different they are in style and interpretation. The traditional Renaissance compositional form favoured 3-D figures in the round and set in a convincing perspectival space. Many realistic details are included in this Station, down to the grouting between the stones on the wall, the buildings in the background etc.,. In this way, the viewer is made to feel that they are looking at and participating in 'theatre'.

In the decades that I'm concentrating on, both Irish patrons of religious art and the faithful were more comfortable with the familiar illustrative image and many found the response of Rouault in particular to be 'offensive' or 'crude'. Thus when a painting of *Christ and the Soldier* by the French artist was presented to the Hugh Lane Gallery of Modern Art, the artistic committee who made the decisions as to what would be added to the existing collection, turned it down. What is

interesting is that artists of the calibre of Albert Power and Sean Keating believed that the work was an unsuitable religious art image. But then while they produced innovative work it was in no way in a modern art style; unlike the art of Hone and Jellett, for instance. Ironically, the Rouault painting ended up in Maynooth College and only many years later did it come into the Gallery's collection.

It is worth noting that nowadays 'Irish' eyes have become far more accustomed to expressive works of art as evidenced by this powerful image of famine in the College's collection. This expressionist image would not have met much favour in the 40s at the time of the Rouault controversy. It would have been considered too crude a representation.

These two works are also by Evie Hone; *Rest on the flight into Egypt* and a tripartite sketch of the Annuciation.

St Patrick



The last work I want to consider is the statue of St Patrick in the grounds. Although the statue dates back to the 19th century it is one of a huge number of representations of St Patrick, all alike, be it in paintings or sculpture, almost all of them depicting the saint in this way

It is strikingly different from a statue by Melanie le Brocquy which was modelled in the early 1940s. Not surprisingly it was not a commission for a church but rather made by the artist for display at the Royal Hibernian Academy annual exhibition of 1941. It depicts the saint overthrowing Crom Cruach. He was a deity of pre-Christian Ireland whose worship was banished by the saint.

When both images are compared

I think you will agree that the Le Brocquy one is the more striking; thanks to her creating St Patrick with over sized hands and feet. The other statue is quite effete in comparison. It supposedly shows the saint banishing the snakes from Ireland. But I think the figure looks more like someone who is pointing to the drains below as being the source of a bad smell!

It is hard to imagine that le Brocquy image would have received general approval in the 1940s from patrons of religious art. Why not?

Because as I have already stated, the taste of patrons (priests, bishops, Reverend Mothers etc.) was, in the main, extremely orthodox. The ready-made statue was 'safe'. An artist who might veer from the artistic path was usually regarded as too dangerous to be entrusted with the making of objects connected with worship and church decoration.

In conclusion

The All Hallows collection as you can see is one of considerable merit, thanks to the enlightened Fr O'Donnell, a man genuinely interested in promoting high quality art and who was keen to commission the best artists of the day. That the college was itself interested in ensuring a cultural background for the seminarians also helped.

Artwork by Fr Donal Keohane

All Hallows also possesses two piece by Fr Donal Keohane, ordained in the College in 1968 for the diocese of Savannah, though he currently serves in California. Besides a number of sculptures in Churches and galleries, Donie has also produced stained glass, drawings and paintings and published a number of books, including *Observations Visible and Poetic* and *Musings in Haiku*.

All Hallows College possesses two of Donie's works, both in resin, 'Gorta' and 'The Sower'. Of them he says;

Gorta

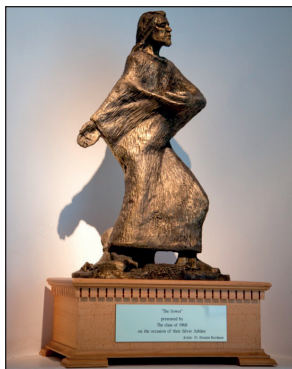
As a conquered nation, Ireland continued to suffer under English domination during the nineteenth century. Most of the people were poor and the country was over populated.

Potatoes were the main sustenance and when the crops failed in 1845 and the following years due to a blight, the people starved. Over one million people died while millions of others were forced to emigrate in order to survive.

My sculpture 'Gorta' depicts the despairing plight of a starving mother with her dead child in her arms. The broken cross represent the challenge to the Faith of the people in such a hopeless state.



The Sower



The 'SOWER' aims to represent the last command of Christ "Go and make disciples of all the nations" based on the parable of the sower who scattered seeds which fell on various grounds.

The role of All Hallows over the years and at present has been to plant the seeds of Christian faith for all peoples throughout the world.

All Hallows Rose Window by Evie Hone

Fiana Griffin



Evie Hone in her studio

By kind permission of the *Irish Times*

(note the design for the All Hallows Rose Window to her left)

All Hallows College and Church: Background

All Hallows College has been a Vincentian institution since 1892, when they were invited to take over the running of the seminary founded in 1842 by Fr John Hand to train priests for the missions. The Vincentians continued to train Diocesan priests, mainly for English-speaking missions around the world, especially those with the greatest numbers of Irish emigrants. Now no longer a seminary, All Hallows is a Catholic and Vincentian higher education institution, accredited by Dublin City University, with a mission to educate 'women and men to be effective leaders engaged in justice and service, championing social and educational participation'. (1)

It is a curious fact that some of the most famous and infamous figures in Irish history have links with the college grounds, and its first premises, Drumcondra House. Ireland's most hated villain, Dermot McMurrough, founded the Augustinian Priory of All Hallows in Dublin city and

endowed it with a large tract of land north of the Liffey, encompassing the area now called Drumcondra. On the suppression of the monasteries in 1535, King Henry VIII granted the priory and all its lands to 'the mayor, bailiffs, citizens and burroughs of Dublin' (2). Queen Elizabeth I founded Trinity College Dublin where the Priory of All Hallows had stood and all land previously owned by the priory was leased to private individuals. In the early eighteenth century, Drumcondra House was built on a small part of this land. Among the lessees of the house was the notorious Claudius Beresford, an implacable opponent of Catholicism and vicious suppressor of the 1798 rebellion. When Fr Hand was looking for premises to found a seminary, it was none other than Daniel O'Connell who came to his rescue. This most-loved hero of Irish Catholics had become the first Catholic Lord Mayor of Dublin so he was well-placed to persuade Dublin Corporation to lease Drumcondra House and its grounds to Fr Hand at a favourable price. Fittingly, Hand restored the name of All Hallows, reconnecting it with the priory of eight hundred years earlier.

All Hallows College church is an impressive building designed in 1897 by George Ashlin, in an Early Gothic style, with a long, high nave and three architecturally splendid rose windows. The smaller ones of the east and west transepts are filled with palely decorative domestic-style glass as money never materialised to commission a stained glass artist to fill them with works of art. However, when light shines through the once equally bland south-facing window over the entrance, it wonderfully illuminates a richly-coloured symphony of sacred symbols in stained glass designed by Evie Hone.

Commission for the South-facing Rose Window

In the 1955-56 College Annual, Fr William Purcell, President of All Hallows, told how the perennially cash-strapped college was blessed with an unexpected windfall in 1944 when a Fr David Shanahan DD of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania – a relative of Fr John Shanahan CM – left a sum of money specifically for the erection of a stained glass window. The bequest was put aside for some years, until Pope Pius XII defined the doctrine of the Assumption of Our Lady on 1st November 1950. Within weeks, the college had commissioned Evie Hone to design a window celebrating this momentous development in Mariology and the Catholic Church. According to Fr Purcell, the general idea was 'to show Our Lady in relation to the work of Our Redemption and, in particular, in relation to the Priesthood of her Divine Son.' (3)

Hone was the perfect choice. She was not only the greatest living stained glass artist in Ireland, but also, in 1937, she had been received into the Catholic Church by her friend John Charles McQuaid (appointed

archbishop of Dublin 1940), and she had read widely on spirituality and religion. However, in 1950, she was engaged in her most prestigious and demanding commission, the great East Window at Eton College depicting the Last Supper and the Crucifixion. This would occupy most of her resources from 1949 until it was erected in the spring of 1952, and it took a serious toll on her health, always frail. An article in the Irish Times of 15th November that year shows Hone seated in her studio at Marlay House, Rathfarnham, with her dog on her lap, her cat at her feet, and her design for the All Hallows rose window clearly visible, propped against the wall, a work in progress. It was finally installed in 1954, the year before her death. By happy chance, this had been declared a Marian Year to commemorate the establishment of another great dogma of Mariology, the Immaculate Conception, a hundred years earlier.

Evie Hone: her Life and Work

The train of circumstances that led Hone to a life in art and a search for God began in the Church of Ireland parish church of Taney, Dundrum when she was ten years old, helping to decorate the altar for Easter. She experienced a sudden onset of paralysis caused by poliomyelitis, and fell across the altar. From then on she was cut off from other children, unable to do anything but sketch as she lay in bed. By the time she was fifteen she had been orphaned and was still a semi-invalid, with a permanent and severe limp, despite endless medical intervention; one of her hands was also permanently affected. There was no question of 'coming out' in London, as her sisters had done. She seemed to have little chance of fulfilment in life. Fortunately, her family was sufficiently wealthy and accommodating to allow her to travel with a governess to France and Italy. Viewing great paintings at first hand forged in Hone a determination to devote herself to art, despite her physical disabilities.(4) As a girl in hospital in London, she sent her drawings to Byam Shaw for his opinion. 'Don't worry if you can't guide a steady line,' he advised, 'Use as your medium a "shaky" line.'(5)

In 1921, having studied painting with a number of artists in London and Paris, Hone and her inseparable artist friend Mainie Jellett set their hearts on studying abstract art with the most radical Cubist of all, Albert Gleizes. In pursuit of the true essence of the world through painting, Gleizes had purged his art not only of perspective but also of all subject matter – that is, figures and objects of any kind. Then, In 1918, while looking for a rational solution to the problems of 'collective order, individual differences and the painter's role' Gleizes had announced to his wife that 'a terrible thing has happened to me: I believe I am finding God'.(6)

Taking on pupils was not an option Gleizes had even considered, as with characteristic humility he felt a mere apprentice. When Hone and Jellett presented themselves at his house in 1921 and informed him that he was their chosen master, he attempted by all means at his disposal to drive them away, but in the end their sheer tenacity, which he described as 'terrifying' but expressed in 'gentle tones' forced him to surrender.(7) Gleizes eventually felt deeply indebted to Jellett and Hone for choosing to work with him, as in order to explain to them what he was doing, he had to make his complex ideas intelligible. Over much of the next ten years, the three artists struggled together, seeking 'a pure art which sang to the sight and like music, obeyed only its own laws... and could rely solely like musical arabesque on the mysterious effects of line and colour.' (8) After twenty-five years exploring the laws of art, and progressively uncovering God in his search, Gleizes converted to Catholicism, in 1941.

Though Gleizes and Hone were to come to the same spiritual conclusions, their artistic routes diverged from the early thirties. Hone turned away from Gleize's strictly abstract art and returned to the depiction of living beings and recognisable subjects. About the same time, she began to study stained glass; faith was the mainstay of her life and the desire to serve God was a primary motivation behind this decision. In a 1952 documentary film about her stained glass, *Hallowed Fire*, (9) she spoke with feeling of her training with Gleizes, and gratefully acknowledged that it had been a wonderful preparation for her work in this medium. Her earliest window, the Annunciation from 1934, in St Nahi's Church of Ireland church, Dundrum, demonstrates her first experiments in combining the discipline of non-figurative design with the inspiration of the religious image.

Soon after this, for some years, the work of the deeply spiritual expressionist Georges Rouault (10) exercised a strong influence on Hone's work, as did the stone carvings of early Christian Ireland. Like all great artists, over time she developed her own unmistakable style incorporating a variety of influences, but like Gleizes, she was always in pursuit of the best approach to God.

Mild and restrained in manner, Hone nevertheless held strong views on her chosen art form. These were rarely expressed in writing, but in an article on windows she had seen in France and Holland, she stated firmly that all art should follow 'the laws proper to the medium'. Windows at Gentilly, France, had pleased her because they had fulfilled their what she saw as their purpose, which was 'to arrange forms and colours in such a way as will produce an effect of beauty, a living organism with rhythm and balance'. She felt strongly that the design and colour of windows should be appropriate to their location. To her

mind, a church was not the place for windows consisting of a ‘juxtaposition of brilliant scintillating colour like jewelled stones’ – an indirect rejection of the virtuoso work of Harry Clarke and Michael Healy. A church window, she wrote, should remind the worshipper that its raison d’être was ‘to raise the mind and heart to God.’ (11)

Hone died on Christmas Day in 1955, as she entered her parish church, the Church of the Annunciation, Rathfarnham. And so her career ended as it had begun, with a fall in a church, while celebrating a key Christian festival.

All Hallows Rose Window

Hone had already designed three rose windows by the time she came to design the rose window for All Hallows. She was at the peak of her career and the end of her life. The majority of Hone’s windows were figurative, designed to be accessible to a non-specialist congregation; for the collegiate chapel of the seminary of All Hallows, her brief was to illustrate the rich store of symbols pertaining to the Catholic Church, the sacraments and Our Lady in particular. This is not a ‘snapshot in stained glass’, like her wonderful windows from the Jesuit college of Rahau, Tullabeg, now in Manresa House, Dollymount, on view to all. Though impressively beautiful to the casual viewer, like medieval windows, this rose window invites contemplation and reflection, preferably when illuminated on a bright day, in order to appreciate this wealth of images and their associations. Some of them are not easy to either discern or interpret.



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The architecture of rose windows can vary enormously. The only common denominator is that the ‘openings’ or ‘lights’ as they are called, must be contained within a rosette, or circle. All Hallows church rose window consists of a large medallion, with eight small semi-circular

openings abutting it, in the centre. Surrounding this central medallion are two concentric circles; an inner one of barrel-shaped openings and an outer one of trefoil-shaped openings, interspersed with small triangular openings. Currently obscured by the organ, there are also two small trefoils at the bottom left and right of the window (see below).

Artistic treatment of All Hallows Rose Window

Each medallion and each opening in the concentric circles depict separate, religiously resonant, symbols. This level of symbolic complexity was not an obstacle for Hone. The art critic James White recognised that for Hone, 'the essence of meaning...lay in the symbolic shape'. He praised Hone's achievement in glowing terms:

...the whole window shines with an exuberance and sparkle of the most moving kind. Unlike so many works of our time, there is a total absence of sentimental observation – no appeals to our innate weakness for kindly facial expression or romantic sunbursts. The pure areas of glass, the depths of sombre colour, the economic and clear-cut symbol, the most cohesive and unified of patterns, in short, all the marks of a great artist – here they are mercifully left free to give expression to her thought in the only language she understood, the language of great art. (12)

As we have seen, under Gleizes, Hone abandoned both subject matter and perspective. When a decade later she began to design for stained glass she embraced subject matter with relief but portrayed it always on a flat plane, as in medieval times. In this rose window, one's eye remains absorbed by the composition in glass created with colour and shape, conferring an artistic unity on the window, that satisfies one's visual sense before one has had time or inclination to decipher the symbols. According to the best practice of stained glass, no two pieces are exactly the same size and shape.

Hone normally used large amounts of pigment to darken some areas of a piece of glass in order to heighten the effect of light illuminating the rest of the piece. However, given the small scale of the openings surrounding the Assumption, she used a minimum of pigment, in order to allow the glass to glow and the images to be more legible.

Here are all the rich colours of an artist's palette. Blue, so closely associated with Our Lady since the Middle Ages, is the colour of her cloak, the background for the inner circle of openings and the main colour, blended with green, of the little abstract triangles around the circumference of the window. Although the most pervasive colour, it

does not dominate. The muted greys of the Mater Dolorosa and the Tower of David, on the right, allow Confirmation on the left to take us aback with its dazzling brightness. Vibrant green is reserved for the fish in the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, signifying the singularity of the fish as Christ. The deep red of the Assumption reappears in the Paschal Lamb, the Mystical Rose and the Gate of Heaven, whereas cooler tones of yellow and pale brown cluster in the wheat and grapes of the Eucharist, the olive tree of Initiation and the House of Gold below.



Imagery

Central Medallion: The Assumption of Our Lady

Since the commission was for the Assumption, Hone naturally placed Our Lady in the central medallion. This arresting image portrays the full figure of Mary almost seeming to step outside the confines of the medallion, reaching out with her left hand, while her right hand is raised in what appears to be a blessing, as she is assumed into heaven.

Hone's treatment of the image of the Assumption is a combination of modern and medieval. The Virgin's robe is composed of pieces of glass whose tones, shapes and arrangement are contemporary, but the overall conception of the image owes something to one of the oldest stained glass windows in France dating from 1120, the bottom section of an incomplete Ascension window in Le Mans Cathedral. Hone was immensely struck by the beauty of this window, which she considered 'the most perfect and wonderful I have ever seen'. (13) It depicts the

crowned Virgin, alert, with an air of mobility, dressed in a simple blue gown with white cloak – here the colours are reversed – and also surrounded by a deep red background. Hone added an irregular white border within a blue circumference to complete her own dramatic image. A further indication of the influence of the Le Mans window can be seen in the triangles of mixed shades of blue glass between the trefoils of the outer circle here, which are extremely similar to the panels of modern glass from the 1940s that border the restored medieval Virgin in Le Mans.



Loaves and fishes

Inner Circle: Symbols of the Seven Sacraments

The inner circle of openings is primarily dedicated to the symbolism of the sacraments of the Catholic Church, with particular emphasis on the Eucharist and the priesthood. They will be discussed following a clockwise direction.

The Crucifixion: the defining event and image of Christianity occupies the opening directly above Our Lady, and shows the influence on Hone's work of early Irish stone carvings. Since these were usually found on high crosses associated with churches and monasteries of great significance at home and abroad, this artistic reminder highlights the continuity between the Irish Golden Age and the ongoing missionary activity of the Irish Catholic Church as carried on by the priests who went from All Hallows to minister in the English-speaking world.

The Sacrament of the Sick: All the preparations for anointing the sick person are shown here: lighted candles, holy oil, the ciborium and the outline of a large cross in the background.

Marriage: the covenantal aspect of marriage is depicted by the linked gold rings suspended in front of the crucifix over the altar, a red kneeler at its foot and the Chi Ro symbol just above that, a reminder that the sacrament of marriage is a symbol of God's love for his people.

Ordination: this window depicts the elements of the Eucharistic celebration; the liturgy of the word shown by the bible open on the altar in front of the crucifix and the liturgy of the Eucharist shown by the host over the chalice.

Penance: two keys crossed over a staff, traditional symbols of this sacrament. They echo the words attributed to Christ entrusting the keys of the kingdom to Peter. The staff, however, emphasises that the priest, as confessor, must also be a pastor.

The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes: a large basket of bread rolls with a fish at its base. This Gospel miracle, recorded in a number of variations involving the breaking and multiplication of bread, anticipated the Eucharist.

Baptism: the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove, with wings folded, echoes the dove that descended on Jesus at his own baptism. The dove is hovering above a fount of water issuing upward from a baptismal font with the Chi Ro (XP) symbol, reminder that each person is baptised into Christ. Finally, a small star shining in the background, evokes the line 'they shall shine like the stars of heaven', suggesting the union of the baptised with Christ for all eternity.

Initiation: this somewhat enigmatic opening shows two birds perched at the base of an olive tree, the source of chrism, used in biblical times for the anointing of high priests, prophets and kings. In the church it is used at Baptism, Confirmation and Holy orders. At the top of the tree is what appears to be a chrismarium, or vessel for containing the holy oil.

The Eucharist: the elements of the Eucharist are represented by bunches of grapes on a vine hanging above a sheaf of wheat, the source of bread and wine.

The Eucharist: the Paschal Lamb is seated on the altar, awaiting sacrifice, a symbol of the cultic sacrifices of the Old Testament, in which it was offered to God. This is an anticipation of the sacrifice and sacrament of the Mass.

The Eucharist: the ram, here seen caught in a thicket, is a symbol of the personal sacrifice involved in the Eucharist. This is the ram sent by God to Abraham as a suitable sacrifice in lieu of his son, also an Old Testament anticipation of the sacrament.

Confirmation: the Holy Ghost appears as a dove descending in the form of tongues of fire, partly encircled by a brilliant crescent of light. It represents both the day of Pentecost and the sacrament itself.



House of Gold

Outer Circle: Symbols of Our Lady

The outer circle depicts some of the titles and images by which Our Lady is known, with an emphasis on her purity, presumably as the centenary of the Immaculate Conception was being celebrated in 1954. Many of the titles Hone depicted are from the Litany of Loreto, especially from the middle section of the litany, which uses concrete visual images connected with the prophecies and symbolism of the Old Testament. In some of the 'lights' she has combined more than one image (eg 'vessel') while in others (eg 'Tower') she has distinguished between different invocations. The more abstract qualities ascribed to Our Lady in other sections of the litany would have been more difficult to depict succinctly in a small space viewed from a distance. The images will be discussed following a clockwise direction.

'M' for Maria: This occupies the most prominent position in the circle, directly above the crucifixion. The imagery is from the reverse of the 'Miraculous Medal', based on a vision seen in 1829 by Catherine Labouré, a Daughter of Charity. The medal was a particular devotion of the Vincentians as the Daughters of Charity were co-founded by St Vincent de Paul and St Louise de Marillac in 1633. The M is placed above the sacred heart of Christ crowned with thorns and Mary's immaculate heart pierced with a sword and is surmounted by the cross.

Boat: Litany of Loreto – Mary's titles 'Vessel of Honour' and 'Spiritual vessel', 'Singular Vessel of Devotion' are here combined and represented by the literal image of an empty boat on a calm, lovely sea.

Gate of Heaven: Litany of Loreto, representing intercession; she is the gate by which Jesus came to us, and by which we may access heaven. A

red door, evocative of a Dublin Georgian hall door with the suggestion of a fanlight.

Mater Dolorosa: Our Lady of Sorrows, a very widespread title for Mary. A heart pierced with seven swords, the seven sorrows of Mary, foretold by Simeon in Luke, chapter two.

Tower of David: Litany of Loreto: a symbol of Mary's strength. The tower of David formed part of the physical defence of Jerusalem, and also occurs as an image of the Beloved in the Song of Songs. A blue and red tower in the centre, with two blue stars, one on either side, set in a grey sky.

Tower of Ivory: Litany of Loreto: a symbol of noble purity, also an image from the Song of Songs, a simile for the Beloved. An ivory-coloured tower in an abstract background.

Crown and fleur-de-lis: It is significant that this opening is directly below the central medallion as the Assumption is linked with the tradition of the coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven. This image is reinforced by the fleur-de-lis, a symbol of royalty, especially in France, homeland of the Vincentians. As a stylised lily, it also refers to her purity. It has the further connotation of the Holy Trinity, being a three-leaved plant. The crown is at the bottom of the trefoil, with a fleur-de-lis in the other two sections.

House of gold: Litany of Loreto; because Christ was in her, she 'housed' him, and gold is most precious; it is also an image from the Old Testament. Steps lead up to gates of rich deep gold set in city walls of a paler tone.

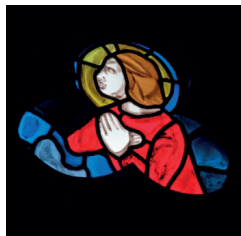
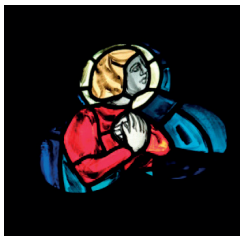
Lily: Though not directly from the litany, this image of Mary's pure love could correspond to many titles, such as 'Mother most chaste'. 'I am the Lily of the Valley' is an image from the Song of Songs'. A lily is shown growing out of a flowerpot.

Mystical Rose: Litany of Loreto; the rose is the queen of flowers – it is the most beautiful, with the loveliest fragrance, and can indicate sweetness, sanctity and love. 'I am the Rose of Sharon' is an image from the Song of Songs. One red rose and two white ones, a flower in each section of the trefoil.

Mirror of Justice: Litany of Loreto: This image may refer to the fact that Mary most closely reflects God, who is Justice. It is the oldest title in

the litany, occurring in the Wisdom writings of the Old Testament. The scales of justice hangs below a mirror.

Ark of the Covenant: Litany of Loreto; likening Mary to this most holy image, represented here by Noah's ark, emphasises the centrality of Mary to the church. She carried God in the New Testament, just as the Ark of the Covenant, resting in the Holy of Holies in the temple, carried the tablets of the law in the Old Testament. Noah's ark carried the seed of new life in a time of destruction. A small ark on a blue sea, with a white dove flying above it, a leaf in its beak, symbol of new life and the Holy Spirit.



Trefoils

The two trefoils (currently obscured by the organ) depict supplicants (possibly angels or saints) as they gaze at Our Lady.

We have been very fortunate to find, in the photo archives of the *Irish Times*, two images of Hone in her studio, one of which was published in the paper in 1952. In both, a section of the cartoon of the All Hallows Rose window can be seen. It is worth noting, however, that the finished window does differ significantly from the photographed cartoon. We compare the photograph to the completed work;

- The penal crucifix is in the six o'clock position in the inner circle, rather than twelve o'clock in the outer circle
- The Ark is in the twelve o'clock position in the outer circle
- The image of baptism (Dove and Fountain) is in the twelve o'clock position in the inner circle
- The 'Tower of Ivory' is in the nine o'clock position in the outer circle
- The three stars at eleven o'clock do not appear in the completed window

Postscript:

Apparently, the knowledge that the window was dedicated to the Assumption had been largely forgotten over the years. From one generation of seminarians to the next, the belief was passed down to the effect that this uncharacteristically demonstrative pose of Our Lady was designed particularly to reassure young seminarians. As they left the altar, having taken their vows, they would look up and see Mary reaching out, promising to love and support them when far from home. The origins of this belief are to be found in the concluding lines of Fr Purcell's article:

As the newly ordained priests proceed out of the Chapel each year, they will be walking towards this window: their lives as priests will be placed under the patronage of the Mother of Jesus. (14)

Notes

1. The full text of All Hallows Mission Statement is available on the home page of the college at <http://www.allhallows.ie/about-the-college/mission-statement.html>:
2. An account of the history of All Hallows before and after it became a college can be found at; <http://www.allhallows.ie/about-the-college/history.html>
3. All Hallows College annuals are collected and bound in volumes spanning a number of years. Fr Wiliam Purcell's discussion of the rose window and commentary by the art critic James White (see note x) are in *All Hallows Annual* , Vol 35, 1953-1958 (1955-56) pps 28-32.
4. 'Evie Hone: Stained Glass Worker' by Constantine P. Curran (1886-1972) appeared in the Irish Jesuit journal *Studies*, Summer 1955, published by Talbot Press, Dublin, pps 131-142. Curran gives an informative account of her life and an authoritative discussion of her work, including a list of her stained glass windows. Elsewhere he wrote on diverse aspects of Irish art and culture, and is particularly remembered for his enduring friendship with, and memoir of, James Joyce.
5. Hilary Pyle. 'Iron in the Soul', *Irish Arts Review*, 2005
6. Harold Robbins is author of the introduction to the catalogue for *Albert Gleizes 1881-1953: a retrospective exhibition*.,Solomon Guggenheim Foundation, New York, 1964, p.22. It is available online at <http://archive.org/details/albertgleizes1881robb>. Robbins was a great admirer of Gleizes' persistent quest for answers to ultimate questions about the meaning of life, through art.
7. This is from an unpublished typescript, by Sir John Rothenstein, C.B.E. Director of the Tate Gallery, London. It was part of the David Clarke estate and is now in the National Library of Ireland. Called a 'Foreword', it appears to have been written in response to a request from James White for a foreword to a book on Evie Hone that never materialised. Rothenstein was instrumental in obtaining for Hone the commission for the Eton window. The manuscript describes the profound impression she made on him on his first visit to Hone in her studio at Marlay Park, as well as recounting the main events of her life and evaluating her work in stained glass.
8. Curran p.134 (see note 4).
9. *Hallowed Fire* was produced and directed by Charles Toomey in 1952, for the Cultural relations Committee of Ireland. However, according to Irish Film and TV Research Online www.tcd.ie/film, it was not finished due to withdrawal of funds, and not

released. However, what appears to be a fully completed version is held by the Irish Film Institute Archives, where it can be viewed on request. It was first broadcast on 15 March 1988, as part of a six-part series entitled RE-Run, looking at post-war Ireland films.

10. Hone published an article on Rouault in *The Irish ecclesiastical record*, Vol. LXI, pp 133-135, Feb 1943
11. 'Modern Stained Glass in France and Holland', by Evie Hone, pps 69-70. This article appeared posthumously in *A Tribute to Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone*, edited by Stella Frost, published by Browne and Nolan, Dublin, 1957, pps 67-74.
12. The All Hallows College Annual, Vol 35, 1953-1958 (1955-56) pp 28-29, pps 31-32 (see note 3).
13. Ibid, p.69.
14. See note 3.

Letters of Fr William Purcell CM
on the topic of the
All Hallows Rose Window

All Hallows College
Dublin
Feast of the Immaculate Conception
1950.

Dear Miss Hone,

On November 19th, last, the day set aside by the Irish Bishops for the celebration of the Definition of the Assumption of Our Lady, I took the liberty of approaching you, through Joyce Collis, to see if you might be interested in a window we propose to have erected here to commemorate the great occasion. Joyce told me that the proposal appealed to you. Needless to say, I was delighted to hear it and I am most grateful to you.

I am venturing to write to you today because though I know there is a long way to go yet, I should like very much to be able to come to an understanding about the matter before the Holy Year is over. Such things must, I suppose, when it comes to business be done through our architect (*rest of sentence illegible*). Mr Simon Leonard is head of the firm now). At the same time, when it has been all done, as I sincerely hope it will be, I should like to be able to say that it originated this year.

I wonder if it would be at all possible for me to go over with a car for you some day and bring you to have a look at the window. Perhaps you would be so kind as to call us over the phone and let me know.

With every good wish and all our humble thanks,

I am, yours sincerely,

15th December, 1954

My dear Miss Hone

This note is long overdue, and many things have happened since it fell due, that is, since your lovely window was put up here. Before it was erected, I was thinking of a trip round the world; instead, I very nearly took a trip to the next world. Thank God to be alive, even though I hope I should be alive on the other side as well! I am picking up slowly, but I am picking up. I believe that much the same is true of yourself, and

I am delighted to hear that you are both mending yourself and doing a little work. Though it is very hard to do anything that might be called little in your work. Concentration in order to secure expression is, I find, the hardest work. So as one who knows (!), let me add my little note of warning to the many such that, I am sure, have been dinned into your poor ears, and let me whisper: Take it easy.

After having avoided concentration for so long, I did a little on the window the other evening and now I want to tell you what I found. I found that the background of blue in that large circle represents infinity. Francis Thompson speaks of the stars as “juts for the climbing sight which, else, would fall down the steep infinite”. The infinite is very steep and dreadful to us poor humans. Your have filled it up with our Lady. Her symbols reach the outer rim of history and fill it with her protection. Closer to her, their meaning is deeper and more comforting; until one comes to herself and to her gesture, which is that of the conductor of a great orchestra. She ascends as Queen of the universe, composing its paths to peace and harmony as she did at Cana, she her simple self in her simple way.

I don't know whether you will say I am a bit mad or not. I am only having my little say in front of the great treasure you have given us and asking you to accept our feeble thanks as the commemoration draws near of that great moment when Mary and her Son filled all the windows of our soul. I enclose our Christmas Card, and hope that you will be pleased, not with the Card, but with the hint it gives of Albert Power's mastery with a piece of limestone.

Wishing you all in the Dower House a very happy Christmas. Very sincerely and very gratefully.

All Hallows College
Dublin
15 January 1959

Dear Miss Dromgoole,
Evie Hone was first approached about the rose window here in November, 1950, soon after the definition of the Dogma of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady. She said she would be happy to undertake the work. Pressure of other work and poor help delayed her and it was not until Easter 1954 that the window came to be erected. Linking 1950 and 1954, it links for us the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of our Blessed Lady.

The general idea of the window is; Our Lady and the Work of Redemption, with special emphasis on the Priesthood of Christ. Apart from its intrinsic truth this emphasis is natural to the ecclesiastical seminary.

The outer circle of trefoils is filled with symbols of our Blessed Lady, taken mostly, as you can see, from the Litany of Loreto. The inner circle shows the Seven Sacraments together with some symbols of the Sacrifice of Christ. The Penal Crucifix highlights the struggle for the Faith here but the light that actually dominates the window is The Descent of the Holy Ghost (The Sacrament of Confirmation). It says in fact that Christianity is the religion of divine Love.

The window is seen to best advantage when the light is fading. The harmony of colour which Miss Hone aimed at is most striking just before the light becomes too weak to show the window. The same is true in the morning, of course before the light becomes strong.

While being firm though unobtrusive, the central figure is a gesture full of grace and very significant of Our Lady's high station and Magnificat. To me, it is also very eloquent about the character and personality of Evie Hone herself. I remember saying something to her about the grace and unobtrusiveness of the figure; she made it clear that this was quite deliberate on her part and: "was not Our Lady a quiet, unobtrusive person?" Many people passed her by without noticing, as they passed her divine Son by. The mystery of Faith.

I am sorry I have no photograph for you. I will send you a copy of our Annual in which there is an attempt to reproduce the window in black and white.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely

The Rev Joseph Leonard, CM

John A Costello

Fr Joseph Leonard, who died in All Hallows on 26th September 1964, aged 87, was born in Sligo in 1877. He joined the community in 1897 and, after ordination served in Castleknock before being appointed to All Hallows. He was an army chaplain in WWI. He was then in Strawberry Hill until 1929, whence he went to Gateacre. He went to All Hallows the following year. He will be remembered in the community for all the translation work he did on Vincentian matters, including a single-handed translation of all St Vincent's conferences, and the entire eight volumes of his letters, though these were never published. He carried on a long and varied correspondence with, amongst others, Hazel, Lady Lavery, Mr and Mrs George Bernard Shaw and Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy.

This obituary notice was written by another correspondent and friend, John A Costello, who was Taoiseach of Ireland from 1948-'51 and from 1954-'57. It was published in the College Annual.



*Fr Joe Leonard CM
with Jacqueline Bouvier
(later Kennedy)
on the occasion of a visit to
All Hallows, probably that of 1948*

As I write I have before me a Christmas card from All Hallows with the inscription: "To my dear and devoted friend with gratitude and affection, from Joseph Leonard, C.M." It is as his friend that I write this appreciation.

Father Leonard was a man of profound and genuine humility. It never even occurred to him that he could be an object of admiration, however greatly he appreciated affection. In writing about him I have to keep this in mind, because I feel his spirit hovering around, ready to pounce on me if I should say anything prejudicial to his humility, and

exclaiming, in his gentle but very forceful way: "You know very well that you oughtn't to have said that!"

In his obituary notice of Father Leonard, Professor Denis Gwynn refers to that rare gift he had for friendship which brought him the affectionate confidence of people in all walks of life. If, as one of those privileged ones, I set down my impressions of nearly a quarter of a century of a valued friendship with a man older and wiser than myself, it is not because I find myself in the goodly company referred to by Professor Gwynn: G. B. Shaw, Robert Lynd, Desmond McCarthy, Raymond Mortimer, Abbot Butler, as well as G. K. Chesterton, Lady Lavery, Sir Horace Plunkett and Professor Gwynn himself, that I feel proud to have been his friend. It was very apparent that in his friendships he believed that he got more than he gave. The esteem and affection in which he was held by his Vincentian confreres and close personal friends was so manifest on the occasion of his diamond jubilee that he was obviously overcome with gratitude and joy.

When growing deafness, occasioned by his service in the first world-war, forced him to leave Strawberry Hill and return to Ireland in 1939, he was profoundly grateful for the privilege of being allowed to reside at All Hallows. The President at the time, Father O'Donnell, had been one of his life-long and most cherished friends. He was no less devoted to his successor, Father Purcell. The priests of the faculty, the students, the servants, all contributed to the happiness of this final period of his life. The matron, Miss Fahy, on whom at their first meeting he whimsically dubbed the name "Little Emily" after Dickens's famous heroine, gave years of devoted help to him, for which he was profoundly grateful.

As a priest devoted to his vocation, he lived according to the ideals of his two great patrons, St Vincent de Paul and St Francis de Sales. The great achievement of his life was his translation into English of Pere Coste's monumental life of St. Vincent, as well as the critical editions of the Saint's conferences and letters. Father Leonard's spirituality was not merely unobtrusive, it was wholly sane. He had no use for mere pietism, or for the "dangerously devout", and woe betide anybody who offered him a pious magazine! Here I may repeat a story which he liked to tell, with a brilliant twinkle of the eye and a shake of the torso to reveal how much he enjoyed the joke. As occasional chaplain to a Carmelite convent he once startled the Superioress with the question: "Mother Prioress, would you prefer your novices to be pious or holy?" He then told her the story of a refined lady of great precision and honesty who had retired from abroad in Dublin. This lady discovered that her local grocer, who had the reputation of being a pious man and well in with the priests, was sometimes inaccurate both as to the price and the quantity of goods delivered. She went up to the shop to seek a proper account-

ing, only to find that he was not there. When she asked where he was, she was told: "At the forty hours!" "Now Mother Prioress," said Father Leonard, "which would you have your novices, pious or holy?"

He had a great sense of humour, and with a memory phenomenal in its appreciation and accuracy, he never forgot a joke. He held firmly the view that the Irish had wit but little sense of humour, while the British had both wit and humour. He revelled in the now forgotten dialogues of Dooley and Hennessy, and could quote Dooleyisms without stopping. He loved the old Irish ballads and liked to test his friends' ability and memory by trying them out on quotations from such uplifting pieces as "Nell Flaherty's Drake" or some of Belloc's "Cautionary Tales". He often liked to recall the bishop of Ross who used to refer to his curates as "boys, boyos and hayroes". He would tell of the missionary in a country parish who before the opening of the mission tried to find out from a worker on the roadside, by a bit of judicious enquiry, what the people were like as regards faith and morals. He got the reply: "As regards faith they could not be shaken, but the morals have them bet".

He also liked the story of the curate who was sent to a parish where there was a particularly difficult parish priest. He went with a special request from his bishop to try to co-operate with the pastor. Shortly afterwards the bishop got a wire: "Sorry can't co-operate; he won't operate".

He was an omnivorous reader, his readings ranging from Teilhard de Chardin, at a time when that difficult intellect was scarcely known and much misunderstood, to P. G. Wodehouse's "Jeeves", and Rex Stout's "Archie." It is certainly not Father Leonard's fault if I have not gained much and varied fruit in my post-graduate course under his guidance! I have a whole bookcase full of books he presented to me or recommended me to get. He always read the *Times Literary Supplement* and delighted to impose on me the task of getting from a Dublin library some of the most esoteric of publications.

One of the most remarkable of his friendships, far-reaching in its effects and associations, was that with Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis of Yale University and Farmington, Connecticut. Mr. Lewis, sustained and helped in an outstanding way by his wife, Annie Burr Auchincloss, whom he married in 1928, undertook with the backing of Yale University to bring out a critical edition of the works and letters of Horace Walpole. While on their honeymoon in London Mr and Mrs Lewis visited Strawberry Hill, the famous Gothic residence which Walpole had built for himself. It had now become the centre of a training college for teachers, of which Father Leonard was at the time vice-President. Lady Lavery had introduced him to Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, and this was the beginning of a long and lasting friendship.

He gave to Mrs Lewis, in Chaucerian vein, the name "Patient Griselda", by which she was ever afterwards affectionately known. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis paid visits to Ireland, in the course of which they were often lucky to pick up additions for their Walpole collection; and Father Leonard visited them at their home in the beautiful Farmington village, which is superbly preserved in its 18th century style.

Through Father Leonard I had the great happiness of becoming a friend of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis. Subsequently, in 1956, I was appointed Chubb fellow and Cherrill lecturer at Yale University, and was thereby privileged to stay with the late President Griswold of Yale, to meet the students in their rooms and to lecture to a distinguished audience on the foreign policy of Ireland. A more lasting fruit of this friendship sprang from a decision of Mr Lewis, on one of his visits to Ireland, to establish a bursary in Yale for students of the N.U.I. and Trinity College, to be called the

"Lewis Farmington Fellowship". It is gratifying to know that all the seven students who have so far gone to Yale as Lewis Farmington Scholars have done well.

The unexpected death of Mrs. Lewis on May 9th, 1960, was not only an irreparable tragedy for her husband but a cause of deep personal grief for her friends and an inestimable loss to American scholarship.

Perhaps the most remarkable outcome of Father Leonard's acquaintance with Mr. and Mrs. Lewis was a further friendship established with Mrs Lewis' niece, Miss Jacqueline Bouvier, and, eventually, with President John F. Kennedy. In early summer of 1948 Miss Bouvier and her step-brother, Yousha, (Hugh D Auchincloss, Jnr), travelled to Ireland and visited Father Leonard. They called to see me at my then office at Government Buildings. Miss Bouvier, who was full of youthful vivacity and charm and delighted with everything she found in Ireland, expressed the hope of coming frequently again.

In September, 1955, she returned with her husband, then Senator John F. Kennedy. In my absence abroad they were entertained by my son Declan and my daughter-in-law. Senator Kennedy on that occasion addressed the students of All Hallows. In the ANNUAL for 1962-63, at page 84, there appears a photograph taken at the time of Senator Kennedy, with Father Purcell and Father Leonard. In it one sees clear indication of the spinal trouble from which he was just then recovering.

When John F. Kennedy again came to Ireland, in summer 1963, he came as President of the United States. While we were waiting to be presented to him at Áras an Úachtaráin, I heard him ask Declan how he could get in touch with Father Leonard, since he did not wish to return without seeing him. That evening there was a startling announcement at All Hallows that the White House wished to speak on the 'phone to

Father Leonard. It was the President. Needless to say, Father Leonard was overjoyed by this kind remembrance.

It is also of interest that when a son was born after the election, in Nov., 1960, the wife of the President-elect invited him to come over and baptize the baby. Unfortunately, he was by then rather feeble and his physician would not allow him to make the journey.

I am proud to own a letter given me by Father Leonard as a “valued possession”, written to him by Mrs Kennedy to thank him for a book, *Pio Nono* by E. E. Y. Hales, which he had sent her as a present.

I am happy to publish that letter in these pages.

3307 N. STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C.

DEAREST FATHER L.,

I didn't think I should thank you for *Pio Nono* until I had read it. It makes me so sad that I now don't have as much time to read as I want. But I have read it at last – so I really can thank you with such great gratitude, and so can Jack, for he read it too.

It is triply fascinating for me, for I never realised that so recently had a Pope played such a fighting role against the other elements of society. When I think of politics now, and what everybody hopes for today from the papacy against communism – Churchmen I know who have secular influence, like Cardinals Spellman and Cushing, plus everything I'd read about the 19th century – you can see that I found it riveting.

How are you, dearest Father L? ...The President of Ireland is in Washington this week. If I meet him I will give him a big hug to be delivered to you!

My Caroline is beautiful – terribly strong-minded-which is so sweet to see in a fat little helpless baby, so determined as she goes about her little projects, like climbing up on a chair. Don't worry, she won't be spoiled. She is so much like Jack, except for being so delicious looking, that I really feel unnecessary to the whole transaction and she might just as well have sprung fullblown from the forehead of the Senator. But that doesn't make you love her the less, as it is such a relief not to find one's own faults in a child.

Endless love to you, dearest Father Leonard. Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Jacqueline

The last letter he wrote to her was one that, I know, caused him great pain and anxiety. He desired to comfort and console her over the frightful tragedy of her husband's death. Father Leonard was moved to the depths of his being by the horror and shock of the President's assassination. For some time previously knee trouble had prevented him from standing for the celebration of Mass, a deprivation which he felt very much. In due course, however, the rector of All Hallows, Father Fagan, secured for him from the Holy See a special privilege of saying Mass while seated, and the letter arrived almost the hour that the President died. Next day he offered his Mass for the late President, but the tragedy had so profoundly affected him that he never again offered the holy Sacrifice.

It is a consolation to me that during the last years of his life, but particularly during the last months, it was given me in some way to relieve his isolation, soften his loneliness, and give companionship to Father Leonard. Whatever small amount of trouble this occasioned to me was very abundantly recompensed. The sanity of his intellect, the influence of his sympathetic understanding, his humble spirituality and his wit and humour, all must have affected me in my spirit and outlook. For that I am more deeply indebted to him than he ever was or need have been to me.



Photo presented to the College in 2002 by Declan Costello, son of John A Costello, commemorating the visit of Senator John F Kennedy to the College in September 1955.

Fr Joseph Leonard CM stands to the right with Fr William Purcell, then President of All Hallows, in the centre.



*Christmas Card sent to Fr Leonard by John F and Jacqueline Kennedy in 1963.
The overseas cards had obviously been posted
before the tragic events of 22 November in Dallas*