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Gentle Readers.

Post Easter Greetings from your Committee!

This is my last communication to you as your 'Chair' and writer of 'Gentle Readers'. With the exception of the Honorary Secretary, Sr. Mary Dalton, and the Communications Officer, Niamh Collins, and Sr. Marie Feely our Financial Officer, who you might remember was co-opted as a member of the Committee many years ago, the remainder of the Committee will be standing down at this AGM, having concluded their term of office. I must thank Sr. Teresa who has seen to the publication of the Newsletter regularly for many years, and who is now standing down as editor after an exceedingly well done job. She has had to prod me a few times for the 'Gentle Readers' script. I would also like to thank all the members of the out-going committee - Noelle Dowling, Sr. Mary Dalton, Sr. Teresa, Fr. David Kelly OSA, Niamh Collins and Sr. Marie Feely for all their work for the Association of Church Archives, their commitment shown in the full attendance at each of our committee meetings, and particularly for their concern for the on-going development of the Association. You will hear something of these developments at the AGM. Their light heartedness made committee workings a joy. So again Míle buiochas!

Of course we have a very committed membership. The attendance at ACAI functions and archival outings are a measure of their interest in the work of the Association and give energy to the committee to work on their behalf. Thank you to each one. The committee has a very interesting AGM lined up for you on 21 April.

To end with – Did you know that Ireland has the world's largest online database of Irish Newspapers, national and regional. They go back to 1700's and are well worth a browse. Web walking for archivists is a very interesting 'blog' for anyone who has a few leisure hours.

To all of you Gentle Readers - Thank you and Goodbye,

Dominique Chair ACAI

AN ARCHIVAL VISIT

The tourist who sets out hopefully for Rome usually returns having completed a number of tasks—seeing the Coliseum, throwing coins in a fountain, visiting St Peter's, admiring the Roman forum, and soaking in the atmosphere of this imperial city. However the members of the Catholic Archives Society who visited Rome last October did not manage to do many of the stock in trade activities of the average Roman tourist, but they did have time to examine and enjoy some of Rome's hidden treasures—the archives of ten of its most historic institutions.

The last decades of the twentieth and early years of this century have seen a phenomenal revival of the archival profession. Nowhere is this more evident than in this gracious city, custodian of some of the world's most precious historic material. Most of the holdings are accommodated in very new premises, which at first sight appear unremarkable in their design. However a keener glance reveals expert planning in these buildings in order that they harmonise and blend in with their older surroundings. Archives are housed in very modern purpose-built strong rooms fitted with all the latest installations for the better conservation of documents. Furthermore most documents not alone record history, but they themselves experienced their own history in that many of them survived disaster, theft and confiscation. A number of institutions whose records had been dispersed through the vicissitudes of calamity and war in recent centuries were lucky in retrieving a good portion of them. Their archivists are now in a position not only to provide access to these documents, but to divert us with stories of their struggle and survival. I confine myself to sketching very briefly some impressions of our visit to three holdings, Propaganda Fide, Vatican Secret Archives and the archives of the Knights of Malta.

Propaganda Fide:

Propaganda Fide was founded in 1622 to organise the evangelisation of peoples and allot specific areas in new lands to the various bodies interested. The records bear a truly international flavour proceeding as they do from territories very distant from Rome. Our host, Father Luis Cuña Ramos enthralled his visitors by showing us drawer after drawer of facsimiles of many rare and famous documents. There were books from Tibet, an Arabic Bible dating from 1627 and letters written to the Pope from China on red silk which was used only in writing to the Emperor. Hanging on the wall was a map of a strangely-shaped Australia dating from 1688, one hundred years before Captain Cooke. Of course for our group, one of the prize exhibits was Oliver Plunkett's last letter to his nephew from the Tower of London. Oliver had been professor in the university in Propaganda for over twenty years. The contrast between the academic atmosphere of university halls in Rome and the hardship of his life as Archbishop here in Ireland struck us forcibly as we viewed the elegant surroundings which he knew and loved so well.

Vatican Secret Archives:

The Vatican Secret Archive suffers a bad reputation on account of its disconcerting name, disconcerting due to the natural evolution of language. 'Secret' is related to the word 'secretary' and it really means the Pope's own papers. In spite of its off-putting title, the Vatican Secret Archive has been open to qualified scholars of all nationalities and all faiths since 1881 and is internationally recognised as one of the most famous research centres in the world. Access is given to all documents and Popes' papers up to 1939, to the records of Vatican Council II and to documents concerning Prisoners of War up to 1947.

On account of their universally recognised value, the Vatican archives have undergone much due to the flux and flow of history over the centuries. Their greatest misfortune took place during Napoleon's occupation of Rome. In 1810 the entire holding was loaded on to a wagon and transported to Paris as Napoleon wished to make that city the cultural and historic centre of Europe. Some years later, after Waterloo, the French monarchy sent back most of the documents but sold others. About one-third were lost in the process. Since French archivists had classified the stolen records according to theme, it proved extremely difficult on their return to reassign them to their proper place.

Pope Gregory VII was one of the main figures in bringing about the Papacy as we know it today. After his reign which ended in 1085, there was much more communication with Rome, more consultation with the papacy concerning marriages, bishops and indulgences. The archive abounds with scrolls, parchments and leather-bound volumes enclosing correspondence older than even a thousand years. Copies of the Pope's outgoing letters were bound and kept in Rome. One volume over eight centuries old contained a copy of all the letters written by Innocent III.

Thousands of letters with their answers can be requested and studied today, letters to the Holy Roman Emperor, letters to Rome from nuncios in the various nation states of Europe. Documents from 1500 on describing what kings were doing are resting there on cupboard shelves – a first class source of history. Some documents are world famous, for example the parchment letter written by English peers to Pope Clement VII in 1530, calling for the annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. This we saw as we hurried by, barely having time enough to notice the myriad seals of the bishops and abbots of England appended to this document. We regretted not having a minute to spare to admire its exquisite palaeography.

One very ancient book which caught my eye was one foot high, two feet broad by two and half feet long. A volume such as this with the spine coming apart and the leather cover frayed with age would be a huge challenge for conservationists. It would be necessary to take the book apart, wash and clean out the acid and redo the leather binding.

The climax was yet to come. Our host, Father Marcel Chappin took a child's delight in bringing us to the Tower of the Winds, nimbly leading us up one hundred and fifty spiralling steps to a very colourful room high in the complex of the Vatican buildings. This room was decorated with two striking frescoes, one of Jesus calming the storm at sea and the other of Paul being shipwrecked. The floor dating from 1580 was eye-catching, being marked with a circle and a meridian. Father Chappin pointed out to us a barely perceptible hole in the wall which was specifically constructed so that a ray of sunlight would strike a point of intersection between the circle and meridian on the 21 March every year. In 1582, the Pope's astronomers discovered that the sun did not strike the meridian in the proper place thus indicating a faulty calendar. This question of calendar was tied up with the celebration of Easter; hence it was felt necessary to have the date as correct as possible. Subsequent calculations revealed that the calendar was out by roughly ten days. The discrepancy was corrected by papal decree and the calendar moved forward the appropriate length of time. Scotland and Catholic countries modified their calendars accordingly though Protestants and Russians kept the old style for another two or three centuries. The last European country to accept the change was Greece who in 1921 made up the accumulated deficit of time by losing thirteen days!

Knights of Malta:

The Knights of Malta hosted us archivists for an entire day. These are a hugely interesting group, having over a thousand years of history behind them and retaining many features of the age of They are a sovereign religious order, an order which has a government recognised as a nation capable of having diplomatic relations with other countries, somewhat like the Vatican, possessing perhaps even less territory than that august body. They have two houses in Rome and diplomatic representatives in one hundred and five countries. Founded originally for caring for sick pilgrims in Jerusalem, they rapidly became caught up with the Crusades where this duty was seen to include military action. From being almost extinct over the last hundred years they have made a remarkable recovery. They are a Catholic religious order with vows, but no obligation to community life. They have reverted to their original charism, care of sick pilgrims and their diplomatic status gives them entry to places possibly closed to others. Every year on the 24 June, the feast of St John the Baptist their patron saint, the Grand Master of the Knights makes a formal visit to the Pope as one head of state to another! Their documents filled a large modern strong room with the latest in shelving and equipment. We caught sight of a very tall safety ladder with side railings and sporting the labour-saving device of a reading desk on top, a boon for a pressurised archivist. A further labour-saving device on the lower levels was a pull-out reading shelf underneath the boxes, thus facilitating greatly a hurried consultation. Some documents were on exhibition in their vast reading room. It must be admitted that at that point our interest lay elsewhere as we were listening enthralled by the Order's story which these modern day knights delighted in relating to us while they guided us through their vast halls and apartments.

The trip was the journey of a lifetime. Indeed the visit must have been a wonderful source of satisfaction to the organisers who had worked assiduously in the preceding weeks and months to make it a resounding success for all participants. It was especially gratifying to them when those who knew Rome well were loud in their praise. This brief but privileged entry into hallowed spaces left each one of us with a sense of awe and thankfulness to God at the wonder and growth of human achievement over the ages.

Mary O'Beirne, op



IRISH CARMELITE LIBRARY

Address on the occasion of the Blessing of the Restored Library and Archives by the V. Rev. Martin Kilmurray, O.Carm. Provincial - 29 June 2011.

Libraries go back a long way in human history; one of the first dates from the Assyrian legislator Hammurabi about 1800 BC. Early libraries had records of monarchs, treaties, annals, and documents dealing with accounts and trade.

Fast forward 3000 years to Mount Carmel. The early hermit brothers must certainly have had some books on Mount Carmel, at least for liturgy and worship; St. Albert presumes access to reading the bible by at least some of them. There is, moreover, legislation in the 1294 Constitutions that books, which the brothers fleeing from persecution had brought from Mount Carmel, were to be collected and returned to the Holy Land as soon as peace and stability were restored. Earlier still in the 1281 Constitutions there was a rubric "Deceased Brothers and their Books" which specified that their books were to be returned to their convent of origin. Thus were the study, disease or the food to kill a brother studying at a university like Paris or Bologna, his books were to be sent back to his house.

In subsequent centuries there is regular legislation about books and libraries especially from the time of Bl. John Soreth. His *Constitutions* (1462) had a chapter, "The Library and the Care of Books," which predates printing. This chapter becomes foundational and is repeated with modifications until the *Constitutions* of Pius Mayer (1904) and Elias Magennis (1930). Some features of this legal tradition:

- If, with the permission of the provincial, duplicate books were sold, the accruing money must be spent of buying books.
- Books are to be listed
- Books are to be regularly cleaned—one thinks of rodents and bats that were a problem in medieval libraries.
- No stranger is to be admitted to the library unless accompanied at all times by a Carmelite brother.
- Twice a year there is to be an inventory or stocktaking.
- Serious punishments were to be meted out to those who destroyed or removed books; a
 minimum of two days on bread and water, with discipline administered in refectory.
- There must to be no permanent marks on books, and the corners of the pages must not to be turned down.

D. Waite, "Biblioteca" in E. Boaga and L. Borriello, Dizionario Carmelitano (Rome: Città Nuova, 2008) 104-106

² "De libraria et custodia librorum," Part II, rub 10, c h. 31.

 In the later constitutions there was a stipulation about two libraries: one restricted to priests and one open to students and brothers.

Pope Clement VII had laid down severe penalties for anyone who removed books from Carmelite libraries in 1593.³ Since papal edicts are rarely revoked, I think that these are probably still in force, so thieves, pranksters and the disruptive should beware.

Carmelite houses in Europe and in the Americas were generally well endowed with libraries, many of them very extensive. Some libraries were very extensive; for example, the prior in Belém in Brazil donated 2,600 books in the early 17th century. The position in Ireland was quite different. The Order nearly died out in the Penal times under the double whammy of Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries (from 1536) and of the pillage by Oliver Cromwell and his forces (from 1649). The Province was restored in 1737, when there were fourteen houses, most of them not much better than a bothán or mud hut; the province comprised only thirty-four members in 1767.

When the penal laws had been repealed in the early 19th century, the intellectual state of the Irish Church was poor; Maynooth was seen as unsatisfactory because of the quality of its courses and its lack of books. In 1801 the Carmelites had ten friaries manned by twenty-eight priests. For two centuries young Carmelites did their novitiate and studies on the continent, mainly in Spain. There was no tradition of intellectual life in the Province from the Reformation to the mid nineteenth century, except for a few gifted individuals like Myles Prendergast (1775-000), Thomas Bennett who lectured in All Hallows College Dublin (from 1842 to 1881) and was President there (1861), John Spratt and Ignatius Carr. They brought books when on the continent. We have several books inscribed by them, especially Spratt. Given that our students had been largely educated in Spain for two centuries, we have rather few books printed in Spain. The nineteenth century was one of great difficulty for the Order in Europe, with restoration beginning in the last quarter, which was a time of expansion also in Ireland. But the century was not one of rich academic life, either in theology or spirituality.

In the twentieth century Irish students began to study in Rome, but this was not a great source for the Gort Muire library. The main textbooks of systematic theology were the Latin series of the German Jesuit L. Billot (1846-1931); later Roman Carmelite students had texts of B.M. Xiberta were circulated in cyclostyle and other production means. With the Second World War, Irish Carmelite students were made welcome by the Jesuits in Milltown Park. Here as elsewhere in the Church there was little innovation in seminary study. Sturdy and reliable books continued to be reprinted. In moral theology the textbook of the Belgian Jesuit E. Genicot, Theologiae moralis institutiones (1900), went through many editions even after his death in 1900; it was my textbook in Milltown in 1960. Dogmatic theology was taught from C. Pesch; Milltown professors polycopied extensive summaries of his seminary course of four volumes, Theologiae dogmaticae compendium (1913-1914) and for those doing the license in theology his nine volume Praelectiones which was first published 1894-1897. Each Irish Carmelite theology student had his own copy of the moral textbook which he was meant to keep for life, a Latin bible, the summary of Church teaching by Denzinger and a florilegium of patristic texts by Rouët de Journal. There was then no need to buy textbooks in theology; which was unchanging with nothing new. Philosophy was no different; it was studied from ancient copies of textbooks dating from 1910 by the Jesuit V. Remer. For Church history students consulted the three volume set by the English priest Philip Hughes, frequently reprinted from 1934. Students at University College Dublin had text books in English, Irish and French—the three

Bullarium Carmelitanum II: 267-268.

J. Smet, The Carmelites: A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Darian, III: Carmelite Centre, 1976), vol. 2, 206; see also J. Smet, "Carmelite Libraries in Spain and Portugal at the End of the Sixteenth Century," Carmelus 19(1972) 251-301.

See P. O'Dwyer, The Irish Carmelites of the Ancient Observance (Dublin: Carmelite Publications, 1988) 131.149

⁶ Ibid, 177.

See C. O'Donnell, "Carmelite Spirituality in the Nineteenth Century." Carmel ion the World 47(2008) 87-101 and 83.

most common subjects taken for the B.A. apart from philosophy. Reference books and secondary literature had to be studied in the College library.

This period 1940-1960 was one in which few new books came to the student library. The province was poor; it had a growing number of students to be housed and fed, and the mission in Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, had just been founded in 1946. This last was a heavy burden on the province especially in personnel and finance. I remember the Provincial, Fr. Emmanuel McGrath in January 1966 bringing to Gort Muire about £100 in book tokens he himself had received as Christmas presents.

With the establishment of the theology school in Gort Muire in 1961 it was necessary to begin purchasing books. They were mostly textbooks, and a trickle at that. Systematic or dogmatic theology was taught from the new four volume series of Latin textbooks emerging from the Madrid publishers of the *Biblioteca de autores christianos* (BAC) which began in 1953. The books were new, but in the traditional format of theses exposed and defended. The main buying of books came after Vatican II when new and exciting books appeared; it was then that the rather derisory phrase "paperback theology" was first used.

A main source for purchases was the teaching staff in Gort Muire and Milltown: people like Peter O'Dwyer, Eltin Griffin, John Lawler, Paul Lennon, Aloysius Ryan, John Keating and myself were avid book collectors. In the mid 1960s one prior in Gort Muire, Fr. Enda Devane, allowed us to keep money we got for giving a retreat during the Summer for the purchase of books for our studies and for the library.

With the establishment of the Conference Centre after 1976, there was a further incentive to buy books. The Centre took up all the energies of the community at the time. Books needed for courses were acquired by the individuals involved. There was no serious care of the library at that time. On one occasion the Prior General, who was giving a retreat here, wanted to consult a book from the library. Rather than let him see its disorganised and unkempt state, he was told that the key could not be found!

We can view with a smile and with gentle humour the history of books in the province. Some people did not appreciate the value of books or of archive material. A certain amount has been lost by carelessness, misdirection or misadventure. Books go missing: they are not stolen, but rather borrowed and never returned - the net result where the library is concerned is, however, the same. The Irish Province of Carmelites reflected the Irish Church which was noted more for its pastoral energy and commitment than for the value it placed on scholarship. We cannot judge the past with the wisdom that came later.

When the refurbishment of Gort Muire began during the provincialate of Fintan Burke, a few of us, led by Martín Kilmurray and Joe Mothersill, undertook to sort and cull books. The libraries in religious houses always have a lot of useless material. When people change from one community to another, they take with them books which they value, and the remainder is dumped in the library. Funerals are another source of unwanted material. The culling of libraries is difficult. We seem to hoard books in a way that we might not gather and keep other things. Throwing out a useless pair of shoes or an old radio and throwing out a book are not the same: who knows if some day a book that seems shoddy, old and dilapidated might not be useful to someone, or even valuable. Not only is there a need for some expertise in books when culling, but one has to harden one's heart. I remember on many occasions when working with Martin Kilmurray his telling me to be more stern in my culling, and not to be so soft; then a few minutes later I would catch him slipping aside a book that attracted him, even though it was outside the rules we had drawn up for ourselves. It was about the time of the refurbishment of Gort Muire that Martin Kilmurray and myself attended a Carmelite librarians meeting in Nantes. There our thoughts clarified so that we felt that our library should specialise in Carmelitana, Mariology and spirituality, with less concentration on other areas. refurbishment of Gort Muire all had to be boxed and when it was all over our new librarian Ruth Long emptied them, sorted, shelved and catalogued our holdings.

In more recent years Martin Kilmurray, now Provincial, has devoted his attention to our archives. Peter O'Dwyer was a great collector, though not by nature a tidy man. Our archive material was kept in old presses, file boxes and tea chests, but now thanks to Martin's drive and interest and the labours of our archivist, Laura Magnier, we have come a long way towards cataloguing and displaying. Peter's own archive representing his interests in Carmelite matters, Mariology and history had been kept in shoe boxes; his research notes were very often jottings written on unsold raffle tickets of various sizes. We should remember, however, that the history of Ireland has meant that our archives are poor and incomplete as a result of the persecution of the Church in the penal times mentioned earlier. A further point that should be recalled about Fr. Peter is the influence on him of the Celtic Studies Department in University College Dublin, where he did an MA, and prepared a doctoral thesis that he would later present to the Angelicum University, Rome. The great Celtic philologist, Osborn Bergin, who died in 1950, was a perfectionist, who published little. On his death there was a consensus amongst many Celtic scholars that people should publish, even when their material was still imperfect or their research was incomplete. Peter followed this perspective even to a fault. As a result we have his foundational studies in Carmelite history, Irish Mariology and spirituality, as well as his doctoral thesis on John Spratt. I am as a result rather intolerant of any criticism of Peter's scholarship or archive collection. He served scholarship and the Order well.

Many have contributed to the library and archives that are blessed and formally opened today. Fr. Martin Kilmurray has always appreciated the work of others; he refused my insistent request that the new brass plate marking the blessing should give more credit to his inspiration, vision and labours. But I would have to insist that without Martin Kilmurray's drive and commitment we would not now have a new Carmelite library to serve the Carmelite Order and scholarship in Ireland, nor the fine archives. There are better collections elsewhere in the world, but this is ours and we can be proud of it. Today we are asserting that students, researchers and others are welcome to study in our Carmelite heritage here in Gort Muire.

Christopher O'Donnell, O.Carm.,

Benediction - 150 Years of Bon Secour in Ireland.

In recent times the Sisters of Bon Secours launched an exhibition at the Cork Public Museum, Fitzgerald's Park, the Mardyke, Cork entitled "Benediction: 150 years of Bon Secours in Ireland. Bon Secours means "good help". The Sisters of Bon Secours are an international religious Congregation whose mission is to bring "good help to those in need". Though we are best known for our work in healthcare, we also work within communities and with marginalised people in Ireland and abroad.

The Sisters were founded in Paris in 1824 in an unstable post-revolution France. 1824 marked the end of the reign of King Louis XV111 and he was succeeded by King Charles X. A group of young women with like minded aspirations, "to care for the sick and the dying" came together in a house on the Rue de Bac. They chose one of the group – Josephine Potel as their leader. At 25 years she led a Congregation of twelve women aged between 20 and 33 years. She was the Congregation's first Superior General. The Sisters were unique in that they remained in the homes of the sick day and night as long as they were required. At the age of 27 years Mother Potel died from tuberculosis. The newly professed Mother Angelique Geay succeeded her as Superior General, a position she held until her death 34 years later. As women continued to join the Congregation, the Sisters made further foundations, at Lille, Boulogne and Abbeyville in the north and at Orleans in the south of Paris.

The first foundation abroad was made in Ireland in 1861. Following repeated invitations from the O'Fearall family from Dublin: Catherine, Mary Anne and Louisa, five Sisters arrived in

Dublin on 6 May 1861. Among the group to arrive was Mother St Hedwige Hegarty whose father was a Captain in the British Army. He had been assigned to escort Napoleon to his exile on the island of St Helena in 1815. The O'Fearall sisters were members of the Daughters of Mary, a group that had strong links to the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris. The O'Fearall's had sponsored two young women to go to Paris to become Sisters of Bon Secours. The Sisters were supported on their arrival in Dublin by the O'Fearall's, a Ms. Hamill and her brother and Sr. Josephine de Virieu of the Sisters of St Vincent de Paul, the Congregation that provided accommodation to the Sisters, at Grenville Place in the parish of the Pro-Cathedral. The Sisters arrived to find an Ireland recovering from the aftermath of a devastating famine pre-occupied with land and tenancy issues. The Sisters remained in the homes caring for the sick and the dying as long as they were required, as the Sisters did in the homes in France. As the number of Sisters increased a house was purchased at 64 Mount Street. This was convent for the Sisters until the purchase of Delville, Glasnevin by Mother Teresa Ryan in 1944. The Sisters commuted daily between Mount Street and Delville until 1951 when Glasnevin Hospital was opened and Mount Street was sold to the Sisters of Nevers.

In 1871, five Sisters of Bon Secours left Mount Street, Dublin for Wexford and with Dr Thomas Furlong, Bishop of Ferns established the Sisters of St John of God. Today the Sisters work in Ireland, Australia, South Africa and Pakistan. During the cholera outbreak of 1866 a sister from Dublin was sent to Cork to nurse a Vincentian priest, Fr. O'Connor. He and his brother, a Doctor approached Bishop William Delany to request a Bon Secours foundation for Cork. Five Sisters, from Dublin and Paris came to Cork in 1867. Their first Convent was at 11 Dyke Parade. Due to increasing numbers, the Sisters soon needed to move to a larger house. In 1872 the former residence of Charles Beamish on Mardyke Walk became available. The Sisters moved into "The Shrubberies" now Cork Public Museum and this was their home until 1880 when they moved to Our Lady's Hill, College Road. The work of the Sisters connected them deeply with the local community and people of the city. The records tell us that Sr. Benilda Mansfield and Sr. Euphemia Stack visited the strikers in Cork Gaol during the 1920 and 1923 hunger strikes. The Sisters have a long association of working in the city's parishes – Ballyphehane, The Lough, South Parish and Togher.

Under the guidance of Mother Sulpice Hayes the first unit of Bon Secours Hospital in Cork opened its doors in 1915. The Chapel and a further unit were added in 1925. This forms the present facade of the hospital. Over the years several extensions have been added to the building to form Bon Secours Hospital as we know it today. The Bon Secours Maternity Hospital opened in 1958. It played a special role in the life of many Mums in Cork city and surrounding counties. Over 100,000 children were born between 1958 and 2007, when the Cork Maternity Hospitals centralised to the Cork University Maternity Hospital (C.U.M.H.). A statue of Our Lady with the Child by Cork sculptor and stone carver Seamus Murphy adorns the entrance that is now part of the general hospital. Following its foundation in Cork the Sisters continued to bring their mission of healing and compassion to other counties, towns and cities in Ireland.1872 Belfast, 1879 Tralee, 1885 Glenamaddy, Co Galway, 1909 Cobh, 1931 Mount Desert, Cork, 1937 Edenburn, Co Kerry, 1945 Tuam, 1999 Knock and Galway.

Having made foundations in Ireland the Sisters went on to become an international Congregation. In 1870 a foundation was made in England and in 1881 in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A. In both these countries further foundations were established over the years.

In 1966 Bishop Cornelius Lucey, Bishop of Cork and Ross having established the Cork Diocesan Mission in Trujillo, Peru, invited the Sisters of Bon Secours and the Mercy Sisters

to respond to the peoples great needs, of healthcare and education. In October 1966 four Sisters, Sr. Columba Mary Byrne (Monaghan), Sr. Felim Duignan (Cavan), Sr. Mary de Sales Humphreys (Cork), and Sr. Joseph Finbarr O'Sullivan (Cork), left Ireland to begin an "unknown" mission in the name of Bon Secours, in a new country, a new culture and with limited knowledge of Castellano the spoken language of the country. The Sisters began their work in the barriadas—shanty towns of La Esperanza. They focused on pastoral work, visiting the house-bound in the area and caring for the sick at two clinics, working with limited-existing healthcare providers. The Bon Secours Mission continues today with Peruvian Sisters and one Irish Sister, Sr. Consuela Mc Cullagh bringing "Good help to people in need".

In 2006 Sr. Esther Murray commenced a new ministry in Mwanza, Tanzania, as lecturer of Social Communications and Journalism at St Augustine's University under the sponsorship of the Catholic Bishops of Tanzania. In 2008 two Sisters from Ireland, Sr. Mary Leamy and Sr. Martina Mulcahy and two Sisters from Peru, Sr. Rosa Sanchez and Sr. Nora Jimenez Cruz left Ireland to found a mission in Tzaneen, South Africa to care for people affected with the HIV/AIDS virus.

To be a sister of Bon Secours means to care for people in a spirit of healing, compassion and liberation. For many Sisters this meant nursing in homes or in hospitals for their entire working lives, to mention a few - Sr. St Emile Mc Namara, from Mitchelstown, Co Cork was Directress of a hospital in Normandy, Northern France. Following World War 1 she received the "Medialle des Epidemies" from the French Government and the "Queen Elizabeth" medal from the Belgian Monarch for wartime and humanitarian services. Sr. Mary of the Annunciation Walsh, from Cobh, Co Cork spent her active nursing career of 61 years exclusively in France. She was decorated at Lille in France, April 1970 with "La Croix de Chevalier de L'Oeuvre Humanitarie" and awarded a certificate proclaiming her a "Knight of Humanitarian Deeds" for her dedicated care of the wounded and maimed of two World Wars. On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Sisters coming to Cobh, at the request of the people of Cobh two Sisters, Sr. Fintan O'Hanlon from Ballymacelligott, Co Kerry and Sr. Fidelis O'Shea from Cahirciveen, Co Kerry were awarded the "Papal Pro Merenti Medal" for their outstanding dedication and commitment to their ministry on behalf of the people of Cobh. Sr. Fintan having graduated as a nurse in 1930 for all but two years of her working life ministered to the people of Cobh. She died at the age of 107 years. Sr. Fidelis ministered for 57 years to the people of Cobh. She was honoured "Cobh's Citizen of the Year" in 1980.

Bon Secours in the 21st Century: Today four acute hospitals, Cork, Dublin, Galway, Tralee and one long-term care facility, Mount Desert Care Village are part of Bon Secours Health System.

In 2008 C.I.C.L.S.A.L.(the Congregation for Religious)approved the request of the Irish Sisters to ≤establish a new Public Juridic Person(PJP) called Bon Secours Ireland.

- 1. To assume responsibility for the future governance of our healthcare ministries.
- 2. To ensure the continuation of Bon Secours charism, mission and ethos into the future.

Today, Sisters of Bon Secours work in all areas of healthcare, day care facilities, parish and community work, social services, counselling, chaplaincy and education.

"Lord we thank You, for all that has been accomplished, for the promise of tomorrow and for what lies ahead we trust You".

Lord We Thank You

Sr. Jean Marie O'Keeffe

Visit to the Columban Archives and Cemetery Dalgan Park

A group of twenty three members of the ACAI visited the Columban archives and cemetery in Dalgan Park, Navan, Co. Meath on Saturday 10 March 2012. The afternoon got off to a buzzing start with a very welcome and invigorating cup of tea/coffee and ample opportunity for all to chat and catch up with many friends and colleagues whose paths only cross on such social occasions.

The members were warmly welcomed by Fathers Michael Molloy, Maurice Hogan, and Niamh Collins, archivist. Niamh began by leading us to the inner sanctum, the strong room, a former convent, now home to the Columban archival collections. Interestingly only a few modest modifications were deemed necessary for the change of use.

The holdings include:

- · Administrative records of each region and of central administration
- · Private papers of significant Columbans
- Works on the history of the society, journals, magazines, publications,
- Film, audio visual collection, oral history cassette tapes and printed transcripts.
- · The necrology files are kept in Donaghmede.

Our next treat was to peruse and spend time on an inspiring exhibition of:

- Compiled letters of Edward Galvin from China and one heart rending letter to his mother February 1912
- Photographs of scenes from China 1914-1915, ordination book 1918-1967, first group of Columbans who went to China in 1920, notebook of co-founder John Blowick
- The 'Ocean Bulletin' 1921 put together on-board a ship from US to China
- Spiritual returns listing statistics from Columban parishes in China in 1922
- Programme for the 1932 Eucharistic Congress
- Constitutions of the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Chinese sisters founded by Galvin) 1939, and smuggled out of China in the shoe of Patrick Reilly
- Programme and photographs from the Luxeuil Congress of St Columban held in 1950 and much more!

History of the Columban Society 1909-2006

Equipped with this background information Dr Niall Collins continued with the History of the Columban Society from 1909-2006 using a colour coded timeline. His content and delivery were alive and stimulating, oozing enthusiasm and deep conviction. One could hear in the background music of one's mind "Go ye afar, go teach all nations, bear witness unto Me".

The Far East magazine was first published in 1918 and has stood the test of time. It was the favourite diet of pupils of my vintage in the 1940s and 1950s. We simply devoured it, intrigued by the missionary activity in faraway places, but more attracted to the entertainment on the 'Pudsy Ryan' page!

Cemetery Visit

The Columban story was further enhanced for us when we visited the cemetery. Even though it was only a short distance away, we were very kindly treated to a jaunt there by car! It was

a rich experience not to be missed! Entering the cemetery one had a strong sense of standing on holy ground, listening to the sounds of silence and a new springtime.

During the 'boom years' up to two hundred students studied in the seminary on campus. The cemetery proved to be a fascinating fund of information. Shock registered when, one read the name, age, date of death and country of origin, of each deceased Columban from 1921-2011, displayed on eight enormous marble panels. Large numbers died in their 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s in the early part of the last century. One explanation offered was the absence of immunisation against various diseases, plus many other complicated factors, hostility, violence and even persecution.

As I mused, memories from the book *Three Winters Cold* flooded my consciousness. Some of the gruesome details and images that surfaced were, of a straggling, struggling, tortured, emaciated group of disciples, forced to walk long distances in inclement weather.

Father Maurice Hogan effortlessly filled in many blanks including the name of the author, Fr Philip Crosbie, an Australian Columban. The question that came to mind: Who made the greater sacrifice, these young missionaries, or their parents?

From the moment our group entered the Columban household we experienced a warm welcome and lavish hospitality for which we are most appreciative and grateful. The grounds too were very inviting in their luscious growth and greenery, and of course the day smiled warmly and dryly upon us! We are sincerely grateful to Niamh Collins for a wonderful treat.

CLERICAL SUCCESSION LISTS IN THE CHURCH OF IRELAND Canon David W T Crooks

Early Succession Lists

The production of lists of clergy originated early in the nineteenth century with the publication by Samuel Percy Lea of *The Present State of the Established Church or Ecclesiastical Register of Ireland for the year 1814*. This was followed in 1817 with the publication by J C Erck of *The Irish Ecclesiastical Register... containing lists of the Dignitaries, Beneficed Clergy and Curates-Assistant.* Erck produced revisions of this work in 1818, 1820, 1825 and 1835. In 1843, J.M. Bourns published *The Irish Clergy List and Ecclesiastical Almanack*

Those early works were basically just lists of clergy with little biographical information. The first to produce succession lists of clergy with biographical and other details was Henry Cotton of Lismore, who published Fasti Ecclesiae Hibernicae, subtitled The Succession of the Prelates and Members of the Cathedral Bodies of Ireland. The first volume, which appeared in 1847, covered the Province of Munster. Subsequent volumes for Leinster, Ulster and Connaught were produced in 1848, 1849 and 1850 respectively. Cotton amended and corrected his work in later editions. In the Fasti, Cotton gives varying amounts of detail of academic qualifications and appointments of the bishops, deans, canons and other dignitaries of the Irish Cathedrals from the 5th to the 19th centuries, along with some biographical details.

The first to produce Diocesan Succession Lists was the Rev. William Maziere Brady, who published lists of clergy of Cork, Cloyne and Ross in 1863 and 1864. In 1903, the Rev. John Harding Cole produced Church and Parish Records of the United Diocese of Cork, Cloyne

and Ross. Further work on the Diocese of Ross was done in 1936 by the Dean of Ross, Charles Webster.

Later Twentieth Century Succession Lists

Following on from the work of Brady and Cole, a great deal of work on the production of succession lists of clergy was done in the first half of the 20th century. Archdeacon St. John Drelincourt Seymour, who spent all of his ministry in the Dioceses of Cashel and Emly, produced in 1908, Succession Lists of Clergy in Cashel and Emly. In 1920, the Rev'd William Henry Rennison, published Succession Lists of the Bishops, Cathedral and Parochial Clergy of the Dioceses of Waterford and Lismore. These however, are in the main, lists of clergy, containing little biographical information. Hugh Jackson Lawlor, Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, who had earlier attempted unsuccessfully to revise Cotton's Fasti, published in 1930 The Fasti of St. Patrick's, Dublin. The Dean of Dromore, Henry B. Swanzy had almost completed Succession of the Diocese of Dromore at the time of his tragic death in a car accident in 1932.

James Blennerhasett Leslie, 1865-1952

The most prolific, and arguably the greatest producer of biographical succession lists of clergy was Canon James Blennerhasett Leslie, Rector of Kilsaran Parish, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth in the Diocese of Armagh from 1899 to 1951. Leslie was a most careful and meticulous scholar who spent many hours over many years, gathering and recording information from a huge variety of sources. Perhaps our greatest debt to him is the preservation for posterity of much that was to be lost in the devastating fire at the Four Courts Public Record Office in Dublin in 1922. Canon Leslie's first published succession lists, Armagh Clergy and Parishes, appeared in 1911. The other volumes which he published were Clogher Clergy and Parishes, 1929, Ossory Clergy and Parishes, 1933, Ferns Clergy and Parishes, 1936, Derry Clergy and Parishes, 1937, Ardfert and Aghadoe Clergy and Parishes, 1940, and Raphoe Clergy and Parishes, 1940. Leslie with Dean Swanzy, published Biographical Succession Lists of the Clergy of the Diocese of Down in 1936, and in 1933 he published Swanzy's Succession Lists in the Diocese of Dromore. Leslie also produced a supplement to Armagh Clergy and Parishes in 1948.

For financial or other reasons, Canon Leslie was not able to publish all his succession lists. Those which were not published are in manuscript in the Library of the Representative Church Body in Dublin. They are lists for the Dioceses of Ardagh, Connor, Dublin, Elphin, Glendalough, Kildare, Kilfenora, Clonfert and Kilmacduagh, Killala and Achonry, Killaloe, Kilmore, Leighlin, Limerick, Meath and Tuam, as well as Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin. There is also a biographical index to the Clergy of the Church of Ireland.

In his lists, Canon Leslie gives the Archbishops/Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, Prebendaries, Canons and any other dignitaries. There follow in alphabetical order, the parishes of the diocese, with biographical details of the clergy from as early as they can be traced to the time of writing. Leslie also includes short historical notes on each parish. For each entry, Leslie gives the clergyman's name, parentage, date and place of birth, details of education and academic qualifications, dates of ordination, appointments, preferments, Marriage and children and date of death. Obviously, not all of this information is available for each entry. It must be noted that Leslie omitted many curates – it seems that he was most concerned with incumbents.

and Rennison. In recent times there has been a renewal of interest in this whole subject. In 1993, a sub-committee of the Down and Dromore and Connor Library Committee, of which the Secretary was Mr Fred Rankin, updated and published Leslie's unpublished Connor succession lists with Clergy of Connor from Patrician Times to the Present Day. The committee followed this in 1996 with an updating of Swanzy's Dromore lists and Leslie's Down lists in a volume entitled Clergy of Down and Dromore. In 1999 Canon Frederick Fawcett and I published Clergy of Derry and Raphoe, an updating of Leslie's two volumes of lists of clergy of Derry and Raphoe. In 2000, Canon W.E.C. Fleming published Armagh Clergy 1800-2000, Followed in 2001 by Mr. W.J.R. Wallace's updating of Leslie's two unpublished volumes on Dublin and Glendalough. Dean Thomas Moore and I updated in 2006 Leslie's 1929 Clogher Clergy and Parishes. In 2008 the Rev. Iain Knox published Rennison's lists for Waterford and Lismore and Leslie's lists for Ferns, and I updated Canon Leslie's three hitherto unpublished volumes of lists of Clergy of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh, along with his two previously unpublished manuscripts of Clertgy of Tuam, and of Clergy of Killala and Achonry.

Canon Leslie's unpublished succession lists for the Dioceses of Meath and Kildare, which Mr W.J.R. Wallace updated, were published by the Columba Press in 2009. In 2010, I updated Leslie's two previously unpublished volumes of Clergy of Killaloe and of Clergy of Kilfenora, Kilmacduagh and Clonfert. At the present time, the publication of an update and revision of Archdeacon Seymour's Cashel and Emly lists and of Canon Leslie's unpublished Leighlin lists, which have been prepared by Rev'd Iain Knox and myself, is on the verge of publication. The Lists for the Diocese of Ossory which Leslie published in 1933, and which I have updated, will hopefully be published later this year. I am at present working on revising Leslie's unpublished lists for Limerick, and his published volume of 1940, Ardfert and Aghadoe Clergy and Parishes. Dr. Alicia St. Ledger is working on updating and revising Brady's, Cole's and Webster's work on the Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross. When complete, it will be time to start again, as the first volume, Connor, will be long out of date. With the exception of Canon Fleming's Armagh update of 2000, and Mr Wallace's Meath and Kildare volumes, these works have been published by the Ulster Historical Foundation in Belfast.

Of course, these books go out of date almost immediately after publication. However, they provide a record up to the present, and photographs of the churches and maps of the dioceses, for which we think in the main, Canon Edgar Turner of Belfast, and also, Canon Leslie's manuscripts in the RCB Library, which are available only to a limited readership, are now much more widely available. We hope that others will keep them up to date in the future.

Canon David W.T. Crooks

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The Seminar "Histories and Archives of Women Religious" will be held in the School of Education, University College, Dublin on 21 -22 June 2012.

Contact information is available from Dr Deirdre Raftery, School of Education, University of Dublin D4. or from Dr Louise O'Reilly, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

An Adventure in Archives

In recent months two volumes of invaluable research have provided me with the comprehensive backdrop that puts closure to twenty years of intermittent research on the strange story of Margaret Anna Cusack, also known as the Nun of Kenmare. The two volumes were: (i) Elizabeth Hayes, Pioneer Fransiscan Journalist by Pauline J (Sr. M Francine) Shaw MFIC and (ii) The Oxford History of the Irish Book Vol. IV. Together they gave me the context of Cusack's life which covered the Victorian years 1829 – 1899, and answered for me the nagging question: Is there any lasting value in all she wrote? My conclusion I will come to later.

In her heyday in the 1870s the name The Nun of Kenmare was a household word in Ireland on account of her fund raising and printing of Catholic history and devotional works. But by the 1970s she was all but forgotten. Her life had been a colourful and turbulent one. Born of Dublin Protestant parentage with friends and connections in high society, of wealthy social status, she had converted to Catholicism in England and eventually in 1858 entered the Newry Poor Clare Community. When the Newry Sisters were invited to open a convent in Kenmare, Co Kerry, she as young Sr. M Francis Clare – was included in the founding group. For twenty years she was allowed the opportunity to indulge her passion for writing and even set up a printing press which produced a number of devotional texts under the name of 'Kenmare Series.' The passing years brought changes in the community; the much loved Mother Abbess O'Hagan died and life changed drastically for Sr. Francis Clare. The Bishop also was succeeded by one not so lenient with her privileges. Indeed he withdrew her financial management of the printing press and called her to account on questions of orthodoxy. When this Bishop, Dr John McCarthy, also died after a brief three years in office, Sr. Francis Clare was looking for a transfer away from Kerry. This was the point in time when her turmoil began.

In piecing together the sequence of events in Cusack's life the obvious, indeed the only, source available at the time was her Autobiography (the second of three. The first had been published in Kenmare under the title of "Seven Years in an Anglican Convent" and the third would be written in England when she returned in 1891 and titled "The Story of my Life.") This personal account proved to be an extremely biased tale of woe, of persecution and injustices inflicted upon her by clerics and the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Sr. Francis Clare, or Mother Clare as she became known in Knock, was portrayed as the innocent victim of a harsh male-dominated institution against which there was no protection.

Early in the 1970s an *Irish Times* journalist, Irene ffrench-Eager, produced a revised, shortened edition of the 1889 Autobiography, adding some genealogical information. The content of the original was left unchallenged and accepted as authentic. This version then passed into popular usage and was taken up as reliable source material. In the mid 1970's, in a climate of change in Church and State affairs in Ireland, the feminist women historians both in Ireland and America saw in Cusack's story a powerful tool in the cause of feminism and proceeded to exploit it without further serious exploration.

One small but courageous voice was raised in protest against the many false allegations made by Cusack, was that of Sister M Philomena McCarthy of Kemare Convent. She spoke out in defence of the Poor Clare Sisters, contemporaries of Sr. Francis Clare, who had suffered greatly from her behaviour. In failing health Sr. Philomena hastily published a concise booklet, well documented from primary sources, refuting the fallacious allegations. This was entitled: "The Nun of Kenmare: The True Facts (1986)" I was fortunate to visit Sr.

Philomena soon after and to share with her the excitement of discovering dusty, old letters and documents, and discerning their significance. This was the beginning of my 'Adventure among the Archives' and of my deep appreciation of the meticulous dedication of the many archivists I have since met and learned from. Sr. Philomena asked me to continue her work into the Knock period of Cusack's life. This I have endeavoured to do over the years when my missionary commitment was the priority and opportunity to pursue the enigmatic Nun was intermittent. In 1991 I compiled a dossier of primary sources which I called: 'Look at the Evidence' but did not publish until the late Monsignor Michael Walshe made reference to it in his final up-dating of the history of Knock Shrine. I then brought it out as "Margaret Anna Cusack, The Nun of Kenmare. 1881 – 1883" (Gaelbooks 2008).

Since then further avenues of research have opened up for me providentially and with final "cementing" as it were of the two volumes mentioned above, I believe I can now untangle the web of events of Margaret Anna Cusack's unfortunate life. This, obviously, is beyond the limits of a short article, but I would like to briefly indicate for my archivist friends the more important factors that have brought me to my conclusion. My personal collection of relevant source material is lodged with the Curator and archivists of the Knock Shrine Museum, Knock, Co. Mayo and is accessible to bona fide researchers.

Let us take the periods of Cusack's life in chronological order and observe the discrepancies between her account of events in the two main Autobiographies (1889 and 1891) and other independent primary sources:-

The Early Years:

This period I accept from her narrative, noting the family and social contacts that will be relevant in later years. (especially mention of William Smith O'Brien, the Young Irelander Patriarch and his daughter Charlotte Grace Smith O'Brien.) Margaret Anna Cusack was absent from Ireland during the Great Famine and so she had no direct experience of the suffering. We learn of her complete absorption into aristocratic English life and education in continental languages; as well as the emotional lengthy account of breakdown after double bereavement of Charles Holmes and her father. Her attachment to the Holmes family was her only lasting relationship. We also note her hasty reception into Catholic Church and immediate application to the new Order of Penance in Staffordshire, where she stayed nine months; received the habit and name Sr. Raphael.

The autobiographies make little reference to contemporary Anglican converts and Mother Foundresses e.g. Fanny Taylor, Elizabeth Hayes and their successful writings. Later in Nottingham there was little affinity with Mother Mary Potter. (Little Company of Mary) Cusack showed little interest in the mission to Irish immigrants in England – her sights were set on America.

Kenmare: Twenty One Years:

Those halcyon years are described in "In Memoriam" but later the authorship was denied. There is much further material in letters, Ave Maria Journals (USA), Cloyne Diocese letters and documents regarding the suggested link-up with Charlotte Grace Smith O'Brien (This is pivotal to later story) There is also a letter from Bishop McEvilly, (Tuam) curtailing her writing.

Knock 1881:

Hastily and under the pretext of returning to Newry, she availed of the opportunity to visit and remain in Knock as the apparition had taken place there in August 1879. For further

elaboration of this move – See "Knock 1881 -1883" and note a letter to Rome claiming to be the recipient of a message of Knock; but this was not mentioned later on her visit to Rome.

England – One Year:

In November 1883 she travelled from Dublin to England and visited London, Nottingham – (Jan 1884) and Grimsby from where she went to Rome and returned to Nottingham. She then embarked for USA in October, but stopped over for a week in Cork to make enquiries about Charlotte Smith O'Brien's work with emigrant girls in New York. However, she was strongly warned not to interfere after the scandal of Knock (see Autobiography)

USA - New York:

On arrival in New York she gave newspaper interviews in which she exaggerated accounts of established work in England and she was disparaging of Fr. O'Riordan's mission at Castle Gardens. See Biography of O'Brien which starkly notes the contrast in approach to situations as Cusack travelled Cabin Class and booked in to First Class Protestant Hotel etc.

She was refused entry into New York Diocese, and later claimed that she was never told why. Cognizance of American situation and politics is needed here. The essays in The Oxford History of the Irish Book' is relevant. From this time on there is constant hostility with Catholic Hierarchy; and she shows little concern for consequences for other Sisters to whom she leaves the actual work. Her attitude towards the death of a faithful companion - Janice Downing is worth noting as is her isolation from the Sisters and the secretive manner of her departure from New Jersey in July 1888.

Worthy of note also is the Publication in Boston of her Autobiography in January 1889. It was strongly denounced by the Irish Diaspora across the globe. See New Zealand newspapers etc. especially O'Donohoe's Magazine (Boston) which has an eight page Editorial. This was also complete break-off point with the Sisters she had established. They chose to turn to Bishop Bagshaw in Nottingham, England, for authority.

America in the years 1888 – 1891 - reverted to Protestant Evangelicanism as it was a time of strong anti-Catholic activities. Renegade Catholic priests and religious were considered great proselytizing tools to be used on lecture tours and written propaganda. NOTE; Charles Henry Lea Collection of letters from Cusack (held in Pittsburg University - Archives Penn.) This correspondence reveals her gradual fall from Protestant popularity until in 1891 she was left friendless and penniless seeking means to return to England. A publication company obliged on condition that once in England she would write another Autobiography to be published by them.

England – 1891 – 1899:

This period is greatly overlooked by recent historians. It is covered by English newspapers which track her lecture tours mainly around Devonshire, but also as far north as Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Her lectures and writings were now strongly vitriolic not only against Catholic clergy but also against Catholic doctrine and Marian devotions. She was lecturing in Warwickshire at the time of last illness. Her friends, the Holmes sisters who were the only constant relationship in her life, came to Leamington Spa to care for her until her death there in June 1899. She is buried in Leamington cemetery and local newspapers record her obituary.

Sr. Catherine Ferguson CJP.

(Above is a very abridged edition of a lengthy exposé on the treasures which are to be found in Archives.)