ST. SAVIOUR'S CHURCH DUBLIN

CENTENARY

1861—1961

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From an impression of the Seal of the Medieval Convent.
By courtesy of the National Museum of Ireland.

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1861—1961

Nihil obstat:
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SENANUS MAC CONCHRADHA, O.P.

Imprimi potest:
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Prior Provincialis.

Nihil obstat:
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Censor Theologiae Deputatus.

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HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN AND PRIMATE OF IRELAND

VERY REVEREND FATHER REGINALD HARRINGTON, O.P., S.T.L., J.C.D., PRIOR PROVINCIAL

FOREWORD

St. Saviour's Church, Dominick Street, Dublin, is one hundred years old this year. Graceful and magnificent, it stands sentinel over the heart of the city. It commemorates more than seven hundred years of Irish Dominican history, for it is the lineal descendant of the first Irish Dominican church built on the bank of the Liffey in the year 1224. Thus the history of a hundred years is amplified sevenfold.

This Centenary Book is a Dominican record. But it is not exclusively Dominican. The Dominican story is only a thread, however variegated, in the elaborate pattern of the story of Ireland. It blends harmoniously with the more extensive history of the Catholic Church in Dublin.

Resident within the confines of the Cathedral Parish, the Dominicans of St. Saviour's esteem it a privilege to continue a sacred tradition of ready co-operation with the Diocesan clergy.

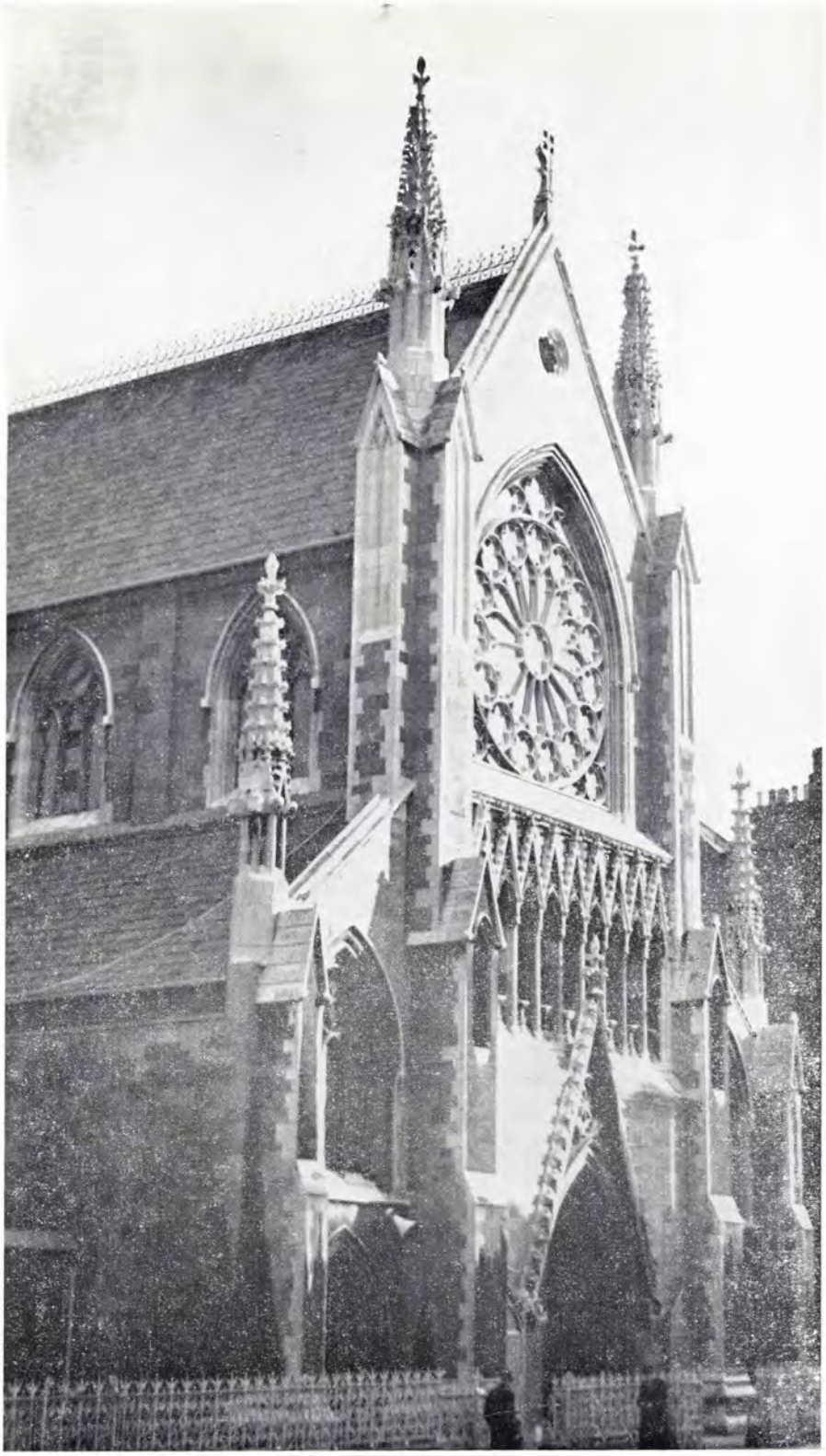
REGINALD M. HARRINGTON, O.P.

One Hundred Years

ON the centenary of a church one's first thoughts are of thanks; thanks to God for a century of peace and prayer, a century of the Mass and the sacraments. It is a time of gratitude for favours received, a time for remembrance of those who built and adorned the house of God. It is, too, a time of family celebration. Every church has a family or congregation of those who have always prayed in it, and whose fathers for one or two or ten generations back have prayed there before them. For these worshippers the church centenary is a family birthday. So it is with St. Saviour's. Looking back over the happenings of the last hundred years we will find inspiration to walk firmly ahead whatever the next century may bring, strong in the faith shown so vividly in this beautiful church. When we read of the back-street chapels it replaced and the sacrifices and expenses lavished on the building of it, we will appreciate better what the Mass and the sacraments and the real presence of Our Lord in the tabernacle, meant to our forefathers, and what they should mean to us.

The Dominican Fathers, whose priory looks so venerable, are comparative newcomers to Dominick Street, for their residence there goes no farther back than the date of their present church. Before that, they had a church nearby in Little Denmark Street (now the National Schools), which, although in its time the most fashionable in Dublin, had become by 1850 rather the worse for wear. Every year large sums were spent on patches and repairs until it became obvious to the Fathers that a new church was needed. So they began to collect the pennies of the poor, whilst relying also on the occasional generosity of the rich, in support of the new venture. Thirty years passed before their new church was finally opened—thirty years of stress and difficulty for the small community. The site in Denmark Street was cramped. People raised great obstacles to the buying out of leases. Eventually when four or five houses had been secured it was discovered that nothing could be done in that location and the Fathers had to look elsewhere for a site.

At last they found four houses and a large yard, once a coach factory, in Lower Dominick Street. One of the houses had been the residence of Sir Christopher Dominick, from whom, and not from St. Dominic, the street got its name. The site was bought for a reasonable sum, and a very young architect, J. J. MacCarthy, reputed to be Pugin's best pupil, was commissioned to draw up the plans. With great solemnity



ST. SAVIOUR'S CHURCH

The church as originally designed

the cornerstone was blessed by the Most Reverend Dr. Cullen, Archbishop of Dublin, on 8 September, 1852. The original estimate was for £15,000, an enormous sum at that time, and the actual cost did not exceed that figure by very much.

Father Bartholomew Russell took the chief part in organising and directing the enterprise, having found the site and bought it while in charge of the community, and built the church as Provincial. He was one of the most important Irish Dominicans of his century, builder of the two finest churches of the Order in Ireland (Dublin and Cork), founder of the novitiate and house of studies in Tallaght which helped to restore regular monastic observance in the Province after the Penal Days, and restorer of the Order in Waterford. He was also an outstanding preacher, although he did not equal the great Father Burke in this respect. Father Conway in his *Memoirs* writes of him: "Father Russell was the head and heart of all; and even with the care of the young community and the care of the whole Province, he efficiently directed the work of collecting funds for the building and, withal, preached a great deal, as well in Denmark

Street as elsewhere. For just now he was the most esteemed preacher in Dublin; he was greatly in request on all important occasions . . . He did great things, he had great ideas, he saw them almost all carried out".

The impression given by Father Russell's building record is that he was a man of force and determination. He was also meek, and St. Saviour's preserves a memento of his meekness. At the very back of the church a narrow cloister runs from the sacristy behind the apse to a door opening onto the passage at the south side of the church. Before the church was as wide as it is now this cloister continued along the south wall of the church and reached, or was intended to reach, two (now demolished) houses on Dominick Street which Father Russell had fitted up as a priory. A sum of £700 was spent in preparing the houses which had room for about a dozen priests, with a refectory and oratory, decorated with panels taken from the old mansion of the Dominick family. Yet, on the return of the Prior (Father White) from Italy, the whole plan was cancelled for no sufficient reason, with the result that when the community came from Denmark Street in 1861 there was no house ready to receive them, and they had to buy No. 30 Rutland (now Parnell) Square, for £1,700. For the next thirty years they had to come a distance of some hundred yards to the church in all seasons and at all hours. Father Russell gave way to the change, and his cloister behind the apse is now a store for candlesticks.

William Murphy

While work on the church progressed in 1853 and the south side of the nave had risen to a point well above the arches (about forty feet) an incident occurred which must have been most disheartening for all concerned. During some days of hard frost it was noticed that the pillars on the south side of the nave had begun to bend and tilt, with the result that they had all to be taken down. They were of soft Caen sandstone, and the architect, to prevent the blocks from chipping, had instructed that thin plates of lead should be inserted between the blocks composing the pillars. The contractor blamed the architect's leaden plates; the architect blamed the contractor for not laying the blocks as they had been cut in the quarry; but when the pillars went up again they went up without the leaden plates. Apart from this accident the building went on without mishap, and had not to be stopped at any stage for lack of funds. It was, of course, a smaller building than the church as it now stands, having at first the nave and two aisles. Later a north and a south aisle were added to the original pair, so that at present the nave is flanked by two aisles on both sides, making the church as capacious as many recently erected in the suburbs.

The collections, the life-blood of the project, were of two kinds. One was the "chapel rent", a weekly house to house collection through the city. The other was an occasional meeting of the leading citizens and public officials in the old church at Denmark Street. A published report of one such meeting shows that almost £1,000 was subscribed at its close, the speeches made being punctuated by loud cheers, laughter, and cries of "Hear, Hear", which would seem to us out of place in a church, even though the sanctuary was screened off by a heavy curtain. Yet another fund-raising expedient was the letter to some prominent personality. One reply received had a somewhat dampening tone: "The Duke of Wellington acknowledges Mr. Flood's application. The Duke knows nothing about the Dominicans, nor about the people who use their ministrations, and as he takes no interest in the subject, he declines to comply with Mr. Flood's request". Later, a raffle was held in aid of the building fund and as a separate prize, "a holograph letter of the Duke of Wellington" sold 2,000 tickets at 6d each, netting £50.

But such piecemeal collections could not supply within a short period the sums required. No one, it seems, suggested borrowing the money from a bank. Generous benefactors came forward, notably the Murphy family of Mount Merrion, who gave very large sums to complete St. Saviour's. There were also Mr. Thomas Higgs, Miss Margaret Daly, and a Miss Cruise, but the Murphys were princely in their generosity, and it is only right that they, to whom St. Saviour's owes at least its prayers, should be especially remembered here. Father Conway writes of them: "James Murphy and his sister of Mount Merrion were great benefactors. James Murphy left £5,000 in his will to St. Saviour's Church. His sister, Miss Margaret Murphy, who was a residuary legatee of James Murphy, left £8,000 to our novitiate, and £2,000 for the erection of a chapel in connection with St. Saviour's Church. In addition to the legacies, a sum of four or five thousand pounds was given by Miss Murphy for a life interest of 8 per cent and she lived only a short time . . . James Murphy and his sister were drawn to St. Saviour's and to our Order by the friendship and veneration they had for Father E. Murphy". The north aisle (St. Dominic's) was later erected in memory of the Murphy family and Masses are said for the repose of their souls every year.

Margaret Murphy

The church as it appeared when opened for public worship in 1861. Note the "Chapel of the Passion" projecting from the south aisle. (From a contemporary drawing.)

The Church is Dedicated

On 15th January, 1861, the great church opened its doors for the first time. The work had taken nine years. It was an exceptionally fine example of the Gothic revival inspired by Pugin, a great nave flanked by two aisles, leading to a superb sanctuary. The altar, of the purest Caen stone, and delicately carved, was raised on eight steps. In a most detailed description of the church and the occasion, the *Freeman's Journal* gives some inkling of the impression made on those who witnessed the scene. The Catholics of Dublin, though freed for thirty years by the Act of Emancipation, knew little as yet of the beauty of Catholic ceremonial and church architecture. St. Saviour's was a ray of light and hope for men as yet emerging from the catacombs. "When entering, the visitor beholds the sanctuary with its golden semi-dome and stained glass Gothic windows shedding a mellow and religious light on the almost lace-work tracery in stone of the tabernacle and high altar. So light, so graceful is the general character of the clustered pillars, that no one dreams of their collossal proportions; and then the numerous side-chapels, each a shrine, wherein is to be seen some exquisite triumph of art . . . Through the open arch of the great central portal a view could be caught from without of the sanctuary with its emblazoned windows, and the splendid high altar blazing with lights forming the

termination to the vista of clustered columns sustaining the richly decorated ceiling".

"From so early a period of the morning as nine o'clock, carriages and other vehicles were to be seen drawing up outside the church, and conveying group after group of gentry to the scene of the day's ceremonial, whilst crowds of people occupied the space in front of the church. At half-past ten . . . the entire of the great nave, up to the very rails of the sanctuary, was thronged with the vast assemblage . . . admirably representing the wealth, intelligence and respectability of the city and its environs . . . Shortly after eleven o'clock the procession of priests and prelates issued from the portal of the southern aisle of the church, headed by a Brother of the Dominican Order bearing the processional cross. First came the novices and younger brethren of the Order of St. Dominic, next followed the Fathers of the Order, two and two in their monastic robes . . . After the Dominican Fathers came the large body of other clergymen, and finally came the prelates, each attended by a clergyman as chaplain. Then, preceded by the archiepiscopal cross, and attended by two Vicars General and two canons, came His Grace, the Lord Archbishop of Dublin. His Grace, as well as the other prelates, were robed in cope and mitre . . . The choir of priests chanted the *Miserere* as the procession moved round the walls of the church outside".

Apart from the officiating archbishop, Dr. Cullen, there were also in the procession, one other archbishop and seven bishops, all wearing cope and mitre, a bishop-elect, some monsignors, about ten canons, and almost one hundred priests. "After making a circuit of the building and arriving at the great front portal, the procession drew up at each side of the entrance with the prelates in the centre. The archbishop then, in the most solemn manner, besought the Almighty to bless and sanctify that temple, raised in honour of His Holy Name, and to send His Holy Spirit to dwell therein". All entered the church once more and read again the dedicatory prayers at the foot of the altar. The clergy took up the litany of the saints in solemn chant while the procession wound its way once more, this time around the inside of the walls, the archbishop sprinkling holy water to this side and that as they went along. Dr. Errington, Lord Archbishop of Trebizonde, then offered High Mass and gave Solemn Benediction. A choir of male and female voices, aided by the organ and a full orchestra, sang Beethoven's Mass in C. Dr. Moriarty of Tralee preached on the text: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus", using with some ingenuity a text of Isaias, "You shall draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains".

"*These waters of the Saviour the Church has set up for you here today. Here, for many*

Father Robert Augustine White, O.P.

a generation, they shall flow abundantly. They shall be open for the washing of the sinner and the unclean. From them you shall drink of the water which Jesus gives—of which he who drinks thirsts not again—for it becomes a fountain springing up into everlasting life". Nor did he let the occasion pass without stressing its significance. For him the new church was evidence of the power of God over the forces of persecution, a symbol of the perpetual vigour and beauty of the true faith, and an image, St. John's image, of the Mystical Body of Christ. "*I have seen the flaming torch of Dominic lighted again in the land . . . This day inaugurates for them a new era. By their own untiring zeal, by the approving gratitude of the people whom they so faithfully served, and by the generosity of this most Catholic city, they are restored today to their ancient honours. This church, the most beautiful in our country, becomes them well . . . but you must, above all, use this church for the great end to which all your wishes should be directed—your soul's salvation. Thus shall it be for you in name and in deed, the church of your Most Holy Saviour*".

Let the last word be with the *Freeman's Journal:* "Without state aid, patronage, or support, the people have built up this temple to God's worship—a temple not surpassed by any that has been built for centuries in this country, and which will be for centuries yet to come, a record not to be removed of a people's faith and devotion". These testimonies to the effect that St. Saviour's surpassed in beauty all other churches of the time, are surprising but may be quite true. Certainly, no modern Irish church of equal or greater age can compare with it, and few even of the more recent churches are either as beautiful or as large. The following passage from an article on John Hogan, the sculptor, in the *Irish Quarterly Review* of 1858 is of interest: "And—a great sign of the times—the Friars Preachers are building a beautiful church in Lower Dominick-street, not for a fashionable congregation, or for the wealth and rank of Dublin, but for the poor, devout, toil-hardened population of Britain-street and Liffey-street and the nameless lanes and alleys that intersect those thoroughfares. And this church is to be no barn-like square building, with decorations of *ormolu* and tinsel . . . but from the long line of pure stone pillars, arches spring aloft; and windows and vaulted roof are rich with intertwining traceries. An Irish architect has planned this worthy temple—and one whose munificence rivals the splendour of the Medicean era has commissioned Hogan to execute a *Pieta* for the high altar of St. Saviour's!"

To a great extent St. Saviour's has fulfilled all that the preacher and the reporter expected of it. In fact, during its century of life, it has surpassed all expectation. The community tending the church has grown in numbers from six to twenty-five; the fabric of the church has been enlarged by the addition of two aisles, the north in 1897, the south in 1901, making room for congregations of almost 2,000. The confraternities and devotions in the church have increased in scope and variety with the changing times. Electric light has extended closing time from mid-afternoon to 10 p.m., and loud-speaking apparatus has made the weakest voice audible at the back of the church. Most important of all is the great increase in the number approaching the sacraments, the surest index we have to the spiritual state of the people. At least one of the congregation, a poor labourer who died in 1925, has reached heroic sanctity. There has been also wide expansion into many ventures allied to church work: the orphanage, St. Kevin's Hostel, the Calaroga Club (long defunct), under heading of Dominican Publications: the *Irish Rosary*, the *Imeldist*, the *Lantern*, *Doctrine and Life*, the Blessed Martin Apostolate and magazine, the Rosary Crusade, the boys' club, boy scouts, tertiaries, and a cycle of sodalities and confraternities to cater for every section of the congregation.

Hogan's Pieta

The Church Extended

At its opening in 1861 the church consisted of the nave and two adjoining aisles, and one side chapel, dedicated to the Passion of Our Lord, projecting from the south wall close to the door of the church. At the heads of the two original aisles the altars of the Rosary (north) and the Holy Name (south) are still in position. Under the Holy Name altar is the last work of John Hogan, a *Pietà* or carving in marble of the dead Christ in His mother's arms. The sculpture, altar, and window of the Resurrection, specially made in Tours, were commissioned by Mr. Thomas Higgs, a great friend of Father Russell. St. Catherine's altar, just to the left of the Rosary altar, was erected in 1879 in compliance with a bequest of £300 from Miss Dodd in 1849. By 1897 the new north aisle was ready, giving room for an altar of St. Dominic in honour of Father Smith. In that same year Dr. Flood of Port-of-Spain consecrated the three altars of the Holy Name, St. Dominic, and St. Catherine.

St. Joseph's altar, the last in the present church, was added only in 1906, some years after the opening of the south aisle. The window of the Crucifixion above it (commissioned in 1882 by the Lord Lieutenant) is of interest. Until the opening of the century it had been in the chapel of the Passion. Close to the altar is a brass plaque with the inscription: "This window is placed in this church by John Poyntz, Earl Spenser, K.G., Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in memory of his friend Thomas N. Burke Esq., Under-Secretary, who was killed in the Phoenix Park

on the 6th of May, 1882". It is said that, for fear of the Invincibles, no priest dared attend his funeral, although he was a Catholic, except his fellow Galwayman and namesake, Father Thomas Burke, the Dominican preacher, and that for this act of charity the window was erected in St. Saviour's. The altar of the Passion, donated by Mrs. Clarke, is now in the Domestic Oratory. It is a beautiful one in wood, with a large panel, finely carved, of the Agony in the Garden. Concerning the building of the additional side aisles (St. Dominic's in 1897 and St. Joseph's in 1901) there is not very much recorded nor is there very much to say. They seem to have been envisaged by the arthitect from the beginning, but St. Joseph's was set farther back (in line with the Holy Name altar) to provide a continuous communion rail. St. Dominic's aisle was built largely with the aid of the money bequeathed by Miss Margaret Murphy; St. Joseph's was financed by what must surely have been Dublin's greatest bazaar — the Calaroga Bazaar of May, 1899 in the Rotunda and Rotunda Gardens. The actual sum raised was £5,000 and this covered the entire cost of the aisle.

The completion of the church greatly added to the seating capacity and gave much needed accommodation to the increasing congregation. By the turn of the century confraternities were more highly developed, frequent reception of the sacraments became more usual, and the people had churches in which they could take pride. By 1935 Father Coleman could write that the work at St. Saviour's was like "an all year round

Domestic Oratory showing the altar formerly in the Chapel of the Passion.

mission". The church could no longer afford to close at three in winter and at five in summer, and so we find the community arranging in 1894 to have it open until six.

Although it does not concern the history of the church, it may be as well to record the building of the present priory. It has been occupied only since 1891, shortly after the death of Father Towers whose great ambition it had been to build it. The architect was Mr. Robinson and the contractor Mr. Toole. It was to have been a complete quadrangle, but, in the event, only three wings (sufficient for the needs of the community at that time) were built. An extension, recently made at Dorset Street, helps to meet the needs of the growing community.

Father John Thomas Towers, O.P

The Growth of Sodalities

Looking back over the hundred years that have gone, it is well to remember that the building of St. Saviour's Church was begun less than thirty years after the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act. It was true that Denmark Street had its chapel hidden behind the houses since 1780, and only in 1835 did the Fathers dare to show the facade of their church by clearing the site. In the Penal days holy Mass was the essential which had to be preserved at all costs. For the same reason the little chapels of the time were known as Mass-houses. There could be no embellishments by way of Church organisation, such as we know it today. The opening and blessing of St. Saviour's of Dominick Street, in 1861, was indeed a sign of the new vitality which emerged strongly out of the ruins of the past. But our faithful people, still dazed from the accustomed darkness of persecution, took some time to find their way in the new light and to realise the meaning of liberty of worship in their Catholic faith. As already noted, even in Dominick Street the church was closed at 3 p.m. in the winter and 5 p.m. in the summer. Only in 1894 was it decided to keep it open until 6 p.m. all the year round. The Fathers as well as the people of those days would be surprised to see that the closing time in later days would be 10 p.m.

In our day we witness the full flowering of what we call sodality life. It is one of the strongest features of our religious worship

apart from devotion to the holy Mass. Even in the times of persecution when the Dominicans, like many other religious Orders, held on grimly to their priestly work, there was always evidence of the characteristic apostolate of the Friars Preachers, which was concerned with love of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, His Adorable Sacrament, and very specially the Rosary of Mary. Neither would the Third Order have been neglected, but membership of it had to be very secret. There was always a danger that registers might fall into the hands of informers of one kind or another. These were the roots from which the thriving sodality life, such as we possess it today, grew and prospered.

Each of the sodalities has quite a history of its own. Beside those which have now their regular meetings in the church there were others which lasted only for a time. All of them are intimately linked with the history of the last hundred years.

Father Joseph D. Slattery, O.P.

The Holy Name Sodality

This sodality was founded by Father Slattery in 1884 to whom was erected a commemorative window representing the Child Jesus in the south isle. A chalice, presented to him by the members in 1888, is still in use and a token of the esteem in which he was held by the members of the Holy Name society. Two jubilees have been already celebrated, the silver jubilee under the spiritual directorship of Father Barrett and the golden jubilee, in 1934, when Father O'Daly had charge of the sodality. At that time gold medals were presented to those who had joined the sodality when it was first founded. The two stained glass windows in the south aisle commemorate both these jubilees. Many of the members will still recall some of the outstanding events in which the Holy Name men of Dominick Street took part. In 1929 Ireland celebrated the centenary of her newly found religious liberty. The members walked behind their banner from Dominick Street to Phoenix Park to attend the open-air Mass and return to O'Connell Bridge where the final Benediction was given. Three years later, in 1932, which marked the passing of fifteen hundred years since the landing of St. Patrick, Ireland was granted the great privilege of being the venue of the World Eucharistic Congress of which Cardinal Lauri was Papal Legate. Once again St. Saviour's men marched to the Park. This occasion was also honoured by a celebration proper to the sodality itself. Once it was known that some thousand or so Holy Name men from America were on their way to Ireland for the Congress, it was obvious that a special rally should be held in their honour. The Americans marched from their liner, the *De Grace*, which had docked in Dublin Bay and were met by the Holy Name men of Dublin who lined both sides of the wonderfully festooned Dominick Street. An address of welcome was read to

Holy Name Sodality Director, President and Council.

them by the then Provincial, Father Finbar Ryan outside the church, which was duly replied to by Bishop Schrembs who presided and by Father Conlon, O.P., then the General Director of the Holy Name Society of America. The Master General, Father Gillet, preached a sermon for the occasion in the church and the Rally ended with Benediction. This event was also honoured by the presence of John McCormack, who sang the *Panis Angelicus* at the closing Mass of the Congress. With the men came also a large number of the spiritual directors of the American Holy Name Society. About this time also was introduced the singing of the confraternity Mass by the members every second Sunday of the month. In this work the general body was led by a choir of select singers who made such rapid progress in the rendering of Gregorian chant that they were made the proud winners at the Dublin Feis Ceoil of the Del Sarto Cup. This custom of singing their Mass is still maintained by the sodality. In those days it was not too difficult to keep the number of Holy Name men at an average of 1,500 since up to twenty years ago Dublin's population was concentrated within the inner boundaries of the city. With slum reconstruction and clearance of old housing sites, the people have shifted in large part to the new suburbs. If the numbers of our St. Saviour's sodalities have been thereby considerably lessened, the old tradition of fidelity to the aims of confraternity have been maintained, and the appeal of the HolyName as a rallying power for men is still evident.

Eucharistic Congress 1932. Men of the Holy Name Sodality in procession through Lower Dominick Street for the rally in honour of their American confreres

The Rosary Confraternity

The organisation of this confraternity such as it exists today was begun by Father Slattery in the same year as he founded that of the Holy Name. These two sodalities clearly marked what was to become a division of sodality life for men and for women, though neither is confined in membership to any particular sex. Men can and should be members of the Rosary Confraternity, just as women can also be members of the Holy Name. In the case of the latter confraternity a way of including both men and women was begun by Father Finbar Ryan and called the "White Star League" with a general purpose of respect for the Holy Name and the avoidance of all profanity and impurity of speech. This has become very widely known and the little white star badge has been successful in asserting every Catholic's duty of guarding one's tongue.

Shortly after its foundation the Rosary Confraternity branched out into three or four separate groups for special purposes. Probably the oldest of these, and one which more than likely was also found in the Denmark Street church was composed of "Rosary Brothers". Father Larkin speaks of the sodalities as he found them as a young man. "I joined an organised body of that (Rosary) Confraternity in their beautiful church. At that time, over sixty years ago this branch of the confraternity consisted of a select number of men who in the church wore a white and blue habit or tunic in honour of Our Lady of the Rosary; collected the offerings of the faithful at the church doors; sang vespers every Sunday evening at the evening devotions and took part in the processions". There is still an old picture which shows them in procession wearing white tunic and hood. In 1926 these brothers were merged with the Third Order and formed into the present St. Saviour's Chapter of Brothers.

In 1896 Father Peter Murphy founded a special branch of the Rosary Confraternity, called the "Professional and Commercial Association" and more popularly referred to as the "Tall Hats", which were in vogue as part of gentleman's attire at the time. This sodality had its importance at a time when the district around the church was still the centre of business and of the professions, especially that of law. As such occupations drifted towards more flourishing parts of the city and the residences in Dominick Street

and Henrietta Street deteriorated, the organisation ceased to serve any purpose and was closed down in 1916. Founded in 1900 by Father Butler a similar branch of the Rosary was known as "The Ladies' Association"—perhaps the counterpart of the Professional Association. It was merged with the general Confraternity of the Rosary in 1919. The special Rosary branch which lasted longest was that called the "Grocers and Vintners Association". It was begun in 1898 at a time when licensed premises had no regulations for working hours of their employees. Open until late hours on Saturdays, and back again at work early on Sundays there was no opportunity provided for receiving the sacraments. They had their meeting in the church on Sunday mornings and a number of the Fathers were at hand to hear their Confessions so that they could receive Holy Communion at least once a month. Legislation gradually improved their working conditions and in 1930 it was decided that the need no longer existed.

All these years the general Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary for the women of the district thrived. Their crowded weekly meetings and general Communions, their annual retreats, their processions for July and for the October blessing of Roses are still a feature of present day church organisation. A chalice in the sacristy, which the members presented to Father Purcell, in 1929, marks the celebration of the silver jubilee.

Mention of Father Purcell's name brings to mind also a great movement which he promoted of the Perpetual Rosary. This had a great success and its members from all over the city who maintained the unceasing recitation of the Rosary held an annual meeting on the fourth Sunday of October for the furtherance of this pious association. A letter from Father Cormier, Master General, in 1906 to Father Purcell emphasises the good work being done: "Catholic Ireland did not wish to remain outside this association in honour of the Queen of Heaven. And a proof of this is the ardour, the wisdom, and

Rosary Sodality—Director, President and Prefects.

the perseverance with which you have devoted yourself to the work of making known to your people this organisation of uninterrupted recitation of the holy Rosary".

Perhaps it is of interest to recall here that on Monday, 31st October, 1898, the Fathers permitted the use of their church for the weekly recitation of the Rosary in Irish — the first church in Dublin to do so. On the following day Michael Cusack, founder of the G.A.A., wrote a letter to the *Evening Telegraph* describing the scene:

> "Sir, Last night the Rosary was said in Dominick Street Church . . . During the past thirty-five years I have said many prayers, but I now think that I never really knew what I was about until the Hallow-Eve of 'Ninety-Eight. There was no room for me to kneel. I had to keep back the crush of awe-stricken and humiliated Irishmen who may have been impelled by curiosity rather than devotion to hear a few young men and elderly persons reciting the Rosary in a language that for ages was banned, proscribed, and, to the everlasting discredit of the Irish people, repudiated as a badge of shame. What Dominic did to wipe out the Albigensian heresy in the beautiful land and language of Oc, he can do in Ireland with and through the *Irish Rosary* and the Rosary in Irish, for the eternal benefit of the section of the Irish people that is drifting fatally into modes of thought that are utterly foreign to our traditions . . ."

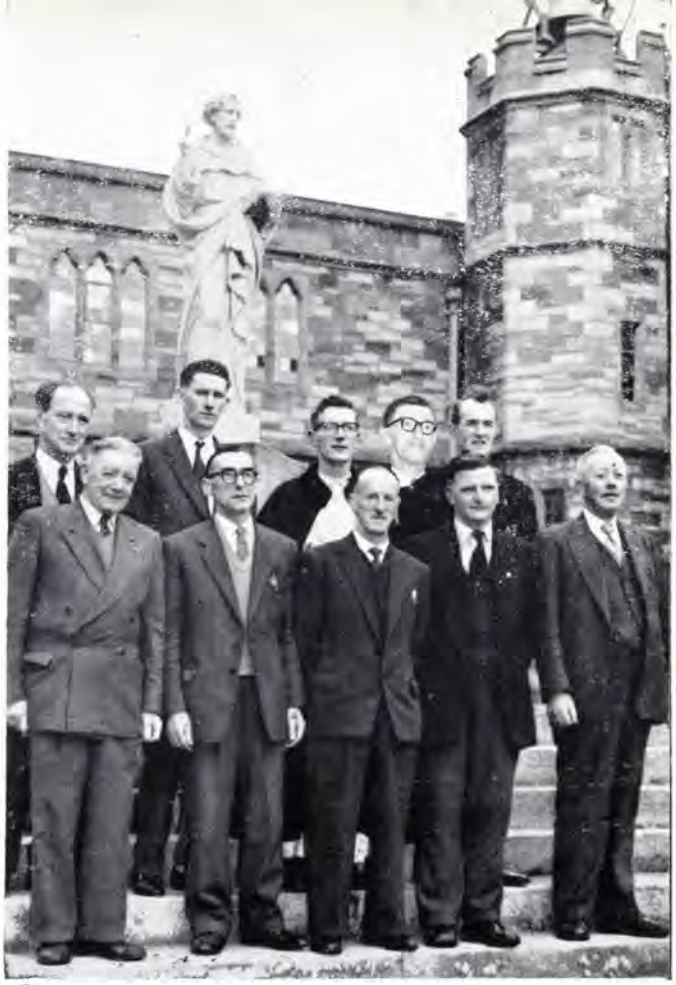
The version of the Rosary used was that to be found in a little pamphlet "Rosaire na Maighdine Muire", published by Harvey and Co., Waterford.

Speaking of the original associations connected with the opening of St. Saviour's mention should be made that there existed yet another group called the "Society of the Blessed Sacrament" which engaged in the teaching of the catechism to the children after the last Mass on Sundays at a time when so many of them were deprived of that instruction. When the children were dismissed the members recited the Little Office of the Blessed Sacrament. This association ceased in 1917 when ample schools and well trained Catholic teachers, lay and religious, provided for children of the district in the normal way during school hours.

Veterans of War of Independance march to St. Saviour's for their annual Rosary Parade in October.
(Courtesy, *Irish Press*)

The Boys' Sodality

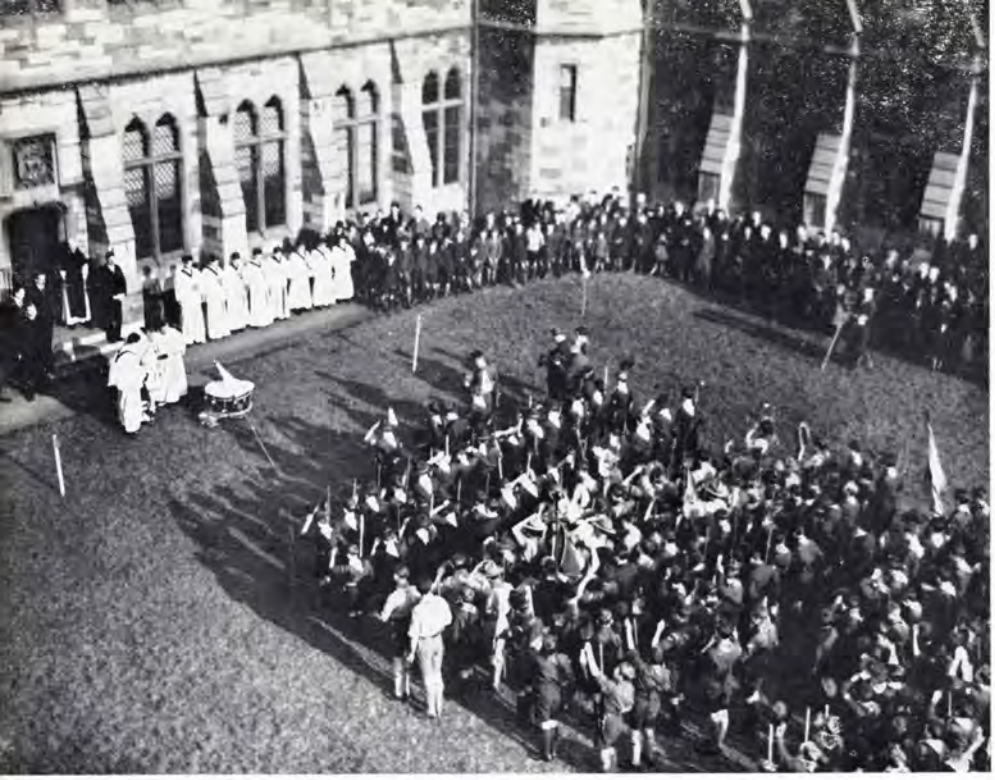
Father Larkin, already referred to, who had grown up to manhood in the shelter and inspiration of the "Rosary Brothers", after some years at business became a Dominican and was assigned to St. Saviour's. He realised the need of sodalities for the young, especially the boys who were to be the men of the future. At the turn of the century, temperance had become one of the big issues. He founded his "Temperance Sodality" in 1906. There are still many who remember the power which Father Larkin exercised for good over the boys of that time. He provided also for the lighter side by annual sports in Phoenix Park. Father Francis Ryan took over at a later date and the lighter side took the form of formidable annual excursions for which as many as ten trains would leave Dublin for such spots as Moyvally or Wooden Bridge. The boys were amply provided for by way of refreshments, and prizes for their sports through proceeds from sales of tickets on the other trains. As the years passed a change of title was suggested as more positive and more in line with new needs, and the "Boys' Sodality" was brought closer to the Dominican Order by being made into one of its recognised confraternities, called the "Angelic Warfare".



Boys' Sodality—Director, President and Council

In 1928 Father Joachim O'Sullivan established a Troop of the Catholic Boy Scouts which grew so rapidly in numbers that in a matter of months there were three Troops, each with its own "Cub Pack" for the smaller boys. Father Henry Gaffney gave valuable assistance at this time too and wrote some plays which he helped the boys to produce with striking success. But the Scouts had no regular place or "Den" of their own until some years later, under Father Courtney, a Scouts' Hall was provided in the basement of the Priory. He too succeeded in forming the first "Knight Errant Clan" as a means of holding the interest of the senior boys and ensuring a pool of Scout leaders. Today all three Troops are up to full strength and, indeed, in recent years were acclaimed the leading Troops in Dublin.

Shortly before leaving Dublin in 1935 Father Columba Courtney founded the first Boys' Club. His successor, Father David Lewis, concentrated on its development and, with the assistance of the Scouts, initiated a succession of activities which met with remarkable success. First was the Harmonica Band which played in the Mansion House in 1937. This was followed by a group of excellently trained and colourfully attired carol singers. But his greatest achievement along these lines was his annual presentation of the Passion Play, *It Was Night*, in the Olympia Theatre on the Sundays of Lent.



Blessing of Flag on the establishment of the first Troop (18th Dublin) of the Catholic Boy Scouts of Ireland 1928.

Wartime restrictions brought an end to many of the activities which had so greatly contributed to the success of the sodality. The annual excursions had to be cancelled, the Scouts' summer camp abandoned and the Boys' Club, with no possibility of building, went out of existence. Yet the sodality continued to grow steadily until in the late 1940s it reached its peak membership of 1,500. Then came a rapid decline in numbers. The movement of people from the central city areas to the suburbs thinned the ranks month by month, and moreover, the older boys were finding the sodality inadequate to their maturing spiritual needs.

For these young men the present Director, Father Vincent O'Rourke, established a senior section or Youths' Sodality which aimed also at providing a wide range of interests and activities to attract their attention and ensure their loyalty and devotion. Sodality Football Leagues were so successful that he was emboldened to seek a loan of £3,000 to build a Club on Western Way which would enable closer contact to be maintained with the youth of the district and channel their interests and activities along lines which would help in the formation of sound character.

In arts and crafts, woodwork, physical

training, swimming, sports, football, indoor games, dancing and dramatics, the Club, opened in 1953, advanced year by year, ensuring a steady attendance at the sodality and giving consoling proof of its benefits. One of its most appreciated activities is the annual summer camp in the grounds of Newbridge College. Over a hundred boys have been placed in promising employment, and others, the pride of the sodality, have joined Religious Orders. But the Club would never have succeeded so well were it not for the self-sacrifice of so many men and women on Council and Committee who have given unstintingly of their time and talents to this apostolate of youth.

The Club Committee

Imeldist Sodality—Director, President and Prefects

The Imeldist Sodality

The Imeldist Sodality for scoolgirls is also a relatively new institution. It was founded in 1912 by Father Finbar Ryan who at the same time published through what was then the Irish Rosary Office a monthly called *The Imeldist*. This was sold for many years for a halfpenny. This little monthly children's magazine was the means of promoting devotion to Blessed Imedla and to the ideal of her confraternity of love of the Blessed Sacrament in almost every English-speaking country. It found its way into India, Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Its circulation increased steadily. Two world wars and the changing tide of political upheavals eventually closed down many of these overseas countries to the magazine. In spite of these difficulties the little monthly for children still carries its message afar, and the present circulation in Ireland and England keeps well up to old standards.

The Imeldest Sodality in St. Saviour's is organised in much the same way as the other confraternities, namely into sections with elder prefects in charge of each. It caters for the younger children of the district, helps to prepare them for their First Holy Com-

munion and to persevere in their fervour towards Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament all their lives.

By far the most outstanding event of this Imeldist Sodality during the years that make up our century was the celebration (17-23 May, 1926) in honour of the first centenary of Blessed Imelda's beatification by Pope Leo XII, 1826. Each day of these solemn ceremonies had its own particular congregation. Monday for the boys, Tuesday for the men, Wednesday for the women, and Thursday the children of the city schools. That was the big day with High Mass in the morning, and in the afternoon, after a sermon by Father Gaffney, a solemn procession of the Most Blessed Sacrament which was led by a large group of altar boys from the city churches, and in which took part also according to the report of the time—"Imeldists from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, England, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, South Africa, Scotland, United States, New Zealand and Wales". The centenary closed on the Sunday with two Eucharistic dramas specially composed for the occasion by Father Gaffney, namely, "Imelda" presented by the girls of Dominican College, Eccles Street, and "Tarsicius" presented by the St. Saviour's altar boys.

Centenary of the Beatification of Bl. Imelda, 1926.

Brothers' Chapter of the Third Order

The Third Order

It is notable since the time of St. Dominic, who first organised the Militia of Jesus Christ, which was later merged with the Third Order movement, how great an intimacy exists between Dominican Tertiaries and the First and Second Orders. Whilst our confraternities offer a wider scope, the Third Dominican Order has a traditional preference for small groups of brothers and sisters who form an intimate family within a family. This was also the case in St. Saviour's which now possesses two flourishing Chapters of the Third Order, numbering about sixty for men and about a hundred for the women.

We have already referred to the merging of the "Rosary Brothers" into the Third Order, but that is by no means the beginning of Third Order Brothers in association with the Fathers. The line is probably unbroken from the time of the first St. Saviour's of 1224, for the simple reason that this lay movement belonged to the Dominican ideal from the very beginning. But our records for Dublin are very scanty, and give only indications of what the Third Order must have meant, especially during the years of persecution. One such glimpse is the mention of a Brother Raymond who died in 1911 aged sixty-nine, who for forty-seven years had collected for the Orphanage. This would bring us back at least to 1864 when the Fathers were still in Denmark Street. In the *Memoirs* written by Father Conway we have evidence that there existed a Chapter of Tertiary Brothers there as well. He writes: "In the year 1858 or 59 two young men were

taken into St. Saviour's, Denmark Street as postulants (for the lay brothers' habit). I believe both were Chapter Tertiaries. Of these only one persevered, Brother Dominic Fitzpatrick, who may be said to be the first lay brother in modern times in our Province".

The present Chapter of St. Saviour's Brothers carries on with perhaps even still greater zeal and devotion the ideal of the Third Order. Their service to the work and life of the church is unceasing. They have their premises, their own oratory, where they regularly recite the Little Office of Our Lady as well as the Office of the Dead. They continue to maintain the valuable and indispensable work of "receiving the offerings from the faithful", and of serving as stewards at the crowded religious functions. At the same time their regular meetings stress the importance of personal sanctification as the motive power of all work for God.

It is beyond doubt also that a Chapter existed in Denmark Street for the Sisters. There is an entry in the obituary list of an old council book which tells of a Sister Mary Moran who died in 1859 at a hundred years of age and who was for seventy-two years a professed Tertiary. This brings us back to 1787, seven years after the opening of the church in Denmark Street. Another book which may perhaps be still older has become undecipherable owing to mildew. When St. Saviour's was opened and before the present priory was built, the Sisters held their meetings in the stables at the rere of 30 Parnell Square which is now the Blessed

Confraternity of Brothers of the Holy Rosary, c. 1925

Sisters' Chapter of the Third Order—Director, Prioress and Council

Martin Apostolate, but was taken over by the Fathers as their dwelling house whilst awaiting the building of the new priory. The rapid progress of the Sisters branch of the Third Order can be gauged from a book giving dates of meetings—in 1884 forty members attended, whilst in 1885 a hundred members are marked as present. In 1887 the Sisters met in the Confraternity Chapel provided in the new priory and they had it furnished with presses and pictures and a beautiful wooden altar. Their chronicle goes on to say that seeing that their funds were not sufficient to cover the full expense a small bazaar was held which cleared them of debt. Sister Kerr was Prioress at this time. The recent reconstruction scheme provided them with a still larger oratory on Dorset Street side.

Like the Brothers, the Sisters also maintain the splendid record of the past. Meetings are held every fourth Sunday at 12 noon, the Office of the Dead is recited monthly. They have engaged in various activities as the necessities of the day demanded, particularly through a sewing guild. Today their work is directed especially to the aiding of our Dominican foreign missions through co-operation with the Guild of Blessed Martin.

Altar Boys in procession through O'Connell Street, Marian Year, 1954 (*Irish Independent* Courtesy)

The Altar Sodality

In the history of any church the decorum and solemnity of its religious services are so taken for granted that it is easy to forget that much time and energy must be spent in the training of those who serve the altar. The priests, indeed, who play the principal part with other ministers, such as deacons and subdeacons, have the advantage of years of training either in a seminary or a religious studentate. But what about the so-called altar boy—the acolyte of old who with the benefit of a special, even if minor Order, was deputed to the service of the altar? We may have seen from time to time altar boys, who are ill-prepared, whether in dress or demeanour, to take part in the divine mysteries within the sanctuary, and we have found the effect both distracting and disturbing to our devotion. We know quite well that such carelessness does not lessen the sacramental power of the divine action in sacrifice and sacrament, but for that very reason we become more agrieved that the outward appearance so little coincides with the beauty and depth of the mystery within.

St. Saviour's boys' sacristy has been the training ground of countless boys in the last hundred years, and we can certainly state that as far as our living memory goes these boys have contributed much to the edification of the faithful by their knowledge of ceremonial and dignity in carrying it out. Not only today but down the years these boys of St. Saviour's whether doing duty in their own church or elsewhere have been noticed and remarked on. This grand tradition is due in large part to the devotion of our Brother Sacristans in daily contact with our altar servers. The most perfect fruit of this apostolate among the altar boys lies in the number of religious and priestly vocations which have been thereby fostered, not only to our own Order but to the diocesan priesthood and to other Orders and Congregations too. The majority, of course, do not receive this grace, but the formation which they receive in the service of the sanctuary is invaluable in strengthening their faith and in preparing them for life.

The Altar Sodality of SS. Thomas and Tarcisius

Dominican Publications—Display in Belfast 1955

Dominican Publications

The history of what is now included under the general title of *Dominican Publications* goes back to 1897, and covers a period of over sixty years of the history of St. Saviour's. Those who are fortunate enough to possess the old bound volumes of *The Irish Rosary*, which found their way into so many Irish homes, will understand how daring was this venture in the closing years of the nineteenth century. Father Glendon, who was the pioneer in this literary initiative, had in mind under the inspiration of the Mary's own prayer to provide for her Irish children a magazine which would help them to be true both to faith and to fatherland. How necessary such a periodical was at that time can only be judged by the history of our people in the centuries which went before. In 1897 we were still politically and religiously despondent. A kind of inferiority complex was abroad which blinded us in great measure to the value of our traditional Irish culture, which had so prospered under the inspiration of the Christian religion, but which had been well nigh blotted out by an alien Protestant ascendancy. The first number appeared in April, 1897. It has since then never ceased publication. It is still a pleasure to thumb over the first numbers of this magazine, which though times have changed, and literary fashions have altered, still resound with the message that Ireland by being both Irish and Catholic can maintain its ancient inheritance of being for all the world the Island of saints and of doctors. This second half of the twentieth century has proved in many fields that this is true. Our erstwhile sense of inferiority is wearing thin.

The law of all life is progress or die. Fortunately the Irish Dominican literary effort decided to progress. New needs inspired new efforts. There were those who were willing to take the initiative once again. Mention has already been made of *The Imeldist* which came as a further development in 1912. This was a children's monthly magazine, costing then only a halfpenny per copy. But it had a great message under the inspiration of the little "Saint of the Eucharist"—a message equally valid in old age as it is in childhood, namely the importance of leading eucharistic lives. How much is conveyed in the title of the Dominican confraternity of "Fervent First Communion and Perseverance" may, perhaps be gauged by the enormous success of the magazine in promoting it far and wide as became evident in the outstanding event of the centenary of Blessed Imelda's canonisation in 1926. The price, unfortunately, since its inauguration has had to increased to 2d per copy, but the message to the youth is still maintained.

In 1934 appeared the first number of *The Lantern*, which has for its purpose the presentation of Catholic thought in a short and popular form for the layman. At first a special cover was provided for each of the churches in the Irish Province, but the popularity of this little magazine soon extended beyond these localities, and it was judged opportune to have the same cover for the wider circle of readers.

The need was long felt of providing some form of teaching on the spiritual life, and in 1946 a section of *The Irish Rosary*, under the distinct title of "Doctrine and Life" became devoted to this important subject. In 1951 further progress was made in this respect when a new magazine under that title was issued every two months. It continued this bi-monthly appearance for a further five years with such evident success that in the January of this centenary year of St. Saviour's it became a monthly. We may quote from an editorial folder which was distributed with the January number: "We thought it fitting

Office of Dominican Publications.

that it should become a monthly after it had completed its tenth year of two-monthly publication. We realised, however, that such a step could not be taken without the assurance of support from our readers. In some trepidation we solicited their views through a circular letter. The response was so nearly unanimous and so enthusiastic that we felt we had no choice but to publish *Doctrine and Life* monthly from January, 1961".

Though a very important part of the Dominican apostolate of the Press, these periodicals were by no means the only form of St. Saviour's literary activity. In the beginning pamphlets, especially the lives of Dominican Saints and Blessed, were published at a penny per copy. Other pamphlets were added and the supply has been maintained since these early days. Larger books appeared later on various subjects of Catholic and Dominican interest. Religious plays by Father Gaffney and Sister M. Joseph, O.P. also proved very popular. Gradually Dominican Publications has become a centre for all Dominican literature with agencies on behalf of various overseas publications, as well as for Dominican liturgical and confraternity supplies through its attached Dominican Bureau.

St. Saviour's Orphanage

St. Saviour's Orphanage, 20 Lower Dominick Street

No. 20 Lower Dominick Street, one of the very few Georgian houses in the street still in good repair, has been occupied since 1927 by St. Saviour's Orphanage. The orphanage, one of the oldest for Catholic boys in Dublin, appears to have been under the direction, if not the control of the Order since 1780. For many years it consisted of some old stables in Chapel Lane (a narrow alley beside the old Dominican chapel in Denmark Street) fitted up to accommodate twenty-five destitute children and provide for them until apprenticed. They were well taught: in 1787 Father Denis Farrell of the priory was teaching them Greek and Latin, and preparing them for "literary lines of life". From this cramped hostelry the orphans moved at some unknown date to 44 Jervis Street, coming shortly afterwards under the direction of Father John Prendergast, who found much to complain about in the living conditions of his charges: "The institute was not in any way connected with the Dominican community, except that as a

Father John Prendergast, O.P.

matter of form one of the Fathers was guardian, while the secretary and a few others held everything and were masters of everything. The children were badly fed, badly clothed, unhealthy, and, in winter, frozen". After the Fathers had moved to Dominick Street in 1861 Father Prendergast arranged the exchange of 44 Jervis Street for the abandoned priory. The change was not finally made until the Catholic Young Men's Society, tenants for a while of the chapel and chapel house, gave up possession in 1867. Both the old chapel and priory were ruinous from roof to cellar and had to be repaired. Under the National Board the chapel was converted into three schools. The gallery became the girls' school; the flat was divided between the orphans and the other boys. Denmark Street priory was now St. Saviour's orphanage and so remained for sixty years, the boys attending the National School beside them. In the present orphanage there is a coloured sketch of the old building, now a business house, on an illuminated address, and a portrait of Father Prendergast, a determined, handsome young man.

Thanks to the zeal and ability of Father James P. Dowling (Guardian 1908-45) the present premises at 20 Lower Dominick Street were acquired and opened. The house is close to the church. Built by Robert West in 1758-60 for Judge Robert Marshall, it passed in 1774 to the Christmas family, until 1856. Shortly afterwards the Rev. Edward Singleton Abbott bought it for use as a Protestant school, which it remained for seventy years. It boasts one of the finest Georgian ceilings in Dublin. The boys, thirty or forty in number, between the ages of seven and fourteen, are happy and well provided for by the Master and Matron, who see that they get the education and the faith which is their right.

St. Kevin's House

The name of Father Stephen Glendon crops up frequently in the chronicles of St. Saviour's. His zealous endeavour has left behind it monuments to his organising genius which still exist and the memory of others that faded out for one reason or another. He

was alive to the needs of his day, at times he seemed even before his time in what he proposed, but never daunted he pursued his way. In his later days he was best known as founder of the Boys' Camp in Knockadoon, Co. Cork. His stay in St. Saviour's was about nine years, but he left his mark deeply on the City of Dublin. His effort to found a Catholic Defence League was, perhaps too bold to meet with approval and he bowed to higher authority. He started a Domestic science school in Kilmacud which was also before its time, but succeeded so well that it was taken over under government auspices and became in 1939 the present technical school for that science in Cathal Brugha Street. Prior to the Kilmacud venture he had seen the need of young Irish girls who arrived in Dublin in search of employment and were too frequently left stranded or a prey to unruly elements in the city.

To cater for such as these the provision of a supervised hostel was an obvious necessity, especially from a religious view-point. It was a thing unheard of for single girls to live in flats. Father Glendon bought two houses for the purpose. He describes the transaction in one of his letters: "St. Kevin's was first in

Orphanage—The Orchestra

No. 40 Rutland (now Parnell) Square, a house we rented. We soon found it too small for all who wanted accommodation. Just then a Protestant boys' club had closed down in No. 42 and we bought the house from the Protestant Church Representatives for, I think, £600. We still kept on No. 40 and connected it with No. 42 by renting the top storey of No. 41 from the society which had its offices there. The top storey served not only as a passage but as a place for cubicles. Later, after I had left, when an addition was built at the back of No. 42, No. 40 was given up". The letter goes on to tell a story with an ironical twist: "When I was changed to Rome at the end of 1904 the community of St. Saviour's decided to sell St. Kevin's to a Miss Coppinger. When the contract was to be signed they found that the house, being ecclesiastical property, could not be disposed of without the Apostolic Beneplacitum. When they applied for it Rome refused to give it. They said the work was excellent and a kind of work the Holy See wanted to be undertaken by religious Orders, and so they had to keep it on". Not everyone agreed with Father Glendon's schemes, in part because he was too possessive about them, but fundamentally because his ideas were far in advance of his time.

The hostel was opened in May, 1901, the first of its kind in Ireland. Despite the greater freedom now allowed to girls the hostel in Parnell Square still finds many to avail of it. Father Glendon intended that there should be some form of religious instruction, perhaps a Sunday lecture with provision for morning Mass. The same thoughtfulness, on a material level, inspired the school in Kilmacud. If the girls were to obtain employment as domestics or as housewives, they would need training. So Father Glendon arranged the building of a training college. That was the sort of man he was.

In 1900 there was a club for young men, also in Rutland (now Parnell) Square, founded either by Father Glendon or Father Murphy. Perhaps the two priests co-operated both in the founding of this club and of the hostel for business girls. Whether because it lacked Father Glendon's magic touch or for some other reason, the Calaroga Club, as it was called, failed after about twenty years and its effects were sold to the Gaelic League. The need for such a club remained, to be met later by two other priests of the community.

The Blessed Martin Apostolate

Devotion to Blessed Martin really started in Ireland something less than twenty years ago. It had its origin in Holy Cross, Tralee, where it was begun by Father Glendon, and when he was transferred to Cork some years later he introduced the devotion to that city also and worked strenuously to make Blessed Martin's name known and loved on all sides.

Father Glendon was a very zealous priest but was now well advanced in years and when, in 1947, the Provincial, Father Geelan, formally established the Blessed Martin Apostolate, he decided that its headquarters should be at St. Saviour's, Dublin, and he placed it under the direction of Father Coffey, to whose zeal the spread of the devotion owes so much. The chief aim of the Apostolate was to promote devotion to Blessed Martin and to obtain prayers for his canonization.

The Shrine of Blessed Martin in the Church. Carved of Austrian oak by Father Henry Flanagan, O.P., and erected 1960.

Between the pillars where this statue now stands, the Servant of God, Matt Talbot, frequently knelt for hours during the several Masses at which he assisted.

For some years previously a small group of Mission workers had been banded together in St. Saviour's to help in raising funds for the Dominican Missions at home and abroad. To this group Father Geelan entrusted the new task and the organization became known as the *Dominican Missions and Blessed Martin Apostolate.*

From the beginning the task was not too difficult. Blessed Martin himself seemed anxious to help and as people read the story of his life the gentle appeal of the laybrother made a deep impression on them. They vied with each other in making him known and the movement rapidly gathered pace and momentum, though it suffered from having no premises of its own.

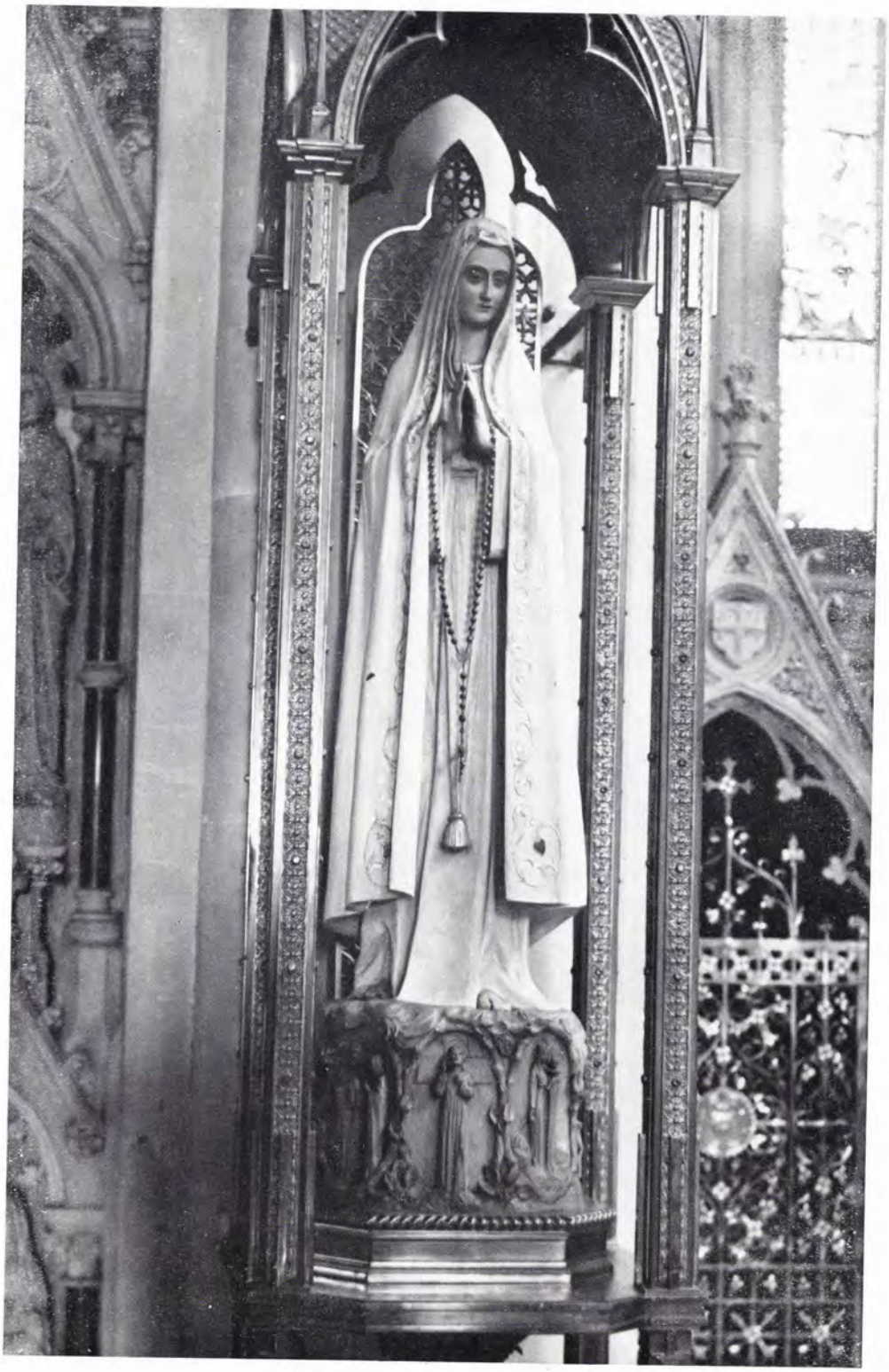
But premises were found, first in the

Blessed Martin Apostolate

Priory and eventually in No. 30 Parnell Square wh'ch had been bought by Father Geelan, and the ample accommodation thus provided enabled the work to be placed on a properly organized basis. Extra voluntary workers were enrolled, but attendance on at least two nights every week was demanded, together with the realisation that everything was to be done for the love of God and in the interests of His Mother and Blessed Martin. In the meantime the work of helping the missions continued as actively as ever. The premises in Parnell Square became known as the centre for accomplishing both tasks and any small profits made from the sale of Blessed Martin literature were devoted to the missions.

In 1953 the *Blessed Martin Magazine* was launched and from the beginning proved very popular. This, of course, is due to the use of Blessed Martin's name in the title and to the fact that it is of wide interest and costs a mere fourpence. Popular devotion is essential for a canonization and the *Magazine* has certainly helped to keep before the people of these islands the name and charm of the coloured laybrother of Peru.

There are hopes of Blessed Martin's early canonization. In that happy event, one of the aims of the Apostolate will have been accomplished, but the work of the Missions will still remain, and it is hoped that the members of the *Dominican Missions and Blessed Martin Apostolate* will work for many years to come in that praiseworthy task.



Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima

Our Lady of Fatima

Devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, one of the most popular in St. Saviour's at the present time, was inaugurated by Father Raymond O'Donohoe in 1947. The response was instantaneous and from the first Saturday of the perpetual novena the people of Dublin came from far and near to pay homage to Our Lady. Two years later a very beautiful statue, the first major work of John Haugh and carved of African whitewood, was erected in the church.

As a further act of devotion to Our Lady, the first overland pilgrimage to Lourdes and Fatima was organised in 1949 also. About four hundred and fifty pilgrims travelled, bringing with them a Golden Book in which were inscribed the names of one hundred thousand people who had promised to say the Rosary every day in accordance with Our Lady's wishes. Travelling with the pilgrimage also was a group of people who presented to the shrine at Fatima a richly jewelled monstrance as a gift from the people of Ireland.

During the novena in preparation for 13 May, 1960, the faithful were asked to join in a "tribute of flowers" to Our Lady on that day. From all parts of the city flowers began to pour in, at first in a small stream, then in a torrent, and it was estimated that over 80,000 blooms were laid at Our Lady's feet. All day long the church was thronged for the continuous recitation of the Rosary. Then, on 13 October a "tribute of light" was paid to Our Lady. Four thousand candles burned at the shrine and almost eight thousand people walked in the torchlight procession held that evening.

Family Sunday

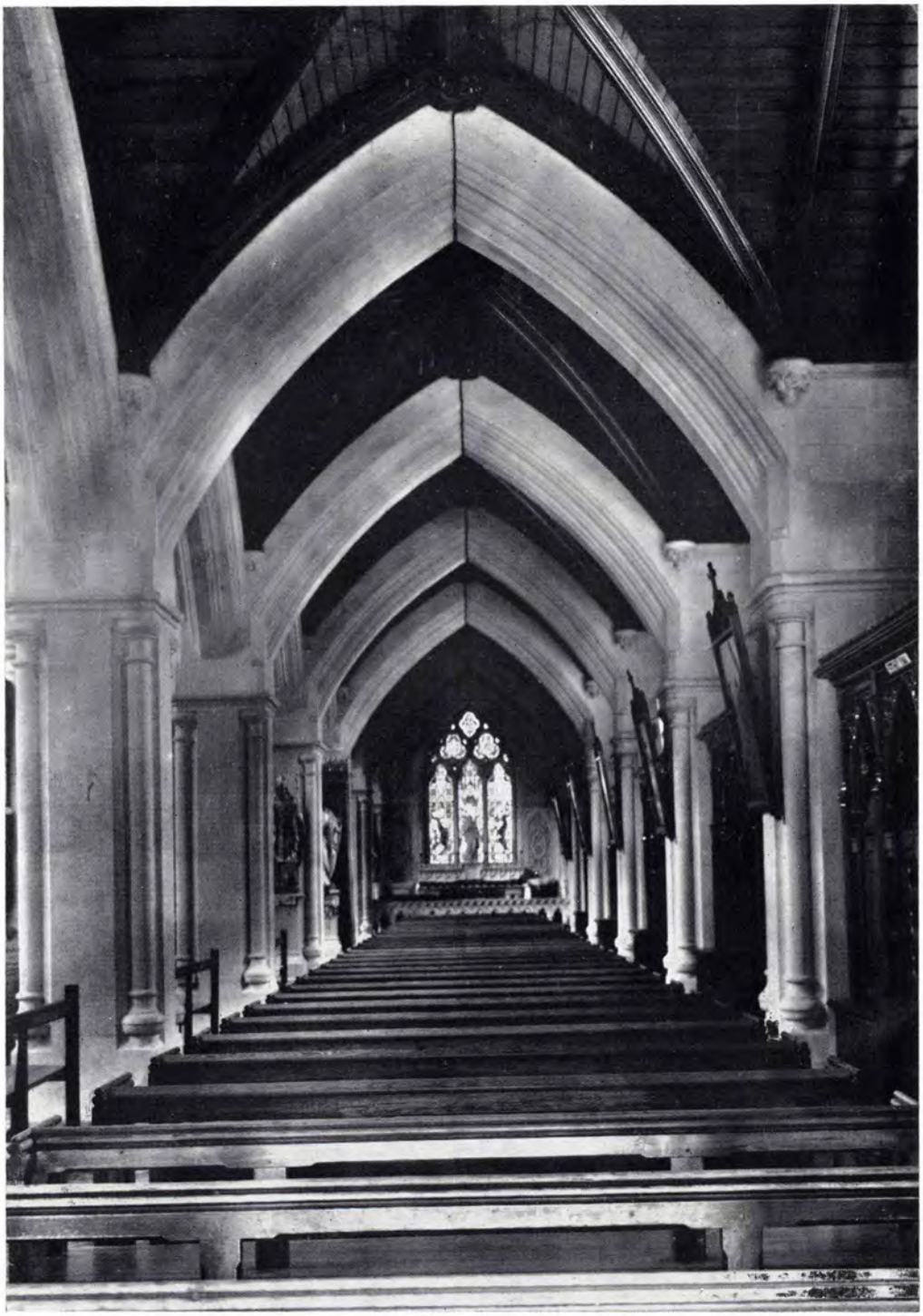
To stress the importance of the family, the very basis of society, which is subject to so much attack from every side at present, the devotion of the "Family Sunday" was introduced during 1958. In order not to interfere with the sodalities attached to the church, this is held whenever there is a fifth Sunday in the month. Families are encouraged to attend the "Family Mass" at nine o'clock and to receive Holy Communion together, and in the evening at seven o'clock there are the family devotions with special sermon for the occasion.

This was followed in 1959 by the Blessing of the Children, a ceremony to which even the youngest infant could be brought, and parents were invited to bring all their children, irrespective of age. It proved so popular that now it is held twice on the Children's Sunday, at five o'clock and again at seven.

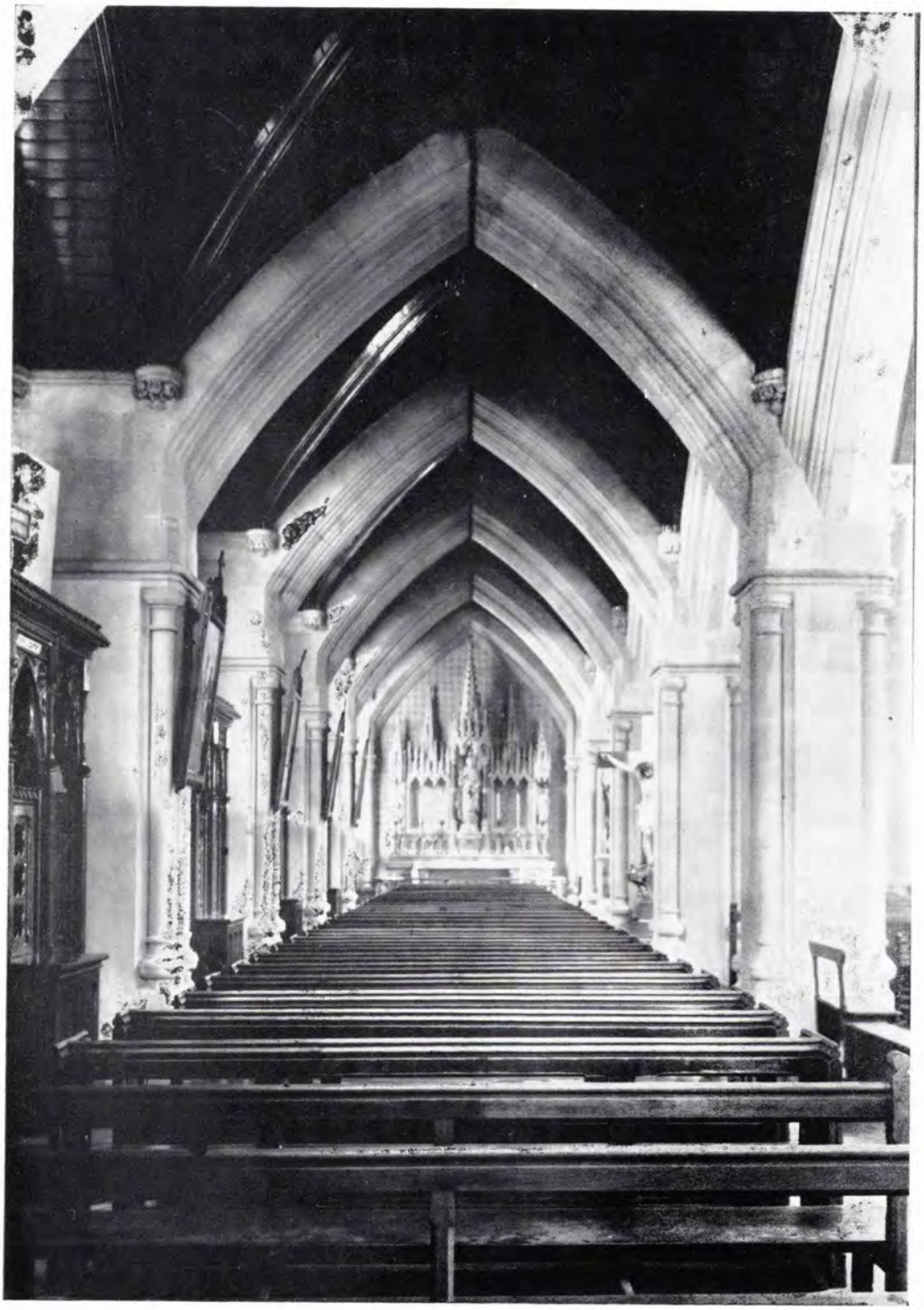
The Nave

Holy Name Aisle

Rosary Aisle



St. Joseph's Aisle and Burke Memorial Window



St. Dominic's Aisle

The Crucifix

Before the erection of the Rosary Altar in 1872, this Madonna and Child, with the statue of St. Dominic now incorporated in that altar, formed a "Rosary Group".

"Ecce Homo"

Rose Window and Organ

The Organ

(We are indebted to Mr. J. Holmes and Mr. R. E. Meates for much of the data contained in this account.)

There is evidence of the existence of an organ in the original St. Saviour's of pre-Reformation days, at least from 1488.

It is certain that the Bridge Street chapel did have an organ in 1836, but that was in its days as a parochial church. At the same time, 1836, the organist of the Dominican Church in Denmark Street, was a Mr. M'Donnell. One wonders if he and Mr. J. E. M'Donnell, who was Professor of Music at St. Patrick's College, Carlow in 1876, were one and the same person. The organ in Denmark Street, would appear to have been built by John White in the late 1840s or early 1850s.

The present organ in St. Saviour's was built by William Telford, founder of the Telford firm, in 1860-62. Originally it seems to have been envisaged as a three manual organ, but it was built as a four manual. A writer in *The Dublin Builder* (1st April, 1860) states that Mr. Telford was engaged at the time in making working drawings for the Dominican organ, which was planned as a "fine pedal instrument of 6 stops, with an open diapason of 32 ft", and with a case 37 ft high and 26 ft wide, in the Gothic style, with illuminated front pipes, the organ to have "three benches of keys and the cost about £1,200". This splendid instrument was opened on 8th September, 1862, Mr. G. H. Tilbury presiding at the organ. Tickets to the Nave cost 2/6, South Aisle, 1/- and North Aisle, 6d. The following extracts from *The Freeman's Journal* account set the scene:

> ". . . The mighty instrument, still silent, looked most beautiful in all its individual proportions . . . The new organ is a noble instrument worthy of the high object for which it was intended and combining in an admirable degree, softness, brilliancy, tone and power . . . The first tones of this great instrument burst in grand melody on the ears of the densely crowded congregation in the overture to Handel's *Saul*, and a person would be almost inclined to believe that the thing material had a human soul and told glad tidings to all present".

The music played at the opening was:
Overture to *Saul*—Handel
Mass in C—Beethoven
Theme (?)—Hesse (after the Epistle)
Andante (?)—Mozart (during the Offertory)

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament followed and the *O Salutaris* was sung to music of J. S. Bach, with Schubert's setting of the *Tantum Ergo*, and finally Witzka's *Te Deum*.

The specification of the organ in its original state given at the end of this account shows four reeds on the Swell. These, however, were not added until 1897 when a very extensive overhaul was carried out by W. Meates & Son, successors to Telford's.

The organ was rebuilt by the Belfast firm of Evans and Barr in 1928 when it was reduced to three manuals A new detached console was added and the front of the organ recessed. The pipework behind the front was repositioned, not always with the best result. More recently in 1955 it was again overhauled, new action was fitted to the console and a new roller crescendo.

The following is a list of the organists and assistant organists who have served St. Saviour's:

ORGANISTS	ASSISTANT ORGANISTS
? —1896: Mr. Moneypenny	
1896—1899: Dr. Smith	
1899—1902: Mr. Vincent O'Brien	
1902—1903: Mr. Myerscough	1902—1921: Miss Bebe
1903—1936: Mr. M. Scherer	
1936—1954: Mr. W. H. Murray	
1954— : Mr. F. Lefevre	1954— : Miss V. Doyle

The specification of the organ as originally built by Telford & Telford in 1860-62 was as follows:

GREAT ORGAN

Double Open Diapason	16	Full Mixture, III ranks	2
Great Open Diapason	8	Sharp Mixture, II ranks	1
Salicional	8	I. Swell to Great Suboctaves	
Gedeckt	8	II. Swell to Great	
Octave	4	III. Swell to Great Octaves	
Twelfth	3	IV. Solo to Great	
Fifteenth	2		

SWELL ORGAN

Gedeckt Bourdon	16	Mixture, III ranks	2
Open Diapason	8	Contra Fagotta	16
Dulciana	8	Cornopean	8
Cone Gamba	8	Oboe	8
Octave	4	Clarion	4
Flute Harmonique	4	Tremulant	
Fifteenth	2	V. Solo to Swell	

CHOIR ORGAN

Lieblich Gedeckt	16	Suabe Flute	4
Salicional	8	Piccolo	2
Viol di Gamba	8	Clarionet	8
Stopped Diapason	8		
Gemshorn	4	VI. Swell to Choir	

SOLO ORGAN

Open Diapason Harmonique	8	Trumpet	8
Gamba	8	Clarion	4
Octave Harmonique	4		

PEDAL ORGAN

Contra Basso (open)	32	Trombone	8
Double Open Diapason	16	VII. Swell to Pedal	
Violone	16	VIII. Great to Pedal	
Octave	8	IX. Great to Pedals Octaves	
Ophicleide	8		

ACCESSORIES

Comp. Ped. for Great to Pedal coupler; Swell pedal; Four composition pedals for Great; Two composition pedals for Swell; Three wind pressures.

The specification of the organ as it now stands after the 1928 and 1955 rebuilds, is as follows:

GREAT ORGAN

Double Diapason	16	Posaune	8
Open Diapason, No. 1	8		
Open Diapason, No. 2	8	I. Swell to Great	
Gedact	8	II. Swell Octave to Great	
Hohl Flute	8	III. Swell Suboctave to Great	
Mixture, III ranks		IV. Choir to Great	
Principal	4	V. Choir Octave to Great	
Twelfth	2 2/3	VI. Choir Suboctave to Great	
Fifteenth	2		

SWELL ORGAN

Lieblich Bourdon	16	Contra Fagotta	16
Open Diapason	8	Cornopean	8
Echo Gamba	8	Oboe	8
Vox Angelica	8	Clarion	4
Stopped Diapason	8	Tremulant	
Mixture III ranks			
Gemshorn	4	VII. Swell Octave	
Suabe Flute	4	VIII. Swell Suboctave	

CHOIR ORGAN

Violin Diapason	8	Clarinet	8
Lieblich Gedact	8	Tremulant	
Viol d'Orchestre	8		
Dulciana	8	IX. Choir Octave	
Wald Flute	4	X. Choir Suboctave	
Piccolo	2	XI. Swell to Choir	

PEDAL ORGAN

Double Open Diapason	32	Trombone	16
Open Diapason	16	Trumpet	8
Violone	16		
Bourdon	16	XII. Swell to Pedal	
Unison	8	XIII. Great to Pedal	
Bass Flute	8	XIV. Choir to Pedal	

ACCESSORIES

Two balanced swell pedals; Roller crescendo operating in all departments on any pre-set combination; Four pistons to Swell, operating Swell and Pedal; One double-touch piston, Swell to Pedal; Three pistons to Great, operating Great and Pedal; Three pistons to Choir; Four toe-pistons to Swell and Pedal; Three toe-pistons to Great and Pedal.

The Community 1961

Front Row: *Fr. Colgan, Fr. Gogarty, Fr. Doolan, Fr. Coffey (Prior), Fr. Smith, Fr. Casey, Fr. Crofts.*
Centre Row: *Fr. Walsh, Fr. O'Rourke, Fr. MacEnery, Fr. Bowe, Fr. Keenan, Fr. Wall, Fr. O'Riordan.*
Back Row: *Bro. Bonaventure, Fr. Harty, Fr. Crowe, Bro. Augustine, Bro. Paul, Fr. Flannery, Bro. Pius.*

Pádraic Mac Piarais
a tháinig cun an Teampaill seo Ár Slánaitheora
agus a ghlac Corp Chríost ann
Satharn na Cásca 1916
roimh éirí amach in aghaidh na nGall dó

LOOKING

BACK

THE EARLY YEARS

1224–1539

About the time of St. Dominic oral, vernacular preaching suffered sadly from neglect. The common people, not only of Ireland but of Europe, knew little of their faith; in some parts, they lapsed from faith to superstition, and from superstition to heresy. To meet the urgent need the Orders of Friars were formed, with most encouraging results. In Ireland they were providentially timed, arriving in the wake of the Normans, the pious builders of most Irish friaries, abbeys, and hospitals. The effect of the friars on religion in Ireland, so far as one can judge, was to spread and deepen a knowledge of Christian teaching by regular preaching from fixed points about the countryside. To us with our parish system, such an activity seems commonplace; to the Irish of the thirteenth century it was, literally, a revelation. There is evidence, of course, that the Norman friar preached only to the Norman Catholic, but from the beginning the new Orders were welcomed by the native Irish also.

Nine bridges now span the river Liffey, like so many clasps binding the two halves of Dublin city. When the Dominicans arrived there was only one. The city, on its long, steep hill to the south, sprawled in untidy confusion around Christ Church. St. Mary's Abbey and the small Danish settlement of Oxmantown had the northern bank to themselves. The houses, with few exceptions, were of wood, and fire a constant hazard. Paving and sanitation were unknown, while livestock, as it did up to the eighteenth century, roamed everywhere. Plague, not unnaturally, struck the city every ten or twenty years. Such was Dublin when the new preaching friars with their French ways and strange habits of black and white arrived. It was the year 1224.

The friars were fortunate in gaining immediate possession, thanks to the good offices of the Archbishop, of a small chapel only four years old. They retained the title of the chapel, St. Saviour, as they have to this day, seven centuries and ten chapels later. It stood on the north side of the solitary bridge, at the point at which Church Street now runs onto the river. Three acres of ground beside the chapel stretched downstream towards the Cistercian abbey over the site of the present Four Courts. Work began at once on a more suitable church, one large enough to hold the people they intended to attract, and this was opened in 1238. Meanwhile the more routine work of the friars in the city had begun. They preached regularly for the Cistercians and others, receiving habits and wheat in return. Like other early houses of the Order they conducted a small seminary to train aspirants for the priesthood, from which each year twelve scholars graduated, and which may in part have explained the eager welcome of the Archbishop. To vary their programme they undertook, also in that first century, to collect alms in support of the Crusades.

That first church, although repaired in 1285 by thirty royal oak trees from Glencree, fell victim in 1304 to one of Dublin's periodic

conflagrations. Yet again the work of church-building began, this time with the generous assistance of John Decer, the first Provost of Dublin, for whom, so great a benefactor was he, the friars inserted a special collect in the liturgy: "Pray for the health and salvation of the mayor, bailiffs, and citizens of Dublin, great benefactors to our Order, now and at the hour of death". John Decer may have been the first to introduce the custom whereby each year on the election of the mayor, the entire corporation went in their robes in solemn procession to the church, to hear a sermon by the Prior on civic rights and duties. Until the late eighteenth century this custom survived, the mayor and aldermen marching to the sound of bugles from the tholsel to where the church once stood, and through the gardens and cloisters of the ancient convent. After the Reformation, however, the sermon was heard in Christ Church.

The new church had only twelve years of life. On the approach of Robert Bruce, the Scottish rebel, with his army, the citizens taking fright, destroyed every building on the north side which could possibly have been turned to advantage by the enemy. The stones of the new Dominican church (the priory was probably of useless mud and wattle) were removed to build the gate "going up St. Audoen's arch", the Wine-tavern Gate, and strengthening the wall along the river. Bruce, in the event, thought better than to fight, and a new St. Saviour's arose, built this time, thanks to the proddings of the king, at the city's expense. This church survived until its deliberate demolition after 1540, although by that time it was in poor repair. It had some claims to comparative magnificence; stained glass, a fine tower (erected in 1350, a very early date for friary towers) and, by 1488, an organ, but the consecration ceremony was delayed until 1402, due to the Black Death and the Great Schism.

The Chapel of St. Mary of Grace on the Bridge

In 1348 a Dublin layman obtained leave to erect on the bridge of Dublin a chapel in honour of Our Lady endowed for the support of two chaplains to say Mass there daily for Edward III and his queen, and for the corporation and its citizens. The chapel does not appear to have been actually *on* the bridge but close to its northern end, within the precincts or boundary of the Dominican property. It may be that it is the separate building shown in that position on Speed's map of the city. In the chapel of St. Mary, as it was called, pilgrims and wayfarers stopped to pray for their safety on the roads, or in thanks for their safe arrival. Later, in 1478, a guild of merchants was founded in the chapel; this was what we would call a trade union rather than a confraternity, though it combined the better elements of both. They supported a priest to say daily Mass in the chapel for the king and citizens,

St. Audoen's Arch

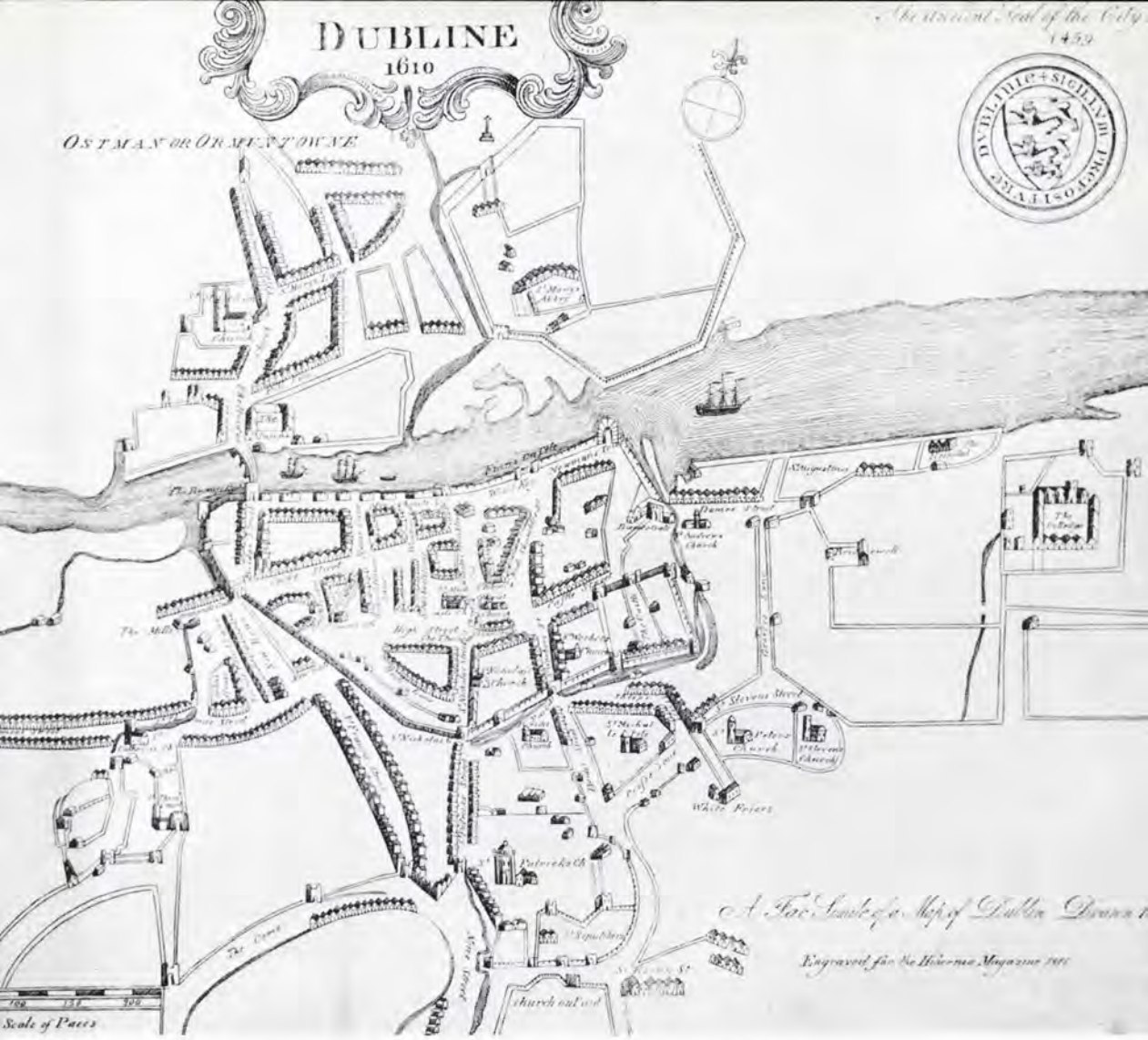
and appear to have been under the direction of the Dominican Fathers. There is no sufficient reason for believing, though it is frequently claimed, that the friars ever built the bridge; they were at most its guardians and were responsible for its maintenance, in those times a great work of charity. Father Burke, the historian of the Irish Dominicans, remembered seeing as a boy (*c.* 1716) the holy-water stoup on the bridge for the use of passers-by.

The University

Another enterprise with which the Dublin Dominicans were associated was the establishment of a university for the city. The first attempt was initiated by the Archbishop in 1310, the second in 1475. Both were defeated, perhaps by the influence of Oxford, lack of funds, and the chronic suspicion of the native Irish of anything suggested by the Pale. On the first attempt four professors were appointed, and of these two were Dominicans. All four mendicant Orders were associated with the second venture, and the plans envisaged the inclusion of the already existing Dominican school as a constituent college of the university. There is good reason for believing that this university became an accomplished fact, if only for ten years.

Not a Stone Upon a Stone

No trace remains of the original St. Saviour's or of its two medieval successors; no sketch or drawing has survived. Speed's map shows only the three wings of the priory and a separate smaller house, possibly the chapel of St. Mary "at the Brygge-end". The priory buildings were taken over in 1539 under Henry VIII for use at first as courts of law, and then as a hostel for lawyers under the title of "King's Inns". The lawyers retained a chapel within the former monastery for their private use, of which Duhig wrote (1806) in his history of the King's Inns: "The chapel of the King's Inns Society lay in that part of the monasterial district called in our time Mass Lane; it was most probably one of the ancient chapels in the Dominican friary and merely converted into a place for reformed worship. James II restored it to its ancient use and attended Mass therein. On the Revolution King William presented it with the Society's consent, to French Huguenots who wanted a place of prayer. The site is now under a similar use by a dissenting congregation". Dr. Donnelly seems to identify this chapel with that used by the Jesuits under James II, in Lucy Lane, now Chancery Place, off Inns Quay. In later years, apart from its brief restoration to the friars in the time of James II, the priory was used in turn as a barracks, a theatre, a publishing centre (whose products were stamped "in the Cloisters") and, in 1786 the present Four Courts building was erected on the site. Shortly after the building of the present St. Saviour's a small sandstone cross just three feet high, inscribed with the date 1222 in Roman numerals, was unearthed during excavations for an extension to the Four Courts. It was then, and has remained ever since, built into the back boundary wall of the church grounds. At the same time (1860) underground chambers discovered in the Four Courts area were considered to have formed part of the ancient priory. The following is taken from *Life in Old Dublin* by James Collins. "The building of the Four Courts, and the consequent improvement in this neighbourhood, has removed all traces of the Dominican Priory and its massive structures, save such as remain still underground, several of which are known to exist in the locality starting from North King Street towards the river. One of the most interesting was up to some years ago in a good state of preservation after a lapse of seven hundred years. It consisted of a series of lofty semi-circular and round arches, built on massive piers which are approached by a descent of large steps built in what was up to a short time ago known as Bailey's timber



Speed's Plan of Dublin 1610 showing the medieval Convent of St. Saviour.

yard, Goerge's Hill. Opposite to the steps and in the first vault is a deeply arched recess in which there is a well of the purest water, said to be dedicated to St. Anne from whom the adjoining street derives its name. On the left of the entrance vault is a built-up opening which closes a vaulted passage, and tradition tells us that this passage extended to Christ Church . . . It is said that fifty years ago a workman procured a large ball of twine and some candles and proceeded to explore the passage . . . unwinding it as he went along until he reached, as he considered, as far as Ormond Quay, when he was obliged to return, being driven back by foul air. The entrance was closed up in consequence of this exploit. The vault conducts to many others, one being 150 feet in length, 15 feet wide and 12 feet high. There are also several others but of smaller dimensions". A more attractive relic is the original conventual seal, now preserved in the Royal Irish Academy. It is a circular bronze matrix with a loop on the back, just two inches wide, bearing a figure of the Crucifixion, with the inscription + SI[GILLUM] CONVENTUS FRATRUM P[RAE]DICATOR[UM] DUBLINIAE. It belongs, probably, to the thirteenth century.

Suppression and Survival

1539-1660

Henry VIII's suppression of the monasteries cannot have come as a surprise to the friars in Ireland: the wind had been blowing in that direction for too long. There are indications that they tried to avert the worst consequences of the blow, setting out land on short leases, and stowing away until safer days some of their more valuable possessions. They cannot have conceived that this calamity would outlive Henry by a day. Fan-wise, the systematic spoliation of the religious houses moved slowly out from Dublin across the country, effective only where it could be enforced by English law, achieving full success only on the fall of Ulster in the opening years of the seventeenth century. As the arm of the law advanced, the friars fell back towards Connacht and Ulster, the Dominicans making a last stand in Sligo and Athenry, growing ever fewer until only twenty friars remained of a Province which had once numbered above a thousand. The return of official Catholicism in the person of Queen Mary was too brief for more than a few optimistic attempts at revival in Munster. Then under Elizabeth the long and glorious roll of Irish martyrdom opened.

Father Roch MacGeoghegan

We have a short but valuable account of the Province in this period from the pen of Father Roch MacGeoghegan, restorer of the Dominicans to Leinster and to Dublin.

"They (Henry and Elizabeth) were not able to destroy entirely our Order in Ireland. Though ejected from their monasteries, our friars did not fly the kingdom but hid with lay Catholics. Sometimes, even, meeting in one of their country convents (occupied by Catholics) they held chapters as well as they could, and in the presence of all passed laws to suit those troubled times. They remained obedient to the Provincial or the Vicar of the General, who for almost the whole period of the suppression was the Very Rev Father Thaddeus Duane. On his death the brethren scattered among the laity, their benefactors, and so remained until about 1613, when friars educated in Spain began to arrive in Ireland. These friars gathered our priests once more into two or three remote country convents, from which they spread over the whole Province, so that they now (1627) occupy twelve houses, eight of which are in towns and cities". These details, recorded by one who had been at work in Ireland since 1605, bear out two important points. The first is that the Irish Dominicans were saved by the training of novices abroad; the second, that so far as the quality of religious life in Ireland was concerned, the Reformation was providential. It gave the Irish friars a new spirit, a resilience. Those young men returning from the continent came back with all the vision and the vigour of the counter-reformation, ready, not to withdraw into the bogs, but to storm the cities for Christ. And that is what they did.

The Mass Continues

Meanwhile, the people of Dublin had kept the faith. Some of the more prominent among them, hailed in 1565 before Loftus, the Protestant archbishop of the city, admitted that since the Reformation (1540) they had continually assisted at Mass. And

in 1592 it was widely complained of that Jesuits and seminary priests (so the continental-trained arrivals were called) abounded even in the Pale, disguised as serving-men. Elizabeth died, raving and unpitied, in 1603, but under her successor James I, the penal legislation grew even more severe. The Catholic faith was attacked in every conceivable way, in worship, in education, and in property. That was the position when the story of Dominican Dublin reopens in 1616. The curtain, so far as the records are concerned, had been drawn for seventy-five years; when it first lifts it reveals two Dominicans in prison, one of whom was Father Richard Bermingham, and the other a priest whose name we do not know. Presumably they had been imprisoned for saying Mass or hearing confessions about the city, in "a back-room of Mr. Plunkett in Bridge Street", or in "Shelton's house, beyond the bridge"—two of the seven obscure Mass-houses known to have existed then in Dublin. Two years later, at the instance of the King of Spain, the unfortunate pair were released and transported with a group of one hundred priests.

Religious Life

Others were found to take their place in Dublin. In 1622 there were eight Dominicans in community in Cook Street, then, as for two centuries after, the Catholic ghetto of the city. Among them, though not a regular resident, was the Provincial, Father Roch MacGeoghegan, whom we have quoted (now Provincial). During his term of office he was delated to the authorities, not by a common informer but by one of his own subjects in consequence of some rebuke. His portrait was hung on all the gates of Dublin. Because of the hue and cry he could not visit the city too often after re-establishing the convent there, but he did return in disguise on missions of mercy. In this way he converted some notables, among them Edward Herbert, a divinity professor of Trinity, and one Blondell, a lapsed Catholic whom he reconciled on his death-bed. The danger involved in these escapades for those who sheltered him was so great that he left for exile in France, having held office for nine years (1617-26). Conditions greatly improved with the accession of Charles I, a Catholic, in 1625, and the growth of England's political friendliness with Spain. Dublin witnessed an ostentatious religious revival during which the Carmelites, at least, went so far as to hold public processions of the Blessed Sacrament. Inversely to this change of fortune, the Dominican personnel in the city decreased. In 1627 there were only three priests, three novices, and a brother in the community. The presence of the novices alone would prove that the persecution was at an end. Nevertheless, they were still cautious, not having any legal right to live in community or to celebrate Mass, and well aware that although the king might be Catholic, the Dublin authorities were of the party which hated Catholicism, and eventually killed the Catholic king. These men, having bided their time during five years, struck abruptly once again in 1630, closing all the Mass-houses and forcing Dublin's Catholic life back into the catacombs.

Dublin Novitiate

Thanks, again, to Father Roch MacGeoghegan, we have a description of the short-lived Dublin notiviate and its programme. ". . . our novices are instructed daily in the constitutions and rubrics, in vocal and mental prayer, and in the other observances of the Order, except that (for fear of the heretics) they cannot be taught plain chant. And when it is necessary for them to go abroad, neither they nor the professed brothers dare to wear the habit of the Order outwardly. However, they seldom leave the house, and then only in necessity, nor can they do otherwise in these times of persecution. Since religious in these parts

live, not in cloisters, but hidden in secular houses, it is necessary in those towns and cities in which they fear the attacks of heretics that some Catholic laymen should live in the outer part of the house facing the street. If these are craftsmen or shopkeepers to whom all sorts of people may resort, then it is a better and more convenient arrangement; for the heretics are less likely to suspect that religious are living in the back, and those Catholics who are coming to their Masses and sermons are thought to be conducting business . . . Although the novices wear lay clothes when they are compelled to go out, in order to escape persecution by the heretics or for some other reason, still they wear the habit of the Order openly at home, and even when they do go out they are accustomed to wear a light habit or a small woollen tunic and a short scapular under their lay clothes . . ."

Persecution Renewed

An attack on the Franciscan friary in Cook Street by the Protestant archbishop, the mayor and sheriffs, with a band of soldiers, sparked off the next period of suppression. Early one morning the band arrived, broke down the locked doors, arrested two of the friars, and, despite the fact that the place was packed with people attending Mass, began to pull the frail wooden oratory to pieces. Coming out again with their captives and loot (five sets of vestments and a chalice) into the street, the aldermen and bailiffs were surrounded by a crowd of women who pelted them so accurately with stones, dead animals, decaying vegetables and worse, that the unfortunate men had to escape into whatever houses would give them shelter, to be rescued later by the military. Ignominious as the affair was for the archbishop and officials who took part in it, the policy of the Castle was pursued and no open profession of faith permitted. And so the next eleven years passed for Catholic Dublin, in tension and obscurity.

The Confederation

In 1641, disappointed in Charles I, and realising that they must fight for their land or lose it, the Catholic nobles of Ireland rose in rebellion. The war, the most complicated and most nearly successful of all such wars, lasted a full ten years, and ended with the defeat of the Irish cause at the first siege of Limerick. Cromwell, Ireton, Coote, Inchiquin and others of like mind, swelled considerably the stream of Irish martyrs. One of the earliest to die was Father Peter Higgins, prior of Naas, who was hanged on St. Stephen's Green in the first year of the war. He had been brought from Naas under a guarantee of safe conduct, confident that he would be safe, having often protected English people from the Irish soldiers. Just before he was to die he hinted to his captors that he might exchange his faith for his release, succeeding by this stratagem in getting a document which promised him his freedom for his apostasy. On the scaffold he drew out the document and read it to those standing silently about. "You can judge now for yourselves, whether I die for treason or for my priesthood". With these words he threw the paper to a friend among the crowd. An attempt was made to bury him in the cemetery of the old St. Saviour's with his own. This was refused, the soldiers insulting the body, and firing a musket-shot in contempt through the dead priest's head.

Cromwell

In the circumstances it is ironical to read that in 1644 the General Chapter of the Order, expecting a Confederate victory in Ireland, arranged the erection in Dublin of a house of studies for the province of Leinster. This was never done. From 1640 until 1663 the Puritans crushed Catholicism in Dublin. As in Waterford and other cities

caught in Cromwell's track, all priests and Catholics were forced either into exile or outside the city walls. There, if they wished, they could linger on, hewers of wood and drawers of water for their evictors, until plague or starvation or both relieved their misery. In 1652 only two priests, disguised as hawkers and pedlars, remained about the city. We have the inspiring testimony of a Carmelite Father, writing ten years later, that during this frightful time, the Dominicans never wholly abandoned Dublin but stood at the post of danger. This, although under Cromwell there was only one secular priest in the city, and in 1662 all the priests of Dublin except two or three, had been captured and exiled, and three of them, a secular priest and two Franciscans, were in prison.

During the 1650s the prisons of Dublin and of Ireland were packed with priests awaiting transportation either to the continent or, less fortunately, to the sugar-plantations of the Barbadoes. Their captors were paid the sum of £5 per priest, for which the receipts are still available in the Public Record Office. One of these, Father Thomas Bermingham, another Prior of Naas, was led to Dublin after the siege of that town. During the siege he had seen, with others even among the enemy, a vision of St. Dominic above the town. For Father Bermingham at least it was not a happy omen, for he was marched to Dublin, tricked out for the amusement of the soldiers in a Franciscan habit. There he spent a few miserable years in prison until ransomed and exiled to Spain. At the same time another priest lay in jail in Dublin, Father Redmond Moore, who was, in all likelihood, the Dominican of the same name who returned from England to Dublin in 1662, having, it is suggested, spent some of the intervening time in the Barbadoes and in Belgium. It is certain, in fact, that Father Moore and some priest companions were released immediately on their arrival in Barbadoes for fear they should cause disaffection among the Irish slaves, and found their way to the Low Countries. Yet another Dominican, though not a Dublinman, Father David Roche, was exiled at the same time to St. Kitt's where he died a martyr in the act of celebrating Mass for the poor Irish captives.

So ends our account of Dublin under the Puritans. Never again were conditions quite so bad for the Dublin Catholics who had to bear, and bore, thank God, successfully, the full brunt of every persecution.

Restoration and Exile

1660-1698

In theory, religious tolerance returned with the restoration of Charles II in 1660; in practice, Ireland's governors, and England's "Popish Plot" bred an uneasy half-peace which lasted until the accession of James II (1685). Under the new regime, the Catholics, naturally, expected full freedom of worship. Yet the Protestants, ranged solidly behind Ormonde, the Lord Lieutenant, managed to keep control, chiefly because they were successful in driving a wedge into the Catholic party. Their scheme was this. On the accession of the new king the English Catholics had presented an elaborate address of loyalty which had, in its zeal to concede, steered very close to an infringement of papal claims. Here Ormonde saw his chance, and used a Franciscan, Peter Walsh, to draw up a similar document which the Irish clergy could sign. The friar eventually produced "*The Humble Remonstrance of the Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland*". Its terms, deliberately ambiguous, were calculated to divide the Irish clergy, and in this the document was only too successful. Ormonde, surpassing himself, succeeded even in setting Peter Talbot, archbishop of Dublin, and Blessed Oliver Plunkett of Armagh in opposition to one another, although both eventually died fellow-martyrs.

It is against this background that the story of the Dominicans of Dublin continues. Father Redmond Moore signed the Remonstrance in London on its first appearance, but withdrew his name when Rome condemned the document as anti-papal in its implications. Father John O Hart, the Provincial, sent the suspicious document to the Spanish university of Alcala for theological judgment. Father Christopher O Farrell was caught in Dublin carrying letters from Cardinal Barberini about the affair. When persecution of the clergy broke out again in summer 1666 because of their refusal to sign, these three priests were among the first to suffer; they were lodged in Fyan's castle at the river end of Fishamble Street. For Father Moore, Peter Walsh had nothing but contempt. "He is by his Provincial", he sneered, "and for his recantation, made prior of Athy, and that's excuse enough among men that have neither brain, nor shame, nor conscience, nor even fear of the laws of God or man". Yet a fourth Dominican, Father Keane Carroll, a priest otherwise unknown, spent the following three years, sick and starving, in a Dublin prison, appealing again and again for reprieve.

Imprisonment

Their prison was a small square tower of four storeys on the river bank, built as a private dwelling by one of Dublin's wealthy families and only recently pressed into service as a prison. In summer the captives had to endure the smell of the Liffey at low-tide on the one side, and the stench of Dublin's chief fish market (Fishambles) on the other. In winter, as the floods swept past, the rats came up for food and shelter. There was no heating, no furniture, no exercise, and little food. O Hart was held prisoner here for a year and a half and was freed only on giving heavy bail to re-appear instantly when wanted. Christopher O Farrell survived three years'

imprisonment (and lived on in Dublin for a further thirty years), but Redmond Moore, perhaps an older man, died from hardship at the end of the third year. The captives slept on the bare ground, their feet cut and nibbled by the mice. So Father O Farrell described their sufferings to the historian O Heyne. Perhaps there was too an element of active cruelty on the part of their gaolers, for a contemporary pamphlet by a Dublin pastor testifies: "Such poor creatures as had not wherewithal to bribe him, he [Walsh] persecuted so violently that one, Father Moore, a Dominican, died a prisoner". To Walsh it seemed that Redmond Moore had changed his mind for a lesser reason than allegiance to the Pope. O Heyne, writing fifty years later, was more charitable and more honest in his judgment: "He fought with energy and learning for the honour and unity of the Church in its supreme, visible, and infallible head". His chalice, made earlier for the convent of Mullingar, is still in use in St. Saviour's.

Community Life

Under these discouraging circumstances there can hardly have been a regular Dominican community in Dublin, although in 1664 a subprior, Father John Reynolds, had been appointed. Shortly afterwards (1671) a meeting of bishops was held in Father Reynolds' house "at the Bridge-foot", in all probability the convent premises, for it is certain that the chapel of the Dominican Fathers was then in Bridge Street. At this juncture the community consisted of Father Reynolds, Father Michael Fulham, Father Christopher O Farrell, Father William Ash, and two lay brothers, newly received to the habit by the Prior. Owing to the fortunate confiscation of the convent archives a short while later (they are how in Trinity College), we possess some valuable details of the chapel and convent in 1678. There was a common fund and safe. There was a convent library from which some among the community had been giving or lending books to outsiders. Convent and chapel were distinct, and probably in separate buildings. On weekdays Divine Office was recited in the convent oratory. On Sundays and feastdays, Vespers, Compline, and Rosary, were recited chorally in the public chapel at two o'clock. Before Mass the litany of Loreto was recited, a custom which persisted into the following century. On the first Sunday of each month a preacher exhorted the faithful to devotion towards the Rosary and the Order. From another source (O Heyne) we know that at this time the Rosary Confraternity was established in the city under the care of Father James Fulham. Unfortunately its registers, unlike those of some other centres, have not survived.

The "Popish Plot"

In that very year, the storm broke. Titus Oates and Lord Shaftesbury discovered (so they swore) a giant popish plot to assassinate King Charles. That was in early autumn. By November all the regular clergy and bishops were banished the kingdom, although not many actually left. With difficulty Ormonde prevented the Dublin apprentices from wrecking the Mass-houses of the city; but by April, 1679 he could report that: "There is not one Mass-house left unsuppressed". Father Mark Barnewall of the Dominican community had to fly to Portugal for safety, never to return. With the deaths of Blessed Oliver Plunkett and Peter Talbot in 1680 and 1681 the ridiculous but damaging "plot" was revealed as an anti-Catholic campaign based on perjured evidence. Gradually the harassed "papists" began, as Marsh the Protestant archbishop put it, to "open their shops", and apart from the two months of 1684 in which they closed again (purely for prudential motives), the miserable chapels remained open until the end of the century, enjoying in the effective reign of

James II (1685-90) a brief sunlight of prosperity.

James II

The accession of the new king, a Catholic, gave the signal for great rejoicing. Bonfires greeted everywhere the end of religious bondage. After an eviction of 150 years the Dominican Fathers regained possession of their old priory, the King's Inns, and set about receiving novices. The only two received, Simon Archpol and Walter Fottrel, after their year's novitiate, were professed and sent abroad to study, the one to France, the other to Lisbon. Once more the friars appeared in their habits, to be laughed at by boys in the streets, until the Lord Mayor sent his constables to protect them. On 29 September, 1689, the newly elected mayor Terence Dermot went with his sheriffs to Mass in the Inns—a revival in Catholic terms of the old medieval custom. But James on his coming needed the Inns for parliament, ordering the Dominicans back into the Cook Street area where they acquired yet another chapel.

Limerick

Forced to fight William of Orange (his rival for the throne) in Ireland, James fared badly, very badly, despite the superhuman efforts of his Irish Catholic supporters. When, after the disaster of the Boyne (1690), he fled to France, they continued the fight to Athlone, to Aughrim, and to Limerick, where, despite enormous odds, they won honourable terms of surrender. Had these hard-won terms been fulfilled they would have granted equal liberty of worship to all creeds. "But the decline of France from 1694 onwards", writes W. P. Burke, "allayed the fears of the Irish minority, and furthermore released William from obligations to his Catholic allies. Accordingly the flood of Protestant fanaticism pent up since the days of Charles II was now let loose and the penal era began". Louis XIV of France, the only political figure who could have brought international pressure to bear on William to honour the treaty of Limerick, was put out of court by his own treatment of the Protestant Huguenots.

The Friars

These great military and political developments had their eventual repercussions on the tiny chapel in Cook Street. For a while in 1693 all the regular clergy of Dublin were imprisoned *en masse*. By this time the Dominican personnel in the city had slumped in number from thirteen to seven since their moment of glory in the King's Inns. Novices were no longer in evidence. Two of the priests, Fathers James Fulham and Patrick Hegarty, left for the continent after the fall of Limerick. Father Fulham, captured by an English vessel at sea, spent two years in a London prison. He escaped to France, but was captured again in England on attempting to return home. After a year he was released, went to Belgium, became chaplain to the regiment of the Duke of Berwick, and died in battle in Lombardy in 1705. Father Patrick Hegarty, his fellow in arms and in misfortune, went with the Irish Brigade to France where he taught theology for a while and died, probably at Rouen, in 1704.

Yet another of the community died in Dublin in 1697. This was Father Peter Roth, the Prior, a young, handsome man from Kilkenny, only forty years of ago. O Heyne writes of him: "Being made Prior of Dublin everyone admired his management of the funds and goods of the convent, left in a dilapidated state by the war . . . His assiduous care for the beauty of God's house wore down his constitution, and consumed by a slow sickness, he gave up his soul to God in November, 1697 . . . All the Catholics of Dublin came in a crowd to his obsequies, and the principal nobles, both Catholic and Protestant, of both sexes, were present at his

funeral". The tableau formed by this scene summaries the era which died with Father Roth. With immense labour and the cost even of his life, he had prepared some derelict stable to be a worthy house for the King of kings. But all to no earthly avail. Within six months of his death the expected edict of banishment of all the regular and higher clergy of Ireland was promulgated.

From the port of Dublin alone one hundred and fifty friars put to sea. From Limerick, Galway, Cork, and Waterford other pathetic groups to the overall total of four hundred set sail for France and Belgium. Few, very few, remained to risk the death-penalty. The great majority left Ireland, most of them never to return. Nine years after the flight of the Wild Geese these friars, the vanguard of Ireland's fight for the faith, were forced in their turn to leave. But, unlike the Irish Brigade, they came back.

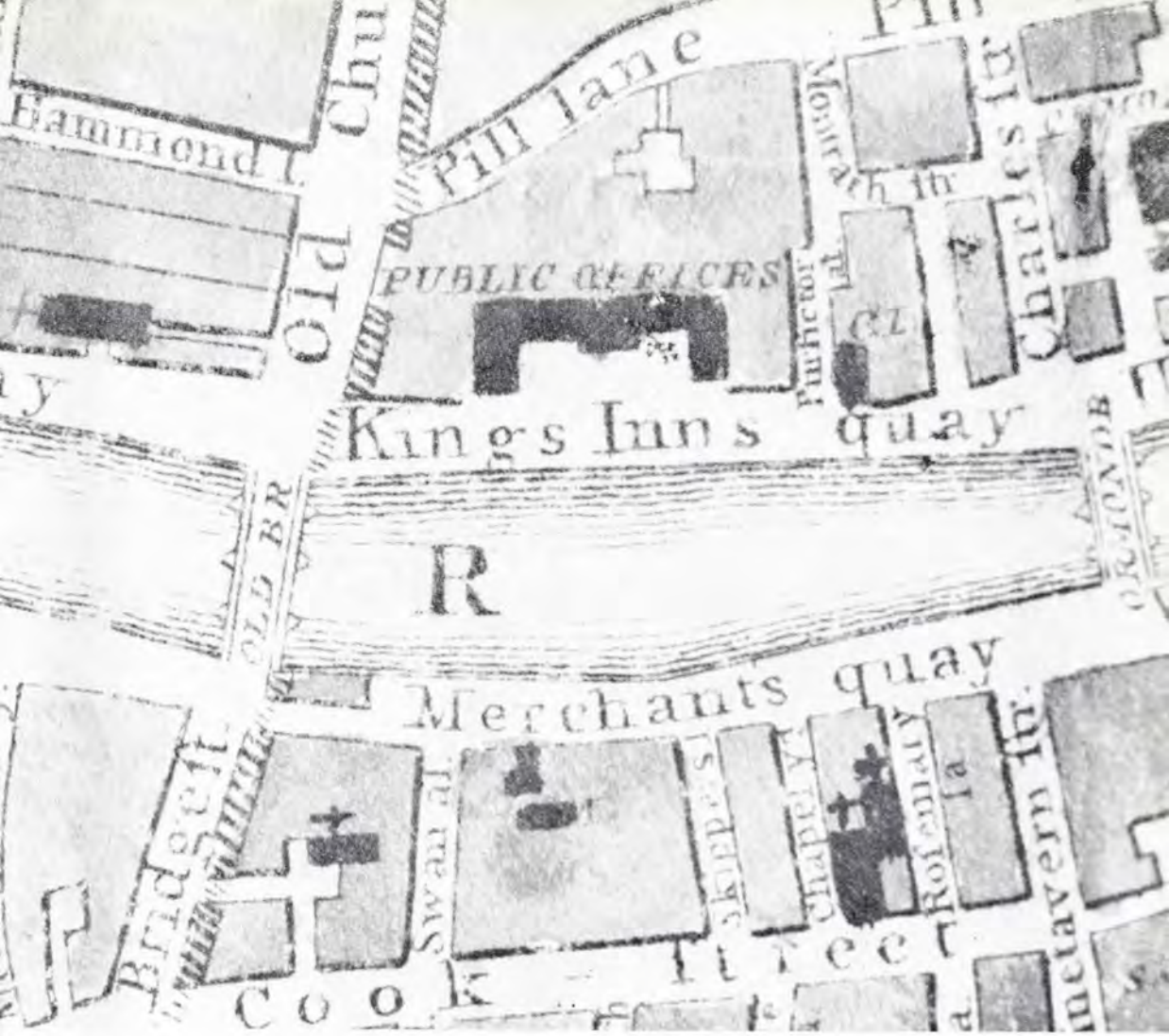
Chalices from the Cook Street days—Cahil (1685), Moore (c. *1650*) *and King* (*1707*).

The Church Outlawed
1700-1780

With the rejection of the promises made at Limerick, not only the friars but the whole Church in Ireland was put without the pale of law. For the next century it was despised and crushed by the Protestant minority; growing with the passage of time, not stronger but gradually weaker ,owing to the increasing poverty and eventual apostasy of some of the Catholic landed gentry, the growing immorality of the poorer classes, and the inroads of Deism among the educated. The wretched chapels in which the "papists" were allowed to indulge their "superstition" might not be seen from any main street, nor enjoy the luxury of a long lease. At times of military danger it was the "papist" chapels which were nailed up, the "papist" underdogs who were herded out of the walled towns, the "papists" alone who were suspected of treason. In the earliest and most severe stages of the persecution priests said Mass behind grilles or even wearing veils so that no one could admit to having seen them. Naturally, these conditions were at their worst in the very beginning of the Penal era. Some few priests were permitted to say Mass (being registered for the purpose, one priest to each parish) with the intention that when these men died they could not, for want of an ordaining bishop, be replaced. Death awaited any unregistered priest who entered the country in defiance of the law. That the penalty was not enforced was due to international opinion, roused by the expulsion of the friars, which would not tolerate it. The offending priests were transported or, more often, imprisoned for an indefinite period, usually until death. These measures, worthy of Nero, had little effect on the brave priests who returned, some to hidden creeks about the coast, others to Dublin and Limerick. And so began that Penal era of priest-catchers and priest-filled prisons which has left such a stain on the Protestant name in Ireland.

Return of the Friars

The traditional account of Dominican revival in Dublin picks up the threads once more with the arrival of Father Stephen MacEgan in 1708. For some years he served as curate in the united parishes of St. James and St. Catherine, and then, quietly, opened an unobtrusive chapel for the Order in Bridge Street (*c.* 1716). The former chapel in Cook Street, occupied before the exile, had passed to the diocesan clergy of the parish of St. Audoen, being known as the "Old Dominicans". Father Burke (de Burgo) from whom the account derives, wrote only forty years later and was himself a Dublinman, but it is clear that either his information was incomplete or that he did not wish, by revealing too much, to show the civil authorities how well they had been duped. For there is every reason to believe that Father Ambrose Mooney (vicar of the Dublin community in 1693) and Father William Plunkett (a member of the community in 1696) never left the country at all but registered as parish priests in 1704. Their names appear for the parishes of Portrane and Palmerstown, though both at the time lived in the city. Yet another former member of the community, Father John Keating, returned from Liverpool within nine months of the exile, although he was fifty-nine years old and had a partial paralysis in one hand. Shortly after landing he was

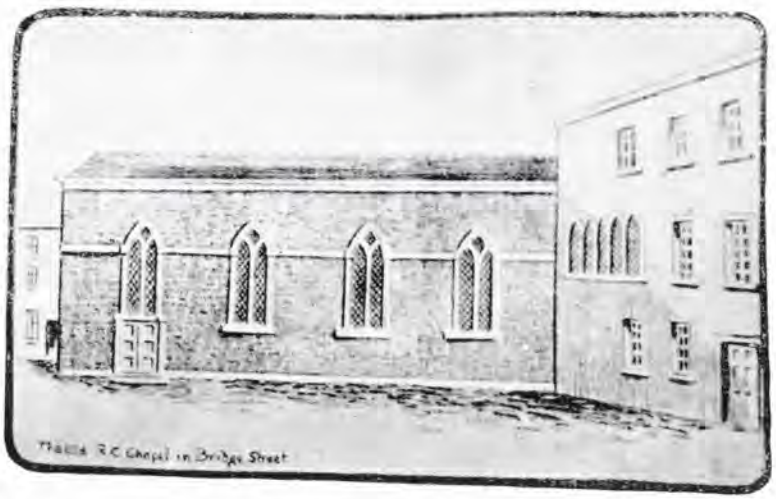


Map of Dublin 1782 showing the site of Bridge Street Chapel, well hidden from the public view. The Four Courts have been built on the old site across the river.

arrested and confined in Newgate prison until released by death in 1703. He had at least the consolation of receiving the last Sacramerts from the hands of a brother in religion, Father Dominic Egan of Tralee, who had been captured in the previous year.

THE "BLACKDOG"

The Blackdog prison in which these two priests were held bore scarcely any relation to what we now think of as a prison. It was a filthy, sordid den of thieves, murderers, and prostitutes, over which the gaoler had supreme control. What the prisoners could not pay for they did not get. For those who could not pay there was an even deeper and darker dungeon, more foul than that above. Separate cells were unknown, and criminals of every class brawled and drank together. Here, for eleven years, until his death in 1713, Father Dominic Egan celebrated Mass every morning, although he had been imprisoned for being a priest! Only bribery could explain it. Years afterwards Dublin people told Father



Bridge Street Chapel. (Courtesy C.T.S.I.)

Burke that they had attended these Masses, not having any other chapel to go to, and that Father Egan had converted many of his fellow-prisoners and given them the Sacraments before execution. Father Egan had the consolation of preparing for death two of his fellow Dominicans, Father Keating and Father Randall Felix MacDowell. This third priest was arrested on landing in April, 1706, and died 3rd April following. Like many another he was detected only because of his papers without which no priest, even in modern times, would be accepted by those who did not know him personally. Still another Dominican not mentioned by Father Burke, was his namesake, Father Edmund Burke, at work in Dublin from 1710. But let it not appear that the Dominicans had the field of honour to themselves. There were several other priests in the Blackdog at the time, true confessors of the faith, to whom Ó Neachtain addressed an Irish poem. Father Blunt, a Franciscan of Trim, spent no less than twenty years there awaiting the release of death.

Father Stephen MacEgan

But the honour of having organised the Dominican home-coming remains with Father Stephen MacEgan, the most distinguished Dominican of that half-century. He brought the Dominican nuns from Galway to Dublin (1717), helping to establish them also in Drogheda and Waterford. As a preacher he was, in Father Burke's phrase, "second to none in Ireland". Later he was elected in turn Provincial and bishop of Clonmacnois, and transferred to the see of Meath (1729) which he ruled for almost thirty years. Meath, the largest diocese in Ireland, stretches from the Shannon to the sea, but Dr. MacEgan visited it regularly from the safety of the nuns' convent in Channel Row (now North Brunswick Street), close to which he rented a small dwelling house. His building of the chapel can be dated at least as early as 1716, and some rudimentary form of community life is traceable to 1714. Indeed, a chalice bearing the name of Father M. King, O.P., and dated January, 1707, is still in use at St. Saviour's. These dates have great significance, for the closer one gets to the opening of the century the more lively does the persecution become. The arrest of the Provincial and his companion and their transportation, two years

after the opening of the chapel shows the courage Father MacEgan had in opening it at all.

THE CHAPEL

Later Priors improved the chapel and we are fortunate that a government official has left us a detailed description of it as it stood in 1745:

". . . it was rebuilt as tis now by contributions gathered by Christopher Dillon, prior of the said house, and partly by a benefaction of Michael Shea, a conventual of the same. It has since been repaired and improved by the solicitations of Terence Reilly, Lawrence Richardson, John Fottrel, Dom. Shanley, expriors. The altar makes a grand appearance, partly gilded and partly painted, the pillars are lofty, the altar-piece a large painting of the Crucifixion. Besides other pieces there was the taking down of the Saviour from the cross, the Nativity of Christ, the Assumption, St. Michael fighting the dragon, and St. Dominic receiving the Rosary from the Virgin Mary. Before the altar, which is always well adorned with tapers, hangs a silver lamp, and a plate of silver hangs upon the tabernacle door. Near the pulpit the Lord Kingsland has a large pew on which is his coat of arms. There is a convenient sacristy, several pews and two galleries, in the lower of which are the confessionals, in the upper the choir. The devotion of the Rosary is much used here, an essay on which has been published by Father Richardson a conventual of this house, where six friars are commodiously lodged, who have a superior, also kitchen and a servants' room".

Some of the pictures listed in this description can probably be identified with pictures still in St. Saviour's, particularly a pair on wood, the Nativity and the Deposition from the Cross. Two large altar-pieces of the Crucifixion and of St. Dominic receiving the Rosary are in the present sacristy. Notice the absence of pews for the majority of the congregation. Lord Kingsland had had a chaplain from the community from 1720 and his family were closely linked with the nuns of Channel Row. The Father Richardson mentioned in the account was a man of the same stature as Father MacEgan. Both were Dublinmen, were educated in Louvain, were great preachers, and finally bishops. Father Richardson differed by being also a writer. His "Essay on the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary" appeared in 1736, "The Manner of Hearing Mass Etc." in 1746, and two shorter works on the Holy Name Confraternity in 1748 and '49. The diocese of Kilmore was under his charge for only five years when he died "broken not by age but by labour for his diocese". He was a kindly studious man whom we can picture visiting his flock in the roadless wilds of Cavan and Monaghan, plodding along on his grey mare, dressed in blue coat and black waist-coat and breeches.

All this while, of course, bishops and friars did not, legally, exist. They were known, but ignored by the authorities, partly because they were despised, partly because they could not be stopped. The friars generally kept out of the public eye, doing nothing to attract unfavourable attention. Sermons were not preached during parliamentary sessions, if indeed the insignificant chapels opened their doors at all. In 1735 the Prior of Dublin resisted a Provincial who tried to introduce choral office and common refectory; it would be, he claimed, "unheard of and dangerous". A year later the Provincial briefly noted of St. Saviour's: "Do not hold refectory. Archives there. No cubicles for half the community. Serve the chapel well". The bald, clipped phrases catch something of the sadly pruned quality of conventual life at the time. Gradually, however, the tension relaxed until in the 1760s some Orders of friars held processions of the Blessed Sacra-

ment again about the streets. A new spirit of tolerance asserted itself, particularly under Lord Chesterfield's administration. On being awakened one morning with the cry "The papists are rising", he answered, "So am I". For him the most dangerous of the papists was Miss Ambrose, one of the Castle beauties. But every so often mounting fears of a Stuart rising would trigger off sharp reprisals of which the last has been recorded by Father Burke, an eye-witness. It was the year 1744.

"On Saturday, February the 17th, alderman William Aldrich went secretly with his sheriffs to the parish church of St. Paul's on the north side of the city, in which I then served as curate. There he found on the altar Father Nicholas English, a secular priest of Dublin, who had scarcely finished reading the Preface. Aldrich forced him to come off the altar and unvest, and sent him off to prison in a public carriage. Off he went then to the Dominican nuns in the same parish where he seized two chaplains, Dominic Kelly, O.P. of Roscommon and Thomas Nolan, O.P. of Gola, putting them into a second coach to be carried likewise to prison. I could easily have been captured instead of Father English, for I was in the habit saying the 9 o'c. Mass there and he the 10 o'c. However, a few days before we had exchanged Masses at his urgent request, and so he, not I was arrested on the altar. Meanwhile all the priests, secular and regular, hid themselves, changing residence at once; except for one Franciscan, Michael Lynch, who was arrested and jailed while still debating whether to leave his house or not". Crowds of clerics poured into Dublin from the country, hoping to hide themselves more successfully in the city than they could at home. Large rewards were offered for their apprehension, ranging from £50 for a mere priest to £200 for information leading to the conviction of those who harboured a bishop. "While the persecution raged the faithful were deprived of Mass even on Sundays and feastdays. Some heard Mass in caves. In Dublin Mass was offered in stables and other secluded places, until as John Fitzgerald (a priest of Meath) was offering the Sacrifice for a full congregation at the top of a condemned house, just as he had given the blessing and the people rose to their feet, the floor fell in. The priest and nine people, men and women, were killed; many were fatally injured. After that the Lord Lieutenant with his council and magistrates silently changed their tactics, preferring the chapels to be open than that the citizens should all be killed. And so the chapels of Dublin opened for St. Patrick's Day, 17th of March, and have never been closed since".

Father Thomas Burke

Father Burke was the greatest, certainly the best known, of the Dublin Dominicans of any period. As a boy he had seen priest catchers stoned through the streets by angry crowds, and witnessed the arrest and transportation of the Dominican Provincial and his companion in 1718. He was a great theologian, canonist, historian and bishop. The *Hibernia Dominicana*, as much a history of the Irish Church as of his Order, won him the well deserved fame he still enjoys. He ruled the See of Ossory for seventeen years from a small thatched cottage in Kilkenny and he died in 1776, having insisted, despite the great heat of that summer, on hearing the confessions of enormous crowds, flocking to the cathedral for the Jubilee Indulgence. Under the strain and heat the old bishop of sixty-seven collapsed and died. Alone, and with a vision greater than that of his times he put on record the story of Ireland's struggle for the faith, and collected, as far as he could, the scattered annals of the Dominican Province.

Church Devotions

In the story of Dominican Dublin devotion to the Holy Name and to the Rosary takes the centre of the stage for the eighteenth

century. Father Laurence Richardson and the earlier writer Father Edmund Burke were joined later in their literary labours by Father John O Connor, also of the Dublin convent. All three combined to leave a goodly store of manuals in support of the confraternities, which never before and rarely since have thrived so well as they did in Bridge Street. Father Edmund Burke, the earliest on the scene, brought out "*The Rosaries of the Name of Jesus and B. Virgin Mary*" bearing the imprint "Louvain: 1725" and including three letters on apologetical topics. Thanks to Father Thomas Burke (the historian) we know that this book was, in fact, published in Dublin, despite the danger involved for printer and author. Even thirty years later Father Thomas Burke's own book (*Hibernia Dominicana*) though published in Kilkenny, had to bear a false imprint.

THE ROSARY

Another Rosary book came from the pen of Father Richardson in 1736, while yet a third, by an English Dominican, Father Clarkeson, was reprinted in Dublin in 1788. Nowadays we have only one prayer to close the recitation of the Rosary. In 1725 Father Burke had one for every mystery, with "meditations" differing widely from those in use today. The language is high-flown and ornamental but one at least merits reproduction. We may take the *Annunciation* as a sample.

MEDITATION: Contemplate here the immense charity of the immortal God who to deliver mortals from the slavery of the devil and pains of hell becomes miserable and mortal as man, and to beat down the mountains of our pride descends from the highest throne of His celestial empire to this valley of tears, assuming human nature in the sacred womb of the blessed Virgin by the operation of the Holy Ghost; to which end the angelical embassy is despatched by God, delivered by the Arch-angel Gabriel and received by the B. Virgin. He salutes her, full of grace, Mother of Jesus, blessed amongst women, and elected vessel of our Redemption; notwithstanding which (though a dignity almost infinite) yet, with humility without parallel she answers "Behold the handmaid of the Lord".

PRAYER: O Holy Mary Mother of God by the high mystery of the Incarnation of our

Monstrance (1772) and Chalice (1778) from the Bridge Street days. The monstrance is that still in general use in St. Saviour's, but the Cross is a later addition.

Lord Jesus Christ thy Son by which our salvation was so happily begun, obtain for us by thy intercession grace for the future, to be perfectly disengaged from all worldly disturbances and alluring charms and enable us to conceive Jesus in the chaste embraces of our loving souls, nourish Him with the tender affection of our innocent hearts, and bring Him forth by the fervent acts of our inflamed love to God; that so we may firmly believe and daily reap the fruit of so great a mystery. Amen".

THE HOLY NAME

The confraternity of the Holy Name was not, meanwhile, neglected. Father Burke's book of 1725 and Father Richardson's of 1748 were supplemented in 1772 by Father John O Connor with his "*Essay of the Rosary and Sodality of the Holy Name of Jesus*". One historian of Georgian Dublin has referred to the prevalence of oaths and profanity among the lower classes as though it were whimsical and amusing. Father O Connor did not take that unreal view: "Such abominable oaths, imprecations and blasphemies are to be heard in the fish and meat markets; at the Market-house, Smithfield, public stands, etc., as are sufficient to strike the hearer with horror, on the one hand and amazement on the other, that the vengeance of God does not fall on their guilty souls and plunge them into endless misery. If they follow business, every sentence they utter, every assurance they give, must be upheld and enforced by an oath; as if they could not vend their wares or transact their business without prophaning God's Holy Name and selling their souls to the devil". He offers some examples too of the sort of thing to be heard: "God d—n me, I am glad to see you" and so on. By encouraging devotion to the Holy Name over the last two hundred years the friars have persistently and tenaciously improved the moral fibre of the people of Dublin, weakened and debased as it was by the denial of education in Penal times. It is they, not (despite their fine houses) the drunken squires of St. Stephen's Green, who are the heroes of Georgian Dublin.

Father O Connor gives us some idea of the popularity of the devotion. "The city of Dublin can certify what prodigious crowds resort to the chapel of St. Dominic on the second Sunday of every month, on every evening during Lent, etc., but more especially on the first day of the new year, on which the principal solemnity of the sacred institution is celebrated. What a multitude of penitents approach the sacraments, humbly confessing their sins, and most devoutly receiving the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. What an edifying sight, to behold multitudes of sinners who were unhappily addicted to the damnable vices of blasphemy, cursing, and prophane swearing, crowding the tribunal of confession, penitently confessing their crimes . . ." On every morning of the week, before first Mass at six o'clock, the Rosary, either of the Bl. Virgin or of the Holy Name, was recited in the chapel. It was recited also before noon on Sundays, feastdays, and the weekdays of Lent.

Before leaving the Bridge Street chapel it may be well to give some idea of its location. Cook Street, now almost totally demolished runs at right-angles to Bridge Street, and the little chapel stood, not on either street, but in a courtyard at the junction of two lanes leading onto each. A block of flats erected in memory of Oliver Bond the patriot, who lived in Bridge Street, now occupies the site. The original fabric of the chapel, altered and improved by its earlier Priors, was substantially remodelled in 1767 and ready by 1771. The builders proudly agreed that it "far surpassed in beauty and in strength any in the city" and termed it "very elegant". Father O Connor's fine gold monstrance, bought to dignify the occasion, is still in use in St. Saviour's. We must take these

Paintings which hung in the Bridge Street Chapel.
Left: The Nativity; Right: Deposition from the Cross

appraisals of the chapel with more than a grain of salt; realise at least that they are purely relative praise. In 1846 the same building was thus described, "extremely small, dark, and badly ventilated, situated in an obscure alley, a filthy lane immediately behind the very sanctuary, surrounded on the other sides by warehouses and stores; the noise, confusion, and ribaldry of idle assemblies in the courtyard almost mingling with and disturbing the words of the Holy Sacrifice". From this spot the Dominican Fathers emigrated in 1780 to the northern side of the city, leaving their new chapel to the diocesan clergy of St. Audoen's. Until 1846 it served as the parish church, the second Dominican chapel to do so. Perhaps the area was too cramped, the chapels too close; perhaps they realised that the dawn had come, and that the Catholics might now creep from their ghetto, away from the overbearing bulk of Christ Church on the hill above. Whatever the reason, the Dominican friars crossed the Liffey once again, never to return, and found accommodation in Little Denmark Street, a highly respectable area.

Bridge Street—". . . the altar-piece a large painting of the Crucifixion".

Emancipation: 1780-1861

Dan O'Connell's Bell

"When he had won Emancipation, Daniel O'Connell was so much honoured and beloved that all the Catholics were delighted to see him. And when his carriage passed through the streets of Dublin, the coachman seated on the box carried this little bell and now and then rang it (for instance at the corner of the street) in order to let the people know the Liberator was coming. The bell was given by the coachman's granddaughter, who knew its history, to Brother Patrick MacGee, O.P., about 1910".

—From the notes of Father Reginald Walsh, O.P., who was more than once told by his mother that she often heard the bell rung.

The Catholic relief acts of 1778 and the years following resembled in effect, if not in intention, the release by Communists of a brainwashed prisoner. The Church did not walk strongly into the light of freedom; she staggered, exhausted by the long, unequal struggle. The Catholic gentry, by and large, had apostasised for land and social standing; the poor were ignorant with an uncouth inherited ignorance, three generations old; the endowments of the Church were, as now, the pennies of the poor; and, worst of all, her members had a slave mentality. "They would scarce dare to look a Protestant in the face", declared John Keogh in 1806, "and they had not courage to walk upright and erect as other men, they were marked by the timidity and caution of their gait and demeanour; when the meanest Protestant that walked in the street considered himself a divinity when compared to a Catholic". There was, of course, the other side of the picture—that painted by Edmund Rice and his companion heroines, Teresa Mulally, Nano Nagle, and Catherine MacCauley. But such was the general state of the Church at the time.

The French Revolution

The friars fared even worse. Even the greatest and final act of emancipation left them outside the law. However, their troubles came at first, not from Westminster, but from abroad. Rome had been slow to allow Irish novitiates during the eighteenth century, so that the regulars had houses on the continent for the purpose. The Dominican students were trained, usually, in Rome, Lisbon, or Louvain, all three of which went under in the revolutions which marked the end of that century. No one, as a consequence, was available to replace the older priests as they died off, one by one, and moreover, many of the regular clergy were needed to serve in parishes. The Dominicans gradually abandoned their houses in the more remote parts of the country, and by 1800 the ninety-six Fathers in Ireland were concentrated in the larger towns (as they are today) and a full quarter of them were in Dublin. Within the few decades 1790-1830 more than twenty-five members of the Order acted as curates and parish priests in the Dublin diocese, so that it was said that there

were Dominican parish priests all the way from Dublin to Drogheda.

Missions to America

A second effect of the worsening conditions was the exodus of many Fathers to America. Father Arthur O Leary, the Capuchin political worker for Catholic rights, expressed the opinion of many in a letter of 1782. "There has been a settled plan these many years past to banish the regulars from the kingdom . . . it has been renewed five years ago . . . The Church has been persecuted from the beginning in some part or other and will be to the end of time, and it is in trials that the Christian is to show his constancy. Any young man then that has a vocation for the priesthood should be encouraged in it. If after his studies he is persecuted here there are other places where he can work in the Lord's vineyard. America will soon be open to the whole world. Thousands of Catholic families will want chaplains, and if one formed an establishment there he could soon invite some of his brethren to his assistance. Thus we can gain ground in one place when we lose it in another".

Somewhat in the same spirit at least six, perhaps ten or more, of the Dublin community left for Canada and the United States. Without exception they were excellent priests, learned and courteous. Father William V. O Brien, an example of the rest, worked for seventeen years in Dublin (1770-1787), spending his later years in New York and New Jersey where he died. During the plagues of 1795, '98, '99, 1800, and 1805, he remained bravely in New York city, hearing the confessions of the dying. Amongst his achievements was the founding of St. Peter's free school, the first of the kind in New York. Fathers William V. Harold and John Albert Ryan, a most distinguished pair, went out to Philadelphia for two long periods in the early nineteenth century. There they played a strenuous but unrewarding part in the work of the diocese, being unfortunately involved in trustee troubles between the bishop and laity, and had to return. While in the States Father Harold wrote many controversial pamphlets on these disputes. Then there was Father Thomas Carbery, in the estimation of his superiors "a priest of the utmost integrity and learning, full of zeal for the salvation of souls". He worked in New York from 1815 to 1822, having spent much of his early life in Dublin. Father Charles Dominic French was a convert, brother of the last Warden of Galway, whose ministry, for no less than forty years, was conducted in the snows of Canada and the northern States, 1812-51. During the years 1801-12 he too worked as a young priest in Dublin.

The United Irishmen

At least two more of these neo-exiles were such by necessity, Father James Bushe and Father Bartholomew Augustine MacMahon. The one was listed in the act of banishment in 1798, and the other had to leave the country because of his membership of the United Irishmen. The reports of the government spies of the period, now published, throw an amusing and instructive light on the Denmark Street community. Eleven priests in the convent are listed, divided almost equally into two groups according to their political tendencies. Six, headed by the Prior, are labelled "Democrats", meaning that they favoured the independence movement, while the other five are "of moderate principles". Another note tells us that "a party of priests, MacMahon of Denmark Street at their head, meet once or twice a week at Herbert's Tavern" Clontarf. Father MacMahon must have been a particularly enthusiastic republican for the spies reported that he was "both active and successful". On the day after the outbreak of the rising the priests "are now flying in all directions—a whole covey has sprung from Denmark Street friary". And

well they might. Many a priest, innocent of any political activities, was whipped or shot merely for looking his accusers in the face. Father MacMahon escaped to New York within the year, dying there of yellow fever in June, 1800. Father Bushe was not so fortunate. Arrested in the courtyard of the friary, he was transported to Botany Bay, never to be heard of again. Years later Father Conway wrote in his memoirs: "I saw many years ago a nephew of his who had a marble yard in Westland Row. He brought to Denmark Street a breviary or diurnal which he told us his uncle had, saying his Office in a small court before the church in Denmark Street. The book must have been thrown out of his hand—he was arrested by soldiers or police on the charge of having relations with the United Irishmen of 1798. From mere suspicion, for which there were no grounds, he was transported to Botany Bay". Although that breviary was preserved in the community until at least as late as 1912 it can no longer be certainly identified.

Archbishop Troy

So far we have concentrated on the darker side of the story, and that is necessary, for the story is mainly dark. It had, however, its brighter side. For much of the period, from 1786 to 1823, Dr. Troy, a Dominican and a Dublin man, was archbishop of the diocese. Although keeping severely aloof from the convent to which he had come to join the Order, his presence was an encouragement and a consolation to the Fathers during these difficult years. Because of his loyalist stand in 1798 and 1803 the good man has been much maligned by those who prefer force to legal appeal, but it may yet be appreciated that he did the better and only possible thing. He was a very learned, conscientious, quiet man, who held to his principles and suffered for them.

Preachers

Although low in numbers, the Order still produced effective preachers, and in the person of the young convert Father Thomas Augustine Clarke, Dublin was fortunate in having one of the most popular preachers of the time. His father, a military officer, was so violently prejudiced against the Church, that his son (a student of divinity at Trinity) when drawn towards the true faith, had to leave home for his personal safety. Deep friendship with a playmate drew him to follow that friend into the Dominican Order, and the two, Father Cunningham and Father Clarke, returned after their studies to Dublin. Finding the work in Denmark Street too limited in scope for his energies, Father Clarke served as curate for seven years in the parish of St. Mary until his early death in 1809. The newspaper reports of his life and funeral can find no superlatives too extreme to praise him. "His compassion for the poor often left him without necessaries; his zeal to instruct was manifested by the most unremitting attention to this department; and his great powers of oratory were directed against vice wherever it appeared; rich men heard from him no qualification of rebuke. His ability in controversial learning far exceeded what could be expected from the shortness of the time which intervened between his conversation and his death". He was "the great ornament of the Irish Church", "whose death excited so much sympathy in this great metropolis, such as we never before witnessed on the death of any person in any rank of life". The magazines went so far in their enthusiasm as to print "Elegaic Lines" in which the young preacher was extolled as "the orphan's advocate" who "poured in the church his logic thunders loud". One couplet of this well intentioned doggerel deserves quotation as an example of the whole and as giving an inkling of his talents.

"His sermons ever nervous, bold, and grand,
Upheld fair virture's mirror to our view,
His every touch displayed the master's hand,
And robed the vices in their blackest hue".

Tomb of Dr. John Thomas Troy, O.P., Pro-Cathedral, Dublin.

Father Conway, himself a Dublin man, noted afterwards: "I heard it said when I was quite a child, that the day of Father Clarke's funeral there was not a vehicle to be got, so great was the funeral. He was buried at Mulhuddart, some six or seven miles from Dublin on the Meath road". Elsewhere the same writer admits that until Father Russell, some sixty years later, no other Dominican preacher held so securely the affections of the Dublin public.

THE HAROLDS

As the years from 1800 to 1840 drew slowly by the strength of the Province flagged until it numbered scarcely forty souls, as few perhaps as in the worst days of Elizabeth. And yet, providentially, the few who remained were, by and large, priests of ability, learning, and courtesy above the average. Father William V. Harold and his young nephew Father William Dominic Harold are particularly noteworthy. Both were of Naas, relatives of that other Father Harold, parish priest of Rathcoole, who was exiled to Australia after the rebellion. The Older Father Harold was a distinguished and able man of varied experience. With Father Ryan he spent many years in the United States, and on their return after the first period of their work there, both collaborated in a school at Merrion, and later again in a

novitiate and studentate for the Order in Lisbon. Several times in the first half of the century Father William V. Harold was Prior of the Denmark Street convent, and for one term Provincial, at the request of the Master General. He took part in the collections for the present St. Saviour's, dying in retirement with the Corbett family of Churchtown while building was still in progress. His nephew, also of the convent (1826-28), gave great satisfaction although so young, but did not live to fulfil his great promise, dying of consumption at the age of twenty-nine. Having caught a chill on a sick-call at night he took no care of himself but worked and heard confessions as usual. The surviving accounts of his death strike an unusually vivid and inspiring note in the dusty records of the community, which for that period are particularly sparse. "For some time before his death like St. Augustine, he was unwilling to receive visits which might distract his thoughts from God; and since his death Mr. Harold says that he is surprised at what is said by the poor of his charities . . . His death was most edifying. He kept his attention constantly directed to God, calling on Him not to spare him here but to spare him eternally . . . his eyes . . . all through his long agony . . . were never turned away from a crucifix". Father Raymond Griffith, another Dominican of the time, acted as curate in the city, where he was among those heroic priests and nuns tending the sick in the cholera epidemics of the early century. In 1837 he was consecrated in the Townsend Street chapel as Vicar Apostolic of the Cape of Good Hope, being the first bishop ever sent to that country. His letters from the colony reveal how this lone priest from Dublin founded the Church in South Africa. His mission stations were hundreds of miles apart; to reach them he had to swim his horse across deep rivers in tropical heat. But when he died, more than twenty years later he had laid the foundations of future development, and given his present successors in the diocese every reason to revere his memory.

Bloomfield College

Father Harold's college for secondary education at Bloomfield, Merrion was an answer to two needs. For the boys it provided a first class Catholic education not easily obtainable elsewhere in Ireland. For the Order it supplied in some measure for the lack of an Irish novitiate, in the sense that it brought boys of a suitable type into contact with the Order, gave them the schooling which was an essential condition of admittance into it, and ensured that the boys sent abroad for their religious training would be well known to the Fathers. Unfortunately, after a brief life of two or three years, it failed. A sermon preached on the consecration of some bishops in Townsend Street by Father Ryan, a member of the staff, was mischievously misinterpreted by some sections of the Press as "Vetoist", i.e. in favour of allowing the British government a veto on the appointment of bishops. Whether right or wrong, the parents of the boys withdrew their children and the staff dispersed. Daniel O Connell had nephews at the school. The great stone gates still stand directly opposite the new church in Merrion, and the careful observer can make out the faded name "Bloomfield" on either side. In all fairness to the priests of vision who founded it, we must record that it had, considering its brief life span, some most distinguished pupils, particularly Dr. Leahy, O.P. of Dromore, and that the idea of the college persisted until 1856 when it was re-embodied, so to speak, in Newbridge, Co. Kildare, under the same title and patronage, that of St. Thomas.

A Tertiary Community

Yet another enterprise was that of the male tertiary monastery in Fairview, the main source of information on which is a letter of complaint from the Provincial to

the Master General. In 1819, it seems, a very good and pious man, James Young, received the habit of the Order and gave his considerable wealth for the support of this monastery. He built a chapel and school in which poor children were taught and, occasionally, provided with clothes. Not only that but a chaplain, provided by the Order, was paid £20 a year with his keep. For four happy years Mass was offered, sermons preached, confessions heard, and catechism taught in the chapel until, on an evil day, the parish priest returned from an absence of some years in France. This priest, a Father Long, saw to it that the little chapel was closed in 1823, despite two archbishops, Dr. Troy and Dr. Murray, who wished to protect the brothers but would not cross Father Long. Whatever was the outcome of this impasse, there is a record of a chaplain appointed to the community in 1832. After that the tertiary monastery of Fairview appears no more.

Denmark Street

Denmark Street today still preserves the facade of the friary church. The building (though altered interiorly out of all recognition) now houses St. Saviour's National Schools. The front of the old church, in cold grey granite, stands within a small railed courtyard, with the words SANCTO SALVATORI SACRUM in bold letters cut across the stone under the architrave. At first sight one would imagine that such was the appearance of the building in 1780; that the friars had grasped the opportunity to face their new chapel boldly onto a public street. In cold fact what is visible now dates only from 1835. The older fabric did not directly face the street. The church, with its tiny courtyard, hid behind a house under which one approached the chapel. Before this covering house was yet a second small court bounded on the side nearest the street by a high wall broken by three wooden gates. To the right of this front court was a row of trees; to the left stood a second house at right angles to the first, also community property. From the street one saw nothing to indicate that within was the House of God.

The changes of 1835 were dictated by absolute necessity; by the early death of more than one priest from consumption. The friary was a ramshackle, unhealthy pile, having no air from the back or from one side. "We shall commence to build a splendid front to our chapel and also a new dwelling house", wrote one of the Fathers to a friend in Lisbon, "we have weekly collections regularly established. Mr. Dempsey and White are out every day collecting for the purpose. Mr. Dempsey is the most indefatigable being I have ever known, all zeal and activity". In May of the same year, 1835, another Father wrote a letter which gives the most exact details of the new plan. "The altar of their church is resting against the back walls of their house; that house is to be thrown down. The walls of the church are to be continued and ten feet more of their yard are to be taken in, so that the front of their church will look towards the gate of Denmark Street and be ten feet closer to it than the front of the old house: the front will be of cut stone but simple. The new house will be on the site of the old one that was on the left hand side as you go in, but it will be twelve or fourteen feet deeper and about six feet broader . . . It is to be four storeys in height and contain apartment for eight persons, each being provided with two rooms. They are to give £1,700 for the building of the house and church, and they have stipulated that it must be terminated next May. They have collected £1,000: two storeys of their house is built and the front of their church and the side wall are raised about four feet". So much detail may be tedious but the opportunity of preserving this letter, unnoticed until now, should not be lost.

Denmark Street Chapel, now St. Saviour's National Schools. The building on the left was the Priory and, later, the Orphanage.

CONFRATERNITIES

Of the confraternities established, either in the first Denmark Street chapel or the second, we have no information except the fragmentary reminiscences of Father Conway. We may take it that the Holy Name Confraternity and that of the Holy Rosary thrived as they had in Bridge Street and that the tertiaries were in evidence too, but Father Conway mentions yet two more. "A most efficient Christian Doctrine Society was attached to church, which had no connection with the Rosary Confraternity. To it, after a time, was associated the Evening Office Society". The members of this second group recited Vespers and Compline of the Divine Office together on every day of the year, with Office of the Dead, and Matins on the greater feasts, having "the lower part of the church arranged in a most conventual way, with lectern and lights, according to the feasts". It was composed, generally, of young men and grown boys, tradesmen, clerks, shop-assistants, who came together after work, singing the hymns and psalms of the Church's prayer far into the night. With the doors of the church closed they would continue singing, often until eleven o'clock. Also in Denmark Street, in Chapel Lane, beside the friary, was the orphanage, from its beginning in a few converted stables in 1780 until its unknown date of removal to Jervis Street after the collapse of Bloomfield *c.* 1817. A classical day school was opened in Denmark Street for the remaining pupils, which probably occupied the abandoned orphanage premises.

For a full eighty years the Dominican Fathers lived and worked in this now decayed part of Dublin, biding their time and faithfully carrying out their allotted work until the strength of the Order returned. Over many centuries they had known all the twists of fate, prosperity and persecution, and survived the dangers of both. Thanks to the care of God and to the generosity of the Dublin people they had fought the good fight and, surely, gained the crown. This short record of their achievement is written in their honour, asking their blessing and prayers for St. Saviour's and its people in the centuries ahead.

Chalice which Father White had specially made for the dedication of the church. It was consecrated on 1st January, 1861 by Pope Pius IX and used at Mass by His Holiness the same day.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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HUGH FENNING, O.P.

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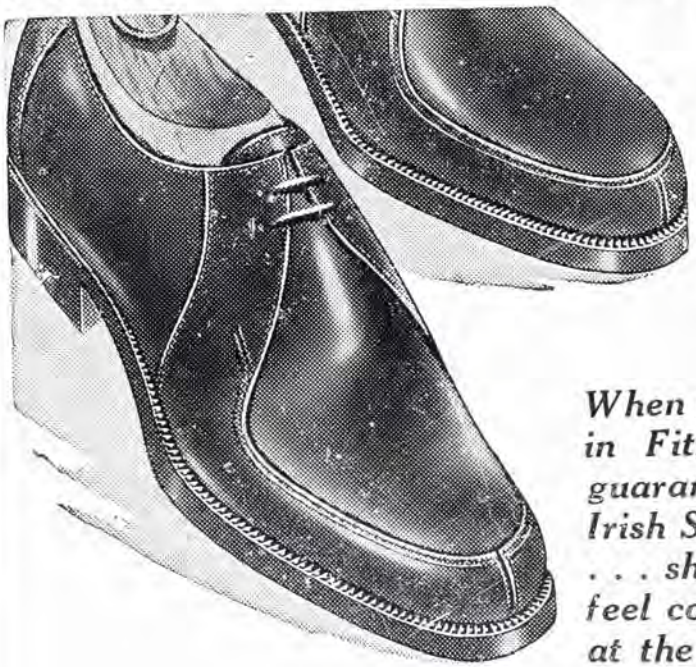

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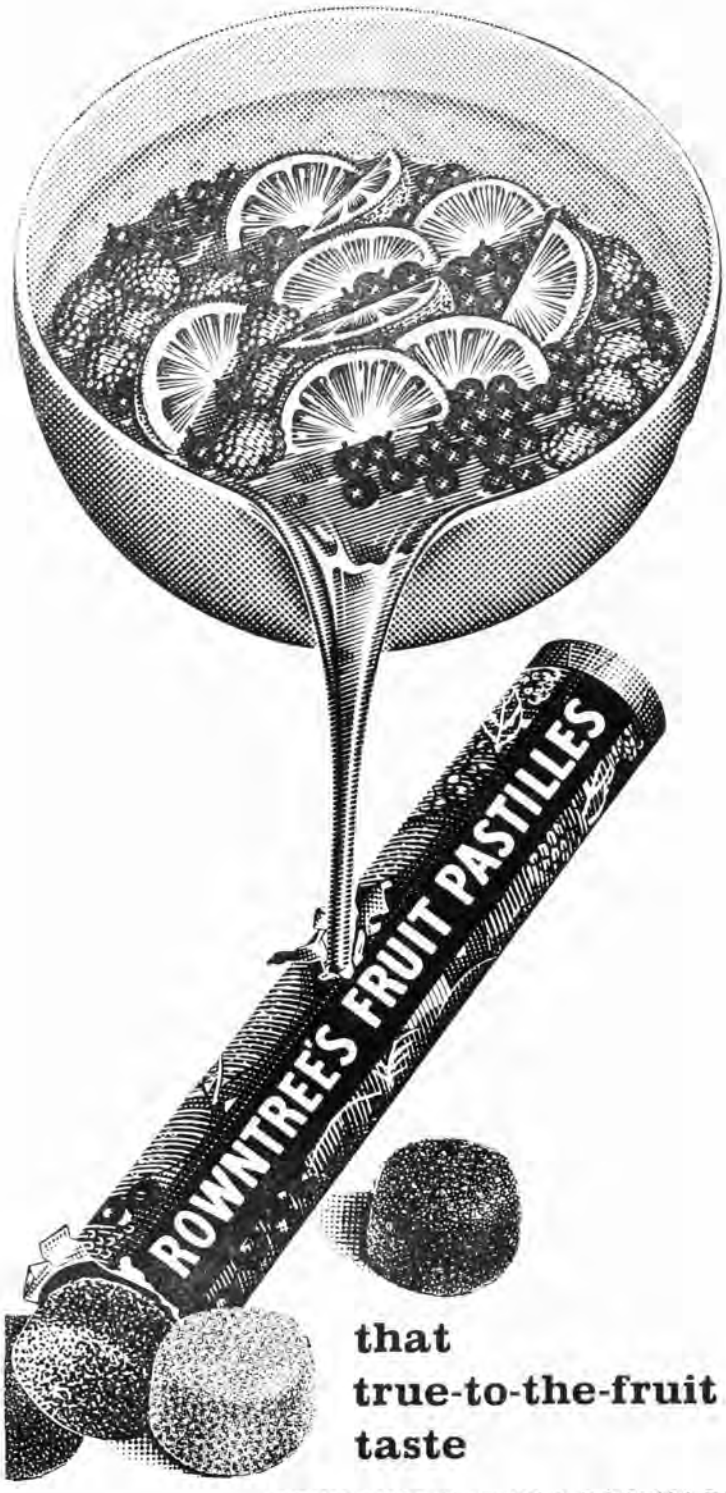

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