



*the Dominicans*  
*in*  
*Kerry*

1243 – 1987





# Editor's Note

*This booklet is not intended to be a history of the Dominicans in Tralee. It merely draws attention to their contribution to the religious life of the people of Kerry over a period of more than seven hundred years.*

*It highlights the way they survived persecution and massacre, and its publication coincides with the unveiling of a Dominican memorial on the site where communities of Holy Cross lived for four hundred years – from 1243 until the desecration of the priory by Cromwellian soldiers in 1652.*

*The Dominicans stayed on in Kerry – scattered here and there – and the modern Holy Cross in Day Place began to take shape in 1861 after Bishop David Moriarty formally restored the community to Tralee.*

*This booklet is by way of acknowledgement, as is the memorial on the old Abbey site, of the constant and sometimes heroic support of the Dominicans for the people of Tralee and Kerry.*

**Séamus McConville.**  
**August 1987.**

Cover Design:  
**Eileen McSweeney.**



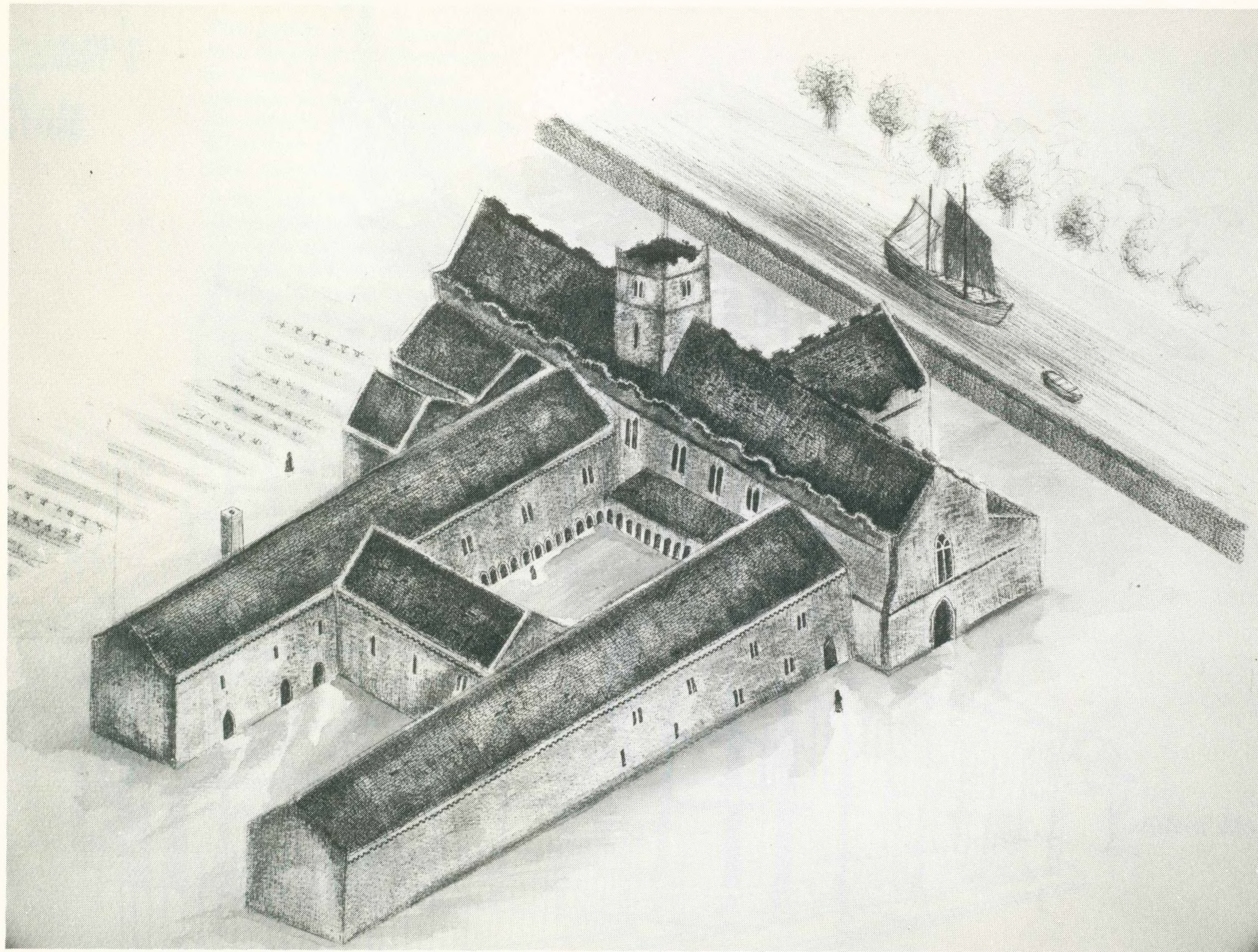
JOSEPH DUNN OF



*Holy Cross Priory and Church, Tralee.* (Line drawing by Paddy O'Donnell.)

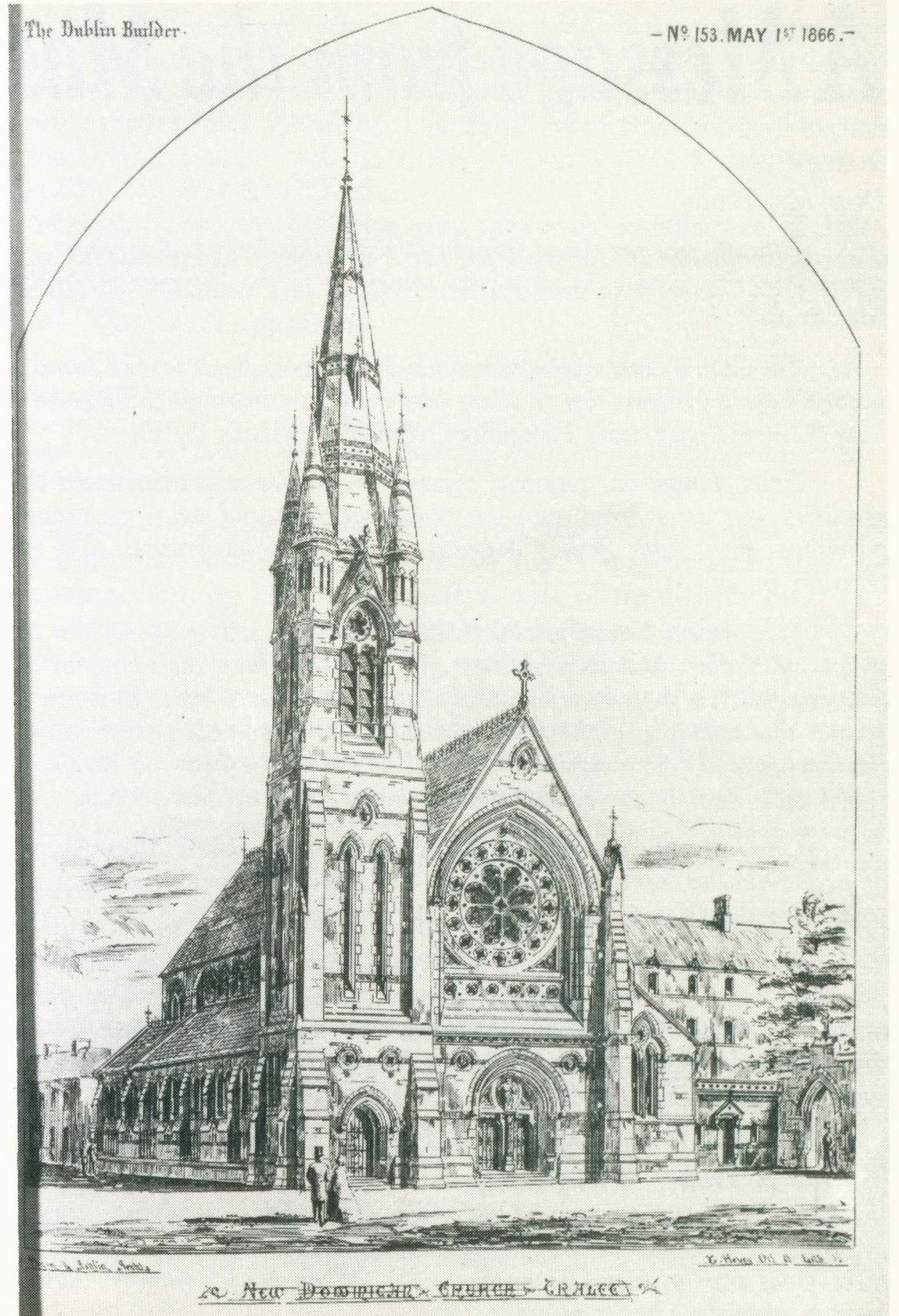
Paddy O'Donnell  
21. 6. 87.





*Artist Jim Langton's impression of the medieval Abbey of Holy Cross in Tralee.  
(Courtesy of AnCO.)*





*Holy Cross Church — as it was originally intended to look.  
Lack of funds prevented the erection of the spire.*



# A Message from the Master General

Dear Mr. Editor,

*I thank you for the invitation to write this foreword to your commemorative booklet marking the unveiling of the Dominican Abbey Memorial.*

*The Dominican connection with Tralee goes back to 1243 and it has been a very particular one in that, like the Franciscans in Killarney, we have been the only male Religious Order of Priests in the town.*

*Even though our physical presence in Tralee was interrupted for two centuries, our association with the people was not and when circumstances permitted, they, with Bishop Moriarty and his priests, ensured that we would return.*

*The present beautiful church of Holy Cross was provided for us by the people of Tralee. But their greatest gift to us has been their support and friendship down the centuries. Truly we have received more than we have given. The example of the faith and sacrifices of countless men and women has strengthened our faith and inspired many young men and women to spend their lives in the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad.*

*One has only to think of the example of Thaddeus Moriarty in times of persecution at home or of Dominic O'Daly in Lisbon ensuring a supply of priests for the Irish Church and for our Province.*

*In our own days, the Irish Province has had many outstanding preachers, scholars and missionaries who came from Tralee. One need only mention the late Bishop Fitzgerald, Auxiliary in Port of Spain, or the distinguished Prefect of the Vatican Library, Father Leonard Boyle, to underline this point.*

*The service we have been able to give the Church, through our presence in Tralee, as religious, preachers and educators, is complemented by the presence of our Sisters in Oak Villa. Their lives as religious and their provision of a home for the elderly enables us, as a family, to answer the three great cries of Saint Dominic – for the needy, for sinners, those who need to hear the Gospel message.*



*Father Damien Byrne, OP.*

*The Dominican Order is grateful to the present generation of Tralee people, to its priests and Bishop, as well as to those who have gone before us 'marked with the sign of faith' for the opportunity of being part of your lives for seven hundred years.*

*In its name, I thank you and I am grateful to all those who have been responsible for the memorial initiative, particularly the members of the Dominican Memorial Committee, AnCO, and the members and officials of Tralee Urban District Council.*

**Father Damian Byrne, OP,**  
*Master of the Order.*



# The New Holy Cross

John Griffin

THE restoration of the Dominicans to Tralee had its origins in the great Parish Mission of 1854, conducted by the Dominican Fathers in Saint John's, at the invitation of Dr. David Moriarty, the then recently-appointed Parish Priest and Co-Adjutor Bishop.

Following the mission, hopes were raised that the Order might return to re-establish its ancient priory in Tralee. John Mulchinock, the great benefactor of the Church and uncle of the famous song writer, vowed to bequeath the remainder of his family fortune to facilitate their return. However, he died before his wish could be fulfilled.

After Dr. Moriarty's transfer to Killarney as Bishop on the death of Dr. Egan in 1856, the first formal invitation was extended to the Dominicans to return. This was declined by the Provincial owing to a shortage of available priests but the Bishop persisted until his request was eventually acceded to.

The Dominicans formally returned to Kerry on 5 April 1861 – a historic day which was celebrated with enthusiasm by the townspeople. The first prior was Father Pius Lynch, OP, a very holy but delicate priest.

For a short period, the Dominicans used a room in their new home, at 1 Day Place, for a chapel. Later they moved to a more spacious building in Godfrey Place (later Latchford's store and now Cameo Bakery). This was a converted slaughterhouse intended only as a temporary church while a site for a new priory was being sought.

In November 1862, Father Lynch was succeeded as prior by Father Thomas Rush, a dynamic priest who quickly endeared himself to the people. Preparations for a new church could now begin in earnest. With the help of two friends of the community, Father Rush obtained a bank loan of £2,000 to purchase the present site at Day Place from Mr. William Denny. He then engaged the professional services of Mr. George Ashlin, RHA, the prominent Gothic-Revival architect, to prepare the plans for a new Church.

Meanwhile, collections for the building fund were organised throughout the town and diocese. The Catholic merchants of Tralee were particularly generous and Mr. Patrick Jeffers, a Kerryman based in Dublin, contributed the princely sum of £500. Father Rush personally undertook a parish to parish collection in the diocese and, in Tralee, a penny-a-week collection was organised by Mr. Robert O'Kelly.

By the end of 1865 the building fund proceeds amounted to £2,100.

Ashlin's plans for the New Holy Cross appeared in the March 1866 edition of *The Dublin Builder*. The design is described as having 'novelty and boldness'. The writer continues:

It is built on a site adjoining the Dominican Convent, with which it will communicate. At the north-west angle there will be a tower and spire to a height of about 120 feet, and the west front will be enriched by an elaborate rose window of excellent detail. The total length is 126 feet, and width, including aisles, 51 ft.; the height from floor to ridge of nave is 56 feet.

The builder is named as Mr. Arthur Crosbie and the cost at about £6,000.

The cornerstone of the building was laid on 15 August 1866, the Feast of the Assumption, by Mrs. Anne Jeffers, wife of the benefactor.

From the beginning, serious difficulties were encountered with the foundations. *The Tralee Chronicle* of the period recalls that 'the trenches and foundations would become submerged by the incoming tide, carrying everything before it and undoing, in a few moments, the work of weeks'.

The contractor eventually overcame the elements by working night and day, and using inverted arches and a new material called concrete. No chances were taken with the tower. The foundations for it were taken down fifteen feet to solid rock. However, lack of funds would eventually prevent its completion.

The Church was solemnly blessed and opened by Most Rev. Dr. David Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry, at a tumultuous ceremony on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 14 September 1871.

Each of the succeeding priors have made their own individual contributions to beautifying the Church. The stained glass windows in the apse were installed by Father Albert Ryan, OP (1891–98); the organ by Father Dominic McCarthy, OP (1898–1904); the mosaic work by Fr. Antonius Kelly, OP (1904–07), and Saint Anne's Chapel was built during the priorship of Father Molloy (1932–38).

Holy Cross took its present form in 1970 when the sanctuary area was adapted for the liturgical changes of Vatican II by Father McArdle, OP.



# *The Dominican Contribution to Kerry*

*Diarmuid Ó Súilleabháin*  
*Bishop of Kerry.*

WHEN Bishop David Moriarty blessed the foundation stone for Holy Cross Church, Tralee, on 15 August 1866, he said: "We are not raising new Churches, properly so called; we are rather restoring the ruins of those that were."

Bishop Moriarty was referring to the former Dominican Priory that stood on the site and the noble tradition that it and its community had left in Tralee and, indeed, throughout the Diocese of Kerry.

In 1221 a number of Dominicans were sent to England with a view to establishing the Order there. One of those was Reginald, a companion of Saint Dominic. It was he who came to Ireland with Maurice Fitzgerald, an ancestor of the Earls of Desmond. Thus began a long association with the Geraldines.

In the beginning, the Dominicans founded their priories along the coast, especially the east coast, e.g. Dublin in 1224 and later Drogheda. Foundations in Kilkenny and Waterford followed.

Holy Cross Priory, Tralee, was founded by John Fitzgerald, who was the fourth Baron of Offaly, and the grandson of Maurice Fitzgerald. Both John and his son, Maurice, were killed in 1261 at the battle of Callan near Kenmare and were buried within the precincts of Holy Cross.

During the following centuries we find that many of the Desmonds were buried in Holy Cross.

Maurice, first Earl of Desmond, was buried in the Dominican Church, Dublin, but was later reinterred in Tralee.

Thomas, Earl of Desmond, who was beheaded in Drogheda in 1467, was brought to Holy Cross for burial.

John, the fourteenth Earl, was a member of the Dominican Order in Tralee

when he acceded to the title of Desmond. He took no part in political matters and died in 1536.

From the beginning, the contribution made by the Dominicans in Kerry has been immense. As early as 1253, we note that Christianus, OP, was appointed Bishop of Ardfert (Kerry). Subsequently, two other Dominicans are listed as having been appointed to the Diocese.

Holy Cross was looked upon as a seat of learning. Many famous priests were associated with it. Father Dominic Rosario O'Daly, a native of Kilsarcon, was one of these. He later founded Corpo Santo and became a distinguished figure on the continent. At one time it was thought that he would be appointed Bishop of Ardfert. Instead, he became Confessor to the Queen of Portugal and, later, was that country's ambassador at the Court of Louis XIV.

Another distinguished Dominican was Father Thaddeus Moriarty who was prior of Holy Cross. It is likely that he was an ancestor of Bishop David Moriarty. Father Thaddeus ministered to the people of Tralee and Miltown in times of persecution. According to tradition, he was arrested celebrating Mass at Poll an Aifrinn, near Milltown, and later hanged at Martyrs' Hill, Killarney.

Although the priory was suppressed by Henry VIII and later burned down during the Desmond wars, the Dominicans continued to work in the Tralee area, preaching and ministering to the people. This they did throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They resided in places of refuge where the people gave them shelter. (This aspect of Dominican history is dealt with in another article.)

When Bishop David Moriarty became Coadjutor Bishop of Kerry in 1854, he took up residence in Tralee. Writing to Father Kirby, at the Irish College, Rome, he said: "I would like to begin my parochial administration with a **grand mission . . .**"

As he had a great regard for the Dominicans, Bishop Moriarty asked them to conduct a month-long mission in the town. Seven Dominicans undertook the task. Their duties commenced at 6.00 a.m. each morning and continued right through the day until 9.00 p.m.

During that time they celebrated Mass, preached, catechised and heard Confessions. Sometimes they were assisted by Bishop Moriarty and fifteen to twenty diocesan priests. It was estimated that over eight thousand people received the sacraments.

Bishop Moriarty, again writing to his friend, Father Kirby, said: "Our people are going on delightfully since the mission of the Dominicans. Most decidedly it is by missions that God wishes to work nowadays."



During the following years, the Dominicans gave missions in different parts of Kerry culminating in Killarney in 1857. There was a very large attendance at the various ceremonies. According to contemporary newspaper accounts, the Cathedral was thronged each day, especially for the final ceremony which included the renewal of the baptismal vows. The scenes witnessed later, when the Dominicans set out for home, were unbelievable as they were escorted to the railway station by the Bishop and thousands of Killarney people.

Bishop Moriarty had one great wish, namely, that the Dominicans would return to Tralee and re-establish Holy Cross Priory. His efforts in 1857 failed, but in 1861 he convinced Father Goodman, the Provincial, who appointed Father Lynch as superior to Tralee.

On 5 April 1861, the Dominicans returned and took up residence at No. 1 Day Place, which Bishop Moriarty had purchased for them. For the first year-and-a-half they used the lower part of the house as a temporary chapel where they celebrated three Masses on Sunday. Then, towards the end of 1862, they acquired an old slaughter-house at the corner of Godfrey Place and converted this into a church.

Bishop Moriarty recalled the event for Father Kirby: "211 years and a fortnight after his (Thaddeus Moriarty) martyrdom, I went from the spot where he was hanged to the very spot where his old Abbey stood – opened with great solemnity the temporary chapel of the new convent of his Order – and used at Mass the Martyr's own chalice."

Father Lynch was succeeded by Father Thomas Rush who immediately undertook the task of rebuilding Holy Cross. He purchased property from William Denny for £2,000. On this site Holy Cross would rise again. Fund-raising began. A local committee organised a penny-a-week collection, while others made substantial contributions.

The foundation stone was blessed on 15 August 1866, and Father Burke, Prior of San Clemente, Rome, preached. The Dominicans were back to stay. Work commenced on the building and when completed in 1871, it had cost £7,000. However, it was, as yet, unfurnished. The solemn dedication of Holy Cross took place on 14 September 1871, the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The altars, a sacristy and the mosaic work were added; Saint Anne's Tertiary Chapel was built in the mid-1930s.

A number of memorable events are recorded in recent times. In 1943, the seventh centenary of the arrival of the Dominicans in Kerry was celebrated and the centenary of their return was recalled in 1961. Both, however, paled when compared with the celebration in 1953 that marked the third centenary of the martyrdom of Father Thaddeus Moriarty. The gathering at Holy Cross was truly impressive. The congregation was lead by Seán T. O'Kelly,



*Diarmuid Ó Súilleabháin, Bishop of Kerry.*

President of Ireland, together with many other distinguished people. Bishops and priests, nuns and brothers, were there in numbers. The special preacher was Dr. P. F. Cremins of Maynooth, a priest of the Kerry Diocese. It was a happy occasion both for the Dominicans and for the people of Tralee.

Since then, in spite of the shortage of priests, the Dominican commitment to Tralee has been unwavering. Their contribution to the spiritual welfare of the people has been greatly appreciated. Holy Cross and the Dominicans are an integral part of the story of the Church in Kerry.



# Tralee Dominicans

## Survival and Service

**Father Myles Nolan, OP.**

IN his definitive *Discovering Kerry*, T. J. Barrington adverts to what he calls a 'most interesting antiquity in Tralee': the ruins of a little church in Rath Cemetery. He comments: "It lost all claim to eminence when the Geraldines established the Dominicans in Tralee in 1243 and chose that priory as their burying place. Nonetheless, it survives even as a ruin when all traces of the Desmonds and their foundation have disappeared from Tralee." *Op. cit.*, pt. 3, n. 224.

The author is certainly correct about the almost complete disappearance of the original Holy Cross Priory. Writing around 1760, de Burgo, who wrote an authoritative history of Irish Dominican priories, describes his own inspection of the site: "Although the church and priory have been completely levelled, still on the site, or in streets nearby, there are still to be seen several burial stones . . ."; a few of which he then describes briefly. Some of these carved stones are now in the garden of the present Holy Cross Priory.

Although several sketches of long vanished Dominican priories in Ireland may be found in Speed's *Theatre of the Empire* (1611), Tralee is not among them. But, as late as 1946, it was claimed that fifteen arch-frames of the old Holy Cross cloisters were visible around Abbey Street. Cf. Hayward R.: *In the Kingdom of Kerry*, pp. 264 sqq.; which contain a sketch of the arches then visible. Whether or not such ruins really were of the long-vanished Dominican Priory, all traces have since disappeared.

More than one observer has commented on the complete disappearance of the first Holy Cross; very few other Dominican foundations in Ireland have been so ruthlessly destroyed. One may surmise that the complete destruction was a deliberate attempt to blot out all memory of the Dominicans and of their Geraldine protectors, as the reformation and the anglicization of Ireland proceeded.

The link between the Geraldines and the Dominicans is clearly stated in one of the earliest accounts of Dominican priories: "In county Kerry is a sea-port called Tralee, where a Dominican abbey was founded in 1243, by John the son of Thomas Fitzgerald, both of whom are buried in the abbey church. From these have sprung the earls of Desmond. . . ." O'Heyne, *Irish Dominicans*, Louvain, 1706.

Both the founding Fitzgerald and his son, Maurice, were killed in fighting the McCarthys; they were buried in the first Holy Cross. Full references are found in de Burgo and also in Coleman, A.: *The Ancient Dominican Foundations in Ireland*, Dundalk, 1902, pp. 64 sqq.

It is a measure of the paucity of records concerning Holy Cross, that de Burgo devotes so much space rather to the Geraldines. But 'the records of this abbey are very scant'. Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

As in many Norman religious foundations, there may have, initially, been some tension between the first Dominican arrivals in Tralee and the Irish, who later sought admittance. All the more so, since the precise juridical position of Dominicans in Ireland, and the degree of independence which they enjoyed, is difficult to disentangle. (For a popular precis of such problems, cf. Pochin-Mould, D.: *The Irish Dominicans*, pp. 18 sqq.). However, tension eased with the gradual assimilation of the Desmonds by the Irish. One of the *de jure* Earls of Desmond, John, died a Dominican in this abbey, a short time before the Christmas of 1536, and was buried there. Cf. Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

There are no records of the work carried on by Tralee Dominicans, during their centuries under Geraldine protection. But it is a reasonable assumption that life followed the general Dominican pattern: prayer in common in a large Dominican church whose characteristic feature must have been suitability for preaching; with decoration a distinctly secondary consideration.

Since Dominicans tended to work from relatively large centres of population, and since Tralee, during those centuries, can hardly be so described, one must suppose that members of the community travelled through the surrounding countryside, to preach, instruct and celebrate Mass.

It is, perhaps, sad that beautiful stories of Dominicans preaching the rosary, which afterwards became so linked with their Order, must be treated as no more than stories. Not until 1598, does there appear the first record of a 'Rosary Confraternity' in Ireland: when the Dominican bishop of Clonfert – which had its own Kerry connections through Saint Brendan – established



the confraternity in his diocese. But the history of the rosary as a prayer pattern, of especial importance in Irish practice, is a complex study. Cf. Warner, M.: *Fairest of All Her Sex*, Picador Books, 1985, pp. 305 sqq. It was certainly not preached from Holy Cross during its early centuries.

Holy Cross Priory provided two bishops of what is now called 'the Diocese of Kerry'; but which was then sometimes named 'the Diocese of Ardfert'. De Burgo records them as 'Christianus' about 1256, and Edmund of Caermarthen, about 1341. The last named shows clearly the Norman-Welsh origin of at least some of the Holy Cross Dominicans.

With the suppression of the monasteries, doubt immediately arises as to how long the Dominicans were allowed to retain possession. The State Papers of the time give no record of the priory or its possessions. But it is clear that, by the 1580s, the abbey buildings were in the possession of Sir Edward Denny, as partial reward for his work at the massacre of Smerwick Harbour. It seems to have been the fate of many religious houses in Munster, then devastated by the Desmond Rebellion, to become a military barracks. Thus, on 29 March 1580, it was reported to the 'Lords and Council in England': "All the country between the earl's house and Tralee was burnt by the rebels, and all the houses in Tralee burnt and the castles razed, saving the abbey. Finding the abbey a very convenient place for a garrison . . . I determined to have one band of horsemen and 300 foot, under Sir William Stantle." Carew Papers: quoted Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

As to the fate of the community during these years, one can only conjecture that the community ceased to exist, with individual Dominicans surviving as best they could. Barrington states, *op. cit.*, III, n. 224, that 'the friars were back in 1622. In 1633, there were twelve Dominicans in Kerry, presumably based on Tralee: they ran a school there at the time'. The 'presumably' is important. There is no mention of a community in Tralee in the Irish Dominican Provincials' accounts of 1622 and of 1629. As for 1633, a letter to Rome does speak of twelve Dominicans in the united Dioceses of Ardfert and Aghadoe, with one – unidentified – priory. However, there is mention in contemporary records of a statue of the Blessed Virgin, which was greatly venerated by the people.

The final destruction of Holy Cross came with Cromwell in 1652. The account of the arrest of Father Thaddeus Moriarty at the Mass rock in Kilcrohane Wood and his subsequent execution in Killarney on 15 October 1653, is well known. So it is mildly surprising to read in Barrington, *op. cit.*, that the martyr's arrest and execution were only 'according to the story'. A booklet printed by *The Kerryman*, on 18 October 1953, is entitled simply:

*A Martyr Commemorated*. It gives an account, in the style of the time, of how that tercentenary was honoured.

Amongst the many Dominicans now scattered from Tralee, was a Father Thomas O'Quirke: 'who was so learned and eminent a preacher' that he was appointed preacher-in-ordinary to the Confederation of Kilkenny, 'amongst whom he glorified God and brought honour to his own Order.' O'Heyne, *op. cit.*, p. 113. Father Daniel – sometimes called Dominic – O'Daly founded the Irish Dominican communities in Lisbon and served in the Portuguese diplomatic service. He was born near Tralee, from a famous bardic family, a background which greatly inspired him in his history of the Desmond Geraldines. On this, presumably, de Burgo relies for his extensive notes on that family.

In O'Heyne's time, the Dominicans of Tralee were widely dispersed. But later, there seems to have been some attempt to form a community near Killarney. In the Lords' Committee Returns of 1731, they are described as 'doing much mischief . . . For they confirm the papists in their superstitions and errors. . . .' Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

Catholic Emancipation brought no restoration of community life to the Dominicans in Tralee. But an invitation to return to the town from the then bishop, Dr. David Moriarty, was accepted on 5 April 1861. The only two Tralee Dominicans mentioned by de Burgo acted as curates in the diocese. Cf. de Burgo, *op. cit.*, p. 240. It is claimed that a Dominican, Father Shine, died in 1827 while parish priest of Brosna, but no authority is given for the claim. Cf. Barrington, *op. cit.*, III, p. 224.

The Dominicans returned to a house in Day Place where a room was fitted up to serve as a chapel. Clearly some sort of school was opened since in the then *Tralee and Killarney Chronicle*, of Tuesday, 4 November 1862, there is a long account of the opening of a temporary chapel, which included 'a procession of the younger students of the Seminary under the care of the Dominican Fathers'. The reporter marvels at how a one-time slaughter-house could have been so rapidly transformed into a chapel 'capable of containing a thousand persons'.

Later, a church was begun, of which the corner stone was laid by Dr. Moriarty on 15 August 1866. There exists a copy of a diary made by Robert O'Kelly, in which he records the efforts made by himself and other collectors, 'and the spontaneous ways in which people gave their pennies'.

The present author can find no confirmation of the assertion made that the foundation stone 'was laid by Edward Mulchinock, brother of the author of the "Rose of Tralee".' Cf. Hayward's *In the Kingdom of Kerry*, p. 260. The design is by George Ashlin, whose partnership with the famous Pugin, built many of Kerry's finest churches. This present Holy Cross was opened



for Mass on 14 September 1871, the Feast of the Holy Cross.

Thus the Dominican priory of Holy Cross in Tralee reflects the history of the times: from Geraldine foundation, through Cromwellian destruction, to Catholic restoration, through the 'pennies of the poor'. Its records, from its earliest centuries, are sparse after so turbulent a history. But survival and service are a true measure of success. In such ways, have the Dominicans of Holy Cross, Tralee, despite long periods of decline and relative inertia, which seemed to threaten final extinction, succeeded.



Some of the men who participated in the volunteer work effort organised by the Dominican Memorial Committee in Dominic Street early in June 1987. From left: Jerry O'Connor (ganger), Anthony Lynch, Tommy Foley, Ted Hennessy, Anthony Moriarty, Daniel Moriarty, Willie Seeler (with hat), Matthew O'Donovan and Joe O'Donovan.

## Treasures of Holy Cross

**The Moriarty Chalice:** This Chalice was given to Father Thaddeus Moriarty, Prior of Holy Cross, in 1651 – two years before his death in Killarney. It came into the possession of Dr. David Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry, who presented it to Holy Cross when the present Church was built. It is a plain silver Chalice, about 7¾ inches high, with a cup of about three inches in diameter. The base is hexagonal. On three of its sides, figures are engraved: the Crucifixion, the Crucified Christ standing on a representation of the world; a three-quarter figure of Our Blessed Lady, her hands joined, and wearing a crown surrounded by twelve stars; a three-quarter figure of Saint Dominic, his head surrounded by rays of light, holding a book and lily in his right hand and a long staff in his left. The following inscription runs around the base: *Orate pro Carolo Sughrue, qui me fieri fecit pro Conventu Traliensi, Priore fr Thadeo Moriarti 1651* (Pray for Charles Sughrue who had me made for the Tralee Convent, when Thaddeus Moriarty was Prior, in 1651).

**The Galway Chalice:** This is a hexagonal Gothic Chalice. On the front panel of its base is a figure of Our Blessed lady, holding the Infant Jesus in her arms. The figure is surrounded by the inscription: *Monstra te esse matrem; monstra te esse filium, 1595* (Show yourself to be a mother; show yourself to be a son). In the corners of the panel are the figures of a skull and crossbones, a dog's head vomiting flames, a plain cross, a sandglass. On the opposite panel is a more recent engraving of a shield with the Geraldine Cross. The Chalice was given as a gift to Holy Cross by the Galway Dominican community in 1861.

**The Ryan Chalice:** This is a plain silver Chalice, 9½ inches high, bearing the simple inscription: Presented to the Rev. John C. O'Ryan, OP, for Holy Cross. Pray for the donor. 1881.

**The Memorial Chalice:** This is a solid silver Chalice, heavily gilt. The cup and base are chased with vine leaves, grapes and wheat – emblems of the Blessed Sacrament. The Chalice is studded with numerous real garnets, rubies and amethysts. On the base the following figures are engraved: the Sacred Heart, Our Lady of the Rosary, Saint Dominic, Saint Matthew (Apostle), Saint Margaret (Queen of Scotland), and Saint John of Cologne (a Dominican martyr). The following inscription is round the base: Presented to the Rev. John C. O'Ryan, OP, for Holy Cross. 1880.

**A Chalice,** similar in design to this Memorial Chalice, bears the inscription: Presented by the Ladies' Altar Society. 1897.

**Ciboria:** Among the ciboria used in Holy Cross, there are: a small silver Ciborium, bearing the date 1864 – a present from the members of the Ladies' Altar Society; a large silver Ciborium, presented to Holy Cross by the members of the TCLS, 1924; a quite small Ciborium, a gift from Saint John's Total Abstinence Society to Holy Cross 'on the occasion of its restoration, April 1861'.

**Windows:** In the door which leads from the Sacristy to the Church, there are two stained-glass panels, made in 1912 by Michael Healy – one of the founders of the twentieth-century Irish stained-glass movement.





*The Moriarty Chalice, which was given to Prior Thaddeus Moriarty in 1651.*



*The Galway Chalice, which is dated 1595.*



# *The Dominican in the Modern World*

*Father Vivian Boland, OP.*

THE Dominican has always lived in the modern world. That may sound a bit too clever. Let me explain what I mean.

The Dominican Order was established in response to the modern world of the thirteenth century. Great social and cultural changes were taking place. Towns and cities were growing in a way not known before. Universities were being established at Paris, Oxford and many other centres in Europe. Important books on science and philosophy were being translated into Latin from Greek and Arabic, and were challenging the received understanding and presentation of the Christian Gospel. The Church, seen as wealthy and worldly-minded, was largely ineffective against various cults and sects, small religious groups which were at once more serious and more enthusiastic than the institutional religion.

New ways to the truth were needed if people living in radically changed circumstances were to hear the ancient Gospel truth in a way that was fresh and relevant to their changing lives. Saint Dominic responded to this challenge. He gave up his life as a cathedral canon in Spain and became a travelling preacher in the south of France. He saw that a life of poverty and simplicity had to accompany any preaching he might do if his message were to be credible. He sent his first followers to the university towns to become acquainted with the intellectual debates of the time and to bring the Gospel light to bear on them. He devised a style of religious life which combined priory-life with freedom to travel, monastic prayer with freedom to study, devotion with preaching, the old with the new.

In the system of government which Dominic left to his Order there is a built-in openness to constant change. It is a structure which is constantly revising itself. This democratic and constitutional organisation ensures that the Dominican Order is responsive to whatever 'modern world' it finds itself

in, whether penal-times in Ireland, sixteenth-century Spain, nineteenth-century France, or twentieth-century Taiwan, or Trinidad, or Canada. The wise system of government left by Saint Dominic ensures the Dominican Order's flexibility and adaptability to changing circumstances. It has also ensured that the Order has strained but never cracked, has suffered stress but has never split.

The Dominican, faced with the modern world of the late twentieth century, thus has a lot going for him, or her. Behind him is a 'tradition of adapting', a constant encouragement to work out 'new ways to the truth' as the Dominican constitutions put it.

Like his contemporaries, the Dominican will be a little bit dazzled by the **speed** of change in the modern world, a rate of change which marks it off from all previous ages. All the time there are new developments in technology, in communications, in artificial intelligence, in weaponry, in social conditions, in ideas and styles of living. He has no quick or easy solution to coping with such a rate of change since he is himself a participant in the process, a man of this time.

He has, however, a few clues in the response of Saint Dominic to the 'modern world' which he faced. One is to stay with the people: to live where they live, to be where they are, to experience the social and cultural changes which the people are experiencing.

Another clue from Dominic is that the Dominican should go to the places of learning, the places where ideas are being processed, where new ideas are being considered. This is not necessarily in order to 'take on board' all new ideas. Nor is it so as to reject all new ideas. It is in order to listen and to understand them, to see whether they do justice to human dignity, whether they are ideas worthy of the human being. These places certainly include the universities and other academic institutions, but also today it means understanding and using the 'mass media' – journalism, radio, television – the places where ideas are processed, wherever thought is being pursued.

The connection between 'poverty' and 'preaching' takes the form, today, of an essential link between 'justice' and 'preaching'. Dominic saw that authentic preaching had to come out of a life of poverty and simplicity. Today, authentic preaching must be 'justice-making preaching'. It is not enough to talk about justice: it must be worked for in Dominican communities, in the institutions we work in, in the Church, in society. Dominicans are 'with the Church' in its call for a preferential love for the poor, the marginalised, the oppressed.

Questions like a proper understanding and living out of human sexuality,



the education of new generations in accordance with human dignity and the destiny of the human person with God, the coming together of Christian churches in understanding and unity, the changing experience of women in society and in the Church, the question of nuclear power and the arms race, the spiritual riches of other great world religions with their ancient traditions of meditation, respect for life and compassion: all these questions, and many more, are of concern to the Dominican today. He grows through facing these questions. He shares the struggles of others who are trying to understand what is right and to live for what is good.

An essential 'moment' in the Dominican's experience, perhaps the essential moment today, is the time spent in listening. He must listen to the ancient Word of God, in scripture and in the Church's life, a word 'ancient and ever new', a creative, saving, healing, encouraging, freedom-giving word. He must pray. But he must listen equally to the world as it takes form in him and

around him, an exciting, fast-moving, stimulating but, perhaps, slightly giddy, largely lonely kind of world to which the Word of God must be spoken.

Of the Dominican this demands skill, a skill which can be termed **understanding**. Involved in this understanding are: openness to the truth of things, compassion for the human reality he encounters in himself and in others, patience and gentleness in nurturing new ways of expressing and living the Gospel, humility and trust in God.

In the bull of his canonization, Saint Dominic is described by Pope Gregory IX as the prophetic instrument of a God who constantly does new things for His people in response to their changing needs. The Dominican today is not to be a curator of a museum, however impressive. He is to be in his time what Saint Dominic was in the thirteenth century – a prophetic instrument of our God, who is taking care of us, and who constantly does new things for His people in response to their changing needs.



*Poll an Aifreann, the Mass Rock at Kilclohane Wood, Milltown, where Father Thaddeus Moriarty was arrested in 1653.*  
(See pages 22 – 23.)

## KERRY DOMINICAN PRIESTS AND BROTHERS IN THE IRISH PROVINCE

Fr. Thomas Walsh (Caherciveen) .....	St. Saviour's, Dublin
Fr. Anselm Moynihan (Tralee) .....	St. Saviour's, Dublin
Fr. Ephraem McCarthy (Ballymacelligott) .....	St. Mary's, Tallaght
Fr. Paul Kearney (Ardfert) .....	Holy Cross, Tralee
Br. Bernard O'Leary (Caherciveen) .....	St. Mary's, Cork
Fr. Brendan Dillon (Tralee) .....	San Clemente, Rome
Fr. Leonard Boyle (Tralee) .....	Vatican City
Fr. Fergal O'Connor (Ballyheigue) .....	St. Saviour's, Dublin
Fr. Ailbe O'Connor (Causeway) .....	St. Mary's, Tallaght
Fr. Seanan Mac Conchra (Tralee) .....	St. Mary's, Tallaght
Fr. Finian Lynch (Valentia) .....	Argentina
Fr. Kieran O'Shea (Kenmare) .....	Holy Cross Priory, Leicester
Fr. John Heffernan (Knocknagoshel) .....	Dominican College, Newbridge
Fr. Placid Nolan (Abbeydorney) .....	Canada
Fr. Hugh Costello (Tralee) .....	St. Mary's, Tallaght
Fr. Denis Clifford (Caherciveen) .....	St. Saviour's, Dublin
Fr. Brendan Clifford (Ballymacelligott) .....	St. Mary's, Cork
Fr. Martin McCarthy (Tralee) .....	St. Magdalen's, Drogheda
Fr. Louis Hughes (Tralee) .....	St. Dominic's Retreat House, Cork
Fr. Vincent Mercer (Tralee) .....	St. Mary's, Cork
Fr. Timothy Mulcahy (Tralee) .....	Argentina
Fr. Paul Lawlor (Tralee) .....	San Clemente, Rome
Fr. Séamus Tuohy (Tralee) .....	Trinidad
Fr. Michael Savage (Tralee) .....	San Clemente, Rome
Br. Joseph Dineen (Tralee) .....	St. Mary's, Tallaght



# *Dominican Laity*

*Father Raymond O'Donovan, OP.*

THIS is the year of the laity and next autumn the Synod of Bishops will discuss the role that lay people are being called on to fill in the Church today. Of course most Christians are lay people and what we are witnessing in our days is a greater realisation than of late of the fact that all Christians share the duty of handing on the faith to others and of being a light to the world.

The Order of Preachers is now some seven hundred and fifty years in existence and for most of this time lay people have been actively involved in its apostolic work. To be precise, it was in 1285 that the Third Order of Saint Dominic was set up to enable lay people to become part of the Dominican Order, and to share its work and its ideals. During the succeeding centuries, the Order grew and developed, having its moments of greatness as well as its periods of decline and crisis. The same may be said of the Third Order. It too waxed and waned and waxed again.

There is no doubt that Tertiaries flourished in Ireland even in the early years of the Order. On July 19 this year, a celebration was to take place in the newly-restored ruined Dominican Priory in Kilcorban, Co. Galway. Documentary evidence shows that this foundation was originally made in the fifteenth century by Dominican Tertiaries, both men and women.

The tradition has been kept and there are now thirty-three groups or chapters of Tertiaries in Ireland, attached to Dominican priories or convents for the most part. In Tralee, two flourishing chapters meet together and work with the Holy Cross community and these are the contemporary heirs of a long-standing tradition in Tralee, in Ireland, and in the Dominican Order throughout the world.

What then is a Dominican Tertiary, and what does he or she do? Nowadays, Tertiaries are often called Lay Dominicans because they are, precisely, lay people who share the life of Dominicans while remaining lay people. It is important to stress that Tertiaries remain lay people, as at one period the tendency was rather for lay people to try and live the religious life as far

as they could. So there was great emphasis on wearing a habit and leading a semi-conventual life. Nowadays, it seems more important to try and identify the essentials of the Dominican vocation and then try to adapt these to a fully Christian lay life.

Saint Dominic founded the Order of Preachers, as a group of people whose care and purpose was to study and preach the Gospel. However, he realised from the start that people like this must share community life and fellowship, and must be rooted and founded in prayer. The essentials of the Dominican vocation then are community, prayer and preaching, and these three are the basis and ideal of the life of a Tertiary, a Lay Dominican.

Tertiaries may not live in communities but they meet regularly so that they may grow together in friendship and understanding. We sometimes forget the essential part that friendship plays in Christian life and the regular meetings are meant to develop a sense of community, of sharing joys and sorrows, but, above all, of sharing an increase in faith.

It is through community meetings, like the regular chapter meetings, that Tertiaries grow in faith as they share the problems, the challenges, and the joys of growing in trust and confidence in the Lord. Some find the most attractive element in Tertiary life to be just this help they find in meeting other people who want support in believing and who are ready to share their own experience of the challenge of faith in our days.

Naturally, as faith and prayer go hand-in-hand, when Christians meet, they pray. So prayer is an essential part of Tertiary life. Great flexibility is allowed in the way we pray but Dominicans have a long tradition of liturgical prayer dating from Saint Dominic who lived for many years as a canon regular and was ever enthusiastic about the importance of the liturgy in understanding and preaching the faith.

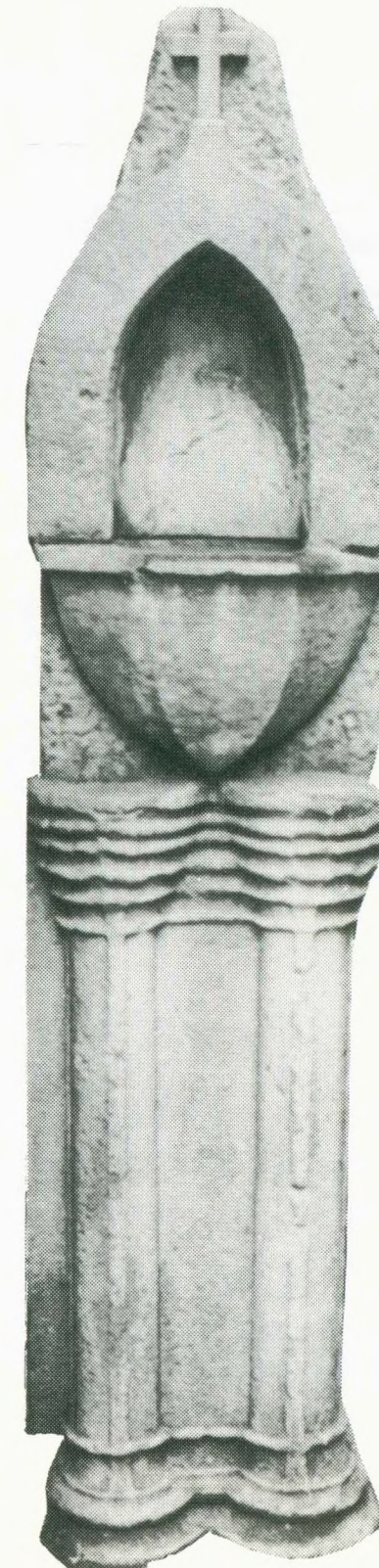
Tertiaries, then, are encouraged to pray together the great Prayer of the Church. They like to prepare together the celebration of Mass, so that reading, singing and ritual may help to stir up faith in the presence of the Lord.

Finally, we come to what is most specific to Dominicans and that is preaching, spreading the Gospel. For Tertiaries, as indeed for all Dominicans, this means first of all getting to know the Gospel message. When they meet, Tertiaries are encouraged to read the Gospel together, to discuss it, to argue about it, to air their difficulties, to become informed and educated in their faith. There are plenty of opportunities to spread the faith they have studied, be it at home with their own children, or in factory, office or work-place.



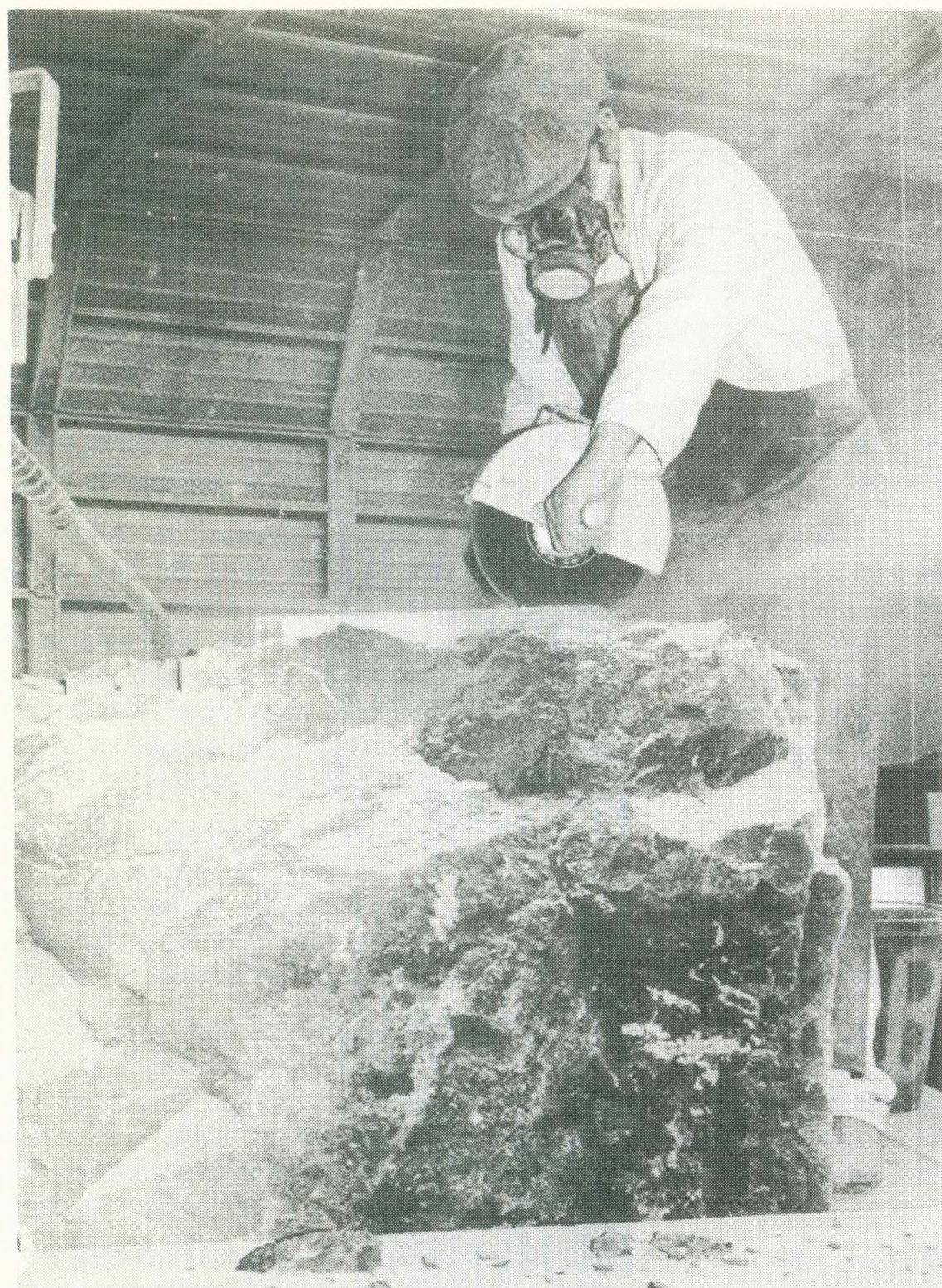
Surely the Tertiary, the Lay Dominican, has a special place in today's world? He or she is doing just what Vatican II hoped lay people would do. He or she is striving to know the Gospel, to live the Gospel and to share the Gospel. Tralee Tertiaries are aware of the vocation to which they have been called. They have recently initiated the practice of an hour's adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Holy Cross every Saturday. During this hour Morning Prayer is recited and the devotion has attracted many others to come and share this prayer with the Tertiaries.

Tradition is an important part of life but only if it inspires one to develop and evolve. May the venerable tradition of Lay Dominican life in Tralee continue to flourish and find new ways of helping people to discover the saving message of the Lord Jesus.



Right: *This Holy Water Font, which stands outside Saint Anne's Chapel at Holy Cross, was recovered from the ruins of the old Abbey of Tralee in the 1940s.*





*The Dominican Memorial was carved from an eight-ton block of limestone excavated from a quarry in County Laois. The sculptor was Tralee man Noel Fitzgibbon, a sixth-generation craftsman who donated his skill and time to the execution of the Memorial. The work was completed in the AnCO Training Centre in Monavally, Tralee, over a period of nine months. Noel was assisted in his task*

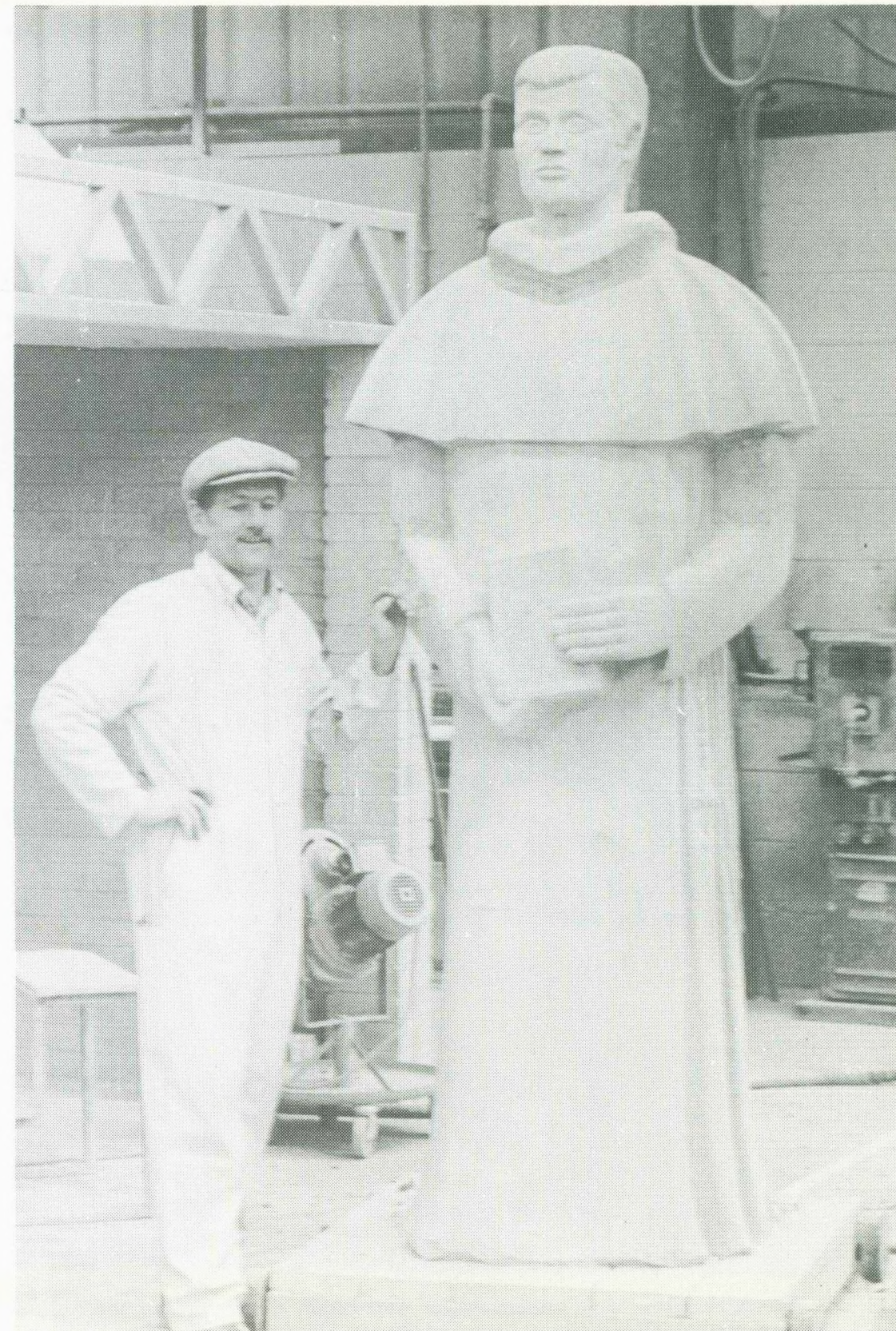


*by the Stone Carving apprentices at the Centre. Their contribution to the Memorial was the octagonal base which supports the figure of the Dominican. The pictures show Mr. Fitzgibbon at various stages of the work on carving the statue from the bulky block of limestone. Included in one of the pictures is Very Rev. Anthony Morris, OP, Prior at Holy Cross. Photo: John Cleary.*



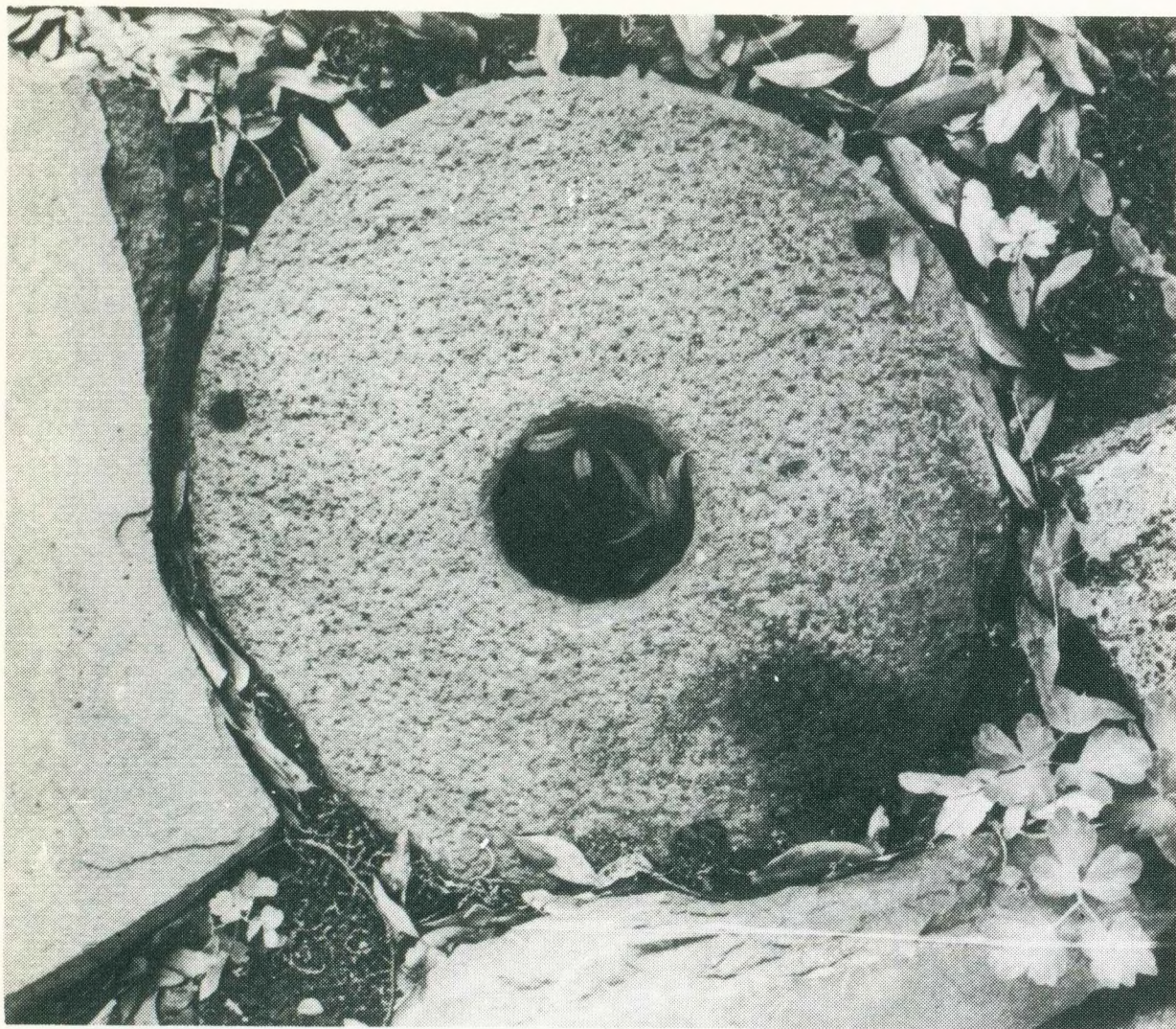


*The Memorial nears completion. . .*



*Pride of a craftsman.*





*Above: A millstone from the old Water Mill operation of the Friars of the old Abbey of Tralee. The stone is now located in the Priory garden at Day Place.*



*Right: This is a fifteenth-century representation of the Assumption of Our Lady, retrieved from the medieval Abbey of Tralee. The stone carving was built into the north wall of the Presentation Convent Chapel in Tralee.*





*This picture was taken in 1953 at celebrations to mark the third centenary of the death Father Thaddeus Moriarty. Left to right: Very Rev. T. Garde, OP, Provincial; Very Rev. Benedict O'Sullivan, OP, Prior of Holy Cross; Most Rev. Dr. Denis Moynihan, Bishop of Kerry; Right*

*Rev. Monsignor Francis Cremin, Maynooth; President Seán T. O'Kelly; Right Rev. Monsignor Donal A. Reidy, PP, VG, Dean of Kerry. In the background are Deputy Tom McEllistram and Councillor Bill Dennehy.*





Above: Group taken at Holy Cross in August 1951 to mark the Feast of Saint Dominic. Front (from left): Rev. Ailbe O'Connor, OP; Rev. Theodore Crowley, OFM; Very Rev. Benedict O'Sullivan, OP, Prior; Rev. Senan Crowe, OP (a native of Tralee); Rev. Fergal O'Connor, OP. Back: Rev. Thomas Drummond, SMA (a native of Tralee); Rev. Leonard Boyle, OP (now Prefect of the Vatican Library); Rev. M. Kennedy, SMA.

Left: This is one of the wells of the old Abbey of Tralee. It is still visible in the rear garden of No. 1 Staughton's Row, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hawney. The Hawney garden incorporates part of the western boundary of the original Abbey site.





*Photograph taken at Holy Cross in 1943 on the occasion of the seventh centenary of the founding of the Abbey of Tralee.*



# *Some Dominican Places of Refuge in Kerry*

*Father Kieran O'Shea*

SINCE the foundation of Holy Cross in 1243, the Dominicans have been part of the history of Tralee. The priory was the focal point of their mission and remained so until the sixteenth century when the religious upheavals changed that. The priory was suppressed by Henry VIII in 1540, burned during the Desmond Wars and then granted to Sir Edward Denny together with the lands surrounding it. The result was that the Dominicans could no longer use Holy Cross for worship. They sought places of refuge amongst the people whom they served. It would seem, for a time at least, that they lived near the original priory in a house that was held in the name of a lay person. A possible place of refuge was Kilcomnachta in Camp.

Although the Dominicans got some respite from persecution during the reign of Charles I, the arrival of the Cromwellians changed all that. When Major-General Edmund Ludlow became commander-in-chief of the parliamentary army he was determined to end all resistance and destroy the Catholic Church. He appointed Brigadier John Nelson to command the English forces in Kerry. Nelson carried out his task ruthlessly. After the fall of Ross Castle on 22 June 1652, he decreed: "That benefit of all or any of the articles aforesaid extend not to give protection to priests and jesuits and others in Popish orders to live in the Parliament's quarters."

Priests would be hunted down and, if caught, they would be executed.

Father Thaddeus Moriarty, OP, had been appointed prior of the Tralee Dominicans c. 1640, and probably resided near the ruins of Holy Cross. With the obvious danger to life from Nelson, Father Thaddeus sought refuge

amongst the Catholics in Milltown area. It was here that he was arrested in Kilclohane Wood as he celebrated Mass for the people of the area. The Mass Rock, known as Poll an Aifrinn, is still a place of pilgrimage. Father Thaddeus was transferred to a dungeon in Ross Castle and he was later hanged on 15 October 1653 at Martyrs' Hill, Killarney.

His brother, Father Thomas Moriarty, also a Dominican, travelled in disguise throughout County Kerry administering the sacraments, catechising and instructing those he met. He, too, died in 1653 worn out by fatigue.

In spite of the obvious dangers, the Dominicans continued to minister to the people under their care.

Throughout the latter part of the seventeenth century, one finds many references to priors of Holy Cross, Tralee. In 1683 members of the community included Fathers Peter Kina, Dominic O'Connor and Edmond Fitzmaurice. one even finds mention of novices, Brothers Thomas Fitzgerald, Dominic Egan and Peter Hennessy. In 1690, Fathers Dominic O'Sullivan, Edmund Fitzmaurice, John Cahane and Dominic O'Connor are associated with Holy Cross. In 1703, Father Dominic MacEgan is mentioned as prior of Holy Cross. He died some years later in prison.

Perhaps the most important place of refuge was that established in Knockanure, in the townland of Carrueragh. When, exactly, the Dominicans first settled in community there is unclear. It may have been before 1781 as Father Edmund Stack, OP, who died that year, is still recalled in local tradition which suggests that he lived in the area.

Today, a field called the 'Friar's Field' is referred to as their place of residence. A holy well, known as 'Friar's Well', is now filled in; it was said to have curative powers. According to tradition the priests were herbalists and were known for their cures. Father Edmund Stack was said to have been a 'noted' preacher, while Father Bartholomew Shine was probably the best-known member of the community.

Father Shine was born in Freemount, County Cork. He was educated at Louvain and for a time ministered to Belgian soldiers fighting against Napoleon. He came to Knockanure c. 1797. This community remained in existence until c. 1806 when in response to the request of Bishop Sughrue they accepted parishes in Kerry. Father Shine became parish priest of Brosna and Knocknagoshel. He did not confine himself to these places. His mission included parts of west Limerick and north Cork. Father Shine lived in Brosna until his death in 1827. He was greatly loved by the people – a man of learning



and piety. Many cures were attributed to him while he lived. Perhaps these arose out of his knowledge as a herbalist. A headstone marks his grave in Brosna Cemetery. With the death of Father Shine, the Dominican connection with Kerry was temporarily severed – but not for long. In less than forty years they returned to Tralee and rebuilt Holy Cross.

They no longer needed to go into hiding. 'Places of refuge' were a thing of the past. The Dominicans were, once again, amongst their own – the descendants of those whom they had served so loyally for six hundred years.

Right: Joe Barrett of Carrveragh, Kilmorna, Listowel, pictured in Friars' Field, Knockanure, where the Dominicans settled in the eighteenth century. At the bottom of the picture is a pipe which drains water from the well which once served the community of friars.





## TWO KERRY DOMINICANS

# Fr. Dominic O'Daly

*Augustin Valkenburg, OP.*

Born at Kilsarkan in 1593, Donal O'Daly was known in the Order as Father Dominic of the Rosary, on the continent as Frey Domingo, to English diplomats as a meddlesome friar and a dangerous Irishman.

He came from a background of bardic culture. He compiled in Latin a history of the Desmond Geraldines who had been generous patrons of the Tralee Dominicans, and for whom the O'Dalys had made poetry for centuries. Doubtless, it was from the bards with their sense of drama that he inherited his adventurous spirit and the panache with which he carried out his diplomatic missions.

Dominic was professed at Lugo in Galicia, studied at Burgos and for a time after ordination taught theology in Bordeaux. On his return to Kerry he laboured zealously as a missionary, but was quick to perceive the dire shortage of priests in Ireland. He was appointed superior of the newly-founded Dominican College in Louvain. In 1634 he was in Lisbon engaged in helping to found a similar college in that city; at the time Belgium and Portugal were ruled by Spain. In recompense for generous help from the Spanish crown in founding the College of Corpo Santo at Lisbon, Dominic undertook a discreet diplomatic mission to England on behalf of Philip IV.

It suited both England and Spain to maintain an uneasy peace. Charles I was not interested in enforcing penal laws and Henrietta Maria, his Catholic queen, protected priests.

Dominic was in and out of the country before the story broke. Writing to the English ambassador at Madrid on 29 December 1637, an infuriated minister of state relates the news: "There was here last summer one Daly, an Irish friar, disguised and in the habit of a captain who came from Spain. It seems he is a very dangerous person and did practise much while he lurked here."

The ambassador was instructed to protest and demand to have the culprit punished.

Three years later Dominic ventured to land in England again. On this occasion the English ambassador was more in touch. He forwarded a description, a pen-picture in one sentence: "Hodal (Ó Dálaigh) is a very tall black man and speaks very big." So the watch were on the lookout for very tall black men, and O'Daly was arrested shortly after landing. But all that was found on him were 'letters to the ambassador of his Catholic Majesty at this court, concerned with the erection of a monastery of nuns in Flanders'.

This time it was the turn of the Spanish ambassador to protest. O'Daly was released from prison but ordered out of England.

At Lisbon, Dominic did not forget his own people. He interested the queen and several wealthy Portuguese ladies in the project of founding a convent for Irish girls who felt called to be nuns. The Dominican 'Convento do Bom Successo' was founded and exists to the present day.

In 1640 Portugal threw off Spanish rule. It was almost inevitable that a man of such immense ability and energy as Dominic, who never hid his sympathy with Portugal, should now be called upon. The new king, John IV, appointed him the ambassador of Portugal to the court of Louis XIV of France.

The ease with which he moved in the court circles of Europe and his ability in conducting delicate diplomatic negotiations never hindered him from being a good religious. He lived quietly in the Dominican priory but, at the same time, maintained his official position, even to the extent of giving Paris a firework display to mark the new king's coronation.

In these years what deeply distressed him was the worsening news from Ireland: deaths, defeats, Cromwellian excesses. The pain and the pride come through in his *Geraldines*. "Our empire was once bounded by the ocean, our fame by the stars, but now to be a Catholic is to be called a traitor, and to be a native, a rebel."

The General Chapter of the Order, held in Rome in 1650, with friars attending from the whole Catholic world, was greatly perturbed by the persecution of the Church in Ireland. Sensing their concern, Dominic added a valuable appendix to *Geraldines*: accounts based on contemporary evidence of nineteen Irish Dominicans who had recently died for the Faith.

With refugees pouring in from Ireland, he negotiated, in 1659, the foundation of a much larger College of Corpo Santo. With the idea of financing it he accepted the bishopric of Coimbra, though he had always declined ecclesiastical preferment. But in the end there was no problem. He died 30 June 1662, before he could be ordained bishop. These are the concluding words of the Latin inscription on Dominic's last resting place in Lisbon: "Successful in the royal legations he undertook, he was conspicuous for prudence, learning and piety."



# Father Thaddeus (Tadhg) Moriarty

BORN at Castledrum, Parish of Milltown, about 1603. His younger brother, Thomas, also became a Dominican. These two boys, and many others, were greatly influenced by Father Dominic O'Daly, who, during his years at home as a young priest, held school in secret.

Tadhg went overseas to prepare for the priesthood, studying in Toledo and later at the Dominican College in Lisbon, founded by Father O'Daly, to supply priests for the Irish mission. Indeed so many of its priests died for the Faith in Ireland that the college became known as 'the seminary of martyrs'. The founder was to recall Tadhg as a student remarkable for humility and patience, one who never seemed to lose his temper.

After ordination, Tadhg returned to his native Kerry. In 1636 he is numbered among the Dominicans ministering in the diocese, and became one of the four professors in the short-lived seminary founded in Tralee by Bishop Rickard O'Connell. This was during the halcyon days of the Confederation of Kilkenny when Ireland was assured of civil and religious liberty.

Disunity, defeat and the arrival of Cromwell put an end to the dream. In July 1652, Ross Castle and island, the last stronghold of the Irish in Kerry, surrendered to the Cromwellians. Ireland was now divided into fourteen 'precincts', each under a military commander. Brigadier John Nelson was in command of the 'counties of Kerry and Desmond'. From 1652 to 1658 he wielded absolute power with ruthless cruelty.

On 6 January 1653, the four parliamentary commissioners for the affairs of Ireland issued from Dublin a decree banishing Catholic priests. Within twenty days of this date all priests were to present themselves to the authorities to express their willingness to be transported beyond seas at the earliest opportunity. Failure to comply rendered the priest guilty of high treason. The penalty was death.

Many old and sick priests obeyed and were transported, others ignored the decree and went into hiding, others still were taken and executed. Deaf to all pleas, the commissioners reaffirmed the decree on June 10 of the same

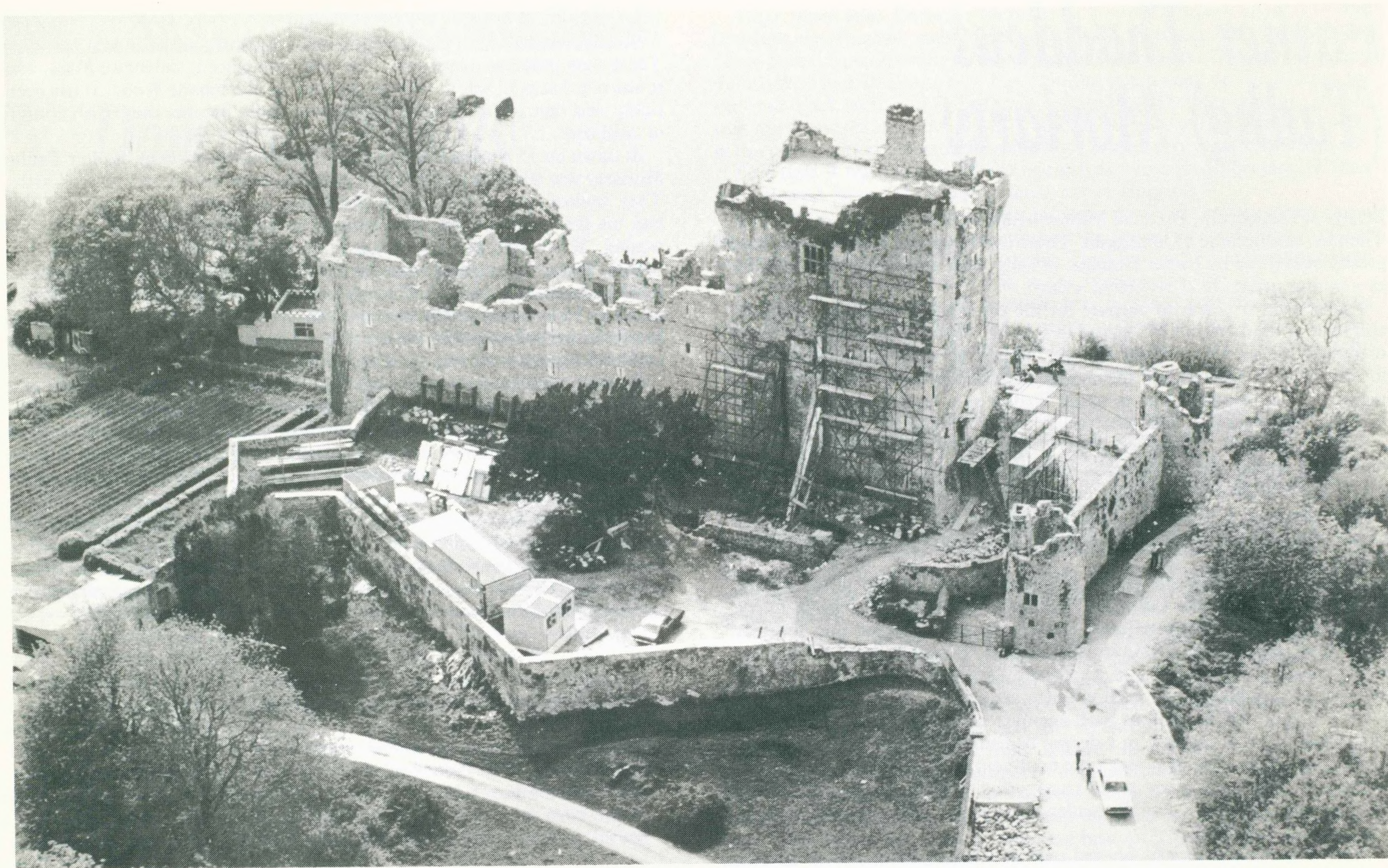
year. By this time, the remaining Dominicans with their prior, Father Moriarty, had left Tralee and withdrawn to Castlemaine, Moriarty country. There they posed as merchants. The only safe place to celebrate Mass, and it was not that safe, was at 'Poll an Aifrin' in Kilclohane Wood. It has been finely said that at this time the Mass Rock there became the parish church of Milltown.

At dawn on 15 August 1653, while celebrating Mass there, Father Tadhg Moriarty was taken by soldiers who probably came from Castlemaine Castle. They walked him all the way to Killarney, to Ross Castle, where Nelson had his headquarters. For two months he was held there and grossly ill-treated. When stripped and flogged, the prisoner did not complain. His replies, when interrogated, were so unfailingly truthful, simple and direct, that his opponents concluded he was a man who knew not how to lie. When asked by Nelson why he did not obey the law of the country, Tadhg replied he was bound rather to obey the law of God and those who for him represented God and commanded him to exercise his priesthood.

He welcomed sincerely the news that he was condemned to death, and gave to the messenger and the jailers the few coins he possessed. Availing of the condemned man's privilege, he held a discourse on the scaffold at Martyrs' Hill in Killarney. He spoke briefly of the true Faith, of the Roman Catholic Church, of the brevity and uncertainty of life, and of martyrdom as the surest way to heaven.

In death, his face emaciated as a result of weeks of semi-starvation and bearing the signs of violence, seemed to change and be transfigured. This greatly consoled the Catholics. Even the Cromwellians were forced into admiration. One of them remarked: "If ever a papist were a martyr, he certainly should be accounted one." It was the 15 October 1653.





*An aerial view of Ross Castle, Killarney, where Father Thaddeus Moriarty was imprisoned for two months prior to his martyrdom at Fair Hill, Killarney, in 1653.  
(Photo: Courtesy of the Commissioners of Public Works.)*





*The committee responsible for the Dominican Memorial and celebrations to mark its unveiling on 9 August 1987. From left: Mrs. Ena O'Shea; Councillor Tommy Foley; Mrs. Kathleen Browne, County Librarian; John Griffin, BE, Hon. Secretary; Very Rev. Anthony Morris, OP, Prior, Holy Cross; Michael Scannell, Chairman; Donald O'Regan, Hon. Treasurer; Joe Dunne, Manager, Anco, Tralee; Mrs. Eileen Dowling, and Paddy O'Donnell. Photo: Kevin Coleman.*



# *Dominican Sisters at Fatima Home*

THE Dominican Order, which has a community at Fatima Home, Tralee, was founded in the thirteenth century by Saint Dominic.

Dominic gathered a band of men and women to preach, to pray and to carry on Christ's work of evangelisation. Within eight years of Dominic's death, the Dominican Family had grown and expanded to most parts of the world. Today, the Dominican Fathers, Sisters and Laity are to be found in all the great mission fields of the Church.

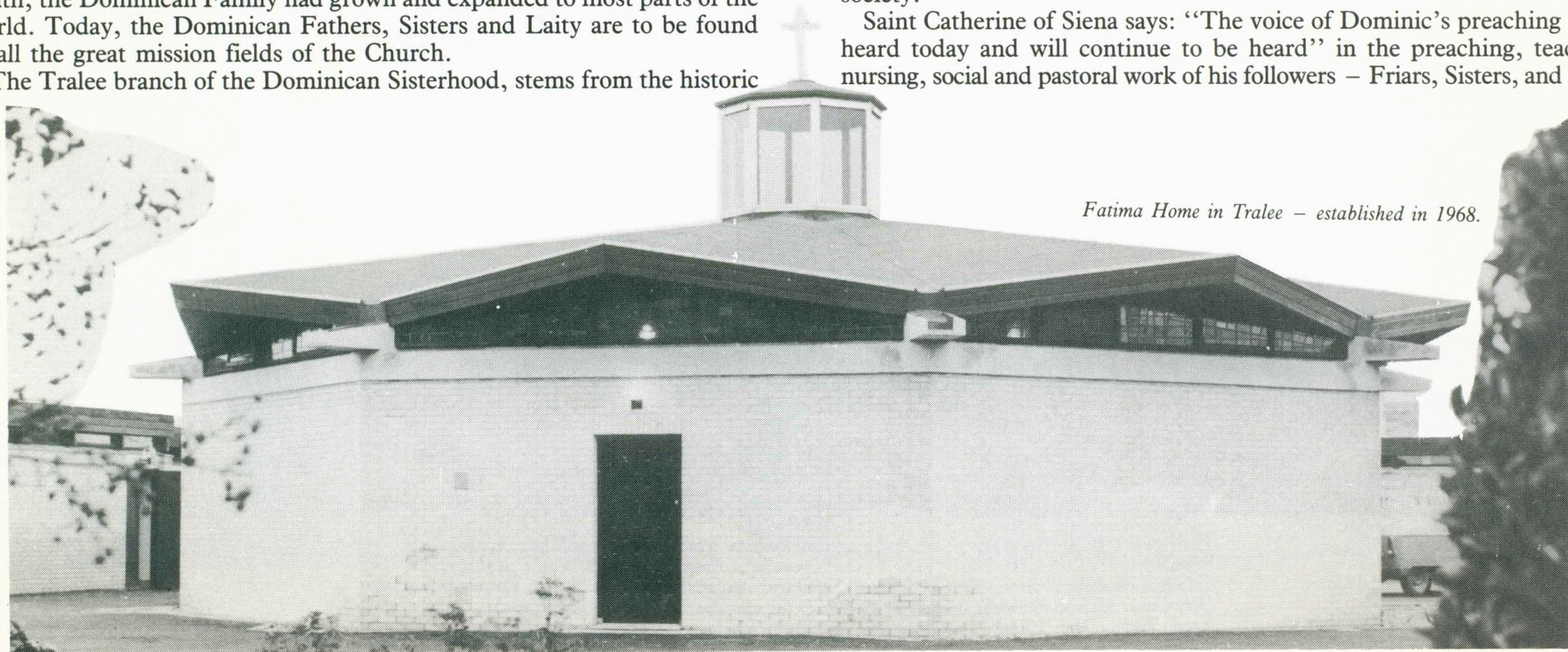
The Tralee branch of the Dominican Sisterhood, stems from the historic

Enclosed Dominican Convent of Saint Ursula, Augsburg, Bavaria. The call to Africa came early in the congregation's history. In response to an appeal for 'Missionaries' by Father John Fagan of Dublin and backed up by Bishop Ricard from Wexford, the Mother House of the 'Dominican Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena of King William's Town' was established. The seven pioneer Sisters from Augsburg, were joined later by Irish, Swiss, English, Dutch, South African and Chinese. And so, from the 'small mustard seed', the nucleus, the Dominican Sisters of King William's Town grew and spread throughout Africa, Europe, and South America.

Fatima Home was founded in 1968 by a Kerry woman, Sister Hilda Maloney, OP. At eighteen years of age, Kathleen Maloney, accompanied by five other Irish girls, sailed off to South Africa where she spent over forty years. Returning to her native land, Sister Hilda established Fatima Home for the retired people of Kerry. Men and women have entered its sanctuary to spend their declining years in peace and under the care of the nursing staff.

This is a worthwhile apostolate today and it meets a felt need in our Irish society.

Saint Catherine of Siena says: "The voice of Dominic's preaching is still heard today and will continue to be heard" in the preaching, teaching, nursing, social and pastoral work of his followers – Friars, Sisters, and Laity.



*Fatima Home in Tralee – established in 1968.*





*The Dominican Community at Fatima Home, Tralee, (from left): Sister Hildegard, Sister de Montfort, Sister Canice, Sister Mary, Sister Teresa, Sister Audrey, Sister de Mercédè, Sister Alban.*



# Holy Cross Seminary

1862–1910

*Paddy Redmond*

JUST a year after their return to Tralee, the Dominicans responded positively to a further request from Bishop Moriarty; this time to establish a school for boys in the town.

The Christian Brothers, who had come to Tralee in 1855, were proving the advantages of education to the youth of the town and the Dominicans were asked to help further this good work.

Holy Cross Seminary was opened at No. 1 Day Place on 3 February 1862. The teachers were: Father Lynch (Modern Languages), Father O'Connor (History and Cathecetics), Father Hyland (English and Science), and Mr. Pierce (Latin and Greek).

Twenty-three pupils enrolled on the first day. The school fees were fixed at £2.0s.0d. per year but waivers for different amounts were given to families in financial distress.

From the beginning students from the Seminary enjoyed exceptional academic success. Father Hyland, writing to Father Lynch in June 1862, says: "I hasten to inform you of the cheering news from Killarney this morning. You are aware that the concursus took place on Monday morning. The first two places have been won by our students, James Huggard James Murphy to the seniors."

Mr. Timothy Harrington, MP, and later Lord Mayor of Dublin, was a teacher in Holy Cross Seminary at a salary of £5.0s.0d. a month. Edward Harrington, MP for Kerry, and brother of Timothy and later Editor of the *Kerry Sentinel* (founded 1878), succeeded his brother as a teacher at the Seminary at a salary of £90.0s.0d. per annum. At the examinations held on the 14 December 1865, distinctions were awarded to the following pupils: First Class – P. Scollard, M. Neligan, B. Scanlon, W. Brick, D. Riordan;

Second Class – J. Riordan, P. Driscoll, J. Foley, H. McClelland, D. Mahony; Third Class – J. Fitzgerald, D. O'Leary, J. Harrington, D. J. Harrington, J. Dalton, J. O'Brien, P. Crosbie, P. Houlihan, D. O'Leary, J. Connolly, M. Sullivan, J. Slattery, J. Frawley, D. Lawlor.

A list of some of the pupils on 22 July 1879: Thomas Shea, R. Quin, James McSweeney, John Leonard, John Foley, Maurice Kelly, Laurence Hickey, T. Griffin, Wm. Enright, Terence McMahon, Thomas Ryle, Mortimer Sheedy, Thomas Walsh, John Nolan, David Crean, W. Poyntz, Maurice Quinlan.

In 1863 one student passed the Apothecaries Hall examination and two affiliated to the Catholic University of Ireland.

In 1864 two students passed for Maynooth and one for the Dominican Convent, Woodchester, and one for the Irish College, Rome. In 1865 two passed for the Irish College, Rome; four for the Irish College, Paris, and one joined the Oblate Fathers at Inchicore.

Monsignor David O'Leary, Dean of Kerry and Parish Priest of Tralee (1918–1942), and Dr. Denis Coffey, first President of University College, Dublin, were both students of Holy Cross Seminary.

The Seminary closed in 1910.



*Tralee Dominicans Bishop Michael Fitzgerald, OP, of Bridge Street, and Father Leonard Boyle, OP, of Gallowfield, with Pope John XXIII in the Vatican in 1960.*





*The Community at Holy Cross, Tralee, 1987: Front: Fr. T. Hegarty, Fr. A. Morris, Fr. S. Casey.  
Back: Fr. M. Nolan, Fr. P. O'Reilly, Fr. P. Kearney, Fr. K. Dwyer, Br. R. Walsh.*



# Collecting the Pennies

Written below is a personal memoir of Robert O'Kelly, whose son, Stephen, became a member of the Dominican Order. Mr. O'Kelly, who was born in Castleisland on 18 June 1835, died at his home in Tralee on 29 January 1919. This memoir deals with the penny collections which were taken up in Tralee and surrounding areas after Bishop David Moriarty had invited the Dominicans to return to Tralee in community and build a new Holy Cross. The memoir has been made available for publication by Mrs. Aloysia Doyle, a grand-daughter of Robert O'Kelly.

Bishop Moriarty gave full permission to the Prior to make one penny a week collection from house to house through the streets, lanes and alleys of Tralee to raise a fund for the purchase of some site or place for a Church. He provided collectors from the nucleus of the Confraternity who came down to him. There were six districts and it was not an easy matter to get collectors for those six districts. Myself and Daniel O'Shea, Moyderwell, took Boherbee as we both lived at the Cross. The latter got tired after three Sundays collecting, he thought it too difficult a job so I took the collection myself and with zeal, energy and determination I made it the biggest collection weekly to Holy Cross. My average weekly amount was more than two districts although being the farthest away from Holy Cross, Fr. Lynch (Prior) was delighted with my collections so he elected to accompany me on Sundays as I had no collector only myself. He was more than delighted at the spontaneous way those people gave their pennies Sunday after Sunday. He blessed the people and their homes and they knelt when he came along to be sure of his blessing. It was a sight to see them, flocking to get his blessing. I collected £400.00 in pence out of Boherbee.

The collectors in the Abbey Street, Mary Street, Bridge Street and Dominic Street failed so I took up that district and went very near making as big a collection as Boherbee. From that I went to Rock Street, Bohereen and Brogue Lane and collected up to £300.00. In all I collected nearly £1,000.00 out of the streets, lanes and alleyways of Tralee for 27 years of Sundays; and I collected at the Church doors easily thousands of pounds during the same term which they badly needed for their keep and support.

Being noted as a collector for the Dominican Church, a great many people in the country around and as far as Castlegregory used to bring to the house to me their monthly or weekly subscription for the Building Fund of Holy Cross Church.

Fr. Rush, some short time before he died, got permission from the Provincial to go to America collecting for the Church as it was then in a very bad way for the want of funds to pay the contractor. He asked me to go along with him to the U.S.A. He said he had so much confidence in me as a collector for Holy Cross Church but as I was then married I refused to go; perhaps if I was single I would have gone on that mission as I called it. However, he fell sick and six weeks after that he died and the trip was off. But his death caused a big subscription to be raised to roof and finish the Church as a monument to his hard work for God. The good people of Tralee and its surroundings subscribed to this fund most generously and in a short time £400.00 was collected – what he would hardly have got in America after all his expenses were paid.

Robert O'Kelly died 29 January 1919, at 13 Princes' Street, receiving the last rites from Father Redmond Powell, OP, and was laid out in his son's Dominican habit.

## HOLY CROSS

## TRALEE

### PRIORS: 1861 – 1987

1861–63 ..... Pius Lynch  
 1863–68 ..... Thomas Rush  
 1868–74 ..... Eustace Murphy  
 1875–81 ..... Louis Hickey  
 1881 .. Thomas R. Hyland  
 1881–84 ..... John Ryan  
 1884–90 ..... Joseph Flynn  
 1891–98 ..... Albert Ryan  
 1898–1904 Dominic McCarthy  
 1904–07 .... Antonius O'Kelly  
 1907–13 .... Austin O'Coigley  
 1913–19 ..... Antonius Dalton  
 1919–22 ..... Raphael Ayres  
 1922–32 ..... Patrick O'Hara

1932–38 ..... Leo Molloy  
 1938–41 .... Benedict Costello  
 1941–47 .... Stephen Glendon  
 1947–53 .. Benedict O'Sullivan  
 1953–59 ..... Aengus Byrnes  
 1959–62 ..... Basil Keenan  
 1962–69 .... Canice O'Riordan  
 1969–72 .... Isidore MacArdle  
 1972–75 ..... Finbarr Kelly  
 1975–78 ..... John O'Reilly  
 1878–81 ..... Anthony Morris  
 1981–84 ..... Stanislaus Foley  
 1984 ..... Anthony Morris





*An interior view of Holy Cross, Tralee, taken in the early part of this century. Note the left aisle  
— there were no seats then.*  
(Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.)





Glenbeigh Records  
Management



**F3224591**