

## **St. Maria Goretti (October 16<sup>th</sup> 1890 – July 6<sup>th</sup> 1902)**

Born in 1890 in Corinaldo, Italy the third child in a very impoverished family.

By the age of 10 she had lost her father.

By the age of 12 she had died a martyr's death.

Beatified in 1927 – just 25 years after her death.

Canonised in 1950 – a mere 48 years after her death, with her mother present for the Canonization.

It is also said that her repentant and reconciled murderer, Alessandro Serenellis, was present too.

### **Our Theme this Year**

Undoubtedly, we live in very challenging times. We have just emerged from the grips of a deadly pandemic that has claimed many lives and changed the world. Now we witness the devastating effects of war on European soil once again, as well as all the consequences that war brings with it. There is much division in our world today. Closer to home, our own country continues to struggle with homelessness, crime, poverty, our international obligations towards refugees as well as with the ever escalating cost of living.

However, in the midst of darkness, there is always light. The theme of this year's *Maria Goretti Novena* seeks to find the light and point towards its source. There is much more goodness in the world than we sometimes realise. All we need do is open our eyes to find it. Hopefully, we will do so

### **Our Guest Speakers**

**Sr. Marianne O'Connor** has been involved in education for most of her life. She is a former President of St. Angela's College of Education in Sligo. She is also very committed to many charitable organisations, including St. Vincent de Paul.

**Fr. Tomas Surlis** is a native of Tubbercurry. He is a former president of St. Nathy's College in Ballaghaderreen. He is now Rector of the National Seminary in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.

**Fr. Tommy Towey** is Parish Priest of Ballisodare. He recently celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood. He has taught at second level. His area of expertise is History. Prior to being appointed Parish Priest of Ballisodare he was Parish priest of Bonniconlon.

**Fr. Martin Convey** was appointed Parish priest of Collooney in September 2022. Prior to this he was Parish Priest of Straide in Co. Mayo.

**Martin Daly** lives in Ballina. He is a teacher / chaplain in St. Nathy's College in Ballaghaderreen. Martin was instrumental in the setting up of the Newman Institute in Ballina. He is also a frequent contributor to local radio. Martin has a deep interest in catechetics / religious education.

**Monica Morley** is a well known broadcaster with Mid West Radio. She is also heads up the Family Centre in Knock Shrine.

**Fr. John Cunningham** is a retired priest of the diocese of Phoenix, Arizona. Since retiring, he lives in Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo where his parents lived before emigrating. He continues to have close ties with Arizona State University (where he graduated from) and offers online course tuition to students.

**Mary Forte** has been involved in the Hospice Movement for a considerable length of time. She has been involved with Northwest Hospice for many years, where she is now Commercial Manager.

**Fr. Brendan Kilcoyne** is a former President of St. Jarlath's College in Tuam. He has served as Secretary to Archbishop Michael Neary of Tuam. He is now Parish Priest of Athenry and Supreme Chaplain to the Order of Knights of St. Columbanus. Fr. Brendan is a co-founder of "*Immaculata Productions*", a content production company specialising in podcasts, video blogs and inspirational video content relating to Faith.