

St. Maria Goretti (October 16th 1890 – July 6th 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 also present.

Our Theme this Year – *Maria Goretti : A Saint for our times*

If the saints teach us anything, they teach us that their lives and their message are as relevant today as they were when they walked this earth. Today's modern world can learn much from the profound and deep faith of a twelve year old child whose saintly life was acknowledged with beatification 25 years after her death and, later, canonisation some 48 years after enduring a martyr's death on July 6th 1902. In honouring St. Maria Goretti each year, we strive to follow her example as well as continuing to seek her guidance and intercession.

Our Guest Speakers

Bishop Kevin Doran – was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Dublin in 1977. He was appointed Bishop of Elphin in May 2014. On April 10th 2024 he was appointed Apostolic Administrator of the diocese of Achonry following Bishop Paul Dempsey's appointment as an Auxiliary Bishop in Dublin. This will be Bishop Doran's first time to speak at our Novena.

Fr. Niall Ahern is Parish Priest of Strandhill. He is no stranger to the Maria Goretti Novena in Collooney and has been a very popular guest speaker in the past. This year he will lead our *Reconciliation Evening* on Tuesday, July 2nd.

Fr. Vincent Connaughton is Parish Priest of Ardagh and Moydow. Prior to taking up this appointment in 2018, Fr. Vincent was Parish Priest of Killenummery and Killery in Co. Leitrim. Fr. Vincent has preached at our Novena in the past and has always been very well received.

Deacon Kevin Flynn - is a native of Collooney Parish. He is married to Geraldine and has a grown up family. He was ordained a deacon in 2018. He is appointed to minister in the cluster of parishes in the north west of Achonry diocese. He is a stroke survivor and will speak on how life has changed after a stroke.

Collette Furlong was involved in the organising of the 50th International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin in 2012. Now living in Sligo, she is employed by the Sligo cluster of parishes as a Catechist in the diocese of Elphin. Colette is a Healthcare Chaplain in Sligo University Hospital. She finds her engagement with people as a catechist and as a chaplain to be inspiring and life-giving.

Stephen Giblin runs his own business in Foxford, Co. Mayo. Over the years he has conducted many courses in theology and scripture throughout the diocese of Achonry. He has recently been appointed Director of Youth Ministry in Achonry Diocese.

Derek Gormley is a native of Bunninadden. He has works in the area of pastoral care and chaplaincy. Currently he is part of the Pastoral Care team in the Mayo Hospice in Castlebar.

Antoinette Moynihan - lives in Co. Meath. She is married to Peadar for 31 years. They have two girls. Antoinette started '*Children of the Eucharist*' (COTE) in 2012 after the international Eucharistic Congress in Dublin. COTE is a group of lay Catholic people set-up under the auspices of the Apostolate of Eucharistic Adoration in Ireland. Its mission is to enhance the faith lives of children by guiding them gently in quiet prayer in the presence of Jesus, in the Most Holy Eucharist.

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.