

Welcome to our house of prayer!

Short Guide to the Roman Catholic Church St. Teresa of the Child Jesus Donore Avenue, Dublin 8

A church is more than a building. A church is a sacred space for a prayer and a moment of reflection. Please respect the sacredness of the space you have just entered.

The city of Dublin expanded around 1900 and with it our mother parish St. Catherine's, Meath Street. St. Teresa's was built as a chapel-of-ease and opened in 1926. Thérèse of Lisieux was canonised the year before and our church became the first in the world to be named after this already popular young saint. Father Valentine Burke (+1966) worked here from 1926 to 1946. He founded the 35th Donore Scouts in 1928. St. Teresa was constituted as a parish in 1946.

The parish has these main areas: The Tenters; Cork Street; Maryland; South Circular Road; St. Teresa's Gardens. Since July 1980, the Marist Fathers live and work in the presbytery.

The building as Church

The **church** was built in neo-gothic style. An extension was built in the 1950s. You see the difference in the pillars. In **1984**, the church got its present **internal design** according to the renewed liturgy after Vatican II. The high altar was reduced and part of it is now the altar used to celebrate mass. The sanctuary was extended. The communion rails were removed but some elements were kept. The confessionals were taken out and two rooms for confessions were built. The shrines replaced the confessionals in the alcoves. The Lourdes-Grotto, formerly outside, was brought in in 1997.

The side door towards Donore Avenue is the **main entrance**. The door at the opposite side leads to the garden behind the church. The **entrance** on the Southern Façade is mainly used as an emergency exit.

Decorated **railings** go around the grounds. You find two monuments near the Community Centre: 'Hand of Hope' (2007) for the victims of addictions as well as a plaque for babies who died before birth.

Celebrating the Sacraments

To celebrate the sacraments is an essential part of liturgy in the life of Catholics. The **Eucharist** is celebrated at the altar. The risen Lord is present in the Eucharist and in the Word of the Gospel proclaimed at the **Ambo**. The **baptismal font** with the Easter candle is close to the altar. Baptism is the door as it were into the community of the faithful. This is marked by the **holy water font** near the entrance. The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** is either received individually or during Lent or Advent in a penitential service.

A big day is **First Holy Communion**. Our sacramental programme also includes the preparation for **Confirmation**. This sacrament hopes to 'confirm' what was begun in baptism. Two sacraments represent ways of following Christ – **Marriage and Ordination to the priesthood**. Both were and are celebrated in our church.

Once a year we invite on the Sunday nearest 11th February (Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes) those aged and frail to receive the sacrament of **the Anointing of the sick**. This sacrament is also given individually when people ask for it. Every Wednesday mass is offered for the sick. A **funeral** is not as such a sacrament but a very important event. We also honour the dead with one mass every week.

Our Saints and the Shrines

Our patron is St. Teresa of Lisieux, a French Carmelite nun. The saints direct us towards heaven as do the many angels in the church. Standing at the baptismal font invites you to reflect upon your name, possibly your confirmation name. Who is 'my' saint?

Left aisle:

Sacred Heart (Third Friday after Pentecost): The windows with Jesus in Gethsemane, and Jesus carrying the cross meets his mother, together with the statue of the Sacred Heart form as it were a short passion narrative.

St. Anthony of Padua (13 June): This Franciscan saint is very popular. People who lose something and ask for his help tend to recover what was lost. Born in Portugal, Anthony (1195-1231) joined the early Franciscans. He is shown with the child Jesus as he promoted a great devotion to Jesus the Christ who became one like us. He is buried in Padua, Italy.

St. Patrick – first patron of Ireland (17 March): The statue was donated by the workers of the Player Wills Factory. On St. Patrick’s Day, the statue is moved up to the sanctuary. The alcove shows two photographs. One is of Laurence O’Toole (1128-1180), principal patron of the Archdiocese of Dublin (14 November). The other shows Matt Talbot (1856-1925; buried in Glasnevin) and the medal of St Teresa found after his death in his clothes.

St. Patrick (385-461) came first as a captured slave and then as missionary bishop to Ireland.

“My only prayer to God is that it may never happen that I should leave his people which he won for himself at the end of the earth. I ask God for perseverance, to grant that I remain a faithful witness to him for his own sake until my passing from this life.” St. Patrick

St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1 October): She lived from 1873 to 1897. Her parents, Louis and Zélie Martin, are also canonised. As a child Teresa was cured by a vision of Mary smiling at her. Her spirituality is doing small things with extraordinary love. Each year a Triduum in honour of St. Teresa is celebrated.

From the Triduum Prayer:

God, you promised your Kingdom to the little ones and the humble of heart. Give us the grace to walk confidently in the way of St. Teresa so that helped by her prayers, we may see your glory and share in your Kingdom. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

St. Teresa, Little Flower of Jesus Pray for us

St. Teresa, true child of God Pray for us

St. Teresa, friend of all who call on you Pray for us

Right aisle:

St. Joseph (19 March): The New Testament names Joseph as the human father to whom Jesus was entrusted (see the gospels of Matthew and Luke). Pope John XXIII at the end of the first session of Vatican II (1962) declared him patron saint of the universal church. In liturgy, the month of March is dedicated to St. Joseph.

Lourdes-Grotto (11 February; World Day of the Sick): A Grotto with a statue of St. Bernadette was erected in the green behind the church in 1927. Due to vandalism it was removed. There are other images of Mary in the church (windows, icons, Stations of the Cross). After each mass, the Rosary is said. May is the Month of Mary. There used to be May-altars and May-processions. October is dedicated to the rosary.

St. Peter Chanel (28 April): This alcove is dedicated to the first Marist saint, Peter Chanel (1803-1841), martyr and patron saint of Oceania. There are also images of other Marist founders: St. Marcellin Champagnat (1789-1840), Marist priest and founder of the Marist Brothers (FMS), and Jean-Claude Colin (1790-1875), founder of the Society of Mary (Marist Fathers). The space is used for the crib and for the annual mass for all the dead of the parish.

Prayer to St. Peter Chanel:

St Peter Chanel, you left your homeland to proclaim Jesus, Savior of the world, to the peoples of Oceania. Guided by the spirit of God, who is the strength of the gentle, you bore witness to love, even laying down your life. Grant that like you we may live our daily life in peace, joy, and in love. May your prayer and example call forth from our midst many workers for the Gospel so that God's kingdom may reach to the ends of the earth. Amen.

St. Jude (28 October; Eastern Churches: 19 June): This is Judas Thaddaeus as distinct from Judas Iscariot who betrayed the Lord. Our saint is often called the 'saint for hopeless cases' and very popular in many countries. He is mentioned as one of the twelve apostles in the New Testament (cf. Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13).

For many it is a custom to light a candle for a special intention for oneself and/or others and to say a prayer. You will find prayers at each shrine.

The Church Windows

The windows in the sanctuary:

To have three windows in the sanctuary represents the Trinity. The **central window** is dedicated to the Sacred Heart with a beautiful image of St. Thérèse of Lisieux holding roses. The window to the left shows **Mary**, the window to the right **St. Joseph**, both with many angels.

The windows in the side chapels:

Sacred Heart: One window shows Jesus carrying his cross meeting his mother (see the fourth Station of the Cross). The other shows Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane. Both windows show the lower and upper end of a vine as Jesus said, 'I am the true vine' (Gospel of John).

St Joseph: The Annunciation (Luke 1: 36-38) is given in two windows. Mary: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord' (bottom right corner); the Angel and smaller angels: 'Ave Maria – Gratia plena' (on the angel). The third window shows a festive dressed girl with a halo who receives (first) Holy Communion. The letters 'TS' above could indicate Saint Teresa who called her First Holy Communion (8 May 1884) as a deep encounter with Christ.

The windows in the nave: Most of the top windows and the windows below are in a gothic window frame. Some have colour but not figures or symbols. These windows are dedicated to their main function – allow the light to come in.

The Southern façade: There you find three windows corresponding to the northern façade and a small window on top. There is no stained glass window.

The Stations of the Cross

Jesus is in the centre – He is the one who suffers to console those who suffer today.

The Stations end when Jesus is laid in the tomb. Our faith is based on the resurrection and so you sometimes find a 15th station. In our church, you may continue with your pilgrimage to the altar and tabernacle with the Risen Christ present in the Eucharist.

The 14 Stations as titled in our church:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Jesus is condemned to death | 2 Jesus receives the cross |
| 3 Jesus falls the first time | 4 Jesus meets his mother |
| 5 Simon helps Jesus with the cross | 6 Veronica offers Jesus a towel |
| 7 Jesus falls a second time | 8 Jesus consoles the women |
| 9 Jesus falls a third time | 10 Jesus stripped of his garments |
| 11 Jesus nailed to the cross | 12 Jesus dies on the cross |
| 13 Jesus taken down from the cross | 14 Jesus is laid in the tomb |

The prayer at the end of the stations:

'We praise you o Lord and we adore you / for by your holy cross you have redeemed the world'

The Gallery

At the back is an impressive gallery. Underneath was the main entrance. The space is now used for archives and storage rooms (former confessionals). You see the big organ by Alex Chestnutt & Co, Church Organ Manufacturers, Waterford 1930. Sadly, it had not functioned since about the 1980s. Music holds an important place in liturgy. The present location is at the alcove of St. Patrick. We have an electronic piano. Musicians play the piano for mass or special occasions like the 'Blessings and Carols' in December. The senior choir and the children's choir also gather there.

The Seating

There were many more pews, from close to the high altar to the very back of the church. The nicely carved pitch-pine pews offered seats for nearly 900 people. Today, the pews can host about 310. The backspace is available for receptions after special celebrations.

The parish at present has around 3000 Catholics. On a normal Saturday/Sunday, about 300 people come to mass. During the week, around the same number or more would come. Special masses like Christmas or big funerals see a full church.

On many of the pews you find brass plaques in remembrance of deceased people. The plaques from pews taken out are now displayed on two boards on the side wall.

Artists and Companies

Architects and plans: 1924 building: Ashlin & Coleman Architects; 1950 extension: W.H. Byrne & Son; 1984 renovation of the internal: Don Henihan Architect, Monkstown, Co. Dublin

Constructors: 1924 building: Macguire & Short Contractors

The pipe organ: Alex Chestnutt & Co, Church Organ Manufacturers, Waterford 1930

The pews: P. & D. Flynn & Co. Upper Ormond Quay, Dublin, and C. Bull Ltd. Church furnishing Specialists, Suffolk Street, Dublin

Some of the chairs and other wood work: Father James Carr SM (born 1933; in the parish 1990-2008)

The sanctuary windows: Earley & Co, Church decorators and stained glass artists, Camden Street Upper, Dublin (1852-1972)

The statues of the Sacred Heart and St. Joseph: J.A. Deghini & Sons Ltd, Dublin

The frames for the Stations of the Cross: C. Bull Ltd, Church Furniture Specialisation, Dublin.

After your visit

Again, welcome, and hopefully you enjoyed your time in our church. This guide tried to open up the Church for you in different ways – for body, mind, and soul.

The different expressions of art reflect different experiences of the faith of people over the last hundred years. And so you find paintings, statues, stained glass windows, icons, photos, mosaic, different decorations in stone and wood...

We hope that you found something that nourishes your life today. May God bless you!

October 2019

Parish team & parishioners

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