

Index

Religious Poems

1. *Dancing in the Hands of God the Father... 3*
2. *Jesus my Saviour and Friend..... 4*
3. *Breathe on me Holy Spirit..... 5*
4. *Our Lady of Mount Carmel..... 7*
5. *The Rosary..... 9*
6. *The seven Joys and seven Sorrows of St.
Joseph..... 11*
7. *The Mass..... 13*
8. *The Monastery Choir..... 14*
9. *Silence Solitude and Enclosure..... 15*
10. *Mid-way through Lent (Laetare Sunday) 16*

Garden Poems

11. *The Making of the Lavender Walk18*
12. *The Catmint border... 19*
13. *The Golden berry..... 20*
14. *Sr. Cora's Rose border..... 21*
15. *Sr. Cora's Vocation Journey..... 22*
16. *A history of Mount Carmel New Ross..... 24*
17. *New Ross Lace..... 28*
18. *Contact details..... 29*

Religious Poems

Dancing in the hands of God the Father

*There's nowhere else I would rather be,
Than with God the Father whom I long to see.
To play in his hands is my dreamland,
Dancing with God the Father in the heavenly homeland.*

*Oh my dear heavenly Father you understand,
My hearts longings for your very own land.
Here below I honour your command,
And accept when you give me a reprimand.*

*Dearest Father you know me so well,
My purpose and journey you can foretell.
Your care for me is a detailed plan,
You placed me in my family clan.*

*You are my best friend all through daylight,
You are my favourite thought at night.
You are near, you are in my heart,
For me this union is the greatest part.*

*Your hand is upon me protecting me from death,
Keeping me from harm, you give me my breath.
You love me with so great an intensity,
Your love for me is an infinite immensity.*

*While in your providential plan I am an exile,
It is only for a lifespan, just for a little while.
In the bosom of God the Father I would hide,
I go through Mary, through Jesus to God the Father's side.*

*With God the Father I like to play,
With God the Father I like to pray,
In union with Jesus and Mary I can only say,
How wonderful it is to be with God all day.*

*From earthly things I long to be free,
With God the Father in my heart I am a retiree.
God the Father lifts my burdens so I am carefree,
Day by day dear Father I come closer to Thee.*

Jesus my Saviour & Friend

*O Jesus my Saviour and friend,
A plan for me You did intend,
You brought me forth with such delight,
All the Father creates is perfect in your sight.*

*You were with me in my formative years,
There always in my joys and tears,
You called me to virtue; good habits of life,
The reason; to gain heaven in the afterlife.*

*Jesus my Saviour and my friend,
When I sin, you ask me with you to transcend,
You call me to give You my all,
To trust Your plan and not to stall.*

*I ask what is the meaning of life and death?
In the creative act God has given me breath!
Oh, Jesus breathe Your Spirit on me,
Set me free from what keeps me from Thee.*

*You raise me up on Your cross of victory,
You raise me up so I can live eternally,
O Jesus how great is Your love for me,
Its vastness an abyss wider than the sea.*

*I willingly cast myself at Your feet,
Without You Jesus my life is incomplete,
You called me one day to be Your spouse,
Daily I now sing Your praise in Your house.*

*Dear Jesus I ask of Thee a strong faith,
To ponder Your word, to watch and to wait,
From all eternity Oh, my Jesus You are,
My Saviour you are my matchless guiding star.*

*Oh Jesus you are my dearest friend,
Your love is eternal, it will never end,
Saviour and friend of all living things You are,
I am your creature; You love me beyond compare.*

*Jesus You are the great Healer, please heal me,
From all that distances me from Thee,
My heart is Yours and will forever be,
You love me most intimately and for all eternity.*

Breathe on me Holy Spirit

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
with the gentleness of the sun.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
when my working day is begun.*

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
take all pain and anxiety away.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
be with me throughout the day.*

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
grant me to live in your grace.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
I long for a glimpse of your face.*

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
Send me your bright guiding light.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
in you let me take my delight.*

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
Let your grace in my soul display.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
Come and do not delay.*

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
Inspire me what to do and to say.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
to union with God be my pathway.*

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
Send healing rays upon me I pray.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
come in your own special way.*

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
Direct my soul on its way.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
keep all illusions at bay.*

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
especially at the end of the day.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
All worries and fears cast away.*

*Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
when day is over and dim the light.
Breathe on me Holy Spirit,
be with me all through the night*



Our Lady of Mount Carmel

*Oh Our Lady of Mount Carmel fair,
Look on us take us into your care.
In our Lord's providential plan,
You care for us with great élan.*

*Oh Mary the order of Carmel you did plan,
A pathway to heaven for every woman and man.
The oldest evolved order with Elijah it began,
He decimated the idolaters and put them under the ban.*

*Oh Our Lady of Carmel our Mother and guide,
Teach us to choose the narrow path, keep us at your side.
Oh Mary our Mother in you we confide,
Under your broad mantle of Carmel let us hide.*

*You appeared to St. Simon Stock in the 13th century,
With a promise to save our souls for all eternity.
By wearing your most Holy Brown Scapular,
Heaven bound your children from near and far.*

*Now most of all, you want us to pray,
You gave us St. Teresa and St. John to show us the way.
Many are the saints given to Carmel to light our day,
St. Thérèse and St. Elizabeth have a lot to share and say.*

*Oh Mary in your prayer we repeatedly Hail!
You assure us our faith in you will never fail.
Look on us kindly for we are so frail,
Madonna of mercy, you know us in every detail.*

*The reward of our prayer to you Mary is grace,
Grant that one day we may gaze upon your face.
Oh Mary whom Gabriel did call "full of grace,"*

*You are our Mother; help us in this life long race.
Oh thrice blessed Mary our Mother and Queen,
Whose beautiful smile St. Thérèse has seen.
On that day you sent a healing ray,
Our Lady of Mount Carmel heal us today.*

*Oh Mary you wish to lead us to your Son,
To pray to Jesus and on Him to gaze upon.
Upon the cross He gave us you as our Mother,
What a joy for us Mary, there's none like you, no other!*

*Oh Mary keep us always in your Immaculate Heart,
Oh so securely there, may we never depart.
Protect us oh Mother from Satan's wiles,
Cast him from us; bestow on us your sweet smiles.*

*Oh Mary you gave birth to Jesus in the Bethlehem cave,
Jesus asks us for our love in return and to be brave.
His life as a ransom for our sins he gave,
By dying on the Cross our lives did Jesus save.*

*Your rosary you asked us daily to recite,
This we do each and every night.
We thank you Mary for giving us Jesus our Saviour,
Help us to grow in virtue by good behaviour.*

*In 1879 you silently appeared in Knock,
With great love you gazed upon your little flock,
An image of heaven you did for us unlock,
We are grateful to you Mary, for being our rock.*

*Oh Mary you have appeared all over the world,
To call us all back to the Good Shepherd's fold.
This asks of our faith to be both brave and bold,
Oh Mary the full story has yet to unfold.*

The Rosary

*The Rosary is a pious meditation,
It is with Mary a holy conversation.
Our Lady frequently requests its recitation,
Whenever worldwide she makes an apparition.*

*The Rosary with the Dominicans did commence,
And by the faithful has been recited ever since.
It began by an apparition in the thirteenth century,
As an antidote for sin, and a remedy for heresy.*

*Today's rosary consists of twenty mysteries,
Wherein contained are many biblical histories.
On these stories we ponder while we pray,
There are fifty "Hail Mary's" in every rosary we say.*

*The first half of the "Hail Mary" is a greeting by Gabriel
Requesting that Mary decide to be God's chosen vessel.
The second half is Mary and Elizabeth's visitation,
In this verse we see Mary's filial love in action.*

*In the Joyful mysteries we reflect,
On Mary and Joseph God's chosen and elect,
That Mary chose the world's Saviour to expect,
And that Joseph would both of them protect.*

*The Luminous mysteries reveal Christ as one of us,
Calling us to strive to be truly virtuous.
Jesus is the miracle worker, the mediator of God's love,
Bread broken and shared with all of humanity from above.*

*In the Sorrowful mysteries we recall,
How on the cross, Jesus gave his all.
In the Mass it is remembered in an unbloody way,
The liturgy of the Mass is celebrated every day.*

*In the Glorious mysteries Jesus is risen!
The stone is rolled open; he is no longer in prison.
Mary is assumed body and soul into heaven,
The Holy Spirit descends for us to strengthen.*

*On seventh of October 1571; the battle of Lepanto was won,
When Our Lady through the rosary asked this favour from her Son.
Thereafter Our Lady's feast day of the rosary is the 7th of October,
There are fifteen promises for its daily recitation moreover.*



The seven joys & seven sorrows of St. Joseph

*Oh Joseph you were on the point of a cruel separation,
You were in a place of extreme anguish and desperation.
You did not know that Mary had accepted with great love,
To be mother of the world's Saviour in her Nazareth alcove.*

*While you were in your slumber deep,
Into your heart the angel Gabriel did leap.
He confirmed the mystery of the Incarnation,
Thus surmounting all fears and contrary emotion.*

*Oh Joseph to extreme poverty you were no stranger,
But when the infant Jesus was laid in the animal's manger,
The lowliness of the cave was a bitter sorrow for you then,
But the calm acceptance of Mary did thee strengthen.*

*The three wise men came from afar on pilgrimage,
Following the star to do the infant Jesus homage.
What joy filled your heart when they kneeled to adore,
And recognized Jesus as their God forever more.*

*Oh Joseph with the will of God you were in union.
And thus you accepted Jesus's circumcision.
Your heart was pierced at the sight of the blood,
This marked the beginning of Jesus's victimhood.*

*As foster-father you had a duty from above,
You imposed the name of Jesus with an ardent love.
A great honour in your paternity it did behove,
As Jesus's destiny was sin from the world to remove.*

*Simeon spoke to Mary a prophetic word,
That her soul would be sorrowfully pierced by a sword.
For Mary your spouse, you felt deeply in your heart,
And prayed for her earnestly to have a brave heart.*

*Simeon said that Jesus was to be the resurrection of many,
This was for Simeon a long awaited theophany.
You were joyful in Jesus's and Mary's company,
And in your heart you composed a grateful litany.*

*Oh when the archangel Gabriel did yet again appear,
To warn you that a great danger was very near.
With Mary and Jesus you did immediately up and go,
Egypt bound to escape a great and terrible woe.*

*And when passing through old Egypt land,
The good Lord chose to reveal His mighty hand.
The idols of Egypt he did overthrow,
Now the heathens the one true God would know.*

*While in exile you heard of the cruelties in Bethlehem,
How Herod deployed soldiers to kill and cause mayhem.
The fear of the cruel king was in your heart,
You awaited Gabriel's signal from Egypt to depart.*

*St. Joseph you lived in joy in Nazareth with Jesus and Mary,
This was a grace and privilege most extraordinary.
You did for them daily all that was necessary,
You practiced great virtue in a manner most exemplary.*

*On returning from Jerusalem the boy Jesus you could not find,
With Mary you searched over and again, it racked your mind.
It seemed that in Jerusalem Jesus had been left behind,
Of all your trials this was of the most perplexing kind.*

*Oh Joseph the joy of thy soul when Jesus was found,
To your great surprise in the vast temple ground.
His loss most certainly did you and Mary confound,
Now in finding Jesus with Mary your joy did abound.*

The Mass

*The Last Supper was two thousand years ago,
From then on many graces continue to flow.
Here in Mount Carmel it is our privilege to go,
To eight am Mass on a daily basis you know.*

*The Mass is my favourite devotion!
But where would I get that notion?
Many anointed blessings it sets in motion,
Of calmness, trust, serenity and like emotion.*

*We start with the "Penitential Rite,"
In this our heavenly Father takes delight.
Now I humbly acknowledge my sin,
God exhorts me anew to begin.*

*Then we have the "Liturgy of the Word,"
With bible stories as sharp as a sword.
They are all "The Word of the Lord,"
With God they bring us all into one accord.*

*In the "Homily" the priest will elucidate,
The daily readings and gospel he will promulgate.
He puts into context the comprehensive theology,
For religious and laity to better understand you see.*

*Now it is the time for the "Liturgy of the Eucharist,"
In which Christ's body and blood both subsist.
This enables us to grow in actual grace,
And we are made ready to appear before God's face.*

*Now as the priest elevates the host,
I declare to Little Jesus that I love Him the most.
The Eucharist is the summit of all Christian life,
It frees our hearts and minds from strife.*

*At "Holy Communion" we receive Christ's body and blood,
This moment of intimacy really does us an immense good.
After "Holy Communion" I make a long "Thanksgiving,"
Out of gratitude to God for the gift of life I am living.*

The Monastery Choir

*In the monastery we spend much time in the choir,
In the choir the liturgy sets our hearts on fire.
We gather together seven times a day,
For there are seven offices a day for us to pray.*

*The first one is "The Office of Readings,"
We say it late in the evenings.
Its character is two readings which are long,
The first is biblical, the second is virtuous, to make us strong.*

*Next up is the office of "Lauds,"
It's the early morning office that God applauds.
In addition to psalms and scripture there are intercessions,
In these for the whole world we make many intentions.*

*Then comes "Terce" or office "Before Noon,"
At which the commencing hymn we croon.
This office is one of three known as a "Little Hour,"
It is there we complete our morning spiritual armour.*

*"Sext" is also known as the Midday "Little Hour,"
In which we express to the Lord our amour.
It has a litany and is said around noon,
It is a short office and it ends soon.*

*The last "Little Hour" is called "None,"
It is often said in private or while alone.
Its timing and character is mid-afternoon,
Praising God throughout the day is our boon.*

*In the evening we have the office of "Vespers,"
On festive days the chanting heavenward whispers.
We then offer our prayers as so many flowers,
To the Triune God who is the only thing that matters.*

*Now we come to the nocturnal office "Compline,"
This is the last office that closes the scene.
It with a long "Examen" commences,
And with an anthem to Our Lady reminiscences.*

Solitude & Silence & Enclosure

*Silence and solitude I do declare,
As an aid to prayer there is no compare.
Solitude sets the tone and mood,
It is very much for our greater good.*

*In an atmosphere of silence and solitude,
You will in peace and tranquillity exude.
Enclosure is an aid to our prayer life,
It keeps us from all unnecessary strife.*

*One reason why we have enclosure,
Is to reduce our daily world exposure.
It helps our thoughts to recollect,
And on the Triune God to reflect.*

*Be still before the Lord and wait,
This is a good habit to cultivate.
Many a good nun will you tell,
It's good to dwell in one's own cell.*

*The Spirit brings me to a point that's still,
And there I learn to do God's will.
To open the mind and heart to prayer,
And the indwelling God who is there.*

*If one were to pray in the garden ground,
It makes my thoughts very profound.
In the garden nature is all around,
And so my thoughts of God abound.*

*In the chapel where I ponder Jesus in the tabernacle,
I am in spirit in the upper room of the Cenacle.
To be near God is my happiness,
In solitude there is joyfulness.*

*There's a time to keep silence and a time to speak,
Lord you know I am very weak,
Our time of prayer and togetherness makes me strong,
And in my heart I sing your song.*

Mid-way through Lent “Laetare Sunday”

*The season of Lent is half spent,
Half spent is the season of Lent.
To confession I must go,
And tell the priest my tale of woe.*

*Oh to fast I am aghast,
At this austerity I cannot last.
To make reparation for my sinful past,
Oh merciful Saviour my sins from thee cast.*

*The sanctuary is in a bare state,
The immense Easter joy we anticipate.
On display is the thorny crown,
Sorry Jesus, I have let you down.*

*Lent is a special time to watch and pray,
The Lenten season lasts a mere 40 day,
Now pose the question: Is your Lent well spent?
What Jesus wants you to do: is repent!*

*Then midway Laetare Sunday comes our way,
The fourth Sunday of Lent and Mother's day,
The purple and violet are the colour of the season,
A reminder of our penitential practice is the reason.*

*Lent is not a season of show,
We are exhorted in virtue to grow,
The liturgy features much from Exodus,
It tells us of what God has done for us.*

*We look forward to Holy week,
Forgiveness of our sins is what we seek,
Although the Cross and Calvary are bleak,
Our Saviour's heart is both humble and meek.*

*On the cross Jesus takes all my sins away,
The cross is the terrible price he did pay,
Then from the tomb the stone is rolled away,
With rejoicing and alleluia, it is Easter day!*

Garden Poems

The making of the Lavender Walk

*It all started with talk,
Let's make a "Lavender Walk!"
Alongside the perimeter wall,
There's a pathway and trees so tall.*

*She said with holy glee,
"We could landscape this pathway" said she.
"It looks quite unfinished and bare,
And nobody seems to care."*

*Let's sow some lavender seeds,
They don't have many care needs.
We sowed them in the spring,
They grew well and fast like anything.*

*To prepare the ground that was our play,
We worked hard at it all day,
With weeds, holly and ivy to contend,
The woodchip, weed controls do lend.*

*So they grew up tall and strong,
The time to plant them came along,
The robin and blackbird did sing their song,
The lavender blue makes a lovely throng.*

*And now a year on they start to take shape,
And a lovely perfume in summer does escape,
The lavender border is of linear landscape,
Interspersed with periodic trees, that drape.*

*I am a co-worker with God the Creator,
Co-creation is my joy and educator,
In kitchen, garden or card making,
Co-creation is to me fascinating.*

The Catmint Border

*The Catmint border is in good order,
In good order is the Catmint border.
Nepeta cataria is the proper Latin name,
Catnip is another name for this kind of game!*

*It needs to be in full sun to flourish,
With free draining soil for it to nourish.
The Catmint plant naturally attracts cats,
So you don't have to worry about the rats!*

*In the Catmint border, the cats do lay,
In the Catmint border they lay all day.
The cats in the Catmint are fun to watch,
It's really amazing how they love this patch!*

*To observe the cats as they do themselves wash,
Their antics and playfulness are never slapdash.
They stretch and twitch and ground do scratch,
These endearing things I would love to sketch!*

*Also the butterflies fly around and dance,
In and around the Catmint they enhance.
The cats endeavour the butterflies to catch,
But to this end they are no match!*

*The Catmint pest and mosquito do repell,
Due to its endearing and lovely smell.
Catmint has a lovely violet blue flower,
And keeps its shape even after a good shower!*

*The foliage of Catmint is an attractive grey-green,
With the blue flower is as lovely a sight ever seen.
Catmint in the border is such a lovely plant,
And that is the end of my little Catmint rant!*

"The Golden Berry" Physalis Edulis

*Well my little Peruvian belle,
So delicately enclosed in your paper-like shell.
An exotic sweet and sour berry,
That looks like a robust golden cherry.*

*My dear "Golden Berry" you have many a name,
But in top class hotels is your claim to fame.
The English poetically call you "love in a cage,"
As a desert decoration in restaurants you are all the rage.*

*Your various other names are Peruvian ground cherry,
The Inca berry, and quite commonly the Cape gooseberry.
Oh my little golden berry, you look so well,
And by the way, you taste just swell.*

*My little golden berry, you are a neat treat,
Delicious and tempting and so tart and sweet.
Your lovely lacy cape gives you good protection,
From the list of pests, there's almost no exception.*

*We sowed you early in February in the heat,
Thinking that the challenge would be quite a feat.
You were planted out early in the month of May,
You grew really fast, you went skyway.*

*You need some support along a fence or wall,
And you only grow two or three feet tall.
The time came in autumn to harvest at last,
Being a strange new fruit the sisters were aghast.*

*The little "golden berry" is very versatile,
And the many possibilities would make you smile.
In the kitchen there are an endless variety of dishes,
From smoothies, muffins and preserves if one wishes.*

*In the garden under the summer sky azure,
The little "golden berry" will thrive and endure.
I write this little poem to give God pleasure.
My gratitude to Him is no small measure.*

Sr. Cora's Rose Border

*The roses in the border came mostly from Loughrea,
They were mostly gifts for her Profession day.
For the donors and benefactors we pray,
In the daily prayers that we say.*

*The roses in the border are very strong,
And indeed they flower all summer long.
The roses make a colourful display,
They are long-term, they are here to stay.*

*The yellow and the white,
Are colours very bright.
While the crimson and the gold,
Are colours very bold.*

*There are several shades of pink,
And the cream rose, is lovely I do think,
There's a lovely red and white two-tone bloom,
While the orange rose would brighten any room.*

*In the rose border there is a variety,
We use them often in arrangements of piety.
For the sanctuary they really fit the bill,
The rose border is on a slight hill.*

*The roses annually need a good feed,
In late autumn you do this deed.
The roses are pruned once a year,
The reason for this is very clear.*

*To buy a good rosebush, it is quite dear,
But they last a lifetime of many a year.
They are a good choice to commemorate,
That very special memory or date.*

*Of types of roses there are many,
They are all well considered in botany.
In Cora's border they are mainly Hybrid-T
Just perfect for a cut-flower devotee.*

Sr. Cora's Vocation Journey

*Sr. Cora has a certain aura,
A certain aura has Sr. Cora.
To the garden she oft would go,
To plant or dig or weed or sow.*

*First came the Lavender walk,
About which there was much talk,
Then came the cat in the mint plant,
About which she wrote quite a rant.*

*The rhubarb patch was keenly watched,
In case the crop was unfortunately botched.
And as for the "Golden Berry"
It made the sisters very merry.*

*She is a farmer's daughter from Navan,
In county Meath her life began.
After school she studied much,
Home economics, horticulture, accounts and such.*

*Her professional life was in accountancy,
But later she felt it wasn't to her fancy.
Then she heard a call, to give her all,
She felt very small, and initially did stall.*

*At 34, to the religious life she opened the door,
But it didn't work out, she hit the floor,
She thought that Jesus wanted her to Him adore,
But of the journey of her vocation there is more.*

*She next entered the order of the Visitation,
And for seven years stayed in that station.
But they had to close; such is her tale of woes,
To Carmel in Loughrea; to St. Joseph's she goes.*

*After a further seven years there were more tears,
Loughrea Carmel closes; realising her greatest fears.
She transferred with two sisters to Carmel in New Ross,
Sometimes ones vocation seems a loss and is a heavy cross.*

*Now my vocation journey with New Ross is clear,
With God's blessing and the company of my sisters so dear.
And with each day and with every passing year,
I firmly realise that in life's ups and down's God is near.*

Mount Carmel New Ross History

A brief history of Mount Carmel New Ross

Mother Mary Teresa Kavanagh

Mother Mary Teresa of the Holy Ghost was born in New Ross on 29th July 1769. Her father and brother were local medical doctors. The Kavanagh home was at Ringwood, The Rower, Co. Kilkenny and their medical practice was located a few miles away at No. 2 John Street, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

In 1775, during the period of the Penal Laws, Dr. George Kavanagh and his son became Protestants in order to save their property.

Dr. Kavanagh's daughter decided to become a nun and joined the Carmelite Monastery in Ranelagh (Dublin). In April 1791, at 22 years of age, Sr. Mary Teresa Kavanagh made her profession as a Carmelite Nun.

In her early religious life she had first-hand experience of the persecution of the Penal Laws, when in 1804 the members of her community were driven from their convent, deprived of the religious habit, and compelled to rent a house in Arran Quay (Dublin) where they lived as seculars before being allowed to return to their cloister. Mother Kavanagh was Mother Prioress, when the convent of Ranelagh was built in 1805.

For many years Mother Kavanagh had nurtured hopes to found a monastery in her native town, as reparation for the defection of her father and brother from the Roman Catholic Church. Coincidentally, it was through another family relation that her prayers were answered

In 1816 her prayers were heard when her sister's brother in law, Dean Chapman, Parish Priest of New Ross, applied to Ranelagh Carmel for a group who

would undertake the running of a school for the education of poor children in his parish. It is most likely that the family connection prompted Dean Kavanagh to make this request to Ranelagh Carmel. The Mother Prioress of Ranelagh agreed, if matters could be arranged, to place a small community of her Sisters at Dean Chapman's service.

Thus Mother Kavanagh returned to New Ross as Foundress and First Prioress of Mount Carmel Monastery on 18th July 1817, aged 48 years. Mother Kavanagh was Prioress for 18 years, and guided the destinies of her foundation with singular tact and prudence through all the early vicissitudes and struggles in trying times. Irish Catholics still lay crushed under the oppression and restrictions of the Penal Laws, as Catholic Emancipation was not granted for more than a decade after the arrival of the Carmelites to New Ross. Mother Kavanagh died on 18th May 1843.

The Foundation of the Carmelite Monastery in New Ross

On Friday 18th July 1817, Mother Kavanagh and the founding group accompanied by the Father Provincial, Fr. Leo Oates O.D.C. entered and took possession of the new convent which they named Mount Carmel. On 20th July 1817, Feast of the Prophet Elijah, the Father Provincial celebrated the first Mass and the new monastery was blessed and dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

The Founding Group comprised Mother Kavanagh along with two professed sisters, Mother Mary Augustine Madden and Sr. Mary Gertrude Hodgens and two postulants, Dorothy Hickey and M.A. McDonagh.

Mount Carmel Monastery and School

In 1817 there was no religious community of women in the Diocese of Ferns, all earlier ones having been suppressed during the 16th Century. The great teaching Orders were in their infancy or not yet founded. The first schools for the poor were set up by Nano Nagle (Presentation Sisters) in 1754, by Edmund Ignatius Rice (Christian Brothers) in 1802 and Catherine McAuley (Mercy Sisters) in 1827. One consequence of this was that poor children lacked opportunity for schooling and religious instruction. For this reason, the Bishop of Ferns, Dr. Ryan granted his approval for the foundation of the Carmelite Monastery in New Ross, on condition that the nuns undertake the education of the children of the town. This reads a surprising condition in view of the Carmelite contemplative calling, but perhaps an understandable one in the circumstances of the times. Therefore in October 1817, three months after their arrival, the nuns opened a Poor School in the ground floor of their residence.

By 1837, when the Carmelite Community numbered fifteen, it became necessary to demolish the small house which was their first house twenty years earlier, and extend the newer building towards the front.

From 1833 the school was linked with the National School System which had been established in 1831. The Mount Carmel School closed after 115 years of service to the education of the children of New Ross and the nuns returned to complete enclosure.

In 1932 was the year the Carmelite Community was freed to return to their life of contemplative prayer within strict enclosure. Hence, on 1st July 1932 the Nuns

of Mount Carmel started adherence to their Primitive Rule.

After the closure of the school in 1932 the Sisters turned to making Altar Breads as a means of earning their living. The electric baker was installed in 1932 and the first breads baked on the hot Irons were used at the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin in the same year. To the present, the Sisters continue to make Altar Breads for use in various parishes throughout the country.

To earn their living the Sister also made the very popular Brown Scapulars, Piety Cases and Motor Badges. In recent times the Sisters have turned their artistic skills towards the making of greeting cards and candles.

The Foundation of the Monastery of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Joseph at Zing, Taraba State, Nigeria. 1995

The Carmel of Zing was founded from the Monastery of our Lady of Mount Carmel, New Ross, Co. Wexford at the request of the Bishop of Yola, Nigeria, Right Reverend Patrick, F. Sheehan OSA. From the start, a few Sisters declared themselves willing and eager to go on a foundation to Yola. The Foundation Group came from five different monasteries, each with its own distinctive tradition. As Zing Carmel grew stronger the need for the Founding Missionaries decreased and they gradually returned home to Mount Carmel New Ross.

In 2017 the bicentenary of the monastery was fittingly celebrated.

New Ross Lace

An Industrial Lace School was started in 1833 with the aim of providing the girls of the town with employment and to make them self-sufficient. The needlepoint lace which was painstakingly produced by a needle and a single thread provided an income for the poor and helped many local families to survive.

Mother Austin Dalton, a native of Ballygub, Inistioge, changed the reputation of New Ross Lace from ordinary to extraordinary, making it one of the most sought after status symbols in the world. Mother Dalton re-discovered the lost art of Venetian Point Lace, through painstakingly undoing stitch by stitch, a sample which chanced to come her way. She then designed variations such as Rose Point, Flat Point, and Needle Point etc., which experts judged to be better than the originals. Samples of this delicate work won awards at Exhibitions around the world – London, Edinburgh, Brussels, Paris, Chicago, New York, Buenos Aires etc.

A shawl of Mount Carmel rose – point lace was presented to Queen Victoria on the occasion of her diamond jubilee in 1897. However the regular markets for Mount Carmel Lace was threefold:

- 1) Ecclesiastical: Altar Falls, Vestments, Veils
- 2) High Fashion: Collars, cuffs, handkerchiefs & fan covers
- 3) Tableware: Tablecloths, napkins, doilies.

In the early 20th century, the demand for lace dwindled due to the production of synthetic fibres and machine made lace. World War I saw the end of its production in the Monastery. However many skilled lace makers worked from home.

Nowadays New Ross Lace is a treasured heirloom. Samples of the Lace may be seen in museums around the world and the Monastery treasures some precious heirlooms which are now destined to go on public display.



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Please visit our website at:

<http://carmelitesnewross.ie>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/carmelitesnewross>

Mass: 8am

Evening Prayer: 4.30pm

Visiting Hours: 9am – 11.30am
3pm – 4.15pm

For further copies please contact us at the above and we will do our best to facilitate you.