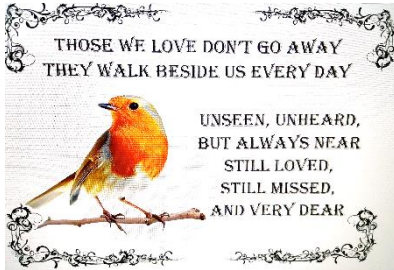




# NEA NEWSLETTER



## NOVEMBER NEWS 2022



## November – the month of remembrance

Mary Oliver is a poet who understood grief all too well. Here are some of her reflections.

### STARLINGS IN WINTER (EXCERPT)

Ah, world, what lessons you prepare for us,  
even in the leafless winter,  
even in the ashy city.  
I am thinking now  
of grief, and of getting past it;  
I feel my boots  
trying to leave the ground,  
I feel my heart  
pumping hard. I want  
to think again of dangerous and noble things.  
I want to be light and frolicsome.  
I want to be improbable beautiful and afraid of nothing,  
as though I had wings.

### THE USES OF SORROW

Someone I loved once  
gave me a box full of darkness.  
It took me years to understand that  
this, too, was a gift.

### IN BLACKWATER WOODS (EXCERPT)

To live in this world  
you must be able  
to do three things:  
to love what is mortal;  
to hold it  
against your bones knowing  
your own life depends on it;  
and, when the time comes to let it go,  
to let it go.

### HEAVY

That time  
I thought I could not  
go any closer to grief  
without dying  
I went closer,  
and I did not die.  
Surely God  
had his hand in this,  
as well as friends.  
Still, I was bent,  
and my laughter,  
as the poet said,  
was nowhere to be found.  
Then said my friend Daniel  
(brave even among lions),  
“It is not the weight you carry  
but how you carry it—  
books, bricks, grief—  
it’s all in the way  
you embrace it, balance it, carry it  
when you cannot, and would not,  
put it down.”  
So I went practicing.  
Have you noticed?  
Have you heard  
the laughter  
that comes, now and again,  
out of my startled mouth?  
How I linger  
to admire, admire, admire  
the things of this world  
that are kind, and maybe  
also troubled—  
roses in the wind,  
The sea geese on the steep waves,  
a love  
to which there is no reply?

## BEREAVEMENTS



We offer sincere sympathy to the sisters in the Madonna House community on the recent death of two sisters.

Sr Catherine Gough RSHM aged 71 years in the 51<sup>st</sup> year of her religious profession.

Sr Máire O'Donnell RSHM aged 86 years and in the 63<sup>rd</sup> year of her religious profession.

*May Catherine and Máire rest in peace and rise in glory.*

### TRIBUTE TO CATHERINE - Philippa



On behalf of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary it is my privilege to welcome you all here today to join with us in celebrating Catherine's life and journeying with her to her new life, life to the fullest. I especially welcome Catherine's family – her twin sister, our own Sr. Mary, Nano, Philip and Marian as well as her nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews. Welcome too to Catherine's relatives and her wide circle of friends who have been journeying with her for many years. We are also very happy to have so many parishioners with us today. You have been such a support to us over many years.

Catherine was born on November 20<sup>th</sup> 1950 in Faithlegg five minutes after her twin Mary. They were together through primary school in Faithlegg and Secondary school here in Ferrybank and they entered the congregation on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1969. After taking their first vows their paths divided. Catherine did her third level education in Newcastle on Tyne, in England and went on to make a great name for herself as a teacher. She taught in Carlisle and Barrow in Furness where she is still fondly remembered today as “the best teacher”. In 1991 Catherine was asked to go to Zambia and to teach in St. Joseph's Secondary School Chivuna. She very generously accepted the challenge and took with her, her passion, love and dedication to bringing out the best in each student and to inspiring them to be confident, caring and compassionate young women.

Catherine had many gifts and especially a great love for the congregation and a longing for our numbers to grow in Africa. She had no hesitation then when she was asked to work in Formation with young women who had an interest in joining our congregation. This work spanned Zambia and Zimbabwe which in 1996 became the Zambezi Region.

It was decided in the early 2000's that an international novitiate be opened in Brazil and again Catherine was asked to uproot, learn a new language and be the first novice mistress in Belo Horizonte Brazil. Without hesitation Catherine's generosity led her to pack her bags once more and head off. She spent 6 years training the novices and today we have several young committed and dedicated sisters in the Zambezi Region all formed by Catherine who led by example and by her own strong commitment to religious life and community life.

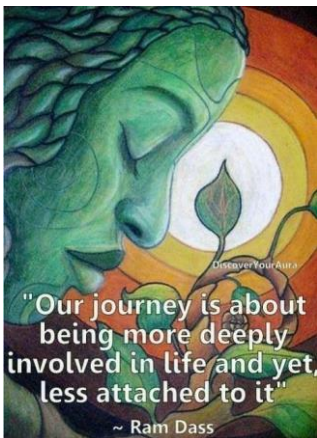
Catherine came back to Ireland in 2014 and settled in Huntstown in Dublin where she forged many friendships with the women young and not so young that she led in prayer groups. This was a great joy for Catherine but God had other plans for her and she developed cancer. She was well cared for in Beaumont hospital but opted to come to Ferrybank for the continuation of her treatment at Waterford University Hospital to be closer to her family.

Over the past two years Catherine's acceptance of her sickness and fragility was an example to all of us. Her depth of faith, her interest in everyone and her quiet and calm assurance that all was well and would be well was an inspiration.

It was an absolute privilege for those of us who were with Catherine on Monday. She was sleeping and then a big smile lit up her face and she slipped away happy. May you now enjoy life to the full in all its glory and we believe that you will be with us always. Rest in Eternal peace Catherine and thank you for everything you were to each of us.

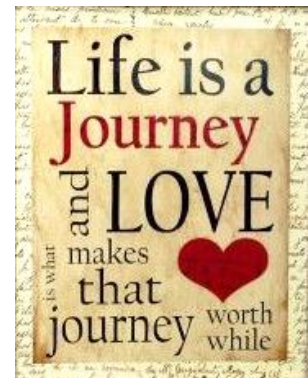
## IN LOVING MEMORY OF SR CATHERINE GOUGH - Virginia

Catherine, your blithe spirit has left our cosmic reality  
After almost a seventy two year span.  
You have intertwined with and influenced many lives  
From the bright quizzical, fun-loving, carefree, schoolgirl  
To your days as teacher, formator, encourager, carer.  
You gave hope and uplift to all those whose lives you touched,  
Irrespective of colour, creed or nationality you always saw  
personhood  
As you relentlessly pursued your path of touching  
The spark of life sometimes virtually extinguished in others.  
You gently nurtured them towards trust and hope,  
Whilst you selflessly walked with them on their journey.



You could say: 'yes' to many challenges.  
And when you had to say 'no' it was always with regret;  
To the extent that somehow it was perceived as right and just –  
You did not dismiss because you listened  
And found a kernel in the listening that gave direction.  
You once said to a colleague questioning how to handle difficult people  
'Just love them.'  
These three little words brought a long meandering debate to a close  
For you they were not just words but a lived reality.  
You put them into action and wisely acted on them.  
You truly loved people and managed to find some good in what they did.

In your last days you cared for all your carers through your love and gratitude.  
You truly birthed the essence of the scriptural words;  
'He must increase I must decrease'  
The big 'I' of the 'Me' was never visible as you moved gently to the end.  
You had reached the pinnacle that somehow all strive to attain.  
As they walk, hobble, stumble, sprint or run  
On the race which was begun at birth  
And moves in myriads of ways  
Through the many paths and vicissitudes of life,  
Toward a new birthing not from the womb but from the tomb.



## SHORTENED EULOGY FOR MAIRE – Patsy



Sr Máire was born with her twin Padraig in Enniskillen, Donegal on 28th April 1936 to their parents Eithne and Bernard.  
Their mother was an active member of Cumann na Mban. The twins spent their early years in Donegal and always retained their love of their birthplace. The family moved to Terenure, Dublin and while Padraig was educated in Terenure College Máire was a pupil in Drishane School in Co. Cork. On completing their secondary education their dad said to Maire " as Padraig is going to join the Carmelites in case anything happens to Mammy and me you better go to University and get a profession."  
Máire qualified as a teacher and joined the staff in our Secondary School in Sandymount where she taught Geography and English. Sr Madeleine was one of her pupils and told me "all the students loved Máire."



In 1959 Máire entered our Novitiate in Ferrybank and after Profession she returned to Sandymount to teach and eventually was the last Principal in the school where through her concern for others she was instrumental in helping every lay teacher to get a position in other schools.

When we think of Máire we remember a person who was kind, just, concerned for everyone, gentle yet able to speak tough truth when necessary, obliging and ready to minister whenever and wherever she was needed. These gifts were witnessed when she lived and taught in Dublin, in Rathmore Grammar School, Belfast. in Lourdes Mount Centre, Ealing - where she engaged with Adult Groups and School groups and was particularly helpful to the many Refugee Kurds who were in Ealing at that time, in her months in Brazil and visit to Zambia and in Upminster, Essex where she was the Province Archivist. That work suited her very well because she was meticulous in recording information, unlike Padraig, who, while being a brilliant lecturer, would have a "little piece of paper here, there, and everywhere" as many of his students could recall.

Máire came to Madonna House in 2013 and was cared for with love and devotion especially during her last few years when she was confined to bed. Máire was admitted to Palliative Care in Ardkeen Hospital on the 9th Nov and died peacefully on Friday 11th. We Thank you Máire for your love, service and years spent with us and we pray that you may Rise in Glory in God's Presence with Padraig and all your loved ones forever.

We offer our sympathy to the sisters of the **Portuguese Area** on the death of **Sister Maria de la Salette da Rocha Marques** who died on 19th November. Sister Maria de la Salette da Rocha Marques was aged 94 and in the 70th year of her religious life. She was a member of the Braga community. May she rest in peace.



*Thank you very much to all of you who supported me and the family during the past three years and more especially during the three months before Catherine died. We appreciate all the messages of sympathy, the masses and prayers and, in many cases, your presence at her funeral in church and online. It is at times like this that the internationality of our RSHM family is very evident and we felt the support from Africa and Brazil as well as the NEA. It was good to have Florence present at the funeral as a big part of Catherine's heart was left in the Zambezi Region. Let us all continue to support each other in our bereavements.  
Many thanks, Mary*