

Our
Lady of Lourdes
Inch.

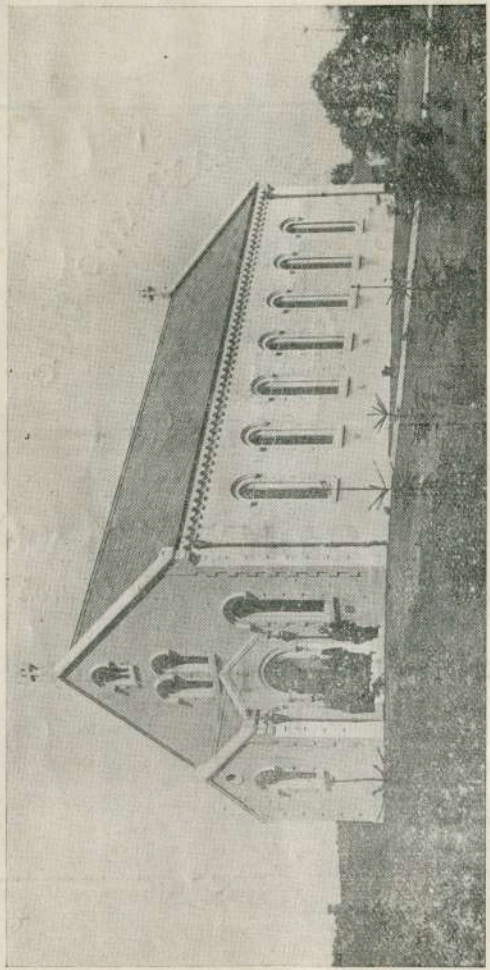
Cuimneacán easlaire úire
na
h-Inche.



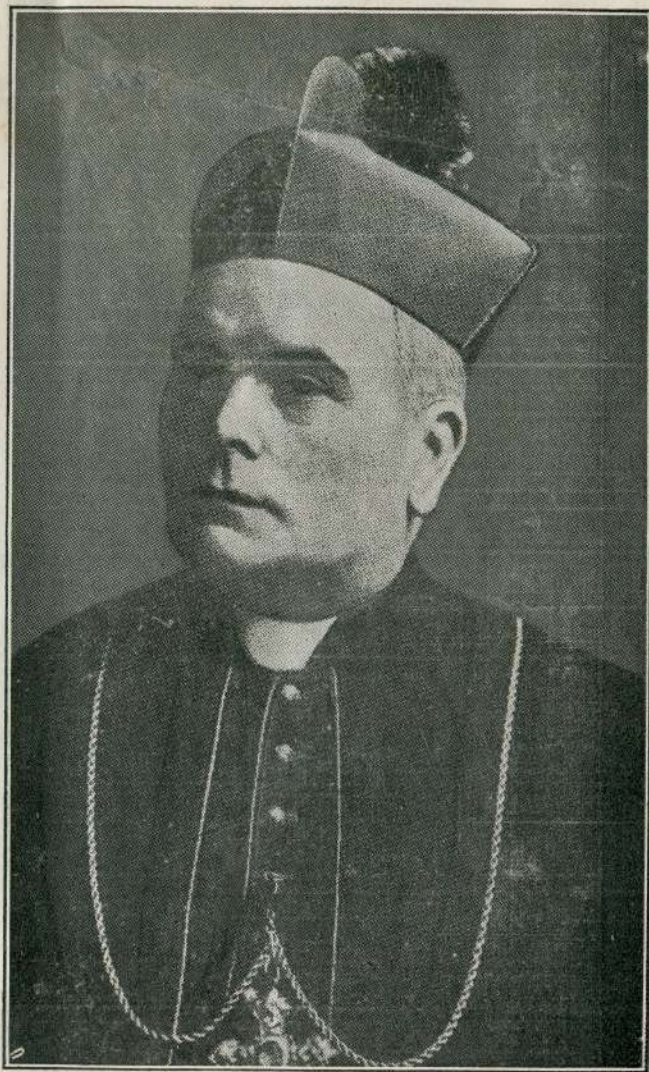
A SOUVENIR
Of the Erection of the Church
OF
OUR LADY OF LOURDES
INCH.

1923.

CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES, INCH, TIRCONAILL



DEDICATED BY HIS LORDSHIP MOST REV. DR. MCHUGH, BISHOP OF DERRY, ON 27TH MAY, 1923
Above Group—Rev. M. O'Mullin, P.P., Fahan; Mr. J. P. M'Grath, M.R.I.A.; Architect; Mr. S. Brown,
Mr. H. M'Dermott (Directors Sweeney's, Ltd., Builders.)



MOST REV. DR. M'HUGH, BISHOP OF DERRY.



VERY REV. MGR. O'DOHERTY, P.P., V.G.,
STRABANE.

Dedicated to
Mgr. Schoepfer,
Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes,
Guardian of the Miraculous Grotto
and
Distinguished Benefactor
of
Our Lady of Lourdes, Inch

Nihil Obstat :

JOANNES DOHERTY,

Censor Deputatus.

P.P., V.G., Strabane.

1st October, 1923.

Imprimi Potest

✠ CAROLUS

Epûs Derriensis.

CONTENTS

—(o)—

	PAGE.
Synoptic Historic Notice of Inch ..	7
Collection of Funds ...	8—9
Letter of the Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh ..	9—11
Appeal for Public Support by Father O'Mullin ...	11—13
Reference by P. L. Malone, Esq., Editor <i>Derry Journal</i> ..	13—14
Prize Drawings and Subscriptions ...	14—20
Ceremony of Cutting 'First Sod' ...	20—22
Foundation Stone Laid & Unveiling of Our Lady's Statue ...	22—24
Autograph Letter and Precious Souvenir (Piece of the Rock) from Bishop of Lourdes, and Fr. O'Mullin's Reply ...	25—28
Final Appeal ...	28—29
Solemn Dedication ..	30—31
Charity Sermon ...	31—43
Fr. O'Mullin Returns Thanks ..	44—46
Description of the Church, High Altar, Windows, etc. ..	47—51
Lady Day, 1923, in Inch ...	51—52
A Few Reminiscences ...	53—56

Preface.

It is hoped that this little record of the steps taken in connection with the collection of the funds and the erection of the new Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Inch, will be an interesting souvenir at least for those immediately concerned, and a testimony of our gratitude to God and the Immaculate Virgin Mary for their blessing all our efforts and crowning them with such signal success.

If an enterprise of this kind be laborious and exacting to a degree well nigh inconceivable, it is equally honourable and meritorious, being done for God; and we should regard our present success as an inspiration to unshaken confidence in Our Lady of Lourdes' intercession and as an earnest of our great reward hereafter.

Long may Our Lady of Lourdes, Inch, with its precious piece of the Rock of Massabielle so kindly sent by the illustrious Bishop of Lourdes, be a centre of devotion to God, of veneration for Our Lady, and an ever increasing source of Heavenly Blessings on ourselves and all our Benefactors.

M. O'Mullin, Fahan.

Feast of the Nativity of the
B.V.M., 1923.

INCH A PART OF UPPER FAHAN PARISH.

HISTORICAL REFERENCE OF 14TH CENTURY.

Inch till about 70 years ago was a complete island, the present two monster embankments connecting with Fahan and Burt having been constructed in the early fifties of the last century by Lord Brassey.

The island is beautifully situated, being the central gem of a district lavishly bedecked with scenic beauties difficult to surpass. Add to this the many historic spots all around—Fahan Abbey, dating from the 6th century, to the North, Aileach to the East, Kilmacrenan to the West, and Rathmullan to the North-West. What historic memories do not these recall ?

Inch, Burt, and Aileach Castles were probably built in 15th Century for the O'Dohertys, Lords of Inishowen from this till the death of Cahir O'Doherty, in 1608. Inch as the result of the confiscation of this period fell into the hands of Sir Arthur Chichester, and was subjected to all the horrors of the persecutions that ensued; little wonder that only about a dozen Catholic families hold land in the island to-day, as the rest are but labourers. The townland in which the new church is built is called Carnaghan, in Irish "Carnachan"—from the fact that the whole district around formed in ancient times a vast graveyard; some say, indeed, it formed the graveyard for Aileach itself. In Norman times, in the reign of King Edward II., reference is made to an Inch church and the Bishop of Derry—Geoffrey M'Laughlin (1297-1315), giving the advowson of it to Earl de Burgo, who built his castle at Greencastle, Moville, in 1305. When the present old church was built it is difficult to determine. It is quite probable, however, that it was built by Dr. O'Donnell, who became Bishop

in 1798 in succession to Dr. M'Devitt. From about 1811 Iskaheen, Burt, and Inch, which formed till then part of Templemore (Derry) were united into a separate parish. This old church was used as a school-house on week-days, and built on a dried-up mill dam! It was about 30 feet long, but an addition was made to it in 1858. Father M'Aleer was made parish priest of the parish of Burt and Inch in 1847, and continued so till his death, in 1864. Burt and Inch were then united with Upper Fahan (which had been separated from Lower Fahan and Buncrana in 1846, and had the late Most Rev. Dr. Kelly as its first parish priest), and the three districts are since known as the Parish of Upper Fahan. The present Church in Fahan was built by Most Rev. Dr. Maginn. in 1833. Before Inch Old Church was built probably some 120 years ago, Mass was said at Moress Point, and the priest likely came from the Fahan side, from Bail'an tSagairt (Priestown), near to the bridge that spans the railway at Inch Road. Here there is a height called Ard Aifrimn, "Mass Hill," which is nearly opposite to Moress Point. The new church, Our Lady of Lourdes, is built in the centre of Inch. "The first sod" for it was cut on St. Patrick's Day, 1922. The foundation stone laid and blessed on Ascension Thursday following by Rev. M. O'Mullin, P.P., and its Solemn Dedication on May the 27th, 1923, by Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh, Bishop of Derry.

THE COLLECTION OF FUNDS.

The two acres of which the grounds consist were purchased from Mr. Tomb, an esteemed resident of Fahan, by Father Sheerin, P.P., in May, 1907. Was it a mere coincidence that the site for this church of Our Lady of Lourdes was purchased and the church completed in the same month? By means of a bequest (the Campbell-M'Aleer one), and contributions by the people of the island, the expense thus incurred was cleared

off. For the next three years the people, though mostly labourers, contributed very generously, but had to cease doing so through sheer inability.

When Father O'Mullin was appointed to the pastoral charge of Fahan in February, 1915, he found to the credit of the new church fund about £270. As the great war was then raging and so continued for three years more nothing could be attempted in the matter of a renewal of the contributions. Upon the end of the war another start was made by the congregation, though few were sanguine enough to hope to see the new church erected.

Towards the end of 1919, Father O'Mullin, considering that the local people had contributed more than could be expected of them, requested the Bishop's (Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh) sanction for an appeal to the public. This was promptly and cordially given.

APPEAL FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT.

After Mass on Sunday in Inch, on November 2nd, 1919, Father O'Mullin, P.P., on referring to the heroic efforts being made by the small community of Catholics on the Island of Inch (Lough Swilly) to raise funds for a new church, read an important letter on the subject by his Lordship the Bishop, Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh, as follows:—

Bishop's House, Derry,

October 31, 1919.

Dear Father O'Mullin—In reply to your letter asking permission to make an appeal to the public in support of your efforts to raise funds for the erection of a new church in the Island of Inch, I desire to say that it gives me great pleasure to comply with your request, and to invoke a blessing on all who may contribute towards this very laudable object.

It is pretty well known throughout the diocese, and even beyond its borders, that the little church in Inch, poor at best, has for some time ceased to be a place fit for Divine worship, and that in its present condition it is even a source of danger to the faithful, who have no alternative but to go there in order to comply with their religious obligations.

Of the seventy families that make up the Catholic population of the Island, I understand four-fifths are labourers; still, such has been the anxiety of this little community to provide a church worthy of their holy religion, that, with a generosity, all their own, they have already contributed £750 towards this project so dear to their hearts. What was not spent in purchasing the site for both church and graveyard stands to the credit of the building fund; and the people, I am told, are willing to continue their contributions in the same generous spirit till the work is completed.

Owing to the abnormal price of labour and building material, the cost of erecting a House of God in keeping with our faith in the Real Presence on our altars, however simple it may be in design, must necessarily run into some thousands of pounds. Such a liability the good people of Inch, with all their generosity, could never meet without extern help.

Considering the wretched condition of the present little church, the limited means of the congregation, and the absolute necessity for a church in a place so isolated as is the Island of Inch, it would be difficult indeed to find an object that should make a stronger appeal to the religiously and charitably disposed.

That your appeal may meet the response it deserves and that the blessing of heaven may descend on all who help you and your spirited people in the great work in which you are engaged is the fervent prayer of

Yours sincerely,

✠ CHAS. McHUGH.

Continuing, he (Father O'Mullin) said the Bishop's timely letter would lighten and cheer their hearts; for great indeed had been their anxiety, and heavily had the burden of their contributions pressed upon their slender and well-nigh exhausted resources. The contribution of £700 to the fund for a new church by that small congregation of fifty-five farm labourers and fifteen small farmers was a unique record of generosity. To realise how great a sum that was for seventy householders, a proportionate contribution for a normal parish in the diocese would be well over £6000, or for a city like Derry, over £50,000. In all fairness they had done far more than could reasonably be expected from people so few and so poor—so he considered it his duty to put the whole situation there before his Lordship. They had now heard with the liveliest satisfaction the reply he had sent. His Lordship's intervention in his powerful and touching appeal on their behalf for financial assistance is sure to focus the sympathetic attention of a charitable public on the urgency for prompt and generous assistance. No words of his were needed to enhance the Bishop's advocacy of this great charity, so closely connected with God's honour and glory. Most heartily, then, did he acknowledge his own and their indebtedness to the Bishop for putting at their disposal the great influence which his name so extensively commands.

The blessing of heaven has already attended the special efforts inaugurated to augment their funds. An abundance of very valuable prizes (including one from his Lordship) had been obtained for their prize drawing, and a host of zealous volunteers to assist had offered their services, and he had no doubt the response of the public would be whole-hearted and generous. But the sum likely to be realised in this way would be little compared to what was needed for the building of a new church, and so their appeal must be for large and liberal contributions and subscriptions. With the enormous profits amassed by many during the war, such contributions as they were appealing for would not be a heavy tax, and of all taxes it should be the most cheerfully given, for in this case it is required for a much needed new house for God Himself in the little Island of Inch.

He (Father O'Mullin) felt confident that their support would be general, now that their appeal was made public.

It had been well said that most of the big churches in the United States were built by the dollars of Irish exiled maidens. His own observation had been that few works of philanthropy, patriotism, or religion in any parish could be carried to success without the enthusiastic co-operation of the same class—the Irish mother or the Irish maid—the blessing of St. Brigid was upon them. He was sanguine they would not disappoint them in this arduous undertaking. If this appeal reached his faithful friends in other parishes where he had spent happy days in their midst, or if it reached their exiled friends across the Channel, he trusted they would come to the assistance of the kind, virtuous, and patriotic little flock of which he had beautifully adorned with such scenic charge in the little Isle of Inch, so

charms on the part of the bountiful Creator, but also horribly disfigured at present by the wretched hovel of a house in which, like the stable of Bethlehem, to their great humiliation, He has to dwell.

With the help, however, of their many friends, and the charitable public, this would not continue much longer, and instead of this disgrace to religion in their midst, their new church will be a pledge of their love for God and the house in which His glory dwells, and the pent up desires of their hearts will find a fitting expression within its walls in the chant of the angelic choirs—Gloria in Excelsis Deo ("Glory be to God in the highest)."

REFERENCE BY THE EDITOR

(P. L. MALONE, ESQ.)

"DERRY JOURNAL."

In the issue of the "Derry Journal" of Friday, November 7th, 1919, the following editorial commendation was published:—Addressing his congregation at Inch on Sunday last, the respected parish priest, Father O'Mullin, read a letter from the Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh, and made an appeal to the charitable public, a report of which appears in another column of this issue. A new church is an urgent necessity at Inch, and the circumstances under which financial assistance for the undertaking is now sought are clearly explained in the statement of Father O'Mullin. A perusal of that statement will, we are sure, move strongly and strike deeply a sympathetic chord, not alone in the breasts of the good people belonging to the parish, of which Inch forms a part, but it will also similarly touch the hearts of our benevolent readers in Derry and throughout the North-West

generally. The effort which is being made to aid the commendable endeavours of a small and struggling community to provide for themselves a place of worship in some reasonable measure befitting the majesty of God and the sanctity of religion, has, it will be seen, the most cordial approval and support of the Bishop of the Diocese. The letter of his Lordship says:—"Considering the wretched condition of the present little church, the limited means of the congregation, and the absolute necessity for a church in a place so isolated as is the Island of Inch, it would be difficult, indeed, to find an object that should make a stronger appeal to the religiously and charitably disposed." We feel confident that to Father O'Mullin's call for practical help there will be a ready and generous response.

Father O'Mullin put the whole matter under the patronage of Our Lady of Lourdes. The results are well known. Success, unprecedented success, marked every effort from that day till the crowning of it all by the solemn Dedication of the new church on 27th May, 1923.

PRIZE DRAWINGS.

Prize-drawings were successfully organised, and in this connection the young ladies of the parish, but notably those of Inch and Fahan, showed remarkable assiduity.

The following are deserving of special mention:—Mrs. James Deeny, Burnfoot; Miss Jeanne Deeny, Burnfoot; Mrs. Molloy, Burnfoot; Miss M'Laughlin, Carnaghan; Miss C. Craig, Carnaghan; Mrs. Durnin; Mrs. M'Grory, Mullana-dee; Miss Agnes Doherty, Mullana-dee; Mrs. Mary E. M'Laughlin; Miss Nicol, Crislamore; Miss Becca Walker; Miss Quigley, Inch Road; Miss Cecilia Quigley; Miss Ch. M'Laughlin, Fahan; Miss Mary I. Lynch; Miss Sophia

Carter; Mrs. M'Manus; Miss Georgina Sheerin; Miss C. Callaghan; Miss Lizzie M'Dermott; Miss K. Fitzpatrick; Miss Logue; Miss Canning; Mr. P. M'Laughlin, Greenock; Mrs. Doherty, Motherwell; Miss M. A. O'Mullin, Altmorever.

As collectors of subscriptions, Miss M'Laughlin, Carnaghan, Miss I. Craig, Miss T. Molloy, Miss A. M'Grory, Miss Green, and Miss Eva Doherty, Mr. Owen Grant and Mr. I. Boyle were most successful; while Mr. Hugh Gallagher and Mr. Joseph M'Laughlin, Inch, Mr. Joseph Quigley, Fahan, and Mr. Dobbins, Burnfoot, gave very valuable assistance in many ways. In Derry City the girls of Artillery Street Evening School (Convent of Mercy), the proprietors, management, and workers in Tillie and Henderson, and Hogg and Mitchell, and M'Clean and Reaper contributed most generously and sold many tickets.

Many kind friends in Derry City and in the counties of Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone gave invaluable assistance all along during the whole period of those drawings.

DONORS OF PRIZES.

Valuable prizes were given by:—Mr. M'Manus, Mrs. Smyth (Castlehill), Mr. James Doherty, Miss M'Grory, Miss Molloy, Mr. and Mrs. Durnin, Miss Craig, Miss M'Laughlin, Miss A. Doherty, the women of Inch, the young men of Inch, young ladies of Fahan, his Lordship Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh, Father Sheerin, Father O'Mullin, and Father M'Connellage, Mr. J. Devine (Strabane), and generous contributions and prizes by the National Teachers of the Parish; Mrs. Quigley, N.T.; Mrs. and Miss Fitzpatrick, N.T.; Mr. M'Cullagh, N.T.; Miss Downey, N.T.; Miss Lecky, N.T.; Mr. Gavigan, N.T.; Mr. J. M'Laughlin, N.T.; The Convent of Mercy, and Mr. M. A. M'Laughlin, Great James Street, Derry.

Bishop (Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh) supported with a strong letter Father O'Mullin's appeal to clear off the outstanding liability.

The Charity Sermon, as given further on, was arranged, and with the parochial and outside contributions on this occasion the magnificent sum of over £1,000 was received.

CEREMONY OF CUTTING THE FIRST SOD.

On St. Patrick's Day, 1922, a commencement was made in connection with the building of this new church by the ceremony of cutting the first sod on the site. Father O'Mullin, P.P., who celebrated Mass in the old church, congratulated the people of Inch on now being about to realise the object of their fervent wishes and prayers and great sacrifices. The national festival was a very appropriate occasion to inaugurate this good work for God's honour and glory. Needless to say, they had long and keenly felt a sense of humiliation that, amid scenes of so much natural beauty, the worship of Almighty God had been conducted in a building and surroundings so utterly unsuited for the purpose, and completely out of harmony with their Irish Catholic instincts of respect for the Divine Mysteries dispensed in His earthly home. To remedy this, they had made great sacrifices themselves, and had got a liberal measure of support from many friends, and he had no fear but that the comparatively small sum yet required would in due course be forthcoming.

The new church would be entitled "Our Lady of Lourdes." The Irish had always a great veneration for the Blessed Virgin Mary. The evidence for this, even in the early Irish Church, is very pronounced—suffice to refer to the Hymn of Secundinus, the Book of Kells,

the Litany of St. Aengus, the Irish Litany of the Blessed Virgin, the Antiphony of Bangor, etc. This veneration for Our Lady has been much increased in these latter days by the wonderful cures at Lourdes, so clearly supernatural. Our own success, too, as the result of putting the collection of our funds under her special patronage, deserved some visible token of gratitude, and hence this new church is dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, with the assured hope that under her patronage countless blessings, spiritual and temporal, will be obtained for ourselves and all who shall have helped to raise it in her honour.

The whole congregation then repaired to the site of the new church, where the Irish Rosary was said, and the Litany of Lourdes recited, and a hymn to St. Patrick, and another to the Blessed Virgin were sung, after which the first sod was cut by Father O'Mullin in the form of a cross, and he got the youngest little girl present, Nan Duffy, to put over the spot a magnificent Rosary brought from Lourdes itself, and a bunch of shamrocks. The prayers were all offered up for a blessing on this good work, and for all kind friends who had so generously assisted so far. Father O'Mullin also mentioned that he had got already said for benefactors three novenas of Masses at Lourdes, and he intended to get another novena said there also at a later date for those who contribute in the future. Further on there would be a more formal and solemn ceremony in connection with the new church, at which his Lordship Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh would preside. They were already aware of the very special interest the Bishop took in the erection of this church, and they were exceed-

ingly grateful for the great assistance he had all along given them.

Mr. J. P. M'Grath, the architect, attended, as also the builders, Messrs Sweeney, Derry. Under their very capable direction and workmanship, there is every confidence the new church will be a credit to all concerned.

FOUNDATION STONE LAID

On Ascension Thursday, 10th May, 1922, the ceremony of laying and blessing the foundation stone of this new church was performed by Rev. M. O'Mullin, P.P., who was specially delegated for the purpose by his Lordship Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh, who was unavoidably absent.

There was a large attendance of local people, the general public not having been invited owing to the unsettled conditions prevailing.

Since the "first sod" was cut on last St. Patrick's Day good progress has been made with the work owing to the very capable superintendence of Mr. M'Dermott, of Messrs. Sweeney's, the contractor. His hands were certainly very full, considering that he had also charge of the provision of all the materials.

The foundations were laid on hard, solid clay, and consisted of concrete to a depth of two or three feet and 5 feet wide. The walls, in rubble masonry, are equally substantial, being as a minimum 2 feet 4 inches wide. A damp course of heavy bitumen class is laid over all walls and sleeper walls full width and lapped at joinings.

The foundation stone, which was solemnly blessed on Thursday last, is placed to the Gospel side of the sanctuary, close to the sanctuary door. In a cavity in it was put a

sealed bottle, containing, among other things, an attest of the ceremony. This contained the names of his Lordship Dr. M'Hugh and Father O'Mullin, whom he had delegated for the occasion, also the names of the architect, Mr. J. P. M'Grath, and the builders, Messrs. Sweeney and Mr. M'Dermott.

The attest was written on parchment in Latin, Irish, and Sax. bearla

A copy of the "Derry Journal" containing a notice of the ceremony of cutting the "first sod" on St. Patrick's Day was also enclosed.

When the ceremony of laying and blessing the stone was over, Father O'Mullin said that although they had no public function that day still he felt he was voicing the feelings not only of the people of the parish but of many absent friends when he expressed their thankfulness to Almighty God for the great privilege of inaugurating so auspiciously this sacred work for God's glory and the honour of His Immaculate Mother—Our Lady of Lourdes. They themselves rejoiced immensely, and a host of outside friends equally rejoiced that this good work in which their heart's desires were so long centred was now on the way to speedy completion. Countless, he felt confident, would be the blessings for all who helped in its realisation. The hymn, "Immaculate" was beautifully sung by the Inch children, and the proceedings terminated.

UNVEILING OF STATUE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES.

This new church in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes is now almost finished. The progress in its erection has been marvellous, considering the fact that it was only on St. Patrick's Day, a year ago, 1922, that the "first sod" was cut, and now on the anniversary—on last St.

Patrick's Day, 1923—the whole edifice is practically completed, and the ceremony of the unveiling of the magnificent statue of Our Lady in its lofty niche, in the exterior of the gable, was performed amidst unbounded satisfaction and enthusiasm of the whole Catholic population of the Island.

On the occasion the school children, in charge of Mr. Gavigan, N.T., sang a number of appropriate hymns, in Irish and English, and Rosary was also recited in Irish by Father O'Mullin. The statue, which is much admired, was solemnly blessed, and in addition it was touched by the "precious souvenir"—a piece of the Rock at Lourdes which was specially sent for this new shrine of Our Lady by the Venerated Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes. The people most earnestly recommended themselves and all the interests to the patronage of the Immaculate, fully assured that through her intercession with God manifold blessings will ever descend on themselves and all their generous benefactors who made it possible for such a splendid church to be erected on the Island.

Messrs M'Grath, the architect, and M'Dermott (Messrs Sweeny's, the builders), were in attendance. This new church is sure to be regarded as Mr. M'Grath's masterpiece, and for skilfulness and honesty the superintendence of Mr. M'Dermott could not be surpassed. The work on the seating and marble altar, etc., is well advanced, and it is now practically certain that the solemn Dedication can be performed before Mary's month has ended. We feel confident that the financial responsibility, at present very heavy, will be much lightened on that occasion, if not entirely removed.



MGR. SCHOEPFER,
BISHOP OF TARBES AND LOURDES.

Autograph Letter and Precious Souvenir from the Bishop of Lourdes

The following letter from Tarbes and Lourdes was received in response to a request from Father M. O'Mullin, P.P., Fahan, for a piece of the hallowed rock at the Grotto of Lourdes for insertion in the new church of Our Lady of Lourdes, now nearing completion at Inch:—

Eveche de Tarbes et De Lourdes.

Lourdes, 27th January, 1923.

Mon Cher Pere O'Mullin—A la place du chanoine Eckert, mon secretaire absent, je me conform a votre pieux desir, et je vous expedie un fragment tres authentique du rocher que la tres Saint Vierge a touche de son pied au cours des Apparitions.

Je suis hereux (dites le a vos paroissiens) de pouvoir par l'envoi de ce precieux souvenir, donner un ailver a la pietie filiale de mes bons amies Irlandais, pour Notre Dame de Lourdes.

Jes les benis tous du fond du coeur au Nom de la Vierge Immaculee et je fais des voeux pour qu'ils reviennent bientot et tres nombreux en pelerinage a la Grotte miraculeuse.

Je present mes affectueus et devoues respects a mon tres cher et venere frere Mgr. M'Hugh, Eveque de Derry. Au revoir, Mon cher Pere O'Mullin. Priez pour moi, Je vous benis de coeur.

F. XAVIER,

Eveq. De Tarbes et de Lourdes.

Translation.

Eve'che de Tarbes et De Lourdes.

Lourdes, 27th January, 1923.

My Dear Father O'Mullin—In place of Canon Eckert, my secretary, who is absent, I comply with your pious desire, and I send you a piece, duly authenticated, of the rock which the Most Holy Virgin touched with her feet during the Apparitions.

I am happy, and so tell your parishioners, to be able by the sending of this precious souvenir to give an incentive to the filial piety of my good Irish friends for Our Lady of Lourdes.

I bless them all from the bottom of my heart in the name of the Immaculate Virgin, and I most earnestly desire that they return soon, and in very great numbers, in a pilgrimage to the miraculous Grotto.

I present my affectionate and devoted respects to my most dear and venerated brother, Dr. M'Hugh, Bishop of Derry. Adieu, my dear Father O'Mullin. Pray for me. I heartily bless you.

F. XAVIER.

Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes.

COPY OF REPLY.

My Dear Mgr. Schoepfer—In spirit, reverently at your feet, as Guardian of Our Lady of Lourdes, I offer to you, in the name of his Lordship Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh, Bishop of Derry, in the name of my parishioners of Fahan, in my own name, and, I make bold to state, in the name of all your devoted Irish friends, the expression of our profound gratitude, not only for the most precious souvenir—a fragment of the immortal Rock of Massabielle—and your own coveted blessing, but also for the magnificent autograph letter which accompanied it. (Tentatus sim dicere 'o felicem abesentiam secretarii vestri).

We are one and all electrified by your magnanimity, by the cordiality of your good wishes, and by the supernatural impulse to piety which was thereby conveyed into our souls, as if your words had been heavily charged with that peculiar aroma of sanctity which ever hovers around that hallowed Grotto.

If anything were needed to cement more closely the historic affection of Ireland for France and the traditional love of the children of the Gael for the Virgin Mother, Our Lady of Lourdes, this has been supplied by

the priceless treasure you sent us from Mary's dearest shrine in France, and by the blessing given us in the name of the Immaculate Virgin, which favours reaching us on the Feast of the Presentation indicate her own heavenly approval of your action and her love for us. In view of all this, how our hearts throb with the "nunc dimittis" of that Feast's ceremonial!

Heartily do we reciprocate your earnest desire for a speedy return of an Irish National Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Your loving invitation there seems like an inspiration from our common Mother—an appeal from herself to her Irish children to cease their present unnatural strife and seek from her hands at her most cherished of shrines the remedy for all their troubles.

[Note—It is noteworthy that the civil strife ceased with the beginning of the month of May following.]

God grant that we may soon all meet you there to renew the cherished acquaintances of the past, secure for our country the blessing of peace, and make some adequate return of gratitude to our Heavenly Queen and the most devoted and most beloved guardian of her Holy Shrine.

Your gift and your letter we will suitably encase in our own new church in Inch in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes, and further on we hope to send you a souvenir which will foster our mutual love for the Immaculate Virgin and for our beloved nations "la belle France" and "Eire Cilean na Naomh."

His Lordship Dr. M'Hugh sends his most affectionate regards to the venerated and beloved Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes. We will ever pray for you, and we ask you, priez pour nous. Beannacht Dè leat. Is mise do bhuan.—Chara.

M. O'MULLIN, P.P.

Note.—“The precious souvenir from Lourdes—a piece of the Rock touched by the feet of the Virgin during the Apparitions is placed near the Virgin’s statue, encased in a marble slab, and supported by a mahogany pedestal, and secured to the wall of the church right over the Altar Rail.”



REV. M. O'MULLIN, P.P.

FINAL APPEAL.

Father O'Mullin issued the following appeal in connection with the Charity Sermon on 1st May, 1923:—

In connection with the forthcoming Solemn Dedication, on May 27th, of the New Church in Inch, under the title of Our Lady of Lourdes, I may be permitted to point out that, owing to the liberal support already given to our Funds, we have been able to meet most of the cost of the main Building Contract. But in addition to the construction of the Church itself we have to provide—the entire Seating, High Altar of Marble, Stained Glass and three Lancet Window over High Altar, Statues of Our Lady of Lourdes, and of the Sacred Heart, all Altar and Benediction requisites, Baptismal Font, Choir Organ, Candelabrum and Sanctuary Lamp, etc. This has involved us in a very heavy liability which, I am sure, you will understand could never be discharged by this small community.

The fact that these things just mentioned are so closely connected with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, will in a special manner appeal to the devotion of Irish Priests and people; and if an additional motive be required it is sure to be supplied by the consideration that, as this New Church in Inch Island is being dedicated to Divine Service in the Name of the Immaculate, Our Lady of Lourdes, none of us would like to see the merit and beauty of our votive offering impaired by an encumbrance of debt.

Relying, therefore, on your piety and liberality, we confidently make this appeal to you for generous support. Contributions will be gratefully received and acknowledged by myself or Fr. M'Connellage, C.C., Burt.

N.B.—The Fourth Novena of Masses for benefactors will be celebrated at Lourdes in connection with the Dedication.

THE DEDICATION CEREMONY BY MOST REV. DR. M'HUGH

On the 27th May, 1923, the New Church erected on Inch, and given the beautiful title of Our Lady of Lourdes, was solemnly dedicated to the service of Almighty God. The ceremony, performed by his Lordship Most Rev. Dr. M'Hugh, Bishop of Derry, was of a deeply impressive character, and all the events of the memorable day were an inspiring manifestation of the devoted attachment of the people to the Faith handed down by St. Patrick. At every stage in his noble undertaking fortune favoured Father O'Muilin, the revered parish priest, to whose energy and enthusiasm the church will be an enduring monument, and seldom has his good fortune been so strikingly evidenced as yesterday in the weather conditions. In the morning rain was falling heavily, and it was feared that the downpour would continue. But the day turned out to be particularly fine, a glorious sunshine at times giving much-needed warmth. It was, therefore, in almost ideal conditions that the ceremony of dedicating the church was performed at eleven o'clock by the Bishop, who was assisted by Rev. L. Hegarty, Adm., St. Eugene's; Father O'Mullin, P.P., and Father M'Connellage, the respected curate of the parish, who has assisted wholeheartedly in raising funds for the completion of the work.

Special trains from Derry and Bunrana brought a number of friends, and many travelled to Inch from the city and elsewhere by motor and other conveyances. There was also a good turnout by the people of the parish, with the result that the church was filled to overflowing at twelve o'clock—when High Mass was commenced—and many people were unable to gain admission.

Those who had seen the church for the first time were filled with admiration for the beauty of it, and for the splendid way in which all the work had been completed. It is a handsome structure, in lovely surroundings, and reflects credit on the architect, Mr. M'Grath, and the builders. One felt that the Bishop's description of it as "a little gem" was very happy.

His Lordship presided at High Mass, which was celebrated by Very Rev. J. M'Shane, D.D., President, St. Columb's College. The other priests in attendance were—Very Rev. W. B. MacFeely, B.D., P.P.; Rev. L. Hegarty, Adm., St. Eugene's, Derry; Rev. M. M'Gecwn, P.P., Carndonagh; Rev. John Gribbon, P.P., Iskaheen; Rev. T. J. Agnew, C.C., Bunrana; Rev. W. Elliott, C.C., do.; Rev. M. O'Mullin, P.P., and Rev. T. M'Connellage, C.C. The solemnity and devotional effect of the ceremony was enhanced by the beautiful singing of the choir of St. Eugene's Cathedral, Derry, which attended specially, and under the direction of the talented organist, Mr. J. S. O'Brien, rendered in magnificent style Guonod's Sacred Heart Mass and plain chant.

THE SERMON.

BY

VERY REV. PRIOR SCANNELL, O.M.I.

The distinguished and scholarly Provincial of the Oblates, Very Rev. Father Scannell, preached, and his eloquent discourse was listened to with rapt attention by the congregation.

Father Scannell, O.M.I., taking for his text the words:—"This is no other but the house of God and gate of heaven." (Gen. vxxiii., 17), said—My Lord Bishop, Rev. Fathers, my Dear Brethren—The public life of our Divine Saviour lasted but three years—the influence of

that life upon the human race has gone on for twenty centuries. For three short years did the man-God preach to men, yet millions ever since have accepted His words as a living force. "My words shall not pass away," did He say, and time has proved the truth of the prophecy.

This lasting effect of the teaching of Jesus Christ upon the world is all the more remarkable when we remember that at the hour of His death no message to the human race had He put on record for future reference. No, brethren, the doctrine which our Divine Saviour Himself had taught He did not commit to parchment. Of those wonderful dogmas of truth which He had personally announced, He left not one written word. Of His teaching during the years of His ministry no scroll remained at the hour of His death.

What means, then, did the great Divine preacher take to perpetuate His teaching? How was He able to produce by His teaching the wonderful and lasting effect upon mankind? During His lifetime Jesus gathered around Him a band of men—for the most part they were poor and unlearned—they were called His followers, His apostles. He instructed them by word of mouth. He taught them His doctrine so that they became the guardians of His teachings; they were to be the pillars of the Society soon to be called the Church of Christ. To that band of men, to that society, to that Church, He gave one command on Calvary before His death—"Go ye and teach all nations—teach them all things whatsoever I have commanded you—he that heareth you heareth Me." Lest they should fail in their task, for fear they might think only of their own human weakness, He encouraged them with the words: "I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." To the head of the little society He had formed He exclaims: "Thou art Peter, and upon

this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Brethren, such were the means employed by our Divine Saviour to bring home His teaching to all mankind, giving to His apostles and their successors the command to teach all nations, assuring them that He Himself would be with them in their mission.



VERY REV. FATHER SCANNELL, O.M.I.

For nearly 2,000 years has the Church of Christ been carrying out that mission;

for 2,000 years has she been teaching mankind. What has she taught them? "All whatsoever I have commanded you." In other words, Truth, Divine Truth. How has she done it? What means has she employed to carry out the charge imposed upon her by her Divine Founder? The Church has not hesitated to make use of all earthly means that were in her power. That her teaching of the word of Christ might be effective, that she might the more readily fulfil her task, she has not hesitated to summon to her aid all the arts perfected by man himself. Sculpture, painting, music, eloquence, have all in their turn been made use of by the Spouse of Christ, whenever thereby she could reach man's senses and thus by the use of such arts bring home more clearly to her children the loving messages of Jesus Christ. The history of the world is but a proof of this. The greatest sculptors and painters were members of the Church, and the theme of their masterpieces nearly always served to illustrate some point of His teaching, or to bring home more forcibly some event in the life of Jesus Christ. But the crowning art which the Church has made her own in order to carry out the command of her master: "Go ye and teach all nations," is architecture. Sculpture, painting, music, are all at her disposal, but she must have a place wherein to exercise them. The architect comes, places his designs at her feet, the result is a building in which the Spouse will deliver the message of her Founder—a building where her sculpture can be examined, where her paintings can be admired, where her music can be heard, a building where she can carry out her Divine mission: "Go ye and teach all nations." That building she names after herself. She calls it "a church," and she applies to it these words: "This is no other but the house of God and

Gate of Heaven." Just as the greatest masterpieces in sculpture and painting have been used in God's service, so, too, the greatest triumphs of architecture have found their realisation in the temples erected to Jesus Christ. Yes, brethren, the grandest buildings in the world to-day are the cathedrals built by the Church of Christ to carry out His command: "Go ye and teach all nations." But, my dear brethren, whether it be in the majestic cathedral or whether it be in the more modest, yet beautiful, church dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, where we have assembled to-day, the reason of their existence is ever the same—to continue, to perpetuate the work of Jesus Christ—"Teach them all whatsoever I have commanded you."

This mission allotted to the Church of Christ, this spreading of the Truth, may be called a spiritual warfare. Jesus Himself said He came "a sword in hand." The Church wages it with unremitting energy, and her battlefield is none other than the world in which we live; her strongest weapon none other than the material building, the house of God. In the prosecution of earthly warfare of which, alas! we have known only too much in our own day, there are various kinds of buildings. First, there is the fortress to withstand the impetuous onrush of an enemy; secondly, there is the hospital for the wounded in the fight; thirdly, there is the monument of victory. Let me try and show you, brethren, how in the warfare waged for the salvation of a soul every Catholic Church discharges this threefold use. Let us try to understand how our poorest Church may be called a spiritual fortress—a hospital for the soul, a monument of victory over the gates of hell.

**THE CATHOLIC BUILDING—A
SPIRITUAL FORTRESS.**

Brethren, carry yourselves back in imagination. To all appearances there is nothing that can mar the peace that reigns over the world. Suddenly with the rapidity of a cloud bursting in the prairie, a war cloud bursts over Europe. The dogs of war are let slip. Almost at the same hour an immense army leaves the confines of its own country and begins its onward march. For a while there is no check to its victorious parade, nothing seems able to stay its proud progress. When lo! the world learns with joy that this mighty host is being held at bay by the fortresses thrown in its path. Again and again they hurl back the invaders of their country whilst the rest of their country is gathering strength to meet the common foe. Let me show you another army in battle array; let me show you also the fortress that stays its onward course. This time it is the spiritual fortress. Listen, brethren, I pray you, to one whose words command respect; look at the sad picture painted for us by the late Pope Pious X. "Who can fail to see that Society is to-day more than in any past age suffering from a terrible and deep-rooted malady which, developing every day and eating into its inmost being, is dragging it to destruction. You understand what this disease is—Apostasy from God." And the successor of Peter continues: "We find extinguished among men all respect for the Eternal God and no regard paid in the manifestations of public and private life to the supreme Will, nay, every artifice is used to destroy utterly the memory and knowledge of God." Apostasy from God! Revolt against God! Society diseased. My brethren, you see in these words a picture of the onrushing army of infidelity.

It is the mighty hordes of unbelief. Brethren, one would almost think that nothing could stay its impetuous invasion. What spiritual power can throw back this power of hell? What fort can save Society from this army of infidelity. Brethren, there is but one obstacle that cannot be set aside; there is but one army to stay the march of infidelity; there is but one army to meet the power of hell, and that one is the Spouse of Christ, and her churches spread around in every land are her fortresses. In some lands you see them on the summits towering in their majestic splendour over all around, elsewhere you find them in the poverty-stricken streets, but always a fortress to guard her children against a powerful foe. A fortress is a means of defence, and she will make it from her pulpit. From the pulpit she serves them with food for the mind. She teaches them truth—the words of Jesus Christ "Go ye and teach all nations," did He say, "Teach them all things whatsoever I have commanded you — he that heareth you heareth Me." In every Catholic Church she is doing it. Infidelity may spread its poison of unbelief, but from the Catholic pulpit will her children hear the doctrine of truth—the doctrine of Jesus Christ, Who is all truth. Infidelity and unbelief will bring in its train a disregard of morality, unbridled and sinful pleasure, but again from her pulpit will the Spouse of Christ denounce as did her Master Himself, all those who are seeking to ruin society.

This army of unbelief will wage war even against her very children by seeking to stifle in their hearts the very breath of religion. From their earliest years they must never know God; they must not be taught to love Him; they must be educated without God. But from that fortress will the Church thunder forth her demands that her children at least must not be defiled with a Godless education. Her pulpit will ring as

it has rung in days gone by that her children at least must not be stifled in their spiritual birth.

Yes, brethren, every Catholic church is a fortress; it is a defence for us against error and unbelief, for it holds back the enemies of Jesus Christ, and will always repel the invasion of infidelity.

CATHOLIC CHURCH — A HOSPITAL

A Catholic Church is something more: in the warfare we are waging it is a hospital for the wounded soul. We do not require much imagination to-day to picture the wounded on the field of battle. The picture, alas, has been too often before our mind during these days of slaughter. See the poor soldier as he leaps from the trench, reckless in his bravery, heedless in his frantic charge, he hurls himself forward upon the enemy. Look at him! Rushing onward with his companions, his cheeks pale with excitement, and his eyes aglow with wild enthusiasm; look again, his rifle drops from his grasp, a death-like pallor has come over him, an enemy bullet has found its mark, he totters and falls—wounded on the field of battle. He lies there, his life blood oozing away; he hears the distant, defiant shouts of his comrades; he remembers no more; he faints away. Long hours afterwards he comes back to himself—weak and in pain. Kindly hands have brought him to the hospital. As he opens his eyes he sees near him a Sister of Charity, one of those ministering angels. She warns him not to exert himself—he has been near to death—with care now his life can be saved. Days pass by and then the weeks, in that hospital, that haven of rest. Gradually the failing strength of the wounded is built up. After many months of tender care and nursing, having been snatched from the jaws of death, he is sent from the hospital restored to health and vigour.

Another picture, brethren, this time not the hospital for curing the body, but the

hospital of the soul—a Catholic church. It is a Saturday evening, a poor soul has entered and immediately he walks over to that side of the building where is situated the confessional—one of the characteristic signs of a Catholic church. He kneels there in silence, almost unable to speak a prayer, his soul within in fearful anguish. Who is he? A poor unfortunate sinner; he has fought in the battle for salvation, but he has been wounded, scarred, stained with the leprosy of sin, he has fallen low. As he kneels there his mind is wandering back over the past; his early days, his First Communion, his leaving school, and then his gradual downward career. For years he has lived in sin. But to-night, the grace of God has touched him. How, we know not. It is the kindly hand carrying him to the hospital of the soul. Whither has he come—to the confessional. "I will arise (has he said) and will go to my Father and say to Him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee." He is still kneeling. He is looking into that soul—He is aghast at the sight; sin, mortal sin, is there. "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them," he remembers, and almost unconsciously he is muttering the sentiments echoed in the prayer, "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on me." See he leaves his place; he enters the confessional. In a low voice he begins his sad, sad story—the story of a poor Catholic living in sin. "I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed." He lays bare his soul to God's minister; nothing is hidden, no excuse; simply as a child he unravels that terrible skein. Gradually he feels a change coming over him, the weight that is bearing him down is dropping from his soul. The judge listens to his story; in a few earnest words he shows him the nature of his wounds; he points out to him how near he has been to eternal death, and last of all, he pronounces those words of pardon, "I absolve thee from thy sins; go in peace and sin no more."

Wonderful words, brethren, heard only in the Catholic confessional. What a change they produce in the sinner's soul.

Brethren, I said that a Catholic church is a spiritual hospital. Yes, by her confessional the wounded are brought back to life. Her confessional is a hospital. She brings them from the jaws of death to life.

A few hours later and we again see that poor wounded soul within the walls of a Catholic church. This time he is kneeling at the altar rails. His soul, saved from death, is now being nourished with the bread of heaven. He has answered the invitation, "Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you." The priest stands over him, holding in his hand the Sacred Host, "Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him that taketh away the sins of the world." A few moments later, and the God of heaven and earth is within him under the appearance of bread, and thus the poor wounded victim of sin has received the pledge of eternal life.

My brethren, I said to you a Catholic church is an hospital. Can you not see clearly how true are my words? The confessional and the altar rails, who shall ever know the number of wounded they have brought back to spiritual life? Who but God Himself can ever realise the help, the comfort, the consolation, that the soul derives from a Catholic church? Brethren, your own experience is the greatest proof. Are there not days in your life when all seemed black, when sorrow laid heavily upon you. For a few moments you have called in your church; you have knelt there almost without knowing what you said, you poured out your tale of woe to Jesus, Whom you knew to be present before you. Tell me, brethren, have you not felt as though that burden was made lighter; have you not felt the consolation of a Catholic church. "Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you."

Last of all, brethren, every Catholic church is not only a spiritual hospital, not only a spiritual fortress, it is a

MONUMENT OF GOD'S TRIUMPH.

Every nation is proud of its victories in the field of battle. Its history lingers upon the valour of its sons, and recalls with pride the names of those who laid the foundation of its greatness. These names are inscribed with honour, their deeds, their triumphs, are spoken of from generation to generation, and handed down from father to son. Last of all, monuments to commemorate their victories are erected throughout the land.

Oftentimes within their walls are amassed the trophies of those victories of which the nation is so proud, the guns, the standards, the ensigns captured from a brave enemy. All this is meant to proclaim a nation's triumph. Brethren, in the erection of a Catholic church we erect a lasting monument to God's triumph. His triumph has been gained not at the cost of blood; His victory is acquired not by the death of His enemy, but a victory over sin by His own death. First of all, brethren, every Catholic church is a monument of God's triumph, inasmuch as it is a speaking proof of our belief in Him. The church which is solemnly opened here to-day is to be a witness while it stands to the Almighty. It is but one more temple reared to the Supreme Being, acknowledging our dependence upon Him.

But it is when we enter within the sacred walls that we realise how this building becomes a monument of triumph to God. The Baptismal Font is a monument to God's goodness; the Confessional a monument to God's mercy; the Altar Rails a monument to God's love.

These characteristics of the Catholic Church are to be found in every material building that the Church erects. May I be

permitted to say that they are to be found in this Church more particularly, because to-day we celebrate the dedication of a Church of our Lady of Lourdes. Do you understand fully the meaning of the title of your beautiful church? Do you understand what Lourdes means for you? Do you realise how in being associated with Lourdes your church, like it, must become a spiritual fortress, a hospital and a monument of victory? Some of you, no doubt, have been to that hallowed spot. Some of you were with that glorious pilgrimage, led by his Lordship, your beloved Bishop, a few years ago to the Rock of Massabielle, and may I hope that in the near future his Lordship will lead another vast pilgrimage to Lourdes; then those of you privileged to join it will be able to understand the feelings that animate me this morning, and what it means to have your church associated with that sacred spot. Lourdes is a spiritual fortress, marked out by God to stem the tide of infidelity, the revolt against God and against everything supernatural which was rising and surging in France. Lourdes is not only a spiritual fortress; it is an hospital. If you have been there you will understand. The sick, even the dying, from every country in the world are brought there, and are raised up from their stretchers in that hospital of Lourdes. In fifty years 4,000 genuine miracles, authenticated by every human criterion, have taken place on that spot. Picture to yourselves this morning in imagination those three churches rising from the rock, are they not a monument of God's love and power and mercy? Look at that wonderful Basilica rising where Mary Immaculate appeared, does it not speak of God's triumph? With that triumph, my dear brethren, you are associated in your own beautiful Church of Our Lady of Lourdes. And now of your own church, what am I to say? No one could be here this morning and remain unmoved. First of all, if it be permitted to one almost a stranger, I must congratulate you. I offer you the congratulations of a Catholic priest upon the great occasion that we

celebrate to-day. God's ways are not our ways, but when He has a work that he desires to have accomplished He brings together the necessary people and the necessary means for its accomplishment. Therefore, God when He desired that this church was to be erected found one who was capable of accomplishing His work. It is not for me to speak of Father O'Mullin, of his untiring energy, his zeal, and his wonderful work. I offer him my heartfelt congratulations upon the great task that he has brought to a successful issue to-day. But no priest, no matter who he is, could accomplish a task such as this without the loyal support and generosity of his people. Of these people, of their generosity, he has spoken to me; he has told me that it was not given to a priest to work amongst a more loyal, a more generous, and more self-sacrificing people than the people of Fahan, Inch, and Burt. The way in which you have responded to his efforts has been for him his great encouragement in his arduous task. I can only say, may God bless you for that generosity and for that loyal support. May God bless the people of this parish for what they have done for the house of God. Outside the parish there are many who have come to Father O'Mullin's aid. Without their help it would have been impossible for the people of this district to have erected so beautiful a church. They, too, have been the means raised by God to assist your worthy pastor in the accomplishment of his task. I tender to them, in your name and in his name, heartfelt thanks for the part they have taken in the consummation of this work. One further appeal I make to you, one further sacrifice I ask of you, that by your generosity you wipe out the remaining debt on this building, so that in handing over a free gift to God we may say, "Our Lady of Lourdes, receive this morning the Church of Inch, that we, thy Bishop, priests, and people offer to thee; take it from our hands, take it from our hearts, as a free gift to thy Son, Jesus Christ. Through thee we offer it to Him, exclaiming, 'This is no other but the house of God and the gate of heaven.'" Amen.

Ascending the Altar steps at the conclusion of the sermon, Father O'Mullin said he wished as his first words from that Altar to offer a hearty *cead mile failte* not only to his Lordship the Bishop, for honouring them with his presence, but also to the priests and the congregation.

The collection was next taken up through the church. The collectors were Father O'Mullin and Father Agnew, assisted by Mr. M'Cullagh, N.T.; Father M'Feely and Father M'Connelloge, assisted by Mr. Gavigan, N.T.



REV. T. M'CONNELLOGE, C.C.

RETURNING THANKS.

Father O'Mullin, P.P., then returned thanks to all who had responded so generously to the appeal on behalf of

funds for the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes. He owed a special debt of gratitude to his Lordship the Bishop, who had even interrupted his diocesan visitation to be with them that day. This was only in keeping with the constant support his Lordship had given from the beginning of this onerous undertaking. Long may he be spared to re-visit this Home of the Immaculate to whom he has ever been so devoted. Fortune favoured them immensely in sending them such an eloquent preacher as Father Scannell, O.M.I., the Provincial of the Religious Order of Mary Immaculate in Great Britain and Ireland. He came on very short notice, and also had to interrupt the visitation of houses of his Order in England and Scotland in conjunction with the Superior General of the Order, Archbishop Dontenville, O.M.I. Our Lady, said Father O'Mullin, has given us many favours, but in sending us Father Scannell she has crowned them all. She, too, will know best how to reward him. Dr. M'Shane, in midst of arduous duties as President of St. Columb's College, with his characteristic kindness, celebrated for us the first "Missa Cantata" in our new church. For this we are very grateful. Father O'Mullin heartily thanked all their friends from a distance who came to honour the occasion and assist in clearing off their liability.

To the Bishops of the Armagh Province, including its venerable and illustrious Cardinal, and the priests of the Diocese and many outside it he felt specially grateful for such generous support. And now as to his own parishioners; no priest could possibly have got more loyal and cordial support. Though not many of them were rich in worldly goods, the spirit shown by them and the sacri-

fices made redound all the more to their credit, and were an index that God in giving them such good dispositions has already bestowed on them a great reward, and their willing co-operation is sure to bring down upon them a great increase of blessings here and an imperishable treasure hereafter in Heaven.

Their cause, Father O'Mullin added, was much assisted by the constant and able advocacy of Mr. Malone, the Editor of the "Derry Journal," and his efficient staff. The respected pastor paid a special tribute to Mr. M'Dermott, who superintended the work for the builders, Messrs Sweeny, and also to his old friend, Mr. J. P. M'Grath, the capable architect who had artistically designed the building and had supervised the work of construction.

For his many friends in this great work who are scattered far and wide Father O'Mullin's prayer is that God and His Holy Mother might give them a large share in the blessings of that glorious day. He felt simply overpowered in the face of the cordiality and generosity of the support he had got.

It is understood that the present liabilities in connection with the Church have been fully met by the contributions received. The Church is complete and furnished, with the exception of the Stations of the Cross.

After the ceremonies the Bishop, clergy, and members of the choir were hospitably entertained at the Parochial House, Fahan, while for other visitors luncheon was provided at Carnaghan. The catering was very satisfactorily carried out by Messrs W. J. Fleming and Son, Derry.



MR. J. P. M'GRATH, M.R.I.A.I.,
ARCHITECT.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH.

The design of the building is oblong in plan, with the sacristy and clerks' room on the north side, the church is parallel to the county road, and towards the south. The style of the church is Romanesque, carried out throughout in pure style. The length is divided into seven bays and two half bays. The entrance is at the south-west, having a porch with double doors on the north and south sides.

The entrances are flanged with columns having moulded caps and bases, and semi-circular heads with Celtic ornament introduced. The floor of the porch is tiled. The holy water stoups are in porch, of good design in freestone, circular in plan and design. The church is approached by double swing doors. The length of the church is 70.6 feet by 29.6 feet out to out. The choir is over the west door, and

is approached by a stair on the south side, and the treatment is pleasing, the front being framed and pannelled with a moulded mahogany rail polished. The Baptismal font is on the south side enclosed by open tracery work in pitch pine with richly moulded posts. The font is of Mountcharles stone headed with a circular bowl carried by a single shaft of Cork red granite, with a nicely moulded sub-base, sitting on a Newry granite base. The top of the front is of mahogany, furnished and fitted with brass fittings. The inside walls of the church are plain, and finished off in parian cement, which are relieved with the effective colouring of the windows. The ceiling is of fibrous plaster formed into panels, with pitch pine mouldings, principals with curved ribs, and the main cornice at wall plate level is pierced and moulded. The floor of the church is solid and finished off in wood, laid on a cement bed. The sanctuary floor is tiled. The predella and sides are laid in wood block in pine and mahogany. The steps are of Bere stone, to contrast with the altar. The altar rail is of pitch pine tracery work, divided by walnut shafts and circular heads, with a mahogany rail on top nicely moulded.

The Confessional is on the north side adjoining the sacristy, the door being wrot and pierced. There is also provided a sacristy of ample dimensions, and clerks' room, and in the sacristy is provided vestment case. The floor of side entrance is tiled. The seating is of pitch pine, with bench ends wrought, and moulded. The kneeling boards are hinged for cleaning purposes.

The High Altar, supplied and erected by Mr. Edmund Sharp, Dublin, is in the Romanesque style of architecture, and is all marble. The Altar Table is supported on four columns, the shafts of same being highly polished Cork red marble.

The capitals are richly carved in the Celtic style of ornament. These support three arches. The large centre one is filled with a group of "The Adoration of the Host," carved in high relief. The two smaller ones on either side have sculptured panels of wheat and vine. There is also an extension at both ends of table of two marble panels with polished Cork red inlays. The Tabernacle Head is richly moulded and supported by coloured marble columns and carved capitals. The panel over the brass plate of safe has a sculptured subject representing "The Pelican and Young." The whole terminates with a platform to receive Monstrance. The candle benches are also white statuary marble. The reredos is formed on each side of the Tabernacle by three arches, supported by Connemara green columns, bases and carved capitals, terminating with a moulded cornice and rich cresting. The panels formed by the arches have coloured inlays, finishing at the wings with white marble panels. The Altar steps are composed of Seaton stone and the predella of pine. The size of altar is 10 feet wide and 8 feet high.

The tri-lancet window over the High Altar is of stained glass, and the subjects are the Madonna and Child in centre, St. Patrick on Gospel side, and St. Joseph on Epistle side. This group adds a halo of glory to the whole church. The figures are most realistic and arresting. With difficulty can one withdraw from this ravishing sight; description need not be attempted. Their entrancing beauty can only be realised by inspection.

The other windows are lead lights with appropriate symbols. The symbols on the Epistle side form a homogeneous group illustrative of some mystery or characteristic of the Blessed Virgin in

the following order:—Morning Star, Tower of David, Mystical Rose, Lily of the Valley, Overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, Pierced Heart, and Mary Crowned. Those on the Gospel side refer to Our Lord:—The Lamb and the Laburnum, the Chalice and Host, The Sacred Heart, I.H.S. The Church is symbolised by the Bishop's Crozier, the Cross Keys of St. Peter, and the Pope's Tiara, while Peace and Hope are represented on the windows over the Choir Gallery by the Dove and Olive Branch and the Anchor. The colouring and toning throughout is very effective. The statue of Our Lady of Lourdes in the Epistle side is after the model of the statue of Our Lady over the Grotto at Lourdes, and the Sacred Heart statue is modelled after that at Montana and in Paris. The piece of the rock got from Lourdes, referred to in the previous letter, is placed in the centre of a marble slab secured to the wall of the church on the Epistle side over the altar rail.

The external walls are of masonry, with concrete quoins, all being finished in cement, with seven single light windows on the south side and five in the north, with circular heads and moulded label mouldings and square blocks terminations. The west gable is broken up with double light windows, and the porch is finished with gables on three sides, with pediments. On the north-east is a three lancet window, with plate tracery and pierced heads. Over this window is a niche and a statue of Our Lady in Portland stone, with circular head and projecting base moulded. The gables of the Church are surmounted with free-stone Celtic crosses.

The grounds are enclosed and laid out, and the Church is approached by gravelled main walks, and side entrances

have concrete piers, with ornamental tops, wrought iron gates being provided.

The building contract was carried out for Messrs Sweeney, Limited, by Mr. Henry M'Dermott; the painting by Mr. P. Malley; baptismal font by Messrs Haslett Brothers; gates by Mr. L. Elliott, Spencer Road, Derry; statue above lancet window by Mr. G. Smyth, Dublin; stained glass window over High Altar and lead lights by Messrs Campbell Brothers, Belfast. The statues on the side altars, namely, Our Lady of Lourdes, with Bernadette, and Sacred Heart by Messrs P. Ceppi, Dublin. The brasses were procured in Cork and Dublin. The works were carried out under the superintendence and from the plans of Mr. J. P. M'Grath, M.R.I.A.I., architect, Derry.

LADY DAY, 1923, IN INCH.

On the occasion of special devotions in the Our Lady of Lourdes' Inch in the evening of 15th August, Father O'Mullin said he was glad to be able to state that since their new church was opened there were many evidences—crowds of visitors and communicants—that it had greatly enhanced the worship of Almighty God and veneration for Our Lady in the district. The illustrious Bishop of Lourdes, Mgr. Schoepfer, had done them two signal favours: the first in sending them a piece of the very Rock touched by the Virgin's feet, which had reached them on the Feast of the Purification; and the second in connection with this Feast, namely, his photograph and Special Blessing in the Name of Our Lady of Lourdes, whose representative and special Guardian of her Grotto he is. Coinciding as these favours do with these two special Feasts of Our Lady, we are justified in regarding them as tokens of Our Lady's love for us and of her satisfaction at what we have done in her honour.

and in honour of God Himself. May she ever benignly look down with love and compassion on all who visit this her shrine in Inch, and on all who helped to erect it.—Amen.



*Mr. J. P. M'Grath, Architect; Father O'Mullin, P.P. and
Mr. J. S. O'Brien, Organist (St. Eugene's Cathedral),
Derry.*

Taken on the day of the Dedication.

A FEW REMINISCENCES :-

Everywhere I went in the course of my collecting for Inch New Church, I was much impressed with the deep reverence of the people for the object of my appeal—A House on Earth for God; while its Title—"Our Lady of Lourdes" struck a very responsive cord in their hearts, so devoted to Mary Immaculate. The Priests facilitated and assisted me most cordially in their several churches.

COLLECTION IN DERRY CITY—

I made this collection in November, 1919. The readiness and cheerfulness of the Catholics of Derry in contributing made my visit a pleasure rather than a labour. A considerable number gave sums from £1 to £5 and even some few gave £10. The Protestant firms, of the larger class, also contributed generously.

One morning I called at a large factory. The proprietor and manager happened to be in the office. I mentioned the object of my visit to the proprietor, but got a flat refusal "because (he said) we priests had influenced the Irish people so much against joining with the Allies in the recent war." I tried hard to evade a discussion in the circumstances, but in vain. So a brisk and pointed argument from his and my point of view was maintained for almost 20 minutes, with hundreds of machines humming over our heads. Being open to reason, at last he admitted there was a good deal to be said for the attitude of the Irish people, and to show that he appreciated my contention, he gave me £2, and his manager and heads of departments took up a collection among the workers, and sent me a cheque for £29. Every blessing on them all for such generosity. A few districts of the city which duties elsewhere prevented me from visiting were collected by Father M'Connellage, C.C., with results similarly good.

COLLECTION IN BELFAST.

This was made in the week after St. Patrick's Day, 1920, and ended in St. Patrick's Street, though my guide (Mr. Cosgrove) strove hard to get some additional subscriptions in a few other streets, but in vain. I traversed the whole City in the course of a week, and nearly always on foot. In no district did I meet with any disrespect though I went into places (as I was informed) which no priest had entered, on a Collecting Mission before.

In Sandy Row we visited a Protestant business house (the only one visited in Belfast). The proprietor received us kindly and give us a handsome subscription, remarking that priests were better collectors than his own ministers. In Duncairn, Mr. M'Fawn, who was my pilot there, observed that we were being shadowed by a detective; and just to get rid of this annoyance, he politely approached the detective and asked a subscription. Seeing he was cornered, the detective was glad to escape with a half-crown penalty and we saw no more of him.

A few months later and no collection could have been got from Belfast as the burnings and shootings were in full blast then: how much it means to be just in time!

TROUBLE IN DERRY.

Further on in the summer I was collecting in South Derry, and on return journey, with a well filled bag, I heard of the outbreak of shooting, etc., in Derry City, making return by that way impossible, so making a detour I got across by boat to Greencastle. Here

I met a number of refugees from Derry with all sorts of alarming rumours about the trouble there and the way to Derry blocked at Muff. Once more I had to change my course and motored to Carndonagh which I just reached five minutes before the train started for Fahan—I arrived home safe after nine hours journey.

IN DUBLIN.

Three years scarcely pass and such a change—the scene of trouble is now shifted to Dublin, etc. I had occasion to go to Dublin in February, 1923, in connection with Inch—travelling to Dublin then was neither pleasant or safe, with the danger of bridges being mined, and the broken arches of others as Malahide, etc. In the City the usual gay and courteous demeanour of the people had disappeared and they seemed depressed and sullen.

My hotel experience was far from being comfortable—most of the hotels were burned down so I had little choice and I found myself in one specially exposed to attack because some of the Dail Members were lodging in it. On the second night, just about bedtime, the explosions in close proximity commenced—bombs, grenades and rifle fire all in quick succession—our guard took up position in the open—armoured cars are rushing about. The Dail Members begin to realise their danger and express their pleasure in having me in their midst. However, the storm passed off after some time without any casualties

to our party—Two months after this I was back again on Inch business in Dublin but this time the clouds were breaking and the pleasant faces and kindly greetings were everywhere visible—the dawn of the peace that ensued on the “Cease Fire” order issued towards the end of this same month.—
Esto perpetuum.

M. O'M.

