



# PCH PRESENTATION DAY NEWSLETTER

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## TO OUR PCH COMMUNITY,

We would like to wish our entire community a very happy Presentation Day. Our school feast day is being celebrated in a very different way this year. We have been forced, through public health restrictions, to be innovative in our plans for celebrations. All this week, our students and staff have been holding short prayer services in their classes to commemorate the Venerable Nano Nagle and her work. Our school has been decorated throughout with iconic images of our foundress. Classes have been discussing what it means to be a Presentation school and also the iconography of our school crest.

Friday the 20<sup>th</sup> marks the highlight of our celebrations with a student and staff prayer service, a leaving certificate hot chocolate morning and other little treats for students and staff throughout the day.

What we really wish to achieve is an awareness and an appreciation of what it means to be a Presentation school. We want each member of our community to have a real sense of who we are, what we are, and what we stand for. We cherish our simple school motto, inspired by Nano herself; 'Be the Best You Can Be'. Nano summarized her own philosophy and ethos towards the end of her life with the following; 'Love one another as you have hitherto done.' As her legacy she bequeathed to them the treasure which she prized above all the wealth of the earth – the love of the poor of Jesus Christ. She bade her Sisters 'Spend yourself for the poor.'

Thank you all for your help and support in living out the charism of Nano Nagle and the Presentation Order here in PCH

Aisling McAlpine, Ciarán Ryan & Orla Jackson

### A SHORT HISTORY OF PCH

The story of Presentation College Headford began on Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup> 1942, in a disused army hut behind the presbytery. The founders of the new school were the Presentation Sisters, who had been involved in primary education in Headford since 1906. At first, the new secondary school catered for girls only.

In its opening year, there were seventeen students in first year and twenty in second year. By 1946, the demand for more space necessitated the use of the parochial hall and the convent dining room as classrooms.

The building of the new post-primary school at a cost of £12,000 in 1953 was a landmark. It consisted of six classrooms, a home economics room and a staff room – all still part of the present structure.

The courageous decision to become coeducational marked a new departure, and the arrival of eighteen intrepid boys in 1955 created a truly 'mixed' school. Sr. Vianney guided PCH through this transition and the rapid increase in student



## The Nano Nagle Prayer

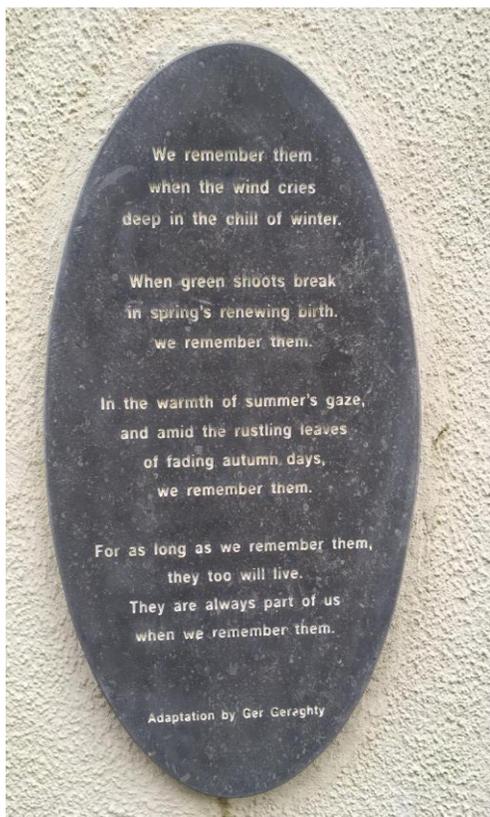
Lord God, You raise up people from age to age  
to speak anew Your Word to us  
And to show us your ways  
Such is Nano Nagle.  
In days when courage is needed,  
You give us this woman of strength  
To walk before us with conviction.  
In days of great change, You present us with a prophet  
whose faith is firm.  
As the light of her lantern brought hope  
Into the lives made wretched by poverty and oppression,  
So may she inspire us to compassionate action  
For those in need around us.





AN INTRODUCTION TO NANO NAGLE & HER WORK (please click link below for a video about Nano Nagle)

<https://youtu.be/JzyUTkwntRc>



IN NOVEMBER WE REMEMBER ALL THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE US.

numbers during the 'free education' era in the sixties and seventies. This expansion made it necessary to plan an extension, which was completed in 1978, to provide facilities for a wider curriculum. These facilities enabled the school to offer woodwork, metalwork, technical drawing, art, computers, music, typing and home economics, as well as the traditional academic subjects. Thus the school broke from the narrow academic tradition and became comprehensive, striving to cater for the needs of all.

In 1982, the then-Principal, Sr. Nuala Courtney, backed by the local community and with a loan from the Presentation Sisters, oversaw the building of a modern sports centre, consisting of gymnasium, stage, ball alleys, dressing rooms and shower facilities. This new facility enabled pupils and local people to pursue a wide and exciting range of sports and to enter competitions at all levels.

Sr. Bríd Brennan became Principal in 1986 and with Mr. John Boner, then vice-Principal, guided the school through the next major phase of development in curriculum and facilities. In 1991 the second major extension to the school building was opened. This new wing included a music room, a canteen, two extra Science laboratories, a language laboratory, Technical Drawing / technology rooms, an extra woodwork workshop, new general classrooms, extended computer facilities and a careers library. And in the mid-1990s, a specialist area, consisting of rooms for engineering, technology, mechanics, electronics, carpentry and pottery, was added to the gym building.

Mr. Boner succeeded Sr. Bríd as Principal in 1999, and in 2004 he oversaw the construction of a Resource Centre, designed specifically to meet children's special learning needs. The unit includes a kitchen, two rooms for small group or one-to-one tuition, an office, computer room and classroom. In 2008, the construction of a major new extension commenced, overseen by Dr James Whyte, who followed Mr. Boner as Principal in 2004. The John Boner Building, which opened in September 2010, comprises a large study hall, two woodwork rooms, eight general classrooms, a meeting room and an office. Subsequently, two new science laboratories were developed in the space vacated by the old woodwork rooms, and in 2013 the Sr. Bríd Brennan library opened at the heart of the main building. We are delighted to announce major refurbishment works for PCH in the very near future. More exciting plans to follow.

Since the 1960s, while continuing to provide an academic education of the highest standard, Presentation College Headford has been a pioneer in the introduction of various programmes and initiatives designed to meet the varied needs of less academically-oriented pupils, Disadvantaged students, those with additional education needs, and to retain in the education system those students who would be unlikely to persist with a more exclusively academic curriculum. These programmes, which today include the Leaving Certificate Vocational, the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme, The Seomra Seoda Autism Class and the Junior Certificate Schools Programme, have greatly contributed to strengthening retention rates, at both Junior and Senior Cycle.

From the beginning, as a stand-alone school, Presentation College Headford has striven to meet the varied needs of all the pupils in its catchment area through the development of a comprehensive curriculum and of the necessary facilities and services to provide such a curriculum. This has been achieved through the great enterprise, imagination, hard work and perseverance of many in the school, and through the generosity and good will of the local community and the Presentation Sisters.

We are privileged to continue carrying this lantern into the future for our PCH Community.

## *Love one another as you have hitherto done-Nano Nagle*



The Icon of Nano Nagle in our sacred space

Tomorrow, November 21st is the day that the Venerable Nano Nagle, foundress of the Presentation Order is honoured and celebrated worldwide. In the most difficult of times, three hundred years ago, Nano moved by day from hovel to hovel in the labyrinthine streets of Cork to gather the most needy children she could find to teach. By night, carrying a lantern to guide her through the treacherous, dark streets, she provided the poor with the necessities of life. Nano soon became known as 'The Lady of the Lantern' as she was a beacon of light and hope in an otherwise bleak world.

The symbol of the lantern on our crest is a reminder that our school is founded in the proud Presentation tradition. We are challenged to find ways and means in our modern school setting, to celebrate the life and legacy of Nano Nagle, so that we too might carry with us an ember of Nano's burning desire to serve others by being a shining light in our own community.



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A HAPPY AND A BLESSED PRESENTATION DAY TO EVERYONE IN OUR PCH FAMILY