



Exploring the Nano Nagle Icon



Christmas Eve 1775

Uncle Joseph

# Exploring the Nano Nagle Icon

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## What is an Icon?

An icon is a religious work of art found in the cultures of the Eastern Orthodox Church, Greek Orthodox Church and the Roman and Eastern Catholic Churches. The icon is a visual doorway leading us and helping us to focus on God. It enables us to reflect silently and patiently.

Icons use symbols to engage the mind and to help the imagination get through those barriers that exist between us and the invisible world of the spirit which surrounds us.

## The Icon of Nano Nagle

The Icon of Nano Nagle was 'written' by Irish artist Desmond Kyne in the 1970s. Icons are described as being written rather than painted, because making them is considered more a form of praying than art. The Icon portrays Nano Nagle immersed both in the mystery of God and amongst the people of 18th century Ireland.

We can follow Nano's story as it unfolds, exploring the symbols Desmond Kyne has chosen reflecting the joy and pain, energy and stillness, success and failure, agony and ecstasy which were present in Nano's life. The template below will give us some tools to explore the Icon but each person will respond individually. It will take a little time and patience to become familiar with the Icon – it is not to be rushed.

## *Laudato Si'*

Pope Francis' 2015 Encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, reminds us of our shared responsibility for caring for our common home and emphasises the urgency of the issues surrounding environmental justice. In the encyclical, Pope Francis urges us to take action to protect the planet and its people.

## What are Sustainable Development Goals?

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 connected targets to achieve peace and prosperity for all of us and for our planet. They were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 and the aim is that they should be achieved by 2030. The SDGs are a call to action for all countries, creating a global partnership to end poverty, reduce inequality, improve health and education, tackle climate change and preserve our environment.



# Central Panel: The Young Nano

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- Nano's relationship with God
- How her faith in God supported her mission

## PRE-STEP 1

- Look at the young Nano, what do you notice about her image?
- What can you see in the background?
- Why do you think Nano has wings around her?

## STEP 1

### Historical Context

The artist, Desmond Kyne, has used a number of symbols here. The **spiral** is an ancient sacred symbol adopted by Christians to represent God the Father. The **stained glass** with light and many colours is God's presence portrayed in the Golden Age of Stained Glass, in the 12th and 13th centuries.

**Christ's hand pierced by a nail** symbolises the incarnation of all creation moving through Christ. It also speaks of trials and difficulties of the world.

Nano is in the circle of God's embrace. For in God, Nano lived, moved, and had her being.

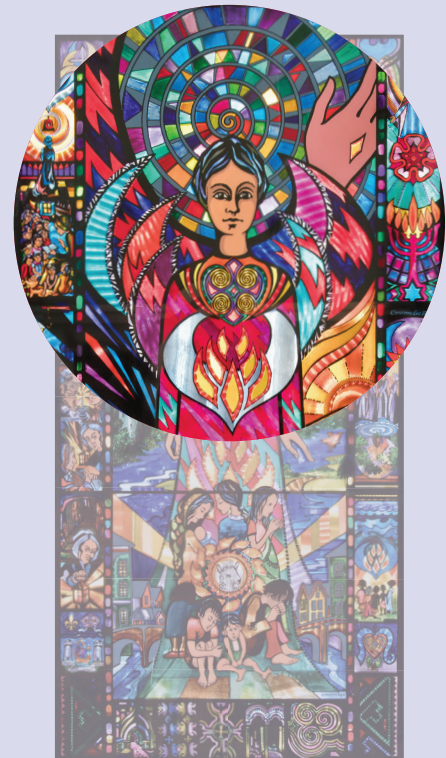
Proceeding from the Father and Son is the Spirit of love. It enters and passes through Nano and finds expression in the bird-like shape bearing down into seven flames, representing the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. These gifts give courage to Nano to stand between the forces of darkness on one side and the light on the other.

## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

Nano believed in a three person God (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit). Today she would express her belief in the three Gospel values of Justice, Freedom and Love. These values can find expression through "ME".

When I make the sign of the cross and say *In the name of the Father*, I know I am being called to pursue the Justice of the Father. When I continue *and of the Son*, I remind myself that I must exercise my freedom to discover right action and live by it. When I add *and of the Holy Spirit* I strive to identify with the poorest of the poor. When I end with *Amen*, I make a commitment to live out these values in my life.



### STEP 3

#### Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

How is the mission begun by Nano Nagle continuing today in your country?

For example, in Chennai in India slum dwellers were forced out of their homes to remote places away from the city with no access to education or other facilities, and no way of earning a living. The Presentation Community fought for justice. Government transport was arranged to bring students to school and women's self-help groups were started. A Children's Parliament was established to represent their grievances to government officials. Work continues today.

### STEP 4

#### Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Si*, Poetry & Song

The relevant SDGs are:

- Goal 16 Peace, Justice & Strong institutions
- Goal 17 Partnerships to achieve the goals

#### Nano's Sayings:

*"I think there is no greater happiness in the world than to be in union"*  
Letter II Para 6

#### Songs & Hymns:

Listening prayer -Be still and know that I am God.

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akroL-1S-sc>

#### Scripture:

*"For in God we live, move, and have our being."*

Acts 17: 28

#### Prayer:

Breath of Life

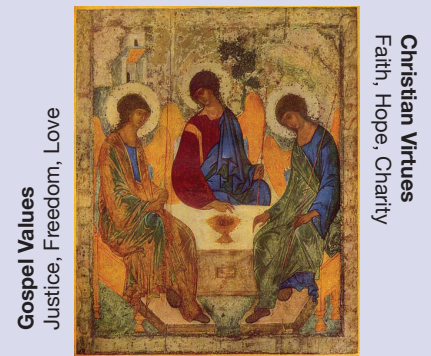
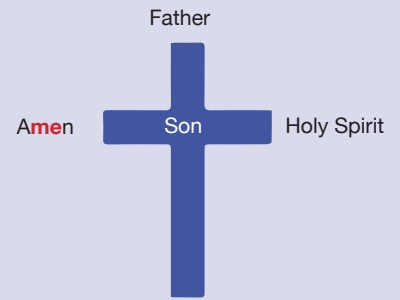
May we allow the breath of life to be evident in our words and actions, in our homes, in our workplaces, in all our relationships and in our world. Amen.

### STEP 4A

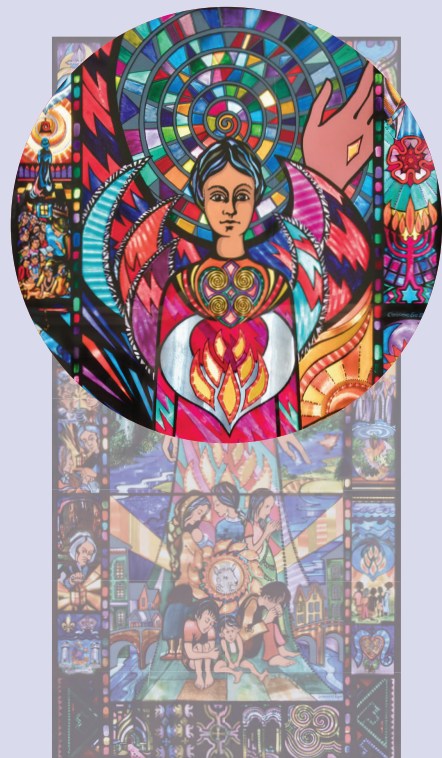
Write a quality you learned about Nano from this image.

### STEP 5

What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?



**Socio-Political Values**  
Equality, Liberty, Fraternity



# Central Panel: Light versus Darkness

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- Nano's upbringing in Ballygriffin, Co. Cork
- How her experience of growing up in the countryside helped her understand the presence of God
- How Nano's mission continues today
- How we can put that mission into action in our own lives

## PRE STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the Icon
- What do you know about any of these images?
- What questions do you have as you look at these images?

## STEP 1

### Historical Context

This section of the Icon highlights a river and Nano's hands just above it. The river represents the River Blackwater, which flowed through the Nagle family's property at Ballygriffin. It was near the Blackwater that Nano developed her love of nature, discovering how God is present in it. The memory of this beautiful place would have stayed with Nano during her work in the crowded city slums.

Notice the left-hand side is darker and the mood is different. The valley is gloomy under the harsh laws of the time. There is a ruined castle on the banks of the river once owned by Nano's ancestors. It was in this ruin that Nano attended a hedge school, a small informal place of education which was the only place Catholic children could learn in their own faith in those days.

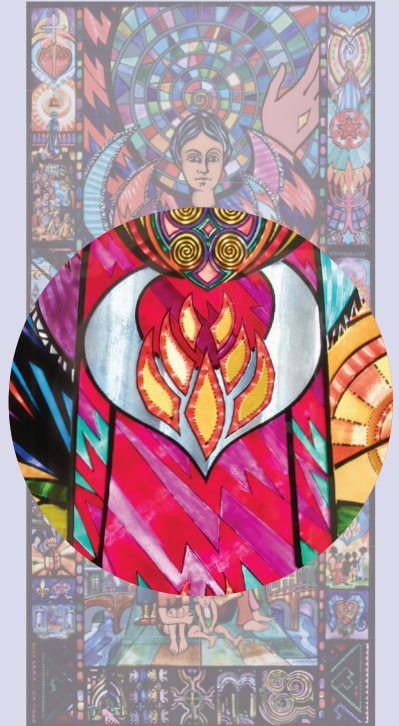
In Celtic times the rivers of Ireland were thought to be sacred. In the early Celtic Church spiritual people often chose beautiful places, such as near rivers, to live, work and praise God. Today Ballygriffin remains a place of peace and beauty where people visit to rest and find refuge from the busy world. It is a place which reminds us of the importance of looking after our environment.

 <http://www.nanonaglebirthplace.ie/environmental-policy/>

Read the environmental policy at Nano Nagle Birthplace.

### Discuss:

- Why does the centre consider it important to have this policy in place?
- What can other organisations learn from the policy?



## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

Nano was a bright and intelligent young woman with the courage to challenge the repressive laws of her time. She was aware of the dangers she faced but her vision for improving the lives of young children and supporting those who were sick motivated her to continue her work. She could have chosen an easier life, but her conscience did not allow her to turn her back on those who needed help. To ensure the continuation of her dream Nano inspired others to join her. She founded a religious congregation in Cork City in 1775 which today is known as the Presentation Sisters. Today the congregation has a presence in 24 countries.

Nano Nagle was declared 'Venerable' by Pope Francis in 2013.

There are many people today who do their best to continue Nano's work. Many women continue to dedicate their lives to the work Nano started. On her deathbed she said: "Spend yourselves for the poor".

Each of us can continue her mission today. We can do this in 3 ways:

- Inform ourselves of her life and work
- Reflect on her words and deeds
- Interpret them for our world today

Would climate change matter to Nano and why?

Look at the Icon again. This section focuses on preserving our environment and caring for it as a gift from God.

## STEP 3

### Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

The Presentation Sisters were among the first Catholic institutions in the world to announce their divestment from fossil fuels. This means not investing in any company extracting, producing and/or distributing fossil fuels. This decision was made to mark the first anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. It highlighted people's responsibility to care for and protect the planet.



The Sisters are involved in a joint coalition of more than 40 Catholic organisations across five continents. Speaking about their decision, the Presentation Sisters' Congregational Leader, Sr Mary Deane said "We regard our ethical investment policy as an expression of our commitment as a congregation."

The ethos of responding to climate change has also been taken up by Presentation schools.

- What have the Presentation Sisters agreed to do?
- What do you believe motivated them to make this change?
- In what way is this decision carrying out Nano's mission?
- Draw / find a picture which communicates the beauty of God's world

In the last few years, Swedish environmental campaigner Greta Thunberg has made international headlines for her views on climate change. She has raised awareness of issues that others have been trying to bring to our attention for some time.

Watch these clips of Thunberg and read the article by Mary Kenny in the link that follows and then think about the questions and statement afterwards:

➡ [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKTQW5i9\\_p8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKTQW5i9_p8)

➡ <https://www.independent.ie/life/green-living/mary-kenny-young-girls-with-courage-have-long-been-mocked-but-greta-is-an-inspiration-to-all-of-us-38555133.html>

- Do you agree with Greta Thunberg's approach?
- What is the key message of Mary Kenny's article?

Imagine Nano Nagle was alive today. Describe how you think she might address the issue. In your answer refer to her actions, her words and her audience. Give one example.

## STEP 4

### Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Sí*, Poetry & Song

Organise students into groups and give each one of the following to read:

*"If you would learn more, ask the cattle, seek information from the birds of the air. The creeping things of the earth will give you lessons, and the fishes of the sea will tell you all. There is not one such creature but will know this state of things is all of God's making"*

Job 12:7-9

*"The future belongs to those who give the next generation reasons to hope"*

Teilhard de Chardin, French priest and philosopher



*"Each of us accepts total responsibility for the earth's survival. We are the curators of the earth, starting at the crossroads of time"*

Helen Caldicott, Australian physician and author

*"I urgently appeal for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots concern and affect us all"*

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 14

In your group discuss the quote, and use it to make a commitment to one action which will change our world for the better. Share your responses and create a mural for your classroom outlining the beauty of our world and our commitment to caring for it.

#### STEP 4A

Write a quality you learned about Nano from this image.

#### STEP 5

**What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?**



# Central Panel: Children and the Lamb

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- The image of the children by examining the relationship between love and suffering
- How Nano reached out to all sections of society
- The schools set up by Nano
- The importance of Eucharist in the life of Nano

## PRE-STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the Icon

## STEP 1

### Historical Context

This section of the Icon is bound on each side by the images of the North and South Gate Bridges, situating Nano's initial mission in Cork City. The seven children represent Nano's seven schools in Cork at that time, five for girls and two for boys.

The image of the children points to the difficult circumstances in which they found themselves, suffering misunderstanding, abuse and exploitation. The pregnant girl and the anxious mother show some of the problems faced by the people during Nano's time. Nano understood and empathised with these issues and involved herself with the people. Nano was known as the Lady of the Lantern, symbolised here by the rays of light shining over the bridges. Nano believed that the light of Christ shone through her into the darkness of people's lives and she drew her strength from her deep faith and commitment to prayer.

The lamb at the centre represents Jesus the Lamb of God – reminding us of Easter. The children are depicted as being oblivious to the presence of the Lamb, while the eye of the viewer is drawn towards it. Sometimes we are oblivious of the good we are and do and the supports surrounding us and how we can use them.

Through the Icon we come to see the relationship between love and suffering. This was the gift that Nano brought to the children of Cork City, with a sense of urgency on one hand and on the other patience and painstaking care.



## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

If Nano were alive today these are the issues with which she would be concerned:

- Education
- Gender Equality
- Exploitation
- Trafficking
- Homelessness
- Migrants and refugees

Can you think of examples of exploitation and marginalisation in your country?

## STEP 3

Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

## STEP 4

Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Sí*, Poetry & Song

The relevant SDGs are:

- Goal 1 No Poverty
- Goal 2 Zero Hunger
- Goal 3 Good Health and Wellbeing
- Goal 4 Quality Education
- Goal 10 Reduce inequalities

### Nano Sayings:

*"Spend yourselves for the poor."*

Nano's message to the Sisters on her deathbed

### Song/Hymn:

How could anyone ever tell you, you are anything less than beautiful:

 [Shaina Noll https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aF7yFOIOk9M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aF7yFOIOk9M)

### Scripture:

Commandments of Love, Matt 22:34-40

Who is my neighbour – Good Samaritan

## STEP 4A

Write a quality you learned about Nano from this image.

## STEP 5

What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?



# Left Side Panel: Nano in Prayer

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- The importance of prayer in Nano's life and her devotion to Eucharist

## PRE STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the Icon
- What prayers do you think Nano might have said?
- Take a close look at the different aspects of the image, choose two images which express Nano's faith and explain your choice
- What questions do you have as you look at this image?

## STEP 1

### Historical Context

The tabernacle in this image reminds us of the importance Nano placed on the Eucharist. For her it was a symbol of Christ's Presence with us always. Nano's courage and determination to continue the challenging work she undertook was sustained by her faith in God and her belief that she was fulfilling God's will.

The mystery of God's merciful love is what drew Nano to those who were poor and suffering. She saw them in a new light – as children loved by God. This experience of God's merciful love compelled her to reach out to those who did not experience God's love and light.

There is a simplicity to this part of the Icon. Why do you think this is so?

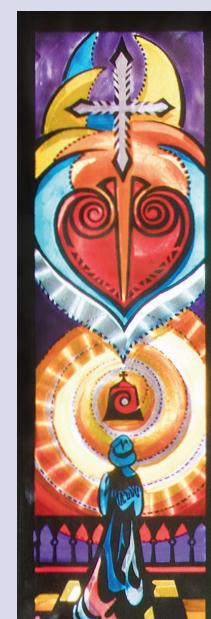
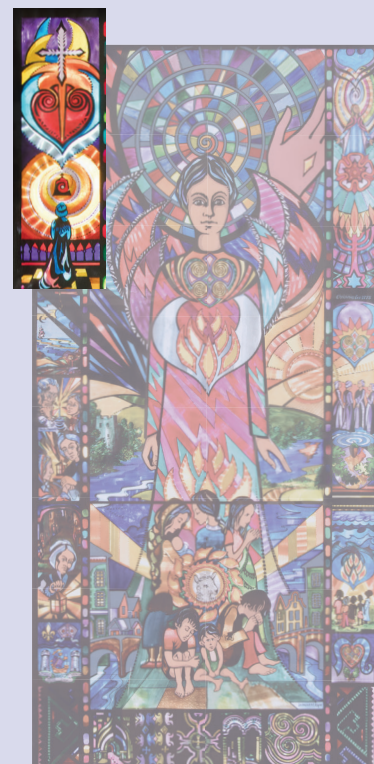
## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

In her home place of Ballygriffin Nano's faith was nurtured and today Ballygriffin offers many opportunities to deepen one's spirituality. Find out more about Nano Nagle's Birthplace

The place where Nano was born “*provides a space to engage in a deeper journey. A sacred place that honours the story and legacy of Nano, a woman born of this place. A place that reminds us of our inner-connectedness and communion with all of life. A place of prayer, of healing, and hope and a wonderful resource for us all.*”

Sr Mary Deane,  
Congregational Leader of the Presentation Sisters (Union)



## STEP 3

### Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

Nano worked to fulfil her mission to educate and serve the poor but central to her life was prayer. Even when exhausted from her work, she always made *time to be with God*.

Today, the need for prayer and spiritual enrichment is recognised as key to finding true contentment. When faced with life's challenges and suffering, prayer is a constant source of sustenance and support, a time to be alone with God. Just as for Nano, for those who continue her mission prayer still holds a place of priority in the day.

It is through prayer and a healthy spiritual life that Presentation Sisters today find the strength, wisdom and guidance to live and work for justice and compassion for the poor.

## STEP 4

### Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Sí*, Poetry & Song

#### Nano's Sayings:

*"The Almighty is all sufficient"*

Letter to Miss Fitzsimons, 17 July 1769

#### Song:

When I Pray - Daniel Nahmod

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=77UDeznzOck>

#### Scripture:

*"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles."*

Acts 2: 43-43:

## STEP 4A

Write a quality you learned about Nano from this image.

Explain why you liked this quality and how you might make it part of your own life.

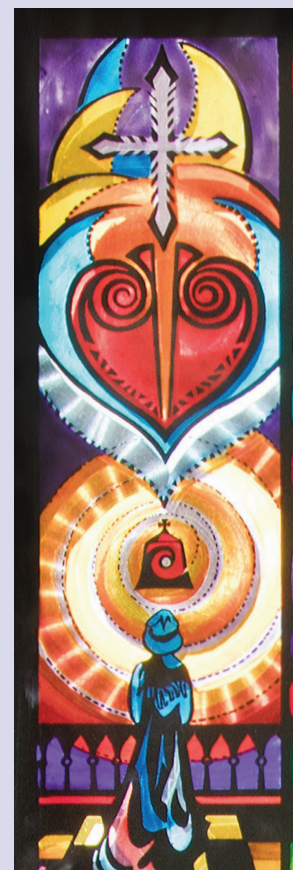
#### Read the following prayer of Nano Nagle:

Holy Spirit of God, enlighten us to understand how we can use our gifts to give you praise and serve your people in works of justice and mercy. Teach us to listen, that we may hear your words, give us vision born of faith to know your way for us and courage born of love to follow it.

Write your own prayer to Nano.

## STEP 5

### What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?



# Left Side Panel: Nano at School

## OBJECTIVES

Let us examine:

- Nano's belief in the importance of education
- How she set up her first schools
- How Nano's mission continues today
- How we can put that mission into action in our own lives

## PRE STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the Icon
- What do you know about any of these images?
- What questions do you have as you look at these images?
- What does the picture tell you about Nano?

Here we see a scene in which a tiny cramped window illuminates a room, suggesting the poverty-stricken conditions of the cabin schools. The window through which the light streams mirrors the tabernacle above the lantern below. The lantern is associated with Nano's travels through the dark streets of Cork city. Nano holds a book which represents her belief in the importance of learning. She valued learning as a means to escape poverty. The pages of the book are blank: this symbolises that she is teaching from her heart. She hopes to teach the children of the love of God for them. The room is cramped and has no comforts, no chairs or resources. This conveys the difficult conditions in which Nano worked, yet her schools were soon to become very popular.

## STEP 1

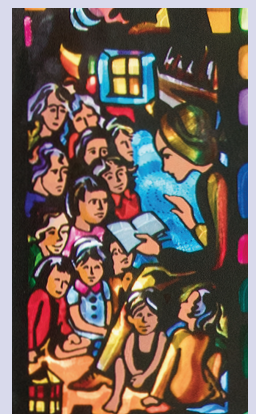
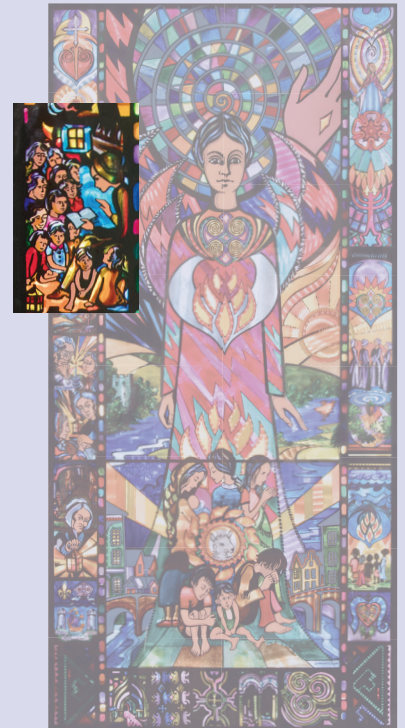
### Historical Context

Under the Penal Laws imposed on Ireland at this time, Catholic children were excluded from formal Catholic education or travelling abroad to school. Nano's family used their connections to arrange for her to go to France to finish her schooling. However, Nano strongly believed that education was the best way to help Catholic children have better lives. She made up her mind to return to Ireland and live with her brother Joseph and his wife Frances in Cove Lane, Cork. She dedicated the rest of her life to the education of Catholic children in Cork.

Under the Penal Laws operating a Catholic school could result in three months in prison, so Nano had to work in secret. She began in the early 1750s by opening a girl's school in Cove Lane (next to Nano Nagle Place). This first school was a mud cabin where the children sat on the floor and Nano sat on a small stool. It focused on reading, writing, Catechism (Catholic religious instruction) and needlework.

Within ten years demand for the education which Nano provided was such that she was operating seven schools across the city of Cork, teaching boys and girls.

When Nano's brother and his wife moved to Bath in the south of England, Nano rented her own house on Cove Lane. By day she visited each of her schools, and by night she visited the poor of the city. The city streets were not properly lit or policed, so it was potentially very dangerous for Nano. She travelled by the light of the lantern she carried, and across the city of Cork she became known as 'Miss Nagle, 'the Lady of the Lantern'.



Today, Nano Nagle is regarded as one of the great pioneers of Catholic education. Her work laid the foundation for a voluntary school system in Ireland. Her spirit and tradition inspire the Presentation Philosophy of Education.

## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

- Eirin Earth <https://youtu.be/VnKlo-i2pjM>
- Sr Rita Lee <https://youtu.be/LuwAJWZOFbc>
- Sr Mary Kelliher <https://youtu.be/Xs5NdGjx9oY>
- Sr Regina Coughlan <https://youtu.be/vqv11Rfcu74>
- Sr Evelyn Flanagan <https://youtu.be/mmynoBkWoi8>

Compare modern classrooms with those of Nano's school.

## STEP 3

### Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

Listen to the different accounts of the Presentation Sisters and note the work of the Presentation Sisters today.

What are the key areas in which the Sisters work?

## STEP 4

### Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Si*, Poetry & Song

Reflection – draw or write about the following:

Think of a situation in your own community or locality that is challenging for people at this time. Draw or write a short account of how you think Nano would address it if she were alive today.

*Laudato Si* Encyclical of 2015

In this encyclical Pope Francis has very clearly delivered the message to people all over the world about the need for all of us to care for our common home. Pope Francis challenges us to look at our lifestyles. He asks for justice and equality, as it is clear that climate change is creating a huge amount of suffering and impacting the poorest of the poor in our world; the very people who did least to cause this situation. It is important that we realise how powerful each and every one of us is and that even the smallest changes can have the biggest impact.

*"I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me."*

Matthew 25:35

## STEP 4A

Write a quality that you have learned about Nano from this image.

## STEP 5

### What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?

Give out newspaper cuttings showing various global events in the last year. What questions do you ask when you see these images?



# Left Side Panel: Uncle Joseph

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- The risks that Nano took
- The harshness of the penal laws
- The support of the right people is needed to achieve great things

## PRE-STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the Icon
- What do you know about any of these images?
- What questions do you have as you look at these images?

## STEP 1

### Historical Context

The gallows and departing ship are a grim reminder of the hardships to which many Irish people were subjected during the days of the penal laws. These attempted to force Irish Catholics and Protestant dissenters to accept the established Church of Ireland by denying them political and religious rights as well as access to education. The gallows and ship help us to appreciate Nano's achievements in the face of such odds.

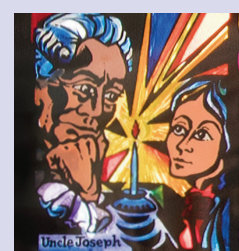
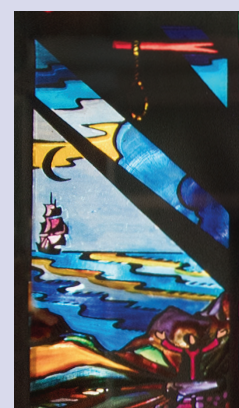
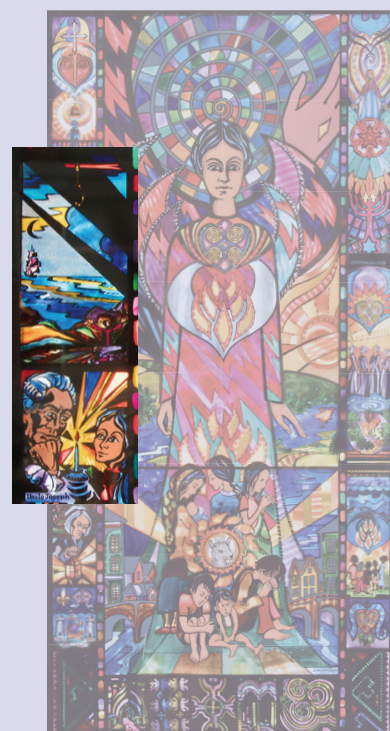
Nano took advice from her formidable uncle, Joseph Nagle. Uncle Joseph, a prominent lawyer in Cork, was the greatest single influence on Nano. This section depicts a tense moment between Joseph and Nano. Joseph's approval of Nano's actions was necessary in order to maintain good family relationships. Nano's facial expression tells us that she was aware that her actions were putting family members at risk. Nano would not have achieved as much as she did without the encouragement and support she received from her uncle.

The flickering candle between them symbolises the light of faith. Their good judgement, wisdom, prudence and courage together with their unshakeable faith enabled Nano to carry on with her mission and Joseph Nagle to support her.

## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

- What would you need in order to achieve your goal?
- From whom would you seek advice?
- How would you secure financial support?
- You need to have someone in your life that you can trust
- You need to work with like-minded people towards common goals
- People of influence can support and enable a project



### STEP 3

Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

### STEP 4

Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Si*, Poetry & Song

Relevant SDGs:

- Goal 4 Quality Education
- Goal 5 Gender Equality
- Goal 10 Reduced Inequalities
- Goal 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions

**Nano's Sayings:**

*"You see it has pleased the Almighty to make me succeed, when I had everything, as I may say, to fight against."*

Letter to Eleanor Fitzsimons, 17 July 1769

**Song/Hymn:**

You Raise Me Up

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DorNUsi5LE>

**Scripture:**

*"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."*

James 1:12

### STEP 4A

Write an interesting fact you learned about Nano from our discussion of this image.

### STEP 5

What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?



# Left Side Panel:

## Nano - Lady of the Lantern

### OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- How Nano provided education for the poor of Cork
- How Nano tended to the sick and elderly by visiting them in their homes
- How Nano became known as the Lady of the Lantern

### PRE STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the icon
- What do you know about any of these images?
- What questions do you have as you look at these images?

### STEP 1

#### Historical Context

The Icon here shows us Nano's care for the sick, the lonely and the old. Nano carrying a lantern through the dark lanes and alleyways would have been a familiar sight in Cork. It was said there was not a single garret in the city that she did not know or did not visit.

### STEP 2

#### Modern Interpretation

If Nano were alive and living in Cork now which issues would she be most concerned about?

- Deprivation, poverty and loneliness, often found together
- Homelessness

### STEP 3

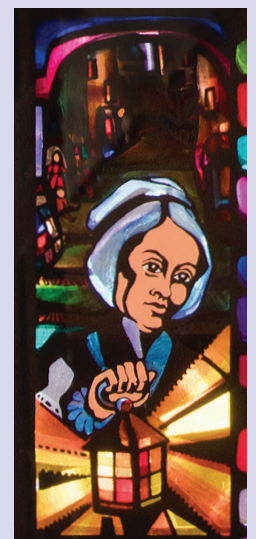
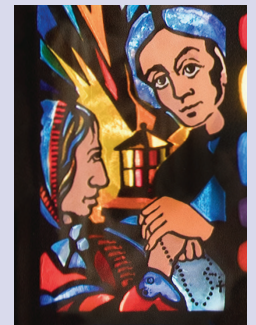
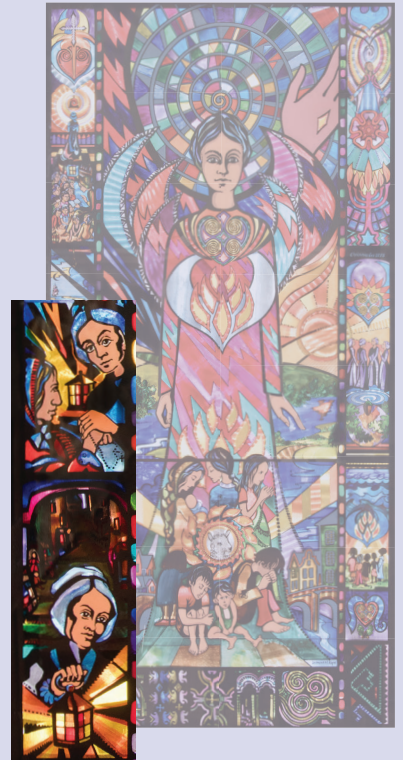
Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

### STEP 4

Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Si*, Poetry & Song

Relevant SDGs:

- Goal 1 No Poverty
- Goal 2 Zero Hunger
- Goal 3 Good Health and Wellbeing
- Goal 6 Clean Water and Sanitation
- Goal 10 Reduce inequalities
- Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



**Nano's Sayings:**

*"Spend yourselves for the poor"*

Nano's message to the Sisters on her deathbed

**Song/Hymn:**

What so ever you do to the least of my brothers - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODQCmus6Hog>



Angel in Disguise – Songs for the Homeless

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l14UjeszKAY>

**Scripture:**

*"For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, You shall open wide your hand to your brother and sister, to the needy and to the poor, in your land."*

Deuteronomy 15:11

*"Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you."*

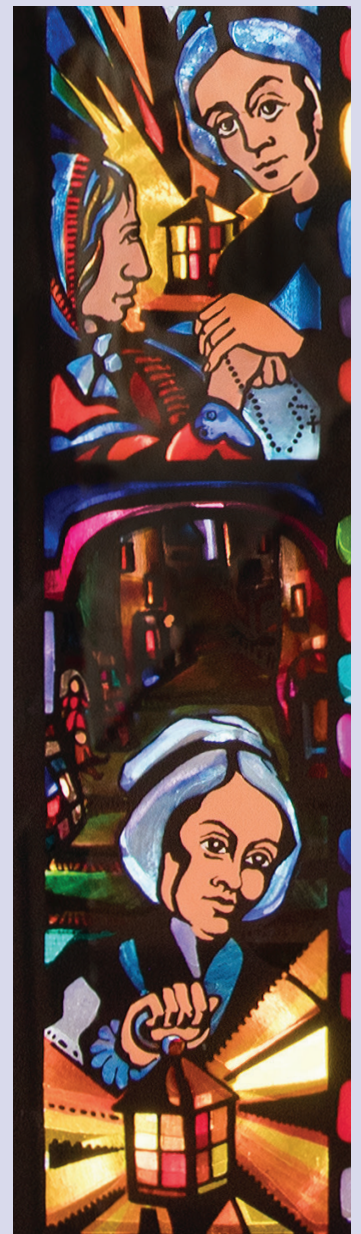
Matthew 5:42

**STEP 4A**

Write an interesting fact you learned about Nano from our discussion of this image.

**STEP 5**

**What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?**



# Left Side Panel: Symbols

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- Nano Nagle's connection with France
- The influence of Bishop Moylan on Nano's work
- How we can use our own influence to bring about change

## PRE STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the Icon
- What do you know about any of these images?
- What questions do you have as you look at these images?

## STEP 1

### Historical Context

There are a number of symbols in this section of the Icon linking together Cork, France, Nano Nagle and her great supporter Bishop Francis Moylan.

#### Fleur-de-lis

The fleur-de-lis is an emblem associated with the French monarchy and by extension with France. It also represents the Holy Trinity in the Church. The three petals of the design reflect this, with the band at the bottom symbolizing Mary.

The fleur-de-lis above the waves and over Cork's Coat of Arms evokes Ireland's links with France during that period. It recalls how Ireland was dependant on France and other European countries for education generally – Nano herself was educated in France.

#### Bishop's Mitre

A mitre is a tall hat worn by leaders in some Christian churches. In the Roman Catholic church, it is worn by bishops, archbishops or cardinals on special religious occasions. It is used on a coat of arms to show that the owner is a bishop, in this case Bishop Moylan. He was a strong supporter of Nano and her Sisters and like Nano was also educated in France.

#### Cork Coat of Arms

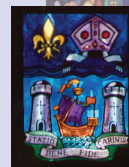
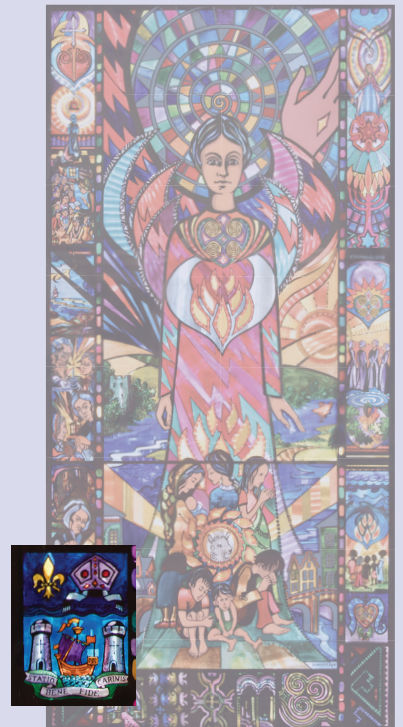
It shows a ship between two towers or castles. Cork City's motto is 'Statio Bene Fide Carinis', meaning in Latin 'a safe harbour for ships'.

## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

If Nano were here now what would she address?

- Emigration and migration
- The role of women in society and the church
- Activism and how to respectfully challenge authority



## STEP 3

### Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

- Those working with migrants
- Someone who has left their own country to work in a missionary country

## STEP 4

### Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Sí*, Poetry & Song

#### Relevant SDGs:

- Goal 4 Quality Education
- Goal 5 Gender Equality
- Goal 10 Reduced inequality
- Goal 16 Peace Justice and Strong institutions

#### Nano's Sayings:

*"The Almighty makes use of the weakest means to bring about His work."*

Letter to Theresa Mulally, 26 September 1776

#### Song/Hymn:

Blessed are they

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WM1Lknv7htk>

Who will speak if we don't

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZ70EZqlCys>

#### Scripture:

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

Matthew 25:35

## STEP 4A

Write an interesting fact you learned about Nano from our discussion of this image

## STEP 5

### What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?



# Right Side Panel: Presentation of Mary

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- Nano's devotion to Mary, as we focus on the Presentation of our Lady
- Mary and Nano's 'Yes' to God
- The importance of right choices by young people today

## PRE-STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the Icon
- What do you know about any of these images?
- What questions do you have as you look at these images?

## STEP 1

### Historical Context

The Presentation of Our Lady was the favourite title under which Nano prayed to the Mother of God. 21st November is the Feast of the Presentation, one of the greatest feasts of the Eastern church. Mary is seen as the new Temple of God, replacing the old and as the dawn, receiving the light from the sun which is yet to appear.

At the heart of the mandorla a small cross appears – the emerging symbol of the redemption of humankind.

A seven branched candle stick represents the cosmic tree – a symbol familiar in the ancient East and also to the Celts. It symbolises the twelve tribes of Israel. Below is the Star of David.

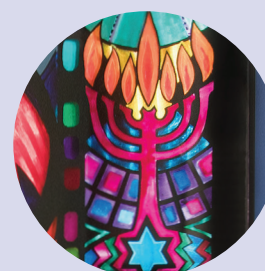
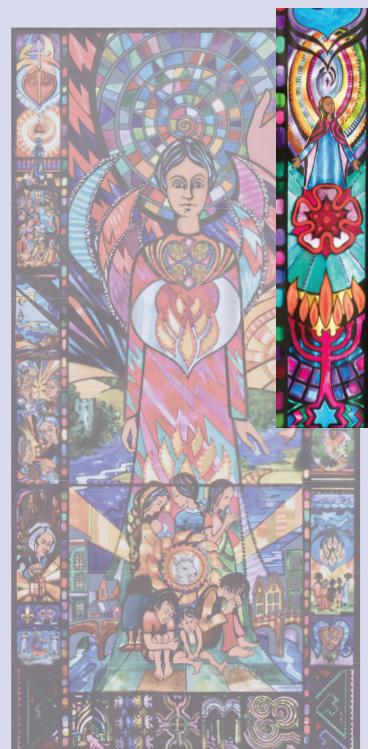
Overall, this section is composed of two triangles, the one facing downward represents God descending into the world and the upward one signifying the uplifting of all people to God.

## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

At the Presentation Mary was offered by her parents to God and totally surrendered her life to God. Nano's 'Yes' to the kingdom of God harnessed all her energies to love God. She became a woman of unbounded compassion, deep contemplation, indomitable courage, radical creativity, native shrewdness and indefatigable zeal for her faith. She challenged her people's brutal oppression, spending her life on the "razor edge of danger", as it was described by Salvador Fink, OFM in his book *Nano Nagle, Cork Lady of the Lantern*.

Are we saying "Yes" to the special things God asks of us, to give voice to the voiceless, and become agents of change and transformation for the people today, particularly women and children?



## STEP 3

### Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

Presentation Sisters all over the world have different initiatives for social justice, the education of women, community colleges, self-help groups, raising their voices against child trafficking.

## STEP 4

### Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Sí*, Poetry & Song

Relevant SDG Goals:

- Goal 3 Good health and well-being
- Goal 5 Gender Equality
- Goal 8 Decent work and Economic growth
- Goal 10 Reduce inequality
- Goal 16 Peace and Justice strong institutions

#### Nano's sayings:

*"The Almighty makes use of the weakest means to bring about His work."*

#### Songs and Hymns:

The Magnificat

'Beyond' by Raphael Consedine

➤ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0yzZZ4e87c>

*Laudato Sí* Encyclical of 2015

'Humanity still has the ability to work together'

➤ [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html)

#### Scripture:

*"God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day."*

Psalm 46:5

## STEP 4A

What interesting fact did you learn about Mary of the Presentation and Nano Nagle from our discussion?

## STEP 5

### What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?

- Make a meaningful celebration of Presentation Day in schools.
- Ethos wall in Presentation Secondary School, Castleisland, Co Kerry see [www.presentationcastleisland.ie](http://www.presentationcastleisland.ie)
- Projects to promote social causes
- Pilgrimage to Our Lady's Shrine
- One virtue in Mary's life you wish to model your life on?



# Right Side Panel: The Women, the Sun, the Water & the Acorn

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- The foundation of the Presentation Congregation
- The symbolism of the acorn
- Actions needed to realise Nano's vision

## PRE-STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the Icon
- What do you know about any of these images?
- What questions do you have as you look at these images?

## STEP 1

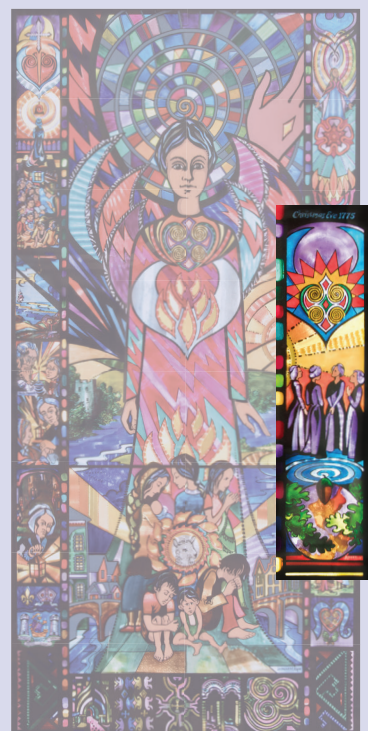
### Historical Context

The **sun** represents God's love and grace spreading across the world. The **water** at the feet of the Sisters is disturbed by the Spirit of God. An **acorn**, a symbol of the Presentation Congregation, is the seed that grows to a mighty oak and spreads shelter across the world.

Nano wanted to ensure that her work amongst the poor would continue by finding people to help her. She committed her finances and her energy to bring the Ursuline Sisters from France at a time of great hardship and an outlawing of Catholicism in Ireland. When they arrived, Nano found that they were an enclosed order and unable to carry out the work she was doing.

Although disappointed, she again listened deeply to God's calling. On Christmas Eve 1775 Nano and her three companions Mary Fouhy, Elizabeth Bourke and Mary Ann Collins became the founding members of the Society of Charitable Instruction of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a title Nano cherished as it represented her passion to follow as a disciple of Jesus. When she asked for the support of Bishop Moylan, he advised her that one religious order (the Ursulines) was sufficient to fulfil the needs at that time. Nano replied quietly that she would go elsewhere. Seeing her quiet resolve and determination, Bishop Moylan changed his mind and gave Nano his support.

Nano demonstrated vision, openness to God, confidence and passion for the poor. She joined with others rather than working alone. Although her first endeavours seemed disappointing, she showed no resentment and wasn't downhearted but carried on and found a new solution.



## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

If Nano were here now on what would she focus? She would join with others to address needs such as poverty, education, human trafficking, gender equality, homelessness, exploitation and migration.

## STEP 3

### Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

Releasing the charism and supporting others to meet the needs e.g schools, growth of Friends of Nano, Vocation promotion. New missions developed in Cambodia and Palestine. Intercultural living initiatives in Thailand and India.

## STEP 4

### Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Sí*, Poetry & Song

Relevant SDGs:

- Goal 1 Eliminating poverty
- Goal 3 Good Health and Wellbeing
- Goal 4 Education for all
- Goal 10 Reduce inequalities

**Nano's Sayings:**

*"The greatest successes meet with the greatest crosses in the beginning"*

**Songs/Hymns:**

Called by a Presence with no Name: Jan Novotka

 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_RIUvFd620](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_RIUvFd620)

Christ be Our Light: Bernadette Farrell

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FUPitZ5Xs>

**Scripture:**

Come Follow Me - Matthew 4: 19

He sent me to give good news to the poor - Luke 4: 17-18

## STEP 4A

Write an interesting fact you learned about Nano from our discussion of this image.

## STEP 5

**What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?**



# Right Side Panel: Children of Many Nations

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- The spread of the Presentation Congregation across the world

## PRE-STEP 1

- List what you see in this part of the Icon
- What do you know about any of these images?
- What questions do you have as you look at these images?
- What are the faces of the children expressing?

## STEP 1

### Historical Context

Children are gathered together, and they are all the same colour, perhaps symbolising all children are equal.

Water represents the oceans and the distances the Sisters travelled. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are carried over the water, overcoming the long distances.

## STEP 2

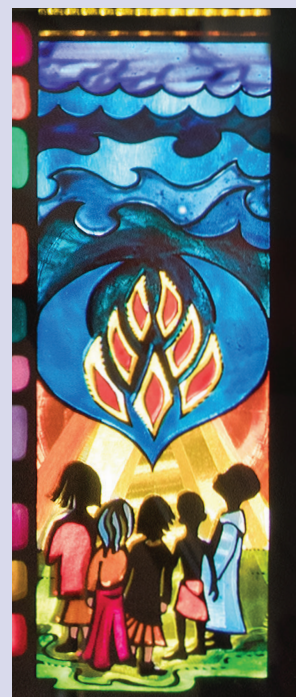
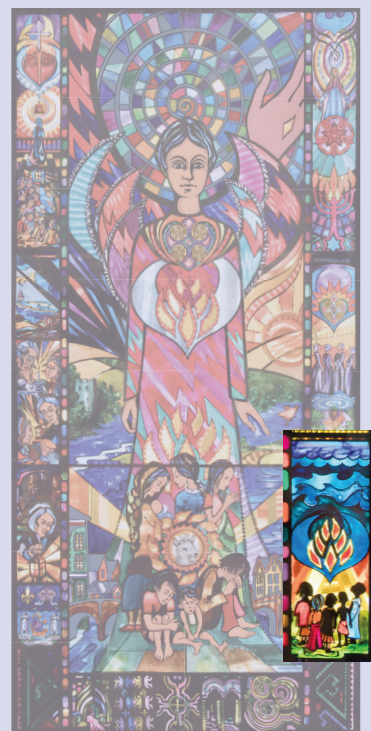
### Modern Interpretation

If Nano were here now what would she address?

- Barriers between cultures
- Education for the poor and the vulnerable

## STEP 3

Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today



## STEP 4

### Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Si*, Poetry & Song

- Goal 1 Eradicate poverty
- Goal 4 Quality education for all
- Goal 5 Gender equality

#### *Laudato Si*:

Made in the image of God  
Equal distribution of wealth  
Quality of life  
Equal opportunities

#### Nano's Sayings:

*"If I could be of service, in saving souls, in any part of the globe I would willingly do all in my power."*

Letter to Eleanor Fitzsimmons, 1769

#### Scripture:

*"But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."*

Luke 14:13-14

*"Rich and poor have this in common.  
The Lord is the Maker of them all."*

Proverbs 22: 2

#### Music:

John Denver: I want to live

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dfq6c2JKUE>

Barbara Streisand: At the same time

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scGQr9l8jfQ>

## STEP 4A

Write an interesting fact you learned about Nano from our discussion of this image.

## STEP 5

What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?



# Right Side Panel: Nano's Devotion to Mary

## OBJECTIVES

Let us explore:

- The Presentation Sisters devotion to Mary
- The spirituality of the Presentation Sisters
- The significance of the oak tree and acorn

## PRE-STEP 1

- Look at the young picture of the heart. what do you notice about it?
- What else can you see in this picture?
- Why do you think the symbols might mean?

## STEP 1

### Historical Context

This symbol in the Icon was new for the Presentation Sisters and was inspired by an Australian Sister, Raphael Consedine in her book *Listening Journey*. This book conveyed to Desmond Kyne the true sense of unity which exists in Nano's spiritual family. The cross pierces the 'M' for Mary.

Below the heart symbols a few oak leaves and acorns signify the enduring devotion of Presentation Sisters everywhere to Christ and to Mary.

## STEP 2

### Modern Interpretation

The Presentation Sisters are under the patronage of Mary in a special sense and this love of Mary is implicit in their lives. Their devotion to the heart of Christ follows easily.

The oak represents the early Irish Church. The acorn appears in this picture and is a symbol of the Presentation Congregation.



### STEP 3

#### Explore some Presentation mission initiatives of today

Marion Feasts are celebrated by the Presentation Sisters throughout the world.

Our Presentation spirituality is heart-centred and the Sisters are called to be contemplative and walk in the footsteps of Mary, always pondering in their hearts.



### STEP 4

#### Explore Links with SDGs, Nano's Sayings, *Laudato Si'*, Poetry / Song

The Magnificat

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34ikYPM7EZY>

Mary Mother of the Poor: Chris Skinner

 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TipwvIVh7js&t=1545s:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TipwvIVh7js&t=1545s)

Hail Mary, Full of Grace: Carey Landry

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OUey6ytEXqY>

### STEP 4A

Write a quality you learned about Nano from this image.

### STEP 5

What action can I / we take to further Nano's mission?

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## **Prayer for the Canonisation of Nano Nagle**

Gracious and loving God we place  
before you the Cause of Canonisation of  
Venerable Nano Nagle.

Bless the Presentation Family and the  
Church by declaring Nano Nagle's  
Sainthood.

With her lantern light for our journey,  
may we be blessed with the vision,  
courage and fidelity that stirred Nano to  
passionate service to those made poor  
and abandoned.

We ask this in the Name of Jesus in whom  
she found light and strength.

Amen

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Christmas Eve 1775

# Exploring the Nano Nagle Icon





## Exploring the Nano Nagle Icon

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