

## **REFLECTION ON THE LIFE OF SR. MONICA FAGAN**

**September 10, 1930 – May 12, 2026**

**by Roisin Gannon, pbvm**

**PBVM NL Unit Leader**

**MAY 2026**

God says to us, and through his death and resurrection has told us in no uncertain terms..." I have loved you with an everlasting love" and to Monica says, "come my beloved into the home I have prepared for you, where no harm can ever touch you".

We are here this evening to honour the long life of Sr. Monica Fagan. I welcome Monica's nieces, nephews, grand and great-grand nieces and nephews, friends, and our Presentation Family. We sympathise with each other on the death of Monica.

Monica was born in St. Mary's on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1930 to Bridget Yetman and Joseph Fagan. Life was not easy then...the world was just learning to recover from the effects of World War 1, which ended just 12 years prior.

Monica was one of eight children, her siblings all gone before her.... Monica being the last to go. Monica's nieces and nephews are with us today, as they have been over the past few days, showing how they loved her, and how she loved them. And we believe there is no ending to that love.... like the ring on our fingers...there is no mark signifying the end of the ring.

Monica joined the Presentation Sisters on 8 September 1951. In this year of 2026, Monica has spent 75 years as a Presentation Sister, following the spirit of Nano Nagle who founded the Congregation in Cork, Ireland in 1775, 250 years ago. 75 years...3/4 of a century.

Monica's Presentation Life took her all over the island, where she touched many, many lives, particularly the poor and underprivileged. She taught in Witless Bay, Stephenville, Deer Lake, Windsor, Port au Port, Ferryland, Corner Brook, Carbonear; She was the Religious Correspondent in Humbermouth, St. John's, Grand Falls. From 1982 to 2007 she lived in the Motherhouse and visited the local hospitals, doing all she could to help those in any kind of difficulty. In 2007 she decided to give up that ministry, and minister from where she now lived in the Motherhouse. All of these years Monica dressed in some form of the traditional habit including the veil. She was not free enough then to let go of the signatory dress.

In 2016 Monica moved to the Nano Nagle Floor and this is where colour took over her life!! All of a sudden, no habit, no veil ... slacks!! We saw her wit, her humour, and even in the midst of her confusion she saw fun! Anytime we went into the NNF Monica was running a marathon. She was in her wheelchair, but the two legs were going a mile a minute. Up and down, she went, adding to or ignoring the various conversations around her. She relived her life of teaching....in her mind she would go to school, correct copies, prepare lessons, visit families. I would often admire the colour of her fleece (she was always freezing!) which gave her great delight. I used to call her THE QUEEN OF ST. MARY'S.... she agreed that was true and how she enjoyed the title!

Monica was noted for her kindness to the poor, the sick and the uneducated. The Sisters with whom she lived, loudly and emphatically remark this of her. In these qualities she was a true daughter of Nano Nagle, who in 1775 founded us for the poor, the uneducated. Nano must surely have welcomed Monica and praised her for living so strongly and loyally the spirit of the Congregation.

## **IN BLACKWATER WOODS (EXCERPT) MARY OLIVER**

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

Monica let go so gracefully, so quietly, no fuss..... just as she wanted. I feel she made great speed in her wheelchair to get on the road as she was only a few minutes alone. She saw the escape route and off she went. She must have heard the words..." Today you will be with me in Paradise". She knew her life was complete. "Come you blessed of my Father".

Monica's long life is a shining example to us of a life of commitment... commitment to the Gospel Values of Jesus and commitment to our Presentation Way of Life. Monica is now enjoying eternal peace and contentment in the realms of her new home. No doubt she is walking those miles, not in her wheelchair, and will continue to walk with us. She walks in the lives and hearts of her beloved nieces and nephews, grand and great-grand. Monica, thank you for your wonderful life, thank you for the fun, the wit, the colour in all its shapes and forms. We will miss you. We will miss the marathons as we enter the NNF. Your spirit lives on and you live on in our memories.

God bless you Monica.....and until we meet again may God hold you in the palm of HER hand.