

'The characters, ambitions, disputes and sheer drama involved in the Australian Loretos' evolution offer both stunning surprise and inspiration.'

GERALDINE DOOGUE



# LORETO

## IN AUSTRALIA

MARY RYLLIS CLARK

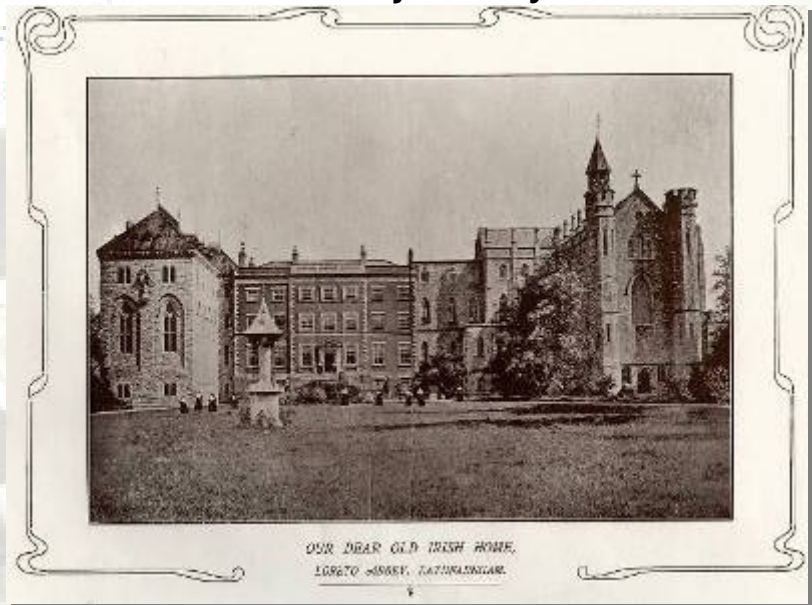
Sisters Peg Flynn and Florence Quinn in Rockingham, W.A., 1968  
*Photo: 'The West Australian'*

# Leaving Ireland

It was scarcely daybreak when Mother Gonzaga Barry and her nine companions left Loreto Abbey, Rathfarnham in Dublin at the start of their journey to Australia.



Mother Scholastica Somers,  
General Superior at the time  
of the Australian foundation.



OUR DEAR OLD IRISH HOME,  
LORETO ABBEY, RATHFARNHAM.



Mother Gonzaga Barry's  
Mother, Elizabeth Barry



The Barry Children, Mary Barry (Mother  
Gonzaga) top left



'S.S. Somersetshire' on which the sisters travelled to  
Australia.

*State Library of Victoria, Picture Collection*



Good Shepherd's Convent Abbotsford  
where the sisters stayed on their first night  
in Melbourne.

*Photographer N.J. Caire, from the collection of  
Tony Lee*

# Mary Ward: A dangerous memory of the gospel

“All look upon you as new beginners of a course never thought of before, marvelling at what you intend, and what will be the end of you.”  
 Mary Ward (1585-1645)



Guy Fawkes, and the Gunpowder Plot Conspirators, all relatives or family friends of the Ward family.



The Painted Life  
 Pl 21 The Glory Vision, Mary Ward's first vision of an Institute



Mary Ward made a journey of 2,400 kilometres on foot to present her constitutions to the Pope in 1621.  
 Oil Painting, Augsburg Convent



Mary Ward's lemon juice letters were written while she was imprisoned in Munich. No. 68 p.1  
 Archives Munich, Nymphenburg

*Yours ever  
 Marie Ward*



Mary Ward's tombstone in Osboldwick  
 'To love the poor, persever in the same, live dy and rise with them was all the ayme of Mary Ward who, having lived 60 years and 8 days dyed the 20 of Jan. 1645'

## A complex legacy

Mary Ward's creation of a new form of religious life for women survived in spite of the efforts made by the Church in Rome to remove all trace of her Institute.



The Painted Life, in situ Augsburg Convent, 50 paintings recording the life of Mary Ward



The Bar Convent York, established in 1686



Mary Poyntz, one of Mary Ward's 1<sup>st</sup> companions and biographer  
*Oil Painting, CJ Convent Augsburg*



Frances Teresa Ball, founder of Loreto in Ireland in 1821



Loreto Abbey, Rathfarnham, established in 1821 by Mother Teresa Ball

# Mother Gonzaga Barry: A many sided woman

Mother Gonzaga was convinced that, 'there is no subject of greater, perhaps of as great, importance to a nation as that of its women's education'.



Mother Gonzaga Barry (1834-1915), founder of Loreto in Australia



Original Wynne House (Mary's Mount) from the north east



St. Alipius Presbytery, Ballarat, where the sisters stayed during their first few months in Ballarat  
*Ballarat Diocesan Archives*



Bella Guerin, 1<sup>st</sup> female graduate of the University of Melbourne taught at Mary's Mount

## Expansion

When she left Rathfarnham in 1875, Mother Gonzaga had placed her hands in God's hands. She had been led not only to Victoria but to three other states, each an immense distance from her base in Ballarat.



Dawson Street Ballarat, 1<sup>st</sup> Loreto Day School,



On the flat roof of the Albert Park Convent, opened in 1890 and including the Central Catholic Teachers' Training College in 1906



Portland Convent, established in Bayview Cottage in 1884



Sisters of the Randwick Loreto community, established in Sydney in 1892



Loreto Claremont  
Loreto established in Western Australia in 1897



Loreto Norwood, Adelaide, established 1905

# Mother Gonzaga Barry's International Role

After her visit to Ireland in 1887, Mother Gonzaga's letters show her to have been increasingly involved in issues relating to the Institute as an international body.



Mother Gonzaga Barry's prolific letter writing helped her to develop relationships with her sisters in new missions isolated from the Mother House and assisted in her fight for Institute unity and recognition of Mary Ward as founder.



"HMS Chimborazo", on which Mother Gonzaga and Mother Xavier Yourelle travelled to Ireland in 1887  
*State Library of Victoria, Picture Collection*



Mother Catharine Chambers, author of 'The Life of Mary Ward' Vol. 1 1882 and Vol. 2 1885



Mother Gonzaga Barry visiting Loreto Convent Wexford at the General Chapter 1894

## Always in debt but never bankrupt

As Archbishop Mannix pointed out when he laid the foundation stone for the [Mandeville] chapel in September 1927, 'the Loreto sisters were always in debt but they were never bankrupt'.



St. Mary's Hall, 'Barbiston' in Parkville, opened as a Catholic University Women's College in 1918



The opening of Loreto Mandeville Hall, Toorak, 15<sup>th</sup> February 1925  
from "The Advocate" MDHC

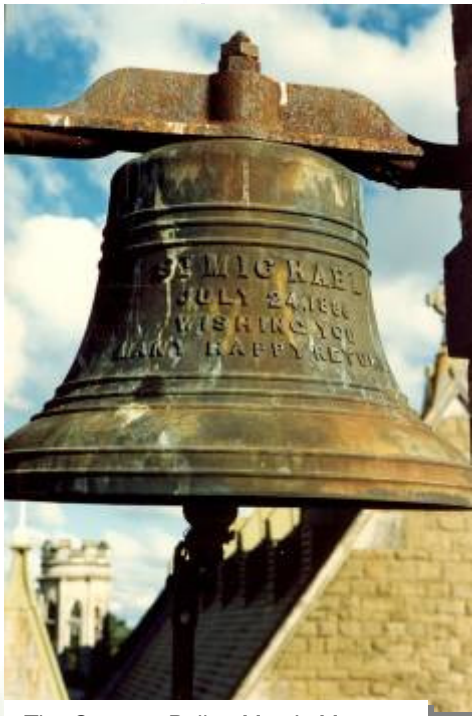


Loreto Coorparoo, Queensland, founded in 1927. The Casket Building on the right, built with Golden Casket Lottery winnings.



Laying and Blessing of the Foundation Stone for Loreto Nedlands, W.A., 1930

## A deep well within them



The Convent Bell at Mary's Mount marking the cycle of the day

The postulant entering religious life was at the beginning of a spiritual journey which would remake her identity.



The Oratory of Our Lady, c.1887, Mary's Mount



The Novitiate Quadrangle, Mary's Mount Ballarat, c.1899



Novices and Postulants 1925

STRALIA

MARY'S MOUNT BALLARAT CLARK

## The terrible years



Mother Raphael Deasy, General Superior, 1919-1935, was strongly against the cause of Union of the Institute branches.

When Mother Stanislaus Mulhall died in 1923, the Australian province of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary was drawn into a crisis from which it took decades to recover.



Mother Raphael Deasy and Mother Teresa Gertrude O'Sullivan, Provincial 1924-1937, arriving in Fremantle in 1924. The appointment of the Irish Mother Teresa Gertrude, led to tension in the Australian Province.



Mother Catherine Goddard, a devoted Mary Ward woman, driven to write to the Apostolic Delegate describing the crisis in the Australian Province.



Mary Ward Pageant held at Loreto Marryatville. Celebrating the Tercentenary of Mary Ward's death in 1945.

## Surprised by the spirit

*The statement, "Change is not a betrayal of the past and of its traditions, change is fidelity to it." was made by Sister Noni Mitchell, IBVM*

"Change is not a betrayal of the past and of its traditions, change is fidelity to it."

Sister Noni Mitchell, IBVM



On their way to the General Chapter at Rathfarnham in 1948, the Australian delegates visited Mary Ward's grave at Osboldwick. Mother Mildred Dew is standing at the back, Mother Francis Frewin in the middle distance and Mother Colombiere Lillis in the foreground.



Mother Dympna McNamara, Provincial 1958-1970  
*"She believed in the potential of women, liberated through education and learning."* Sr. Noni Mitchell



Mother Francis Frewin, outside St. Mary's College. The new College replacing St. Mary's Hall was opened in 1966



Novices in front of Normanhurst Novitiate, 1958

## Adaptation and renewal

The Loreto Institute was fortunate in having three great women to lead it into the hard initial years following Vatican II: Mother Dympna McNamara, Mother Antoinette Hayden and Sister Noni Mitchell.



General Chapter 1971 – Sisters Margaret Manion, Antoinette Hayden, Dympna McNamara, Emilian Brooke-Cowden, Noni Mitchell



Mother Agnes Walsh, Superior General 1968-1986, at Mary's Mount 1969



Loreto House, Albert Park, purchased in 1969 for the Provincialate/Province Office, Novitiate and Community Residence



The Claremont Community in the mid 1970s with the variation in dress permissible after Vatican II

## In the service of youth

At the same time that religious teaching orders in Australia were dealing with the challenges of the Second Vatican Council a crisis developed in parish schools that affected them equally strongly.



Mother Sebastian Brady, St. Joseph's Parish School Ballarat.  
Class sizes of 60 were not uncommon  
*NL Harvey Photographers Ballarat*



Sr. Mary Murray with Loreto Commercial College South Melbourne students, 1961

Students were much sought after by local firms because of the thorough grounding they received in book-keeping, typing and office management. They were also given lessons in etiquette.



Sister Angela Slattery with Grade 1 students, Broome  
Sisters Mary-Ellen McCormack and Myrene Erdman were the first to go to Broome, arriving in January 1973.



Mother Joseph Halloran, a legendary figure in Australian Catholic education

## The beauty of a Loreto education

Students were encouraged to develop a love for art, literature, music, history and conversation – in short, to participate in an education that would fit them for a well-rounded life in the world.



Sister Kevin Maye lived at Normanhurst for forty-five years, where she ran the dining room and had daily contact with boarders.



Mary's Mount Boarders at Ballarat Station, 1967



Mary Ward Sculpture by Meliesa Judge installed in every Loreto school to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the founding of her first community and school.



Sister Denise Desmarchelier at the new John XXIII College, 1986. The amalgamation of Loreto Claremont and St. Louis took place in 1977.

## An ordinary manner of life



*Residents and members of the support group at the Ministry of Housing estate at Lygon Street, Carlton. From left, residents Miza Matigevic (with dog Dino), Pauline Eagwood, Sr Angela Quill, Jocinta Forbes, Sr Margaret Hill, resident Rodney Madeley . . . There is a great richness of people and quality to their lives.'*

Housing Commission flats in Lygon Street, Carlton, an opportunity to live and work among underprivileged people.

Mary Ward's women had discovered new ways of being contemplative in action and of finding God in all things.



Sister Margaret Hill (right) with Mary Doyle (both committee members of Catholics for Peace) after Margaret had given the keynote speech at a peace rally in Melbourne in March 1984.



Sister Pauline Prince, co-founder of the Child in Need Institute at the Abinash Gini clinic



Sister Mary Wright (left) Mother General of the Irish Branch, and Sister Maria Bierer (right), Superior General of the North American Branch sign a historic reunion document in Toronto in September 2003.  
Photo: Ron Turenne, Courtesy of IBVM Loretto Sisters Canadian Province