

Ballygriffin - Birthplace of Nano

The image of Nano as a woman of the Lantern comes from the description in '*A Panagetic on the Life of Nano Nagle*' by Dr Coppinger, given in 1774. He wrote:

'How often have we seen her, after a well spent day, returning through the darkness of the night, dripping with rain, mingled in the bustling crowd, moving thoughtfully along by the faint glimmering of a wretched lantern, withholding from herself in this manner the necessities of life at administer the comforts of it to others.'



We are invited to follow in Nano's footsteps and fan into flame the gift of God in our own lives and our own time:

'The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire.'

To display the lantern of the soul in shadowy times like these – to be fierce and to show mercy towards others, both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity.

Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it.'

'Do not Lose Heart' Clarissa Pinkola Estes

Nano's life in a Nutshell:

- 1718 Honora Nagle born at Ballygriffin
- 1730 Sent to France/Ypres, Belgium to school
- 1739 Famine in Ireland
- 1746 Her father died. She returned to Dublin
- 1747 Her mother and her sister died. She returned to Ballygriffin
- 1754 She opened her first school in Cork with 30 children
- 1763/4 Her finances failed and she was forced to beg
- 1767-71 The years James Cook began his Pacific voyages and discovered Botany Bay and Boston Tea Party occurred in America. Nano plans to bring the Ursulines to Ireland.
- 1775 The foundation date of the Presentation Sisters as on Christmas Eve Nano and her three companions made their religious vows.
- 1784 Nano died April 26



*A little girl grew here.
For her, brownstone house was home
Its fireside love and peace.
The blossoming hedgerows sang freedom
The river told stories of places far away,
While beyond dreaming mountains called.*

*A little girl grew here.
Because of her
Children in far-off lands learn love and
freedom.
Living water flows for them.
Their eyes search the everlasting hills.*

Raphael Consedine

These are the gates of the original Nagle property restored and relocated to this site.



The original stables have been restored and extended. To make up the very busy Nagle Centre. Be sure to visit the heritage room

Meet Massey and Fergusson and learn about the environmental activities that the Centre promotes.



Walk along the river bank or along the road and cross the bridge to the village of Killavullen



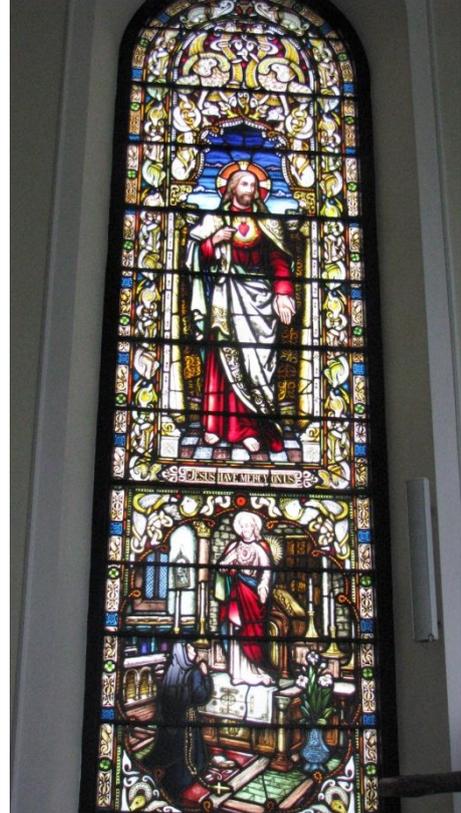
The Church of St Nicholas here was donated by James Hennessy (of Irish Whisky fame) in 1839. Local tradition holds that the baptismal font now in the church was the one used at Nano's baptism held at the thatched-roof church at Monanimy. (Sr Anthony Moloney *Reminiscences on the Story of Ballygriffin*). It was dated by Seamus Murphy RHA as belonging the 13th or 14th century. In the refurbishing of the church the font was placed outside to be discarded.

A lady from Rocksavage asked for it and set it up in her garden as a bird bath. Ms Crowley had an aunt in Presentation Midleton, Sr Grtrude. When Ballygriffin was opened Sr Gertrude and her niece decided that the font should be given to Ballygriffin where it was placed at the end of the coach house. In the refurbishments of the 1990's the Font was restored to the church where it now stands.



The stained glass window near the font depicts the Sacred Heart. Given Nano's devotion to the Sacred Heart this is very fitting.

In a small annex on the left of the sanctuary there are memorial windows which give a potted history of the spread of the Presentation Sisters to other countries.



On your return to the Centre, walk the Cosmic Walk. (An explanatory booklet is available at the Centre)

You will pass the stile Nano would have climbed to go the Hedge School near Monanimy Castle and to the Mass Rock on the other side of the river. This has now disappeared as the river bank has eroded.

Coppinger, in his Life of Nano (p15,) said: The laws may have prevented her from doing as much as she wished, (but) they could not prevent her from doing what lay in her power.

Round off your visit with some quiet time in the Chapel. Reflect on Raphael Consedine's description of that 'little girl who grew here', on what you have learned and on what has touched you during this time.

Woman of Hope:

In the face of fear, she chose to be daring,
In the face of anxiety, she chose to trust, In
the face of impossibility, she chose to begin.

To universal misery,
she proposed ministry to persons;
To ignorance, knowledge;
To disillusionment, tenacity of purpose;
And to multiple vexations, singleness of heart.

Faced with failure, she held fast to hope; Faced
with death, she believed in a living future;
A programme for the future she gave in one word:
Love.

And as we leave let us pray:

- with Nano who gave birth to justice, compassion and love for the people of her time.
- with all who give birth to solidarity with all people who suffer unjust systems.
- with all who give birth to compassion when wounded humanity waits to be
- with all who give birth to hope when they hear the cry of those who are voiceless.
- with all who give birth to the regeneration of our broken earth.

May the blessing of the One who calls us forever forward to be with us.

May we go forth in peace taking with us the majesty and the mystery of this place.

May we return here often in memory.

May the blessing of the One who calls us forever forward to be with us. Amen.

