

CONECTA 95

October 2021



Teresa Ball Bicentenary



Conecta is the internal newsletter of the Blessed Virgin Mary Institute, IBVM, Spanish Province.

A religious community inspired by Mary Ward, who wants to live its spirituality and share it with the people with whom it lives and works.

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Cover Picture:

Small miniature portrait of Frances Ball, which was probably painted during a visit to her sister Cecilia, M. Regis Ball, at the Ursuline convent in Cork in 1814. An article in the Irish Art Review on Frederick Buck, a famous Cork portraitist of the period, reproduces samples of his work into which this portrait fits perfectly.

Bicentenary of the founding of the Irish Branch of the IBVM



Two hundred years have passed since Frances Teresa Ball returned to Dublin from England to found a new branch in Ireland of Mary Ward's Institute. It is known as the Irish Branch, from which the IBVM in Spain originates.

Portrait of Teresa Ball by Haverty RHA, commissioned in 1834. Currently on display at Loreto College, Stephen's Green, Dublin

In 2021, the Institute globally commemorates the 200th anniversary of Frances Teresa Ball's return to Dublin and the creation of a new branch of the Mary Ward Institute. Throughout this year, the Institute's archives plan to produce a series of newsletters exploring the life of Teresa Ball, her companions and the history of this Irish Branch of Mary Ward's Institute.

The Ball family

The first issue in August 2021, featured the Ball family. The family home, in Eccles Street, Dublin, was the place where Frances Ball experienced and witnessed true Christian charity and Catholic social action that endured throughout her life and that of all her brothers and sisters. In 1776 John Ball married Byrne de Saggart in Dublin and they had one son, John

Ball, born in 1767, who grew up to become a successful businessman with operations in Cadiz, Spain. After the death of his first wife, John Ball married Mable Clare Bennett in 1776. From this marriage Thomas was born in 1779 and Mable Clare in 1780, but nothing is known of the lives of these two brothers, so it is believed that they died in infancy. Later, Cecilia was born in 1782, Anna Maria in 1786,

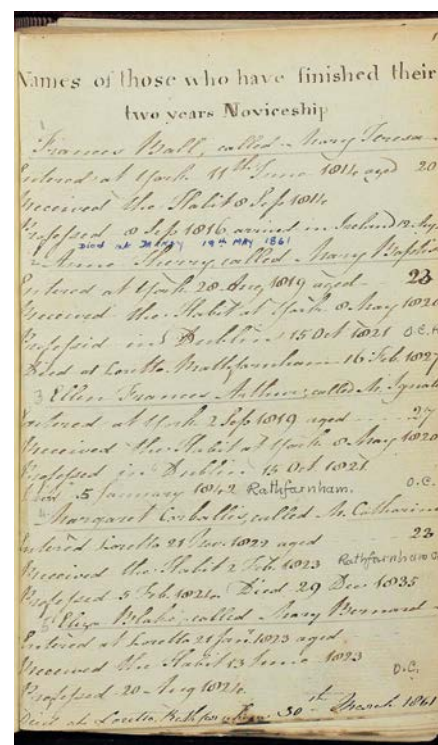
Isabella in 1787, Nicholas in 1791 and Frances in 1794. The father died in 1804, when Frances was 10 years old. A year later, in 1805, her older sister, Cecilia, entered the Ursuline convent in Cork. In 1809, Cecilia's mother and younger sisters, Isabella, Anna Maria and Frances, attended her profession at the Ursulines.

Cecilia, Mother Mary Regis, died in 1854. Her obituary says of her "this truly perfect religious is acknowledged for her great work as a counsellor, not only in everyday details, but also in particular emergencies. While her exemplary holy life commanded universal respect, her great goodness of heart, gentleness, consideration and kindness attracted the esteem and love of all who had the happiness of knowing her personally". The second eldest sister, Anna Maria, was educated like Frances and Isabella at the Convent Bar, York,

The family home was where Frances Ball experienced and witnessed true Christian charity and Catholic social action.

England. In 1805, Anna M. married John O'Brien, from a famous Dublin business family. Anna Maria O'Brien became one of the most famous Catholic lay philanthropists of the early 19th century. Born in 1787, Isabella married Thomas Sherlock, a wealthy Dublin merchant. She corresponded extensively and regularly with her sister Teresa and the Bar Convent community in York, where several of these letters are preserved. The letters in the Institute

Archives also indicate Teresa Ball's close and affectionate relationship with her brother Nicholas and his children. As a lawyer, he advised his sister primarily on legal matters. Nicholas, born in 1791, married Jane Sherlock, with whom he had eight children. He achieved enormous success in his profession. He was appointed attorney general in 1838, only the second Catholic to hold this office since the reign of James II. He was also the Member of Parliament for Clonmel, a position he held for only one year, due to his distaste for politics. In 1839 he became a judge of the Court of Common Pleas, a high court of the time. He remained in this position until his death in 1865. His second daughter, Mary Isabelle Ball, was also a nun at the Bar Convent, under the name of Mary Alphonsa. She had a very affectionate relationship with her Aunt Therese. She was described





by the superior of the community as “the perfect religious”.

God’s call

When Frances felt God’s call, she told her confessor, Dr Murray. In 1814 she returned to the Bar Convent in York to join the religious community there, where she was professed two years later, taking the religious name Teresa, after St Teresa of Avila. After overcoming some difficulties, in 1821 she returned to Dublin to open a school modelled on the Bar Convent where she and her sisters studied, accompanied by two novices, M. Baptist Therry and M. Ignatia Arthur, and started a convent school in Rathfarnham House, thus beginning the Mary Ward Institute in Ireland. She then opened free schools for poor girls and boys who could not afford to pay the fees of the Loreto school, as she had named Rathfarnham house. From then on, with each new Loreto school in Ireland, another free school was opened for the most needy, who were provided with warm clothing

and food as well as education.

At the beginning of the 19th century, there was a rapid growth of religious congregations and religious vocations among the young



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women of the time. M. Teresa was being joined by more young women, and new communities were being opened in the archdiocese of Dublin and beyond, in Navan, County Meath, north of Dublin. Later, because of disagreements with the bishop of Meath, that community had

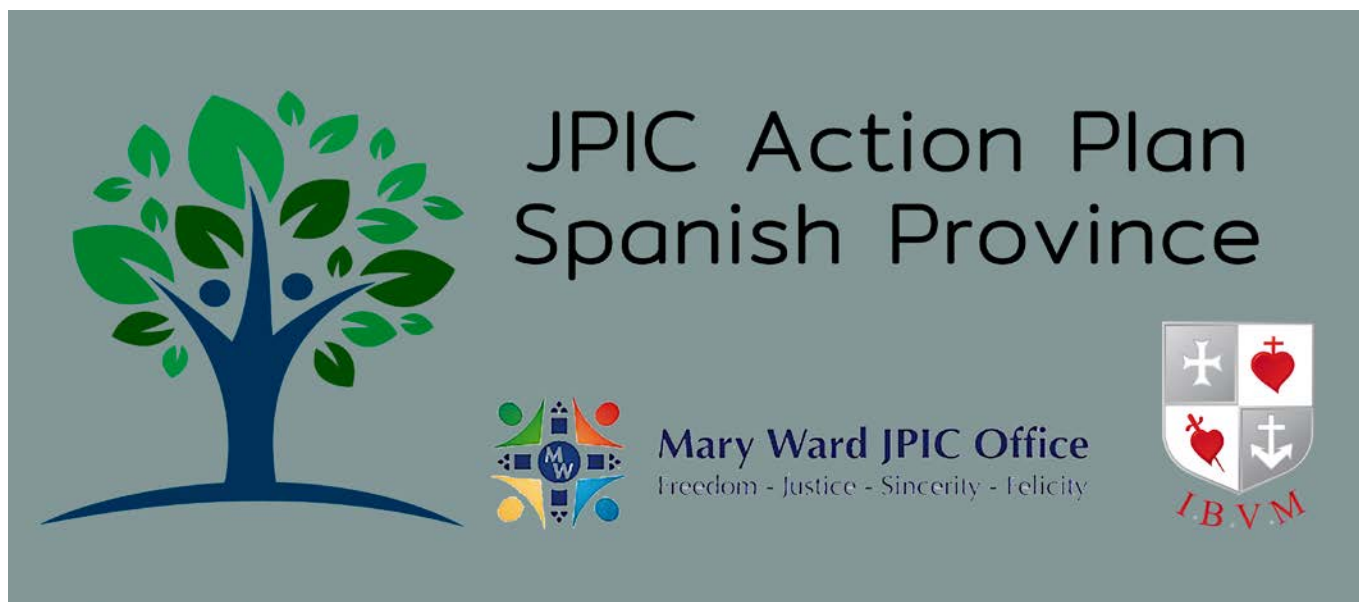
to separate from the Rathfarnham community, voting in its own superior.

Teresa Ball began to expand outside Ireland. Her first overseas foundation was in India (1841), then in Mauritius (1845), Canada (1847)...

Arrival in Spain

Frances Ball at York College had a great friend called Concepción López, (one of the first religious in Rathfarnham) who always told her: “Until you get to Heaven you will not know how beautiful Spain is”.

In 1851, Mother Teresa Ball founded her first house in the Spanish province of Cadiz, but after five years they moved back to Rathfarnham because of the political instability of the time. For some years they had run a school in Gibraltar, which was attended by a number of Spanish pupils from Cadiz. Finally, in 1888, the IBVM nuns settled in Castilleja DE LA CUESTA, Seville, from where the other foundations in Spain were established.



Moving forward on the 7-year Action Plan, living Laudato Si

The IBVM Spanish Province continues to move forward in the implementation of the Mary Ward Family Action Plan for the care of our common home, in daily life and mission.

Last June, the Mary Ward JPIC Office presented the Mary Ward Family Action Plan for the next 7 years, a plan for the care of the common home, addressed to all individuals and groups who are part of the Mary Ward family. This Action Plan is also framed within the Laudato Si Platform for Action of the Dicastery for the Service of Integral Human Development.

It was the first step of a journey of integral ecology in the spirit of Laudato Si, during which we intend to live the encyclical of care for the earth and others in our daily life, in our work, family, parish, groups or organisations of

which we are part... Not only that, but we also want to be agents of change to achieve that radical transformation of society, invoked by Pope Francis in Laudato Si, for the integral and sustainable development of the whole human family and the earth of which we are a part.

At the beginning of September, the Mary Ward JPIC office asked the different provinces of the IBVM and the CJ for initial feedback from the different provinces on how we were already working on the plan document, what we believed we were doing and what we were not doing, ideas for moving forward with the implementation of

the plan... Because it was the beginning of the school year and the recent return from holidays, only few religious sent their reflections and comments regarding the plan, but this was only a first step. We continue to work, to reflect and to concretise actions that we can implement in our life as a family. We remember that the challenge of this method is to unite faith and social commitment.

The time of the planet has come, it is urgent to act and the Institute does not want to lag behind, nor leave anyone behind. We want to give the care of creation the importance it deserves. In the letter of the Provincial

General, Noelle Corscadden, Ibvm, to the provinces at the beginning of October she also emphasised this line *“As part of our Jubilee we will invite each province to undertake an environmental project, something significant that will bear witness to our care for creation”*.

Throughout these years the plan will run transversally through the rest of the plans. For example, the annual spirituality project, which this year is led by a joint CJ & Ibvm Spain commission made up of Beatriz Martín, Blanca Bergareche, Anselma de la Pisa and Na-

tividad Martínez, will highlight in each liturgical season that the objectives of *Laudato Si* are part of Mary Ward’s spirituality towards God’s Creation.

We will also be organising, both at Province and Institute level, events and activities that will help us to reflect, act and be agents of change.

We want each and every one of us to do our bit.

We will not fail to recall that the time to act is now, because there is no planet B, because the earth and the poor can wait no longer.

The IBVM is open to ideas, suggestions and all kinds of

input that members of our Mary Ward family feel will further our plan. You can write to comunicacion@ibvm.es or speak at any of the meetings and events that will be organised.

As Pope Francis says in the encyclical on ecology, *Laudato Si*, *“Your unique culture, experience, initiatives and talents are needed on our journey towards a greater love for our Creator, for each other and for the home we share.”* (LS 14)

Let us remember that the method of reflection is SEE, JUDGE and ACT is a great approach to forge ahead.



SEE

Observation of life, systematically, what is happening and why it is happening.



JUDGE

Interpreting the meaning of what is happening, harmonising one’s view with God’s view.



ACT

With the aim of **transformation** of **reality**.



Mary Ward's Cause

Elizabeth Cotter, IBVM, Vice Postulator for the Cause of Venerable Mary Ward, gives us the summary of status quo of the cause of beatification and thanks us all for any cooperation.

The CAUSE for the Beatification of our dear Founder, Venerable Mary Ward, has been on-going in the Cause Office since November 2015. With the assistance of members of the Family of Mary Ward throughout the world, a significant step was taken in December 2019. The Cause moved to the next level with the examination of a possible miracle, an essential requirement of the Church for Beatification. We wait in hope and expectation, knowing that if God wills, this phase may be brought to a successful conclusion.

While we wait, the Family of Mary Ward continues to pray earnestly and to work towards the final phase, Canonization. My task is to res-

pond to those requests which come from the Beatification level while at the same time seeking and analysing other possible miracles for the Canonization process. In addition, I continue, with your help, to build the profile of devotion to Mary Ward worldwide given in personal testimonies as well as in evidence of how her charism is lived in our world today; to respond to requests for prayer through her in-



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It would be wonderful to receive personal stories about the place of Mary Ward in your lives.

tercession, for relic prayer cards and for information about her; to record favours granted through prayer to her and to investigate fur-

ther what might constitute a “miracle” in the Church’s understanding of what that means.

I am very aware that there are varying levels of enthusiasm for the Beatification/Canonization process. In much of the “western” world, practices and procedures such as those described above seem to generate little enthusiasm. This is not the case in other parts of the world. I remind myself, when confronted with issues about the process, that Mary Ward belongs to the Church and that it behoves us, as members of her family, to do whatever is necessary to bring her Cause to its completion. Her dedication to the Church of her time, despite its deficiencies, urges me on.

The Spanish Alumnae Association (Seville) provides wonderful support and enthusiasm for the Cause.



Their Mary Ward celebration of 23rd of the month is a noteworthy contribution to developing devotion to her. Maria Lopez de Haro IBVM, Asilah, assists me whenever I need translation. Rosa Moro in the Province Office distributes Prayer Requests; Conecta enables me to know how the charism is lived in

Spain and in Asilah today. What more can you do? It would be wonderful to receive personal stories about the place of Mary Ward in your lives, how she has helped you, even in very small ways.

I am deeply grateful to those who have taken the time to contribute to the work of the Cause. I encourage those who have not yet done so to remember that the effort to have Mary Ward beatified and canonized depends on the willingness of each one of us to play our part. If I can assist you in any way, please feel free to contact me.

Meanwhile, continue to pray earnestly that the Church will give public recognition to the inspirational woman who continues to inspire generations of women and men, the woman we are privileged to call our founder.

ELIZABETH COTTER, IBVM

Thanks for wanting the union!

Always with Freedom
deep of the heart,
in search of Truth...
Proclaiming Justice,
striving with the Joy
of giving the Good News,
sharing with Mary.
And even if it costs us the Cross,
we will always have the courage
with Jesus Who is our light!
triumphing through Love.

V. LASSALETТА, IBVM



IBVM Youth Representative Spain

In September, Carlota Gayo began her work in this position which aims to promote the participation of Spanish youth in the global processes in which the UN works. An alumni of El Soto School, Carlota is passionate about Mary Ward's values.



ces more pollution than the rest. Therefore, we began to explore the best way to mobilise Spanish youth. This is how the idea of creating this post came about, a post from which one young person per year would lead the actions to create an ever wider network to raise awareness about the global challenges that the UN is facing.

Since September, Carlota has embarked on this exciting project with full energy. She has collaborated with other enthusiastic young people like herself in the preparation of COP26, participated in events and meetings and is spreading the word among a growing network of young people in Spain.

A former student of our El Soto School, she is currently in her final year of a double degree in International Studies and Business Administration and Management at the University Carlos III of Madrid, Spain.

We hope that this fantastic work she is doing will last and grow until one day in the future there will be so many young people mobilised that the IBVM will be just a small part represented in a large movement.

The problems and challenges facing the world, identified in the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals; the Climate Crisis and the post-COVID world, require the mobilisation of all the people of the world.

Looking to the future, the involvement of youth in the processes that define the lines of action to achieve the goals set is essential.

During Cecilia O'Dwyer's last years at the head of the IBVM and CJ Network NGO at the UN, she noticed that many young people around

the world want to participate, to contribute and have their voice heard, but where is the European youth? And above all, where is the Spanish youth? It seems that the high standard of living in the old continent has resulted in young people ignoring the problems of poverty and lack of basic goods and rights that affect young people in other parts of the world. But they need to understand that the current state of the earth affects us all and requires everyone's awareness, especially if you live in a part of the world that produ-

Fifty years of the Perpetual Vows



Sunday 29 August 2021 marked the 50th anniversary of the perpetual vows of four religious of the Spanish province.

Fifty years of religious life for Concha Parias, Carmen Hormaechea, Pilar González-Cano and María López who professed their perpetual vows together in the Institute exactly 50 years ago, so it was a joy for all the companions to celebrate with them.

The Institute celebrates 40 years in Peru



On 12 October, the 40th anniversary of the Institute's arrival in Peru, in the community of El Soto, in Madrid, this beautiful team photograph was taken in which all the members of the team have been or are in Peru.

From left to right, Irene Reynolds, who has just arrived in Spain from Peru; Carmen Hormaechea Goyoaga, Beatriz Martín García and M^a Ángeles Pereda (seated), who spent years there; Anne Donnelly, who has just been posted to England from Peru; M^a Carmen Hormaechea Arteagoitia, who also spent years in Peru and Mary Elizabeth Kirke, who is still posted there.



Going out of oneself, going out to others, going out to meet people, going out to help those who need it, going out to call, going out to take on the world, going out to search, going out to do sport, going out to clear your head, going out to breathe, going out with friends.... However, just going out can be an understatement. Because life is also about salting. Being salt for those we meet, giving flavour to sweet and bitter moments, having a salt shaker to help make the days more colourful, being the salt that preserves and cares for wellbeing... This year we want to go out into life being salt for the people who fill our days. But be careful, both going out and being salty must be done in the right measure. If I go out with too much energy, I can stay out; and if I salt too much, I can ruin a delicious meal. That's why we want to go out with energy, but with caution; and to salt with enthusiasm, but taking care of every detail. And for this, we have some guides that will accompany us on our school year.

First of all, we have the Word of God, which tells us "You are the salt of the world. If the salt has become dull, with what will you salt it? What a responsibility!



We also have the reference of the Sustainable Development Goals, which guide us where to focus. This year we will focus on the Health and Well-being of the world. How huge! isn't it? As the Church that we are, we have the strength of Pope Francis' new encyclical - Fratelli Tutti - which goes into detail on our way of being brothers and sisters to our neighbour.

And, of course, we will be accompanied by our foundress Mary Ward, who earned the title of pilgrim of hope for her courageous way of going out into the world. As she said: "The path of virtue is a non-stop one. Those who do not go forward, go backwards".

It is a great good fortune to have such good company! So we start this new school year with great enthusiasm and desire to go out (and to salt) to life.


Welcome!


Translation note:

* The text makes a play on words between "Sal", the imperative conjugation form of the verb SALIR, that means to go out, and the noun "Sal", the seasoning, as they have the same spelling.

Get connected to **Conecta**

If you would like to collaborate with the **Conecta** newsletter by writing, sending some photographs, suggesting a topic, or telling us something interesting to share so that we can write it, please contact us.

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