

# Nano Nagle's Memorial Day

26 April 2013



**“Last Wednesday the indisposition of Miss Nagle was announced in the sorrowing countenances of the poor of this city to whom she was the best of benefactors and patronesses.”**

*Hibernian Chronicle, Monday 26 April, 1784*

All beings, including galaxies, including stars, including Earth, have a life span. They are born, they live and they die. This remains one of the most difficult aspects of existence for humans to understand, that we are not eternal, that one day we will take our final breath and no longer be present to the world as we are now... To experience the death of someone we love and the grief and loss that accompanies it, remains too, one of the most painful aspects of existence. There is a finality to death that we struggle to understand, how something can be gone, never to be experienced again in the way in which we remember, in the way that is dear to us. But death is vital to life. It is the price we pay for existence... Without death, nothing new could emerge. There could be nothing new created. It would be a world that is the same, constantly, with no variation in beauty or sound or shape. A world without diversity, no new mornings, no new seasons, no new moments, no change. Death gives way to life... It enables life to continue. Life, not in the sense of my own individual life, but life in the sense of this great Divine adventure started some 14 billion years ago. Life that continues to change and evolve becoming ever more beautiful and ever more differentiated and ever more sacred.

*Extracts from "Good Friday – Death and Darkness. Insights from The Universe Story" by Niamh Brennan 2013. Published by [www.LiturgyRitualPrayer.com](http://www.LiturgyRitualPrayer.com) and Emmaus Productions*

*Left:* For **feeding the flame of your love for God** by fidelity to prayer and contemplative action

*All:* We remember you and give you thanks.

*All:* Holy One, Creator of All,  
may we be people of compassionate and welcoming hearts.  
May we have the courage to live the Gospel of Jesus  
in the spirit of Nano Nagle,  
committed to transforming the world  
into a place where all are welcome,  
all are included, all are able to live their lives to the full.  
Draw us more deeply into Your mystery, the mystery of Oneness  
and the reality of people and Earth made poor.  
Help us to become compassionate people, mystics and prophets  
committed to Your transformative dream for the whole of  
creation.  
Amen.

### **Blessing**

*All:* May the love of the shining stars be [ours].  
May the grace of the dancing galaxies be [ours].  
May the compassion of the Holy One be [ours].  
May the radiance of the life-giving Spirit be [ours].  
This day and forevermore.

*Wildflower Journey Prayers p.76*



*Conclude with a song that is suitable for your group for this celebration.*

## Prophet

Prophets do not conform. They burst upon our flat horizon with creative alternatives and new models of being human. Not for them the mediocre, not for them the binding of the human spirit to societal, political, or religious norms.

In spite of our reluctance to embrace new visions, the prophets create in us a stirring of fascination as we witness in their pursuits a courage beyond the norm. Do they, perhaps, remind us of our own dreams and visions abandoned as we adjust to the grey reality of our world?

*Adapted from Edwina Gateley*

*You are invited now to reflect on (and share if praying in a group) how the spirit of Nano Nagle has helped you to make choices in your own life and ministry as a person of compassion, a mystic and a prophet.*

## A Psalm of Remembering Nano Nagle

**Left:** For your **openness to God's spirit** at work in your life

**All:** We remember you and give you thanks.

**Right:** For **opening your heart** to the cry of those made poor by unjust systems

**All:** We remember you and give you thanks.

**Left:** For your **courage** in responding to the needs of your times at great personal cost

**All:** We remember you and give you thanks.

**Right:** For **bringing the light of hope** to the dark places of ignorance and despair in the face of criticism and many setbacks and obstacles

**All:** We remember you and give you thanks.

**Left:** For **bringing the light of compassion** to the dark places of poverty, sickness and suffering

**All:** We remember you and give you thanks.

**Right:** For **bringing the light of justice** to the dark places of injustice and oppression

**All:** We remember you and give you thanks.



**Ritual Setting:** A picture of Nano, a globe, a lantern

## Gathering Proclamation (All):

- We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land and their care of it.
- We acknowledge all the species with whom we share our planet.
- We stand in solidarity with our ancestors in the faith on whose shoulders we stand.
- We acknowledge all those who have given their lives working for a just, peaceful and sustainable planet.
- We acknowledge all those with whom we live and work on this endangered planet.
- We acknowledge each one of us gathered here and honour the dignity and wisdom of each one.
- We acknowledge all those waiting to be born. It is for their sakes that we work to make this world the best possible world where all may live life to the full.

## Introduction (Leader):



Today we gather to celebrate and give thanks for Nano Nagle, prophet and mystic. She has influenced and continues to affect the lives of generations of Presentation people and of those made poor and treated unjustly. Martin Buber said: 'Every person born into the world represents something new, something that never existed before, something original and unique... If there had been someone like her in the world, there would have been no need for her to be born.' (*Martin Buber (Jewish Philosopher) as quoted in "Narrative Means for Sober Ends", by Jon Diamond, p.78*) Today we celebrate the original and unique gift of

Nano to the universe and to the church. We celebrate her personal identity as a woman of compassion, a prophet and a mystic. We celebrate this identity (her charism) as it is reflected in all Presentation people.

## Reading 1

Among the aspects of our identity are the "things" we inherit – our genetic makeup, our family history, the world we are born into – all those things that make up the context in which we live and over which we have had no control. In a sense, they are dimensions of life which pre-exist our own being. Those things impact upon our identity. (*Ray Campbell*)

Spend some time reflecting on the things Nano inherited and how they impacted upon her identity. If praying in a group, share your insights in the group.

## Reading 2

Then there are those things that happen to us. These are not things that pre-exist us, but they too are things over which we have little or no control. They are the “accidents” that happen to us along life’s journey. It might be an accident that robs us of part of our physical body. It might be that one loses a parent while still young, all kinds of different things which happen to us and which help to shape our physical and psychological being. (Ray Campbell)

Spend some time reflecting on the things that happened to Nano along her life’s journey and over which she had no control. How did they help to shape her identity as a woman of compassion, a prophet and a mystic? If praying in a group, share your insights in the group.



## Reading 3

Then there is the identity that I choose to be, the “me” that I create. This is the aspect of our identity over which we have most control. It is the “me” created by my free choices. By virtue of the choices we create – we create new situations, new scenarios, which would not have existed except for our free choice... But by virtue of every choice we make we are also creating ourselves... I become who I am by what I choose to do... I become generous by doing generous deeds... When we think of moral choices we often think of choices between right and wrong, good and bad. But in actual fact, most of our moral choices are not like that ... they are between morally good options. In those circumstances we often talk about “discerning God’s will”. (Ray Campbell)

Spend some time reflecting on the significant choices that Nano made in her life that created who she is as woman, prophet and mystic and that had implications not just for her own identity but for the identity of her companions and of the Presentation people who came after her.



Spend some time in **quiet reflection** on these quotations:

### Woman of Compassion

They know her in the crowded lonely ways  
Woman of welcoming heart, whose lantern sheds  
Kind beams for eyes waste-misted by the weary miles.

*Raphael Consedine pbvm*

### Mystic

Your pilgrim heart  
Shall urge you still  
One pace beyond.

*Raphael Consedine  
pbvm*

### Mystic

Apart, in shadowed hours of night and dawn,  
Leaning heart to heart on the One who pulses life  
Into the lowliest and least of all that lives,  
She learns to unclasp the last-kept store  
And lay it down in welcome: ‘Take and share’.

*Raphael Consedine pbvm*

### Woman of Compassion

Go Out!  
For need calls loudly in the winding lanes  
And you must seek Christ there.

*Raphael Consedine pbvm*

### Prophet

She has been bitterly  
cursed in our streets as a  
mere imposter; she has  
been charged with having  
squandered her money

upon the building of houses for the  
sole purpose of getting a name, and  
with deceiving the world with her  
throng of beggars’ brats. Has it not  
even been said that her schools  
were a seminary of prostitution...

*Doctor Coppinger*

### Mystic

By degrees with the  
assistance of God we  
may do a great deal.

*To Miss Fitzsimmons,  
28 September 1770*

*Quotes continued over...*