



In October 2012, I travelled on pilgrimage to the shrines of Italy. In San Giovanni, the priest leading the pilgrimage told us that on our return to Ireland the storm would be raging to bring abortion into Ireland. The morning after arriving home, local news rocked with the headline that a Marie Stopes Clinic was opening on a high street in Belfast, in the name of reproductive health services, next to a local grocery store chain. Every news outlet, hard copy and online, ran the opening of the clinic as their top news story, while people from all walks of life, were asking, how could this possibly happen when abortion is illegal in the North? The news continued for days. The morning the clinic opened, it seemed the world's media were camped outside to cover the news of this darkest of days for a city that had seen all too much shedding of innocent blood for decades. Media coverage was heavily biased focusing on stories of false compassion for women who had to travel to England to have their children brutally killed by the blood money industry.

Amidst the news coverage, one story shone out, a light in the darkness and a beacon of hope; teenagers in a County Derry grammar school, taking action through prayer. A year group of forty 16 and 17 year olds enrolled in a 54 Day Miraculous Rosary Novena during their 45 minute lunch break to pray to Our Lady to close the clinic. The novena was published in the main regional paper a few days previously. It was heart-warming to hear the vibrant young voices shining with the truth of the gospel of life and praying The Rosary on the morning radio news. The zeal of the youth group knocked Marie Stopes off the top news spot. For the next 54 days, each lunch time, and at week-ends, the students gathered to pray the Rosary for this intention in 27 days of petition and 27 days of thanksgiving. Their enthusiasm was infectious and many of their families and friends and local parishes joined them. And their prayers, were answered, in God's time. For on the 8th December, 2017, just over 5 years later, Marie Stopes packed her bags, and left our city. No journalists present that day to report on Our Lady's victory. Mary kept her promise, for one of Her 15 promises to St. Dominic for those who pray The Rosary, "what you ask through my Rosary, you shall obtain".

"We are the future and we don't want our children growing up in an environment where we think abortion is right", one pupil stated. Another said, "we want our society to know, that we don't agree with this at all, that it's a disgrace". Yet another observed, "society is becoming desensitised really, people here are eventually going to think this is ok, it's not, it's absolutely disgusting". Another said, "we want society to know that we don't agree with this at all, that it's a disgrace". When asked if prayer could really help, a pupil replied, "prayer is the greatest power of all, people see us getting together and praying, really puts it out there for everyone else,

Roses for Our Lady

An Teaghlach Naofa

to see how strong our faith is and how strongly we believe this clinic should be closed down". A Gaelic football star in the school said, "here's hoping that everyone will get behind us, that every Christian that believes will take action, for it's immoral and wrong and the fifth commandment says Thou Shalt Not Kill. As Christians, we live by the commandments and we should all get behind each other and try and get this place closed down". An All Star in the making! The student group also collected 3000 signatures in their local area to close the clinic. Praise God.

In 1884, 128 years earlier, Our Lady appeared to Fortuna Agrelli, daughter of an Italian military officer. Fortuna lived in Naples not far from Pompeii and was gravely ill for 13 months; eminent physicians said her condition was incurable. On 16 February, Fortuna and her family began to pray a novena of rosaries. On 3rd March, Our Lady of Pompeii, appeared to Fortuna, holding the Child Jesus, and the Rosary, accompanied by St. Dominic and St. Catherine of Siena; Mother and Child were dressed in gold. Fortuna said to Our Lady, "Queen of The Holy Rosary, be gracious to me; restore me to health. I have already prayed to thee in a novena, O Mary, but have not yet experienced thy aid. I am so anxious to be cured". Our Lady replied, "Child, you have invoked me by various titles and have always obtained favours from me. Now since you have called me, by that title so pleasing to me, Queen of the Holy Rosary, I can no longer refuse the favour you ask, for this name is most precious and dear to me". Fortuna and her family completed the Rosary novena and on 8th May 1884, she was restored to perfect health. After Fortuna was healed, Our Lady appeared to her again and told her, "whoever desires to obtain favours from me, make three novenas of prayers of The Rosary in petition and three novenas of prayers in thanksgiving". And so, through Fortuna, Our Lady gave the world the 54 day miraculous rosary novena.

In the same year, on 13 October, Pope Leo XIII, after celebrating Mass in his private chapel, had a locution of a battle between God and Satan. He stopped at the altar and stood there for about 10 minutes, his face ashen. Going immediately then from the Chapel to his office, he composed the prayer to St. Michael the Archangel, requesting that priests pray it at the end of all masses. The date was 33 years to the day before The Miracle of The Sun in Fatima. Pope Leo, was also the first Pope to be recorded on radio, singing The Hail Mary. He had a particular love of The Rosary, writing 12 encyclicals on it. His first encyclical in 1883 established October as the month of The Rosary and recommended public prayer of The Rosary and The Litany of Our Lady in all churches. Pope Leo XIII said "to pray The Rosary is to pray with the Holy Angels since it was the Angel Gabriel who uttered the first Ave".

Pope Leo XIII was also touched by the miraculous healings in the shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii. He added the title, "Our Lady, Queen of The Rosary, into The Litany of Our Lady. In 1901, he made the shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii a Papal Basilica and consecrated Pompeii as a parish of the world. Of the painting of Our Lady of Pompeii he said, "God has made use of this painting to grant those favours which have moved the whole world". Pope Leo XIII was also very concerned about the threat to marriage and family and he created the feast of The Holy Family. Around that time, Bishop Woodlock of the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise, ordained by Pope Leo XIII, commissioned the beautiful painting of The Holy Family in St. Mel's cathedral, from Rome. The painting, a copy of a Murillo

by an unknown painter, survived the fire in St. Mel's in Longford. Many faithful in Ireland consider it miraculous and many graces have been received by people who pray in front of it.

In 1901, 14 year old Francesco Forgione visited the shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii, with his school teacher Angelo Caccavo and seven of his classmates from Pietrelcina. Francesco would become one of the greatest saints of our times, St. Padre Pio. Our Lady of Pompeii was especially dear to him and he often recommended a novena to Our Lady of Pompeii to his spiritual daughters for a particular grace. His devotion to her continued throughout his life. Four days before his death, St. Pio, was given a bouquet of red roses for the fiftieth anniversary of his stigmata. Padre Pio picked a rose from the bouquet and asked a friend to bring it to Our Lady of Pompeii to the shrine of the Virgin of of The Rosary. The rose was delivered to Pompeii the next day. A nun in the shrine placed it in a vase with other roses; she later noted that Padre Pio's rose remained fresh and closed into a rose bud, the day he died. The local Bishop learned of Padre Pio's rose and requested that it be placed in a glass display case. A year later, Padre Alberto D'Apolito, on pilgrimage to Pompeii with a group of third order Franciscans reported that St. Pio's rose for Our Lady was still fresh! In October 2008, Pope Benedict presented Our Lady of Pompeii with a golden rose invoking her motherly protection for all families in the world, the same day as Louis and Zelie Martin were beatified.

The shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii was started by "Apostle of The Rosary", Bartolo Longo, with support from his Bishop and people of Pompeii. He started restoring the church in Pompeii in 1873. On 13 October 1875 he decided to look for a painting of Our Lady for the Church to help start a Rosary Confraternity. He was gifted a painting by a Dominican friar, Fr Alberto, who bought it in a junk shop and kept it in a Dominican convent in Naples. Bartolo Longo was dismayed by the poor state of the painting however, Mother Concetta, in the convent, told him, "take it with you and you will see that the Blessed Mother will use the painting to work many miracles".

The painting arrived to the Church in Pompeii on 13 November 1875, transported on the top of a manure cart and after restoration work was placed in the shrine on 13 February 1876. The painting is of Our Lady seated upon a high throne, holding the Child Jesus on her knee. The Child Jesus hands a rosary to St. Dominic and the Blessed Virgin places a rosary in the hands of St. Catherine of Siena, exactly as they appeared to Fortuna Agrelli 9 years later. Jewels were embedded into the painting as well as a Crown for Our Lady. The cornerstone of the church was laid on 8th May 1876. The 8th May also the date of the miraculous healing of Fortuna Agrelli 8 years later and the official feast day of Our Lady of Pompeii. In 1965, the painting was sent to the Vatican for further restoration. Pope Paul VI requested the painting to remain in the Vatican for a time, and at the end of mass on 23 March 1965, solemnly enthroned Mother and Child, placing two diadems on their heads. "Just as the image of the Virgin has been repaired and decorated, so may the image of Mary that all Christians must have within themselves, be restored, renovated and enriched", he said.

In the convent in Naples, the painting was considered to depict devotion to St. Rose of Lima. Bartolo Longo, changed St. Rose to St. Catherine, because St. Catherine was Italian, the glory of Italy and the mother of The Dominican Third

Order of which he was a member. Bartolo grew to love the painting of which he said "impressed the soul". Many pilgrims visited the shrine and there were many miracles reported, three within the first month. The first cure was a 12 year old girl with epilepsy and Bartolo's own mother was cured on her death-bed. Some 900 miracles were recorded by Bartolo. It is estimated that 4 million pilgrims visited the shrine annually. In later years, Bartolo interestingly corresponded with Padre Pio who entrusted him to the protection of Mary.

St. Pope John Paul beatified Bartolo Longo on 26 October 1980. The previous year, on 21 October 1979, St. John Paul made a national pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii where he thanked the Virgin of The Rosary for the success of his apostolic visits to Ireland and the US and entrusted families of Italy, Europe and the world to the Virgin of The Rosary. Pope John Paul concluded his encyclical Rosarium Virginis Mariae with Bartolo's supplication to the Queen of the Holy Rosary, Queen of Victories: "O Blessed Rosary of Mary, sweet chain which unites us to God, bond of love which unites us to the angels, tower of salvation against the assaults of Hell, safe port in our universal shipwreck, we will never abandon you. You will be our comfort in the hour of death: yours our final kiss as life ebbs away. And the last word from our lips will be your sweet name, O Queen of the Rosary of Pompei, O dearest Mother, O Refuge of Sinners, O Sovereign Consoler of the Afflicted. May you be everywhere blessed, today and always, on earth and in heaven". In 2003, St. John Paul returned to Pompeii to close the Year of the Rosary. "Today as in the ancient times of Pompeii, we must announce Christ to a society that is distancing itself from Christian values and is even losing its memory of them", he said. Ireland is not unlike ancient Pompeii, paganism, hedonism and moral corruption have infested our land. Pompeii, reduced to ashes when Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 AD, the people suffering the same fate as people living in Sodom and Gomorrah as described in the Book of Genesis. Sodom and Gomorrah, how many described Ireland in 2015, after people rejected God by voting yes, to same sex marriage. Ireland now faces its greatest battle, the protection of our unborn children for generations to come.

Last week's confirmation of Pope Francis' visit to Ireland for the World Meeting of Families is a wonderful boost for the faithful of Ireland. In his Angelus address this Sunday (25 March), three years to the day from his own visit to the Virgin of Pompeii, our Holy Father said, "We are accompanied by the example and intercession of Mary, the young woman of Nazareth, whom God has chosen as mother of His Son. She walks with us and guides the new generations on their pilgrimage of faith and fraternity. From her we learn inner silence, the gaze of the heart, the loving faith to follow Jesus on the way of the cross which leads to the joyful light of the resurrection". May She guide the youth of Ireland now.

Great news too, that Ireland's own Apostle of The Rosary, Venerable Fr. Patrick Peyton, is to be exhumed as part of the beatification process. Of his family rosary crusade, he said, "Men and women, old and young, poor and rich, shoulder to shoulder, all honoured Our Lady with their presence and gave testimony of their faith in the power of God and in prayer, which should be present in all families to maintain unity". How to restore this fervour for The Rosary is the challenge. Saints and martyrs of

Ireland, pray for us.

In 2017, The Irish Times reported that Ireland has the highest birth rate in the EU and the lowest joint death rate with Cyprus. Ireland's baby boom welcomed 63,900 new babies in 2016. Ireland is also considered to be one of the safest countries worldwide to have a baby. Obstetric care in Ireland is par excellence. It is the duty now of every citizen to stand for the protection of future generations of our country. No one has the right to say it is ok to take a human life. Every catholic family needs to return to praying The Rosary, St. John Paul's wish on leaving our shores. In the words of St. John Paul, "Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and Alleluia is our song".

Please join in a 54 Day Miraculous Rosary Novena for Ireland starting on Easter Monday to pray for: protection of human life

in Ireland, that every family may uphold the dignity of human life and for a renewal of the family rosary in Irish homes. We will be following the Rosary Novena booklet, first published in 1924, loved and cherished by families in Ireland and America for decades. Details on how to order a booklet and enrol are in the advert. Please encourage families who are not praying to start praying The Rosary. A bouquet of red, white and yellow roses and white rose buds will be presented to Our Lady, Queen of The Rosary, on 25 May 2018. Names of all participating will be included on the bouquet ribbon. "You are all beautiful O Mary, you are the joy, you are the honour, you are the glory of our people".

Email for correspondence: orlaith@anteaghlachnaofa.ie

Roses for Mary

54 Day Miraculous Rosary Novena for family, life and faith in Ireland

Mon 2nd April – Fri 25th May 2018

In honour of Our Lady, Queen of The Holy Rosary

"You are all beautiful O Mary, you are the glory, you are the joy, you are the honour of our people"

INTENTIONS:

- Protection of all unborn children in Ireland
- Protect the Eighth Amendment of the Irish Constitution
- Every person in my family will cherish life from conception to natural death
- Peace and unity in our family
- Renewal of the family rosary in our home and in all Irish homes
- Conversion and salvation of all members of my family and our nation

Use the calendar (Fig. 1) as a daily reminder:

- The first 27 days pray in petition: Mon 2nd April – Fri 28th April '18
- The second 27 days pray in thanksgiving: Sat 29th April – Fri 25th May '18

Fig. 1. 54 day Rosary Novena starts Easter Monday

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

27 Days in Petition 27 Days in Thanksgiving

Pray the mystery of the day e.g. Joyful Mysteries on Mondays and Saturdays (see Fig. 2)

Our Lady Queen of the Holy Rosary, pray for us
 Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Holy Family of Nazareth, pray for us
 St. Patrick, St. Brigid and all the Saints and Martyrs of Ireland, pray for us
 St. John Paul and Venerable Fr. Patrick Peyton, pray for us
 All the holy angels and saints, pray for us

Fig. 2. The Mysteries of The Rosary

The Joyful Mysteries (Mondays and Saturdays)

- 1 The Annunciation
- 2 The Visitation
- 3 The Nativity
- 4 The Presentation of The Child Jesus
- 5 The Finding of the Child Jesus in the temple

The Luminous Mysteries Or Mysteries of Light (Thursdays)

- 1 The Baptism of Our Lord
- 2 The Wedding Feast at Cana
- 3 The Proclamation of the Kingdom
- 4 The Transfiguration
- 5 The Institution of the Eucharist

The Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesdays and Fridays)

- 1 The Agony in the Garden
- 2 The Scourging at the Pillar
- 3 The Crowning with Thorns
- 4 The Carrying of the Cross
- 5 The Crucifixion

The Glorious Mysteries (Wednesdays and Sundays)

- 1 The Resurrection
- 2 The Ascension into Heaven
- 3 The Descent of the Holy Spirit
- 4 The Assumption of Our Lady
- 5 The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

MAKE A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

At the end of each daily rosary we pray: My Jesus, really present in the most holy Sacrament of the Altar, since I cannot now receive you under the sacramental veil, I beseech you, with a heart full of love and longing to come spiritually into my soul through the immaculate heart of your most Holy Mother and abide with me forever; you in me, and I in you, in time and in eternity, in Mary.

ROSES FOR MARY

Each mystery is represented by roses:
 Joyful Mysteries – snow white rose buds
 Luminous Mysteries – golden yellow roses
 Sorrowful Mysteries – blood red roses
 Glorious Mysteries – full white roses tinged with red

Our Lady told St. Dominic that every rosary we pray is a crown of roses for Jesus and Mary. So let us shower Jesus and Mary with roses. A bouquet of roses of white, red and yellow roses and white rose buds, will be presented to Our Lady on 25th May '18 on behalf of all participating.

To enrol and have your name/family name included in the bouquet of roses please complete the slip below and post to:



An Teaghlach Naofa, c/o St. Mary's Church, 25 Marquis St, Belfast, Co. Antrim BT1 1JJ or Emmanuel House, Clonfert, Co. Galway H53 H2T8 or email info@anteaghlachnaofa.ie or text 087-2508043 (S) or 0044-7545-452362 (N)

ORDER A COPY OF THE ROSARY NOVENA

To order a copy of The Rosary Novena booklet (Imprimatur: Cardinal Francis Spellman, Archbishop of New York Sept 30 1954), email the address above or send a text.

The booklet is beautifully illustrated with prayers of petition and thanksgiving and meditations on each decade of each mystery. You can also pray the novena online on facebook at Roses for Mary.

THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

This is a beautiful rosary to pray together as a family. Turn off the TV and make time each evening to pray together. Our Lady told St. Dominic, "whatever you ask through my Rosary you shall obtain". Set up an altar to Our Lady in your home and encourage your children and grandchildren to bring Roses for Mary and join in the family rosary. Children may also write out their prayers, and draw pictures to place at Our Lady's altar. Help the holy souls by gaining a plenary indulgence, available daily for all who pray the family rosary; usual conditions apply.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Holy Family of Nazareth, pray for us; protect our families and our nation, protect humanity.

Radio Maria will pray the 54 Day Rosary Novena daily at 5.30 p.m. starting Easter Monday. To tune in visit www.radiomaria.ie

An Teaghlach Naofa (The Holy Family) www.anteaghlachnaofa.ie info@anteaghlachnaofa.ie

I wish to enrol in the Roses for Mary - 54 day Rosary Novena for family, life and faith in Ireland.

Please include my name/family name on the roses bouquet ribbon presented to Our Lady on 25th May '18.

Name:

County:

Email:

Mobile:

Cut out this slip and post to one of addresses above

PLEASE SHARE THIS NOVENA WITH YOUR PARISH, PRAYER GROUP, FAMILY AND FRIENDS