



IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC AND MARIAN SHRINE
KNOCK, CLAREMORRIS, CO. MAYO, F12 Y226, IRELAND.
t: +353 (0) 94 93 88100 e: info@knockshrine.ie w: www.knockshrine.ie

Message From Pope Francis To Knock Shrine

“Good evening, brothers and sisters,

I gladly take advantage of this means of communication in order to be with you at such an important moment in the life of the Shrine.

Ever since the apparition of August 21, 1879, when the Blessed Virgin Mary, together with Saint Joseph and Saint John the Apostle, appeared to some villagers, the Irish people, wherever they have found themselves, have expressed their faith and devotion to Our Lady of Knock. You have been a missionary people. We cannot forget how many priests left their homeland in order to become missionaries of the Gospel. Nor can we forget the many lay people who emigrated to far-away lands but still kept their devotion to Our Lady. How many families in the course of almost a century and a half have handed on the faith to their children and gathered their daily labours around the prayer of the Rosary, with the image of Our Lady of Knock at its centre. The arms of the Virgin, out stretched in prayer, continue to show us the importance of prayer as the message of hope which goes out from this Shrine. As you know, in her apparition at Knock, the Virgin says nothing. Yet her silence is a language; indeed, it is the most expressive language we have. The message which comes from Knock is that of the great value of silence for our faith.

It is this silence in the face of mystery, which does not mean giving up on understanding, but understanding while aided and supported by the love of Jesus who offered himself for all of us as the Lamb sacrificed for the salvation of humanity. It is this silence in the face of the great mystery of a love which cannot be reciprocated unless in trusting abandonment to the will of the merciful Father. And, finally, it is silence which Jesus asks of us when he teaches: “When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him” (Matthew 6:6-8).

My dear brothers and sisters present at Knock, and all of you who may be watching from afar, the elevation of the National Sanctuary of Our Lady of Knock to an International Sanctuary of Special Eucharistic and Marian Devotion is a great responsibility.



KNOCK



IRELAND'S INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC AND MARIAN SHRINE
KNOCK, CLAREMORRIS, CO. MAYO, F12 Y226, IRELAND.
t: +353 (0) 94 93 88100 e: info@knockshrine.ie w: www.knockshrine.ie

You accept to always have your arms wide open as a sign of welcome to every pilgrim who may arrive from any part of the world, asking nothing in return but only recognizing him as a brother or a sister who desires to share the same experience of fraternal prayer. May this welcome be joined with charity and become an effective witness to a heart which is open to receiving the Word of God and the grace of the Holy Spirit which gives us strength. May the Eucharistic mystery which unites us in communion with the Risen Lord and with one another always be the rock on which to live out faithfully our vocation to be “missionary disciples”, like the Virgin Mary who made herself a pilgrim of the Gospel of her Son. May she protect us and console us with her merciful countenance.

I greet you all as I implore God’s blessing upon you and I ask you to pray for me.”

Pope Francis

March 19th 2021

