Celebrate the Venerable Nano Nagle

Nano Nagle was born into a wealthy family in North Cork, Ireland, in 1718, during a time when Irish Catholics were harshly oppressed by the British under the Penal Laws, which among other things, made it illegal for Catholics to start schools in their homes or send their children abroad for schooling. Fortunately, Nano and her sister came from a wealthy family that was able to smuggle them to Paris for a full Catholic education. Upon returning to Ireland, Nano was struck by the widespread poverty, and opened a secret school for the poorest of the poor in a rented mud cottage, at great risk. Besides learning their catechism, her students learned simple reading, writing, and arithmetic and skilled crafts that might relieve their poverty. By the time of her death in 1784, she had established a whole network of schools that became the basis of the Catholic school system in Ireland, as well as a religious order to run them the Presentation Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Known as the "Lady of the Lantern" for her nighttime visits the homes of poor students, her dying words were: "Love one another as you have hitherto done. Spend your lives for the poor."

Celebrate her life

Make a paper lantern with your kids in honor of "the Lady with the Lantern."

Watch the **video of the annual Nano Nagle play** put on by the Presentation Girls' School, Maynooth.