



ABOUT KNOCK SHRINE

Ireland's International Eucharistic & Marian Shrine

Since the Apparition on the 21st of August 1879, pilgrims and visitors have been welcomed to Knock Shrine from all four corners of the world. The Shrine offers a peaceful, contemplative space in which to pray, to reflect and to reconnect.

August 21st 1879

On a wet dark August evening in 1879, the villagers of this place had spent the day doing the usual work of the harvest time of the year – gathering winter fuel and fodder. As evening approached, the heavy mist that had been persistent throughout the day, turned to a steady downpour. The villagers gathered around the turf fires in their homes, taking comfort and shelter on a terrible night. Suddenly word spread throughout the village that something extraordinary was happening at the Church and so they hurried to the windswept gable where they witnessed a heavenly vision surrounded in a brilliant white light. Men, women and children gathered in prayer at the gable wall of the parish church.

The Vision

The witnesses clearly saw the Blessed Virgin Mary dressed in white robes, her hands and eyes turned towards heaven in prayer. On her head was a gold crown and where the crown fitted the brow, a single golden rose. On her right, bowed respectfully towards her, was St. Joseph. He appeared older, his beard and hair were grey and, like Our Lady, he was barefoot.



To Our Lady's left stood John the Evangelist vested as a bishop, wearing a small mitre. He held an open book in his left hand and in its pages the lines and letters could clearly be seen. He appeared to be preaching but no voice was heard. He stood so that his back was neither turned to the Virgin or to the Lamb that stood upon a simple plain altar. Behind the Lamb was a Cross. The witnesses watched and prayed for over 2 hours and though they were wet, they noticed that no rain fell on upon the Apparition or on the gable.

International Eucharistic & Marian Shrine

Many have reflected on the rich symbolism of the Apparition. Those who saw it were immediately drawn to Our Lady's presence, a reflection of the deep Marian devotion of all those present. And for many years after it was the presence of Our Lady that people were instinctively drawn to. Devotion to St. Joseph has always emphasised his role as the protector of the Holy Family and he appears at Knock as a secure gentle presence beside his wife, head bowed reverently toward her acknowledging and reminding us of her unique place in the history of the Church.

St. John the Evangelist stands between Our Lady and the altar and Lamb. It is his Gospel that refers to Jesus as the Lamb of God. He appears to be preaching on the Eucharistic altar, cross and Lamb that is at the very centre of the Apparition. Unique to the Apparition is the presence of the Lamb of God upon the altar, a visual presentation of the gift and mystery of the Eucharist. This central element is not to be found in any other recognised Marian Apparition. Knock Shrine is honoured to have been officially recognised as an international Eucharistic and Marian Shrine by Pope Francis, through the Pontifical Council for New Evangelisation in March 2021.