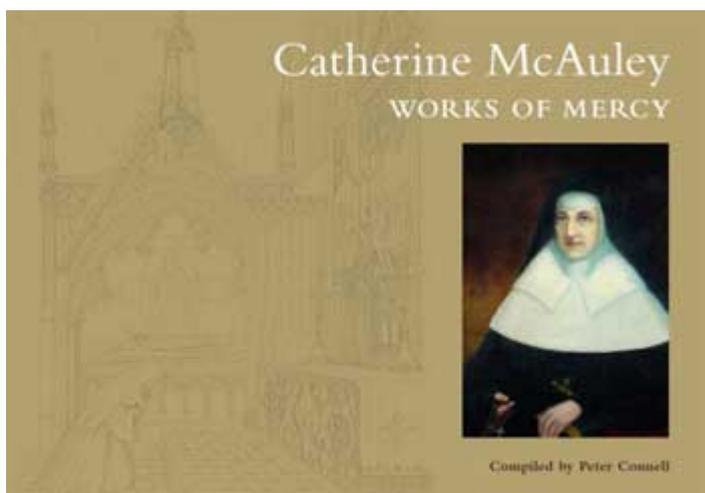


Mercy books launched in Dublin

from Mercy E-News
No. 459 | 25 April 2012

On April 13, about 70 Sisters of Mercy and friends gathered in the International Room at Mercy International Centre in Dublin for the launch of two recent publications of interest to the Mercy world generally. They are *Catherine McAuley and the Works of Mercy* compiled by Peter Connell, Director of the Mercy Heritage Centre in Brisbane, and *The Correspondence of Mother Vincent Whitty, 1839-1892*, edited by Anne Hetherington rsm and Pauline Smoothy rsm, Sisters of the Brisbane Congregation.



Cover of
Catherine McAuley and the Works of Mercy

Catherine McAuley and the Works of Mercy is a reproduction of the drawings of Sr Clare Agnew with some of the original text, together with appropriate scripture quotations, some of Catherine McAuley's well-known words, and some passages from current Mercy writers. Mary Reynolds rsm, Director of the Mercy International Association, spoke about the significance of Clare

Agnew, a foundation member of the Bermondsey community. Her sketches of the works of Mercy, done while she was on a visit to several Mercy convents in Ireland in 1840, are the only eye-witness pictures we have of how the early Sisters carried out their ministries of teaching, care of the sick and dying, and visitation of the poor in their homes and in prison. Very few copies of Agnew's original publication are now in existence, so Peter Connell's reproduction of her work is a valuable addition to our knowledge of the works of Mercy, as carried out in the time of Catherine herself. The attractively produced book will provide material for reflection on the life and times of Catherine McAuley as well as on Mercy ministry today.

Mother Vincent (Ellen) Whitty is remembered primarily as the Mercy foundress in Queensland, Australia, but prior to her going to Brisbane in 1861, she had been twice elected Reverend Mother of Baggot Street, and had held the positions of Bursar, Novice mistress and Assistant Reverend Mother in that community. So she is an important figure, not just in the history of Mercy in Australia, but in Mercy history worldwide. This volume of her correspondence contains 344 letters written by, to or about her from the time of her entrance into the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin in 1839 until her death in Brisbane in 1892.



Anne Hetherington rsm with a copy of
*The Correspondence of Mother Vincent
Whitty, 1839-1892*

Approximately one-third of the letters were written while Mother Vincent lived in Baggot Street, and many others were written to her from her former novices and Mercy friends around the world. There are letters from Bishops, Archbishops and significant figures in Irish and Australian history, even one from Cardinal Newman, so these letters provide important source material for those interested in the religious and social history of nineteenth century Ireland and Australia.

Anne Hetherington rsm, one of the editors of this publication, spoke about the process of compiling and editing the letters and of their significance to the Mercy world. (Anne's speech follows).

After the launch speeches, the visitors were entertained to morning tea in the dining room of the Centre. Quite by accident, the launch was scheduled to take place at a time when a number of Mercy sisters from around the world were in Dublin for other reasons, so it was a very cosmopolitan group who gathered on the day.