

The Story of Knock



The Three Visitors

This story began in the village of Knock, in County Mayo, on Thursday evening, 21st August 1879. The village people were all doing their daily jobs. Patrick Hill,

with his friends John Durkan and Dominic Beirne, Senior, was heading off to the bog. Judith Campbell had just hung out the washing. The postman had stopped to chat at the Beirne cottage.



Outside, two young cousins, Johnny Curry, (pictured here), and Catherine Murray, stood listening to their granny. In an instant, the two children were off, running barefoot through the grass in search of some ripe blackberries, growing in the hedgerows.



Elsewhere, Mary McLaughlin went out to visit her close friend, Margaret Beirne, who lived beside the old grey church in the village. An old man, Patrick Walsh, sat by the half door of his cottage, smoking his pipe. He chatted to the neighbours as they passed by. However, before dark, they would experience something mysterious that would change their lives and the village of Knock forever.



Mary Beirne noticed a strange bright, white light as they passed the gable wall of the church. "It was brilliant white," they said afterwards, "and it lit the whole gable of the church from top to bottom". At that time, there happened to be fifteen villagers there, who witnessed this strange event. Soon, they saw three figures standing in the light: a young woman and two men. The three of them looked kind and peaceful. The weather turned very cold and wet but the people continued to gaze at this beautiful vision.

The beautiful young woman wore a long flowing white cloak fastened at the neck, and there was a pretty golden rose in the middle of the crown on her head. Johnny and Catherine were curious to know who these figures were.

"Do you see the lady?" Mary Beirne said, "Well, that is Our Lady, and the old man is Joseph, her husband.



It took the adults a little while to agree on the identity of the third figure. On his head, he wore a tall pointed hat, like a bishop's mitre, and he held a book in his left hand. Eventually, they agreed it must be St. John, the Apostle.

Behind the three figures, there was an altar, surrounded by angels. On the altar, there was a cross and a lamb. The adults explained to the children that the lamb represented Jesus, the Lamb of God.



The rain continued to pour down, but many stayed on, praying the Rosary, for almost three hours, while the apparition lasted.

Later, the witnesses reported that the ground below the figures remained completely dry during the apparition, in spite of the heavy downpours. (Story from Grow in Love 3rd Class)

Questions:

- a) What happened in Knock on 21st August 1879?
- b) Can you name the figures in the apparition?
- c) How many villagers witnessed the event?
- d) Why do you think, despite the heavy rain, the ground below the three figures remained dry?
- e) What, do you think, YOU would have done, if you were in Knock on that August evening?

Interesting Facts about Knock

- Knock has long since been Ireland's national shrine to Our Lady, the Mother of God.
- "As Gaeilge" Knock is called Cnoc Mhuire---the Hill of Mary.
- Pope Francis dedicated Knock as an international centre of pilgrimage on March 19th, 2021.
- Knock is now known as an International Sanctuary of Eucharistic and Marian Devotion.
- Knock is unique among Marian apparitions as it is the only one, throughout the world, where Mary is accompanied by Joseph, John the Evangelist and Jesus, represented by the Lamb of God.
- The apparition at Knock was a silent apparition.



➤ Knock Shrine is located in the Archdiocese of Tuam

➤ The mosaic in the refurbished Basilica of Our Lady of Knock took more than two years to complete.



➤ The mosaic, containing more than 1.5 million pieces, was made in a town called Spilimbergo, near Venice in Italy.

➤ Many pilgrims visit Knock Shrine each year, especially to attend the annual nine-day Novena held there every August.

Why Go To Knock Shrine?

This little village, in a rural part of County Mayo, attracts approximately 1.5 million people, from all over the world each year. Many of them come as pilgrims with family, parish or diocesan groups. They come here to:

- Pray the Rosary as they circle the church, the site of the original apparition in 1879.
- Pray the Stations of the cross individually or in procession
- Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Celebrate the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick



- Attend Mass in the Basilica of Our Lady of Knock.
- There are two Basilicas in Ireland, one in Knock and the other is in ???? (Clue: another place of pilgrimage in Co. Donegal).
- Take time out for quiet prayer at the shrine or in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

Important visitors to Knock Shrine



Some of the thousands of pilgrims who visit Knock Shrine each year.



The Archdiocese of Dublin comes on pilgrimage to knock in April each year.

The Tuam Diocesan pilgrimage, led by our Archbishop, happens in early May each year.



Pope John Paul 2 visited Knock Shrine on 30th September 1979 as part of his short visit to Ireland.

He celebrated Mass there with 450,000 people present. He presented the shrine with his own personal gift of a Golden Rose.



St. Teresa of Calcutta visited Knock Shrine in June 1993. Here, she is praying at the Apparition site. More than 50,000 people attended.



Pope Francis visited Knock in August 2018. Here we see him in silent prayer at the site of the apparition. Below, with Archbishop Neary, Archbishop of Tuam, and Fr. Richard Gibbons, Parish Priest of Knock, Pope Francis meets some families.



Prayer to Our Lady of Knock

Our Lady of Knock, Queen of Ireland, you gave hope to your people in a time of distress, and comforted them in their sorrow. You have inspired countless pilgrims to pray with confidence to your divine Son, remembering His promise, "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find".

Help me to remember that we are all pilgrims on the road to heaven. Fill me with love and concern for my brothers and sisters in Christ, especially those who live with me. Comfort me when I am sick, lonely or depressed. Teach me how to take part ever more reverently in the Holy Mass. Give me a greater love of Jesus in the Blessed sacrament. Pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen.

Anthem ----- Lady of Knock

*There were people of all ages, Gathered round the gable wall,
Poor and humble men and women, Little children that you called.
We are gathered here before you, And our hearts are just the same,
Filled with joy at such a vision, As we praise your name.*

**Chorus : Golden Rose, Queen of Ireland, All my cares and troubles cease,
As we kneel with love before you, Lady of Knock, our Queen of Peace.**

*Oh, your message was unspoken, But the truth in silence lies,
So, I gaze upon your vision, And the truth I try to find.
Here I stand with John the teacher, And with Joseph at your side,
And I see the Lamb of God, on the altar glorified.*

**Chorus : Golden Rose, Queen of Ireland, All my cares and troubles cease,
As we kneel with love before you, Lady of Knock, our Queen of Peace.**

*And the lamb will conquer, And the Woman clothed in the sun
Will shine her light on everyone;
Yes, the Lamb will conquer, And the woman clothed in the sun
Will shine her light on everyone.*

**Chorus : Golden Rose, Queen of Ireland, All my cares and troubles cease,
As we kneel with love before you, Lady of Knock, our Queen of Peace.**