

## Holy Innocents Reflection

As we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Innocents today, I feel it is fitting that we acknowledge and give thanks for the ministry of our Sisters who cared for vulnerable women and their babies in our Mother and Baby Homes in Ireland and the U.K. Wounded, broken women sought refuge at our door and were never turned away.

The love, commitment and great service of our Sisters saved the lives of many thousands of women and children at a time of great suffering. They stepped in as 'Rachel wept' and protected the lives of those yet unborn. They poured out their love day and night to uphold the dignity of mother and child and did their best to offer the rejected 'maiden with child' new hope. Many of these fine Sisters have now gone home to God, those who remain have at times been vilified by a ruthless press and social media, however, we know that God sees all and will bring good out of this time of suffering,

Writing in his latest book, 'LET US DREAM' Pope Francis writes about the COVID 19 crisis. He speaks about how we are called to work together for a better world for the most vulnerable in our society. He goes on to write about the times of personal COVID that we all go through. These times of great personal anguish strip us to the core and leave us naked before ourselves and God. He asks us to surrender to the redemptive power of grace that is offered to us in these experiences so that as individuals and society we can become the people God is calling us to be. We are then more able to reach out in loving response to create the society that God desires for *all* people.

Acknowledging the human and structural limitations we face in our ministries we continue to desire a better world for all. Through our Vows as Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, we have committed ourselves to speak out and work against the unjust structures that have plagued society since the first massacre of the Holy Innocents. We are called to do this wherever we may be. We may feel daunted by the challenge before us, however, we can take heart that Emmanuel our God living amongst us will show us the way. All we need do is ask!