



fraternitas

Ars Gratia Christi

Official Newsletter of The Fraternity of St Genesius, St Mary's Presbytery, Dublin Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth, Ireland.

Volume 1

Autumn 2007

Issue 2

Fraternity Receives Formal Approval

Bishop Michael Smith, Bishop of Meath, has formally given his approval to the Fraternity of St Genesius. In a letter to the Father Director, Fr John Hogan, dated the 27th August, the bishop said, *"I wish to confirm my acceptance and approval of the statutes of the Fraternity, recognizing it as a private association of Christ's faithful with Diocesan approval"*. This recognition fulfills the requirements laid down by the Code of Canon Law (cf. canons 299 §3, 312 and 322). Bishop Smith (*pictured*) has also given his permission for the Fraternity to use the title 'Catholic', (cf. canon 300).

The Letter of Approval comes following the formal presentation of the Constitution of the Fraternity during the celebration of St Genesius' feast day in St Mary's Church, Drogheda, on the 25th August. At the Offertory of the Mass, John Cahill, Council Treasurer, presented the Constitution to the bishop, who presided over the ceremonies, on behalf of the members and council with an accompanying letter formally requesting approval.

At the end of the Mass, Bishop Smith said that he accepted the Constitution and approved of the mission the Fraternity was founded to undertake. These sentiments were re-echoed in his Letter of Approval, where pointed out that many of those involved in the area of the theatrical and cinematic arts are *"still on the side of the Lord"*. The Bishop wished the Fraternity

every blessing in its work and encouraged its growth, *"May I wish you and you fellow workers every grace and blessing from the Lord and trust that the Fraternity will grow and develop over the coming years."*



Under canon law, while Catholics have the right to form associations, the Church will not formally recognize these associations until their statutes have been submitted to the relevant ecclesiastical authority for approval and official recognition by means of a Letter of Approval. Neither can organizations, be they associations, schools or institutions, call themselves Catholic unless they have the express approval of the Church. The Fraternity is now a recognized private association of Christ's faithful of 'Diocesan Right'.

The Letter of Approval was welcomed by the members of the Council. In his letter of thanks to Bishop Smith, Father Director said that the mission of the members of the Fraternity is one which he hoped *"can be carried out not only in obedience to the Church, but also in union with her, with her blessing and under her care, and indeed, in some small way, as part of her mission."*

In the Constitution Bishop Smith is acknowledged as our Protector Bishop and Fr John assured the Bishop of the prayers of the members of the Fraternity for his ministry and his intentions. The text of the Constitution can be downloaded from our website.

Fraternity News

Bishop Presides at Celebrations

Bishop Michael Smith, Bishop of Meath presided over the feast day celebrations in honour of St Genesius in St Mary's Church, Drogheda and anointed the Proto-icon of St Genesius. The Mass, which was attended by members of the Fraternity and parishioners of St Mary's and many others, brought nine days of prayer in honour of the martyr to an end. Bishop Smith was joined by Father Director, Fr John Hogan, Fr Denis Nulty, Parish Priest of St Mary's, and Fr John McKeever, CC Cooley/Lordship. Members of St Mary's Church Choir provided the Music.

Fr John preached the homily and following it the Proto-Icon was brought to the altar to be anointed (*see article below*). During the Offertory Procession, Bishop Smith was presented with an icon of St Genesius and with a copy of the Constitution which the Council submitted for approval.

Addressing the congregation at the end of Mass, Bishop Smith congratulated the Fraternity on its foundation: *"The Fraternity"* he said, *"has an important role to play in the re-evangelization of culture...and I hope that, in the years to come, it will touch the lives of many people"*. Though the Fraternity is small now, he said, it was like a stone in the shoe: *"It's small, but it makes its presence felt"*. Referring to the Second Vatican Council's decree *Inter Mirifica*, 'On the Means of Social Communication' promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1963, the bishop reiterated the thrust of that document which calls for *"an effort to see that the noble and ancient art of drama, which is now diffused everywhere by the media of social communication, serves the moral betterment of audiences"*.

Novena Report

Opening Mass of the Holy Spirit

The Novena opened with Mass on the evening of the 17th August, invoking the help of the Holy Spirit and interceding for an outpouring of grace on all those who were participating. Fr John Hogan, Father Director, both celebrated the Mass and delivered the homily; Fr Martin Carley, CC St Mary's Drogheda concelebrated.

In his homily Father Director spoke of the Church's practice of calling on the Holy Spirit whenever she begins prayer or a mission. It is the means, he said, of *"conforming ourselves to the will of God"* and *"to and leave ourselves in his hands. We allow ourselves be led by him. Since he is wisdom he knows what is good for our*

salvation and we humbly open ourselves to his wise providence... As imperfect beings we produce imperfect things, but with the Spirit of God leading us we can be led to perfection, and so what is achieved can be achieved in the manner of grace, sanctified by the gift of the Lord of Life. We can then expect miracles, if it is his will."

Reflecting on the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of St Genesius, Fr John continued: *"Genesius was trying to resist and so a struggle ensued in the weeks between his leaving the catechumenate and the night of the play. That struggle bore fruit. The Holy Spirit is a persistent and tender lover – the Paraclete's presence woos and entices. In those struggles the Heart of Christ would have opened himself to Genesius and perhaps the actor caught a glimpse of the true drama of life, the greatest love affair of all... In the mockery of another actor pouring water on Genesius's head, grace was unleashed and poured down on him: it sought his assent, and Genesius surrendered. He had the choice to resist, but he did not: he embraced the power of the Spirit and in his own personal Pentecost, he stood up to proclaim Christ to all who were there."* During the Mass, Oil was blessed in honour of St Genesius. A shrine with a full size copy of the Proto-Icon was set up and throughout the week petitions and candles were left before it.

Holy Hour of Prayer

On Wednesday evening, the 22nd, August, a large congregation attended the Holy Hour of Prayer in St Mary's Church, Drogheda. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed and following the rosary, various meditations and prayers were offered: the sick and those suffering from epilepsy were remembered in a particular way. The devotions ended with the Fraternity prayers to St Genesius, and Benediction.

Handel's Messiah

By far the cultural highlight of the Novena was a performance of Handel's *Messiah*. Weeks of hard work and promotion bore fruit as almost 600 people, including the Mayor of Drogheda, Cllr. Anthony O'Donoghue, filled St Mary's Church on Friday 24th August, for what proved to be a spectacular performance. Robin Moore conducted the Occasional Singers in a faithful interpretation of the famous work, while soloists Rachel Talbot (Soprano), Dearbhla Walsh and Sarah Lane (Altos), Anthony Norton (Tenor) and Gerard Noonan (Bass) interweaved between the choruses leading the audience through what proved to be a vivid and memorable musical meditation on the life of Christ. Edward Holly provided the accompaniment with trumpeter Will Palmer.

The Proto-Icon: Its Significance

The Proto-Icon of St Genesius is, as the title suggests, the first icon of the saint. It was commissioned by Fr John, long before the Fraternity was founded, to help spread devotion to St Genesius and encourage prayer for those in the arts. Approaching Sr Eucharika Kenny, he asked her help, and she in turn contacted Lucho Alvarez, a gifted Chilean iconographer, to compose the prototype – because an icon did not exist it was necessary for an image to be composed. Since the style of iconography is precise and must conform to tradition, Mr. Alvarez turned to the icons of martyrs in the tradition while also embarking on a research project to learn as much as he could about St Genesius, his life, martyrdom and cult within the Church.

Icons emerge from prayer and meditation and so take time and reflection; it was over the course of a year that the wood was prepared and the icon written. It seems that Genesius himself wanted a part in the project and the iconographer has indicated that the saint himself seemed to be guiding his hand. Iconography is not realist art, it is symbolic and stylized. The iconographer's main aim is not the exact physical representation of the saint but to present, in symbolic form, a spiritual representation of the person: this icon seeks to reveal the very heart of Genesius.

At first glance we see that the face of Genesius is very familiar – it reminds us of the face of Jesus himself. This is intentional. Every Christian is called to become an icon of Christ, imitating the life and virtues of the Saviour, being seen as his 'lights' in the world and, ultimately, imitating him in our dying so one day we will rise with him. In his confession of faith, Genesius bore witness to Christ in the world and before the enemies of the Church, in this he becomes the icon of the Lord as he proclaims him – proclaims the Word made Man. This witness was crowned with his death, and this death was itself an imitation of the death of Christ. The martyrdom of Christians is united with the saving death of Jesus on the cross, their blood mingles with his, and in their sacrifice not only do they bear witness to Christ, they also share in his redemptive offering: in their death they become 'another Christ'. It is to testify to this that Genesius is depicted as resembling the Lord he professed and died for: Christ and Genesius are one in love. Around the saint's head we see two halos – the outer is a clear and distinct, the symbol of his holiness; the second, within the first, is a symbolic representation of the Lord's crown of thorns reminding us that his sanctity lies in his martyrdom: it is his crown.

Colours are of deep significance in iconography. The red of St Genesius' cloak symbolizes both his martyrdom and his baptism, for him the two are linked in his 'baptism of blood'. He wears an orange tunic which represents victory: in his death he triumphs over death; in his new life he triumphs over the old. The blue stola symbolizes divinity, recalling the presence and grace of God which surrounded him, as it surrounds all of us. In his conversion, he recognized that God is with us, and so he sought to live in that divine presence, never again living for himself alone.

In iconography martyrs are not depicted with palms, but rather holding the cross in the right hand, with the left raised. This is how Genesius is depicted: he shared in the cross and its victory, and his raised hand proclaims that he is a witness (in Greek witness is translated as 'martyr'). He wears a belt – this is purely symbolic. The belt represents consecration, while this may seem odd at first – Genesius was not a religious nor even baptized, so he was not actually consecrated. However if we reflect on what consecration is we see that his commitment to Christ even to death, reveals a consecration of the heart. To consecrate something is to set it apart for the service of God: it is made holy and is no longer something to be used for profane or ordinary purposes. Genesius understood through his conversion that he was to be set apart for service to Christ. He belonged to Christ who died for him, and it was Christ alone he wished to serve. It also has another meaning. In the Gospel of St John 21:18, we see the Lord prophesy St Peter's martyrdom:

In truth I tell you, when you were young you put on your own belt and walked where you liked; but when you grow old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will put a belt around you and take you where you would rather not go.

Like Peter, Genesius himself was taken prisoner and put to death for his love of Christ. Ironically, the yoke which was put on these two martyrs could not tie them down, they were already attached to the yoke of Christ, so the symbol of the belt in this context represents both martyrdom and their adherence to Christ which led to martyrdom.

The masks of comedy and tragedy are not part of the tradition from which icons emerge, yet it would be amiss not to include them in the icon of the patron of the arts. The mask of tragedy is painted in gray; the mask of comedy is painted 'in light'. It is obvious that they were both joined with a cord, but that cord has been cut. This symbolizes Genesius' cutting away the old life and embracing the new life of joy which Christ now offers him. It is also reminiscent of what the Greek philosopher Aristotle once wrote concerning tragedy and comedy as forms of drama: of the two forms, it was comedy which was the highest: Genesius was a gifted comedian. Genesius' name is written in Greek and this serves not only to identify him, but also testifies to the fact that he is known and loved by God and called to come to know and love that God. Finally, the hand in the top right hand corner is the hand of Christ who blesses the saint. This symbolizes the grace by which Genesius was converted (touched by the hand of God) and also his role now as an intercessor and patron. Icons which bear the hand of Christ in this way are intercessory icons and speak to the faithful of the power of the depicted saint's prayers before the throne of God. This not only encourages devotion, but also reminds us of the union which exists between the saint and the Church on earth. In this icon, Genesius stands before us, facing us while his gaze is directed elsewhere: he wants to engage with us in life and lead us to Christ.

The Anointing of the Proto-Icon

The Ceremony of the Anointing of an Icon is an ancient one which is rooted in the theology and spirituality of eastern Christianity. For the Christian communities of the east, be they in union with the Church, or the Orthodox, icons are channels of grace which, in a mysterious way, make present the person they depict. This presence comes to dwell in the icon following a ceremony in which the image is consecrated and anointed with Sacred Chrism. In its ritual this ceremony resembles baptism.



Presentation and Unveiling

Following the homily at the feast day Mass, the Proto-Icon of St Genesius was brought in procession to the sanctuary by members, Fr John McKeever and Anne Barden, who presented it to the bishop. Unveiling it, the Bishop first showed it to the people and then placed it standing on a table in the sanctuary for the ceremony of consecration.



The Purification

Purifying the icon, Bishop Smith incensed it, front and back before incising a cross on the back. In a symbolic baptism, the icon was then blessed with holy water.



A cross is incised on the back.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving was then prayed, thanking God for the gifts he has given mankind, for his inspiration and guidance in the writing of this image, and also calling on him to sanctify the icon by his grace so it may edify and inspire those who gaze upon it.



The Icon is blessed with Holy Water

Turning to the congregation, the bishop invited those present to join him in prayer as he offered the Prayer of Blessing and Anointing. He then anointed the back of the icon with Sacred Chrism. As he traced the sign of the cross with Chrism, he prayed:

Hallowed and blessed is this icon of the Holy Martyr, St Genesius through this anointing with this holy oil. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The bishop then blessed the people with the image before it was enthroned in the sanctuary, incensed and offered to God with the prayer:

Receive in offering, Most Holy Trinity, this Icon of your servant, the Holy Martyr Genesisius, blessed and anointed, that it may be an instrument of your grace, healing and evangelization, in accordance with your will and for your glory. Amen.



The Bishop prays the Prayer of Consecration

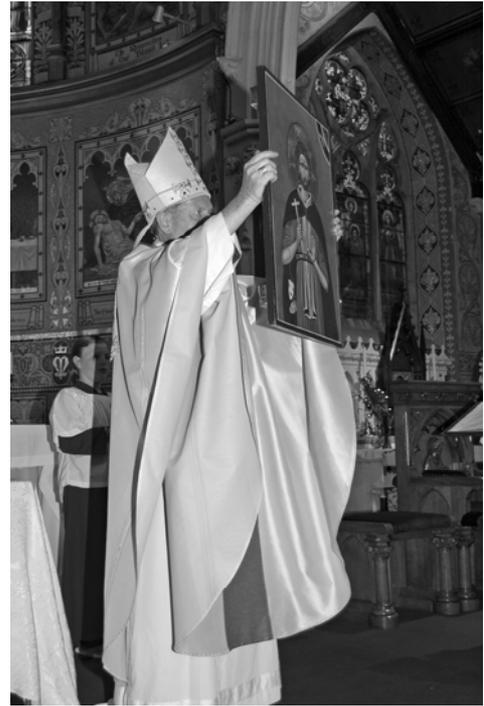
Acknowledging the work and prayer of the one who wrote the icon, the bishop then offered a prayer for iconographers that the Lord would continue to enlighten them and sustain them in their work for the Church.



Anointing with Sacred Chrism

According to the rite the icon must be incensed three times. The first incensing is for purification, and this is done at the beginning. The second is an incensing of offering in which it is acknowledged that this Image, now anointed with Sacred Chrism now belongs to God and to

be used for his greater glory. The third is an incensing of veneration – both of the one depicted and of the Image itself which is holy.



The Bishop blesses the congregation with the Icon

Following the Mass those present had the opportunity to venerate the icon. At present there are no plans to expose the icon permanently in a church, but it will be brought out for veneration at Fraternity events. At present a shrine is being constructed to protect it and allow it to travel to various events in the future.



The Proto-Icon enthroned in the Sanctuary

**Fill our hearts with joy and gladness
now that this icon of your Holy Martyr
Genesisius is complete.
Let your grace sanctify and dwell within it,
that it may edify and inspire
those who gaze upon it and venerate it.**

Ceremony of Anointing

From the Father Director

This article is the homily the Father Director delivered at the feast day Mass of St Genesius in St Mary's Church, Drogheda, on the 25th August 2007.

The story of St Genesius is a fascinating one: we know very little about him, and what is recorded in the Acts of his martyrdom is concerned with his conversion and death. Venerated within decades of his death, his conversion had a remarkable impact, as it continues to do today particularly among the acting fraternity of which he is the patron. The Acts tell us that his conversion came as a result of an overpowering grace given by God, a grace which touched the heart of an ambitious man who seemed to have scant regard for others: grace not only brought him to accept Jesus Christ but also personally transformed him. We know only of the external event – we know nothing of what was going on within, the struggle, the final assent – Genesius, like all of had the gift of free will, he could have resisted even that great grace, but he did not – something happened in the depths of his being – the actor had a role to play in his conversion.

"I wish to receive the grace of Christ" – the Acts attribute these words to the converted Genesius; they reveal his desire to receive that supernatural gift from God which is given through his graciousness to assist us in our daily lives. St Augustine, the Church's great theologian on grace, reminds us that if our very nature we are a fallen people. He had personal experience of weakness, as we all do, and so when it came to our destiny and living the Christian life he knew that if left to ourselves we could not do it – we are utterly fallen, but we are raised up by Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection, and by the grace given by God poured out through the Paschal Mystery. We are completely dependent on God, yet we too have a role to play – we must open ourselves to receive this grace and cooperate with it. While God can shower us in graces, he also respects our free will, and so the soul can resist. But grace is no mere theological concept, nor an impersonal one – it is not given by a great divine being to its creatures as if feeding animals at a distance – God's gift of grace involves him in the lives of men and women as he seeks to involve them in his life.

Grace is a personal gift from God, personal in that it is given to the individual in a personal way, but personal also in that God gives us the gift of his own life – his own divine life: it is not given at a remove, but most intimately and is channeled through the Church. This personal aspect of grace is one which reveals an important aspect of the Christian faith: it reaches into the very personality of the Christian – it is a religion which moves beyond the externals, and as we learn from the life of St Genesius, it is a religion which seeks to transform the person in the most intimate way.

This aspect of Christianity is difficult for many – as human beings, given our weakness, we resist difficult transformations – we are, in essence, not only creatures of habit, but also creatures of comfort. The moral truth about human nature is that it is fallen, the remedy is transformation in Christ through his death and resurrection and through the grace he offers us, particularly his sanctifying grace which is given in the sacraments.

Much of modern society's difficulties with the Christian faith is this tendency to get personal: Christ was not happy to leave well alone – he sought conversion, so does the Church he founded, and this is hard to take in Western society that promotes a philosophy of personal autonomy, where the personal life of the individual is private and they can do what they want. Indeed in a society which sees its role as one of toleration, affirmation and facilitation, with the exception of a few taboos and the tenets of political correctness. For Christianity to say that there is a right way of living and a wrong way, and that every person is called to be transformed through personal assent to Christ and the action of his grace, seems alien. Religion is alright, many say, as long as it stays private and doesn't affect the rest of us. Even some Christians say that the faith is alright as long as it does not interfere in their own personal decisions and lifestyles – "woe betides any bishop or priest who crosses the boundary of my personal autonomy!"

And yet if we dig down deep into the heart of the human person we see the search for something different, something, which will make us better people: somehow we are aware that we do not fit into our skins very well, that the soul hankers after something else; even those who influence our society most deeply know there is something wrong. It is no coincidence that as modern Ireland is losing her Christian values the tragedy of suicide is increasing: the creation of a soulless society will bring with it an alienation which sees no hope, no future and no reason to live. The Archbishop of Armagh in recent days has reflected on this theme in Knock, and despite the outcry from certain quarters, what he said is true. Ireland, and indeed Western society, will not find its fulfillment or its true flourishing in materialism or shallow spiritualities; it will find only decline and decay, and the further disintegration of the human person. The Servant of God, Pope John Paul II in his philosophy reflected on this as he looked at man in all his wonder, dignity and fallenness – only in embracing the humanity we find in Christ, he tells us, through

our personal transformation, will we become what we were created to be. Pope Benedict's own teaching, reflected in his books and talks, is saying the same thing. As he studies Western culture he sees a decline which will only be remedied by a re-evaluation of where we came from and a transformation of society – in Europe and the Americas that involves a return to our Christian roots. In a sense what afflicts our society is the absence of the true person.

Genesisius' Rome was not very different from our modern society – we are more technologically advanced, but human nature does not change. Rome was an ancient society by the beginning of the 4th century, but its decline was already beginning. Even though under Constantine the empire would embrace Christianity, there was already something rotten at work. This decline could be seen in the artistic world which usually reflects society as a whole. The arts in Genesisius' time had strayed from the masterpieces of early Roman and Greek works: he was an actor not like the great classical actors, but of the mime and pantomime, different from what we understand them to be, they were rough, sexualized and at times murderous affairs – sometimes convicted criminals were incorporated into the plot of a play and then actually executed on stage! Reality TV is a worthy successor! If we look at what passes for entertainment today we will see many parallels.

Art reflects society, it reflects the state of the human person at a moment in time – even conceptual art which seeks to represent whatever the viewer wants to see – the emptiness of the work waiting to be filled reflects the values espoused by our society to facilitate what individuals want themselves. And yet there is so much potential. There are gifted individuals who are called to serve in the arts in order not just to entertain, but to help men and women attain their destiny: perhaps this is why God converted Genesisius on stage. The long relationship between the Church and the arts reveal to the world what the arts can do in building up a Christian society and how each assists the other. We hope the founding of the Fraternity of St Genesisius will help that relationship even further as the members assist those who work in the theatrical and cinematic arts by means of their prayers, sacrifices and support. Grace cannot be excluded from our society – it too needs the help of God, but the gift of grace can only be given to society through the men and women who form that society – through their personal cooperation with grace. Men and women, as they are transformed, can transform society – we will never make it perfect, but we can make it better. So too with the arts – actors, producers, directors, screenwriters, composers, and all those involved, can transform the arts, can evangelize, through their own transformation.

Today, as the Proto-Icon of St Genesisius is anointed and consecrated, we see the relationship between the faith, art and grace. This painted image for use in the Church not only as a thing of beauty, but as the image of a saint to be venerated and, as the tradition of Eastern Christianity teaches us, it will also become an instrument of grace and evangelization. May it be so. May the one depicted intercede for all of us particularly in these times, that the Lord may increase his grace in all of us, transform us; make us more like Christ.

Who are the Cooperators?

The Fraternity seeks to include as many people as possible in the prayers offered for those working in the theatrical and cinematic arts, but on foundation we were aware that not everyone could commit to Dedicated Membership. There was also a desire to include an ecumenical dimension to the family of prayer. In acknowledgement of this the grade of Cooperator was devised.

Cooperators are those members who through personal circumstances or choice are unable to assume the responsibilities of Dedicated Membership, and for those who are not members of the Catholic Church who share the ideals of the Fraternity and would like to participate in its life. The grade is also open to children and young people under the age of 15.

Cooperators accompany the Fraternity through their prayers, offering up the Prayer to St Genesisius each day for the men and women of the theatrical and cinematic arts, and the Fraternity and its intentions. They are members of the Fraternity and are included as such in its Masses and works. While they do not have the responsibility Dedicated Members have, they are also invited to help the Fraternity in its, promoting it in as far as they can and helping identify people who would consider membership. It is hoped that, perhaps, over time, Cooperators would consider Dedicated Membership.

Prayer to St Genesisius for the Sick

Saint Genesisius,
Listen to the prayers of those who invoke you.
You are a witness to the grace and the power of the love of Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
and as you laid down your life for his sake,
you opened your heart to sing of his mercy for all generations to hear.
Pray for those who are sick and for all who are in need (*mention your intention here*).
Intercede, dear friend, that like you they may find their strength, joy and consolation in the Heart of our Crucified Saviour. Amen.

Our Protector Bishop



Bishop Michael Smith with Pope Benedict during his 'ad limina' visit to Rome in October 2006

The Most Reverend Dr Michael Smith, Bishop of Meath was born in Oldcastle, Co. Meath, Ireland, in 1940. He entered seminary in the Pontifical Irish College in Rome where he did his undergraduate degrees at the Gregorian University. He was ordained a priest in 1963 at the young age of 23. He undertook further studies in Canon Law in the Lateran University. While he was in Rome the Second Vatican Council was taking place and he served as a recording secretary at the Council. He is one of the few Irish clerics present at every session of the Council.

His doctorate completed, he returned to Ireland to serve as Diocesan Secretary while occupying various pastoral appointments. In 1983 he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop to then Bishop of Meath, Dr John McCormack. He was consecrated by Cardinal Tomás O'Fiach, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, in the Cathedral of Christ the King, Mullingar, on, 29th January 1984. On 10th October 1988 he was designated Co-Adjutor Bishop of Meath (bishop with right of succession) to Bishop McCormack and he succeeded as Bishop on 16th May 1990.

Since then he has been an active bishop in what is one of Ireland's fastest growing dioceses, visiting the many parishes of the diocese at least once a year. Supportive of the various spiritual movements in his jurisdiction, he has given particular attention to the promotion of Eucharistic Adoration. Nationally he has held important posts within the Episcopal Conference and has encouraged various movements for renewal. Conscious of the need to preserve Catholic identity he has spoken on various issues including the important role the Church has to play in education, citing the need for Catholics to protect their schools and their Catholic ethos. He is aware of the need to confront the challenges facing the Church in Ireland and in his own diocese which, as a veritable suburb of Dublin, is experiencing a population explosion and the decline of religious practice. His optimism in this regard can be discerned from his Episcopal motto: *In Christo Confido*: "In Christ I Trust". He lives in the Bishop's Residence, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, Ireland.

THANKS!

The Council would like to extend its most sincere thanks to all members and non-members who assisted in any way in preparing for the various events of the novena. Many people made enormous efforts, particularly in organizing the *Messiah*, particularly those who sold tickets. The success of the performance and the novena in general is down to those who have been so kind in giving of their time and talents. We would also like to thank Fr Denis Nulty, Parish Priest of St Mary's for allowing the Fraternity to conduct the novena in his church and for his generous hospitality, particularly in facilitating the performance of the *Messiah*. Particular thanks must also go to those who have sent donations to the Fraternity to help us in our work. Your intentions will be remembered in our Benefactors' Mass which is offered each month to implore God's blessing on those who support us.

Fraternity Prayer Group

At a recent meeting of the Council a decision was made to begin a prayer group in Drogheda to pray for the men and women of the theatrical and cinematic arts and those who are sick. The Constitution establishes the concept of prayer groups as a means of furthering the mission of the Fraternity and to invite non-members to join members in praying for the renewal of culture. The first meeting of the Prayer Group will take place on Monday 19th November at 8pm in St Mary's Church: it is hoped that it will meet once a month on the third Monday of each month. All members, particularly those in the Drogheda region are invited to attend, and are encouraged to bring friends with them. If members in other regions are interested in establishing their own Prayer Group, please contact the Council.

Favours Received

If you or anyone you know have received favours through the intercession of St Genesius, please let us know. Not only would we like to keep abreast of what is happening, but we would also like to publish some testimonies in the Newsletter from time to time.

Prayer cards and Blessed Oil

Prayer cards and Blessed Oil are available from the Council, if you would like some please contact us; an offering to help cover costs would be appreciated.

Fraternitas is published by the Fraternity of St Genesius. Please address all queries and correspondence to: The Fraternity of St Genesius, St Mary's Presbytery, Dublin Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth, Ireland. Tele: 086 2662565. Fax. 041 9845144. Website: www.stgenesius.com