

**Both Jordanstown and Rathmolyon Churches will have a Shrine to Our Lady of Perpetual Help for the four weeks of the Mission. Your petitions can be returned to either Church.**

# The History of the Icon



The earliest written account of the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (icon) dates back to a plaque placed in a Roman church in 1499. That original icon was available for public adoration until 1798, when French troops occupied Rome during the French Revolution. The Augustinian Friars rescued the icon.

That original wooden icon measures 17" x 21" inches and is carved on hard nut wood, with a gold leaf background. The image depicts the Blessed Virgin Mary looking towards the faithful while pointing at her son Jesus Christ. The angels Saint Michael and Saint Gabriel are to her left and right.

In 1865, the then Holy Father, Pope Pius IX, decreed that the icon be restored and be presented to the Redemptorists Fathers for public veneration in their newly-built Church of Sant' Alfonso in Rome. It was presented on the understanding that the Redemptorists would promote worldwide devotion to Our Lady.

The Redemptorists began this process by immediately sending one of the very first replicas of the icon created to their House at Mount St Alphonsus in Limerick. It was from here that devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help began to spread to the new Redemptorist communities around the world. We continue to show our devotion today by reciting one of the many prayers to Her, especially when we are either in need of help and guidance or want encouragement to give help to others.

The original icon still remains under the care of the Redemptorists at their Church in Rome and was further restored in 1940 and again in 1990.