



Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, Inc.
National Board
Established 1894

Office of the National President
Marilyn Madigan

May 10, 2023

Dear Sisters,

This week May 6-12, we celebrate both Nurses and Teachers' Weeks. I would like to personally thank our members that serve in those professions. This weekend we celebrate Mother's Day. "God's most precious work of art is the warmth and love of a Mother's heart. from Callahanwriter.com. Happy Mother's Day and Remember our Mothers who have been called home to God. This past April, I was honored to speak at an event in Belfast: "It is Different for Mothers and irreparable loss." This event featured an exhibit of 16 women who lost a child during the Troubles. In my address, I remembered my experiences as a nurse and here is some of my address: "Although I have never had the privilege of being a mother, in my professional career as a nurse I was honored to care for seriously ill children in a Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. I was a very young nurse and hoped that I was providing the care that a mother would provide for her child. I experienced firsthand the love of a mother for her child and at times how helpless she was in not being able to make it better for her child. It is very difficult to deal with children suffering from illness and then watching them lose their lives. A mother never gets over the loss of a child no matter the age or circumstances

Losing a child due to a conflict situation is unbearable and no mother should ever have experienced this loss. I believe that when a mother loses a child a part of her also dies and she also is a victim of the violent conflict-related circumstances. What a mother experienced is unique and we all need to help in whatever way we can. Her loss will last for her entire lifetime. Along with their children mothers are also victims of this tragic period. They are deserving of our care and concern. They deserve the truth of what happened to their loved ones. As in the press release "These women are contributors to our peace. They tell our post-conflict society why we must never return to the days of conflict. Their experience tells us why human rights, the rights of women, the rights of children, the right to live free from conflict and in dignity are all so vitally important. They tell us dealing with the past is an act of love and care."

When thinking of these mothers, I remembered the poem by Padraic Pearse The Mother and would like to quote a section: in Honor of the Mothers who lost their children during this period.

The Mother

They shall be spoken of among their people,
The generations shall remember them,
And call them blessed;
But I will speak their names to my own heart
In the long nights;
The little names that were familiar once
Round my dead hearth.
Lord, thou art hard on mothers:
We suffer in their coming and their going;
And tho' I grudge them not, I weary, weary
Of the long sorrow — And yet I have my joy
Because I had the honor of being their mother and loved them and still love them”