

**Address by Sr. Margaret Mary Hanafin, Provincial, Bon Secours Sisters at the  
Tierney Memorial Ceremony in Churchtown on 10 October 2009**

I was recently reading a book by a well known author - Joan Chittester. The title of the book was "**The Way We Were**" It's a story of renewal for our times --- where she calls these times, the in between times, the difficult times.

She says: "To navigate real change in these times, we must draw hope and inspiration from the remarkable stories and achievements of the lives of the great women and men gone before us". Surely this is what we are doing here to day.

While it is a great honour, it also gives me great pleasure to represent the Bon Secours Congregation in Churchtown to celebrate the life and the gifts of the Tierney family and in particular Catherine, Mother St Urban, who entered the Bon Secours in 1879.

In reflecting on today, I wondered what would Catherine Tierney say to us. It seems to me that she would say that we are the people of our time who must continue to be the face of Christ to the world.

**Faith**

Catherine was a woman strong in faith - that faith was nurtured and nourished by her community in Churchtown, and in fact her annals tell us that she helped in the sacristy washing the altar linen and the Parish Priest asked her to visit some house bound sick people. At an early age she developed a great love of the sick and the dying, and was drawn to enter Bon Secours because of its mission to the sick and the dying.

**Vision**

She was far seeing in vision. Throughout her life she kept focused on her vision, and the needs of the day - to help the sick and the dying., and among her many achievements, she was the first to organise the building of a hospital in Baltimore to care for the sick and the poor.

**Courage**

She was courageous in action. She was a courageous woman willing to face any situation, no matter how difficult, and to take care of any case no matter what the danger. She focused on the needs of the day and did it.

We are called to day to be true bearers of the light in our history, and so the question for us here to day is: How can we to day continue like Catherine to leave our footprints in the sands of our time?

I am grateful and again congratulate all who are responsible for this wonderful ceremony of remembering, and all who researched and organised this great event in the life of Churchtown.