

Presentation of Relic and Statue of St Alphonsa

St Alphonsa is the first female Indian to be canonised by the Church. She was raised to the altars by Pope Benedict XVI at a ceremony in the Vatican on 12th October 2008 having been beatified by Pope John Paul II on 8th February 1986. In her earthly life St Alphonsa belonged to the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, an Eastern Rite Church in full communion with the Bishop of Rome. Having become the first canonized saint of that particular Church, St Alphonsa of the Immaculate Conception – as she is known- can now be venerated by the faithful throughout the universal Church.

St Alphonsa was born on 19th August 1910 and entered into new life on 28th July 1946. She was a member of the Franciscan Clarist Congregation. Her tomb is located at Bharananganam, Kerla in the Diocese of Palai in India which has become an important place of pilgrimage.

On 1st November 2009 members of the local Malayalam (Indian) community gathered in the Church of St Patrick for the presentation of a relic and statue of St Alphonsa to the Church. They were joined by the Auxiliary Bishop of Armagh the Most Reverend Gerard Clifford and Fr Brian White along with clergy from the Syro-Malabar Church. They participated in Holy Mass and the relic and statue have now been displayed in one of the side entrances to St Patrick's Church. The parish of Drumcree is greatly honoured by the presence of the saint's relic.

[Click here](#) to view photographs from the presentation at St Patrick's Church. Some further links relating to St Alphonsa are provided below:

Links

[Biography of St Alphonsa from the Holy See website](#)

[Homily of Pope Benedict XVI on the occasion of the canonization](#)

[Official web page of pilgrimage site](#)