

The Sacred Garden

Mercy International Association



An introduction to the plants

BLACKWOOD
ASSOCIATES
ARCHITECTS

20 STEPHEN ST. LOWER
DUBLIN 2 IRELAND
phone: (01) 478 4590
fax: (01) 478 4561
e-mail: studio@blackwood.ie



The garden is a living place, it changes and grows through the seasons and years, illuminated as the earth rotates, as we pass around the sun. It is unique on any given day, at any time during that day, unique to the eyes of each visitor, as they move through the garden.

Many parts of this garden lie in shade for much of the year, the lower courtyard is rarely blessed by sunlight. We therefore selected plants that thrive in such conditions. The design of these spaces has been inspired by the natural environments of woodland glades and rocky ravines.



Ferns

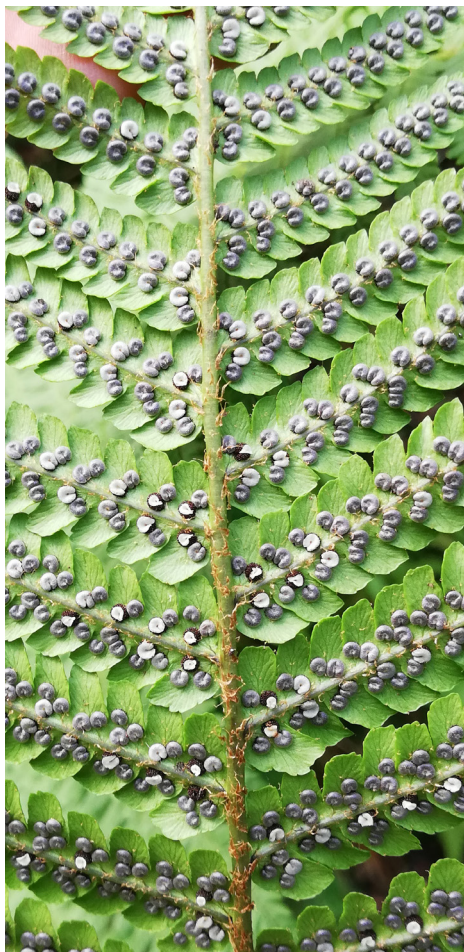
Ferns are plants of shade, of the understorey. They often take root in crevices in rocks, even in buildings. They are resilient plants that provide grace and beauty in even the most inhospitable of places. Ferns offer no showy flowers but display a richness of forms, scales, and contrasting shades of greens, their magic revealed in the unfurling of new fronds.

The fern reveals its splendours only to those who take time and patience to seek them out. As such, ferns are symbolic of sincerity, grace and humility, tolerance and forgiveness, strength in adversity. They can be found in every part of the Sacred Garden.

Ferns as symbols of Mercy

At the core of the Mercy International Association Vision is Mercy Global Presence. One understanding of this concept is that wherever one Mercy person is present, the whole of Mercy is there and the whole of Mercy is only complete if every Mercy person is present to it. A symbol of this reality is the fern.

Each individual frond of the fern holds the entirety of the fern's structure, while the fern as a whole would be incomplete without each individual frond.



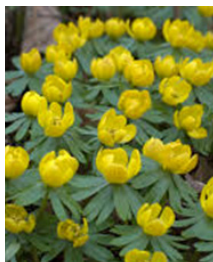
Colour in the Garden

In the fern garden, we have used the juxtaposition of textures and shades of green as the defining character of the beds. Foliage plants such as the Aralia Sun King provide contrasting leaf colour and texture.

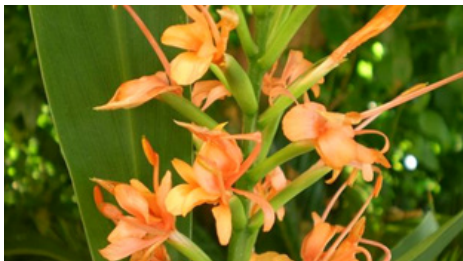


Within this tapestry of green we have placed flowering plants and shrubs that will emerge with grace and interest throughout the year. With the serenity of the garden in mind, the colour palette is principally one of whites and creams and greens, but with points of bright colour selected to appear as highlights through the seasons.

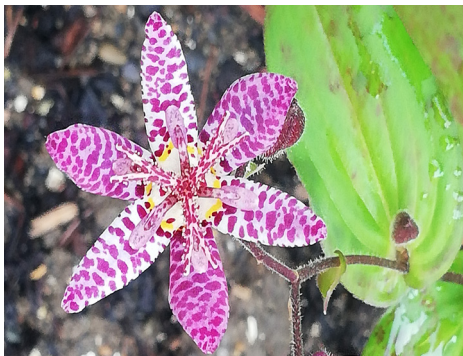
Yellows where they are present are mostly pale lemons and creams. Bright yellow flowers shine out from time to time; Winter Aconites, when all is dark in January, Hylomecon Japonicum, later in the spring, and the Catherine MacAuley roses, the highlight of summer and autumn.



Bright oranges will appear in late summer and autumn in the flowers of the hedychiums and crocosmias, with softer peachy shades showing earlier in the year in the foxgloves and hellebores of the flowering borders.



Purple is a colour of remembrance and purple flowers, including irises and violas, are integrated into the beds and pots. The exotic, but delicate, toad lilies appear in late summer and early autumn.



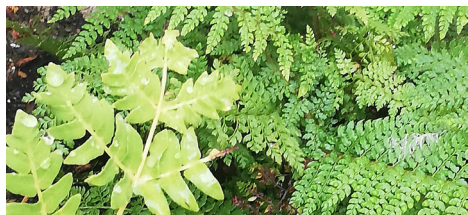
Where **white** flowers appear many of these are starry in form: bright points of light amongst the green foliage.



Plants have been selected not only for their form, but also as representatives of the worldwide Mercy Family. The ferns throughout the garden recall the symbol of New Zealand and Maori culture, while the papyrus grass, at the lower pool of the water feature, is a native of Africa.

Plants of Ireland

Trees of Ireland are represented by five Silver Birch, *Beith gheal*, symbols of hope and new beginnings. Native Irish ferns include the Royal Fern, *Raithneach riúil*, a graceful fern, once common in the West of Ireland, the Hart's Tongue Fern, *Creamhna na muice fia*, the Soft Shield Fern, *I bheag bhog*, and the Lady Fern, *Raithneach mhuire*.

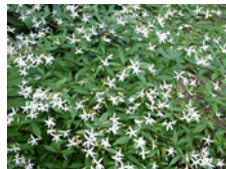


Irish plants provide ground cover, forming the tapestry through which the more exotic species emerge. Sweet Woodruff, *Lus moileas*, Creeping Jenny", *Lus an dá phingin*, the Wild Strawberry, *Sú talún fiáin*, and the Wood Anemone, *Lus na gaoithe*.



Plants of North America

There are many plants from the North American continent in the garden. Garrya Elliptica, will grow to be a large shrub, with pale tassels in late autumn and winter. In the bed beside it grows the Tiarella.



Trautvetteria Carolensis, Gillenia, Darmera Peltata and the Echinacea Green Jewel, grace the flowering beds, while the Juniperus Horizontalis will grow to form a carpet of matt blue grey, in the bed in the wall between the upper and lower garden. North American Ferns are represented by the lovely Dixie Wood Fern.

Sister Claire Augustine Moore Tiles

Roscoeas, native to Himalayas and China, and Hedychiums from South East Asia and Madagascar, are plants of the ginger family, and have been selected to reflect the exoticism of the plants represented in Sister Claire Augustine Moore's work. The lovely Passion Flower, native of South America, climbs the wall across the garden from its image on the tiles.



Carmel Ennis

Garden Design, Maintenance & Training
carmelennis@gmail.com
087 4596769

Alice Bentley

Blackwood Associates Architects
abentley@blackwood.ie
01 478 4590