



DUCHESNE PRAYER ROOM



ST. CHARLES

# Welcome to the Duchesne Prayer Room, a space for prayer and meditation at Mount Anville House, created by Mount Anville Sacred Heart Education Trust.

The Duchesne Prayer Room honours the life and legacy of St Rose Philippine Duchesne (1769-1852) and celebrates the bicentenary of her journey across the Atlantic to America in 1818.

Philippine brought the Society of the Sacred Heart beyond the borders of France and laid the foundations for the Network of Sacred Heart Schools that continues to thrive in the USA today. Her unyielding loyalty to Madeleine Sophie Barat, founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart, ensured that the Society remained united under a single governance that has never been broken to this day.

Born into a privileged life in Ancien Régime France, Philippine decided she would dedicate her life to God at an early age. After surviving the tumultuous years of the French Revolution, she met Madeleine Sophie Barat in 1804 and joined the Society of the Sacred Heart the following year. Philippine's ambition to undertake missionary work was fully realised when she finally travelled to Sugar Creek, Kansas to work with the Potawatomi, a displaced Native American people, in 1841. Her time with the Potawatomi was bittersweet. After just one year, illness and infirmity forced her to return to the Convent of the Sacred Heart at St Charles, Missouri and she died there ten years later. She was canonised by Pope John Paul II on 3 July 1988.

The narrative in the Duchesne Prayer Room is focused on three universal themes that are evident in Philippine's story: **friendship**, **courage**, and **compassion**. Throughout her

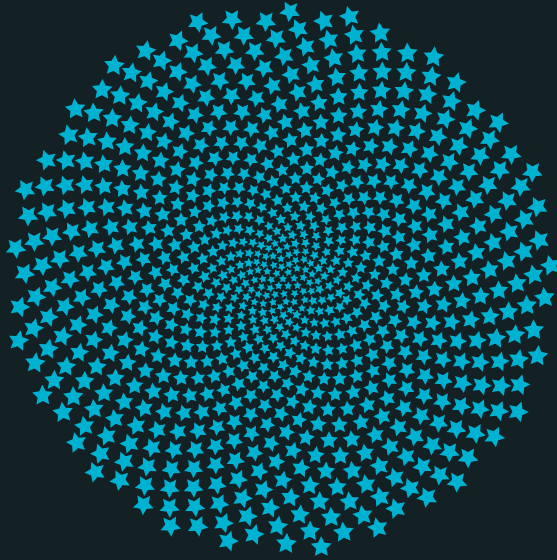
long life, Philippine cultivated friendships with those around her, displayed courage in situations where many would falter, and showed compassion to the vulnerable in society.

The Duchesne Prayer Room provides the opportunity to learn more about Philippine through a variety of experiences including audio accounts that explore significant events in her life and that of the Society. A display of objects associated with Philippine, as well as encouraging words attributed to her, reinforce her presence in the room.

The Duchesne Prayer Room offers a modern contemplative space where the Mount Anville community can imitate Philippine's example through prayer and reflection. In the frantic pace of today's world, prayer and meditation can promote resilience, improve concentration, and foster inner peace.

INFINITE, the central artwork within the room, has been created by artist Peter Monaghan and it presents a powerful means of meditation in modern times. The design is inspired by the Fibonacci numbers, a mathematical sequence that is found throughout the natural world and represents the interconnectedness between all living things.

As a place where visitors are encouraged to embrace silence and cross the frontier to the limitless land of prayer and contemplation, the Duchesne Prayer Room is a fitting tribute to St Rose Philippine Duchesne, the 'Woman Who Prays Always'.



*Do not look back to the past,  
nor forward to the future.  
Claim only the present,  
for it holds God's will.*

St Rose Philippine Duchesne