

## **Catherine Moran** M.A. with Distinction Arts-Health

Artist Cath Moran has over 30 years experience of working in the field of Arts for Health and Well-being. Her art-work can be seen in sites across the North West of England including: hospitals, prisons, schools, community centres, faith centres and charities. Cath's work is eclectic in style and is often collaborative. Her work and the mediums in which she works, are wide ranging and almost entirely dependent upon the wants and needs of the people and communities she serves.



I met Father Leo Heakin in early July and was immediately impressed and inspired by his vision, values and hopes for a painting of *The Assumption of Mary* which would celebrate the founding principles of St. Mary's. By the end of our conversation, I knew that I would be committing to this work and I knew more or less what it was going to look like and what I was going to try to represent. Blimey!

This is what we agreed:

- It needed to be big!
- Mary could rise above somewhere in the Ribble Valley (what a great idea!)
- We'd keep the painting traditional but with a modern twist (OK?)
- The shape of the painting would mirror the rather beautiful brick arches in the church

This is what I found out through research:

- Mary was thought by some people to be about 59 years old at the time of The Assumption
- There are hundreds of paintings of The Assumption, all of them different
- Mary often appears to be stood on a bed of cherubs (hmm)

This is what I found when I started painting:

- I am so happy to be working for such a staggeringly warm and supportive set of people
- Mary probably didn't care if her clothes matched
- I'm not going to paint an *anatomically* accurate Pendle Hill – Just enough for us to guess that's what it is!
- It's hard to do her justice!

It's October on Saturday and I think I'll probably have it finished by Christmas. I keep forgetting to take photos and it changes so much every time. I've got to a point where I'm feeling a bit happier with my progress, but it's not been plain sailing! I spotted a pencil written note left for me today which made me grin from ear to ear, it said: 'We all absolutely love it'. Now I'm thinking: "*Don't mess this up! and thank you all so much for this amazing opportunity*".



Some of my early drawings of Mary - I think it's probably important that she's looking upwards! 😊