

Vatican II Changes

Canon Cornelious P Reidy became the next Parish Priest for St Patricks and under his guidance the Church building underwent significant changes to reflect the new liturgy recommended by the Second Vatican Council in 1962. The wooden altar that had been placed in front of the High Altar so that the priest could say Mass in English facing the people was replaced by a more permanent feature. This change in the language of the Mass caused much discussion across the country. New Mass books needs to be purchased so that the parishioners could become familiar with the new liturgy and clergy were encouraged to embrace these new changes. However, many people liked the rhythm and security of the Latin words and felt that the Church had lost some of its mystery and grandeur. However, Mass fully or partially in Latin can still be celebrated at times.

Canon Reidy grasped the time of change with both hands and set to with a will. The central altar rails were removed but some sections were skilfully incorporated into the front-piece of the new free-standing altar. This was constructed on the floor of the sanctuary in front of the existing high altar, which itself was slightly reduced in depth to accommodate the new sedilia (stone chair on which an officiating priest could sit).

The two side altar tables which had served the Church well for so many years were removed as was the pulpit. Again, the architect showed great taste in using the mosaic panels of the old pulpit in the construction of the new Blessed Sacrament Altar thus preserving part of the original Church furniture.

The altar in Our Lady's Chapel was donated by the Dimascio family and as well as having an extremely heavy base has two beautiful white statues of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Bernadette. Beneath this altar is the old boiler room, and the story goes that one day there were creaking sounds and it was feared that the altar might crash through into the boiler room below. To this day acrow-props support the floor of Our Lady's Chapel from the boiler room and it would be very inadvisable to disturb them.

Many have asked what happened to the large statue of St Patrick. This was replaced by a much smaller version and the whereabouts of the large statue is just a mystery.

During this period of change, many items 'disappeared'. However, we do know what happened to the beautiful large monstrance once held aloft by various early Parish Priests. This is now kept in its large case in the safe of the Metropolitan Cathedral of St David in Charles St Cardiff (the case has St Patrick's name on it !)

Another priority for Canon Reidy was the Consecration of the Church. This took place on March 17th 1972 and was as Canon Reidy said " A landmark in the history of the parish , when the Church is dedicated in perpetuity to Almighty God."

The Consecration Ceremony was performed by Archbishop Dr John A Murphy and was attended by an impressive gathering of Archdiocesan Clergy, and many distinguished guests. A new era in the history of St Patrick's had begun.



In 1974, Canon Reidy passed the baton on to Canon David O'Flynn who also set about making his mark on the Church and Parish. At some point the altar behind the sedilia was re-designed for the position of the new domed golden tabernacle.

In 1979 a link with the past finally disappeared when the old Church which had been part of the old school was demolished. This was carried out by Newport Demolition and Construction Co Ltd in 1979 at a cost of £2,337. However, the painted panels which adorned the original High Altar ceiling were taken down, restored, remounted in a panel and now hang in the new school hall, where they can be admired once more.