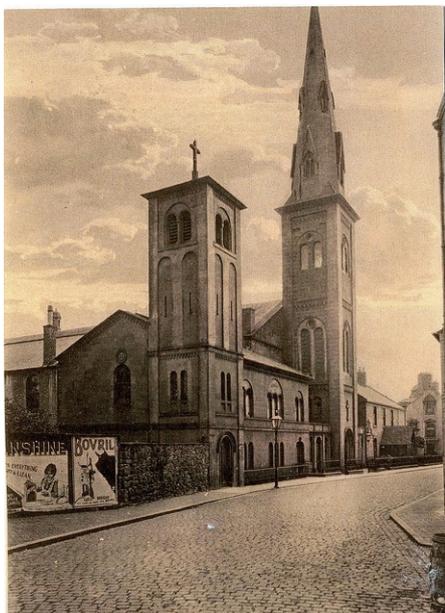


The History of St Andrew's Church

The Cathedral



The St Andrew's Mission in Dumfries was founded in 1810, the foundation stone for the first St Andrew's Church was laid in 1811, and St Andrew's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Dumfries, officially opened in 1813. It was the seat of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Galloway since the restoration of the hierarchy in 1878. In 1947 the Archdiocese of Glasgow was reorganised and the suffragan Dioceses of Motherwell and Paisley were created. At the same time, some of the more southerly parishes of the original Glasgow Archdiocese were ceded to the Diocese of Galloway. As a result of this reorganisation the Catholic population of Galloway greatly increased in number and the centre of population shifted from Dumfries to Ayrshire. The Bishop of Galloway, in an attempt to be nearer to the greatest number of his people, moved his place of residence to Ayr in the 1950's, although he retained his Cathedral Church in Dumfries.

Tragically, in May 1961, St. Andrew's Cathedral was ravaged by fire, and shortly afterwards the damaged building was demolished: all but the Spire and the St. Ann's Tower were removed. The decision was made to build a new Church over the old Cathedral crypt.



The new church



By this time, since the Diocese had been enlarged and the vast majority of the Catholic population was in Ayrshire the Bishop petitioned Rome to move his Cathedral to Ayr - a petition that was granted so the Good Shepherd Church in Ayr became the Cathedral of Galloway and the new church of St Andrew became one of the two parish churches in Dumfries.

The new St Andrew's Church was built on the site of the old Cathedral and opened in 1964. The new Church was built to a modern design using steel and concrete. Externally, the use of Locharbriggs red sandstone gives the outside a pleasing warm appearance. The gardens to the front of the Church have been created within the walls of the Nave of the old Cathedral. The internal layout to this square building is not the expected traditional arrangement of parallel pews with the congregation facing the altar at the front. Instead the whole plan has been laid out on the diagonal.

The church was reordered in 1999. The Sanctuary was simplified and a Blessed Sacrament chapel was installed near the entrance to the Church for private prayer and devotion.

The hangings behind the altar

The wrought iron of the screen and altar furnishings depict crosses of St Andrew and the sweep of the hills of Galloway. Hangings were installed behind the Altar to depict the History of Salvation: the left panel with the Trinity and the birth of Christ: the centre panel the crucifixion and the gift of the Eucharist: the right panel the resurrection, the empty tomb, the coming of the Spirit and the growth of the early Church in the fish symbol (ichthus). The lines hinted at the hills of Galloway (and Galilee); they became the thorns of the Passion and then the new shoots of the early Church faith.

In 2015, to celebrate the Year of Mercy, the hangings, by now in a poor state, were replaced by hangings in liturgical colours depicting the logo of the Year of Mercy and in November 2016 new hangings were installed in the liturgical colours and incorporating words of scripture.

200 years of faith



In 2013 the parish celebrated the 200th anniversary of St. Andrew's Church - the first Catholic Church built in Dumfries after the Reformation. Beginning and ending with Mass to celebrate the anniversary year, there were a number of Events and Projects throughout the year to mark this marvellous occasion and the parishioners of today's St Andrew's embraced these celebrations wholeheartedly! This was a truly wonderful occasion for our parish community - there are not many parish families in Scotland who have had the chance to celebrate 200 years.

Events included: A concert by the Dumfries Male Voice choir; a Pilgrimage to Iona; the musical, "Faith is the Key"; an entry in the Good Neighbours parade; a summer barbeque; a Fiddle Concert; and some parishioners walked the St Cuthbert's Way joined by many more on the walk to the Holy Isle.

There was also a competition to design the logo for the year and a set of Christmas Cards. Photos of these and more events can be found on the photos page.

Information on the organ installed in the Cathedral can be found at:
<http://www.npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=D05678%20target>

For the modern organ, go to: <http://www.npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=E01294>

If you have any photographs of the church which you think might be interesting, please contact the webmaster. (webmaster@standrewsdumfries.org.uk)