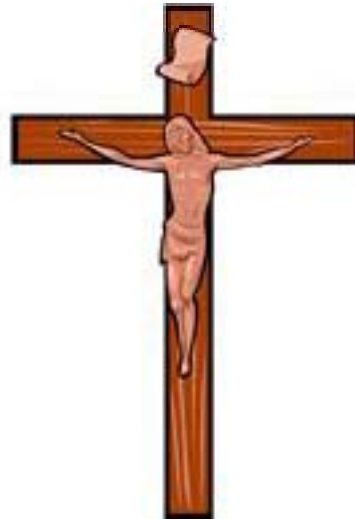


**225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of  
Sedgley's Catholic  
Mission**



From the beginning of the Sedgley Mission in 1786 until the present day there have been 16 Rectors or Parish Priests.

These have been helped over the years by many assistant priests.

OF YOUR CHARITY  
PRAY FOR OUR PRIESTS

In a vault under this Church are buried :

FATHER JOHN PLACIDUS PERRY  
Founder of this mission in 1786. Died 1819

FATHER JOSEPH BOWDEN S.T.D.  
President of Sedgley Park College. Died 1844

FATHER THOMAS TYSAN  
Builder of this Church in 1823. Died 1867

Other Priests who had  
the Cure of Souls here

FATHER CHARLES MALFAIT	Died 1895
FATHER PHILIP HENDREN	1910
FATHER JOHN KELLY	1914
VERY REV. PROVOST HYMERS	1938
FATHER JOHN ROWAN	1944
FATHER JAMES ELLIS	1945
FATHER ARTHUR SAMMONS	1959
FATHER JOHN HANRAHAN	1960
FATHER MICHAEL GAFFNEY	1986
FATHER GEORGE TARRANT	2004

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

The first chapel which opened in 1789 was dedicated to St. George.

The current church was first used for Mass in 1823 and called All Saints. When the church was consecrated in 1891 a saint's name had to be added. So the church was dedicated to St. Chad and All Saints.

## **Reverend John Placidus Perry 1786 – 1819**

The first rector or parish priest was  
Reverend John Placidus Perry was born  
in 1741 in Bilston.



When he became a priest there was no church or chapel in Sedgley so he said Mass in people's houses. One of these was the home of Ignatius Smith which adjoined the Red Lion in Sedgley

Eventually he bought a piece of land in "a secluded spot" at Sandwellfields (now known as Sandyfields).

At Sandwellfields he built a small chapel which was 31 feet long, 21 feet wide and 11½ feet high.

The chapel was dedicated to St George and opened on St George's Day 1789.



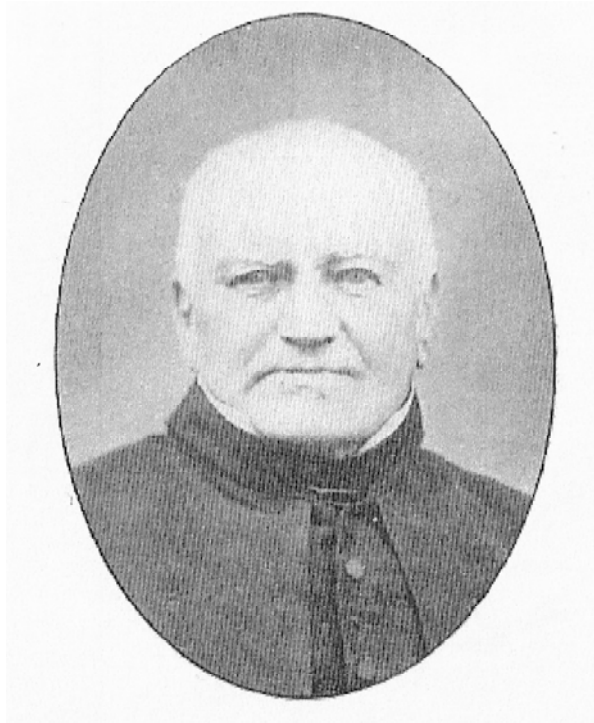
This small chapel was the nearest place of worship for Catholics from Dudley, Stourbridge, West Bromwich, Wednesbury, Tipton and Brierley Hill – about 500 Catholics in all.



Reverend Perry suffered a stroke and died in May 1819. He was originally buried in St George's Chapel but later his remains were moved to the new church and buried in the vault below the sanctuary.

## Reverend Thomas Tysan 1812 -1867

Fr. Tysan was originally an assistant priest helping Fr. Perry. He took charge of the parish in 1819.



He then began the work to build a larger church in a more public place, on the corner of the main road and what is now called Catholic Lane.

In 1821, Fr Tysan bought an acre of land using money raised by subscription , to build a chapel 73 feet long and 27 feet wide.

When Fr. Tysan couldn't pay all the money for the building of the church he was arrested.

A friend helped him and finally the bishop paid the debt.

Fr. Perry's chapel was called St. George, but the new chapel was dedicated to All Saints.

Mass was said for the first time in the new chapel on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1823.

Fr Tysan had the church built with a tower in the hope that he could have bells installed. But at this time it was against the law for Catholic Churches to have any bells.



The church before it was extended.

In 1837 Fr Tysan erected a building on end of the church. Here in two rooms a school was started. Fr Tysan taught the boys upstairs, while his niece Miss Catherine Attwood taught the girls downstairs.

Fr Tysan died in February 1867 aged 84 and was buried in the vault underneath the Sanctuary.

## **Reverend John Day 1858 – 1865**

Father John Day helped Father Tysan for just over two years and took full charge of the parish for four further years.

It was Father Day who erected a room in Gornal Wood to serve as a chapel-of-ease for Gornal people.

In 1865 Father Day left Sedgley and went to America.

## **Reverend Philip Hendren 1865 – 1873**

Father Hendren was ordained on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1856. He began his mission in Sedgley in 1865. He lived in the presbytery while Father Tysan lived in a house on High Holborn.





Father Hendren placed the school under government control. This was so the school would receive a grant. Records from that time show that there were two teachers: Miss O'Dywer, the Headteacher and Agnes Rose, a monitor.

In 1871 there were 68 children attending the school. Parents had to pay for their children to attend the school.



**Dudley Market Place 1870**

## **Reverend James Russell 1873- 1874**

Father Russell spent only a brief time in Sedgley from July 1873 until June 1874. Apparently he just carried on with the work of Father Hendren.

He left Sedgley to go to America.

## **Reverend Charles Malfait 1874 – 1894**

When Father Malfait arrived in Sedgley, in June 1874, the presbytery had no bed, crockery or cutlery. One of the first things he had to do was borrow money to furnish the house.



Father Malfait realised that the school building was inadequate and set about building a new school which was in use by 1876.

The new school building cost £900.



A friend of Father Malfait, Mr Vernon, helped to get an organ fitted in the church. Then in 1890 a proper altar was erected, complete with reredos and all debts on the church were paid off, so the church was consecrated on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1891.



Soon after the consecration of the church Father Malfait became ill.

He struggled on, serving the parish for another two years when he retired to his native country of Belgium in March 1894. He died there on 19<sup>th</sup> January 1895.

## **Reverend John Kelly 1894 -1914**

In 1894 Father John Kelly moved to Sedgley. He was very active in fund raising for the school by organising bazaars and sales of work.





During Father Kelly's time the church was redecorated and the paths from the road to the church and either side of the church were paved.

In 1902 he also had a heating system installed in the church.

In 1908 the organ was repaired and the church was decorated a second time in 1910. Later in 1913 Father Kelly undertook repair work on the tower.

In 1895 Father Kelly bought a plot of land next to the church to be used as a cemetery. The first burial took place in April 1895.

Father Kelly became ill and went to London for an operation but did not recover and died in hospital on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1914. He was buried in the churchyard on February 6<sup>th</sup> 1914.



## **Reverend James Ellis 1914 – 1918**

On 11<sup>th</sup> February 1914 Father Ellis took over as parish priest of Sedgley. He had been in charge of Brierley Hill for the previous twelve years.



During 1914 two stained glass windows were installed in the church on either side of the altar.

One of the windows was a memorial to Father Kelly, the other to the memory of Father Malfait.

The windows were made and installed by John Hardman and Company of Birmingham and cost £100 each.



In April 1914 Father Ellis bought a plot of land that lay between the District Council Offices and the cemetery. This was to allow for an extension to the cemetery if required.

In the church itself, Father Ellis erected a confessional attached to the sacristy and a wooden pulpit.

Father Ellis was in charge of Sedgley parish during most of the First World War and succeeded in raising money for the war appeal. He left Sedgley to move to Dudley parish on November 10<sup>th</sup> 1918.

During the Great War thirteen members of the congregation lost their lives.





## **Rev Arthur T. Sammons 1918 – 1922**

Father Arthur Sammons took over the parish of Sedgley in November 1918. He had previously worked in Dudley parish for six years.



During the four years he was in Sedgley improvements were needed to the school and in particular the heating. Father Sammons organised a “sale of work” which raised the large sum of £1,100 which was for planned improvement of the schools.

Father Sammons had a hall erected on land adjacent to the school. This was an old army hut fitted out for concerts with a stage and piano.

As the final number of dead from the war became known, it was decided that a fitting memorial to the thirteen men would be marble altar rails and brass gates.



THESE ALTAR RAILS ARE ERECTED TO THE GLORY  
OF GOD AND IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING  
MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION WHO GAVE THEIR  
LIVES IN THE GREAT WAR :- 1914-1918

C. BRIDGES L. CADDICK T. COOPER J. CLARKE  
J. DAY W. CUEST G. T. HAYES J. JONES  
J. MARTIN A. MASON S. STANLEY  
J. WHORTON C. S. WHORTON

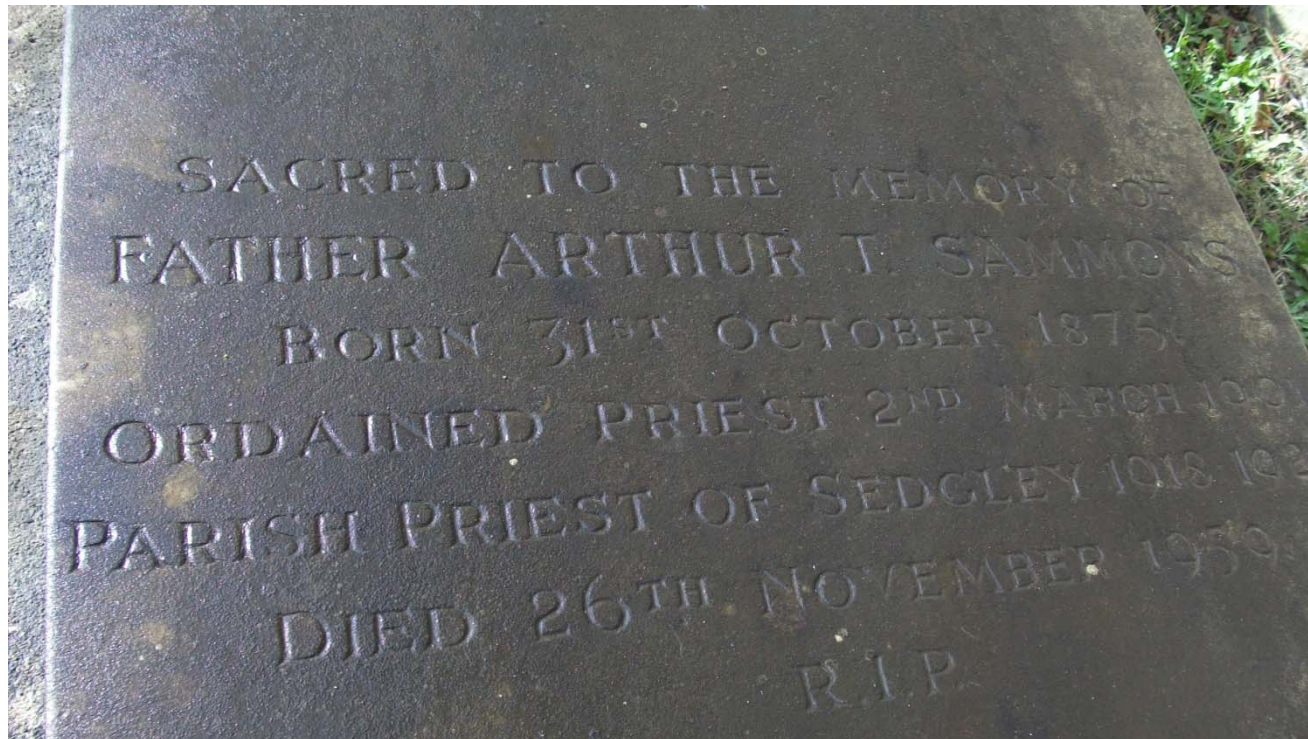
FOR THE REPOSE OF WHOSE SOULS THE HOLY  
SACRIFICE OF THE MASS IS OFFERED IN PERPETUITY.

R. I. P.

They were erected and blessed  
on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September 1920.

Father Sammons left the parish in 1922.

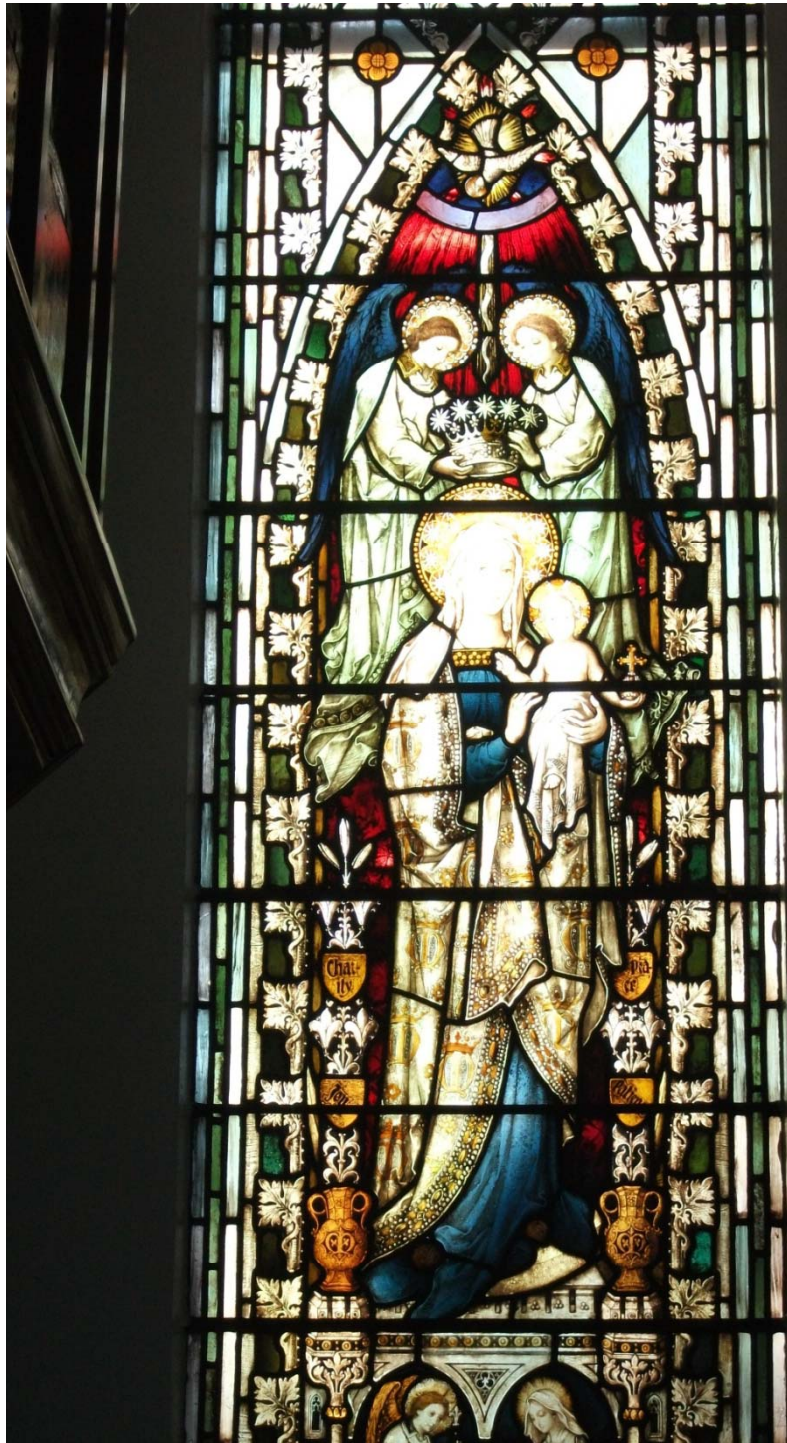
When Fr. Sammons died in 1959 he was buried at the side of St. Chad's Church.



Father Sammons secured donations for the design and installation of two additional stained glass windows.

Mrs Southall of Lower Gornal and Mr and Mrs T. Woodhouse of Leaton Hall paid £140 for each window.

These windows were blessed by Monsignor Glancy on August 24<sup>th</sup> 1923, the day on which the centenary of the opening of the church was celebrated.



## **Canon Hymers 1922 – 1938**

Canon Hymers was appointed as Parish Priest in November 1922.

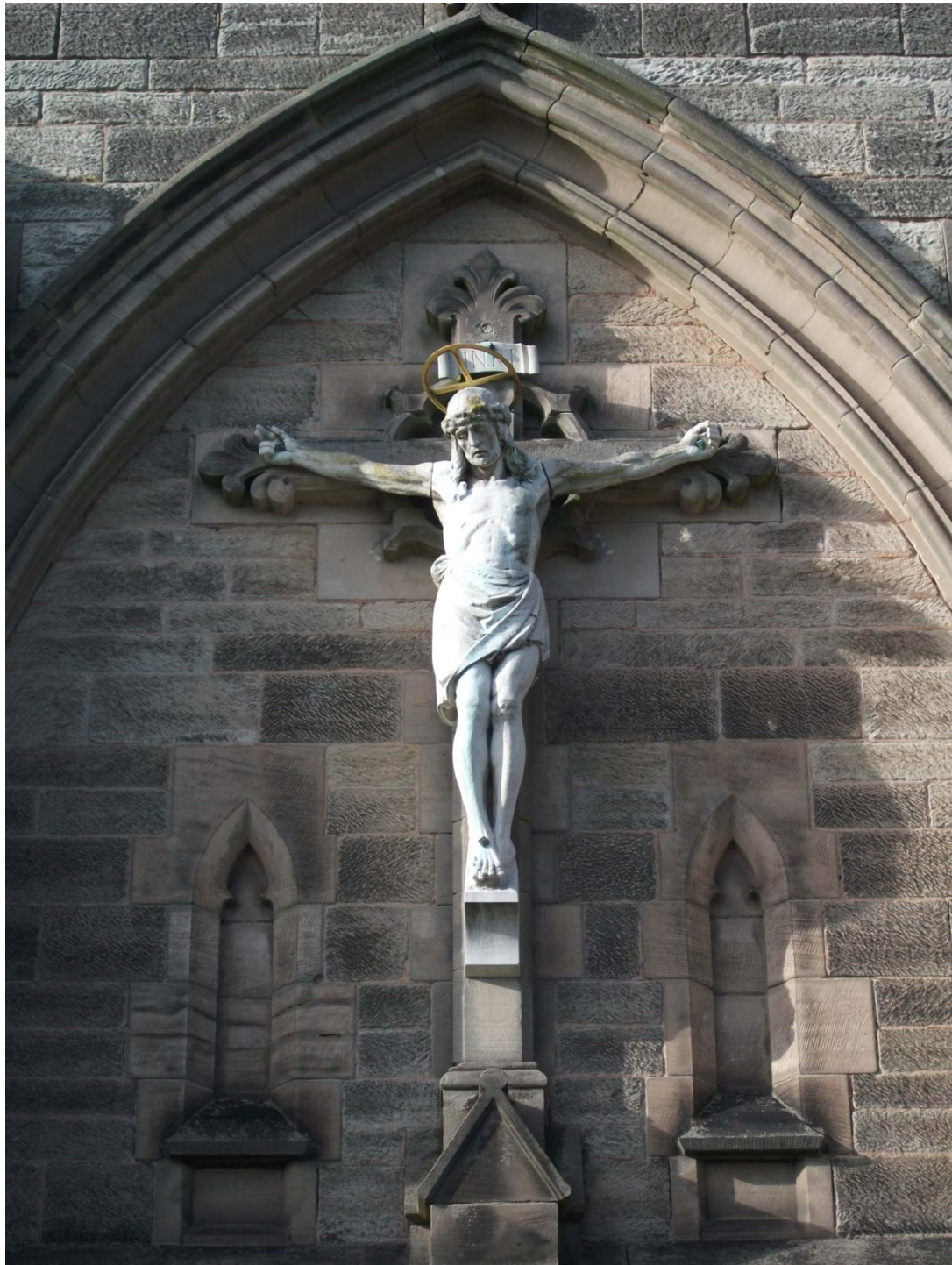
It was Canon Hymers who organised the celebration of the Centenary Celebrations of the Opening of the Church on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1923.



By this time the Parish had grown and it was necessary for the Church to close while extension works were carried out.

The organ gallery was installed, along with the six foot high crucifix over the entrance.

More pews were added to increase the seating capacity by one third. The church was formally re-opened on Sunday 26th October 1924.



Canon Hymer established a chapel-of-ease in Lower Gornal.

The cemetery was also extended early in 1925.

Canon Hymer retired in 1938 and died soon afterwards.

## **Reverend Rowan 1938 – 1944**

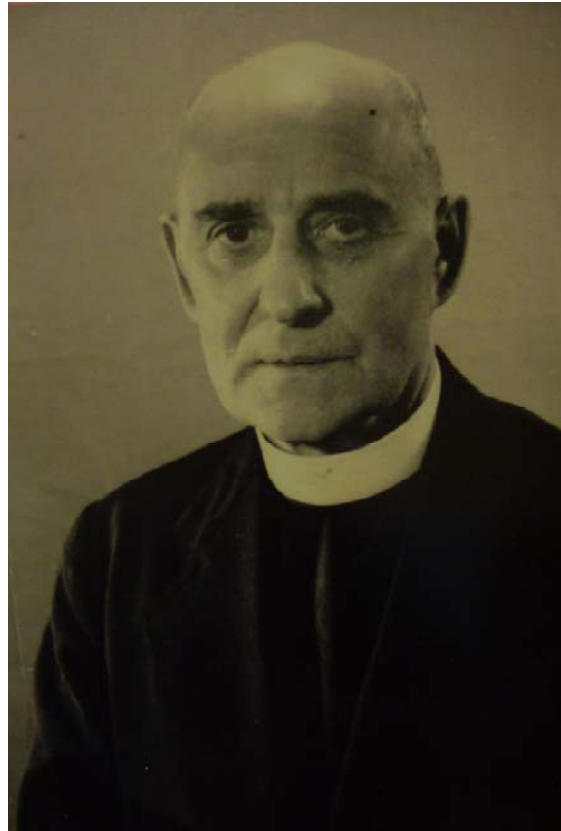
Father Rowan was ordained in 1900 and served many parishes in the West Midlands before being appointed Rector of St. Chad's and All Saints in May 1938.

Father Rowan suffered from ill health so over the years he had three curates Father McGann (1939 – 1940), Father O'Malley (1941 – 1942) and Father Cook (1942 – 1945).

Father Rowan left the Parish in 1944 due to ill health and died the following month.

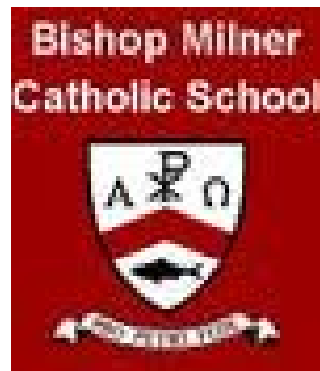
## Reverend Hanrahan 1944 – 1960

Father John Hanrahan was appointed parish priest of St Chad's and All Saints in 1944.



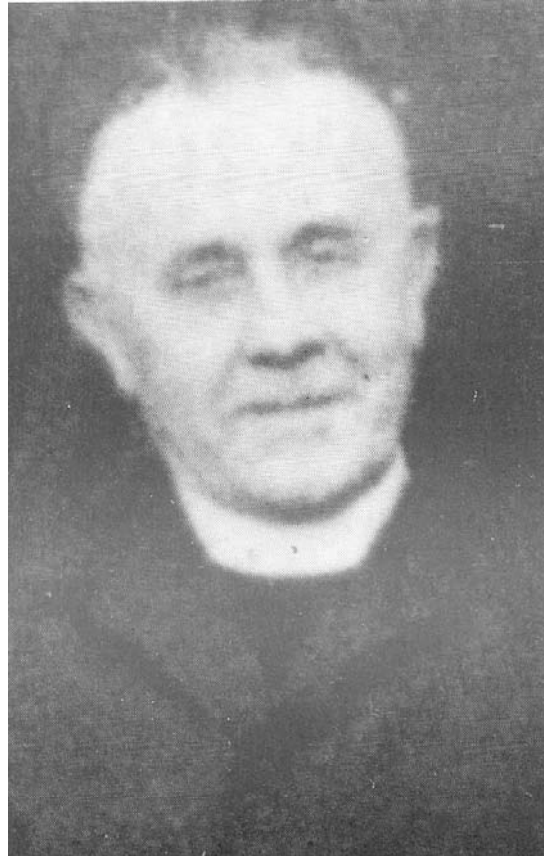
For fifteen years he worked hard to establish the Bishop Milner Secondary School.

After much work, the school was Blessed on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1960 by the Most Reverend Francis Grimshaw, Archbishop of Birmingham, very sadly Father Hanrahan died the same day.



## **Reverend Michael Gaffney 1960 – 1977**

Father Michael Gaffney came to Sedgley in October 1960.

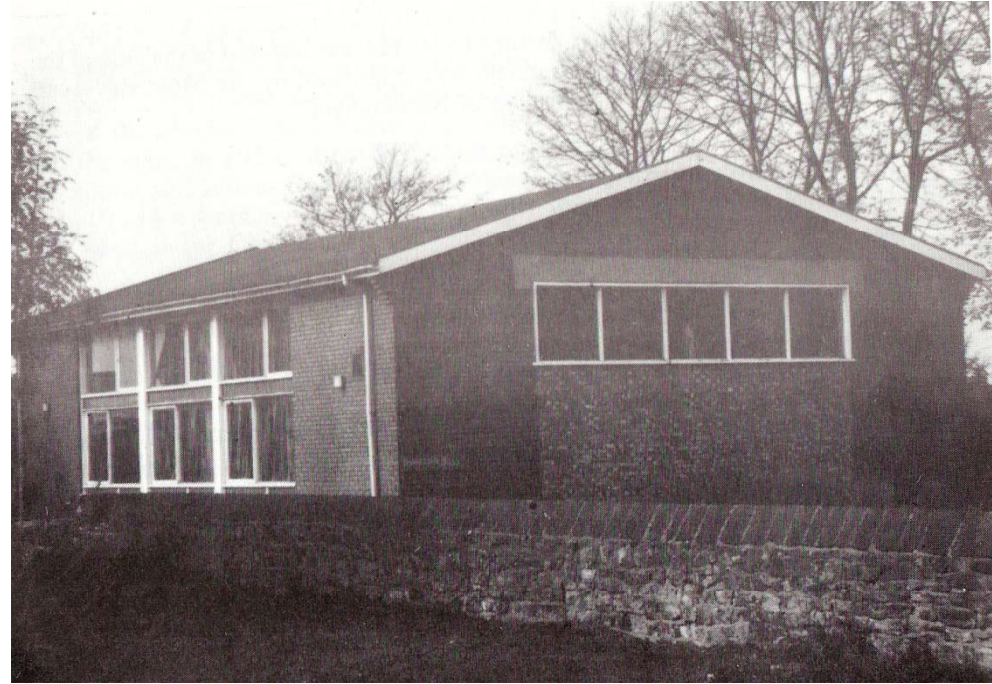




At 16, he had served in the First World War surviving the Battle of the Somme and had made a promise to dedicate his life to God through Priesthood if he survived the War.

He was ordained a priest in May 1929.

During his 17 years at St. Chad's the 'Old Hut' was removed and a permanent St. Chad's Hall.

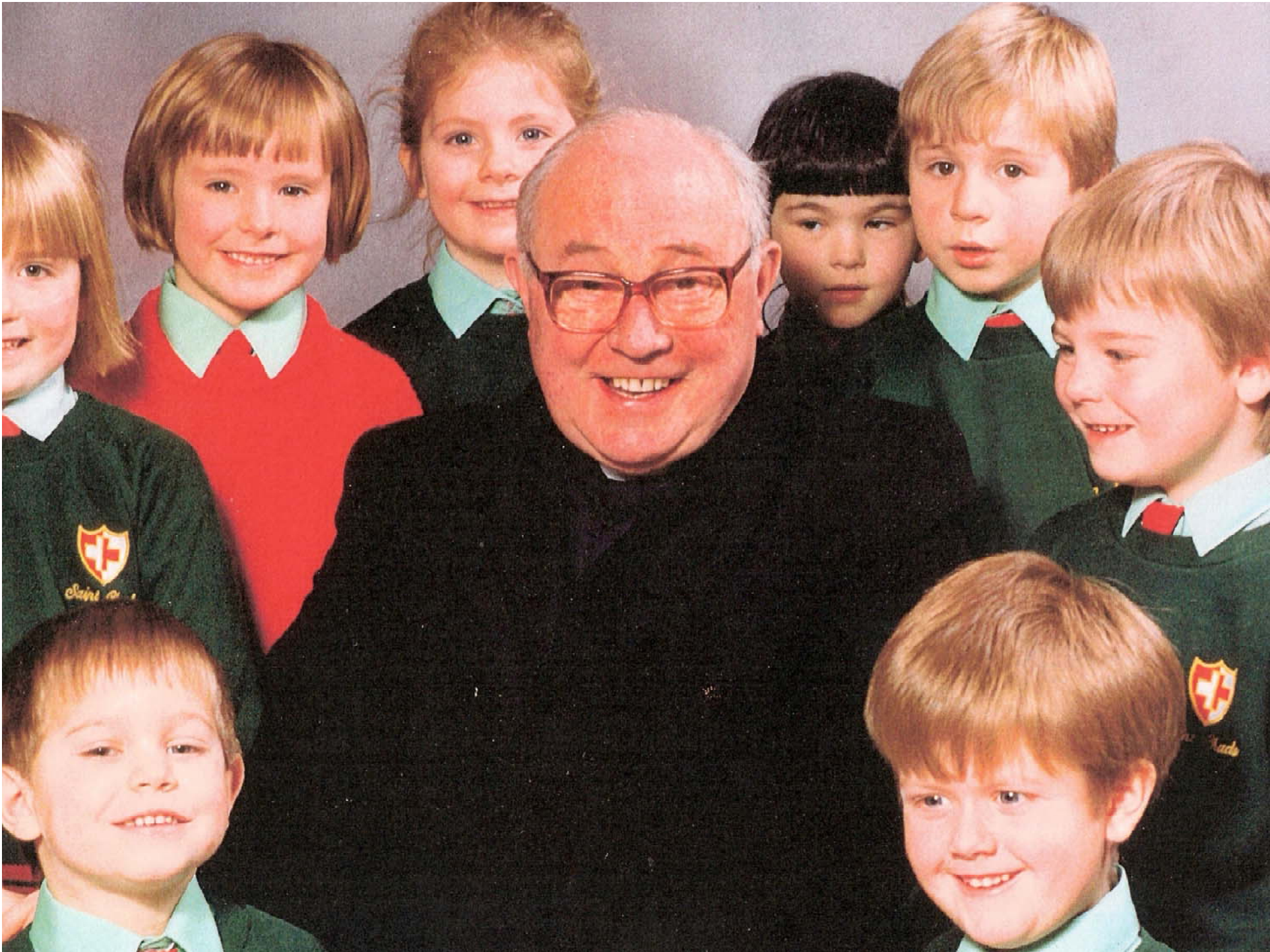


Father Gaffney retired in 1977 to live at Aston Hall near Stone in Staffordshire until he died in July 1986 and was buried in St. Chad's cemetery.

## **Reverend George Tarrant 1977 – 2001**

Father Tarrant was appointed in 1977 and continued caring for the Parishioners of St. Chad's and All Saints.

He was parish priest for 24 years. Father Tarrant loved the children and could often be found in the school.



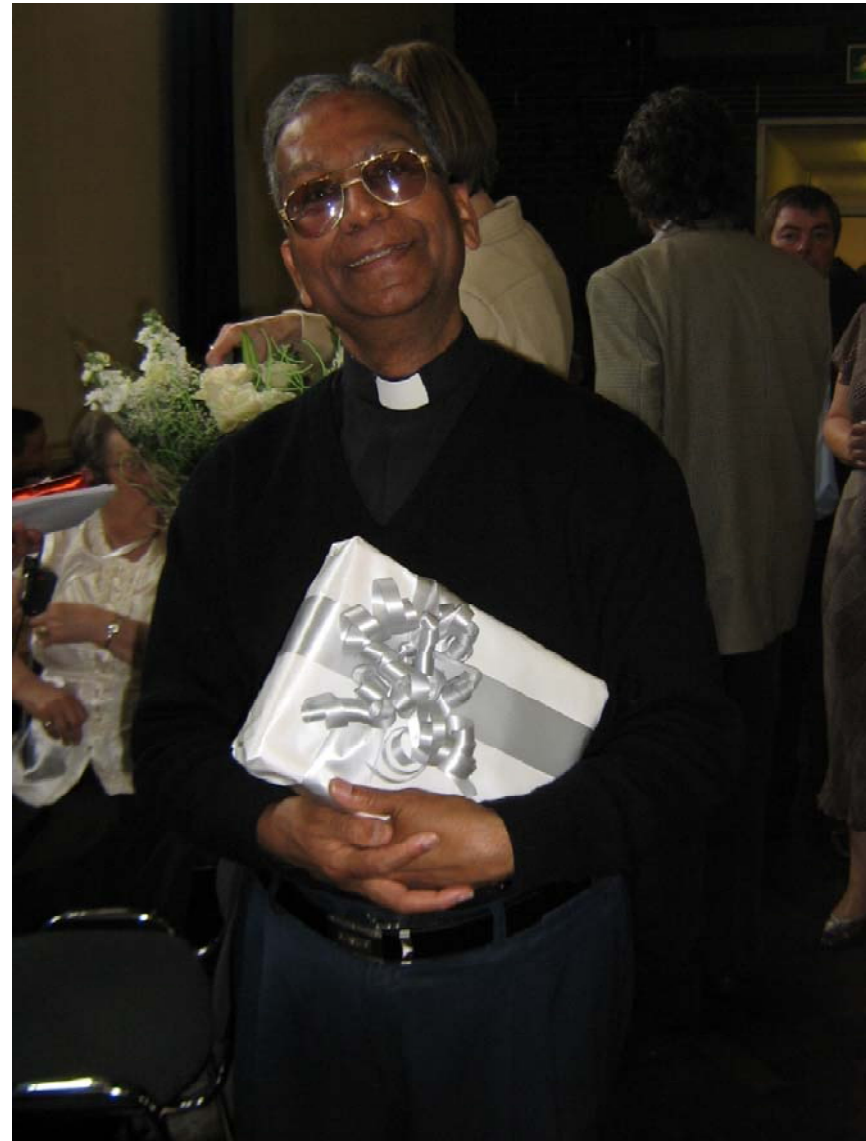
Father Tarrant , whose name was George, held a special Mass on the Feast of St. George when everyone in church would receive a red rose.

Father Tarrant retired in 2001 and died in 2004. He is buried next to St. Chad's Church.

## Reverend Joseph Narikuzhi 2001 – 2011

Father Joseph Narikuzhi was originally From India.

He joined St. Chad's from Birmingham in 2001.



During the ten years he was parish priest of St Chad's and All Saints he continued to serve the people of the parish.

He moved to St George's parish in Worcester in August 2011 when Father Paul Edwards took over as parish priest.

## Reverend Paul Edwards 2011 -

Father Paul Edwards is currently the parish priest of St. Chad's and All Saints.



He took responsibility for the parish in August 2011.

He had previously been in parishes in Willenhall and Coventry.



