

**THE HISTORY OF  
SACRED HEART  
CHURCH**

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**1994 - 2019**

## THE BETHANY ROOM

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Between 2017 and 2018 further work on the Sacred Heart church was completed, including the refurbishment of our community hall, redeveloping its kitchen and the creation of a new space called the Bethany Room. This work was made possible through the generosity of our parishioners who raised money for this extension over a number of years.

This room is named after Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, a place of sojourn, rest and consolation. It was place to which Jesus retired and felt at home among those he loved.

It fulfills that function today, as a place of welcome and hospitality. It is also where the bereavement courses and Bethany Connect (a family support group), meets. In the corner hangs the picture by Vermeer of Jesus at home with Martha and Mary.





## **CHRIST THE EVANGELIZER**

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The works completed in 2017 and 2018 included an extension of the Narthex and the installation of an etched window above the entrance, which was made by the Go Glass company, of Cambridge. It is based on a carving found on the church's lectern, which was part of the original 1923 church.

The etched window was a generous gift bestowed on the parish by Fr. Kevin O'Shea c.m. as he retired as parish priest in 2016.

It carries the Vincentian logo of Christ the Evangelizer of the World, with the words: Evangelizare Pauperibus Misit Me. This is taken from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 4, verse 18: "He sent me to bring the good news to the poor."

## JESUS AT CALVARY

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The Calvary which now stands overlooking the Broadway was installed between 1932-33, during a time of transition between the first two parish priests, Fr. Charles Bagnall c.m.(1923-1932), who commissioned it and his successor, Fr. Daniel O'Connell c.m. (1932-1935).

Fr. Bagnall wrote the following next to the original drawing: "To help the passer-by to think of his Saviour's love for his soul and his future destiny."

It was designed by Miss Carol Wood and carved in teak, shipped from Plymouth. She was assisted by her pupils at the Besford Welfare Hospital in Worcestershire, and the final sculptures were presented to the church by Sister Martha Wells.

In 2019, the Calvary was made accessible and enhanced by a piazza in granite, with a seating area for reflection and prayer. This work was completed by Gormley Stone and Marble Granite Ltd.





## ICONS OF THE SAINTS

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Angela Godfrey (DOB, 1939 -) was commissioned to sculpt the statues in the new church. They are placed in each corner; one is of the Sacred Heart, in the top left hand corner, at the same level of all the others, indicating that our God is never far from us. His heart is visible at the level of our hearts.

To the right of the altar is our Lady as the mother of God. There are also four figures of saints, St. Joseph the carpenter, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac, the latter two being the founders of the Vincentians and the Daughters of Charity.

The idea of these saints in the corners is to remind us that "we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses," that is, the saints who have gone before us and those who are still alive.

## THE RISEN CHRIST

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The wall behind the high altar bears the seven foot high figure of the Risen Christ, which was carved in the studios of Vincenzo Demetz Figlii of Ortiesi, in the Italian Tyrol. This figure was part of the original church and was installed behind the High Altar of the new church on April 1st 1995.





## ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

The centrepiece of the Triptych is of Vincent at table with people who struggled with life itself. Their faces are indistinct. Vincent is in the midst of them but with no halo, a brother among sisters and brothers. The animals too are represented at the base of the table. The right panel represents Mary washing the feet of Jesus and the left, the return of the Prodigal son.

The triptych is a meditation on God's preferential option for those whom life has disempowered. Vincent called his followers to see Christ in the poor and the poor in Christ. Hence the face of Christ is outlined in the centre of the table in the centrepiece.

The original painting by Kurt Welther for the chapel of Mercy in Graz but Fr. Aidan McGing c.m., parish priest, commissioned a replica for the interiors of the new church.



## STATIONS OF THE CROSS

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There have been three sets of Stations of the Cross in the church. The first set was presented by the Sisters of Charity, Redhill, Sheffield, and were erected in 1924.

The next set, purchased by parishioners, were sepia photographs which had originally hung in the Catholic chapel at the Wembley Exhibition of 1924.

The present stations were presented to Fr. Delaney in 1947 by an anonymous donor. They were carefully cleaned and repainted in 1996 before being installed in the new church.





## **STAINED GLASS WINDOWS**

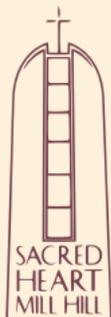
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On each side of the altar, there are two stained glass windows, one depicting the heart of Jesus with a crown of thorns and the other the heart of Mary pierced with a sword. These are the two hearts on the Miraculous Medal, the hearts by which we are saved.

These windows were installed in memory of Vera Moore, who donated generously in her will to the building of the Bethany room and Narthex extension.

The installation was overseen by a committee composed of Jan Szemerényi, Anita Hurst and Sr Aquinata OP. The designs were drawn up by Sister Aquinata and refined by the committee and Go Glass Co., Cambridge.

The windows were blessed by Fr Kevin O'Shea during the Saturday evening Mass on October 3rd, 2015.



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