From Persecution to Integration:
The Scottish Catholic Experience as seen from Perth
1685-2007

Volume Two:
A New History of the Catholic Community and Parish of Perth

Editor: Harry Schnitker

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The Scottish Catholic Experience as seen from Perth 1685-2007

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Introduction

The last history of the community and parish of St. John the Baptist is celebrating its centenary this year. Fr. Michael Lavelle's, *Historical Sketch of the Perth Mission: 1831-1907*, was published in Perth. He was the missionary in St. John's at the time, and, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the church, he did what this book also sets out to do: namely, to record the past of the community. However, Fr. Lavelle decided that, with the exception of a few notes on the community at Stobhall, he was not going to look much beyond the date that Bishop Paterson ordered Fr. Geddes to go to Perth. Such decisions matter. They matter because they determine the way in which we examine the past, and they determine that way in which we perceive our own story.

There was much that was tendentious in Fr. Lavelle's work, a good deal of hearsay was reported as 'The Truth'. This was, in many ways, inevitable. He was writing in a time when Catholicism in Perth was hardly embraced by the wider community. One can forgive some combatative and innovative history writing on the part of Fr. Lavelle. However, it is clear that there is some considerable need for an update and revision of his book. Since its publication, another one hundred years have past, a hundred years in which the community that he served has changed a good deal. Indeed, the Church that he served has changed almost as much. In addition, it is high time that the men and women who risked their lives to re-establish the Catholic Church in the wake of the fiasco of the Reformation were given their due. The fourth Earl of Perth, Fr. John Ambrose Cook, O.S.B., and the priests and community of the late seventeenth- and eighteenth centuries deserve some recognition.

This, then, is a history that pushes the boundaries of time: backwards into the seventeenth century, and forwards to our own day, to 2007. It also pushes the boundaries of geography. This community has not only grown numerically since the days of Fr. Cook's first conversions, but it has also fluctuated much in its borders. At times, the mission encompassed the whole of Perthshire, and even extended beyond. At other times, it was confined to the boundaries of the city of Perth, and, since the 1960s, has seen a new parish arise within that city. In addition, the city of Perth has another Catholic institution, besides its two parishes: the Redemptorist monastery in Kinnoull. It is not quite as old as the parish of St. John the Baptist, but has, nevertheless, made a major contribution to Catholic life in the city. It will not do to be restrictive in this type of book: restrictiveness blinds us to many aspects of the past.

The aim of the contributors to this book has been to show the rich past of the community, to highlight its main artistic achievements, but, above all, to explore some of the aspects that combine to create that community. Thus, the organisations

within the parish are highlighted, an exploration is offered on the role of migrants, and particular attention is paid to the experience of some of these migrants or migrant groups. Change and continuity in the life of the Church, both sacramental and institutional is looked at, as well as some of those 'typical' devotional practices that have always been a hallmark of the Catholic 'experience'. In short, an attempt has been made to present the past as a dynamic and layered reality, as opposed to a static concept. This, in turn, should assist an understanding of what has shaped the community of St. John's of 2007.

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Part One:
The History of Community and Parish

1685 to 1831:
'A Time of Essentials'

When, in May 1559, John Knox came to Perth to preach in the church of St. John the Baptist, the Catholic Church in Scotland entered the greatest crisis in its entire history. This is not the place to examine the circumstances of its collapse, nor is it the place to enter the discussion on what exactly caused that collapse. Suffice to say that it took very little effort to overthrow the whole edifice of the Catholic Church in Scotland. Probably most of its priests and many of its religious just adapted to the changing times, and became ministers or readers in the new Church of Scotland. This was also true in Perth. With the exception of some of the Carthusians, Franciscans, and Dominicans, there was no resistance to the message preached to such effect by Knox that May. The crowd took it upon themselves to destroy all the symbols of the Catholic Church: the rich trappings of St. John's were all removed, and the religious houses torn down. Almost all the artistic accomplishments of the past centuries were simply wiped out.

There was some initial reluctance amongst some to embrace the new doctrines. There are one or two reports from Perth that Mass was still being said, although we know tantalisingly little about this. In the wider region, incidences of pilgrimage or the veneration of saints continued, in some places well into the eighteenth century. At Dunkeld, for example, Christians of all denominations still went to a local holy well as late as the 1650s. However, there was no organised resistance, and, perhaps most importantly, there remained very few priests who could continue the Faith. Only around Murthly Castle was there any attempt to re-organise, with the arrival of Jesuit fathers related to the Abercrombie family. A few of the priests of the cathedral chapter at Dunblane, and the incumbent in Muthil continued to say Mass into the 1570s, and the Bishop

of Dunkeld stayed loyal to Rome, without, however, initiating any overt resistance to the new settlement.

By the 1610s, there is no further report on any Catholic activity; nor is this very surprising, as the number of priests still active in Scotland numbered fewer than ten. The situation of Catholics in the country during the reign of Charles I and under the Cromwellian Commonwealth has been called 'pitiable', but it would seem that in Perthshire there was really no Catholic to be pitied. The decision by the Holy See to restore independence to the remnant of Scotland's Catholic Church in 1653, after it had resided under English archpriests since 1603, would not have made much of an impact in the region. When Fr. William Leslie, S.J. wrote his report to *Propaganda fidei* in 1677, there were, according to him, no Catholics in Perthshire at all.

It is against the background of this total collapse of the Church in Perthshire that the conversion of the fourth Earl, later first Duke, of Perth needs to be seen. The Drummond family, of which James Drummond, Earl of Perth, was the head, was one of the most important in the county, indeed, in Scotland. They owned vast tracts of land in Strathearn and to the north of Perth, and had long, and intimate, associations with the Stewart royal family. James was born in 1648, to a Protestant father. His mother, Lady Anna Gordon, was a daughter of the staunchly Catholic George, second Marquis of Huntly. An intelligent man, James studied at St. Andrews University, and lived for some time in Paris to acquire 'culture'. He had strong Episcopalian leanings, and assisted in the persecution of the Covenanters during the reign of Charles II. In his service, and in that of the future James VII, James and his brother, John, Earl of Melfort, made rapid careers. When James succeeded to the Scottish crown in 1685, the two Drummond brothers were effectively running the country. That same year, they both converted to Catholicism.

A lot of ink has been spilled on the depth of their conversion. Many have seen it as an attempt to ingratiate themselves with the Catholic James VII. However, it has to be said that they remained loyal to the Pope after their conversion, and that their children all grew up to be devout Catholics. Indeed, one of Melfort's sons became a priest. On the Drummond estates, the conversion caused the rebirth of a small Catholic community, the direct predecessors of the Catholic parishes in Perth and Crieff. Once more, the question of the genuineness of the conversions may be questioned, but, the priests in the household of the fourth Earl were successful at attracting some of the leading families on the estates to the Church. The man who was mainly responsible for these conversions was John Ambrose Cook, a Benedictine from the Scottish Abbey of Würzburg. A letter from 1690 tells of his successes around the two main seats of the Earl, Drummond Castle and Stobhall Castle. The earliest of these conversions may be dated to 1688, when the Earl reported converts to Rome.

The revolution of 1689-90 cut short this favourable climate for the Church. William of Orange's regime cracked down on the Church, and

the Earl of Perth was imprisoned and subsequently exiled to Paris. In both Cargill (Stobhall) and Muthil (Drummond) parishes, in the meantime, the local minister refused to recognise the new regime. Supported by the Drummond family and their Catholic factors, they held out until 1698, when both parishes became vacant. It was not until 1708 that Presbyterian ministers finally gained access to the parishes. Perhaps significantly, the minister at Cargill was reported by Bishop Gordon to be inclined towards Catholicism. By this time, a Catholic priest had been active on the estate since 1698, named Alexander Drummond, and a convert of Fr. Cook. Consolidation came in 1700, when Drummond Castle became an official mission station. Six years later, 27 adult Catholics are mentioned at Stobhall, with another 24 around Drummond.

All this had happened under the protection of the second Duke, who had returned from exile in 1695. By 1710, some 40 adult Catholics are reported from the Stobhall part of the estate alone, and it is clear that the Church was successful at attracting converts. This is all the more remarkable as this occurred against the backdrop of the last severe extended famine in the region, which actually saw a drop in population due to starvation, as well as some of the worst persecution suffered by the Catholic Church since 1560. Indeed, the rest of the Scottish Mission suffered a sharp decline during the same period. The Jacobite uprising of 1715 could easily have undone all of this. The Jacobite army, including the second Duke, burned much of Strathearn as it retreated from the Battle of Sheriffmuir, but spared the homes of Catholics. In the wake of the collapse of the uprising, the second Duke escaped to Paris. There, his father died in 1716, soon followed by the second Duke, in 1720. Both were buried in the Scots College, the Catholic seminary for Scottish priests, in Paris.

That the Church did not collapse for a second time is largely due to the influence of Lady Jane Gordon, widow of the second Duke. Another member of the Huntly Gordons, she was steadfast in her faith. In many ways she was typical of the strong female aristocrats who kept the flame of the Faith alive between 1560 and the 1790s. On behalf of her young children, she administered the Drummond estates – which were briefly confiscated but regained when she appealed to parliament. She also protected the Church, and stimulated its mission. Her sons she had smuggled to Paris, to be educated in the Scots College, as the government had proclaimed that all children of Catholics should be taken from their parents and be educated as Protestants. Upon the coming of age of the third Duke, she assisted him in his work on the estate. When, in 1745, Bonnie Prince Charlie landed in Scotland to start the final Jacobite uprising, he received whole hearted support from the Drummonds, mother and sons. The third Duke fought valiantly in several of the battles, and commanded the left wing at Culloden. He died on board of a ship trying to escape to France in the aftermath of the battle. His brother, John, the fourth Duke, refused to surrender, and had all his estates confiscated.

This left Lady Jane Gordon once more as the sole protector of the Church. She had received Stobhall as her dower, and this was, therefore, not subject to confiscation. As a result, the mission could continue, but not until she had served nine months in prison for entertaining Bonnie Prince Charlie at Drummond Castle in 1745. Only one man, Alexander Cumming senior, is marked as a 'Papist' amongst those who joined the Duke in the uprising, although the list is far from complete. We know that some 200 tenants from around Drummond accompanied the Duke, many of whom came from Catholic parts of the estate. There is a tradition that more than a few of these families fled to France and called at the Scots College in Paris in the wake of the defeat at Culloden.

The Church in Perthshire did not suffer much, though, particularly when compared to other parts of Scotland, for which Lady Jane Gordon was mostly responsible. Her excellent rapport with Lord Kames at the forfeited estates commission ensured that the Church was left alone. Growth still occurred and a note to *Propaganda fidei* from 1763 shows around 300 adult Catholics in the mission of Stobhall, with another 168 in Drummond. That same year, Stobhall and Drummond both received new missionaries, effectively splitting the mission in two. Lady Jane Gordon would continue to support the Church until her death in 1773. Within four years, the Church was told to vacate the small chapel from which it had operated in Stobhall Castle. Once more Lord Kames came to the rescue, and he allowed a Catholic farmer on the estate to rent a barn on behalf of the Church, which was barred from owning or renting property by the Penal Act of 1700.

There is no need to discuss the minutiae of the foundation of the Park chapel. Initially, Mass was said in an old barn, and even this was threatened in 1778, when, in response to a proposal to end discrimination against Catholics, a mob had marched from Perth to burn the barn. They were turned back by the local gentry. Agricultural improvements, which were beginning to cause migration in the Highlands, hit the Park mission around this time. A report from Bishop Hay in 1780, shows that there were now only 118 adult Catholics in the mission, down from 300 seventeen years before. It was Abbé Paul McPherson, who was later to become the second founder of the Scots College in Rome, who placed the mission on a more secure footing. The lease was secured, and the barn converted into a proper small chapel, with a priest house next to it. This could not prevent the continued decline in numbers: the Abbé served eastern Perthshire, Angus including Dundee, and northern Fife. For this whole region he reported only 160 adult Catholics.

The position of the Church was about to undergo serious change, however. The first came in the form of increasing toleration. The alliance between the Papacy and the United Kingdom during the wars with Revolutionary France made the Faith more acceptable to many, whilst gradually the Church of Scotland came to share the antagonism of the Catholic Church towards the

revolution. A Catholic emancipation bill was passed for Scotland in 1793 which removed the most serious restrictions. In addition, destitute Catholic Highlanders were beginning to arrive, and would soon be followed by even more destitute Irish Catholics. The *Old Statistical Account* of 1799 shows that this influx would have to wait until the new century. In the Park mission it shows only 34 adult Catholics in Perthshire, almost exactly the same number as those left by the work of Fr. John Ambrose Cook, O.S.B. a century earlier! In Dundee, there were a further 30 Catholics.

By the 1820s, the tidal wave had overwhelmed what was left of the original Catholic community. In Dundee by this time, there were over 400 Catholics. In Perth the figure is less clear, and complicated by the occasional Irish regiment stationed in the city. However, the community there numbered at least 250 around the same time. The chapel at Park was no longer the obvious centre of the mission. In 1816, the priest, John Forbes, complained that the walls of the house were sagging, and that the floor in the chapel had been eaten by insects. This ramshackle heart of the community received an organ in 1820, with Fr. William Rattray finally agreeing to have music in his chapel; the fear of detection by the Protestant neighbours lingered for a long time. Fr. Rattray knew that he could not stay at Park. In 1821, a piece of ground was bought in Perth with an eye to constructing a chapel there, although nothing came of this for a considerable time. Since 1803, when Fr. Pepper, O.S.B. left, Dundee had been without a resident priest, although it did have a Catholic chapel. In 1824, Fr. Rattray moved to Dundee, to be closer to where the majority of Catholics in the region now lived. He still occasionally said Mass at the chapel at Park, but even this came to an end when he died, in 1827.

By now, the Catholic population in Perth numbered around 500, mostly Irish with quite a few Highlanders, and Mass was occasionally said in the hall of the Free Masons. Two years later, in 1829, the Catholic Relief Act was passed, which ended almost all restrictions on the Catholic Church. The presbytery in Perth had been less than happy with this: in 1828 it had collected a massive petition to the government in a forlorn attempt to retain the status quo. Fr. John Geddes received a letter from Bishop Paterson that year, ordering him to the new mission in Perth. Fr. Geddes, always in poor health, tried to delay his arrival, but dutifully went anyway. He started the construction of the church of St. John the Baptist, but would not live to see its inauguration: he died in 1831, aged only 24.

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1832 to 1981:
From Mission to Parish

The Catholic presence in Perth had been rather ephemeral prior to the construction of a chapel. The construction of a highly visible, solid stone church in Melville Street in late 1832 provided a focus for the religious and social life of Catholics in the town. Although the evidence for the initial cultural make-up of the mission is rather contradictory, the church soon found itself at the centre of a large, Irish community, mostly very poor. Their arrival initiated a period of religious, social, and economic isolation, in part of their own choice, in part imposed by the host community. Gathered around the church were people scared of losing their religious and their cultural identity, in what they regarded to be a hostile Presbyterian environment.

Like the Catholics from the Highlands and the north-east of Scotland before them, they had been drawn to Perth by the employment opportunities offered by the agricultural and industrial innovations of the early nineteenth century. Gradually, these people, a mixture of victims of the Clearances, people forced off the land by agricultural change, Europeans, and Irish settlers of all hues, would merge into one homogenous Catholic community. Even more gradually, they would begin to form a constituent of the wider community in Perth. Much water would pass under the bridge over the Tay before that happened, though.

Throughout the 1830s and 1840s, more and more migrants arrived in Perth, mainly from Ireland. They were attracted by the employment opportunities provided by the expanding railroad, and driven from their homes by the horrors of famine. The latter years of the 1840s saw the number of Catholics treble in size. Initially, only a small portion of these people attended Mass, but from the early 1850s this started to change. As the congregation grew, the need for an extension to the church arose, and this duly occurred in 1855-6, from which period stems the oldest picture of St. John's. The growing community had its own voluntary school at High Street-Meal Vennel, in the vicinity of which the vast majority of Perth's Catholics lived. The school offered day and evening classes. The Vennel itself was known for years in Perth as the 'Irish Channel'.

The isolation of Catholics in Perth was to affect their political direction: it prevented them from becoming part of the Trade Union movement for a considerable time. Indeed, it was not until the 1890s that Catholics started to join the unions in any numbers. This was further influenced by the ideological opposition towards organised labour by the Scottish bishops, which expressed itself in a campaign to discourage Catholics from getting involved in the unions. Another source of political and economic disenfranchisement came from the open hostility towards the community from their Protestant neighbours. Sectarianism resulted in Catholics being discriminated against, and it would take decades before they were to gain access to skilled jobs.

When the community did become politically active in the late nineteenth

century, the outlet was found in Irish nationalism. St. John's had its own branch of the United Irish League in the 1880s. The close association between Irish national and Scottish Catholic identity was born around this time, at least as far as self-identification goes; for the Protestant community, this had been the case since the start of mass immigration. In Scotland, the community tended to vote Liberal, but this could change depending on the candidate's stance on Irish Home Rule.

Although not overly political for a long time, Catholics were concerned with self-help and personal improvement. Societies began to appear, which, in the main, mirrored institutions in the Protestant churches. For example, St. John's had a Temperance Society. Also present was the League of the Cross, a branch of the Irish National Foresters, which was a friendly society, insuring people against illness and death. For the poor there was the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, whilst a Catholic Young Men's Society provided a wide range of activities from its hall in the High Street near the school, as an alternative to public houses and gambling. Their billiard room was reputedly one of the best in Perth, and they had their own swimming club, a sign that the Victorian concerns over health also affected the Catholic community. The first stirrings of integration may also be seen: the CYMS entered the Perth Billiard League and the Domino League. Football teams associated with the mission, like Perth Celtic and Erin Rovers, represented Perth's Catholics in the local league from the 1880s.

The character of the Catholic Church in Scotland was to be heavily influenced by the Irish influx. In the central urban and industrial areas, Irish Catholicism, with its less rigid approach to the Faith, and its more florid cultural expressions thereof, replaced the austere, almost Protestant face of the eighteenth-century Church. At the same time, there was a definite Presbyterian influence on the new Catholic congregations: priests did their utmost to make their congregations conform to middle class values, and struggled to get them to understand such concepts as 'Sunday Best'.

Sociologically, the most important aspect of the huge Irish immigration to Scotland was that it transformed the Catholic Church in the country from a small minority into a major denomination. The apogee of this rapid expansion, and in spite of Presbyterian opposition, was the restoration of the Scottish hierarchy in 1878, 28 years later than in England and Wales. This gave the country a recognisable Catholic infrastructure. One of the restored dioceses was Dunkeld, with George Rigg as its first new Bishop; he set up his new seat in Perth. Growth continued for some time, and, in 1892-3, this resulted in a renewed extension of the church.

From around that time, the integration of the Catholic community began to gather pace. This process was marked by a decline in Irish sentiments, and a slow move away from a denominational organisation of social activities. However, one would do well not to regard this as a rapid process: the period from 1907, when the 75th anniversary of the foundation

of St. John's was celebrated, right up to the 1980's saw a very gradual move away from isolation and rejection towards integration and acceptance. Crucial amongst this was the integration of the school system. Since the early 1900s the hierarchy had been in discussion with the government with regard to the incorporation of Catholic schools in the mainstream state education system. This would relieve them of a huge financial burden, but they would only countenance such a move if their influence on education in Catholic schools was to be safeguarded. Catholic voluntary schools, which provided post-primary education, had been discriminated against in the 1872 school reforms, which introduced local government finance in place of fees.

Even though Catholics who sent their children to St. John's School were rate payers, their school had been excluded from receiving government grants. This anomaly was removed by the 1918 Education Act. Interestingly, this move towards integration had acknowledged the continuous influence of the bishops over the Catholic schools, and had thereby safeguarded a specific Catholic identity. Integration, but not assimilation, was to be the underlying theme of the next few decades. Appropriately in this slow-moving process, the full integration of the Catholic schools in the new system would not occur until 1928!

The impact of the First World War on the growing level of acceptance of the Catholic minority by the wider community cannot be overestimated. Of course, parishioners from St. John's had fought for their country in other conflicts. James Fisher, who died in 1923, for example, had joined the 79th Cameron Highlanders in 1857, and was a veteran of the Indian Mutiny. John Kerrigan had served in the Boer War with the Scottish Horse Yeomanry, and held the Queen's Medal with four clasps. He was killed whilst serving in the Black Watch in 1918. He was not the only one. As in the rest of Scotland, Perth's Catholics enlisted and died in rather large numbers. When the conflict ended, the community had lost 65 of its men, a very large portion. A window and plaque were created to honour their memory in 1925. The sacrifice made by the much-maligned religious group allowed them some access to the membership of a wider, Scottish or British, national identity. It is at this point that one can perceive a first shift from 'Irish Immigrant' to 'Scottish Catholic', both in self-perception and in the opinion of the wider community.

The war had also enabled Catholics to move up the social scale by offering them skilled employment, whilst a sense of class solidarity created by the conflict opened the doors to political participation. State-funding for Catholic schools attracted better teachers, and would, in the long-term, begin to create a better educated segment in the community. This led in turn to the slow emergence of a Catholic middle class, although the vast majority of Perth's Catholics were still firmly working class. The economic crisis of the 1930s was to halt this process in its tracks. Irish immigration slowed down to a trickle, whilst Scots of all denominations,

including Catholics, emigrated in droves to escape grinding poverty at home. The Catholic community was particularly hard hit by the crisis, which destroyed innumerable manual jobs. In turn, they became the scapegoats for what was happening: these 'alien' and 'racially inferior' people were blamed for the economic ills affecting the country, an offensive which was led by the Church of Scotland. This turned back the clock, and re-equated Catholic and Irish all over again.

By this time, the Catholic community had associated itself closely with the socialist movement. As seen, this began in the 1890s, but the Liberals could still count on the Catholic vote as long as they supported Home Rule in Ireland. In 1910, they won the elections in Perth due to the Catholic vote. Independence in Ireland and the collapse of the Liberal party put an end to this. And so, after an 11 o'clock Mass in 1921, members of the Independent Labour Party marched up to Perth prison and held a demonstration in support of the large number of Sinn Fein members being held there without trial. It was not only in the eyes of other Scots that Irishness and Catholicism were one-and-the-same-thing. The 1920s saw the Catholic vote in Scotland turning solidly in favour of the Labour Party. Many lapsed Catholics joined the Communist Party, which added to the general distrust of the community, and which allowed Protestants to equate 'popery' with atheism.

The Second World War saw Catholics from the mission in Perth once again joining the national cause, this time against the evil of Nazism. This resulted in further, if less severe, loss of life. For some members of the community, this was a rather fraught time: Catholics of Italian birth were interred as enemy aliens. On the other hand, the Catholic population not only benefited from an increase in standing as the result of their contribution to the war effort, but also increased in size. The arrival of co-religious from a variety of countries, but especially from Poland, caused Perth's Catholic community to swell. Poles serving in the Free Polish Army were stationed all over Scotland, but were particularly well represented in and around Perth. They attended Polish Mass in St. John's, and, in gratitude, donated the brass Sanctuary Lamp to the church on their national feast day, in May 1941.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the Scottish Catholic community saw its numbers swell to an all-time high. The economic boom of the 1950s and '60s allowed new churches to be built, and increased wealth saw the once geographically close-knit Catholic community disperse. The Polish presence, which the government had encouraged, and which communist hostility in their country necessitated, meant that the identification between Irishness and Catholicism in the eyes of many Scots became less tenable. Polish clubs and associations were formed, and Polish priests served their needs. Yet the Irish dimension was also strengthened: the final large immigration from Ireland took place during the war, and in its aftermath, when labour was needed for the vast hydro-electric schemes. In some cases, these labourers actually constructed new churches, as, for example, in Pitlochry, where

the church is dedicated to the very Irish St. Bride.

Reconstruction and urban planning resulted in the building of housing schemes on green field sites, to which were moved large numbers of people. New homes and better living conditions lured them away from their formerly close-knit communities. New parishes were created to coincide with this process, thus further loosening existing bonds. In Perth, Letham and Craigie were the main destinations. In the new Letham Housing Scheme, the church of Our Lady of Lourdes was built, soon to be joined by a primary school. In Craigie, St. Mary Magdalene's was opened. Accompanying this geographical upheaval was a social change of similar magnitude. The break-down of the geographical 'ghetto' of the vennels was mirrored in a break-down of the social ghetto in which the majority of the Catholic community had found itself. True, for wealthy Catholic landowners and well-educated priests, these ghettos had always been relative: now, with Catholics entering universities and the professions, they were joined by their co-religionists. This was backed-up by better secondary education, and, in Perth, St. Columba's was built in 1967 to provide an alternative to the overcrowded St. John's School.

All this flux saw the demise of older social institutions within the community, and the creation of new ones. The Union of Catholic Mothers was formed in 1947, but the parish lost the Knights of St. Columba around the same time. Yet this was also still the period before the storms of the late 1960s and '70s. The Marian Year of 1954, celebrating the centenary of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, was widely celebrated, and the parish participated in the national pilgrimage to Lourdes in 1956. The social changes of the late '60s were mirrored by the impact of the Second Vatican Council, which saw the church of St. John's closed to redesign the interior to comply with the Council's directives on the celebration of the Mass. Much of the old interior was destroyed in the process.

At the same time, the integration process gathered pace. In 1969, Archbishop Grey became the first resident Cardinal in Scotland since the sixteenth century, reflecting the increased standing of the Scottish province in the wider Catholic Church. Four years earlier, Canon John Coogan, the parish priest of St. John's, had been honoured with a civic reception, a far cry from the 1930s. The gale that hit the Church in the 1970s did not pass Scotland or Perth by, and caused some loss of direction. This was soon to be remedied, however: in 1982, Scotland would witness the first visit by a reigning Pope, and the Catholic community from Perth would turn out en masse to greet him. In the wake of this visit, new purpose and direction was found.

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The Visit of Pope John Paul II to Scotland, 1982

"A day made memorable by the Lord" is the caption which the Bishops of Scotland chose to recall the incredible scenes that occurred in Scotland during May and June 1982. The line is taken from a remark made by the Holy Father during his visit:

"this is a day made memorable by the Lord – what immense joy for us!" (Ps 118:24)

And memorable it was. Never had a reigning Pontiff set foot in Scotland. The nearest the country had come to a papal visit was during the fifteenth century, when the later Pope Pius II had been shipwrecked off the coast of Berwickshire. He walked on pilgrimage to Saint Andrews, or possibly only to Whitekirk, and kept an unpleasant memento of his trip: the Holy Father suffered from chilblains for the rest of his life. Even more remarkable, some of the locals doubted that he was a Christian!

John Paul II's memories will have been rather more enjoyable. There was a moment during his Mass at Bellahouston Park in Glasgow when he could not make himself heard above the joyful cheers of the vast crowd. The late Holy Father has been likened to a pop star in the impact that he made when he appeared: he was, indeed, blessed with incredible charisma. His presence was enough for those present to fall silent, either in admiration or because they became nervous. All Popes bring their own particular blessings to their role of successor of St. Peter, but most would agree that John Paul II was one of the most formidable Popes in history. He was on a par with the true giants: with Innocent III, Gregory the Great, or Leo III. Like Gregory, many, including the author of this article, would argue that he warrants the appellation of 'Great'.

One of the ways in which one can measure this greatness is in the fact that his visit to Scotland lasted for only two days, but made an impact that can still be felt to this day. During those days, the Holy Father met a very large section of the Catholic population of Scotland. At Bellahouston, no fewer than 300,000 of the faithful gave meaning to the notion of a Catholic community in Scotland. Amongst them were many from the city of Perth. Another 45,000 had welcomed the Pope in Edinburgh, where they filled Murrayfield Stadium. Of course, the Pope knew exactly where to go to make the maximum impact. In those brief hours that he spent in Scotland, he made two major statements just by being present. One was when he visited St. Joseph's Hospital for the severely handicapped. Naturally, he gave a speech, but his presence was all that was needed. He was the great advocate of the Sacredness of Life, of respect for all human life, and his own suffering in later years gave further witness to this advocacy. The visit provided eloquent witness to his teaching and commitment.

The second visit was of greater historic importance. Whereas the Church has always emphasised

the value of human life, she has not always been close to those Christians who have broken communion with her. In Scotland, this broken communion had caused suffering for those who had stayed loyal to the Holy Church. The late Holy Father knew all too well that division was and is a cause of scandal, and worked throughout his long pontificate to repair some of the damage. During his visit to Scotland he met leaders of the various denominations, and visited the courtyard of the Church of Scotland Assembly Hall. He stated that,

"In particular I have been pleased to learn of the fruitful dialogue in which the Catholic Church in this country has been engaged with the Church of Scotland, the Episcopal Church in Scotland and other Churches, and also of its collaboration with the Scottish Churches' Council in many aspects of its work….we are only pilgrims on this earth, making our way towards that heavenly Kingdom promised to us as God's children. Beloved brethren in Christ, for the future, can we not make that pilgrimage together..."

In the context of this exhibition, few remarks can be more poignant.

At Bellahouston, John Paul II reminded his audience that they

"are the heirs to a sacred heritage. Your forefathers have handed on to you the only inheritance they really prized, our holy Catholic faith! From heaven their heartfelt appeal to you would be this: 'Set your hearts on his Kingdom'" (Luke 12,31).

This exhortation, too, fits in perfectly with this exhibition. For many the suffering that was endured by those who went before us is at best a vague notion. Yet the suffering was real, and there can be no doubt that the Holy Father was correct when he said that they valued their and our Catholic faith above everything else. It is incumbent upon us to follow their example, Yet there can also be no doubt that the challenges that we face are just as difficult as those faced by the Catholics in Perthshire and in the rest of Scotland during the centuries of persecution and discrimination. Twenty-five years ago, John Paul II put it as follows,

"We find it harder to follow Christ today than appears to have been the case before. Witnessing to him in modern life means a daily contest … As believers we are constantly exposed to pressures by modern society, which would compel us to conform to the standards of this secular age … at the risk of compromising our Christian conscience".

These feel like prophetic words today. The Bishops' Conference has listed four key points as being particularly under attack: Sacredness of Life, the Family, Catholic Education, and Freedom of Conscience. They added that "we cannot live in a ghetto". Quite. Nor should we be daunted. We may feel as if we are under pressure, but no-one these days will be put in prison because they educate their children as Catholics, no-one will be imprisoned for attending Mass. This exhibition has provided evidence of the strength and resilience of our faith over the centuries: too often has

it been written of. Cardinal Newman once stated that crisis is the normal state of the Church. In that, he only echoed the words of Our Lord, who warned that his followers should expect the disdain of the world around them.

One can do no better than quote the words of John Paul the Great, spoken during that historic visit twenty-five years ago:

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow... nothing is impossible to God. This is the one same Holy Spirit who came to you at Baptism and …at Confirmation, precisely to prepare and fortify you for the challenge of life. Not one of you is without him! No one must ever feel alone! The Spirit of the Lord has been given to you!".

HS, based in part on the SCMO publication *Pastoral Reflections on the 25th Anniversary of the Papal Visit to Scotland*.

1982-2007: The Modern Parish

Following the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1982, there was a lot done to build on the enthusiasm brought about by the Papal event. In the Diocese, the RENEW programme was launched on 25th September 1987, in the Caird Hall, Dundee. This was a programme of prayer, reflection, and action, which sought to energise the diocese. Each parish had a team of volunteers to lead the community in the renewal of commitment to God's Call and to encourage our response to the Lord's Call. St. John's, of course, was no exception, and vigorously adopted the activities, though the death of parish priest, Fr. Edward Durkin, at the start of the programme saddened the parish greatly. There were activities for all groups and ages. The schools participated fully, and small groups met in each other's houses. There, by prayer, reflection, and discussion, the members of each group sought to find enlightenment and new insights into their faith. The Renew Programme is well documented and has been used worldwide by the Church to develop and propagate the faith and spiritual life of Catholics.

Currently, the parish is engaged in Proclaiming Our Faith. This programme was introduced to the Diocese after a comprehensive consultation exercise carried out by Bishop Logan, who asked all parishes to highlight priorities for each parish. Five initiatives were originally identified: Youth Work, Pastoral Care, Adult Formation, Clergy Formation, and the development of a Pastoral Centre. In St. John the Baptist's, the Pastoral Council leads the way in refining and implementing these initiatives. Funding has been provided by voluntary contributions and some

of the exciting prospects include the *Duc in Altum* Travel Scholarships, which offer young people the opportunity to work overseas for the Church, and the World Youth Day Events, held annually, and attended by representatives of each parish. In 2008, two young pilgrims from St. John's will go to Sydney, Australia, to take part in the next event. For adults in the parish, the Evangelisation Group has organised evenings under the banner of CaFE, where people meet in the hall and have the opportunity to explore aspects of their faith and share them with others.

The community of St John's is not, and has never been, an inward looking one; rather it has sought to be open to others, and to welcome them to the Church. There are many examples of parishioners taking part in public life with the roll call including John Flynn and Archie McLellan, who serve on Perth and Kinross Council. They are the latest parishioners from St. John's to fulfil that function. Michael O'Malley, another parishioner, was the first Labour Provost of Perth. Besides politics, the community of St. John's makes significant contributions to life in the city of Perth. Its volunteers work for Churches Action for the Homeless (CATH). This is an interdenominational organisation. One of St. John's parishioners in particular, Mary Carroll, is synonymous with CATH. She was a founder member and still contributes through the Management Committee. Her contribution resulted in the award of the M.B.E.

In the field of sport there are many examples of Catholics contributing to the public life. Several parishioners have represented their country as well as the county in a broad range of sports**.** Ian McCann**,** who coached a highly successful St. John's Boys Team playing in the Perth Leagues in the 1970s and 1980s, has provided details of other individuals who excelled in their chosen sport: Gavin Rumgay, currently No.1 in Table Tennis and in the Olympic squad for 2008; brothers Charlie and Anthony Gallagher, Badminton internationalists in the 1980s; the Gavigan sisters, Edith and Betty, represented Scotland at Swimming, Netball and Hockey in the 1950s and Betty's family did likewise in Curling. There are many others, too many, in fact, to mention in this short article.

Another field in which the parish has made a notable contribution to public life is through the church choir. This is notable not only for the Music Liturgy each Sunday and on special occasions, but also for its success in consecutive competitions within the annual Perth Musical Festival. The choir has often been commended by judges for its achievements given it is relatively small in number.

A recent phenomenon has been the influx of other nationalities into the parish. There have always been communities of Irish, Italian, and Polish nationals in the parish, but recently the numbers have increased dramatically, both from the European Union and beyond. All find the worldwide unity within the Church conducive to integration within wider society, both in Perth and in Scotland. The parish has been able to provide accommodation for immigrants by releasing several under-used Church buildings for that purpose. There is also provision for Mass in Italian and

Polish at regular intervals. St. John's has become a truly international community, and the new migrants have ensured that it is actually growing in numbers.

As a community, the parish of St. John the Baptist has been fortunate in its priests, and this continues to be the case. Mgr. Charles, Provost Hendry, has served the parish for many years. His ministry is manifold, but his work within the hospitals stands out: it is here that he gives particularly strong expression to the true meaning of Christian charity. Under his spiritual guidance the community of St. John the Baptist looks forward to the future with considerable hope and trust.

BF

Part Two:
Clergy and Community

The Clergy of the Mission and Parish

In many respects, the history of the Catholic community in Perthshire forms a microcosm of that wider Catholic population in Scotland. It shared its fate during the Reformation, for there were precious few areas where the Catholic Church survived in any meaningful way. Perhaps more unusually, the Church regained a toehold here during the later seventeenth century, somewhat later than in other regions where she managed to stage a comeback. From then on, all the characteristics of the wider Church may be found here: dependence on a powerful local family, chapels in their castles, bouts of persecution alternated by periods of tolerance, slow growth combined with rather swift decline by the end of the eighteenth century, and then rebirth through migration.

The incumbent missionaries and priests also reflect the history of the Catholic clergy in post-Reformation Scotland. This is especially the case when one reflects upon the role played by the regular clergy in the re-establishment of the community. For much of the period between 1560 and the mid-eighteenth century, regular clergy made up the majority of the personnel of the Church in Scotland. Unsurprisingly, therefore, we find that the three earliest priests known to us were members of religious orders. The two Jesuit fathers followed the normal procedure of their order, and concentrated on converting the landed aristocracy. John Seton, S.J., in particular, paid for his close ties to the Drummond family: he spent five years in prison and died within months of being released. It was left to a Benedictine, John Ambrose Cook, to carry out the missionary work on the ground. This takes us to Germany, and to the Schottenkloster. These Benedictine houses had

managed to escape the Reformation, and were among the few surviving links between the pre-Reformation Church and the one that came after.

Once the seeds had been sown, the secular clergy took over. Here, too, many of the trends visible in the rest of Scotland may be found. To begin with, there is the predominance of priests from those parts of Scotland where the Church had survived the Reformation. The north-east is typically over-represented, providing no fewer than twelve of the priests. After the 1830s, there are a few Irish priests. Perthshire provided three priests, rather few, and the rest of the diocese another six. Education wise, too, the careers of the priests who have served here are typical, perhaps with the exception that the Scots College in Paris is under-represented, and those in Rome and Valladolid (Spain), over-represented. As one would expect, the earlier incumbents all spent time at the Scots seminaries or colleges on the Continent, either in Douai, Paris, Rome, or Valladolid. Later priests attended Issy or St. Sulpice. This Continental link is very important. It reminded the priests that they were part of a global Catholic Church, and especially during times of persecution, provided them and other Catholics with a place to escape to. In addition, they could experience a more intensely Catholic culture, which was lacking at home.

In Scotland, one can trace the changes of the local seminaries, from the small house in the hills at Scalan, to its rather more luxurious replacement at Aquhorties, to St. Mary's at Blairs, which opened its doors in 1829, three years before St. John the Baptist's in Perth did the same. So far, none of the priests have attended the newer seminaries in Scotland. Finally, the erudition of some of the incumbents stands out. John Thompson became the superior at Scalan, Paul McPherson the rector of the Scots College in Rome, William Rattray was professor at the Royal Scots College in Valladolid, William Wallace served in the same function there and later at Aquhorties. Dr. McPherson was professor at Aquhorties, and later became the rector at Blairs. Thomas Welsh taught at Blairs, as did William Smith.

More than a few of the priests have held the honour of being appointed Domestic Prelates, and even more have been appointed Canons of Dunkeld and Provosts of the cathedral chapter. Some rose to even higher office, and became Bishops, and in this respect one cannot avoid mentioning George Rigg, the first post-Reformation Bishop of Dunkeld, who had his seat at Perth. There has even been a black sheep; William Hay was removed from duties in 1783, and left for the USA. One cannot do more than sum up the contributions made by the clergy to the community over the past three centuries and more. It is now impossible to evaluate the pastoral role of more than a handful of them, for example, although perhaps for some of the priests this was the role they considered to be the most important, and the one that would have brought them closest to their community. A priest like John Geddes may serve as an example. He began the construction of St. John's, but died as the result of administering to his sick flock. Others

were real organisers. William Rattray was described by Bishop Alexander Cameron as being 'no light', this in spite of his becoming professor at Valladolid. He was first and foremost a practical man, though, who began the move from Park to Perth, and who organised the Church in Dundee, as well as founding the first Catholic church in Paisley.

What is clear is that without the priests, there could not have been a Catholic community, for without priests there is no Eucharist, and there are no Sacraments. The early missionaries understood this well, and, in their letters, constantly emphasise the desire of ordinary Catholics to receive the Sacraments. The priests of Drummond Castle, Stobhall Castle, Park chapel, and St. John the Baptist's have facilitated the survival of the community, and have often provided leadership for it. The following pages will examine the lives and contributions of some of them. They have been singled out as representing different strands of pastoral care for both the local community and the wider Church.

HS

Eight Representative Priests

These eight men have been chosen here as they each represent a specific element of the clerical contribution towards the building of a Catholic community in the region. Their lives are also reflections of some of the pressures and problems that have faced the community over the centuries, and, importantly, their education and careers

Fr. John Ambrose Cook, O.S.B.

John Cook was born either at Prestonpans in East Lothian, or near Duns in the Borders, in 1660. We know little of his early life, except that he graduated from university, probably that of Edinburgh, and joined the French army as a soldier. Attending a Scottish university was impossible for a Catholic in this period, and so we can be certain that he was a Protestant at this time. Perhaps his experiences in France led him to the Church, but whatever the reason, we know that he converted to Catholicism around this time. His soldier's career subsequently took him to Rome. Again one may speculate that what he encountered there deepened his spiritual longing, for we next see him at that most remarkable of Scottish Catholic places, the Benedictine Abbey of Würzburg. Cook entered the abbey as a novice in July 1681. Würzburg, with Ratisbon, were remarkable in that these so-called Schottenkloster, or Scottish Monasteries, had never been touched by the Reformation. As such, they were the only part of the pre-Reformation Catholic Church in Scotland to survive into the period of the missionary Church.

Cook made an immediate impact at Würzburg, where he soon professed as a monk, taking the name Ambrose. His Abbot, Maxwell, thought him to be "a youthe of good expectation". Cook would not disappoint, at least not at this point in time. He was ordained in 1686, and was sent to the Scottish Mission in the following year. He arrived in heady atmosphere, for things had never looked more positive for the Faith in Scotland since 1560. Since 1685, James VII had been on the throne, who was a practising Roman Catholic. He had made some tentative steps to increase the freedom of worship for his Catholic subjects, raising expectations – and fears – that more would follow. What is more, in Scotland his regime rested on the shoulders of the convert, James Drummond, fourth Earl of Perth. Upon his arrival, Fr. Cook joined the household of the Earl of Perth. This meant that he resided in either Drummond Castle or Stobhall when the Earl was there, and we know that he was, for some time, a missionary on the Perthshire estates of the Drummond family.

Unlike his protector, Fr. Cook managed to escape the violence that followed the overthrow of James VII in 1689, the episode known as the Glorious Revolution. He made his way back to Würzburg. In July of that year, he was elected its Abbot, aged only twenty-nine. He presided over a flourishing establishment, hampered

only by the fact that several of its monks were incarcerated in Britain in the wake of the 'Glorious Revolution'. Cook was a great improver of the abbey, and reformed its discipline in line with the great movement at the Abbey of St. Maur in France. For two years he seemed to have been a model abbot, but the darker side of his character soon emerged. He began to drink and to live well above the limited means of the abbey, possibly influenced by the lavish establishment of the Prince-Bishop of Würzburg, who had entrusted Cook with several important tasks. The late Abbot, Mark Dilworth, O.S.B., put it aptly, when he wrote that Cook was a man pulled in two directions. At least one can be assured that the Earl of Perth, now in exile, was not disappointed by the lavishness of his reception in the abbey in January 1695. Cook returned to Scotland in 1697, but only for a short visit. The final and rather sad chapter of his life came in 1703, when the Prince-Bishop of Würzburg, in whose diocese the abbey was, deposed him for misconduct. We do not know when he died. To the Catholic community in Perth, Fr. Cook represents nothing less than rebirth.

HS

Abbé Paul McPherson

Paul McPherson was born in Glenlivet, that stronghold of the Faith in the north-east, in 1756. By common consent he was one of the most remarkable priests ever to serve the Scottish Church. He was educated at Scalan, but finished his studies at the Scots College in Rome, and in the Scots College in Valladolid, Spain. As such, the period of his formation as a priest combined the elements of the eighteenth century Catholic Church in Scotland: intensely local and at the same time very international. His ordination took place in 1779, and he came back to Scotland to serve as a missionary, mainly at Stobhall. There, he was responsible for putting the mission on a secure footing after the upheavals following the death of Jane Gordon, dowager Duchess of Perth. He renovated the old barn at Park used as a church, and constructed a house for the priest. Thus, he forms the link between the end of the Drummond patronage of the Catholic Faith in Perthshire, and the establishment of a church in Perth, the current St. John the Baptist's.

He left the mission at Stobhall on a secure footing, although not even his talent could counter the economic pressures which were driving the Catholic population of the old Drummond estates to migration. In 1791, he became Procurator in Edinburgh, but his real vocation commenced only when he was asked to return to Rome in 1793. There, he quickly took over the running of the Scots College, one of the main seminaries for the Scottish Church, then as now. As the French

Revolution was forging a close alliance between the British state and the Papacy, McPherson could foster closer ties with the representatives of the British crown in Rome. As the Papal state came close to collapse under French pressure, McPherson kept his cool. In 1798, Rome fell to the French, the Pope became a prisoner, and the Scots College was occupied. McPherson took it upon himself to evacuate not only the Scottish students, but also those from the English and Irish colleges, leading twenty-four seminarians back to safety in Britain. His trek through Revolutionary France made him a short-lived celebrity, who was feted by government ministers and by the Prince of Wales. Yet again, McPherson's life mirrored the experience of the wider Scottish Catholic community: the French Revolution had brought toleration and, occasionally, acceptance for Catholics in Britain.

He returned to Rome in 1800, and became the first rector of the college from the Scottish secular clergy. He remained in Rome during the conflict between Pope Pius VII and Napoleon, risking his life, but quietly studying the past of the Scots College and writing its history. After the fall of Bonaparte, the Scottish bishops felt they no longer required the seminary in Rome. McPherson disagreed. He set about ensuring its survival, and with Papal support, forced the bishops to acquiesce. In 1820, the first students since the French Revolution arrived, and the college is to this day an important pillar of the Scottish Catholic Church. McPherson lived on until 1846, his last years spent as the honorary head of an institute of which he has been described as the second founder. He saved the mission at Park, and his life illustrates the link between small Catholic communities such as that at Park, and the international Church in Rome.

HS

Fr. William Wallace

William Wallace was born in the parish of Kinnore, near Huntly, into a farming family. His father was an Episcopalian, who died when he was an infant, whilst his mother was a Catholic, who survived his father by only a few years. As a youth, on the intervention of Fr. William Guthrie, the missionary at Mortlach, and of Fr. Charles Maxwell, the missionary at Huntly, he was admitted into the Seminary at Scalan in Banffshire. After a study period of just over three years, he was sent to the Scots College in Douai, in northern France. He arrived in 1788, but the French Revolution soon disturbed his studies, and he escaped with some difficulties and experiencing some danger, in March 1793. The following September, he was sent to the Royal Scots College in Valladolid, Spain, to

complete his studies. At Easter 1798 he was ordained, and he remained at the college, first as Procurator, and then as junior Professor for the following ten years.

The Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1808 threatened the continued existence of the Scots College. The next year, Fr. Wallace was sent back to Scotland in charge of the fleeing students. Upon his arrival, he spent some months at the new seminary of Aquhorties, before being appointed as chaplain and preceptor to Mr. Leslie of Balquhair's three sons in Fetternear. The famous Fetternear Banner, a rare relic of pre-Reformation Scotland, was probably taken there by Fr. Wallace from Valladolid. He resigned from his teaching post in 1812, and was sent to Park, to take charge of the mission there.

It was Fr. Wallace who was the first to acknowledge the need to build a church in Perth, due to the growing numbers of Catholic migrants in the city. Consequently, he initiated the plan to move the base of the mission from Park to Perth. He wrote a number of letters to Bishop Alexander Cameron in 1813, offering various locations suitable for a new church. Financial restraints were the main reason for these plans not being followed through. Bishop's Cameron notorious inactivity, which Fr. Wallace, who had served under him when Cameron was Rector at Valladolid, must have known about, also contributed. Fr. Wallace was to serve at Park for another four years, but, when the Valladolid College re-opened for students in 1816, he returned there as Vice Rector. Before leaving Park, he had sold some personal belongings, which raised £115 towards the project of building a church in Perth.

Fr. Wallace spent only two years in Spain, and returned in 1818 to head the mission in Edinburgh. Then, in 1821, he became chaplain at Traquair House, one of the remaining noble patrons to the mission. It was a position which he would occupy for nearly 33 years, in sharp contrast to his early wandering life. For most of this time, he was the only priest between Edinburgh and the English Border. Even as an elderly man, he would travel great distances to administer the sacraments to the sick and dying. He collected funds for the construction of a church in Hawick, where the Catholic population was increasing.

When he died, his obituary stated that he had a full and active life, a statement few would have any quarrels with! His learning, which Alexander Cameron had disparaged in Valladolid, was praised, as were his writing skills. During his life he had written polemic tracts: "His career was long, but not unprofitable". Fr. Wallace represents the link between Park and Perth, and between the Scottish Church and the Catholic world of Spain.

SC

Fr. John Geddes

John Geddes was born in the Enzie, Banffshire, in 1807, a district that for centuries had been solidly Catholic. He was a grand-nephew of Bishop Geddes. He attended the seminary at Aquhorties, and, like Fr. William Wallace before him, was sent to the Royal Scots College in Valladolid to finish his studies. His poor health, which was to plague him all of his short life, forced him to return home without completing his studies. These he finished once he had recovered somewhat, in the brand-new seminary at Blairs. There he was ordained, in October 1829.

Fr. John Geddes, or, in keeping with the period, Mr. Geddes, was the first resident Catholic priest in Perth since the Reformation of 1559. He was sent there by Bishop Paterson in 1830, but not after he had protested his ill health. It is a sign of Fr. Geddes' deep humility and willingness to serve, that he went regardless when ordered to do so. The congregation that he was appointed to look after was predominantly poor. It is no longer clear whether it was also predominantly Irish, although there was undoubtedly a large Irish element.

There was no church, nor a church house, so he continued the practice of his predecessors who had served the Catholic community in Perth from Park or Dundee, and celebrated Mass in rented premises, notably in the hall of the Freemasons; he also lived in rented accommodation. Fr. Geddes was a cautious man, imbued with the spirit of the Scottish Church which had been marked by centuries of persecution and occasional anti-Catholic violence. He, therefore, urged Bishop Paterson to allow him to build a house on land bought in 1821, in which Mass could be celebrated. It would not look like a Catholic place of worship and could always be altered later. He was raising funds, but, the ill health that had beset him all his life returned during his short period in the city.

His sense of duty and his intense pastoral commitment saw him travel widely around the city, and work in some of the worst slum conditions imaginable. Catholics in Perth in the 1830s were amongst the poorest of the poor. In the early hours of 8 January 1831, he was found dead in his lodgings. The obituary which claimed that the Catholics in Perth had 'lost a zealous pastor' could not have been more correct. His interment in the Greyfriars Cemetery in Perth drew quite a crowd. According to the Perthshire Courier, 'A great concourse of people attended in the expectation that rites and obsequies of an uncommon description would take place'. A revealing phrase, which shows just how alien Catholicism was to most; it also shows that curiosity was stronger than hostility. Fr. John Geddes was in every respect the model of a pastoral priest.

Fr. James Mackay

James Mackay was born at Nether Clashnore, in Glenlivet, on 25 March 1802. He was yet another priest to have come from the north east. Indeed, his very place of birth was near the seminary at Scalan, training ground of the so-called Heather priests. He entered the seminary at Aquhorties, Scalan's successor, in 1821. He was yet another of the priests who served the Catholic community in and around Perth after having studied at the Royal Scots College, Valladolid. There, he developed a reputation of high virtue, and was ordained in 1829.

From Spain, he returned home to the Braes of Glenlivet, where he served as missionary for a few months in Abbé McPherson's old home. He was subsequently stationed in Edinburgh, from where he came to Perth in 1832 to replace the deceased Fr. John Geddes. The task facing Fr. Mackay was daunting, but he undertook it with characteristic vigour. He completed the construction of the church of St. John the Baptist, which was opened on 18 November 1832, and dedicated on 16 December of that year. This was followed by the opening of a school. Lacking funds for either building or teacher, he assembled the children in the church and taught them himself daily for four hours. His circumstances became a little more comfortable in 1834, with the completion of the presbytery.

The mission grew, and, in 1837, upon the death of the octogenarian Fr. Alexander Macdonald in Crieff, Fr. Mackay began to say Mass at St. Fillan's as well. For several years, he was the sole missionary in Perthshire, and in his person re-united the two missions that had begun on the Drummond estates all those years back in 1685. He walked miles to celebrate Mass, not only in Crieff, but in Blairgowrie as well. In addition, he taught the rudimentaries of the Faith, and administered the sacraments. In 1837, he secured a feu in Blairgowrie, and two houses were constructed. On the upper floor of one of these a chapel was opened. Members of the local Catholic landed gentry, usually converts, opened house chapels, increasing his work. This occurred at Murthly, Grandtully in Strathtay, Tullymet and Woodhill in distant Strathardle.

Murthly was by far the grandest of these. Sir William Drummond-Steuart had returned from his adventures in America, where he had been received into the Church, in 1840. Some years after, his sumptuous chapel was opened. Fr. Mackay and the eccentric Sir William held each other in great esteem. Perhaps Fr. Mackay's reputation as an exorcist appealed to the laird. Fr. Mackay sat on the commission managing the Murthly estates, and even received a sizeable farm near the castle. One wonders what he made of the buffalo that Sir William had brought back from America. In 1846 the lure of an easier life brought Fr. Mackay to accept a post as chaplain in Murthly, from where he also served Blairgowrie until the mission there received a priest in 1849.

For reasons unknown today, he ceased to have a fixed charge in 1862, and wandered around the country. Then, in April 1863, he knocked at

the door of the Cistercian abbey of Mount St. Bernard near Leicester in England, where he eventually died in 1884. He was buried in the cemetery of the abbey. It is unclear if he ever entered the abbey as a monk, but the abbot was as impressed as all those who ever met Fr. Mackay with his piety and the strict observance of his Faith. Fr. Mackay was the true founder of the mission in Perth, and the man who is responsible for the existence of the church of St. John the Baptist.

SC

Bishop George Rigg

George Rigg was born at Crochmore, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, on 19 July 1814. Like the north east of Scotland, the Stewartry had been a stronghold of the Faith for centuries, where, under the protection of the local nobility, the Reformation had not made great headway. An only son, he lost his father at a young age; perhaps this increased his desire to be a priest, an idea that his family initially resisted quite strongly. They finally gave in, and, in 1829 he entered the brand-new seminary at Blairs. As almost every priest that has made an outstanding contribution to the community in and around Perth, George Rigg finished his education at the Royal Scots College in Valladolid, where he was ordained in 1838.

He returned to Edinburgh, where he joined a number of priests based at what is now St. Mary's Cathedral. Unlike most of his contemporaries, Fr. Rigg would spend an incredible 32 years in the capital. In 1845, he became the senior priest. While he was in Edinburgh, Fr. Rigg developed his organisational and administration skills, specifically with regard to Catholic education. He was responsible for the building of new schools, for equipping these, for training the staff, and for encouraging parents to make full use of the opportunities offered. A Catholic Industrial School was established to assist poor and neglected children to develop skills. The result of his efforts was that finances for Catholic schools trebled, and school attendance doubled. Such was his success, that HMS Inspectorate came to regard these schools as the model for Catholic education in the rest of Scotland.

From Edinburgh, he was transferred to Dundee, where he served for a short time in 1856, before being posted onwards to the Perth mission. He took up residence on the Feast of All Saints that year. For nearly eight years, he led the mission, and, characteristically, he was instrumental in the opening of the new school in the High Street in 1860, for which he managed to get government assistance. His efforts in educating the Catholic community in Perth were later to be praised by the Inspectorate. While stationed in Perth, Fr. Rigg also secured another important concession from the government: he received official recognition as visiting chaplain to Perth General Prison.

He returned to St. Mary's in Edinburgh in 1864, and was involved in a project for the benefit of Catholic orphans. He also edited the works of Bishop Hay, and sat on the School Board. All his life as a priest, Fr. Rigg had displayed a deep compassion for the weakest members of his community: children, orphans, and prisoners. It is, therefore, good to see that this man was elected to become the first post-Reformation Bishop of Dunkeld upon the restoration of the Scottish Catholic hierarchy in 1878. His consecration took place in Rome, and he must have rather liked Perth, for it was there that he took up residence. As Bishop, he oversaw a rapid expansion of his diocese, with new churches being constructed, and a marked increase in the number of missionaries working in the region. For the Catholic community in Perth he remained available to hear confession, and he visited the sick and the schools, continuing a life-time of dedication to the vulnerable. He died in 1887, after a long illness. His life may be summed up in the dying words of St. Martin: *Non recuso laborem*. He life was not just the confirmation that the Catholic Church in Scotland had weathered the Reformation, it also represents the compassion that priests need to have for the weakest members of their community.

SC

Fr. John McPherson, D.D.

John McPherson was born three miles outside Tomintoul, on 29 August 1801. Once more we have a priest serving the Perth mission who was born in the north east. His father died within months of his birth, and he was raised by his very pious mother. She must have been a major influence on his decision to study for the priesthood. Also influential was his near-relative, Abbé Paul McPherson, who, as Rector of the Scots College in Rome knew how to attract young men to join the clergy. He entered the seminary at Aquhorties in 1814, and went to Paris four years later. The Scots College there was no longer in existence, so he studied at St. Nicholas. A precocious intellect, he went on to Issy in 1823, transferring to the rigors of St. Sulpice one year later. He was ordained in 1827, some 13 years after entering the seminary. His first sermon was in French.

He returned to Scotland, and was a natural choice to become Professor at Aquhorties, although he gained some pastoral experience in the mission at Huntly. Soon he was back, and he oversaw the move of the seminary students to Blairs in 1829. Since the previous year, he had been compiling information on the fast-changing Church in Scotland, which resulted in the first *Catholic Directory*, printed at Blairs that year. It grew into the standard guide to the Church in Scotland, and was soon taken on by an Edinburgh-based printer. It is the oldest directory for the Church in the world, and still forms the only guide to its infrastructure.

In what the bookish Fr. McPherson must have found a rather unsettling

move, he was ordered to Edinburgh in 1830, which by then had a Catholic population of some 14,000. Two years later he found himself in Dundee, where 3,000 Catholics lacked a school, and had only 400 places in the tiny church in Meadowside. Here, Fr. McPherson was to show that he had an organisational talent. By 1836, Dundee boasted a Catholic school and a brand-new church. For most of this time, he had been the only priest in Dundee. He must have felt some considerable satisfaction at his achievements, but there can also be no doubt that he must have been elated when he was recalled to Blairs.

In November 1847, he was made President of the seminary, and spent a further eleven years there. In 1858, he received a Doctorate in Divinity in Rome. He was moved back to Edinburgh in 1861, but soon went to the sinecure of New Abbey. Then, in 1863, his peace was shattered when he moved to the laborious mission in Perth. It was Fr. McPherson who introduced the first religious order in Perth since the Reformation: in 1865 he brought the Ursulines of Jesus from Edinburgh. They took charge of the schools and visited the prisons. He bought Stormont House from the Episcopalians, and turned this into St. Joseph's Convent. He was in Perth for six years, and was then moved back to Dundee, where he died in 1871. In his obituary his sense of duty was praised, and this is undoubtedly justified. A man of his intellect must often have felt isolated in his missions, but he never refused to go where he was needed most. Fr. McPherson stands out as the greatest intellectual amongst the priests who have served in Perth.

SC

Fr. John McCorry

John McCorry was born in Glasgow, 25 January 1812. That a priest should have come from the then still very small Catholic community there, is, to say the least, rather unexpected. He went to the seminary at Aquhorties in 1826, and went to Blairs with all the other students under the guidance of Fr. John McPherson in 1829. He finished his studies at the Scots College in Rome, and was ordained in the Eternal City in 1837. His first mission in Scotland was at Preshome, which, during the eighteenth century, had been the centre of the Church in Scotland, but swiftly moved on to Aberdeen. In 1842, he received charge of the ancient mission at Braemar, where he became engaged in a controversy with a resident Presbyterian minister. This set him on a life-long path of pamphlet writing, public debating, and general defence of the Catholic Church.

His pamphlets cover an incredibly wide range of issues, but all share the apologetic style of his century, exemplified by the writings of Cardinal Newman. He feared none, and spared none. In Perth, he attacked the Lord Provost and the combined Protestant establishment. The latter had attacked 'Popery and the Jesuits' in a speech

in the City Hall in 1853, and came under sustained fire. Fr. McCorry's logic and his structured responses were irresistible. His defence included answers on being a Catholic, on being a priest, and on the merits of the Society of Jesus, who had taught him in Rome. It was the second time that he had felt compelled to defend the Church in Perth. In 1851, he had given a series of lectures in St. John the Baptist's, reviewing a series of talks given in the Free West Church by Presbyterian ministers, in which they had launched scathing attacks on 'Popery'.

His connections with Perth were long-standing. He had moved to Inverness from Braemar in 1844, before transferring to the Eastern District in 1846 and coming to Perth. He would spend the next decade in the Fair City. It was under his guidance that the church was extended, and one cannot be surprised that this fiery defender of his Faith managed to increase the number of Catholics attending Mass. He was raising funds for the reconstruction in Perth in Ireland in 1856 when he received the news that he was to become the missionary in Leith. Having subsequently worked in Dalkeith, Bathgate and Arbroath, he returned to Perthshire to serve as chaplain in Murthly.

All this time, he kept on writing articles and books, more than 15 in all. When he received a Doctorate of Divinity he got no more than he deserved. He was moved to work in Glasgow, and the combination of continual moves, work in difficult missions, and continued study and writing cannot but have contributed to the stroke which he suffered in the mid-1860s. He was allowed to retire in 1870, and moved to London, and, from there, to Rome, where he spent the final years of his life. He died there in 1880. Whereas Dr. McPherson embodies the ivory tower of academic clergy, Dr. McCorry stands here as a representative of the practical application of his learning in the wider world.

SC

Priests of the Mission and the Parish

In the household of the fourth Earl of Perth, 1686-1688

John Seton, S.J., 1686-1688
Robert Widdrington, S.J., 1686-1688

At Drummond Castle, 1685-1689

John Ambrose Cook, O.S.B., 1687-1689.

Fr. Cook's missionary work in Perthshire gave birth to the post-Reformation Catholic community. He was active on the Drummond estates, both around Drummond Castle and Stobhall.

Note: in the wake of the persecution of the Catholic Church by the Orangist regime, there were no priests in Perthshire between 1689 and 1698.

At Drummond Castle, 1698-1788

Alexander Drummond, 1698-1704 and 1706-1742
William Stuart, 1710-1717, as assistant
Andrew Hacket, 1725-1739, as assistant

Note: technically the mission was split in two in 1731, when the Vicariate of Scotland was divided into a Lowland and Highland Vicariate. The lands of the Drummonds lay across the new boundary. Stobhall, the hunting lodge of the Dukes, was chosen as the seat of the new mission, but incumbents at Drummond Castle continued to also serve Stobhall with some frequency.

George Gordon**,** 1739-1763, as assistant until 1742

George Cruickshank, 1748-1749.

Fr. Cruickshank came to Drummond Castle to recover from his ordeal during the '45, when he was chaplain to the Duke of Perth.

Robert Grant, 1763-1764.
Fr. Grant was the missionary for Angus, and served both Drummond Castle and Stobhall as well in this year.

Note: from 1763 there were permanently resident priests in Stobhall Castle. This marks the effective separation of the two missions.

At Stobhall Castle, 1731-1777

George Duncan, 1734-1738

Between 1734 and 1763, the mission was served from Drummond Castle. From 1747, however, the resident priest in Perthshire, Fr. George Gordon, was often in the company of Jane Gordon, dowager Duchess of Perth, who resided on her own estates at Stobhall Castle.

Alexander Gordon**,** 1763-1776
William Hay, 1776-1783

Note: in 1777, some four years after the death of the dowager Duchess of Perth, Hay moved the mission to a farm at Park. Mass was said in one half of a converted barn. Bishop Hay had received support for this move from the Commission for Forfeited Estates, and, more particularly, from Jane Gordon's kinsfolk, Lord and Lady Kames, who were prominent members of the Commission.

At Park Farm, 1777-1829

John Thompson**,** 1778-1779.

Fr. Thompson was assistant to Fr. Hay for a short period before he became the superior of the seminary at Scalan.

Abbé Paul McPherson, 1783-1791
William Reid, 1792-1812

William Rattray, 1796-1797.
Fr. Rattray was assistant to Fr. Reid before becoming professor at the Scots College in Valladolid, Spain.

James Cameron, 1789-1813.
The mentally unstable Fr. Cameron was effectively looked after by Fr. Reid, and, for the last year of his life, by Fr. Wallace.

William Wallace, 1812-1816
John Forbes, 1816-1818
William Caven, 1818-1819

William Rattray, 1819-1824.
Fr. Rattray returned to serve at Park once more. In 1824, with the number of Catholics in the cities growing very fast, he decided to move the seat of the

mission to Dundee. Fr. Rattray had been saying Mass in Perth, since 1821.

Served from Dundee, 1824-1831.

The chapel at Park was closed in 1827. Mass was continued to be said in Perth, with the mission there officially opened in 1830.

At St. John the Baptist's, Perth, 1830-now

John Geddes, 1830-1832

Very briefly, between January and June 1832,
the new mission was served from Crieff.

James Mackay, 1832-1846

Note: the church of St. John the Baptist was opened towards the end of 1832

John Stewart McCorry, 1846-1856
George, later Bishop, Rigg, 1856-1864
Dr. John McPherson, 1864-1869
Patrick McManus, 1869-1871
Dr. William Smith, 1871-1877
Joseph Holder, 1877-1878
William Geddes, 1878-1885
John Turner, 1885-1902
Michael Lavelle, 1902-1913
Thomas Welsh, 1913-1920
John McDaniel, 1920-1939
John Coogan, 1939-1971

Note: in 1946 the mission officially became a parish

Darby Melloy, 1971-1981
Edward Durkin, 1981-1987
Charles Adamson, 1987-1992
Charles Hendry, 1992-now

In addition, a total of 62 priests have served in St. John's as curates

HS and SC, with thanks to the Dunkeld diocesan archivist, Fr. Michael Milton

Immigration and the Catholic Communities

For most of the past century and a half, anyone who mentions Catholicism and immigration would immediately have been confronted by the word 'Irish'. To some extent, this immediate association was a justified one; in 1829, for example, as the Catholic emancipation act was being passed, there were a reported 500 Irish Catholics in the city of Perth, or, to be precise, 500 Irish Catholic adults. There are, however, many serious problems with this assessment, and there have been some serious challenges to the prevailing equation that, in Scotland, Catholic equates Irish. These challenges are very new. As recently as 1996, one of Scotland's leading historians could still claim that, by the 1840s, the Catholic Church in Scotland was almost entirely made up of Irish immigrants.

One has no intention of minimising the Irish contribution to the Catholic Church in Scotland. Indeed, without the enormous influx of Irish settlers in Scotland between the 1790s and the 1950s, the Church would have been much poorer culturally, and much smaller. The 228,000 Catholics who put down 'Ireland' as their country of birth in the census of 1861 speak volumes, particularly when one considers that there were about two to three children per adult at this date. Let us return to those 500 'Irish' Catholics in Perth, however, and examine the facts as they emerge from the records of the church of St. John the Baptist in Perth, one of which is on display in the exhibition. They commence in 1831, and give an exhaustive list of those new-born babies receiving the sacrament of baptism. Naturally, the names of the parents are also entered, and these provide much information on the ethnic or regional origins of the early community.

For the 1830s, and even for the early 1840s, Irish names do not predominate. Instead, one finds a large number of names from the traditional Catholic regions of Scotland: Macdonalds from the lands of Glengarry and Clanrannald, Gordons and McPhersons from the north-east. These predominate, and it is no coincidence that the first Perth-born priest to be ordained since the Reformation, Fr. Archibald Macdonald, carries an Highland name. There are also a rather large number of Italians, which is perhaps rather surprising. It seems that the Italian community of Perth has longer antecedents than is traditionally assumed. Also present are a few French names, possibly those connected with the exiled French court resident in Edinburgh at the time, or descendants of refugees from the Revolutionary wars. To these, one can add a sprinkling of German names, most probably merchants or, less likely, associates of the Schottenkloster. There are, of course, quite a few Irish names, and, as one may expect, they came mostly from the six northern counties of Ulster.

How to explain this seemingly anomalous situation? Well, it may not be as anomalous as one

expects. Initial studies into the ethnic composition of Catholics in Edinburgh around this time show a similar profile. Irish Catholics were frequently resident for short periods of time, many of them employed in seasonal farm work. In addition, there was the well-known friction between Irish and Scottish Catholics, particularly between Irish immigrants and Scottish priests. These revolved around significant differences in interpretation of Catholic worship and culture between the immigrants and the native priests. Irish Catholicism lacked some of the more sober traits that marked the Church in Scotland. In addition, it would not have been unusual for Irish Catholics to take communion in an inebriated state.

For Continental immigrants, the Scottish priests were rather less alien: the ones serving the Perth mission had all studied in Continental seminaries, where they had imbued elements of an international Catholic culture. One explanation for the relative dearth of Irish names in the baptismal register may be that rather few Irish Catholics attended Mass: the Church calculated that only three out of every ten Irish Catholics partook of the Eucharist in the mid-nineteenth century. This would climb gradually to a peak of around 65 to 70 percent in the mid-twentieth century, but that figure encompassed all Catholics, of every cultural background. In Scotland, the ethnic mixture of Catholics was relatively simple until fairly recently.

Four other groups stand out amongst the migrants in terms of numbers and cultural cohesion. The first amongst these has already been mentioned: the Italians. Very little proper research has been done on the Italian presence in Scotland before the middle of the nineteenth century, but the figure of 119 Italians in 1861, which has been widely accepted, must be wrong. There were at least thirty Italians in Perth alone in the 1830s, and the census must have missed many of the itinerant Italians. The census of 1901 is more useful. It reports over 4,000 Italians, and is at least an indication that real growth had taken place. Intensely Catholic in both religion and culture, this group did not always fit in well. Like the Irish Immigrants, they faced hostility from some Protestant quarters, and there was also some friction within the Catholic community itself. This reached its crescendo during the Second World War, when many from this community were imprisoned as enemy aliens. Since 1945, this group has become a more accepted part of the Catholic and Scottish community.

The second group came in two waves. Polish migrants first reached Scotland in the 1830s, fleeing the oppression by Czarist Russia. This was only a small group, and the first real wave of Poles began to arrive during the 1930s. The 1931 census reveals a total of 40,000 Poles in the UK, with a small proportion in Scotland. They arrived in numbers in Perth only during the Second World War, when the Polish exiled army had camps around the city. In total, 120,000 stayed on in the UK after the war ended, and they never suffered the same discrimination as other Catholic groups had done. The respect which they had earned during the war made sure of this. The second wave has come since

their country joined the EU. There are now an estimated 100,000 Poles living in Scotland, the largest influx of Catholics for a century. To what extent these will stay and integrate into the wider community remains to be seen, but the Polish presence has certainly altered the public perception of the Catholic Church.

Finally, and at the same time as the Poles, a small group of Ukrainian Uniate Catholics arrived, refugees from dreadful persecution in the USSR. They were never very numerous, and their liturgy is centred on the Cathedral in Dundee. The last forty years has seen further immigrants arriving to strengthen the numbers of the cultural variety of Perth's Catholic community. These range from Filipinos and Indians to Hong Kong Chinese; from Ugandans to Ghanese and people from the Caribbean, and include a wide variety of Europeans. Immigration has not only assisted the growth of the Catholic community in Scotland, it has enriched it culturally, and it has ensured that it is a reflection of the global family of Christ.

HS

The Italian Connection

The first Italian immigration to Britain took place about 150 years ago, although there have always been Italians resident in the country. In Perth, for example, Italian names appear in the baptismal register of 1831. In the Perth area, the Italian families came from the North of Italy, the Parma (Emilia) Region in particular. The people from this Region initially came to the London area to blast the tunnels for the London Underground, as they had already been doing this work in their own area of Italy. When their work was completed, they sent home to Italy for sack-loads of chestnuts from the countless forests in the Parma area and progressed to selling roast chestnuts in the streets in the winter months and selling ice-cream from freezers attached to bicycles in the summer.

Italians are very family orientated, so it was only natural to them that they should send home to their village for help from their brothers and sisters or their sons, daughters and more distant relatives or friends. The first male member of a family to come to Britain was known as "Padroni" and he would be assisted by "garzoni", a North-Italian dialect word for the boys who were sent for later. Most of the Italians who arrived at this time came initially to London as "garzoni", but eventually branched out on their own by going to other towns and opening their own shops and businesses. The Italians have always been noted as good cooks, so they adapted their catering skills to new types of food.

Although the "Fish & Chip" concept came from London where this was already an accepted "fast food", the ice cream association came directly from Italy. Even today, many Italians are still in the catering trade, others, however, have moved on to other trades and professions.

In the Perth area, most of the First Immigration Italians arrived around 1860 – 1896. Most of these immigrants were men who went back to their towns and villages in North Italy such as Borgotaro, Albareto, Rovinaglia, Valdena, and Sarzara, to bring back their childhood sweethearts as their brides. Others, such as my grand-parents Severino Guilianotti and Assunta Corvi, who were married in St John's church, Perth, on 6th July 1908, chose to have their weddings in Scotland. Their descendants are now third or fourth generation Scots and are fully integrated into the community, notwithstanding the rather unpleasant experience of internment during the last war.

The Second Immigration occurred between 1947 and 1952. Most of these immigrants were young girls who came from the South of Italy on government-assisted grants, and who ended up marrying Scots. Whereas the first immigrants tended to concentrate on integrating into the local community, the second wave tended to form social clubs. The Perth Italian Club started in a little upstairs room in the old High Street round about 1972. It has been functioning in its present form, with the addition of Scots of Italian descent, in St John's Church Hall since 2003.

Many of the Italian customs have been brought to Scotland by the immigrants. For instance, all Italian children are given their "holy medal" at birth. The girls receive a gold medal and chain of Our Lady, and the boys, one of Our Lord with the inscription "Dio Ti Protega" (May God Protect You) on the reverse. Most Scots-Italians eat "Italian" at home. They keep connection with their roots, often retaining their family home, and tend to holiday in Italy with their family or extended family.

Their Catholic religion and their Church is very important to them. The name of the Italian Club attached to St John's is Circolo Italiano Religioso, or the Italian Religious Circle. It undertakes a pilgrimage every year, one year in Scotland, and the next abroad. Its patron saint is St. Anthony of Padua, one of Italy's most popular holy men. In 2007, the pilgrimage was to Assisi. Integration has always been a prime feature of the Association; all their events, which include the aforementioned pilgrimages, the annual trip to the Mass celebrated by Archbishop Mario Conti and Bishop Philip Tartaglia on 2nd November for the dead of the Italian Community, Christmas dinner-dance and so on, are open to all members of the parish community.

There has been a Third Immigration of Italians to Britain. They did not have to walk from the North of Italy like the first influx, nor did they come from the South on government-assisted passage like the second group. They are part of the new Europe which allows its citizens to move freely from country to country within the European Union. In the Catholic Church in Scotland today we have several Scots-Italian priests, notably

Archbishop Mario Conti and Bishop Philip Tartaglia, an indication of just how much the Italian immigrants have altered the make-up of the Catholic community in the country. It is worth reflecting that in 1861 there were only 119 Italian-born persons in Scotland, and that their number had risen to over 4,500 by 1911. Numbers have continued to rise ever since, bringing valuable skills and abilities with them.

One final note: the Scots-Italians now have their own tartan which has been registered with The Tartan Society and is worn with pride on formal and sporting occasions.

Polish Connections:

The Story of Irene and Felix Jackson (Jureczko)

Irene Wieczorek was born on 15 May 1931 in Poland. Her mother, Jadwiga, and her father, Cheslaw, lived in a place called Bialowieza, a highly forested area in the north eastern side of Poland. Jadwiga Suma was born on 1 August 1914, and was sent to Siberia twice, once during the First World War, and once during the Second World War. Irene, only eight years old at the time, remembers when she and her mother, Jadwiga, father Cheslaw, her one year old brother Richard, and uncle Romek, were disturbed by a knocking on the door: when they opened the door, three Russian soldiers told them to pack a few things and dress in warm clothing as the weather was very cold. They were to go with the soldiers, but were told they would be back home in about two weeks.

That was 10 February 1940. They were put into a sledge and taken to a railway station and put in cattle wagons which were then sealed, it took them three months to get to their destination: Siberia. The reason they were taken from their home was that Irene's father, Cheslaw, was a Civil Servant working as a Forester in the National Park of Bialowieza. The Soviet authorities wished to remove all traces of an independent Polish nation.

"My father was made to work in a gold mine and if there was no gold there was no bread so we had to go hungry. Thanks to General Sikorski [the leader of the Free Polish Army red.] my father and uncle joined The Polish Free Army under British Command: we were then able to get out of "Hell." [After the Nazi invasion of the USSR, Stalin allowed Poles to join the armed struggle against the Germans, red]

Irene's journey to Perth started from the moment she, her mother and brother left Siberia in 1941. They all travelled first to Teheran and were there for years. Richard, the young boy, caught typhoid and dysentery and died at the age of three. His small grave remains in Teheran and his mother, Jadwiga, was heartbroken at the loss of her beloved little son.

Irene ate the food that was available and her mum tried to obtain little jobs of sewing to provide for her daughter and herself. Irene remembers that many people became ill because when they were hungry they ate fatty foods which she did not like. This may have saved her life; however the lack of food affected her wellbeing for the rest of her life.

Irene remembers that she and her mother went to India to a place near Goa, where they spent five and a half years at Camp Valivade. She had some of the best years of her life with other young Polish girls who were in the same position as herself, growing up through their adolescence. Although the displaced Polish people were living in camp conditions, it was very well organised and they always practised their Catholic religion; it was never forgotten. Regular masses were said and celebrations were enjoyed with the meagre luxuries they

may have had. Jadwiga, Irene's mum trained as a seamstress and was able to earn a little money sewing clothes for those who were in the camp.

In October 1947, at the age of 16, Irene left India with her mum for Liverpool, from where she travelled onwards to Cirencester, to Lancashire, to Wrexham, and then on to Aberargie, where her father, who had been re-united with his wife and daughter in Wrexham, would be able to gain employment in the forests which he had been told about. Irene met her husband, Felix Jureczko, on a "Blind Date" when she and a friend travelled to North Berwick to meet up with two Polish ex-servicemen. Felix fell in love with Irene straight away.

Felix Jureczko was born on 26 May 1925, and had lived in a place in southern Poland called Czarkow, with two brothers, three sisters, and his parents. His father was a master builder. Felix was taken by the Germans at the age of 14 to work as a farm labourer. Felix heard about the Free Polish Army when he was liberated by the Americans. He joined the Free Polish Army in 1944. He came to the UK to be trained in Catterick, moving on to be stationed in North East Scotland, at Montrose. When he was deployed to Holland to the 24th Armoured Division he was wounded near Breda on 10 March 1945, and was sent to a military hospital in Ormskirk in Cheshire to be treated for shrapnel in his hand. He did not return to active service and never returned to his family in Poland. [Those who had fought in the Free Polish Army were barred from entering the country by the Communist regime, red]

Irene Wieczorek was married to Felix Jureczko on 8 November 1952, in St. John the Baptist's church, Perth, by Fr. Lewandowski. The service took only 15 minutes and there were 38 guests present. Irene remembers that her bridesmaid was Christine McLeod who was a parishioner of St. John's, and was a friend she had met through working as a nurse at Bridge of Earn Hospital. Irene remembers that, when she worked in Bridge of Earn Hospital, a Polish priest used to come to the hospital and say mass on a Sunday for staff who could not attend mass if they were working shifts. At that time Polish mass was also celebrated at St. John's once a month.

On 8 December 1953, Irene had a son, Richard Jureczko, at Perth Royal Infirmary. Richard was baptised in St John's on 26 December 1953 on a very cold and wintry Boxing Day. Irene could not be present at the baptism as she was very unwell at the time. Their family are parishioners at St John's Church to this day.

Editor's note: this moving story reveals just a little of the immense human tragedies that hide behind the arrival of so many Catholics in Scotland. Poles of this generation were mainly the victims of conflict. Others, like the Irish, Italians, and the current generation of Polish immigrants, have come to find work, often fleeing desperate poverty. For all of them, the parish of St. John the Baptist in Perth has provided one element of comfort: a place to practise their faith, and a reminder that we are, after all, pilgrims on earth.

RJ, with notes by HS

Church Societies and Organisations

Catholic social life is marked by a variety of organisations, which can go under a number of names, such as sodalities, associations, or unions. Some can be parish-specific, but that is very rare. Mostly, organisations have a diocesan, national, linguistic, or even very often a global presence. The following are all currently (2007) active in the parish of St. John the Baptist.

The St Vincent de Paul Society was founded by Blessed Frederic Ozanam, with its first Conference being held in Paris, in 1833. The first Scottish Conference was held in Edinburgh in 1845, with the Perth Conference being established in St. John's in 1861, making it the second oldest Conference in Scotland. The Society's main aim is to relieve poverty and suffering by a "person-to-person" involvement of its members with those in need. The Perth Conference meets in the Church Hall on Sunday evenings during the winter months, and on Monday evenings during the summer. It has five active members, and new members, male or female, would be most welcome. Its President is John Joyce.

The Union of Catholic Mothers was introduced to Scotland in 1942, with the Perth branch being established in 1947. It celebrated its 60th anniversary earlier this year with a Special Mass conducted by Bishop Logan, followed by a dinner for members and invited guests. It is open to all Catholic women. Its main aims are the support of marriage and the family life, and the promotion of vocations to the religious life. It meets in the Church Hall on Tuesday evenings, except during school holidays. It has a varied programme of talks, visits, musical and social evenings, fund-raising events etc. It has 48 members. Its President is Mrs. Diane Jeffrey.

The Church Choir has been operating since before the community moved to Perth. The first time it is mentioned is 1820, when music was introduced in the Mass in the chapel in Perth after fierce resistance from a string of incumbents who believed it would antagonise the local Protestants. These days, the choir forms an integral part of the liturgical life of the Parish. It provides the praise element of the 11 am Sunday Mass. It has a core membership of around 20 members, but can call on additional support when required. Choir practice takes place on Monday evenings. The Choir Mistress is Susan Cassidy.

The Perth Italian Association, the successor of the Perth Italian Club, has been running for over twelve years, and is open to Catholics of Italian descent or with Italian connections. It holds its meetings on the last Saturday of each month at 1.30 pm, followed by a Mass in Italian, and concludes with a social gathering in the Church Hall. It also hosts a highly popular Christmas Dinner-dance. It has 57 members, with Norma Giulianotti being its current President. Its Chaplain is Canon Aldo Angelosanto.

The Polish Link Association was formed in 1995 to provide support to families of Polish ex-servicemen who had settled in the Perth area after the

Second World War. It is open to all persons of Polish descent. It holds between 5 and 6 meetings each year and has around 80 members. It has recently been active in helping Poles who have emigrated from Poland to settle in Perth, by assisting in finding accommodation and jobs, finding school places for their children and so on. There is Mass in Polish at 3.30 pm each Sunday, provided by a priest from the Chaplaincy for the Polish Community, based in Glasgow. The contact person for the Association is Anna Campbell.

For the younger parishioners, there is an active Brownie Pack, which has been in operation since at least 1974. Girls between 7 and 10 are eligible to join. The Pack has 20 members, who meet on Thursday evenings in the Church Hall for fun and games. Special activities and events are also organised throughout the year. The Brown Owl is Fiona Watson.

The 19th Perth Rainbow Unit was started in March 1991 with 15 members and 3 volunteer guiders. Its purpose is to introduce girls aged between 5 and 7 years to the world-wide Guide Movement. Through fun-filled activities each girl has the opportunity to make new friends, build confidence in a supportive atmosphere, and realise that she has the potential to turn her hand to anything.

St. John's parish is a member of PACT, or Perth Action of Churches Together, which is an organisation with an interdenominational membership of 26 churches in Perth and District. It organises events celebrating Christian life, particularly at Christmas and Easter. Our representatives are Mary Carroll, M.B.E., Teresa Coull, and Maria Methven.

Over the past 20 years, the parishioners of St. John the Baptist's church, together with those from St. Mary Magdalene's and St. Columba's in Birnam, have supported the work of the SPUC, both through their prayers and by giving most generously at the annual collection.

The Justice & Peace Group has been operating for some time, and is part of a large network of Justice & Peace Groups. The common mission of all Justice & Peace Groups is to work with all who share a commitment to bring the Good News of Christ's love to people who are poor, oppressed or excluded. Although relatively inactive at the moment, our Group has 5 members and was in the habit of meeting on the last Thursday of each month. Its main contact is Margaret Garvie.

The Catholic Faith Exploration Group, or CaFE, was set up by the Parish Evangelisation Team in 2007, to allow parishioners to explore and deepen their faith using modern media resources. There is a specific focus on evangelisation, discipleship, and community. The Group has around 30 regular attendees and meets on Monday evenings in the Church Hall.

The Catenians were founded in Manchester in 1908 and the Dundee and Perth Circle came into existence 73 years ago. The Circle meets monthly on the first Thursday of each month and engages in a variety of social and charitable activities. It is open to Catholic businessmen and meets at the Royal Perth Golfing Society and the Invercarse Hotel, Dundee. It has 40 members at

present and would welcome anyone interested in joining. Its President is Archie MacLellan.

The above show some of the rich tapestry of associations that mark St. John the Baptist's communal life. Other organisations have come and gone, often as a need arose or vanished. The ones in existence at the moment reflect the commitment to social justice, the strong spirit of ecumenical co-operation, a need for companionship, and concern for spiritual development. In addition, they show the continued strength of the two main cultural communities within the parish.

IC and AM

Scottish Catholic Education

Public education in Scotland was pioneered by the Church of Scotland, which handed over its network of parish schools to the state in 1872. Immigrants from Ireland, who represented the majority of Catholics in Scotland from the 1840s, were often denied access to the Scottish education system before 1872 as a result of the hostility of their Scottish neighbours. This led to Catholic schools being created, funded by the Catholic community, and linked to the re-established diocesan structure. In 1872, hundreds of School Boards elected by rate-payers were set up across Scotland to examine the provision of elementary or primary education in their parish or district. If a School Board came to the conclusion that there were not enough school places, they had permission to build and maintain schools out of the local rates. Charitably-funded Catholic schools remained independent of this system.

Before the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, there were around 500,000 Catholics in Scotland; the number of Catholic schools had risen to 213. Government grants were paid annually to any schools, including those under Catholic management, which were 'efficiently contributing to the secular education of the parish or burgh in which they are situated'. The size of the grant was conditional on the attendance and attainment of the pupils, the qualifications of the teachers, and the condition of the school buildings, and the schools were liable to be inspected by His or Her Majesty's Inspectorate.

In 1885, the Scottish Office took over from the Home Office and became responsible for law and order in Scotland, as well as for the various 'Scotch' or Scottish Boards. The Scotch Education Department, which had been formed in 1872, was renamed the Scottish Education Department in 1918. That same year the Education (Scotland) Act (1918) replaced the School Boards with County or City Education Authorities. Catholic schools were transferred to the supervision of local authorities with the agreement of the Catholic Church. Catholic schools were able to preserve their distinct religious ethos, open access to schools by priests, and the requirement that school staff be acceptable to the Catholic Church. To this day, Catholic schools remain as faith schools, whilst other state-funded schools are effectively secular and are known as 'non-denominational' schools.

The Education (Scotland) Act (1918) did not confer special status on Catholic schools in Scotland. The new law allowed all religious denominations to sell or rent their schools to Education Authorities, which were obliged to preserve the religious status of those schools. This was not intended to benefit only Catholics, whose leaders initially rejected the idea. Catholic dioceses were persuaded to move into the state system by the crippling cost of providing an education system for Scottish Catholics in a period of economic depression. At the same time, the state took control of the

curriculum in almost all Scottish schools, and became responsible for improving the quality of teaching and learning in its schools.

R. A. Butler was the Minister of Education in the wartime coalition government formed by Winston Churchill. Butler's 1944 Education Act established the structure for Britain's post-war education system. The Act raised the school-leaving age to 15. It guaranteed free secondary education for all young people in schools that would cater for the different academic levels and other aptitudes of children. Entry to these schools was based on the 11+ or 'quali' examination in the final year of primary education. In Scotland, primary pupils in the state system transferred either to junior or senior secondary schools. This system was reformed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, by replacing the selective two-tier structure with comprehensive secondary schools. At the same time, the school-leaving age was raised to 16. These developments had a profound effect on all secondary schools in Scotland, and came at a time when the powerful influence of religious teaching orders in state-funded Catholic schools in Scotland began to decline. Religious teaching orders continue to play an important role in a number of fee-paying Catholic schools in the independent sector.

Between 1945 and 1965, the post-war 'baby boom' meant that many more schools had to be opened to educate Scotland's young people. Today Scotland has nearly 400 state-funded Catholic schools and around half of these schools have been opened since 1945. Approximately 125,000 pupils attend Catholic schools in Scotland, or 20% of Scotland's school population. More than 90% of Catholic parents make use of Catholic schools where they are available. Catholic schools are part of the state system and are open to children of all faiths and none. Many non-Christian families choose a Catholic education as all parents have the right to have their children educated according to their own beliefs.

The schools have always formed part of the fabric of Scotland's, and, by implication of Perth's, Catholic community. Schools were founded almost as soon as a new church was erected during the nineteenth century, and many attempts were made during the centuries before to prevent children receiving a Catholic education. For those who could, this was available on the Continent, for others, in small, private establishments. With the mission or the parish, and the family, the schools are part of the core of Catholic life in Scotland. This is why, for so many Catholics, maintaining the Catholic ethos of 'their' schools is vital. Much has been made of the fact that this ethos has suffered a decline, but no-one would argue that Catholic schools are not amongst the best providers of education in the country.

TM

Part Three: Devotional Life

Continuity and Adaptation of Worship, 1685-2007

At the time of the fourth Earl of Perth's conversion to Catholicism in 1685, being a Catholic and public Catholic worship was not something to be broadcast. The Catholic community had dwindled, and the regular hierarchy had been extinguished with the death of Archbishop James Beaton of Glasgow, in Paris, in 1603. For fifty years, even the Church in Rome seemed to have forgotten about Scotland before the appointment of a Prefect Apostolic in 1553. Yet this picture of decline is countered by the growth of the Scots Colleges abroad. There were seminaries in Paris, founded in 1325, and re-endowed by Archbishop Beaton and Mary, Queen of Scots, Douai, Ratisbon, Rome, founded in 1600, and the Scots College in Madrid, founded in 1627. These all gave witness to a home community that was still alive, and which was still sending its sons for education abroad, some of them to be ordained as priests to return to Scotland and to serve the Catholic community.

These men found in Europe a vibrant Counter Reformation Church producing great thinkers and saints, where the glory of Catholicism could be seen, and where the liturgy as reformed and renewed by the Council of Trent could be celebrated in its fullest forms. Elegant churches, music and ceremonial would have been part of their education. This was in stark contrast to what they had experienced at home, where Mass was celebrated furtively, in hidden corners for the most part, and stripped of many of the externals that would have been common prior to 1560 and the implanting of the reformed liturgy.

However, at the heart of it all, the same action, the same words, the same essentials were present, whether in the greatest Cathedral or in the smallest cabin. The priest did in remembrance of Jesus exactly what had been done down through the centuries of the life of the Church. He took bread and he took wine, he said the blessing and shared with the people. The language of the liturgy was Latin and praise was given to God. In the light of the documents of Trent, the understanding was of the priest saying the correct words and speaking all the parts, with a server. The part of the people was to be present at the celebration, and this is what they did when they could, if or when the priest came to visit an area. The exhibition shows the survival of chalices from this penal time, when small vessels were carried about on the person of the priest. Often a small altar stone and missal were equally part of his travelling pack. It was a time of essentials.

Gradually the Catholic community became more tolerated, church buildings began to be created, and worship became less hidden. However, even in the late eighteenth century, the tide could turn against the Catholic community. In 1779, in Edinburgh, the Catholic chapel was burnt, and the meagre possessions were lost. The chapel at Park only barely escaped a similar fate.

Nevertheless, Catholicism was becoming more accepted and the last years of the eighteenth century saw a bill for Catholic emancipation passed in 1793, giving greater freedom to Catholics and their worship. While the civil authorities were willing to grant such freedom, the Church authorities, in the person of Bishop Hay, were much more reluctant to accept it. In July 1789, while the French were storming the Bastille, Bishop Hay was to forbid priests from having any music in their chapels whatsoever. This prohibition continued whilst Hay remained in post and it was only with the advent of Bishop Cameron, who was acting Vicar Apostolic from 1803, that permission began to be given for the introduction of music into the worship of the Catholic community. In 1805, the first public High Mass in Scotland since the Reformation was celebrated in Aberdeen. It was some five years later that singing by the congregation began to be permitted, and over the following fifteen years the type of liturgy that would have been familiar to the Catholics of Europe began to be part of the experience of at least some of the Catholic community in Scotland. It would not be until 1820 that this 'innovation' reached the community at Park.

From the early nineteenth century, then, the liturgical life of the Catholic community in Scotland grew steadily, along the lines that would also have been familiar in Europe. The two styles of liturgy that grew side by side were the singing of the Mass and the singing at Mass. The singing of the Mass was conducted initially by the clergy, but then, through the development of choirs, by lay people, who would sing both the ordinary of the Mass, those parts that were the same each week, as well as the singing of the proper of the Mass, those parts which changed each Sunday. However, this would have touched only a small percentage of those attending Mass, since at best only one Mass in each parish would be sung, and in many cases a sung Mass would have been a rarity. Further inroads to worship would have been singing at Mass, with hymns sung by the congregation during Mass, but not necessarily linked to the action of the liturgy. Such practice continued throughout the century, with some influence coming from the priests educated abroad, and major liturgical celebrations of external pomp being interspersed with the quiet worship of parish communities.

Bishop Gillis of the Eastern District was particularly fond of the full panoply of Church worship, and the description of the funeral of John Menzies of Pitfodels, one of the greatest benefactors of the Scottish Catholic Church, reflects Gillis's care. Later in the century, the solemn reception of the relics of St Andrew after the restoration of the Scottish hierarchy reflects that the hidden days of Catholicism were over. This coincided with the transformation of the Catholic community in Scotland from being a very small group to one greatly increased in number by the influx of Irish immigrants from the middle of the nineteenth century. The Church moved from the countryside into urban centres, where its priority was providing education to large groups, so concentration on matters liturgical was not central to the lives

of many.

Scotland was never unaffected by the developments in Church worship, and so the appeal from Pope St. Pius X for a restoration of liturgy and Church music in 1903 was heeded in Scotland. The traditional worship of the Church was influenced by the work of men like Dom Gregory Ould of Fort Augustus, a noted expert in plainsong. The lowering of the age of First Communion, also during the reign of Pope St. Pius X, introduced children more completely into the sacramental life of the Church. The introduction of the dialogue Mass, where the congregation joined in the responses to the Latin with the server marked another stage of change towards greater involvement. Holy Week, following the restoration of that liturgy by Pope Pius XII, was celebrated in union with the rest of the Church, and the anomaly of the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday was suppressed. All of these elements affected the life of the Catholic community in Scotland, while keeping them anchored in the practice of the Faith that has been handed down and for which their ancestors had suffered.

One specifically Scottish initiative for the liturgy at this point was the publication, in 1964, of the St. Andrew Hymnal. This collection of music for the congregation had as its intention to improve the repertoire and quality of congregational singing at Mass and other services. It included a large number of Latin hymns as well as vernacular hymns, reflecting the place of the classical language in the life of the Church. The hymnbook, however, was published just months after an event that was to affect the worship of the Catholic community in the most profound of ways.

On 4 December 1963, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council in solemn session promulgated the decree *Sacrosanctum Concilium* on the Liturgy of the Church. The aim of the decree was to review the liturgy of the Church and to adapt to the modern situation those elements of Catholic worship that were open to adaptation, whilst at the same time remaining faithful to the tradition of the past and leaving untouched those elements that were not subject to change.

In the years that ensued, a new Missal was prepared, the Latin version being published in 1970, 400 years after Pope St. Pius V promulgated the Missal after the Council of Trent. This Missal was translated into the vernacular and the English Missal was published in 1973 and remains in use today. In the period from 1963 onwards, change in the Mass and the language of Mass was introduced piecemeal, with first certain prayers and then the readings being in the vernacular, whilst the great Eucharistic prayer, the Canon of the Mass, remained in Latin. By 1973, it was possible for the liturgy in its entirety to be celebrated in the vernacular, although the definitive texts were always issued in Latin.

The immediate impact on parishes was profound. At many levels change was not anticipated and so priests and people had to learn what was involved. Beyond the change of language and the need to learn new responses, there was also a change in the internal layout of the Church. Mass

celebrated facing the congregation became the general practice and all sorts of temporary arrangements were made to permit this. The reception of Holy Communion as an integral part of being present at Mass increased, with the Eucharistic fast before Holy Communion being reduced to only one hour. Learning to sing the Mass for all the congregation led to the introduction of more modern music, not all of it of a high standard.

Gradually, the understanding of what was required became clearer and a new appreciation of the liturgy of the Mass took hold. It was seen, as it always had been, as the hallmark of the Catholic community, but no longer was simply being present enough. The call, first issued by Pope St. Pius X for full, active, and conscious participation, was renewed. This resulted in an increase in lay ministry, readers, cantors, servers, male and female, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion became familiar sights in the churches. Music that was more fitting began to be developed and the singing of the Mass became part of the repertoire of most parishes, particularly in the wake of the Papal Visit of 1982.

More permanent reordering of churches means that most churches are now adapted for the celebration of the liturgy according to the vision of the Second Vatican Council, which was in continuity with what had gone before, but also sought to improve the worship of the community in the present day. Although the change to the liturgy of the Mass was the alteration that had greatest effect on most parishioners, the other sacraments were also reviewed and continue to be reviewed. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, with its public journey into the Church, was one of the most notable changes. At parish and diocesan level, those becoming Catholic are now introduced to the community at an earlier stage, and through public celebrations mark their journey of faith. The initiation of children has developed, and with the restoration of the traditional order of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion, children are being introduced to full membership of the Church at an earlier age. The introduction of penitential services underlines the communal nature of this sacrament, as well as the individual responsibility for seeking forgiveness. Anointing of the sick is celebrated both privately and communally in the course of the year. All these elements show a community and a faith that is alive and active.

Some of the more traditional elements have, however, disappeared from the life of the community or are less frequent. Rosary and Benediction, the standard evening service of sixty years ago, is rarely seen now, although both are still practised at St. John the Baptist's in Perth. May processions or Corpus Christi processions are equally rare. To counter this, the First Saturday devotions to Our Lady of Fatima are strong in many places, and prayer groups of the charismatic or other sorts, faith sharing groups, and ecumenical services are now all parts of the life of the Catholic community.

The fourth Earl of Perth might have difficulty in recognising some of the elements of the Church of today

were he to return to its midst, but he would also know that it is only the accidentals that have changed. The essence of Catholicism is still the same: union with Christ through the sacraments, union with the visible Church on earth through communion with the successor of Peter in Rome, and a life of prayer and service. As St John the Baptist's celebrates this anniversary, it shares the task of its patron, to prepare the way of the Lord.

MR

The Sacred Heart of Jesus

Devotion to the Sacred Heart is a special form of devotion to Jesus. It may be defined as devotion to the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ, in so far as the Heart represents and recalls His love. The visible wound, made by the soldier as Jesus hung on the Cross, should naturally recall the invisible wound of His love.

From the time of saints John and Paul, there has always been in the Church something approaching a devotion to the love of God. However, it was not until the eleventh and twelfth centuries that we find the first unmistakable indications of devotion to the Sacred Heart. It was in the fervent atmosphere of the reformed Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries that the devotion first arose, although it is impossible to say positively what texts or votaries were used. It was well known and practised by many saints, including St. Gertrude, St. Mechtilde, and St. Bernard of Clairvaux. On the feast of St. John the Evangelist, for example, St. Gertrude was allowed to rest her head near the wound of Jesus' Heart, and she asked St. John if, on the night of the Last Supper, he, too, had felt the delightful pulsations, why he had never spoken of the fact. John replied that this revelation had been reserved for subsequent ages when the world had grown old and become cold to the love of God, and it would need to be warmed again by these revelations.

From the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, the devotion was practised everywhere by privileged souls. The lives of the saints and the annals of different religious congregations such as the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Carthusians, furnish many examples of the devotion. It was in the seventeenth century, however, that the devotion to the Sacred Heart

of Jesus would be fully developed, through a humble Vistandine sister, St. Margaret Mary. Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary (1647-1690) in the Visitation Monastery in Paray-le-Monial on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, and, like St. Gertrude, he allowed her to rest her head on His Heart. He then disclosed to her the wonders of His love, telling her that He wanted to make it known to all mankind. To diffuse the treasures of His goodness and He had chosen her for this work.

In another apparition, Jesus appeared radiant with love, and asked for a devotion of expiatory love: frequent Communions, Communion of the first Friday of the month, and the observance of holy hours. In what is known as the 'great apparition', Jesus appeared while Margaret Mary was adoring Him in the Blessed Sacrament, and said,

'Behold this Heart which has loved men so much, that it has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming itself in order to testify to them this love; and in return I receive from the greatest number nothing but ingratitude by reason of their irreverence and sacrileges, and by the coldness and contempt which they show me in this Sacrament of Love'.

He then asked for a feast of reparation to be held on the Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi.

After the death of St. Margaret Mary, in spite of many obstacles, devotion to the Sacred Heart flourished. However, it was not until 1856, at the urgent request of the French bishops, that the feast was extended to the universal Church. Many of the Scottish priests, however, came into contact with the devotion well before that date. In Spain, Valladolid, the home of the Scots College or seminary, was also the centre of the devotions to the Sacred Heart. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the Sacred Heart played a prominent role in Perth from an early date in the nineteenth century.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, Sister Faustina, now St. Faustina, received a call from Jesus, who told her,

'I am sending you with my mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to my merciful Heart'.

Jesus showed her an image of Himself wearing a white garment, one hand was raised in blessing and the other was at His breast, and from there emanated two large rays; one red and the other pale. He asked that this image be painted with the words, 'Jesus I trust in you' at the bottom of the picture. He promised that , 'the soul that will venerate this image will not perish'. He also gave her some prayers with the promise of His powerful help for those who pray them fervently; for example, 'O Blood and water which flowed from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of His mercy for us, I trust in you'.

It is in this form that a large number of statues were made just before and immediately after the Second World War, including the one on display in the exhibition. The devotion to the Sacred Heart is a classic example of change and continuity in one devotional element in the Catholic Church. It slowly mutated in how it

was expressed in art, and it mutated equally slowly in how it was expressed in devotional activities. As with so many of these long-standing Catholic practices, devotion to the Sacred Heart has suffered a decline in popularity since the Second Vatican Council, and, again like so many of these devotions, it has been experiencing a small revival since the late '90s. In St. John the Baptist's, the importance of the devotion to the Sacred Heart may be measured by the fact that, from the 1920s to the late 1970s, one of its two side-chapels was dedicated to the Sacred Heart. The other one was dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes.

AL

Devotion to Mary: the Changing Face of Our Lady in the Catholic Church

From earliest times, there has been a continually developing veneration for the sanctity and exalted privileges of Mary as Mother of God. Paintings in the Catacombs, from the second and third centuries, show the exceptional position she had begun to occupy in the thoughts of the faithful. There are also many writings from this period honouring her purity and sanctity, and affirming her perpetual virginity.

In the East, as early as the end of the sixth century, there were three feast days in honour of Mary. Beyond all doubt, the devotion to the Blessed Virgin had assumed all those elements which are usually associated with the later Middle Ages in the West. Still in the Middle Ages, we see the West with a more authoritative acceptance of Marian devotion, with Papal sanctions for the feasts of the Assumption, Annunciation, and the Purification of Our Lady.

Countless churches were dedicated to her, many of these the most important in Christendom, such as the Cathedrals of Rheims, Chartres, Rouen, and Paris. From about the year 1000, we find a deep feeling of love and confidence in Our Lady. What until now had been the piety of individuals began to take organised shape in a vast multitude of devotional practices. Long before this time, a Lady altar was probably to be found in all the most important churches. Many records testify that at such altars, paintings, mosaics, and, ultimately, sculptures reproduced the figure of the Blessed Virgin to

the great appreciation of the faithful. By the eleventh century, we find the Angelus and the Salve Regina, which are still sung and recited throughout the Catholic world. The twelfth century gave us the first half of the Hail Mary, but it was not until the fourteenth century that the name of Jesus was added, and St. Bernardine completed it by giving us the second half in the sixteenth century.

The most important Marian prayer, the Rosary, started to develop in the Middle Ages and it was the practice to wear the beads, which were of different fashions and lengths. Some had 15 decades, some 10, some 5 and some even less. The mysteries were added during the fifteenth century, in the Low Countries, by members of the Dominican order. In the seventeenth century, St. Louis Grignion de Montfort wrote his great spiritual work, 'True Devotion to Mary', in which he tells us that the most perfect way to Jesus is by consecrating ourselves to Him through Mary. It was now that sodalities of the Blessed Virgin began to manifest themselves, particularly in houses of education whose members consecrated their studies by placing them under the patronage of Mary, Queen of Purity. The month of May was dedicated to Mary, and May processions honouring her became very popular.

The greatest stimulus to Marian devotion in recent times has been afforded by the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin to St. Bernadette in Lourdes and to St. Catherine Laboure in Paris, both in the nineteenth century, and to the children in Fatima in 1917. She comes as our Mother to call us to be reconciled to God by prayer, especially the Rosary, penitence, and sacrifice. Mary's role is to bring us to her Son who gave her to us as our Mother, and, like any mother, she wants to protect us from all harm. When the atomic bomb destroyed Hiroshima in 1945, eight men living near the blinding centre of the nuclear flash miraculously survived the searing hurricane of blast and gamma rays, while everyone within a mile radius perished. For decades, 200 scientists have examined these men, trying in vain to determine what could have preserved them from incineration. One of the survivors, Fr. H. Shiffner of the Society of Jesus, gave this dramatic answer on TV in America: 'In that house, we were living the message of Fatima'.

It may be clear that the Virgin Mary is as popular in the Catholic Church as she ever has been. Indeed, it has been argued that she is more popular than she has ever been. The late Pope, John Paul II, dedicated his pontificate to her, and attributed his survival of the assassination attempt to her intervention. He later placed the bullet at the shrine in Fatima. There have been so many apparitions of the Virgin Mary since the last World War, that it may be said that she has overshadowed all the other saints. This is only appropriate: no other human has ever been so close to the Divine as Our Lady. In St. John the Baptist's, Perth, devotion to the Virgin Mary is as strong as ever. There are still recitals of the Rosary, May and October are still dedicated to her, and on the Feast Days of Our Lady the parish priest wears blue vestments.

AL

Pilgrimages

From the fourth century onwards, pilgrimages have formed an integral part of the Catholic experience. They originated in a deep-seated need to stand where the martyrs died, to walk the streets where Our Lord had walked. The act of travelling to a sacred site is not confined to Catholicism, indeed, is not just a Christian expression of religious sentiment. All religions have aspects of travel to sacred sites, and it is a reasonable assumption that early Christians copied the practice from Greek, Roman, and Egyptian examples. Initially, pilgrimages were predominantly to the Holy Land, and the earliest records of Christians involved in ritual travel come from there. Soon, however, Rome, with its associations with St. Paul and the martyrs, and other sacred places, began to feature on the pilgrimage itinerary.

For many centuries, this was one of the main reasons for ordinary people to find themselves on the road. Travelling to shrines took pilgrims to all corners of the Christian world and beyond, thereby providing them with a sense of the reach of the Church of which they were members. By the thirteenth century, the roll-call of international pilgrimage places was well established. Top of the list came Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and this in spite of occasional Muslim hostility to Christian pilgrims. This was closely followed by Rome. The Eternal City drew large crowds wishing to visit the centre of the Church, vastly increased in numbers every fifty years, when a Holy Year was proclaimed. Third came Santiago de Compostela, in north-western Spain. Nobody quite knows why it was St. James' bones that attracted more pilgrims than any of his fellow Apostles, with the exception of saints Peter and Paul. Yet, every year, the Sacred Road was full of the pious, the curious, or just plain tourists.

Closer to home, in Canterbury, St. Thomas Becket attracted many pilgrims, as did the Apostle Andrew in Saint Andrews in Fife. Local pilgrimage sites normally are more difficult to assess; we simply do not know whether any of the faithful travelled to St. Fillan's bones in Glendochart, although we do know that King Robert the Bruce held him in special veneration. And did anyone from Perth actually travel to the shrine of the only home-grown saint? Were there Perthshire pilgrims going to St. William of Perth in Rochester? Again, we cannot be sure. What we do know is that the Reformation theoretically put an end to this. Theoretically, for there are a myriad of complaints from Presbyterian ministers about the 'ignorant multitude' continuing in their 'papistical' practices. Ironically, we know that after the Reformation pilgrimages were made to St. Fillan in Glendochart, and we have a report from Bishop Geddes in the late eighteenth century in which he mentions the Catholic communities around Drummond Castle and Stobhall engaged in the practice. Around the same time, we learn that Protestants still went illicitly to a former holy well in Findo Gask, just outside Perth.

It was not until the nineteenth century

that ordinary Perthshire Catholics could once again contemplate participating in international pilgrimages. For important families, such as the Dukes of Perth, Rome was always a possible destination, and we know that many travelled there. With Catholic emancipation, and with better transport links, however, the holy sites became accessible to everyone once again. This had as its unintended consequence that Scottish Catholics once more encountered their Church abroad, and, as a result, could begin to think of themselves as members of a global body again. In Rome and in Spain, they could stay in the Scots Colleges, and in Germany, until the third quarter of the nineteenth century, in the Schottenkloster.

Rome and the Holy Land were the two most desirable destinations, but, in the mid-nineteenth century, they were joined by the first of the great Marian sites, in Lourdes. There, after the appearance of Our Lady in 1858, sprang up the most important new pilgrimage site in the Catholic Church, and very soon, Scottish Catholics found their way to southern France. In 1917, this was joined by Fatima in Portugal, where Our Lady appeared, too. The Church has not officially endorsed the visions at Medjugorje, but that, too, has attracted many pilgrims since 1981. On the Continent, the saints attracted, and still attract, plenty of Perth pilgrims.

In Scotland, pilgrimages have revived, too. Although it has lost some of its popularity, Our Lady's grotto at Carfinn, constructed by unemployed Lithuanian Catholics during the Great Depression, has been an important focal point. Iona, the monastery of St. Columba who did so much to bring Christianity to Scotland, has also witnessed a return of Catholic pilgrims. Of course, pilgrimage is frequently, perhaps overwhelmingly, the endeavour of individuals or small groups. It can be, and often is, a community enterprise. As early as 1890 we find an organised pilgrimage from St. John's to Mount Croach Patrick in Ireland. Ten years earlier still, the first organised pilgrimage to Lourdes had taken place. Since then, the parish, or parishioners with others from the Dunkeld diocese, has seen organised pilgrimages to a number of shrines. Important amongst these have been St. Margaret of Scotland at Dunfermline, Iona, the Holy Land, Rome, and, of course, Lourdes, which is an annual event.

HS and SC

Part Four: Artistic Achievement

The Building of the Church of St. John the Baptist

The land on which St. John the Baptist's church is built was purchased by a Mr. Bremner of Edinburgh, acting on behalf of Fr. William Reid. Reid had been the missionary of the mission at Park before 1812. The land lay just outside the confines of the city of Perth, in what Fr. William Wallace, in a letter to Bishop Alexander Cameron, later called 'an unfrequented street'. Construction on the chapel did not begin until 1831, with the arrival of Fr. John Geddes, the first Catholic priest resident in Perth since the Reformation. It was halted by his sudden death in January 1832, aged only 24. After a gap of a few months Fr. James Mackay, the new missionary, arrived, and work recommenced. In all, it cost some £1,300 to built, and it was opened on 18th November 1832. It was solemnly dedicated on 16th December. Fr. Mackay then built the presbytery house at 16 Melville Street in 1834, costing another £500. The costs involved were large, although the poverty of the congregation may have been a little exaggerated. For some years, Fr. Mackay would take in lodgers from Perth Academy to supplement his income.

By the mid-1840s, the Catholic population grew enormously, and the need to enlarge the church arose. The first efforts to raise funds were undertaken, and, with the arrival in 1846 of Fr. McCorry, this was stepped up. He also drew up plans for a school. During his tenure, Fr. Archibald MacDonald, the first Perth-born priest since the Reformation, was ordained in 1847. The school was opened in the following year and improvements were carried out in the church's interior. This became more Continental in outlook, with Mr. Allan of Inchmartine paying for a marble altar, a new sanctuary, and donating a fine silver chalice. The money raised, St. John's was closed for some months in 1855 to allow for the construction of the extension, under the direction of Perthshire architect, Andrew Heiton Jr. It re-opened in 1856.

It was Fr. George Rigg, later the first post-Reformation Bishop of Dunkeld, who presided over the rededication. He also opened the new school in the High Street. The old organ must have been too small for this new building, and in 1867 a new one was installed, under the auspices of Fr. Cummings. That year, Andrew Heiton Jr. began the construction of St. Mary's monastery in Kinnoull. Twelve years later, in 1878, the hierarchy was restored in Scotland, and George Rigg, now Bishop, chose St. John's as the seat for his new diocese. He extended the church by adding a Lady's Chapel, where he was interred upon his death. His successor, Bishop Smith, resided in Perth until moving to his new cathedral in Dundee in 1894. The presence of both bishops gave impetus to renewed construction. In 1885-6, work was begun on a belfry. Although the intended tower never materialised, a 300 lb bell was eventually installed in 1886. Donated by Louis Stratz and blessed by Bishop Rigg on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, it first rang out at Midnight Mass that year.

Just before Bishop Smith moved to Dundee, the church was, once more,

closed for a few months. Internal and external work was carried out, which included lifting the lower 1832 roof to the level of the 1855 section. The font from the chapel at Tullymet was installed, as were some of its stained glass windows at a later date (1901). It was into this now much roomier building that a Neo-Gothic high altar was installed in 1905. It replaced the artistically refined altar donated by Viscount Allan, and, at 27 feet high, fitted rather badly into the apse.

In 1921 a Restoration and Renovation Group was set up, which collected funds for improvements. In 1925 enough money had been raised for the installation of electric lights, new heating, altar rails, two new confessionals, and a window and plaque for the dead from the First World War. The church was not to alter its appearance in a significant way again for nearly half a century. The only real change was the installation of the Sanctuary Lamp in 1941, a donation by the grateful Polish armed forces. In 1967, the church closed for some months to carry out the changes required by the Second Vatican Council's decisions on the liturgy. The 1907 High Altar was ripped out, and replaced by a much plainer one, allowing space for the celebrant to face the congregation. A proper concrete foundation was laid under the entire floor, which had previously rested on sand. With the High Altar, the altar rails vanished. The old gallery was removed and replaced, and a new organ, previously in a United Presbyterian Church in Dundee, put in place.

Since then, more changes have occurred, although not on this scale. Perhaps the most intrusive one was the demolition of Bishop Rigg's Lady's Chapel, which was removed to make way for a hall. More sympathetic have been the external restorations, the repairs to the roof, and the cosmetic improvements for the 175th anniversary of the building, which saw the old flooring replaced, a new heating system installed, and even cushions placed on the pews.

SC

St. Mary's Monastery, Kinnoull

St. Mary's Monastery was built by the Redemptorists in the 1860s as a centre for missions and retreats. In the words of Cardinal O'Brien, St. Mary's has "been central in the development of the spiritual lives of most of our priests in Scotland over the years – as well as, of course, helping tremendous numbers of religious and lay people". For well over a hundred years, every single priest in Scotland made his retreat at St. Mary's, and, from St. Mary's, Redemptorist priests travelled throughout Scotland preaching parish missions and retreats.

In the 1980s, in response to the needs of the wider community, the facilities of the monastery were made available to the general public. The courses in spiritual and human development which are now offered by the staff of St. Mary's attract people from all over Britain, and from countries around the world. Twice a year, St. Mary's has a Seven Week Sabbatical Course for Priests, Religious, and Lay Pastoral Leaders. On these courses you will find men and women from New Zealand and Australia, USA and Canada, the Philippines and South America, and from many of the African countries. Bishop Logan drew attention to this when he wrote, "St. Mary's, Kinnoull, is a unique resource in Scotland and its role is both national and international". As such, it reflects the parish of St. John the Baptist: both have increasingly become internationalised.

The Monastery offers ecumenical hospitality to all the Churches in Scotland. Presbyterian ministers, Episcopalian priests, Methodist Ministers, together with members of their parishes and congregations, find an ideal environment for their own spiritual renewal in the tranquillity of the monastery, with its peaceful gardens. The Rev. David Ogston captured the atmosphere well when he wrote, "the very stones breathe contemplation and prayer". And the former Episcopal Primus, Bishop Bruce Cameron, wrote, "St. Mary's plays a significant part in the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church. Through summer schools for ordinands and lay ministers, to Cursillo weekends, and conferences and retreats many Episcopalians have experienced the warmth of Kinnoull hospitality. We are very grateful for the openness of the Institute to this ecumenical involvement". When one contemplates the difficulties which were put in the way of the founding members of the community by some, but not all, of the other denominations, this is a remarkable and providential change, indeed.

The Crypt at St. Mary's was officially opened by Provost Hulbert on 1 November 2007. This is a new facility, comprising four rooms underneath the church, which will now be available to groups from the city of Perth for their own educational, cultural and social needs. The Crypt, designed by Andrew Heiton Jr., Perth's most illustrious architect, has been called an "architectural gem" and will provide a unique ambiance for meetings. Once more, St. Mary's is playing its part in the wider integration

of the Catholic community of Perth with the rest of the city. And, like the Catholic community, it has been able to do so without losing its own, unique culture.

JM

Artistic Endeavours

As volume one of this small series exploring the past of the Catholic community in and around Perth shows, the quality of the artistic production, and the aesthetic appreciation of the community has fluctuated wildly over time. There have been some real highlights, as, for example, the decision to give the commission to build St. Mary's Monastery to Andrew Heiton Jr., who was one of Scotland's better architects. At the same time, there is much that is plain and commonplace. And this is to be expected: why would the Catholic community differ greatly from their neighbours in that respect?

Where it did and does differ is in the wide range of influences which its artistic culture experiences. No Catholic community anywhere in the world can be impervious to what happens on an artistic level in the centre of their world: Rome. For the Scots, this influence has long been enhanced by the presence of the Scots College there, a conduit for new thinking on the arts through the priests who study there. The same is true for the Royal Scots College in Spain. These two centres of the Scottish Catholic Church find themselves in cultures which are immersed in Catholicism, unlike the environment in which the Scottish Catholic community has had to operate since 1560. And thus we find Italianate neo-Baroque crucifixes, such as the one donated by Mr. Allan of Inchmartine, which once stood on a neo-Baroque altar.

Then there is France, with, as an artistic twin, Belgium. For many centuries, Catholic communities in Scotland looked to these countries to provide them with the necessities for saying Mass: chalices, patens, vestments, etc. One can, therefore, detect changes in taste in those countries echoed throughout the range of church furnishings in Scotland. This is less so the case today, but the 1921 chalice, the monstrance from Kinnoull, and the former high altar in St. John the Baptist's all bear testimony to this fact, as does the interior of the church in St. Mary's monastery.

For the period between the 1830s and the 1950s, church architecture

and furnishings were dominated by the neo-Gothic style. This began as a potent counterblast to the philistine iconoclasm of the French Revolution, with the publication of Chateaubriand's *Génie du christianisme* in the 1790s. Its secular expressions are well-known, as is the impact it had on the Church of England. In Scotland, it would, in the long-term, mould the architecture of the Church of Scotland as much as it would that of the Catholic Church. Yet there always was some tension. To many, particularly to those with an ultramontane view, Italy should be the source of the artistic expression of Catholicism. This was perhaps particularly true for the noble and aristocratic donors to the community of St. John's. With the exception of William Dick from Tullymet, all donors display at best a tension between the pull of the international neo-Gothic and that of Italy.

Mr. Allan of Inchmartine suffered least from this, Sir William Drummond-Steuart most; and so one can see the impact of Chateaubriand on the font and stained glass windows in St. John's, whereas the Italian influence is visible in Lady Gray's donation of a rock crystal crucifix. Later years would weaken both movements. Neo-Gothic received one final impulse from the Arts and Craft Movement, but this shows more in the commissions from the Church of Scotland than in those from the Catholic community. Pastiche was slowly infiltrating, which is well expressed in the decline of the art of statue making.

Beneath these overseas influences one may also detect a more identifiably local impulse, as well as ideas from abroad which did not sit easily within what had become 'The Style' of religious art. The cast-iron statue of Our Lady of Lourdes may be cited in this respect. Whilst perfectly conventional in what it portrays, it does so in a material that was far from normal. A more adventurous approach to religious art can also been seen in the Stations of the Cross, or in the Sanctuary Lamp, both of which deviate quite considerably from the dominant artistic taste of the period during which they were created.

No survey of the way in which successive generations of Catholics have given shape to their religious environment can be complete without touching upon the impact of the Second Vatican Council. The results of the decisions made by the fathers of the Council were far-reaching, and, artistically at least, a double-edged sword. So much of the old artistic patrimony was swept away that one may, at times, speak of iconoclasm. Nor were the replacements always of the highest quality. One only has to look at the missal from Kinnoull printed in 1913, and compare that with what has been printed since to understand the relative decline in artistic achievement.

Against the losses and the decline in artistic standards must be set the freedom to think again on what constitutes religious art. One needs, in this respect, to remember that the art of the Counter-Reformation did not spring up within two years of Martin Luther, either. The new statue of St. John the Baptist, for example, can rival anything produced in a previous age, and could not even have been contemplated without the freedom created by the Council.

The old neo-Gothic expression had, with a few exceptions, gone stale. It will not do to point at the gloriously delicate 1921 chalice, and use that as if it is representative of the artistic achievements of that period. For that, it has too much of the Art Deco style. It is to be hoped that, unlike in the 1920s, some of the modern trends in the artistic world will find permanent echo in the art which the Church will commission over the next decades to give a cultural expression to the teachings which she holds dear.

HS

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