

Golden Jubilee Celebrations  
1893 - 1943

FOREWORD

In presenting to you this souvenir sketch of St. Joseph's Mission, Tollcross, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee, we would like to remind you that the fundamental idea of the celebration, is to render God, a solemn Act of Thanksgiving for His Divine Presence on our Altar for the past fifty years. To-day we take part in this supreme Sacrifice of Thanksgiving -- Holy Mass-- to mark our appreciation to God for the work of Redemption, which He has wrought for us in the past fifty years.

To-day during Holy Mass, let us think of the countless graces and blessings that have come to our souls. But while we thank God with joy, let us think also of those who were our mediators with Almighty God -- those who are living, but especially, those who have been called to their eternal reward -- viz., Our Beloved Archbishop, so recently dead; Rev. Fathers Doody, O'Sullivan, Horgan, Hennessy and Doherty. REQUIESCANT IN PACE.

We are holding our Jubilee on this, the Feast of St. Joseph our Patron, with the anxieties of war around us. Let us take this opportunity of again placing ourselves under his protection, with a special plea for the men and women of the parish who are serving their country.

*History of  
St. Joseph's Church, Tollcross  
1893 - 1943*

In the early days of the Catholic Church in Glasgow, it would seem that Catholics were rather slow in penetrating the district around Tollcross. It was attached to St. Mary's from 1842 to 1857, but we are told that one bench was able to accommodate all the Tollcross Catholics. When Shettleston or Eastmuir was cut off from St. Mary's in 1857 Tollcross became part of the new parish. From this onward, its growth is more marked. The Clyde Iron Works became the nucleus of a Catholic community. A briskness in the mining industry swelled it. So far had things advanced in 1874 that the late Very Rev. Canon McBrearty, who was then parish priest of Shettleston, opened a school at Tollcross. But the attendance was well below a hundred. The whole district then wore a very rural aspect. There was no railway station at Tollcross, and one had to go to Bellgrove for the nearest car. Still our older people have pleasant memories of those days. They look back with pride to their trudge across the hill to Eastmuir to hear Holy Mass. They retain a warm place in their hearts for Father McLaughlin, and Father McBrearty, and Father Van Hecke.

The increase of the Catholic people made it very difficult to have their needs properly attended to from Shettleston. This led in 1893 to Tollcross being established a separate mission. Rev. Edward Doody took charge for a short time. In the following year Rev. James H. Kirk came to the parish, and arrangements were completed for the opening of a chapel-school in London Road, Old Monkland. This took place on the 16th June, 1895. Archbishop Eyre was unable to be present, but he was represented by Bishop Maguire, then Auxiliary Bishop. Canon McBrearty preached the dedication sermon. This chapel-school served the needs of the Catholics of Tollcross for nine years, but was destroyed by fire on 10th June, 1904. In their sorrow the stricken people has a consolation. They remembered how their fathers when deprived of churches worshipped in the bog and on the mountain. Father Kirk had an altar erected on the site of the ruined church. Around it, kneeling in the open air, the people piously gathered. After three months, a temporary wooden erection was made ready. It had to serve both as a chapel and a school for two years.

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The present handsome school-chapel was meantime erected on a new site given on generous terms by Mr. A. Smith Sligo, Inzievar. It was opened by Archbishop Maguire on 29th October, 1906. The Archbishop himself preached and congratulated the people on the courage which they had shown in an hour of trial. He believed that their children would look with pride on the building that had been newly opened. Later a presbytery was erected near the present chapel-school. In 1909, after sixteen years' work in our midst, Father Kirk was transferred to another charge. His place was taken by Father O'Sullivan, and shortly afterwards the present parochial hall was erected. It has become the centre of the social life of the Catholic community of Tollcross. During recent years the growth of St. Joseph's parish has gone on with rapid progress. It now numbers about 3,000 souls, and close on 600 children attend the school.

On 17th June, 1918, we celebrated our Silver Jubilee. His Grace Archbishop Maguire honoured us with his presence and preached at the High Mass. The Canons of the Cathedral Chapter were present in the Sanctuary. At the evening service Rev. Father McPhillips, S.J., preached, and Solemn Benediction was given. The Archbishop, to honour the occasion, made a Plenary Indulgence available to all the people of St. Joseph's Parish.

The material side of things had also been considered. A Jubilee Memorial Fund was opened and generously subscribed to. The parishioners recognised that they had only a chapel-school and that financial difficulties stood in the way of the erection of a proper church. Thank God, in the not so far distant future these difficulties will be surmounted. When we consider all that our people have done in the past, we can look forward with confidence to the future. The children of the race that has made the Archdiocese of Glasgow great know no limitations when the honour of God is at stake.

Any account of St. Joseph's Parish would be incomplete which does not dwell on the significance of the coming of the Sisters of Charity to Tollcross. Since 1911 we feel that we are living and moving in a truly Catholic atmosphere. The opening of the Home for Blind and Deaf Children revealed the spirit of their christian vocation. They have now become a part of our ordinary everyday lives. They were pioneers on the teaching staff of our school. They bring consolation to the afflicted in our homes. They have made life more cheerful and bright for us all. We have every reason to bless the day that they came amongst us.

Our sketch would also be incomplete without a tribute to Miss Mullen, former head teacher. The virility of our Catholic life to-day is due in a very large manner to her untiring labours. She maintained in our school a standard of religious knowledge that has been excelled nowhere in the Archdiocese.

So far, dear reader, you have been reading the history of St. Joseph's, Tollcross, until the time of the Silver Jubilee of the mission's foundation. Twenty-five years have now gone by and we have still to be content with our chapel-school. The obstacles present to the building of a church twenty-five years ago no longer exist. We are proud to state that the tremendous debt on the mission is now a thing of the past, and we are happy to say that we are clear of debt. St. Joseph's congregation are to be congratulated and that to a high degree for their unfailing generosity.

Unfortunately other obstacles have presented themselves. But for the war, we would now have a beautiful church at Tollcross. The stage was all set when the outbreak of hostilities was declared. Our chapel-school will be required for the children themselves. In fact, the plans for the building of new Secondary School are all ready.

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We have suddenly jumped from the past right into the present so we must return to the past and try to pay tribute to those who worked so hard towards the success of St. Joseph's Mission.

The late Father O'Sullivan, who was rector from 1909-1926 was transferred to Burnbank. It was a real heartbreak to the people of Tollcross having to part with their dearly beloved pastor. He died on the 26th October, 1932, at Burnbank and was deeply mourned by his former congregation.

Father O'Sullivan was succeeded by the Rev. Father Horgan, who left after three years to be rector of the important mission of St. Charles', Kelvinside. He died in Cork on the 1st march, 1937.

Amongst the names of the clergy who served as curates in St. Joseph's during this time some are outstanding. Who will ever forget Father Quillinan (familiarily known as Father McQuillan)? His work with the Boys Guild and the Dramatic Club can never be forgotten. Father Fitzpatrick (Father Fitz) always of happy disposition was certainly part of Tollcross. It was difficult to realise that he must one day leave to take his place amongst the senior priests. While we congratulated him on his promotion, we were truly sorry to see him going from our midst, as he had shared many of our sorrows and joys over a long period. He will be remembered for many a day in Tollcross. Father McDade served here for three years, 1926-29 and he is remembered as a most sincere and energetic priest.

We now come nearer to the present time. Can we ever forget Father Michael McCarthy, promoted to the charge of St. Teresa's, Possilpark, six years ago. His outstanding energy and vitality, his securing of financial stability for St. Joseph's, will long be remembered.

There were many lean years of depression during his stay in St. Joseph's -- but, in spite of everything, we never looked back. We thank him from the bottom of our hearts for his grand work and we fervently pray that he may be spared for many years to continue his work for the Church in Glasgow.

We must also mention in our brief sketch the School Staffs who helped to bring the children of St. Joseph's right out into the limelight. Miss Mullen retired in 1926 and was succeeded by the late Mr. Andrew Curran. The high standard of education and particularly religious was maintained. The clergy and people owe a great debt to those who so assiduously cared for the welfare of the children during the past fifty years and to those, who, to-day so unstintingly give of their best for the same cause.

Now a word about Tollcross in general. It remains much the same, except perhaps that many of the old buildings have gone. The large housing estate of Sandyhills has grown in the last twenty years. North Mount Vernon has added many families to our mission and at the moment a large housing scheme is being occupied in London Road.

Last, but by no means least, Clyde Rows, once the nucleus of the infant mission of St. Joseph's, have now disappeared. But thank God the people are still members of the congregation. They have been moved to a much more up-to-date housing scheme in Carmyle. This is a very different surrounding, but the old spirit and traditions of Clyde still exist.

Of the present staff all that need be said is that Father Cornelius Dennehy succeeded Father McCarthy six years ago. He came to Tollcross with a fine reputation, particularly as a builder of churches. He now awaits the opportunity to erect an edifice to the glory of God -- worthy of his predecessors, and of the fine people of Tollcross. He has already done excellent

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work, ever improving on the grand record set by his predecessor. He is ably assisted by his two curates, Father Neil McKnight and Father William Lowery. God grant they may be spared to us for many a long day.

To one and all who have in any way subscribed to the success of this mission, we render our sincerest thanks. We particularly thank those who so recently have given donations in money and in kind, and beg God to give them grace to continue in health and prosperity, and to reward them for their loyalty and generosity.

We are not forgetful of the many young men and women who, are unfortunately absent today.; they are serving their country's cause in many spheres and our hearts go out to them. We wish them well and pray that soon they may be re-united with their families and friends in Tollcross.

Appended are the names of the priests who have served the mission of St. Joseph's, Tollcross.

### *Senior Priests :*

Rev.	EDWARD DOODY	-	-	-	1893
Rev.	JAMES H. KIRK	-	-	-	1893 - 1909
Rev.	DANIEL O'SULLIVAN	-	-	-	1909 - 1926
Rev.	DANIEL HORGAN	-	-	-	1926 - 1929
Rev.	MICHAEL MCCARTHY	-	-	-	1929 - 1936
Rev.	CORNELIUS DENNEHY	-	-	-	1936 -

### *Assistant Priests :*

Rev.	MATTHEW HENNESSY	-	-	-	1899 - 1908
Rev.	JOHN LYONS	-	-	-	1908 - 1910
Rev.	DANIEL CROWE	-	-	-	1911 - 1914
Rev.	JAMES DOHERTY				
Rev.	MATTHEW QUILLINAN	-	-	-	1913 - 1924
Rev.	Joseph O'Leary	-	-	-	1924 - 1925
Rev.	Jeremiah Aherne	-	-	-	1925 - 1926
Rev.	Gerald McDade	-	-	-	1926 - 1929
Rev.	Peter Fitzpatrick	-	-	-	1914 - 1933
Rev.	William Lowery	-	-	-	1929 -
Rev.	Neil McKnight	-	-	-	1933 -

## A Congregation without a Chapel

On Sunday, 19th June, 1904, the congregation of St. Joseph's, Tollcross, who lost their church by fire a week ago, assembled in the school playground to fulfil their Sunday obligation of hearing Holy Mass. It was extremely touching to see the people entering the playground and uncovering solemnly and respectfully, as if they recognised that that enclosure was the most sacred place left them. The congregation was large and the inconvenience of kneeling bareheaded in the open air on the hard stony ground, while a biting wind blew overhead was forgotten in the desire to be present at the Holy Sacrifice. The mass was said by Father Hennessy, and at the end of the Mass, Father Kirk congratulated the congregation on their exemplary conduct in coming out to Mass under the difficulties in

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which they had been placed by the fire. He acknowledged, that it was only now, he was beginning to realise what these difficulties were. The loss of the League of the Cross Hall had been a serious blow, for the hall had always been a haven of refuge for those who were weak in the keeping of their pledge, and he asked those weak-kneed ones not to take advantage of the misfortune of the congregation, to be faithful in adversity, so that when the hall would be opened again, he would find that they had kept faithful to the pledge. He asked the members of the Sacred Heart Society also to be faithful to the rules of the Society, and go at least to their monthly Communion. The God of Hope was in their hearts, and though they were homeless that day, and gazed on the ruins where once they worshipped, their buildings would arise again and therein would be said the Mass, the Rosary and Benediction binding them together in heart, thought, word and deed.

### St. Vincent's Schools, Tollcross

For a long time the Sisters of Charity sought in vain for suitable premises near Glasgow, to carry on their work of Education of the Blind and Deaf. At last owing to the generosity of Mr. Smith Sligo, Inzievar, who gave them a piece of ground on his estate at Tollcross, they were able to lay the foundation of their new School in 1908. In August, 1911, there were 65 Deaf and 35 Blind transferred from Smyllum with five Sisters; Sister Aloysius Rainford was appointed Superioress. Since that date, with the help of many generous benefactors, the building has been enlarged, and the School which is under the control of the Glasgow and Lanarkshire Education Authorities provides for the education of Blind and Deaf pupils from the age of 3 years to 16 years.

This School holds the unique position of being the only catholic School in Scotland for these children.