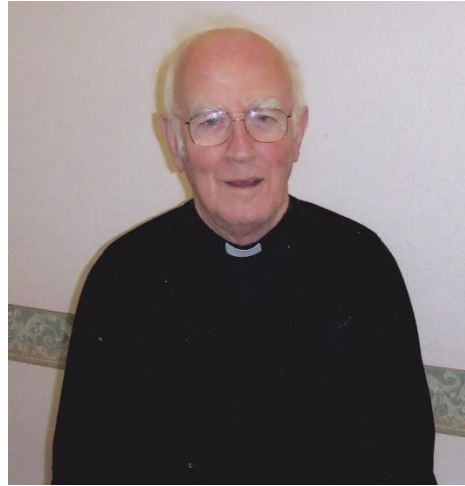


## Fr Jack Fahy



In 1987 Fr Jack Fahy became Parish Priest and in the next years he too began a programme of refurbishment. In the first year the Church was repainted at a cost of £7992. He also decided that the time had come for the green carpet which was showing significant signs of wear, was to be replaced and a new carpet was purchased at a cost of £2820. He felt a change of colour was called for and so he chose Regal Red Velvet Carpet and this was fitted by Wilax Carpets ( Cowbridge Road). For the first time all the aisles were carpeted. The remaining block floor was sanded and polished and pews re-sited to allow for more room for the coffin during funeral services.

In 1988 new heating and lighting were installed: the hanging lights becoming a thing of the past and fans blew heat from above.

In the years that followed he replaced the green padded kneelers with more deeply padded red ones. The Sanctuary walls also needed attention to address the large damp patches. This was a mammoth task as much of the plaster had to be removed from the Sanctuary so that it could be repaired properly. He also had the blue backing panels on the stations of the cross removed so that the figures could be more easily seen and finally he replaced the organ. The costs for the installation of this new instrument was far more than had been anticipated but being a very keen and successful golfer, he augmented the collection for the installation with some of his winnings.

Many parishioners will remember that the very large painting hanging over the right hand side of the Church had been moved into the Sacristy during the 1970s. Fr Fahy felt that this was not an appropriate place for it to be and after some discussion it was decided to have it restored and put back in its original place over the confessionals. Before it was put back up, photos were taken not only of the front, but also of the back, and though it is difficult to read, there is information about the painter and a date.

Fr Fahy was the Parish Priest for St Patrick's for twenty two years and during that time he moved the Parish forward both spiritually and materially. He was a truly pastoral priest with a deep love and respect of people. He has been described as a 'lovely principled man of God', a gentle Irish man. Whenever he had opportunity he enjoyed playing golf and over the years became very successful in tournaments!

In 2005 to celebrate Fr Fahy's 50 years of ordination to the priesthood there was a grand party in the Parish Hall which was attended by members of the Parish, members of the clergy and friends.

This was one of the last grand celebrations to be held in the Hall because with Archbishop Peter Smith's permission it was sold in order to build a smaller hall adjacent to the Church which would be more convenient. The cost of the maintenance of the old Memorial Hall was increasing year on year and the Parish was having great difficulty finding the funds needed to keep it in good repair. The Grange Medical Practice purchased the Hall and land and once the land was cleared built their new premises and car park on the available space. The money raised from the sale was in the region of £625k. This was invested by the Archdiocese.

A dominant feature in St Patrick's Church is the very large crucifix hanging from the main arch of the Sanctuary. Parishioners were shown a few designs and donated money so that the chosen design could be purchased and installed. It took several hours to hang the crucifix aided by a very tall scaffolding tower.

Sadly Fr Fahy unexpectedly passed away in his sleep on Christmas Eve 2008, before his plans for a new hall could be realised. Following the Solemn Requiem Mass he was taken for burial to Co. Galway in Ireland. The following year many parishioners travelled to his resting place to honour and respect the priest who had meant so much to the Parish. A statue of the Sacred Heart was placed on his grave in Ireland, but the more permanent memorial in the Church is the large crucifix hanging over the Sanctuary.