

## Canon Michael Patrick Evans



One priest, who came as a curate in the 1980's and said he always hoped to come back to St Patrick's had his wishes granted. Canon Michael Patrick Evans took up his appointment as the new Parish Priest to St Patrick's in September 2017, much to the delight of many parishioners who remembered him from times past. Canon Mike was transferred from Newport Parishes where he had seven Churches to oversee. Now at the moment he has just one... St Patrick's. He arrived, accompanied by many, many, many boxes !

In the October of 2017, the Polish Community was moved on once more. This time to the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes in Gabalfa, where hopefully they will have a permanent home.

Canon Mike has a style all of his own, and his sense of humour and anecdotes brought the scripture alive for many people. His Funerals are particularly poignant, with references to his Father ( a bus conductor)

“ Have your bags packed and be ready to go. My Father was on an early bus. I am on a later bus, but the trouble is I don't know what the timetable is.”

Then there is the story of the Brecon Beacon Mountain Rescue Team who took him to the Beacons in the dark to demonstrate that a small light can be seen from miles away. We must always walk towards the light of the Lord

Over the years St Patrick's has had many statues and artefacts that have weathered the test of time and some that sadly have not. A few though have made surprising reappearances. During a church and presbytery building inspection, two large original banners were discovered in the roof space encased in heavy polythene covers. The one showing St Patrick was immediately seized on and now hangs from the choir loft in the Church. The second, which is very much larger, is still in its cover, but now is in one of the upstairs bedrooms, until a suitable location can be found for it to be hung once more.

When the Lady Altar was completely refurbished in the 1970's, the statue of Our Lady from the original Church seemed to disappear. However, in 2018, when the garages at the rear of the Church were being cleared out, there underneath cement sacks and rubbish was.... Our Lady.... looking very much the worst for wear. She was chipped, missing a

finger or two and all her colour was gone. The style of the statue was very similar to that of the Sacred Heart statue on the side altar and it is likely that they are a pair. Mary was refurbished and in 2019 was crowned with flowers during the month of May.

Over the years, there have been many priests who have joined the Parish of St Patrick. Some priests came as curates before taking on parishes of their own, and some who came as Parish Priests to shepherd St Patrick's into the future. All had their own way of leading the flock and becoming part of the tapestry of the history of the Parish

The reason for the clear-out in the garages was that a plan was afoot to re-decorate the space and use it for teas and coffees after Sunday morning Mass. Sadly the building of a hall adjacent to the Church was not to be. Kenny Johnson and Family and Christine German worked very hard to make the garage space usable and in the Summer of 2018, Kenny's Café opened for business.

The venture was a huge success and the roller shutter doors replaced with new UPVC windows and a door.

During the year that followed Canon Mike's arrival the continuing refurbishment of the roof, Church lighting, and the Presbytery took place thanks Len Woods and his team of workers who seemed to follow Canon Mike from place to place.

The arrival of the Coronavirus in December 2019 impacted greatly on the world at large and in March 2020 the Church, for the first time in its history closed its doors to everyone.

It was decided to keep a journal about what happened to the Parish in the year that followed.

St Patrick's kept in contact with Parishioners either by phone, the Parish Website and the Parish Newsletter. Some Churches installed cameras so that Masses could be live-streamed with varying degrees of success. As the year went on, technical skills were honed and both picture and sound improved.

As with all things, the virus came and went and by the middle of 2022 things were slowly getting back to normal. However, the impact of Covid 19 will be felt for many years.

We had thought that Canon Mike would be with us as our Parish Priest for many years, but the new Archbishop ( Mark O'Toole) had other ideas.

In May 2023 Canon Mike had once again to pack up his boxes and move on, this time to St Helen's Parish in Barry. He will be greatly missed.

We welcome a new priest Fr Valentine Mobuogwo, one of the Chaplains in Cardiff Prison, who in a few weeks will be joined by two priests from Nigeria, Fr Malachy Orjibele and Fr Solomon Ugwummadu.