

1959— the Diocese had adopted the “planned giving or pledge programme” for fund raising and the parish adopted this method in 1962.

1959-1962— Second Vatican Council was called with councils sitting in 4 sessions. Notable changes were: the priests facing the people during mass celebration; use of local language and wider participation of lay people in the ministry and life of the church.

The excerpts in this booklet has been sourced from *A Goodman’s Legacy* by Patricia Bartley.

The History Committee would like to hear from parishioners who may wish to share information they have of the early years of the Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish.

Information on the history of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception parish is available on the parish website

“We are guardians of our memory, our history is everything & fundamental to our identity” (attributed to St. Paul)

Parish History Committee



Our Lady Of The Immaculate Conception Church Ellerslie

120 year Anniversary

October 2024

History of the Catholic Church in Ellerslie.

1925-1942— Were years full of challenges, hard work and commitment for the parishioners of Ellerslie and called for strong leadership, a call well within the capabilities of the new parish priest, Thomas Lane. This year saw the parish prosper, became debt free and the church, hall and convent being well maintained.

1942-1952— This decade saw the continuous growth of the parish with a lot of renovations and extensions done for the church building.

1952-1963— The parish and the school grew in population and saw the changes brought about by the second Vatican council taken place.

FEATURED PRIESTS

Fr. Thomas Lane 1925-1942

became the parish priest in August 14, 1924. he carried the parish through the difficult years of the 1920s and the depression of the 1930s. He left a parish with a well maintained church, hall and convent.

Fr. Joseph Duffy came to Ellerslie in 1942 and most parishioners warmed to him for his outgoing personality and a good singing voice. He has a particular devotion to Our Lady and during May and October, there were wonderful processions from the church to the grotto in the convent grounds.

1930— The church was extended to increase the seating.

1931— Dean Lane became unwell and Fr. Faragh was the relieving priest for 3 months.

1935— The interior and exterior of the church were painted and £140 was allocated from parish funds to assist the Sisters with renovations inside the convent.

1937— 25th Jubilee of the Sisters' arrival in the parish.

1938— Bishop Liston gave Mons Lane permission to purchase a property for the parish in Wall Street, Penrose for a future church.

1939— The roof of the school and hall were painted and some repairs were made to the floor of the hall.

— The old altar was replaced during this year.

1940— A room was furnished for the first curate to be appointed to the parish, Fr. Michael Lavelle.

1943— Fr. Edward Burke came as the new curate in 1943

— New confessionals were built and a pulpit constructed.

1947— The parish purchased the villa next to the presbytery from William Gavin.

1949— A new brick block was opened, costing £4,547.

6 November 1949— A new church of St. Andrew in Wall Road was solemnly blessed and opened by Bishop Liston

1949— Fr. Duffy approved the formation of a parish committee

1951— Fr. Duffy wrote to Bishop Liston requesting permission to “Inaugurate a Confraternity of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour in Ellerslie.

Fr. J Cummins (Redemptorist) inaugurated a Confraternity at Ellerslie in January,

1952— The presbytery was re-blocked and other maintenance carried on the parish property.

In the early years, the church survived on shared resources by a number of priests from neighbouring parishes like Onehunga, Howick, Panmure.

Some of **the early Shepherds** who served at Ellerslie

Fr. Dean Thomas Lane 1925-1942

Fr. Lavelle—curate 1940-1942

Fr. Joseph Duffy 1942-1952

Fr. Burke—curate 1943-1949

Fr. Harry Jillings 1949-1952

Fr. Stephen Conboy 1952-1963

Fr. Keanne—curate 1952-1957

Fr. Kevin Hackett—curate 1958-1965

1953— A fire broke out in the sacristy causing some damage to the back of the church. This prompted Fr. Conboy to make changes to the Sanctuary. The upright back section of the altar made of imitation marble was removed; the crucifix lowered; the matched lining of the sanctuary walls was covered with Canadian maple panelling. New veneered frontal panels with a central logo were fitted to the altar and a circular brass tabernacle was added. This panelling was also extended through the body of the church, covering the lower part of the walls.

1956— A section was purchased for £602 on the corner of Whites Way and Marua Road as a site for a future church. It never developed because the lower part of Marua Road became an industrial area and housing development. It was sold in 1987.

1950— Christmas Nativity set of European origin was donated to the parish

1960— The choir remained a feature of the parish until the choir loft was removed in the 1960s.