

ICONOCLASM

A lack of maintenance through the later part of the 20th century meant that the church and the Diocese faced similar concerns in 1968 to those that are being faced today and a decision had to be taken as to whether to demolish the delapidated church and presbytery or to seek to undertake a scheme of modernisation.

The decision was taken to modernise and between 1969 and 1972, under the direction of Fr. Coughlan and following designs prepared by the renowned Bradford architects, Langtry Langton, the original character of the church was much altered.

The design proposals were based on an interpretation of the Directive of the Second Vatican Council which advised that churches should be of more simple design with the altar brought forward so that the priest could face the congregation. In order to achieve this the following works were undertaken:

The High Altar and Altar rails were removed

The choir benches were removed from the Sanctuary.

The reredos was altered in height and the tabernacle and canopy were removed.

The figures of the Virgin and St Joseph were removed from either side of the altar.

A new raised dais was constructed in front of the reredos and a simple tabernacle installed

The rood beam from the Sanctuary and the screen from the Lady Chapel together with the font and baptistry were removed along with the altars of our Lady of Perpetual Succour and The Sacred Heart together with the confessionals and the nuns tribune and gallery.

A separate Narthex was constructed at the West end of the church

The encaustic tiled floors were overlaid with vinyl floor tiles and a new carpet finish was installed in both the Sanctuary and the Lady Chapel

A suspended ceiling was installed at high level in the nave and polystyrene tiles applied to the ceilings in the aisles.

A new Altar was constructed and its location moved to the front of the Sanctuary.

The former Holy water stoup was used as a new font and this was installed in the North aisle adjacent to the Lady Chapel.

New modern interpretations of the Stations of the Cross were installed

A new confessional was installed in the South aisle

New lighting and heating systems were installed and the church was redecorated



LOOKING EAST TOWARDS THE SANCTUARY



LOOKING WEST FROM THE SANCTUARY



THE SANCTUARY LOOKING TOWARDS THE ORGAN LOFT



THE FONT AND THE LADY CHAPEL



THE CHURCH SOON AFTER THE REORDERING OF 1969 - 1970



THE NARTHEX FORMED AT THE WEST END OF THE CHURCH



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THE NORTH AISLE LOOKING WEST



THE SOUTH AISLE LOOKING EAST

"The main object was to clear out much of the Victorian clutter and fit the church for the new liturgy without destroying its atmosphere.."
Fr. Coughlan 1970



THE EXTERIOR OF THE CHURCH