

St John Vianney's Parish Fernieside Gardens, Edinburgh



1952 - 2023

Dedication

This booklet is dedicated to the People of God, thousands of parishioners, many religious and seventeen priests, past and present, who have gathered to worship in St John Vianney's church over the past 71 years.

We give thanks for the multitude of ways in which they have contributed their time, their talent and their treasure to serving God through service of the communities in which we live, and of various places across the world we have reached out to over the years.

We give thanks to God for each and every parishioner and the priests and religious who have served us.



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1952 to November 1977: the beginning and the first 25 years

The roots of the parish

The creation of St John Vianney's parish in 1952 was a response to the needs of a new community which, like so many of Edinburgh's suburbs, resulted from the post-war housing boom.

This new housing in the Inch and Gilmerton was located in the parish of St Columba's, Upper Gray Street. Fr William McLaughlin appointed Fr Patrick McNulty in 1947 to look after what was then a fast-growing area of prefabs and new council houses. Bus services were poor, town planning was in its infancy at that time and facilities were almost non-existent. Fr McNulty faced a challenging task, but he was the right man for the job with his great energy and organisation.

From 1947, Mass was celebrated in the Society Hall at Gilmerton crossroads, while land was purchased, and the church was built. At that time, Edinburgh Corporation invited the Catholic Church, Episcopalian Church, and Church of Scotland to select sites for new churches and this resulted in St John Vianney's, St Barnabas and Tron Kirk being built. Many years later we would form strong bonds with these and other churches in the area. The story goes that the priest chose our site because of the views – before the houses opposite were built, there was a clear view of the castle and the city skyline from the church steps!

The opening Mass

Our church building was opened on Sunday 16 November 1952 during a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Gordon Joseph Gray. Archbishop Gray had been appointed as Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh just a year earlier, succeeding Archbishop Andrew Thomas McDonald.



Left to Right:

MGR.P.CONNOLLY; FR.W.GLANCY; CANON W.McLAUGHLIN;
MGR.J.E.BREEN (R.I.P.); CANON P.HIGGINS; FR.A.KELLY (R.I.P.);
FR.P.J.McNULTY (R.I.P.); HIS EMINENCE; FR.L.A.GLANCEY;
FR.J.McKEON; MGR.J.BARRY; MGR.C.CHASE (R.I.P.);
FR.J.CHRISTIE, S.J. (R.I.P.); CANON W.WELSH (R.I.P.);
CANON W.McCLELLAND (R.I.P.); CANON J.TURNER (R.I.P.).

This is an early photo taken inside the church, looking from the sanctuary to the rear.



In what is now the car park, evergreen trees were planted around the perimeter—one for every family in the parish. There was a sheet with a name attached to each numbered tree and about 120 trees were planted at the start.

The early years

Our first parish priest was Fr Peter J McKeon. He served the people of both Gilmerton and the Inch, and later Danderhall, for 18 years, assisted over the years by several curates (as they were known at that time).

The parish continued to develop and Fr McKeon convened a special meeting of the parish on 31 March 1957 to appeal for the formation of a Parochial Committee to *"...organise and concentrate the resources of the parish towards the success of Sales of Work and other functions necessary to the life of the parish."* Those present at the meeting agreed to form a Parochial Committee: it consisted of Mr Radin (Chair); Mr Hughes (Vice Chair); Mr Hoban (Secretary) and Mrs Sutherland (Treasurer).

In the years that followed the establishment of the Parochial Committee their work was wide and varied. One of their main focuses was fundraising to pay off the debt incurred in building the church. To this end, at their meetings they planned and organised: Sales of Work/Grand Bazaars (inviting Lady McEwan to perform the opening ceremony at one of them); Dinner Dances; 'Housey Housey' (bingo); Football Sweep. They also established a benevolent fund and supported the victims of the Ayrshire mining disaster (possibly the Knockshinnoch disaster of 1950). On the social and pastoral front they: organised Socials; introduced a weekly parish news sheet (and a duplicating machine to produce it, funded by a Whist Drive); discussed whether the youth should have exclusive use of the hall on Sunday evenings and adults on a Friday; arranged a bus to take parishioners to the Dunfermline pilgrimage.

The following excerpt from one of the Parochial Committee meetings is a reflection by the Chair that gives us a little insight into passion, commitment and talent that parishioners brought to the meetings: *"Many of the meetings were rather stormy but after the heat of the battle had subsided it was usually found that we had managed to organise and arrange some function and surely the fact that we did argue and debate gives the impression that those attending were not inactive and passive."* He then goes on to reflect on achievements.

The parish was split into Districts (Craigour, Fernieside, Inch, Moredun, Gilmerton Dykes, Danderhall and Hyvots Bank) and each had District Committee Members. Their role included the collection of goods for the Sales of Work. In addition to this, Tim O'Keefe, a parishioner, collected old newspapers house-by-house, sold them as waste and donated the funds to the parish to help finance things such as the building of the parish house.

The original presbytery was at 51 Ferniehill Road with outbuildings which were used by several groups for social functions. In the loft above there was a full-size snooker table – always in great demand! This served for many years as our "hall". There was also an orchard on the land. That house was sold to Peter Donoghue, who was a parishioner, around 1964. The "hall" was turned into a casino which, we understand, was called *the Bonanza Club*. The land where the hall and orchard were located, now has three houses on it, one of which is still owned by the Donoghue family.

Stuart Holden and George Muldoon recall life as altar boys during this period: When the parish house was in Ferniehill Road, the curate Fr Cassidy would take about a dozen of us altar boys to the summerhouse to learn the Latin responses for the Mass. He would say the priest's prayer and we would learn to rattle off the responses in Latin - not having a clue what we were saying.

There was always a *Missa Cantata* (Solemn Sung Mass) on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation and there were between 10 and 12 altar boys on the altar. There was great competition to be doing something special such as ringing the bell, holding the thurible used for incensing the altar, or holding the Communion paten under people's chins when people came to receive Holy Communion. Everyone wore red soutanes and white surplices and there was always a rush to get one that fitted - so you couldn't be late! Some boys went on the altar with garments that were way too big for them. Most of that Mass would be spent giggling at the sight. George adds that he cannot hear *Silent Night*, without it taking him back to processing out of the sacristy in the dark at Midnight Mass with the church lit only by the altar boys' candles and everyone singing that carol.

On the subject of music at Mass, for many years it was led by John Lappin playing the organ, and Eddie Carr and Matt Boland, and others, in the choir.

In most parishes the parish house is beside the church. A house was built alongside our church in 1961-62. Amongst the many parishioners who helped with the construction were Joe Callaghan, Michael McGeever, Hugh O'Donnell, Joe Pelc (Fr McKeown's principal general handyman) and George Taylor. On the following page there is a photo of the house during construction:



Enriched by cultural diversity in the early years: the Irish community

While people have come from Ireland to Scotland for a long time, and still do to this day, during and around the 1950's many came and settled in Edinburgh. Over the years they have made a great contribution to creating the parish we have today.

Due to the closeness to Derry and the sailing from there to Scotland, many came from Donegal, Mayo and Sligo. St Patrick's in the Cowgate became the centre for their spiritual needs and a meeting point for socialising. The Cowgate was fondly named "Little Ireland". Many met their future husbands and wives there. In later years many of those who followed came to the Leith area and settled around the Cathedral. Many of our parishioners, being children of those who came from Ireland, were baptised in St Mary's Cathedral.

With the development of social housing, many of the Irish community moved to Gilmerton, Inch, Fernieside, Moredun, Hyvots, etc, from the early 1950's onwards. St John Vianney's then became the hub for the new Catholic community. Parishioners rallied together to raise money for the upkeep of the parish, and many helped with the building of the parish house (see above).

As children were born and families grew, St John Vianney's had, and continues to have, an important role in both the spiritual and the social life of the community.

Michael McGeever shares the story of his family:

My father, Michael McGeever, emigrated and settled in Edinburgh. He met his future wife, Mary Kain, on the steps of St Patrick's Church, Cowgate as they went into Mass. Once married they lived in the Canongate with their five children - John, Patricia, Rosemary, Robert and Bernard. Our family moved to Fernieside Crescent and were blessed with two more children Catherine and Michael.

We have memories of numerous social events held in the hall within the grounds of the former priests' house situated in Ferniehill Road.

For the McGeever family, St John Vianney's has been the centre for three generations to receive the sacraments. Forever a lasting memory and a place in the hearts of our family.

The young people of the parish

From the early days, the parish had thriving Youth/Drama and Scout Groups.

One memorable moment for the Youth/Drama Group was entering a drama competition under the leadership of Liz Warren (later Davis). They travelled to Dalguise House (in Perthshire) for the event – and won a special commendation!

The Scouts also met in the hall at Ferniehill Road. Their first Scout Master was Leslie Girvan. Trips away were a common theme and clearly live long in the memory! The early Scout Camps took place in the grounds of Abbotsford House (near Melrose), and later in Paxton (Berwickshire) and in the grounds of Nunraw Abbey.

St John Vianney's Primary School: Part 1 – the journey

Our Primary School started as an annex of St Patrick's in 1956 with a class in Moredun Primary School. Meanwhile, the children from the Gilmerton Dykes area were transported by bus to St Francis, Craigmillar, passing St John Vianney's (Moredun Primary School) in the process! And so began the saga of St John Vianney's Primary School.

Over the years classes have been held on many sites including the Craigour Huts, known as the Mud Huts because of the condition of the playground facilities! This site became the Craigour Home for the Elderly (next to St Barnabas' Church). Other places where the school was housed were: Burdiehouse Annex, Ravenscroft Annex in Newtoft Street and the old Gilmerton School in Drum Street. Meanwhile, pupils from the Inch were also moving from place to place – the Inch House, Glenvarloch Primary and the Inch Primary School.

George Muldoon shares a memory of attending the first St John Vianney's school: Our first teacher was Mrs Lappin in one of the two classes in Moredun Park Primary. The classes then moved to a separate school in the huts beside St Barnabas Church.

The building of the hall

The parish was keen to have a hall beside the church. The idea had been discussed at a meeting of the Parochial Council on 5 January 1958. Fr Cassidy agreed that it was "...a *grand idea and one that could be kept in mind for the future.*" Those at the meeting agreed there was no immediate urgency.

It was during the late 1960's that the church hall was built alongside our church. Once again, the people of the parish pulled up their sleeves and helped with the building. The roof is partially constructed from bits of the prefabs which were being demolished in the Hyvots area! It wasn't the only recycled material used. If you have attended any of the social events in the hall down through the years, you may have noticed that it is a great floor to dance on. It is, we understand, made from floorboards that were lifted (with permission, of course) from the Palais de Danse (in Fountainbridge) and laid in our hall!

Our church, house and hall were now all on the same site.

Parish Mission August 1969: Revolution '70

Around the time he convened the Second Vatican Council, Pope St John XXIII is reported to have said that he wanted to throw open the windows of the Church and let the fresh air of the Spirit blow through. The Council concluded in 1965, and in the years that followed in our parish, and parishes throughout the world, we were learning to embrace and implement the changes the Council had brought.

In the last two weeks of August 1969, a group of priests and students from St Andrew's College, Drygrange, arrived to deliver a two-week Mission in the parish. This was quite a different "Mission" to any that had gone before. It was the result of a collaboration between Fr Charlie Barclay, who was assistant priest at the time and his great friend and mentor, Fr Jock Dalrymple, who was Spiritual Director in the College. It was to prove to be a huge step forward in shaping future pastoral training in the College and was the first of many such Parish Missions undertaken by the College over the years in various parishes across the Archdiocese.

The members of the Mission Team were: Fr Jock Dalrymple, who led the Team with Fr Charlie Barclay; Frs John Barry, Hugh White and Brian Saddler; students Hugh Shannon, Bill White, Pat Sharkey, Gerry Rooney, Dick Holuka, John Robinson, Joe Murray, Mike Burns, John Smith and Mike Fallon. They were joined by Stuart Holden, at that time a student from the Scots College in Rome.

The visitors were hosted by families in the parish, some even sleeping in the parish hall. During the two weeks every home was visited, and people were invited to go to a House Mass in their local area. This was ground-breaking and there was a real buzz around the parish. The Mission concluded with three special services in the church. Friendships were formed between members of the Mission Team and parishioners that continue to this day.

The whole experience had a profound effect on the parishioners and on the Mission Team from Drygrange. It provided a model of pastoral practice that was used in the college in the following years. The impact made on the parish was considerable. What we didn't know at the time was that Fr Barclay was being sent to the Mount Olive Institute in Dundalk and would be leaving St John Vianney's. The following year, in September 1970, having completed his studies in Dundalk, Fr Barclay was appointed to the staff at Drygrange, as Spiritual and Pastoral Director. The change in parish personnel meant that the energy created by the Mission was not as sustained as it might have been. It wasn't until nine years later, under the leadership of Fr Lawrence Glancey and Fr Mike Burns, that the energy was reawakened and kindled when a second Drygrange Mission took place.

The creation of St Gregory's

Fr McKeon had hoped to secure a house in the Inch with the aim of establishing a new parish there. However, this did not prove possible until after he had left for St John's Fauldhouse in the autumn of 1970, when Fr Lawrence Glancey replaced him.

From as early as the 1950's, Mass was celebrated on the 3rd Sunday of each month in Liberton High School annexe (opposite the shops in Walter Scott Avenue). It wasn't a straightforward operation. A group of men would go on a Saturday evening and lay the tarpaulin and then get the chairs out from under the stage. It all then had to be put back after Mass. Later, Mass became weekly.

Following the purchase of Dr Stone's old surgery (behind Walter Scott Avenue), Mass was celebrated there during the week.

At one stage during the early 1960's a plot of land in Ravenswood Avenue had been purchased, but later sold. It became private housing.

A significant step forward in the growth of St Gregory's parish was the acquisition, in 1972, of the Scout Hall belonging to the Liberton Northfield Church of Scotland. This project was pioneered by Fr Brian Saddler who had arrived in the parish with Fr Glancey in 1970.

Ellen Salvona recalls this time:

From 1955 I lived in Ochiltree Gardens with my husband, Harry, and our family. We went to Mass in St John Vianney's.

Fr Glancey came to see me one day, shortly after I had had a big operation. He said he was taking me down to see the building that was to become our church - Liberton Northfield Scout Hall. He had just got the keys that morning. He said it had been designed by Basil Spence!

When we got there it was filthy. The women and men of the parish came together to clean and kit out the hall, turning it into St Gregory's.

An important milestone was reached when Edinburgh Corporation finally acceded to the request for a house for a priest in the Inch. And so, a new parish was born in 1972, and with the redrawn boundaries almost doubled in size. Fr Saddler's days as an assistant ended with Fr Stephen Judge's appointment to St Gregory's.

[Society of the Sacred Heart \(RSCJ\) & Sisters of the Good Shepherd](#)

Fr Glancey had great vision and energy and was looking at ways to further develop the parish.

He approached the Society of the Sacred Heart (based in the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Craiglockhart at that time) about the possibility of establishing a community of Sacred Heart Sisters in the parish.

Following his approach in 1974, a new stage was reached in the parish with the establishment of a community of Sacred Heart Sisters in Moredun Park Street to assist with the pastoral work in the parish. The community was initially made up of three sisters - Sisters Dairne (McHenry), Pat (Moran) and Sandra (McSheaffrey). Sister Teresa (Deasy) joined them a few years later, replacing Sister Pat.

This was the start of a long association with the parish. We are so incredibly grateful to the Society of the Sacred Heart for their ministry amongst us.

Sr Sandra remembers their arrival:

I was one of the first community of three welcomed with open arms by the parishioners closely involved with the church.

Fr Lawrence was a very well-read man, and we parishioners got the benefit of that in his sermons, always carefully prepared. He used to drive around in his Beetle and say of the parish - there is always hope when people look after their gardens!

So, although it is 47 years since I left Gilmerton, it keeps its place in my heart for the people who welcomed me/us.

A few years later, around 1978, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd bought a house on Gilmerton Road and established a Convent (Broomlands) there. While they didn't work in the parish, they did join us for the celebration of Mass over a long number of years.

Ordination of Fr Mike Fallon

Shortly before our Silver Jubilee celebration, the parish gathered on 17 June 1977 to celebrate the ordination of Fr Mike Fallon.

Fr Mike and his family had lived in the Inch since 1952, when St John Vianney's church building opened. He had made his First Confession and First Communion and been Confirmed there. He was an altar server. In short, St John Vianney's was a massive part of Fr Mike's life. He speaks of the two great devotions he has had throughout his life - to St John Vianney and the Sacred Heart.

Having been ordained Deacon in St Gregory's on 4 July 1976, one year later he was ordained priest in St John Vianney's by Bishop James Monaghan, the Auxiliary Bishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh at that time. Following his ordination, he was appointed to St. Marie's, Kirkcaldy.



The parish in the mid-1970s

Sr Christine Triay shares her memory of this era:

I used to play the organ for Sunday Mass, but nobody sang - when I came back in 2000, everyone was singing and there were two guitarists.

I have great memories of the prayer group which supported my entering the Society of the Sacred Heart. I have many happy memories of Moredun Park Street and Ferniehill Road and a great reunion coming back in 2000.

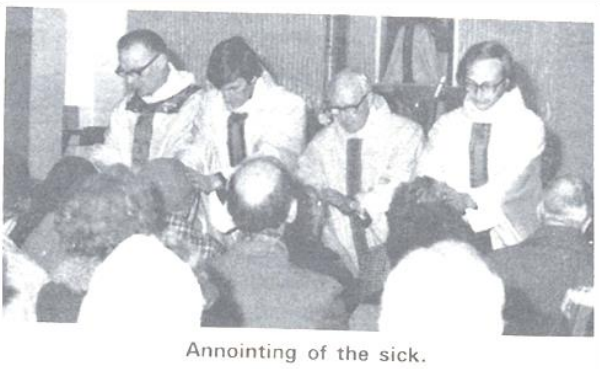
Silver Jubilee Celebration

The Second Vatican Council inaugurated the renewal of the whole Church. As noted earlier, this renewal was far-reaching, and one dimension was the re-ordering of the interior of our church. This, however, was done without the use of any new altar furniture – the only additions being the hung ceiling of acoustic tiles and the 'crying' window in the porch.

Fr McKeon had cleared St John Vianney's debt before he left in 1970, and all that remained was for the parish to buy out the feu and the church could then be consecrated on freehold ground; this was done in 1974 and the scene was set for the celebration of the parish's Silver Jubilee in 1977.

We celebrated our Silver Jubilee Mass during November 1977. Here are some pictures from the Mass and social afterwards, some of which are from the Scottish Catholic Observer newspaper, dated 25 November 1977.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ST JOHN VIANNEY'S



Anointing of the sick.



The concelebrating priests gathered around the altar



Fr Mike is presented with a projector by Mrs Radin



Serving the buffet after the Mass

To mark the Silver Jubilee, a dinner dance was held at the Claremont Hotel. 127 people from the parish attended and the total cost was £441.40, which included the cost of the band, the licence and wine!

The housekeepers

We could not close this chapter without mention of Nellie McArdle (Fr McKeon's housekeeper) and Veda Dawson (Fr Glancey's). Both are remembered as great cooks, but also for serving the parish in many other ways.

There is a lovely anecdote along the lines that when Fr McKeon went on holiday the papers were cancelled, the butter was hidden and the margarine came out!

Nellie is pictured below in Rome with Emma Holden. This photo was taken in 1969 when they had travelled to Rome to see Archbishop Gray being created Cardinal.



December 1977 to November 2002: between our Silver and Golden Jubilees

Every individual and family will have their own treasured memories, special moments in their own faith and life journey celebrated in St John Vianney's Church: a family Baptism or wedding; celebrating First Communion; being Confirmed. There are photographs from, and stories about, some of these wonderful occasions on display in the hall.

There will also be sad memories, gathering in the Church to say goodbye to a loved one.

Liz Mackenzie (nee Allan) shares her memory:

We lived in Craighour Drive. I live in London now but have a very long connection with St John Vianney's. I was baptised there in 1955, made my First Confession and First Communion in 1962, and was Confirmed in 1968. I married my fiancé, Andrew, in the church in 1977, and our daughter, Jean Rosa Mackenzie, was baptised there in 1987. My parents celebrated their Golden wedding in the church in 1990. We gathered there for my father's funeral in 1996 and my mother's in 1999.

In this and the next chapter we have picked out a few special communal moments in the life of our parish, which have helped shape and form our faith community.

Parish Mission – Easter 1978: Renewal through prayer

During 1978, a second team of students and priests from St Andrew's College, Drygrange, came to the parish to give a Mission, "Renewal through prayer" (following the earlier Mission during 1969). The Drygrange team (pictured on the sanctuary) were Mike Purcell, Deacon Jim Birrell, Fr Jimmy Henry, Fr Hugh White, Steve Toner, Richard Cowie, Mark Edie, Paul Stammers, Jimmy McFarlane, Tom Mullen, and Harry O'Brien.

The Mission took place during the lead up to Easter. The Mission Team slept in the church hall, on mattresses. The people of the parish had put a keg of beer in the hall for the Team, and that was most welcome! The Team recall that the welcome and hospitality of the parishioners was just exceptional.



The Team spent most of their days visiting people in their homes. One memorable moment was when Jim Birrell, who was a Deacon at the time, sang 'My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose', as part of a sermon he preached.

St John Vianney's School: Part 2 - reaching the "promised land"

Eventually, after twenty-five years "wandering in the desert", the school reached the "promised land" and was united under one roof (the present building in Ivanhoe Crescent) in August 1980.

This location was perhaps not ideal for the parish of St John Vianney's as the school was now outwith the parish (in St Gregory's). However, the close links between school and parish were maintained. Mass on Holy Days of Obligation was celebrated in the school and many parishioners were happy to travel the two miles to be there.

The school staff in August 1980 were: Rosemary Ramsay (Head Teacher); Ronald Plant (Depute Head Teacher); Catriona McKinnon; Catherine Henderson; Cathy Cooney; Mary Clason; Jennifer Shanley; Maria Polukord; Sr. M. Ninian Duffner; Sr. Margaret Mary Murphy; Mary Innarelli; Susie Smith.

Meanwhile pupils from Danderhall attended St David's Primary and Secondary Schools in Dalkeith as their homes were outwith the city boundary. This is still the practice today.

Sr Ninian shares her memory:

During June 1980 it was all go, clearing out, packing up what to take, getting ready for the move - just like now, 43 years later!

When we moved in it was a big change for some of us, for others it was just a case of moving back across the road. Both staff and children had to get used to working with other people. Staff knew each other, but many had not worked together before.

One great and exciting thing was that there was a swimming pool in the school!

Travelling alongside our fellow Christians - SEECAT

We are part of SEECAT (South East Edinburgh Churches Acting Together), a group of Christian churches in South East Edinburgh, affiliated to ACTS (Action of Churches Together in Scotland). Its purpose is to promote and facilitate the commitment of churches together in this part of the city.

While SEECAT wasn't officially formed until 1993, its origins can be found around 10 years earlier.

It began life as SEECA (South East Edinburgh Churches Association), the fruit of an idea that Fr Lawrence Glancey had in 1983/84: that the churches in the local area should get to know each other better. He organised a meeting where interested people from all the local churches could gather to discuss how we could work more closely together, pray together and begin to knock down some of the 'barriers'. SEECA was formed shortly after that initial meeting.

They organised Lenten Studies, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, a joint service on the Wednesday of Holy Week and a Christmas Carol party, held in different churches each year. In later years they organised a Pentecost Pilgrimage – this involved two coaches of people from the local churches going to Holy Island where they picnicked and then had a joint service in the local church.

SEECA became SEECAT on 30 September 1993 at an Inaugural Service during which we made a commitment in line with ACTS, which had been formed in 1990. This commitment was made by 8 churches in our area: Liberton Kirk, Tron Moredun, Kaimes Lockhart Memorial, Liberton Northfield, St Barnabas, St Gregory, St Catherine and St John Vianney. Over the past 40 years we have grown together in understanding, fellowship, service, and love.

One of the undoubted highlights each year is Good Friday. The day begins around 10am when people from each of the churches set out from their own church on a 'Walk of Witness' to Morrisons store on Gilmerton Road. We gather there for an outdoor service at 11am. We then come together again at 3pm in Gracemount High School for our main Good Friday Service, which is attended by over 300 people. This photo is taken as people move forward to venerate the Cross during the 2022 Good Friday Service.



Also, during Holy Week, we gather for a Passover Meal on the Monday evening, and for Ecumenical Stations of the Cross on the Wednesday.

Other activities throughout the year include: a 'Quiet Morning' during Advent; Christmas carol-singing at Morrisons; the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity; Lent Study groups; Service of Healing at the Balm Well; and a retreat.

Anne Carruthers and Ethel Ferguson share what being part of SEECAT means to them: Being involved with SEECAT has helped us to understand what Pope St John XXIII meant when he said: "Ecumenism is not an option. It is our Christian duty." Through our involvement in SEECAT we came to realise that there was so much more we shared than divided us as Christian sisters and brothers, followers of Christ. During the last 40 years, our 8 churches have grown to love, respect, understand and commit ourselves in striving to fulfil the prayer Christ made to the Father: "That they may be one as we are one."

Parish Mission 1995

Priests from the Redemptorist Order came to give a Mission to the parish during May 1995. Each evening they had a different theme: Healed by the power of God; Forgiven by the power of God; Prayer and the family; United by the Mass; Mary, woman of the Spirit. It concluded with a Requiem Mass of the Resurrection.

Televised Mass

1995 was a busy year! During the 1990s, ITV/STV broadcast a religious service on a Sunday morning. The programme was called *Morning Worship*.

On Sunday 1 October 1995, Mass was broadcast from our very own St John Vianney's. It was a joy-filled occasion. Here is an image captured from the broadcast.



The quality of the image, captured from a TV screen playing the DVD, isn't great, but that is a very young Deacon Alex!

Susanne Lackie, Mary McMillan and Kathleen Thomson recall that day:

There was a great sense of excitement, a real buzz around the parish. Everyone was in their Sunday best and the church was busy. Families with young children were encouraged to fill in any gaps in the front 5 or 6 rows.

The church looked fabulous in the TV company's bright lighting. This, however, caused a bit of a problem for Fr Stephen (Robson). His forehead was too shiny and was causing an issue for the camera operators. So, Fr Stephen started walking down the centre aisle, asking the ladies in the congregation if any of them had a powder compact. There was much hilarity. One was found and was applied liberally to cover up the offending area.

The Mass was broadcast live, so only some parishioners received Holy Communion during the Mass and the remainder after the broadcast finished.

Pilgrimages to Rome, the Holy Land and Paris

Over a period of seven years, between 1995 and 2002, Fr Stephen Robson and Fr Kenneth Owens led parish pilgrimages:

Rome (July 1995)

We made our first pilgrimage to Rome with Fr Stephen. The pilgrims stayed in Scots College. It was an uplifting experience which those who took part will never forget. We visited all the major pilgrimage sites in the vicinity of Rome, plus a visit to Assisi. It was a combined spiritual and joyful time which left us with many happy memories.

Holy Land (October 1996)

A group of over 50 people from St John Vianney's, and beyond, were led on a ten-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land by Fr Stephen. Below is a photograph, with Jerusalem in the background.



Vincent McCann shares his memory of the Holy Land:

Ena and I were privileged to join the St John Vianney Pilgrimage to the Holy Land led by Fr Robson. It was an unforgettable experience and spiritual, visiting so many of the locations mentioned in the Bible. One particular memory captures something of the experience of our visit. We went for a lovely sail one morning on the Sea of Galilee which was beautiful and calm. However, as mentioned in the Bible, storms can brew up very quickly as it is surrounded by hills. We lunched on the shore of Galilee with lovely fish, known as St Peter's fish, and it was so atmospheric and inspirational that you could imagine Jesus and his fishermen disciples being there.

Rome (July 2000): a return visit to Scots College in Rome with Fr Kenneth

It was suggested that the parish go on pilgrimage to mark the Millenium. Around 40 people made the trip to Rome where we visited all the usual sites plus attended the Wednesday audience with the Pope. Fr Stephen was the Spiritual Director at the Scots College at Rome and delighted to be visited by his former parishioners.

Paris (Summer 2002): the Golden Jubilee Year with Fr Kenneth

Most parishes go off on pilgrimage during a Jubilee year, and so did we. However, the destination was somewhat unusual – Paris! Our group of around 30 took in all the religious sites – Notre Dame, Sacre Coeur, Rue de Bac and many more. We did not forget the social and the cultural. It was a pilgrimage to remember! Here are some of the pilgrims on the steps of the Sacre Coeur.



While the main group returned home after the pilgrimage, a small group spent a lovely week in Burgundy, where they had travelled by car.

Golden Jubilee Mass



On Friday 15 November 2002, we celebrated our Golden Jubilee. Archbishop Keith Patrick O'Brien was the principal celebrant at the Mass, during which Catherine McKeen (Snr) was recognised for her work in the parish.

Following the Mass there was a social celebration in Danderhall Community Centre, during which a buffet was served, and the dancing was led by St Thomas' Ceilidh band.

December 2002 to the present day

In this chapter we have again tried to pick out some of the significant moments or periods in our parish life, those things that have helped us to become the faith community that we are today.

Becoming part of a Cluster

St John Vianney's is part of the South Edinburgh Cluster along with our sister parishes, St Catherine of Alexandria (Gracemount) and St Gregory the Great (Inch).

Our cluster actually dates back to 1997 when Archbishop Keith O'Brien intimated that he wanted parishes to consider clustering for the future because of the falling number of active priests. Initially we set out to intentionally heighten the awareness of the people in the three parishes that we needed to share all the resources we could and join together whenever possible liturgically, pastorally and socially.

Six years later, in May 2003 the three priests of the parishes (Fr Mike Fallon, Fr Kenneth Owens and Fr Gordon Muchall) approached Monsignor David Gemmell, the City of Edinburgh Vicar General, and put forward a proposal. The proposal was based on two fundamental principles:

1. The need to plan for a future with a diminishing number of priests.
2. The importance of recognising and respecting the right of each faith community to exist and remain distinct.

The proposal was that the three parishes should continue to exist, retaining their own traditions, but that the three should become intentionally interdependent. This laid a very solid foundation for our future.

Over the past 20 years, we have worked and grown as a Cluster of three faith communities: we have walked ever closer together on our faith journey, as we will see in the sections that follow.

Christine McNally shares her experience of being part of one of the first ministries to operate at Cluster level:

The Bereavement Group was one of the first Cluster ministries, giving support and comfort to those in need and has been going for more than 20 years. When I was invited to join the Bereavement Group, I wasn't sure this ministry was for me, but decided to go along to a meeting, and was made to feel welcome and valued.

The experience of attending my first bereavement service was much more than I expected, I was so moved by it and the comfort I received made me reflect on just how important a ministry this was, and what it has meant to the people of the Cluster.

One of the most loving things that we can do for each other as a church family is to pray for one another and being part of the Bereavement Group offers us the blessing of being able to do this and walk with others in moments of darkness.

Enriched by further cultural diversity

In the 1950's our parish was greatly enriched by the arrival of the Irish community. In more recent times, we have been similarly enriched by new parishioners coming to join us from various parts of the globe.

While this list isn't comprehensive, here are some of the countries people have come from, or have their roots in, to become part of our parish family: Brazil; Caribbean; England; France; India; Italy; Ireland; Nigeria; Philippines; Poland; Slovakia; Spain; Venezuela.

Amid this there have been large groups of parishioners from two countries: India and Philippines. Both groups have shared their story of coming to Scotland and becoming part of St John Vianney's.

The Filipino community

It was around 20 years ago that our sisters and brothers from the Philippines started to come and settle in this part of Edinburgh. They came from various parts of the country, including Nueva Ecija province in Central Luzon region, Manila, the Visayas region, and Mindanao.

Many came to Edinburgh because they heard about it from Filipino friends, who described it as a beautiful city. They were encouraged to apply for jobs here, often in the health care sector, but also in transport and hospitality.

When they arrived in the city, and were looking for a church, fellow Filipinos would tell them about St John Vianney's. In this way the Filipino community grew over the years and now numbers more than 40. They speak about how they felt very supported when they came to the parish.

The parish means a lot to the Filipino community and many of them have had children since arriving, and those children have been baptised, celebrated their First Communion, and been Confirmed in the parish.

Over the years the parish hall has been used frequently for large gatherings of the Filipino community. Here are some of the community gathered in the church.



The Indian (Syro-Malabar) community

Healthcare professionals started moving to the UK from India in the early 2000's for jobs in the health sector. The vast majority were from the South of India, a state called Kerala, and belonged to the Syro Malabar Catholic community.

Having been born and brought up in a strong Catholic faith, whenever they arrived in a new place, their first priority was to find a Catholic church for worship. Since the Syro Malabar community began settling in Gilmerton, St. John Vianney's has become the torchbearer of faith in their lives. They were deeply touched and felt a sense of belonging due to the cordial welcome they received from the parishioners here.

When living miles away from their homeland and loved ones, having a welcoming and accommodating faith community was, for them, akin to being closer to their own family. Despite the existence of separate liturgical rites, they always feel a part of St. John Vianney's in the same way they feel about their families back in Kerala. Even though we may not see all the Indian community frequently, they still consider themselves as belonging to St John Vianney's.

Their children have received their First Holy Communion and been Confirmed in St John Vianney's Church. Most of them also studied or are currently studying in St John Vianney's Primary School and Holy Rood High School. When their university-going children visit the church, it warms their hearts to see how they are approached and recognised by the parishioners.

Despite the cultural differences, our sisters and brothers from India have always felt united in faith with the people of St John Vianney's.

Here is a photo of the wider Edinburgh Syro-Malabar community, which includes many of those who worship with us, taken at St Matthew's in Rosewell.



Pilgrimages to Ars and Greece

During this period there were further pilgrimages. Having become part of a Cluster of parishes, these pilgrimages involved all three Cluster parishes, and beyond.

The first was in April 2010 and took in Avignon, Ars, Taize, and L'Arche (Trosly).

On the 4 August 2009 we had commemorated the 150th anniversary of the death of our parish patron, St John Vianney. Frs. Mike Fallon and Jock Dalrymple suggested that we organise a Cluster pilgrimage to Ars, the place St John Vianney spent most of his life.

Below are most of the group of 23 pilgrims, led by Fr Jock.



The second, during October 2013, followed in the footsteps of St Paul in Greece.

Around sixteen years after the death and resurrection of Jesus, Paul set out on his 2nd missionary journey. According to Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, Paul's journey began in modern day Turkey, but we "joined Paul" after he had crossed from Troas, also in Turkey, and arrived in the north-eastern Greek city of Neapolis (Kavala).

29 pilgrims followed in Paul's footsteps as he travelled from northern to southern Greece and preached in, and established the first Christian communities in Europe, in Philippi, Thessaloniki and Corinth. We also visited Athens where Paul spent some time preaching the Good News. Our pilgrimage also took in some of Greece's spectacular history. The picture on the following page was taken in Corinth.



Patricia Scott shares her memory:

Following in the footsteps of St Paul is an experience I will never forget. It is etched in my heart. Deeply spiritual and ultimately fulfilling, I feel blessed to have walked in his footsteps with wonderful friends old/and new. A joyful experience. I cannot state one part as being my 'stand out' as there were so many but visiting Meteora and seeing these 14th century byzantine monasteries literally perched on solid rock, really is a sight to behold (this photograph is on display in the hall).

Our Diamond Jubilee

We celebrated our 60th Jubilee during our weekly parish Eucharist at 9.30 am on Sunday 18 November 2012. Fr Jock Dalrymple and the parishioners were joined by Cardinal Keith Patrick O'Brien, Bishop Stephen Robson, Fr John Robinson and Fr Kenneth Owens. Bishop Stephen was the principal celebrant as the Cardinal had recently been unwell. The Mass was followed by a celebration in the hall.



Faith Journey: 2013-2017

This stage of our journey, led by Fr Mike Fallon and Fr Jock Dalrymple, started in February 2013 when a group of over 50 parishioners from across our three faith communities came together to share and reflect on the documents of the Second Vatican Council. We did this over a period of 18 months, concluding during September 2014, meeting on a Saturday morning from 1030 to 1230, followed by a shared lunch.

The Vatican II study materials we used had been produced by Bill Huebsch, at that time Director of the online Pastoral Center at Twenty-third Publications (USA). Much of the Center's work was focused on leading an effort to help parishes create within them a culture of holiness as a chief way to implement Vatican II more fully and reach out to the poor. We were very fortunate to be able to organise for Bill to visit while we were sharing and reflecting on the documents. Bill also introduced us to the Center's Sanctus Retreats which we ran across our three cluster parishes.

A couple of months after completing our journey through the documents of the Second Vatican Council, we began our study of and reflection on our Holy Father's Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*. This took us through to November 2015.

During Lent 2016, six groups of parishioners gathered to reflect on Pope Francis' document *'Misericordiae Vultus'* using a process called *'Peace on Earth – a Year of Mercy'*. Between September and December that same year a group gathered to reflect further on Mercy using a programme called *'Having Mercy'*.

In 2017 we started our journey through *Joy of Love*, the Apostolic Exhortation Pope Francis issued following the meetings of the Synod of bishops in 2014 and 2015.

Many of those who participated over the course of the five years spoke about how much they valued being able to come together and reflect on and share with others about their faith. It was a powerful experience and in many ways the beginning of learning to share and be open. This laid solid foundations for the next stage of our journey (described in the following section).

Journeying from maintenance to mission

During 2018, under the leadership of Fr Anthony Caruana and Fr Mike Fallon, we set out on a journey that we intended would help us move from "maintenance to mission".

Across our three Cluster faith communities we recognised that we needed to become more intentionally missionary (to evangelise). During a homily he preached on 3 and 4 March 2018, Fr Anthony said: *"We are not about survival. We are not here to maintain. We are here for a mission. To build God's People. To make disciples."*

We drew upon a process known as *Divine Renovation*. It is described in a book written by Fr James Mallon (a Scots-born priest working in Canada). It offers practical ways of helping us to become a missionary church. Two of the main themes in the book are:

- Our fundamental calling as Christians is to relationship with Jesus.
- Jesus calls each of us to be his disciples and to make disciples (to evangelise).

One of the tools used world-wide for this process of evangelisation is Alpha and it remains at the centre of our journey, thanks to our Cluster Alpha Team.

Connect Groups are another core component of our journey from maintenance to mission. At the end of each Alpha cycle participants are invited by the Alpha Team to continue deepening their relationship with Jesus and strengthening the new relationships with those whom they have experienced and shared their Alpha journey. One of the ways of doing this is through Connect Groups. Across our Cluster parishes we now have 23 people participating in 5 Connect Groups, which meet weekly. The Groups gather to: pray together for each other, for each other's prayer intentions (thus extending the prayer to the wider community), and for our faith community; read the Gospel reading for the following Sunday and then share about the reading. The groups enable people to deepen their relationship with God and with one another - they're like mini churches in action, developing fellowship and evangelising each other.

This *Divine Renovation* process was a logical continuation of the 'Faith journey' we had set out on during 2013, with our study of the documents of Vatican II. A group of around 60 parishioners, this time including our young people, gathered between April and July 2018 to read, reflect on, and share about Fr Mallon's *Divine Renovation* book.

After we completed reading and reflecting on the book, we developed a Cluster Pastoral Plan to guide us and set off on our journey with our Cluster Assembly at Liberton Kirk Halls on Saturday 12 January 2019, attended by close to 200 people.



The pandemic has slowed us down a little, but we remain firmly committed to continuing this journey.

Our direction of travel is very much in tandem with the dream shared by our Holy Father, Pope Francis, in Joy of the Gospel:

I dream of a "missionary option", that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light:

- *as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented*
- *to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open*
- *to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth*

and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with himself.

It is rooted in the final words spoken by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew (28¹⁹):

Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Everything we do is underpinned by two things:

- prayer (led and guided by our Cluster Prayer Foundation Team)
- the power and experience of the Holy Spirit to make a reality the dreams we have for our parish communities. God lives in us through the Holy Spirit: the same power that was at work in Jesus is given to each of us.

Eileen Lewis shares what this journey has meant to her:

I found the Cluster Assembly in January 2019 inspirational and not long after I accepted the invitation to the Alpha course. The experience I had of the love and forgiveness of God through the Holy Spirit changed my whole outlook on what church means. It surely is all about reaching out within and way beyond our parish community in the name and love of Jesus.

The parish today

We are served by Fr Alex Davie, our Parish Priest (and also Parish Priest of St Catherine's and St Gregory's), and Sr Ninian Duffner, our Parish Coordinator.

The parish now comprises the areas of Hyvots, Gilmerton, Craigour, Moredun, Fernieside and Ferniehill, and the village of Danderhall. It also includes many of the new housing estates recently built or under construction. What is known as the 'Edinburgh Southeast Wedge project', the plan to build thousands of new homes in the Southeast of the City, will continue to have an impact on our parish over the coming years.

Just over three hundred parishioners are registered with our parish (spread across 140 households). We continue to be very rich with regard to our cultural diversity.

As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, we are rebuilding our faith community and the number of people gathering to celebrate Mass each week is now slightly above pre-pandemic levels - around 130 parishioners gather each Sunday. Our worship is enriched by our sacristans, welcomers, flower arrangers, altar servers, children's liturgy catechists, music ministry, AV team, readers, and Communion ministers.

Some of our ministries are exercised jointly with our sister parishes in the Cluster; some we organise and operate at parish level. There are a wide range of ministries including: keeping our church and hall clean; outreach to the housebound and sick (including bringing Communion and newsletters); St Vincent de Paul Society; preparation of our paper and electronic Cluster newsletter; providing a lunch once a week for people in the local communities; providing a meal for homeless people every few weeks at the Bethany hub (in Haymarket); support for refugees; Creedou project - helping towards the cost of children's education in Uganda; channelling food from a local supermarket to people in the community; looking after finance and fabric; stall holders; administration of our parishes and Cluster; social events for seniors; bereavement support; SPRED (working within the Church to nourish accepting and inclusive communities for people with learning disabilities); preparation of children and their families for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation; preparation of families for Baptism; Alpha and RCIA; Prayer Foundation Team; Connect groups (faith-sharing); maintaining our Cluster website and Facebook pages; prayer groups; teas and coffees at weekend Masses; Ladies Guild.

This list shows that our ministry, living out our Baptismal vocation, is very much focused on inclusivity and reaching out to and serving the wider communities in which we live, and beyond.

We continue to be part of SEECAT (see above) and actively work with, and walk alongside, Christians from various churches in the area.

Some parishioners share what it means to them to be part of the parish today.

Maureen and Frank Quinn:

Being part of St John Vianney community is a joy and privilege, a wonderful example of togetherness and growth. Over 42 years, we as a family have felt welcome, involved, and nourished by the various ministries, ably led by pastoral priests. Unity and diversity are keystones of our experiences, which allows for all (including visitors) to feel valued and included, demonstrating Jesus's message of stewardship. We are confident that this community, under the patronage of St John Vianney, will continue to be a vibrant and responsive one in the years ahead.

Amber Rodgers:

For me being a member of St John Vianney's parish means, turning up on a Sunday morning knowing that I will always be welcome. Friendly faces, bright smiles and doors always wide open. I think the best way to sum up the parish community at St John Vianney's is by looking at the way we all pulled together when we initially found out about the possible closure of the church. Although, things didn't go the way we hoped, and our building will be no more; we will always be a community together even though we'll be in a new home!

Hilary Stokes:

I've been a member of the music group at St John Vianney's for almost as long as I've been a member of the parish. I'm not a musician, as such, but I do love singing and love the response of the congregation to a hymn or piece of music they like. It really does add a dimension to the Mass.

The community at St John Vianney's has, if anything, become closer over the last couple of years, pulling together to try to retain its identity with or without the physical buildings where we've been so happy. It's been a good feeling to be part of this and to be confident that the community will continue to thrive after the move. I feel really at home as a member of the St John Vianney's community. I help to bring music to the community - and to St Gregory's - but the response to this gives me so much more than I give to the congregations. Let's all go forward singing!

Fhiona and Thomas Monkhouse:

The parish is central to everything in our family and our lives. Faith is what gives meaning to our family life, we leave Mass feeling revived and refreshed for the week ahead.

Our parish family are happy to see us each week and support us just like our own family does which is so important with an infant and preschooler.

We have attended other parishes over the years, but family history keeps pulling us back to St John Vianney's.

The pastors who served us

Our parish has been served by 17 priests over the past 71 years. We give thanks to God for their ministry amongst us.

2018 to present:	Fr Alex Davie **
2013 to 2018:	Fr Anthony Caruana
2006 to 2013:	Fr Jock Dalrymple
2006 to 2007:	Fr Mike Fallon
2003 to 2006:	Fr Gordon Muchall *
1997 to 2003:	Fr Kenneth Owens
1994 to 1997:	Fr Stephen Robson
1986 to 1994:	Fr Pat Kelly
1980 to 1986:	Fr John Ramsay
1976 to 1978:	Fr Michael Burns
1971 to 1972:	Fr Brian Saddler
1970 to 1980:	Fr Lawrence Glancey
1969 to 1971:	Fr Michael McNamara
1965 to 1969:	Fr Charlie Barclay
1961 to 1965:	Fr Joe McMahon
1956 to 1961:	Fr Michael Cassidy
1952 to 1970:	Fr Peter J McKeon

* *Parish Priest of both St John Vianney's and St Gregory's from 2003*

** *Following the retiral of Fr Mike Fallon in September 2020, Fr Alex became parish priest of St Catherine's in addition to St John Vianney's and St Gregory's*

Firsts and lasts

In this church building we have celebrated:

- 3769 baptisms. That is an average of one per week for every week of our 71 years.
- 732 weddings.
- 2 ordinations of parishioners to the priesthood: Fr Mike Fallon (1977) and Fr Gerard Prior (1990). In addition to this, three parishioners from the parish were ordained in the Cathedral: Fr James Radin (1957), Fr Andrew Forrest (1959) and Fr Albert Gardner (1970).
- 1 religious profession – Sr Anna Maria Byrne
- Countless children (and adults) have received their First Communion and been Confirmed.

The very **first baptism** in our church building was of Lorna Tripney - it took place just one week after the church opened, on Sunday 23 November 1952.

The **final baptisms** took place last weekend, on Sunday 30 July 2023, when Remi Appau, Gianna Dick, Reggie Carroll, Ruben Carroll, Maya Matulaitis and Charlotte Monkhouse were baptised.

Here is a photograph of two of the children who were baptised, Charlotte and Giana, with their parents, godparents, and Charlotte's big brother, on 30 July:



Seven weeks after our Church opened, the **first wedding** took place - on Saturday 3 January 1953. Jean Craven and Bob Low were married that day.

This is a photo of Bob and Jean cutting their cake on their wedding day. As many will know, Bob still lives in the parish today.



Our **final wedding** took place on Friday 23 June 2023, when Megan McFadden and Ben Gray were married.

Here are Ben and Megan on their wedding day.

Our **final celebration of First Communion** took place just a few weeks ago, on Sunday 11 June 2023 – here is a picture of the young people who received Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time that day.



A new beginning in St Gregory's – looking forward in hope

While our buildings will now close, and there is great sadness in leaving them, this is very much the start of the next chapter for our parish community, when we will gather each week to celebrate Mass in St Gregory's.

Fr Alex summed this up perfectly when he spoke to the parishioners about the closure of our buildings on Sunday 28 August 2022. He said:

"I believe this is, nonetheless, also a time for us to look forward. When I met with the PPC to share this news, they all spoke about the importance of being positive and looking at what opportunities this might present for us, how we might create something that is even better than we have now."

We have already witnessed so many parishioners giving of their time and talent to prepare for the move to St Gregory's. Let's all continue to work together, bringing our particular gifts and talents, to build our community, and help to build the Kingdom of God. In doing this, we can continue to fulfil our baptismal calling, our vocation, to follow Jesus Christ and to make Jesus and his Gospel, the Good News, present in the world.

We will continue to be guided by, and aspire to, our Vision for our Cluster faith communities:

We dare to experience the friendship and love of Jesus
as a family where all belong and care,
where all are needed and share their gifts.
We are on a journey,
accompanying each other as we grow
and are transformed by the Spirit.
Our Mission is to go out, bringing Christ to others
and together build God's Kingdom.

The following quotation from our patron saint, St John Vianney, sourced by Susan Blaney, the Chair of our Parish Pastoral Council, seems like a very appropriate way in which to finish this booklet:

"On this path, it is only the first step that counts."

As we leave our buildings, we now take that first step in the next chapter of our parish journey. St John Vianney, pray for us.

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### **And finally, thank you to everybody who has helped with this booklet...**

... to those who contributed their knowledge, memories, personal reflections and photographs; to those who reviewed and edited the various drafts; to the proofreaders; to those who looked after the printing; and to the Team who have produced it – *Christina Katague, Ethel Ferguson, Florence Manzano, George Muldoon, Gerry Mulvenna, Jacqui Philips, Jamie Cherrie, Jojo Pascua, Kathleen Thomson, Mary McMillan, Mel Lagman, and Mike McKeen.*

## **Our final Mass: Friday 4 August 2023, the Feast of St John Vianney**

As we gather to celebrate Mass for the last time in this church, you may wish to record here your own memory of what this church building has meant to you over the years.

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We have made every effort to ensure that all the information in this booklet is as complete and accurate as possible.

We apologise if there is anything that is missing or inaccurate.

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Located a little way outside the village of Ars, this statue recalls St. John Vianney on his way to become Curé (pastor) in 1818, meeting a boy who he asked for directions. Jean Marie Vianney said to him: *"You have shown me the way to Ars, I will show you the way to heaven."*



*This photograph was taken on 16 April 2010 during the Cluster pilgrimage to Ars*