

## **ST PETER THE APOSTLE**

### ***INTRODUCTION***

I feel privileged to have been asked to write the history of St Peter's, Falcon Avenue because I knew I was being offered a unique opportunity to look into the lives of the many people for whom St Peter's has played such an important part, from the early part of last century to the present time.

Not only is this a parish with an extraordinary beginning, but, looking through the records of the parish in the Scottish Catholic Archives (and in the mass of material handed to me by the parish priest Fr Francis Kerr and the chairman of his publishing committee, Eugene Mooney), it soon became clear that there was also a very vigorous community flourishing under the magnificent but sometimes cold edifice of St Peter's.

Mgr McNally (parish priest of St Peter's 1980-85) draws attention to this communal aspect of parish life: 'St Paul reminds us that "You are God's building." St Peter puts it differently: "Christ is the living stone. Set yourself close to Him so that you may be living stones making a spiritual house."' ˆ

'I always felt that the parish was overawed by its beginnings,' continues Mgr McNally, 'and I couldn't help thinking of the 'living stones', the thousands of the men, women, children, priests and sisters who made up the parish during those 100 years. There were two world wars and many other conflicts during that time which must have made life very difficult for many families in the parish, with all the problems of loneliness and hardship and yet in the midst of their troubles they clung to their faith.

'There have been thousands of *living stones* making up the community of faith at St Peter's: parents leading by example, struggling to pass on their faith to their children,

struggling to support the local Catholic school which has (and still does) play a vital role in the lives of children and parish.’

As a historian I also had a special interest in St Peter’s. I first came to Scotland in 1947 — straight from living in Brazil, two years after my mother died in Denmark. It was a bit of a culture-shock — both the climate and the food. I suppose the Church was a constant for me. I stayed with my grandparents and my aunt in Albert Terrace, and my grandfather (then senior Baillie and on the Town Council’s Education Committee) consulted Fr Quille, parish priest of St Peter’s as to where I should go to school. Fr (later Monsignor) Quille came to our house and recommended the Benedictines’ boarding school at Fort Augustus and so I was sent first to Carlekemp Priory, the Benedictine preparatory school at North Berwick. Carlekemp was the post-war incarnation of St Andrew’s Priory, Canaan Lane, which, along with St Peter’s, had its own special place in Church history by virtue of the Benedictine Archbishop Andrew Joseph McDonald’s Eucharistic Congress and the anti-Catholic ‘riots’ of the summer of 1935 which followed.

Although my grandparents and my aunt were members of the Church of Scotland (Morningside Parish), they felt duty bound to honour the promises my father had made in his *Ne Temere* marriage ceremony, so, on a Sunday, one of them would take me down to St Peter’s and sit with me through the Mass. I have only faint memories of Mgr Quille but stronger ones of Fr Walter Glancy, Fr Lawrence Glancey and Fr James Rae.

Writing about St Peter’s therefore seemed a logical and worthwhile thing to be doing, as St Peter’s had down the years made an important contribution to the cultural life of the city of Edinburgh and also to its ecumenical development. Lastly, after the Second Vatican Council, the pages that follow will show that St Peter’s became a shining example of how the Catholic Church might set about renewing itself. My aim is that this close examination of the minutiae of parish life over the last 100 years will map the social and spiritual mechanics of

modern parish development and I would like to thank all those generous contributors who have made this possible.

The story of St Peter's, Falcon Avenue shows in microcosm how the Catholic Church painfully made its way from a pyramidal authoritarian institution, in which parish priests were compelled by circumstances to act as benevolent despots, to a wheel-shaped organisation where priests became facilitators in a community of equals, sharing the work of the parish through enlightened collaborative ministry.

For the laity we can see in the story of St Peter's how unquestioning obedience was succeeded by a more informed participation and greater co-responsibility in the work of salvation. Collaboration is not just an expedient necessity in times of a shrinking priesthood but good theology which supports and encourages the People of God on their journey.

Michael T R B Turnbull May 2006

### ***BEGINNINGS — 1906-1910***

Parishes and churches are much more than structures created by canon law or even beautifully decorated buildings: above all, parishes are communities of people and, as Fr Walter Glancy observed in 1957: 'The building of a church and its furnishing is not merely a matter of providing accommodation ... [it] should be an act of worship.'<sup>1</sup>

'Parish' (or, in pre-1937 Scotland, more properly *mission*) is a collective noun, a gathering of people united in one aim and desire — to find fulfilment through Divine worship and assembly.

However, for centuries after the Scottish Reformation of 1560 — even with the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in 1878 — the Sacred Congregation of

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<sup>1</sup> SCA GD27/69/1 Fr Walter Glancy: text for Golden Jubilee brochure, 1957

Propaganda Fide continued its paternalistic control of the Scottish Catholic Church until 1907; moreover, the need to have stable and well-funded communities meant that there were no canonical parishes in Scotland until 1937 in the Eastern Province of St Andrews and Edinburgh and 1947 in the Western Province of Glasgow.

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Until those dates there were no parishes (only *missions*), no parish priests, only *mission* priests or (occasionally) 'missionary rectors'. The difference between a parish priest and a missionary rector was the superior legal rights of a parish priest over a mission priest — reflected in the former's higher stipend.

In 1896 Bishop James Augustine Smith of Dunkeld (later Archbishop Smith of St Andrews and Edinburgh) explained his abhorrence of the incorrect use of the term 'parish priest':

The other day I was telling a Priest how, by express authority of the B[ishops] (certainly, to my knowledge, of the 2 A[rch]b[ishops] of the time of first insertion), the [Catholic] Directory reprobated the use of 'Parish' & 'Parish Priest.' ... it has led to Priests (I have been assured) paying themselves very much more than their £50 per annum, by deducting from the different sources of church income till they had made up the amount they thought themselves entitled to ...<sup>2</sup>

Missions (and parishes) are often born out of one individual's determination, another's inspiration and yet another's opportunity. These may spring from the needs of those who struggle to find a place of worship where none is available, or only with difficulty; from a search for a place to celebrate the holiness of the world and, lastly, someone generous enough to provide the necessary financial support. It was such a fortuitous meeting of minds that took place on 16 February 1905 in a small vineyard some fifteen miles north of Rome.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> SCA ED5/41/8 Bp J. Smith to Abp A. MacDonald, 13 Sep 1896

<sup>3</sup> John Gray, *St Peter's, Edinburgh, A brief description of the Church & its contents* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1925), 3

*St Peter the Apostle*

In his sermon at the golden jubilee of St Peter's church (1957), Cardinal Gordon Gray spoke of 'a chain of coincidences ... or should we not rather say, stages in the development of a divine plan.'<sup>4</sup> In his parish annals some years later, Fr John Gray recorded how the idea of Morningside's new Catholic church of St Peter the Apostle in Edinburgh had its origins at the Pontifical Scots College's dilapidated Villa Scozzese located in rich winegrowing country near Marino, halfway between Castelgandolfo and Frascati: 'At Marino the idea was mentioned of a mission at Morningside.'<sup>5</sup> It evidently originated with Mgr Robert Fraser (rector from 1897 to 1913).<sup>6</sup> Archbishop James Smith of St Andrews and Edinburgh was also in Rome at the time, recuperating from a long illness.<sup>7</sup> Walking down the vineyard paths (even in February) brought back the memory of the Villa's black red and its strong golden wine.<sup>8</sup>

How did this coincidence of interests come about? Aberdeen-born rector Mgr Robert Fraser (1858-1914) was an impulsive but intensely practical man who was in the throes of putting the Scots College Rome on a more secure financial footing after a lengthy period of confusion and neglect; James Augustine Smith (1841-1928), Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh was an Edinburgh man, trained (like Fraser), at the Scots College Rome where he was now recuperating from the effects of an illness which over the next twenty years would gradually incapacitate him.

Offering to underwrite the construction of the new church was the fastidious and Paris-born André Sebastian Raffalovich (1862-1934), a convert whose Jewish family had been forced by anti-Semitic legislation some time before to uproot themselves from Odessa

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<sup>4</sup> SCA GD27/71/1 Cardinal Gordon J. Gray: sermon (typescript), 1957

<sup>5</sup> Raymond McCluskey, 'Tribulations 1820-1922,' in Raymond McCluskey (ed.), *The Scots College Rome 1600-2000* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2000), 92

<sup>6</sup> Robert Fraser (1858-1914) [rector 1897-1913], Bp of Dunkeld 1913; former student of SCR and on staff of Blairs see Raymond McCluskey, 'Tribulations 1820-1922,' in Raymond McCluskey (ed.), *The Scots College Rome 1600-2000* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2000), 92-92 [Raffalovich gave £347 for funding for new chapel (inaugurated 16 April 1900) and the re-ordering of the chapel's interior]

<sup>7</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter's Diary (in Fr John Gray's hand) 16 Feb 1905

<sup>8</sup> Author's telephone conversation with Mgr John McIntyre, former rector of the SCR

on the shores of the Black Sea to Paris. In Paris Raffalovich's father again became a successful banker and his mother, 'a woman of singular beauty and remarkable intelligence', maintained a brilliant *salon* at her home in the Avenue Hoche.<sup>9</sup> André's sister would marry the Irish political leader, William O'Brien and his brother would later become the financial agent of the Tsarist government before the Revolution.

Raffalovich (who, between 1884 and 1896 published 5 books of poetry and 2 novels), had already (1898) made a gift of £400 to the Scots College and would continue to make others.<sup>10</sup> The future parish priest was Fr John Gray (1866-1934), also in Rome recovering from pneumonia; he had entered the Scots College in 1898 not long after Fraser's arrival.

Like Raffalovich, Gray had an unusual personal history. The first of nine children (reputedly with gipsy blood on both sides of the family) he was born on 10 March 1866 at Bethnel Green, London, the son of a former wheelwright and carpenter. Although talented academically, he had been removed from school by his father at the age of 13 and apprenticed as a metal-turner in Woolwich Arsenal where, after three years, his obvious ability and application gained him promotion to the drawing-office. At night, over the following five years, Gray taught himself the basics of French, German and Latin and also began to write poetry. In 1882 Gray qualified for the Civil Service by examination and joined the Post Office Savings Bank as a clerk. In 1887 he matriculated at London University but transferred instead to the Foreign Office in 1888, moving on to the Foreign Office Library five years later.

Having improved his job and increased his prospects, Gray now had the income and opportunity to widen his social milieu. He began associating with so-called 'decadent' writers and painters, many of them with links to Paris and the French *symbolist* poets. Among these

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<sup>9</sup> Jerusha Hull McCormack, *John Gray, Poet, Dandy & Priest* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1991), 44

<sup>10</sup> see Raymond McCluskey, 'Tribulations 1820-1922,' in Raymond McCluskey (ed.), *The Scots College Rome 1600-2000* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2000), 93

were Aubrey Beardsley and Oscar Wilde, the latter allegedly immortalising Gray in his ‘The Picture of Dorian Gray’ (1890).

On 14 February 1890, at Saints Anselm and Cecilia, London John Gray was received into the Roman Catholic Church and confirmed not long after.<sup>11</sup> André Raffalovich, meanwhile, had moved to England. He considered studying at Oxford University but returned to London to become something of a professional host and guest (moving in much the same literary and artistic circles as John Gray), living with his childhood governess, Miss Florence Truscott Gribbell, a devoted housekeeper and presiding hostess. Raffalovich became a convert to the Catholic faith in 1896.

## **A NEW MISSION**

On 28 October 1898, at the age of thirty-two, Gray entered the Scots College Rome. He was ordained by Cardinal Respighi at St John Lateran on 21 December 1901, but, after suffering a severe breakdown in his health a few months later, was diagnosed with a heart condition. Nevertheless, by September 1901 Gray had taken up a post as curate to Monsignor William Grady at St Patrick’s in Edinburgh’s notorious Cowgate district, with some 10,000 souls (many of them Irish), the largest mission in Edinburgh and also the most deprived.

Here, Fr Gray had to contend with near-Dickensian poverty, as he described the scene to Raffalovich in October 1902 with some horror and amazement:

I went the other night into a house of a couple belonging to us when there was a bit of a row going on. The wife ‘had drink in her’ as the phrase is here, and was by way of putting her husband out of his misery, to the screaming of five children ranging from a girl of eighteen down to nothing.<sup>12</sup>

By November 1904, the stress of working in the Cowgate took its toll; Gray was now found to be suffering from pneumonia and advised by his doctor to go to London. He stayed

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<sup>11</sup> Jerusha Hull McCormack, *John Gray, Poet, Dandy & Priest* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1991), 39

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Jerusha Hull McCormack, *John Gray, Poet, Dandy & Priest* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1991), 191

in London briefly with his friend Raffalovich and then together the two went on to Rome, Raffalovich taking rooms at the Hôtel d'Italie, Gray residing at the Scots College.

Things moved quickly after the February discussion at the Villa Scozzese. The following day Archbishop Smith received a more formal proposal from Raffalovich who was anxious to find Gray a more congenial place of work and an escape for himself from the increasingly xenophobic and incestuous life of literary London:

May I now place before Your Grace a scheme which I hope you will find a positive advantage to your Diocese as well as a means of giving suitable employment to Fr Gray?

Those who know Edinburgh see that within a short period a Catholic centre at Morningside will be a necessity: some, I understand, think the time has already come. Your Grace has I believe a piece of ground suitable for church & priest's house. I am ready at once to devote a sum of £3000 in order to begin the work: which sum I would place in deposit account in Fr Gray's name in an Edinburgh Bank. My notion is that plans should be drawn up for a priest's house and a church to hold 400 or 500. The plan of the church would be made so that at first only so much would be built as would give accommodation for say 200 & then as numbers increased the building could be enlarged till it reached the 400 or 500 originally contemplated. I fancy a priest's house could be built for £1200 and thus a sum of £1800 would at once be available for the church. I can guarantee that Fr Gray would be no burden on the congregation or the Diocesan funds as far as his own support & the maintenance of the church are concerned, & in the event of the death of Fr Gray within five years from the date of the opening of the church I undertake to contribute a sum of £120 a year to his successor for the rest of the period of five years. Meantime a congregation would be forming & it is to be presumed that by five years after the opening the said congregation would be equal to the maintenance of a priest.

As I know that Fr Gray would wish to open a school at the first moment it was required I would help the new mission in every material way in that event.

These are the main lines of the scheme I would venture to propose: it could be modified in its details to meet any objections Your Grace's advisers may make to it. It has been evolved because of my deep & lasting interest in Fr Gray & from a wish to do something for Edinburgh & at the same time to mark my high regard for Your Grace's person.

To our deep regret Fr Gray cannot again face the hard work of St Patrick's & in seeking to find him congenial employment I am happy to be able to do what all I hope consider a service to religion in Scotland.

I hope this scheme may commend itself to Your Grace as well as to such of the Chapter as you may see fit to consult on the subject.

Always respectfully and affectionately, André Raffalovich.

I should like the church dedicated either to St Peter or to St Matthew.<sup>13</sup>

Ever self-effacing, Raffalovich went on to ask Smith: 'I want as a great favour that my name as the builder of Church & House should not go beyond the Chapter & Mgr Fraser' (in the event Raffalovich would contribute around £7,000 towards the £7,802 cost of the building on its own).<sup>14</sup>

Archbishop Smith immediately wrote to Edinburgh asking for the opinion of his senior priests. One of them, the Cathedral administrator, Canon Alexander Stuart, was convinced that other areas in Edinburgh deserved a new parish well before Morningside: Restalrig (with its sixty military families in the substantial stone edifice of Piershill barracks) or Trinity and North Leith (then expanding rapidly with the advent of the new electric trains) should take priority.<sup>15</sup>

However, the vicar-general, Mgr Patrick Morris, having consulted his clergy, replied to his archbishop not long after: 'With regard to the New Parish in the Morningside district of Edinburgh, there was but one opinion, "That Your Grace should accept the offer made, and that Edinburgh, and indeed the whole diocese, should be very grateful to Mr Raffalovich for his generous gift."'<sup>16</sup>

While he was still in Rome Archbishop Smith met with the Pope and described to him the future church of St Peter in Edinburgh, at which the Holy Father granted his special blessing to all who should help in any way with the work of erecting it.<sup>17</sup>

In case the impression is given that the future St Peter's grew out of the ideas and the actions of men alone, there seems to have been another (unacknowledged) factor in the final

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<sup>13</sup> SCA DE58/236/1 André Raffalovich to Abp James Smith, 17 Feb 1905

<sup>14</sup> SCA DE58/236/18 André Raffalovich to Abp James Smith, nd

<sup>15</sup> SCA DE58/236/1 André Raffalovich to Abp J. Smith, Rome 17 Feb 1905; SCA DE58/236/2 Canon A. Stuart to Abp J. Smith, 20 Feb 1905

<sup>16</sup> SCA

<sup>17</sup> SCA GD27/1/5 St Peter's Jan 1907

equation. Writing in 1908, Miss Lilian Young revealed what she believed to be the hidden influence of something she had done many years before:

Soon after my reception into the Catholic Church, and whilst I was residing at Falcon Hall, I came to be much impressed with the piety and zeal of many old Catholics, who would, on Sunday mornings, walk fasting all the way from Braid Hills to the Church at Lauriston, rising at six I order to be in time for nine o'clock Mass ... I was most anxious to provide a chapel or room of some sort in the Morningside village for the benefit of these edifying people ... it occurred to me to bury a statue of our Blessed Lady in our grounds at Falcon Hall, thus putting her in possession ... Many years have passed away since then ... The Falcon Hall estate, consisting of some twenty-eight acres, had been sold, and when a site for the new Catholic Church at Morningside was sought for a few months ago, it was found upon this land.<sup>18</sup>

The notion of jointly taking part in the birth and development of a new parish coincided with the direction the lives both of Raffalovich and Gray had taken. Both had sought to dedicate their lives to God, both had become members of the Third Order of St Dominic (in 1898 and 1899 respectively). Raffalovich had also considered studying for the priesthood but had been prevented by illness.<sup>19</sup> Both men were fired by the ultramontane zeal of the newly-converted.

## **ST PETER'S FALCON AVENUE**

On 31 March 1905 Archbishop Smith arranged for Fr Gray to leave his post at St Patrick's and take charge of the new parish of St Peter's and its development. Gray decided to gather as many church furnishings and other materials from Rome as he could. He ordered vestments from Maria Marchisio, metal furniture from Ettore Brandizzi, and bought a picture of the Madonna. On his return to Edinburgh in May, he met the architect, Robert S. Lorimer (1864-1929), and in the light of their discussions Lorimer set about designing the new church. Still recuperating, Fr Gray was examined by his doctor, who saw some improvement in his

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<sup>18</sup> SCA GD27/19/1 The Lauriston Magazine No 6, vol 1, May 1908. 'A Legend of Morningside' by L. [Miss Young]

<sup>19</sup> Jerusha Hull McCormack, *John Gray, Poet, Dandy & Priest* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1991), 202

heart-beat and agreed that a golfing holiday at St Andrews with Fr George Angus (the local parish priest) would be of benefit.<sup>20</sup>

Soon the site for St Peter's was definitely chosen. After some dogged bargaining by the archdiocesan solicitor, Charles George, the Merchant Company agreed to the feu.<sup>21</sup> In addition, Gray was immensely pleased that the meeting with the Merchant Company had taken place on 29 June (St Peter's feast day).<sup>22</sup> On 1 August, the feast of St Peter in Chains, the diocesan Finance Committee approved the architect's plans.<sup>23</sup>

Gray was also busy making preparations for Raffalovich to settle in Edinburgh. On behalf of his friend Gray arranged for the purchase of a substantial mansion at 9 Whitehouse Terrace (half a mile east from the site of the new church), access to which was by means of a large and imposing drive shaded by stately trees. Between 1905 and 1907 until St Peter's church and its presbytery opened, Gray lodged with Raffalovich and Florence Gribbell at Whitehouse Terrace, where daily Mass was celebrated until St Peter's church was ready in 1907.

Meanwhile, Messrs Burns & Oates wrote that they had in their hands a copy of the statue of S. Peter in Rome that they could offer to St Peter's at cost price. Fr Gray accepted and advertisements were inserted in the *Catholic Herald* inviting small contributions to buy the statue on these terms.<sup>24</sup>

On 16 January 1906 the ground upon which St Peter's would be built was blessed by Fr Gray, assisted by Fr George H. Bennett (a former pupil of the Benedictine Abbey at Fort Augustus but also a graduate of the Scots College Rome and a future bishop of Aberdeen) in preparation for the start of building operations. One lay person was present, Mrs Douglas

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<sup>20</sup> SCA DE58/236/17 André Raffalovich to Abp J. Smith, 18 May 1905

<sup>21</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter's Diary, 29 May 1905

<sup>22</sup> SCA DE58/236/13 André Raffalovich to Abp James Smith 2 Jul 1905

<sup>23</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter's Diary, 1 Aug 1905

<sup>24</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter's Diary, 1 Sept 1905

Maclagan.<sup>25</sup> She proposed to carve the frames for the two smaller altar pieces, while the painter Sir Frank Brangwyn (1857-1956) would make a sketch for the large altarpiece; if it proved to be satisfactory, he would have it carried out by a pupil, with himself also contributing to the work.<sup>26</sup>

Fr Gray had also issued 1,500 copies of a circular inviting additional contributions to cover the cost of building and furnishing the church. But he also warned that it was 'right to proceed upon principles of trenchant economy' and this would be reflected in the severe simplicity of the architect's design.<sup>27</sup>

More donations followed: a gift of £120 from André Raffalovich on 3 February and 'two ancient oak panels representing the one a chalice, the other the five wounds of Our Lord ... once the property of Mr Ross who procured them in the Netherlands' from the diocesan solicitor Charles George on 24 March.<sup>28</sup>

The response to Fr Gray's appeal was very encouraging and by April 1906 he was able to report that '... at the present time the walls of the building have risen fifteen feet from the floor line. The end of July will find the joiner at work on the roof, and the first days of November will see the building structurally complete ... the nave is stopped for the present at half its length to the west by a temporary gable ... The floor space ... [will] ... accommodate three hundred persons ...'<sup>29</sup> The stone for the church was from the Hailes quarry.

The weather at noon on Easter Tuesday (17 April 1906) was fine and sunny. A large gathering watched as a dressed and inscribed block of freestone, the *lapis primarius* (foundation stone) of the church of St Peter the Apostle was blessed and laid by Archbishop James Smith. The block was positioned on the east face of the large pier at the epistle side, nine inches from the floor line. In a cavity under the stone a glass jar was placed containing a

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<sup>25</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter's Diary, 16 Jan 1905

<sup>26</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter's Diary, 28 Jan 1905

<sup>27</sup> SCA GD27/1/1 Circular: 9 Whitehouse Terrace, 20 Aug 1905

<sup>28</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter's Diary, 3 Feb; 24 March 1906

<sup>29</sup> SCA GD27/1/3 Circular April 1906

copy of the Scotsman newspaper of the day, a tracing of the ground plan of the building, and a statement on a sheet of parchment commemorating the event. The ceremonial trowel used by the Bishop and afterwards presented to His Grace was designed by the architect. The handle representing St Peter as Pope was carved out of laurelwood by the Brothers Clou.<sup>30</sup>

Previously critical of the project, Canon Stuart now embellished his sermon with suitably romantic historical details, reminding the congregation that this had once been the Boroughmuir of Edinburgh where ‘the flowers of the forest’ had assembled under James IV prior to the tragic defeat at Flodden (1513). He recalled also that to the south in pre-Reformation times there had once stood the tiny chapel of St Roque that gave shelter to plague victims, while to the east stood formerly the Convent of St Catherine of Siena and the church of St John the Baptist. Canon Stuart concluded that ‘Into this church that is being raised the birds will come again, there will come priests with the same credentials, the same mission’ and he expressed ‘the gratitude of the Catholic body to Fr John Gray, to whose unflinching zeal the inception of this good work is due. The burden placed on his shoulders is a heavy one,’ he concluded, ‘we are building a house not for man but for God ...’<sup>31</sup>

Fr Gray issued another appeal for funds towards the end of April. Not long after the Dowager Lady Bute (widow of the great Church benefactor, the Third Marquess of Bute who had died in 1900) mentioned that she wanted to give a window for the baptistery; the design was quickly put in hand, as well as that for a baptismal font made of lead.<sup>32</sup> By June, André Raffalovich gave the sum of money needed for the construction of the western sacristy, the palns for which were in the hands of the Dean of Guild Court by the end of the month.<sup>33</sup> In November Mr Gray of Kinfauns gave a Spanish painting of the Madonna and Child to the church.

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<sup>30</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter’s Diary, 17 Apr 1906

<sup>31</sup> SCA GD27/1/2 Canon Stuart: Sermon, 17 Apr 1906

<sup>32</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter’s Diary, Apr; May 1906

<sup>33</sup> SCA GD27/28 St Peter’s Diary, 1906

Meanwhile, Fr Gray drove the project forward with the commonsense of the metal-worker and the strategic refinement of the civil servant he had once been. The ceiling of the church was to be in Oregon pine; the painted wooden Crucifixion group, the stone medallion of the Lamb of God on the outside wall of the church and the guardian angel in the priest's house were the work of the sculptor Joseph Hayes. The organ was being constructed by Blackett & Howden and Gray urgently appealed for donors to come forward to meet the cost of the stone sculptures, the cross at the summit of the church and the Stations of the Cross which had been commissioned from the Dundee-born artist and designer John Duncan (1866-1945).<sup>34</sup>

As the church community developed, so it struggled to maintain financial health: the annual return for 1907 lists the income from seat rents (£163), offertories (£377), collections (£134) and chaplaincy work (£163); taken with expenditure on priests' salaries (£40 for Fr Gray and £20 for his curate), leading to a deficit of £155.<sup>35</sup>

As Dr Christine Johnson has pointed out, while charging rent for seats in church was common practice in the Church of Scotland, it was a method raising money that, by 1800, was used to a certain extent in Catholic churches, but was never compulsory.<sup>36</sup> However, it could be an effective means of paying for other activities: in 1791 enough money was made from seat rents to pay the salary of a schoolmaster.<sup>37</sup> At St Peter's in 1907 seat-holders such as André Raffalovich, Miss Gribell, Dr and Mrs Ryland Whitaker, Mr Felix Yap and Herr Tramm paid five shillings each week.<sup>38</sup> There was no regular pattern of seat-holding: while Mr Raffalovich continued as a seat-holder from 1907 until 1931, there were cases of defaulting which incurred a warning from the parish priest; in 1915 there were still around 25

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<sup>34</sup> SCA GD27/1/5 St Peter's Jan 1907

<sup>35</sup> SCA GD27/20 Annual Return n.d. [no balance, ie 1907?]

<sup>36</sup> Christine Johnson, *Developments in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, 1789-1829* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd., 1983), 141

<sup>37</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.* 142

<sup>38</sup> SCA GD27/29 St Peter's Edinburgh Seatholders, 1907

seat-holders and twenty-five a decade later. The payment intervals also varied with some paying 2 shillings and sixpence and others 5 shillings; Mr Raffalovich paid £3 in 1922 and Lady Anne Kerr £5 only a year later.

Each donation and addition to the ornamentation of St Peter's was meticulously recorded by Fr Gray in 'St Peter's Diary' between 1905 and 1932 and is now held at the Scottish Catholic Archives in Edinburgh. He himself paid for a window designed by Louis Davis to be put into the presbytery guest room in February 1907 as a compliment to the architect, Robert Lorimer. It showed Saint Christopher being awakened by a reed-warbler at the approach of the Infant Redeemer. The legend *Surge veni vocat te Dominus factus Puer Rea magnus parvulus* was taken from an old office of the Saint.

Donors excelled themselves to make gifts for the church: in February 1907 the £5 given by Mrs Watt met the cost of the material for a red velvet *antependium* [a covering for the front of the altar], an embroidery which was the first work of the Altar Society, and took over 350 hours to sew. That March Councillor Wilson presented a picture representing the Madonna and the Holy Child with other figures.

On the feast of St Mark (25 April 1907) the Church was solemnly opened in the presence of a large gathering. Archbishop Smith blessed the building and afterwards High Mass was sung (Palestrina's *Missa 'Tu es Petrus'*) by a choir under the conductorship of Herr Tramm, with Purcell's 'Te Deum Laudamus' at the conclusion. The celebrant was Mgr Grady, the deacon Fr George Mullen and the subdeacon Fr Octave Couttenier. The sermon was preached by Fr Richard Hogan.<sup>39</sup> Visiting preachers every Sunday evening was very much the norm, as Fr Gray never felt fully at ease standing in the pulpit, in spite of the support of André Raffalovich and his domestic circle sitting immediately below him for support.

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<sup>39</sup> CDS (1907), 251-52

*St Peter the Apostle*

Some gifts to the church could not fail to touch: Miss Robertson Macdonald wrote to the parish priest 'I have a relic of St. Peter's ... own altar. After my death I would like St Peter's Church to have this ...' News of Morningside's magnificent new church had indeed reached the heart of Rome. Mgr Robert Fraser presented the Pope on 16 January 1908 with an album of photographic views of the church. His Holiness expressed interest in the views and used the words: 'Questa é una vera chiesa' [this is a true/real church].

After the embroidered bannerette of the Blessed Sacrament was completed by Mrs Douglas Maclagan and presented to the church in July, the next big event came at Easter 1909 when a painting of St Joseph and the Flight into Egypt was hung on the wall complete in its frame. Costing a total of £70, it was a copy of the painting by Guido Reni then in the collection of the Winter Palace, St Petersburg and was made through the co-operation of the Director of the Gallery. On a scroll at the bottom of the frame were written the words *Surge et accipe puerum et matrem eius et fuge in Ægyptum* [Arise ad take the boy and his mother and escape into Egypt]. On a cartouche above was a palm tree with the text: *Gustus est palma* [sweet is the taste of the palm tree].

A controversial addition to the church interior came with the arrival in April of an oil painting, said to have been the work of Gaspar de Crayer (1527). The painting had been on the wall of the old church at Irvine Place, Stirling. When a new church was built there it was found that there was no room for the painting. The picture was in a very bad state when it came to St Peter's; it was relined and cleaned but the clumsy over-painting of the loin-cloth was not removed. The diocesan Finance Committee emphasised that the painting was only on loan; it was the property of St Mary's, Stirling and had to be returned there in due course — which it was in 1966.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> SCA GD27//2 Extract from Finance Committee Minutes: Mgr Patrick Morris, 5 Apr 1909

*St Peter the Apostle*

The main financial costs and donations had now become clear. Mr Raffalovich initially contributed £5,186; the response to appeals (in which the occasional gifts of Mr Raffalovich figured largely) produced £3697. Interest and special collections yielded a balance of £253 while, in addition £2,347 had been borrowed. The buildings proper cost £782 while the cost of building, decoration and furniture was £1374. Other pieces of furniture came to £771 with the architect's fees and expenses totalling £506. Miscellaneous expenses such as the roadway, fees, advertisements came to £429.9.1. The feu duty was £41.0.8 and there was also a small item of 13 shillings for temporary stations of the cross. The mission fund held Royal Bank Stock valued at £534 and a cash balance of £47. Against the Capital debt there were assets of £581, leaving a net liability of £1765. 'Every object in the Church,' concluded Fr Gray, 'is of a high class in its way.'<sup>41</sup>

It soon became very clear to Fr Gray that a parish school was also urgently needed. Accordingly, in August 1909 Eden Grove, close to the church, was purchased as the site for the elementary school. The architect, Archibald Macpherson FRIBA, rapidly prepared plans and building operations were begun at the end of the month. Fr Gray drew up an agreement with the Sisters of Charity who had been invited to take over the running of the new school: there were never to be less than three Sisters while Fr Gray engaged for the parish to pay for suitable house accommodation rent-free, rates and taxes, fuel and light, necessary furniture, household linen and landlord repairs. He also agreed to pay £90 annually for one of the Sisters holding a certificate and teaching in the school £30 for one for the Sisters not certificated and teaching in the school; finally, he would provide an outfit allowance of £8 as well as travelling expenses to St Peter's school. This important document in the life of the parish was also signed and witnessed by Stephano Giovanni Belli, sacristan at St Peter's Oratory.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> SCA GD27/3/1 Accounts Charles George 3 Nov 1908

<sup>42</sup> SCA GD27/5/1 St Peter's School, Edengrove: Agreement between Rev John Gray and the Sisters of Charity. 1909.

Total School subscriptions received between June and December 1909 came to £175.<sup>43</sup> Between December 1909 and September 1910 funds raised for the school included the Children of Mary (£1), the Church Box (£1) and gifts from Dr Whittaker (5 shillings), Mr Raffalovich (10 shillings) and Miss Gibbon (£100).<sup>44</sup>

### ***OPENINGS — 1910-1920***

St Peter's School opened on Monday 4 April 1910, with Fr John Gray as manager, a staff of three teachers — Miss Agnes Lauretta McMullen (Sister Agnes), Miss Catherine Burns (a temporary teacher) and Miss Clare Clarkson (Sr Gabriel), respectively in charge of senior and junior divisions and infants — and 31 children. A month later, Miss Alexa Emily McKenzie took the place of Miss Burns (who had resigned).

Annie Teresa Duncan, writing in *The Parish Newsletter* (Nov 1987) recalled the School as it was when she joined in 1911:

St Peter's School ... consisted of four classroom (2 upstairs and 2 downstairs) though only 3 classrooms were in use during my time there. There was also a short stair to a small room which was used for interviews, etc. It had a glass partition which when opened made a small stage. I don't remember it being used as such though .. We had a gym teacher, Miss McKenzie, who also taught us Morris Dancing which we performed at our Christmas Party. This was a lovely event, each child received a present and we had tea and cakes ... At the back of the school we had a sandpit where we enjoyed a lovely time during our breaks [*see picture of sandpit in School*] In the strawberry season we had an outing to the Zoo (of which Fr John Gray was a Fellow) and we had a strawberry tea ... On Sunday we had a Children's Mass at 9.30 am when the children sang the Mass. Miss Oliphant was the organist and the children took the Offertory Collection. At Sunday School in the afternoon we met at the school and had to tell what Fr Gray was talking about in his sermon; a bit tricky if you weren't listening!

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<sup>43</sup> SCA GD27/4/1 School subscriptions, Jun-Dec, 1909

<sup>44</sup> SCA GD27/4/2 School subs Dec 1909 – Sep 1910

Esther Dorrian, writing in 'Morningside Memories' (vol. 1, 1989) recalled the Morris dancing in particular, adding that special emphasis was placed on singing and dancing. 'On the floor, in the middle of the hall, there was a small brass plate over a space into which the Maypole could be fixed. The children enjoyed these dances as did the parents who watched the displays from the gallery above.' Every Christmas there was a party and the children received a present from the tree. The parents were invited and were given tea upstairs by the top class. During the school week the children spent their break-times in the playground which featured two large sandpits and a summer house. Although the playground was not formally divided, the girls kept to one end and the boys to the other.

Within the church more vital decorative elements continued to be put into place. At the end of October, a gift of Fr Gray, the panel for the high altar arrived and was installed without any official ceremony. Shortly afterwards the Dowager Lady Bute reopened the question of placing two stained glass windows in the sanctuary as a memorial of her daughter's marriage to Captain MacRae. During a similar attempt to commission a window in 1906 she had turned down a sketch by Lewis Davis.

Early in 1910 parishioners had the privilege of being present at the first mass sung by newly-ordained Dominican Fr Leonard Hanlon who was assisted by Fr Oswald Thornton OP. At Easter 1911 the marble *reredos* [decorative screen] was finally placed on the altar, along with the permanent tabernacle. Both were gifted by André Raffalovich, who also paid for the statue of St Joseph on the gable of the house, designed and carved in the studio of Joseph Hayes by Louis Deuchars of Caledonian Crescent. The panel facing the entrance gate was carved in the early months of 1912 and finished for 25 March, again donated by Mr Raffalovich.

That November the late Mrs Watt left a sum of £20 for the annual celebration of a *Mind Mass* on the anniversary of her death (27 April). This sum was deposited in the name of

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John Gray or his successor with the Edinburgh Savings Bank: the diocesan solicitor, Charles George SSC was to transmit the interest annually as a stipend for the priest who celebrates this Mass. A similar legacy of £25 was left in 1914 by Mrs Margaret McMahon, who had died on 24 December that year. In 1916 War Savings Certificates were bought with the capital of both legacies and deposited in the bank. If realised in 1921, these would yield £60. In the meantime, Fr Gray undertook to say the Masses without stipend.

The eminent artist and designer, John Duncan, arrived in the School on 15 February 1912 to view the location for the painting he was preparing to execute in the hall between the two large windows. To amuse the children he drew a daffodil in coloured chalks. That November he returned to make sketches of the children. The children also visited Patrick Geddes' Outlook Tower on Castlehill to take part in 'The Masque of Learning' and were photographed by Fr Gray. Mr Duncan was in school for the whole week from 27 November, painting the large picture which illustrated nursery rhymes and fairy tales, using the children as his subjects.

St Peter's School also benefited from Fr Gray's careful stewardship of his financial resources. On 20 October 1916 he was able to change the agreement with the Superior General of the Sisters of Charity that the Sisters occupying the house beside St Peter's School would pay an annual rent of £40 as the Sisters were now to be paid directly by Edinburgh Corporation (the local authority), and Fr Gray would be no longer liable for payment of any sum to the Sisters, nor for rent, rates, tenant's taxes, fuel and light. He was, in future, to be only liable for landlord's taxes and lord's repairs, and for maintaining the premises wind and water tight.<sup>45</sup>

Parishioners were given increased opportunity to involve themselves with the spiritual life of the Church on 5 October 1919 when the Rosary Confraternity was canonically erected

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<sup>45</sup> SCA GD27/5/2 Modifications to agreement, 20 Oct 1919

by Archbishop Smith. With the agreement of the Archbishop the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament was erected at S. Peter's Edinburgh on Rosary Sunday. The Confraternity had been informally set up in November 1908 with 73 men and women members, including Fr John Gray, André Raffalovich, Florence Truscott Gribbell, but also Lady Dick-Cunyngham and Florence Younghusband.<sup>46</sup> By 1917 the number of members had decreased to 50, but would rise again in 1931 with 71, before falling to the last entry in the record of a mere 12 in 1934.<sup>47</sup> Members were not only individuals but (as in 1920) nine members of one family and eight of another had joined.

Commented [ICT2]: check confusion

The powerful influence of Bishop Grey Graham made itself in 1919: referring to the Convent oratory, he wrote to Fr Gray reminding him that, according to Canon 1265, paragraph 1, No 2 Mass had to be celebrated at least once a week in oratories where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.<sup>48</sup> The bishop, however, was perfectly happy to agree to Fr Gray's request to set up a Guild of the Blessed Sacrament.<sup>49</sup> By this time the church was well furnished for large congregational use: an inventory taken at the end of December 1919 counted 250 chairs, 98 wooden kneelers (rush-bottomed) and 250 kneelers with cushions.<sup>50</sup>

### **1920-30**

As Archbishop Smith had become increasingly infirm and unable to carry out his Episcopal duties, Bishop Grey Graham had been chosen by Rome as an enforcer to tighten up the diocesan administration. On 11 June 1920 Bishop Graham, a convert and former Church of Scotland minister, made his apostolic visitation to the parish. Five days later Fr Gray attended Bishop Graham's house, along with Jesuit vicar general, Fr McCluskey (who brought Fr Brown with him) in order to clarify the parochial divisions between St Peter's and

<sup>46</sup> SCA GD27/30 St Peter's Rosary Confraternity, 1932

<sup>47</sup> SCA GD27/30 St Peter's Rosary Confraternity, 1932

<sup>48</sup> SCA GD27/8 2 Bp Henry G Graham to Fr John Gray, 15 Apr 1919

<sup>49</sup> SCA GD27/8/ Bp Henry G Graham to Fr John Gray, 2 Oct 1919

<sup>50</sup> SCA GD27/9/1 St Peter's: Inventory, 31 Dec 1919

the Sacred Heart, Lauriston. It was decided that, in the Bruntsfield Links district, the Sacred Heart district would enclose the block of houses at Barclay Church, namely Barclay Place and Terrace and Wrights Houses, including the houses in Bruntsfield Place on the west side as far as Montpellier Park, turning down until Gilmore Place is reached.

An undated census book in Fr Gray's hand (although with few entries and very incomplete) gives some idea of the spread of the parish and its social variation, ranging from Lord Moncrieff and his family at Abbotsford Park, to fifteen parishioners at Balcarres Street, nine in Bruce Street, seven in Millar Crescent Place, two at Montpellier Park Terrace (one a bookmaker), six families in Morningside Road, four families in Springvalley Gardens, ten families in Springvalley Terrace and three at Steels Place.<sup>51</sup>

While applying himself to the care of the 300 souls under his charge with as much dedication as at St Patrick's, Fr Gray continued to receive continual donations to his church. In October 1921 Sir William Stewart Dick-Cunningham presented a picture a painting of St Jerome in penitence (an old copy, the donor explained), in excellent condition. The frame was genuine, made of carved and gilded wood. The painting of the Sacred Heart above the altar arrived in December 1922 and was placed in position. It was the work of Malcolm Drummond; fee paid for it was £240 (£200 for the principal subject, and £40 for the pedestal subject). The cost of stretchers, transport and cloth were additional. It was not the first attempt to provide this picture that succeeded. After various minor inquiries and proposals Glyn Philpot made an attempt that ended in failure and the sacrifice of a fee. Later there were negotiations with Dennis Eden that also came to nothing. It took six men seven hours to place the picture in position.

The two glass panels in the Lady Chapel were installed on 22 May 1924. Their design had taken over a year to complete, the artist being M. Meredith Williams, perhaps to some

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<sup>51</sup> SCA GD27/31 St Peter's: Census book [nd]

extent in collaboration with his wife (the two names appear as a signature). Also by Mr. Meredith Williams was the stained glass window of the Ascension, installed in the sanctuary during June of the following year.

Bishop Grey Graham visited parish and school on 28 June 1925 and gave two important instructions to all his mission priests: the head teacher of the school was to offer polite opposition to the admission of non-Catholic children. Children of 'Ne Temere' marriages could only be baptized upon sufficient promise of Catholic upbringing (ie attendance at a Catholic school). Bishop Graham went on to remind the laity 'of the law of the Church which forbids Catholic children to be sent to any but Catholic school. And to repeat the warning issued on 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 1924 that intending teachers, whether male or female, must attend Catholic centres only, on leaving primary schools; and that they will not receive approval [as Catholic teachers] if they fail to observe this law.'<sup>52</sup>

The church was rapidly nearing completion. The north east window of the church, showing the Holy Ghost descending on the Apostles and designed by Meredith Williams, was put into place in July 1926. The main cost of the four windows was nine hundred pounds. Work on the completion of the church started in 1927 and finished at the end of 1928. In the baptistery the picture window was by M. Meredith Williams and all the iron-work by Hadden.

Early in 1927 new chairs were purchased — 120 rush seats unpolished and battened into groups of four at a cost of £41 from Mealing Brothers Ltd., High Wycombe.<sup>53</sup> The fine pulpit (by Nathaniel Grieve) was purchased at £100 and a carved bracket for the pulpit seat by C. d'O. Pilkington Jackson (later the sculptor of Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn) added another £11.<sup>54</sup> The jewel effects in the stained glass created by Alice and M. Meredith Williams was particularly notable; while she designed, modelled and cast in bronze the figure for the cross in the St Andrew's Chapel (at a cost of £15), her husband's two windows

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<sup>52</sup> SCA GD27/0/1 Bp Henry G Graham: pastoral, 1924/25

<sup>53</sup> SCA GD27/11/3 Mealing Bros Ltd, High Wycombe. 2 Jan 1929

<sup>54</sup> SCA GD27/11/20 Nathaniel Grieve: pulpit; C. d'O. P. Jackson: bracket, nd

completed in 1930 (£130) and his wall painting of the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes in the St Andrew's Chapel (£210) and two angels (£105) further enhanced the decorative scheme of the church.<sup>55</sup>

The probable cost of the completion of the church was submitted in May 1927 by the architect, Lorimer and Matthew of 17 Great Stuart Street, Edinburgh: nave £5,692; narthex £299; baptistery £377; chapel and confessional £562; Additional extension of heating and lighting £300; architect's and clerk of works' fee £550, giving a total cost of £7,780.<sup>56</sup> Fortunately, between 1925 and 1929 the church building fund had grown considerably. This included general donations of £2,054, a personal contribution of £220 from Fr Gray for the St Andrew Chapel and the statue of St Peter, Miss Macdonald's legacy (£300) and miscellaneous sums received from André Raffalovich amounting to £3,044.<sup>57</sup> The church building was completed and opened on the Feast of the Epiphany 1928 with Bishop Grey Graham preaching at the Mass. The cost of the extension was £7,012 and the total cost of building then stood at £16,522.

Also in the course of 1929 Glynn Philpot RA conserved the St Michael picture and painted it. It was then brought to Edinburgh and on the 12 November hung on the western gable in the presence of the artist, André Raffalovich, Mrs Sholto Douglas, Fr Rupert Hopes-Dixon (the Dominican Prior of Hawkesyard) and the Fr John Breen.

### **1930-40**

Lay organisation and commitment continued to flourish. In 1931 the Rosary Confraternity was canonically erected in the church by Archbishop Andrew Joseph McDonald, OSB by virtue of a patent from the Master General of the Dominican Order (both

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<sup>55</sup> see M. Meredith Williams, *Stained Glass* (Orford: The Holywell Press, date?); SCA GD27/2;4;5

<sup>56</sup> SCA GD27/11/1 Lorimer & Matthew: Probable cost of completion, 23 May 1927

<sup>57</sup> SCA GD27/12/1 Building Fund, 1925-29

of which documents were in the keeping of the rector of St. Peter's) on the eighth day of November 1908, being the twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost and the Octave day of all Saints by Fr. John Procter, Provincial of the Dominicans in England).<sup>58</sup>

A parish mission, led by Frs Edwin Essex OP and Giles Black OP took place over two Sundays in 1931 (18 October and 1 November), which left the parishioners refreshed and renewed. The fabric of the building was also attended to: the church was completely cleaned and whitewashed (at a cost of £233) in preparation for celebrating 25 years of the church the following year.

As for Fr Gray's accommodation and daily routine, the former Anglican monk and itinerant artist, Peter F. Anson, a familiar figure at most of the religious houses in Britain and later founder of the Apostleship of the Sea, recalls with affectionate humour that:

On the ground floor there was a small dining room. The large book-lined study held a few comfortable green leather arm-chairs, and a business-like desk ... His austere furnished bedroom ... the sheets on the narrow bed were of black linen. The whole house was in a dim, mysterious and elusive twilight ... It must have been a strange and somewhat alarming experience for the curate — several of whom I recall were Irish — to find himself in this exotic environment.<sup>59</sup>

The weekly cycle of parish activities at St Peter's during the early 1930s provided opportunities for every section of the community. On a Sunday, as well as morning masses there was a 3.30pm service for children, baptisms at 4.00pm and a 6.30pm evening service. Rosary was recited regularly on Sunday for the conversion of Scotland (an intention also prayed for at the annual November pilgrimage to Dunfermline in honour of St Margaret) and sodalities such as the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament met at 7.45pm on a Thursday and then took part in Stations of the Cross and Benediction. Charitable activities included the Catholic Needlework Guild which made clothes for the poor and collections for the Friends of

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<sup>58</sup> SCA GD27/30 Rosary Confraternity St Peter's, 1932

<sup>59</sup> Peter F. Anson, 'Random Reminiscences of John Gray and Raffalovich', *Two Friends, John Gray & André Raffalovich* (Aylesford: St Albert's Press, 1963), 135

the Royal Infirmary. An arresting feature of liturgies at St Peter's were the prayers invited on the anniversaries of literary men and artists particularly whom Fr Gray had known before his ordination: Paul Verlaine (9 January), Charles Scott Moncrieff (28 February) and Aubrey Beardsley (6 March).<sup>60</sup>

As St Peter's semi-jubilee, the year 1932 was a memorable landmark in the history of the church. On 25 April Archbishop Smith sang mass before a large gathering. Mgr Forsyth and the vicar general, Mgr McGettigan, Canon Birnie, Provost Rooney and the rectors of mission and religious houses among those present. The deacons were Fr W. H. Mellon and Fr P. Long (both Fr Edward Mellon and Fr Michael Bruce were ill), the deacon of honour was Provost Rooney, along with Canon Birnie MMC, Fr F. Chase and Fr F. Breen. Mgr McGettigan preached.

Hew Lorimer, the late architect's son, was also present, as well as Frank Deas and Lady Margaret Sackville. After Mass, Fr Gray entertained twenty at lunch, including laymen André Raffalovich, the diocesan solicitor Charles George and Lord Moncrieff. Next day, he had invited twenty-six younger priests to a different restaurant. Later, Fr Gray gave the School children a party, followed by a dinner for a dozen kind helpers conducted with some solemnity. Everyone in the parish and all its friends came away from the festivities with great satisfaction.

From an examination of the wedding banns publicly proclaimed at St Peter's in the early 1930s it is possible to get some idea of how much a thriving parish becomes a thoroughfare in building relationships from the wider community: a man from Loanhead prepares to marry a woman from Inverleith Place; a man from Ceylon and a woman from Bruntsfield Crescent publicly declare their intention to marry. But there are also signs that individual streets bred their own romances — a man from West House marrying a woman

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<sup>60</sup> SCA GD27/32 St. Peter's: Trinity Sunday 1930 to Last after Pentecost 1933

from West House — and evidence of immigrant groups marrying within their own tight circle (a couple, both with Italian names, the man from Springvalley Terrace, the woman from Morningside Road).<sup>61</sup> Undoubtedly, St Peter's church, as magnificent as it was austere, offered a space that encouraged ordinary men and women to focus their imagination on the divine.

But there was another, less attractive face to the early 1930s. The rise of Protestant Action was fuelled by panic over unemployment, and itself served to feed a growing resentment at Irish migration and what was seen as Irish monopolisation of Scottish jobs. Protestant Action was led by John Cormack, a former British soldier who had served in Ireland. He lost no opportunity to attack Catholics in Edinburgh, sending a letter of protest to Melville Dinwiddie, Scottish regional director of the BBC, complaining about the intended broadcast of a service from St Peter's.

The broadcast service had been planned for Sunday 21 January 1934 at 8.00pm. The preacher that evening was Fr Fabian Dix, vicar of the Provincial and superior of the Dominican community, George Square, Edinburgh from 1932 to 1942. Fr Dix, a convert and a former Church of England priest, was also provincial promoter of the lay Third Order of Dominicans (to which both Gray and Raffalovich belonged). For many years Dominicans had preached at St Peter's every Sunday in gratitude for the benefactions which André Raffalovich had made to the Order.

However, that Sunday, things did not go with their customary discreet efficiency:

A sensation was caused when arrangements were made a short time ago to broadcast the service from St Peter's. A few minutes before the start of the service, the engineers discovered a fault, which in the short time at their disposal before the start of the service it was not possible to locate. When the fault was discovered, it was found that the wires connecting the microphones in the church and the BBC had become severed at a point where they entered the church. The service could not be broadcast at the time, but the church was promised a

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<sup>61</sup> SCA GD27/32 St Peter's: wedding banns, Trinity Sunday to Last after Pentecost, 1933

broadcast later. It is this broadcast which has evoked a protest from the Protestant Action Society.<sup>62</sup>

The BBC regularly broadcast services from different denominations, even a Jewish one held at the Cenotaph. The BBC's Scottish regional director was guided by an advisory committee on Religion which included the Episcopal Dean of Edinburgh, a Methodist minister), a minister of the Church of Scotland, one from the Baptist Church, another from the United Free Church and Canon John Gray, representing the Catholic Church. Members of the committee were appointed by the churches themselves at the invitation of the BBC. The strong suspicion was that John Cormack (or one of his Protestant Action colleagues) was responsible for cutting the BBC's microphone cables.

Only a fortnight later, on Tuesday 13 February 1934, André Raffalovich went to a lecture at the College of Art given by his friend the sculptor Eric Gill. A few hours after, at his home in Whitehouse Terrace, in the early hours of the morning of Wednesday 14 February, he suddenly passed away.

Writing in *The Scotsman*, author Moray McLaren described the loss to Edinburgh's younger generation that the death of André Raffalovich represented and the inevitable end of what was the last Victorian *salon* in the city :

Under the gentle beat of his hospitable baton the amiable symphony of conversation played itself out at those meals at Whitehouse Terrace, coming to a full close when the ladies rose, always at some unseen signal from himself (unseen at least to us men). After that the music, if I may continue this metaphor, lost its orchestral colour and evolved into a series of duets, for every man would get up and move to a part of the table where he might talk to the person who interested him most. Cigarettes, coffee and liqueurs, and then for a few brief moments we would join the ladies, shake hands, and pass out into the fog or pale sunshine of an Edinburgh afternoon or, if it was at night, into the profound darkness of an Edinburgh suburb ... there was something about the ceaseless regularity of the entertainment and organised

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<sup>62</sup> *Evening Dispatch*, 1 Feb 1934

conversation at 9 Whitehouse Terrace that transcended formality and made one believe in the true naturalness of the conventions of civilised society.<sup>63</sup>

The death of his friend and supporter Raffalovich was a hard blow for Canon Gray to sustain: he could be seen to visibly fail. At the beginning of June he was discovered in his study slumped over his desk. The following morning Canon Gray was moved to St Raphael's, the hospital nearby run by the 'blue nuns.' He was found to be suffering from congestion of the lungs and pleurisy. His condition improved but then an abscess of the left lung was diagnosed which made an operation necessary. In the course of the operation his heart finally gave out and he passed away on the afternoon of 16 June 1934.

At the funeral of Canon Gray the music of the Mass was sung by a choir of Benedictine monks from the nearby St Andrew's Priory and School at Canaan Lane, under the leadership of Dom Mathew Steddal. A prayer card was printed asking for prayers for the repose of the souls of André Raffalovich and Canon Gray.

Part of Canon Gray's legacy was a book of parish hymns specially written for St Peter's.<sup>64</sup> In his panegyric, delivered before a congregation that included the archbishops of St Andrews and Edinburgh and of Glasgow, Fr Bernard Delaney OP, Provincial of the Dominican Order in England, emphasised the intense religious faith shared by the late André Raffalovich and his friend, Canon John Gray (both Tertiaries of St Dominic), and commented that 'We behold the visible fruit of that love in this noble church ... this church is the standing symbol of their friendship ...'; to confound any doubters present, he went on to affirm the integrity of their relationship, adding 'May we have striven to live according to the words of St. Peter which he made his inspiration and ideal: "Lord Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee."'”<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> *The Scotsman*, 20 Feb 1934

<sup>64</sup> John Gray, *Saint Peter's Hymns*, (Kensington: Cayme Press, 1925): 200 copies printed [24 hymns]

<sup>65</sup> SCA PJG 2/3 Irish Weekly, 23 Jun 1934

John Gray and André Raffalovich exchanged their relatively modest achievement as poets in the overheated atmosphere of London's literary life for a more socially acceptable legacy as patrons of St Peter's, Edinburgh and the stylish *ultramontane* zeal it embodied. Peter Anson, long a friend of Canon Gray summed up the contradictions in his friend's nature: 'He remained inscrutable, enigmatic, shrouded in mystery, and it was largely because of this polished reserve that he was so fascinating.'<sup>66</sup>

Writing a few days after the funeral, curate Fr John Breen poignantly expressed the widespread sense of loss caused by Canon Gray's death. He described '... the last awful few days', adding that '... We are only beginning to realise how empty the house is without the canon; I still expect to see him at every turn. I am going to stay on in the meantime till something is settled.'<sup>67</sup> One of a new breed of high-flying priests sent by Archbishop McDonald to Oxbridge, Fr (later Monsignor) Breen was educated at Holy Cross Academy, Edinburgh and Blairs College. He went on to graduate with First Class Honours at Cambridge, later taking degrees in theology and canon law in France; at the age of 42 he would be appointed administrator of St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh.<sup>68</sup>

At the time of Canon Gray's death the population of St Peter's numbered around 700 souls. With his departure and that of André Raffalovich, the financial rock on which St Peter's rested was no longer there. In spite of the fact that the parish was in a relatively good state of financial health, Fr Gray's successor, Michael V. Bruce, had now to rely much more heavily on the generosity of the ordinary parishioners. Stan and Margaret Tweedie saw that 'When Fr Bruce came he had the responsibility of running that parish and having to pay for everything (which the parishioners had not previously been asked to do). When Fr Bruce came the people had to dig deeper in their pockets.' He set about trying to raise the money he needed: in the

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<sup>66</sup> Peter F. Anson, 'Random Reminiscences of John Gray and Raffalovich', *Two Friends, John Gray & André Raffalovich* (Aylesford: St Albert's Press, 1963), 135-36

<sup>67</sup> SCA PJG2/4/1 Fr John Breen to 'Kathleen', 20 Jun 1934 ...

<sup>68</sup> SCA PJG2/4/2 Mgr. John Breen

three years following the debt at St Peter's remained relatively unchanged at around £16; however, door and seat rents leapt from £11 to £224 and offertories from £103 to £448.<sup>69</sup>

Michael V Bruce was born at St Leonard's-on-Sea in 1886 in a family (the Bruces of Airth and Stenhouse) which claimed direct descent from Robert the Bruce. After school in Brighton he matriculated at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge in 1905 but seems to have left not long after. Nothing is known of his whereabouts until 1913 when he entered the Scots College, Rome and was ordained in Rome (1918). prior to his ordination in 1918. Fr Bruce was a curate at St Peter's (1919-20) and then served in that capacity in Haddington, West Calder and Kirkcaldy.

In the mid-1930s Stan Tweedie was an altar-boy and recalls the change which came about in the parish as a result of Canon Gray's death and Fr Bruce's arrival:

When Canon Gray died, the organist was Harry Anderson. Then Fr Bruce came, Harry left and Canon Bruce somehow got an organist from one of the churches in Morningside: his name was Forbes Macdonald and he wasn't a Catholic. He was a great organist; he was there all the time that Canon Bruce was there. Canon Bruce also introduced a Mr Michael Balfour into the choir. He was a bass, a tremendous bass. Now, the choir (which was upstairs in the loft) was run by Andrew Bree. He was the head chorister (a tenor), under him was Jim Stephens (also a tenor), Willie Stephens (his brother, a baritone) and his brother Robert Stevens and Charlie McIntee (both baritones). Canon Bruce played at choir rehearsals: he was a very musical man.

The organ in the choir-loft was hand-operated: an altar boy would be sent up there at night, at Benediction, he had to watch this weight on the string. The boys were amused to see that, during the sermon, the choir climbed the tiny staircase onto the roof where they passed the time smoking.

There were other changes which Fr Bruce instigated. The Canon Gray's sacristan, John Quinn resigned. Johnny McComiskey and his wife and family replaced him. St Peter's was not all gravitas and dignity. Stan Tweedie recalls that 'at the start of the War they made

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<sup>69</sup> SCA GD27/21/1 Mission of St Peter's: Statement of Accounts, 1934

*St Peter the Apostle*

Johnny McComiskey the air raid warden. One Sunday in September, the air-raid siren went off. Johnny dashed about shouting 'Get them out of church'. The people were only halfway out of church when the 'all clear' went and it turned out to be just a false alarm!

Within a year of his arrival Fr Bruce had to face yet another challenge. In late June 1935 Catholics from all over the diocese converged on the city for a Eucharistic Congress organised by Archbishop McDonald. The little Catholic enclave formed by St Margaret's Convent at Whitehouse Loan to the north, the Archbishop's residence at Greenhill and the Benedictine St Andrew's Priory and school at Canaan lane to the south, had St Peter's, Falcon Avenue at its heart. The tranquillity and respect which set the tone of what was Edinburgh's most affluent area was shattered by a week of orchestrated anti-Catholic provocation and a wave of physical assaults. John Cormack (1894-1978), an Edinburgh councillor (1934-62), formed Protestant Action (PA) in 1934. Cormack lived in St Peter's parish, less than half a mile away, just off Morningside Road at Springvalley Gardens, where many of Fr Bruce's parishioners had their homes.

Cormack took little trouble to disguise his intentions, in fact he advertised them in the press, in leaflets and in his frequent public speaking engagements. There were ominous signs of trouble towards the Catholic community. Leaving a Catholic Young Men's Society civic reception at the City Chambers on Saturday 17 April, Archbishop McDonald's car (provided for him and driven by businessman and Catholic Evidence Guild organiser John Barry) arrived back at St Benet's drenched in spittal after being pushed and jeered by Protestant Action agitators who crammed the High Street, attempting to incite the Saturday night crowds to join them in protest.

There were violent scenes at the Waverley Market where a well-attended meeting for Catholic women was held on 24 June. The climax of the Congress was an afternoon open air procession and Benediction held in the spacious grounds of St Andrew's Priory, Canaan

Lane, the home of the Benedictine community from Archbishop McDonald's monastery at Fort Augustus in Inverness-shire. Fr Bruce was himself an Oblate of the Benedictine order and often called the monks from St Andrew's Priory to preach or say Mass at St Peter's and, annually from 1935-39, to sing the Tenebrae service during Holy Week.

As parish priest of St Peter's, Canon Bruce had an important hosting role to play. He had hired a car in which he set off with the altar-boys to the Priory. One of the altar boys was Stan Tweedie. The car drove gingerly down Morningside Road, aiming to turn into Canaan Lane. For Stan, it was a frightening experience as they passed between pavements packed with people on either side, running the gauntlet of curious onlookers and Protestant Action extremists, the latter (in spite of the best efforts of the police) hurling stones at any vehicle which seemed to be heading towards St Andrew's Priory.

The immediate reaction of Archbishop McDonald to John Cormack's acts of intimidation that afternoon was to issue a strongly-worded statement in protesting that 'For some months past, Catholics have been subjected to a campaign of vilification, calumny and savagery that would be difficult to parallel in these days of enlightenment and progress.'<sup>70</sup>

On 16 November 1937 St Peter's, along with most of the *missions* in the Eastern province of St Andrews and Edinburgh, was canonically erected into a parish.<sup>71</sup> Up until 1937 there were no canonical parishes in Scotland and no parish priests, only mission priests and a handful of *missionary rectors* and it would not be until 1947 that the churches of the Western Province (Glasgow and the West of Scotland) were canonically erected into parishes. The canonical erection of a parish would only take place where a community was stable enough to ensure a steady and sufficient income; it gave the parish priest legal rights (and obligations) and an income that were not available to mission priests or even missionary rectors. At the

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<sup>70</sup> Gallagher, *op. cit.*, 192

<sup>71</sup> SCA GD27/23 St Peter's: Erectio Paroecia (Canon 216), 16 Nov 1937

erection of St Peter's in 1937 Archbishop Andrew Joseph McDonald immediately instructed the new parish priest to divide the parish territory into distinct sections.<sup>72</sup>

When War came in 1939 the parish suffered just as much as any other community. Stan Tweedie remembered 'My brother was on the altar, he started off as a boat-boy; the master of ceremonies was Joe Duff. In 1941 he was in the RAF and he was on my way out to Singapore when the ship he was in was torpedoed and he was killed. Joe Hayes he was the thurifer, he joined the RAF as well and he was killed on night operations over Germany in 1942 or 1943.'

In 1939 Fr Bruce was made a Canon; he celebrated his semi-Jubilee of ordination in 1943 when he was presented with his portrait painted by R. H. Westwater. Canon Bruce was an organist of repute who trained choirs and also acted as ecclesiastical superior for the convents in the archdiocese. Unhappily, Canon Bruce was taken ill in 1948. At first he was under the care of the Little Sisters of Mary (the 'blue nuns') at St Raphael's, Blackford Avenue before transferring to Ballycarron Convent in Tipperary and finally, as his health deteriorated, to a Tipperary nursing home run by the Mercy Sisters. His funeral took place in St Michael's church, Tipperary.

Patrick Francis Quille was a good choice to succeed Canon Bruce. An Irishman with a silver tongue, he was born in the parish of Douagh. At the age of 12 he attended St Michael's College in Listowel, before going to St Kieran's, Kilkenny. He graduated MA at the National University of Ireland and was ordained on 10 June 1936. Fr Quille was one of the 140, women religious, 120 priests and 20 religious brothers from Douagh who left home to serve overseas. In Scotland he was an assistant priest in Bonnybridge, Bathgate and St Andrew's, Ravelsto, Edinburgh. In line with the policy of sending able young priest to Oxbridge, Fr Quille took a diploma in Social Studies and Economics at Campion Hall, Oxford.

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<sup>72</sup> SCA GD27/23 St Peter's: Erectio Paroecia (Canon 216), 16 Nov 1937

### **1940-50**

Fr Quille brought a different but compatible ethos to St Peter's. Over the following eight years, until Fr Quille's departure in 1956, the population of the parish was relatively stable in size and increased only marginally from 720 to 770; numbers in the school fell from 310 to 274 but total communicants rose from 14,650 to 48,329; parish income between 1948 and 1952 rose from £1,694 to £3,730.<sup>73</sup> Even in the early 1950s door and seat rents were still being collected — £72 in 1954 and £64 in 1955. In 1955 annual Offertory collections were an important source of revenue (£976), but other collections were also significant (£911), as well as Sales of Work (£619).

Shortly before he retired Canon Bruce had carried out extensive electrical repairs in the church at a cost of £290.<sup>74</sup> One of Fr Quille's first acts was also to attend to the fabric of the building: it was painted, pictures were restored and wartime anti-splinter material removed from the windows. The baptistery ceiling and walls were lime-washed with two coats, the bricks waxed and polished. The parish room floor was washed with turps and had two coats of spirit varnish applied. The church floor was cleaned with turps, spirit varnish applied and then waxed and polished. Two of the stained glass windows had to be cleaned and re-soldered and the outside glass all cleaned. The total cost of this work was £868.<sup>75</sup>

In 1940, a parishioner, Fr Walter Patrick Crampton (1914-??) was ordained for the diocese at St Mary's Cathedral. Born in Perth and educated at St Edmund's College, Ware Fr Walter served in Grangemouth (1940-41), and in Fife 1941-46) before being appointed a professor at Blairs (1946-53) and then at St Andrew's College, Drygrange (1953-55). He later served as parish priest in Selkirk and Camelon, before retiring in 1987.

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<sup>73</sup> SCA GD27/81-82, St Peter's parish returns, 1948-55

<sup>74</sup> SCA GD27/190/2 Tender for electrical work, 22 Jul 1947

<sup>75</sup> SCA GD27/190/3 Moxon and Carfrae, July-Sept 1949

### **1950-60**

Under Fr Patrick Quille wartime restrictions were now finally lifted and St Peter's provided a wide range of activities, whose details were recorded in the weekly parish notice book; the St Joseph's Men's Guild, the St Margaret's Women's Guild, the Children of Mary, Whist Drives every Saturday evening, dramatic entertainment in the form of the Falcon Players, the monthly parish magazine and filmstrip talks in the parish hall, such as that on St Theresa of Lisieux.<sup>76</sup> The St Peter's Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society was founded under Fr Quille on 28 March 1954 (a Sunday evening), with 18 men of the parish.<sup>77</sup>

The Falcon Players had been formed around 1953 with Fr Falconer as President and spiritual director, also vetting plays as to their suitability for a parish theatre company.. The producer was John McDermott: his brother Hugh was well-known as a film star. Rehearsals took place in the tiny parish room, though dress rehearsals always were held on stage either in the Lauriston Hall or what was then the Little Theatre in the Pleasance. If Hugh McDermott was visiting his mother and sister in Morningside Road, he would drop in to rehearsals to give his professional advice and encouragement.<sup>78</sup> They presented light drama such as 'Deadlock,' a thriller in three acts on Thursday and Friday 21-22 January 1954 and 'See a fine lady,' a comedy in three acts on 20-21 May that year. The performances were given either at Lauriston Hall (part of the Jesuits' Sacred Heart complex) or at Preston Street. Gerry Macpherson recalls nostalgically 'the friendships, the fun, the blunders on stage, the applause and the parties which always followed the "last night" of a performance, all contributed to those wonderful and lasting memories which did not end when the Falcon Players were

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<sup>76</sup> SCA GD27/33 Notice Book St Peter's from Jan 1955 to 25 Dec 1955

<sup>77</sup> Private ownership: Minutes of meetings of St Peter's Conference of SVdP, 1954-56

<sup>78</sup> W. G. Macpherson; letter to author, 9 May 2006

eventually disbanded, Indeed, I am still enjoying the happiness which began in the group in those heady days!

The SVdP helped cases of dire need to meet their electricity bills, pay their debts and also visited Catholics in the mental hospital at West House. In one case they were confronted by

one elderly but fit sister who had to look after three other sisters, of whom one was blind and bed-ridden and another crippled with arthritis. They had been self-employed at one time and had now no income other than the blind girl's pension, the others not being eligible for Old Age Pension. There was a debt of £10, but they seemed reluctant to seek help though obviously in dire need. Five brothers, who had been sea-faring men, were dead ...<sup>79</sup>

To underpin such practical charitable work, parishioners were provided with lectures and discussions on Catholic Action, such as the presentation by Christine Leu (from Holland), Miss Walters (Scotland), Thomas Martin (Canada) at the end of January 1955. Talks for 'non-Catholics' were given at St Anne's Oratory under the auspices of the Catholic Truth Society and a Catholic Information Centre was to be set up on Wednesday evening for Catholics to bring their non-Catholic friends along to learn about the Catholic faith.

At St Anne's Oratory also Canon Bombas, on behalf of the Polish Catholic Mission in Scotland, organised a Mission for Poles in March, while Ukrainians prepared for a rally at Carfin in August. The annual September outdoor Lourdes celebration in the grounds of Craiglockhart convent was also a key event in parish and diocesan life.

September 1955 included a lecture on South America for the St Joseph's Men's Guild while October featured a rally at the Music Hall in George Street organised by the CTS and the teachers' Guild of St John Bosco to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the papal encyclical on Catholic Education when the speakers included the Marquess of Lothian, Dr

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<sup>79</sup> Private ownership: Minutes of meetings of St Peter's Conference of SVdP, 1954-56

William Barry and Bishop Beck. All Catholic schools later took part in a St Andrew's Day concert at the Usher Hall.

After circulating seminary collection boxes (total raised £115), overseeing a Whist Drive Hostess evening to raise money for the 137<sup>th</sup> St Peter's Boys Scouts, Fr Quille announced in November: 'May I remind you of our sale of work on Dec 3. As you know in a short time we will be celebrating the silver jubilee of this Church. We want to renew the seating and also rejuvenate the roofs of the side aisles of the Church.' Early in December 1955, Fr Quille delivered an Advent talk on 'The Holiness of the Church' to drive home the message that, in spite of the failings only too visible among its members, the Church was constantly being transformed by the presence of the living Christ.

This regeneration was nowhere more evident than in the pages of the parish notice books which listed the banns of marriage for couples from all parts of the parish and the world: a man and woman (both from Nigeria), another couple from Kent, a man from Donegal and another from County Down; a man stationed at RAF, Kirknewton, a woman based at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, Morningside and another working at the Iona Hotel round the corner from St Peter's.

With the departure of Fr Quille to St Mary's Cathedral in 1956 and the arrival of American-born Fr Walter Glancy, a renewed dynamism was visible at St Peter's and a hard-edged involvement in post-war social action and politics. Already events outside Scotland were taking their course. The Catholic Church was moving towards its defining moment of the late twentieth century — the Second Vatican Council — and there were already signs that it was beginning to outgrow the confines of pre-War structures and modes of thought.

During the Church Unity Octave on 15 January 1956 prayers were offered for 'the reconciliation of all Christians to Rome', perhaps with little consideration that this would

inevitably have to be a two-way process.<sup>80</sup> In February, Ronald Walls, previously a Church of Scotland minister and now employed by the Converts' Aid Society, gave a talk on 'Our Separated Brethren' — meaning Protestants and Presbyterians, to which he brought his own unique experiences. Still with the scandal of division much in mind, March brought prayerful meetings of the League of St Andrew for the Conversion of Scotland and the Catholic Information Centre (set up to counsel and support those intending to become Roman Catholics) began to operate.

The impending visit of Bulganin and Kruschev to Britain was behind the decision to observe Sunday 15 April throughout the diocese as 'a day of prayer for the Church of Silence and for Lasting Peace.' As well as matters of international politics, however, there were also domestic industrial problems to resolve: in the transport sector, for example, the Catholic Railwaymen's Guild met at Unity House in Hillside Crescent that month in the presence of Archbishop Gray and, at the first of the Lauriston Lectures, Sir Thomas O'Brien, former leader of the Trade Union Congress spoke on 'The Church and Industrial Life.'

In the parish itself there was evidence of good housekeeping: a Garden Fete at the end of May had been arranged to raise money for a new heating system. This raised £306, which added to a sale of work in June, produced a total of £619. On the Feast of the Sacred Heart, the new parish priest, Fr Walter Glancy (transferring from St Andrew's, Ravelston), preached at Benediction. There was joy in the parish on 8 July when a boy from St Peter's, Fr Bernard Kearney was consecrated as a priest of the Mill Hill Fathers, while at the end of July 2 newly ordained priests, Fr Robert MacKenzie OSB (also from the parish) and Fr Kearney gave their blessing after Devotions. Fr Robert MacKenzie (1931-), whose family lived in the parish, was

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<sup>80</sup> SCA GD 27/34 St Peter's parish notice book Jan 1956 – May 1964

baptised by Canon Gray but was educated by the Benedictines at the Abbey School, Fort Augustus.<sup>81</sup>

The strong traditional link between the Jesuits at Lauriston and St Peter's was shown during the Edinburgh Festival that August when Fr Christie asked if some 4 or 5 families could accommodate the young men of the *Niños de Loyola*, choir boys and Jesuit seminarians staying in Edinburgh for ten days. But there were other less benign influences at work in other parts of Europe. The recent revolution in Hungary and its brutal suppression was already having its effect in Edinburgh. St Peter's held a second collection on 11 November for Hungarian refugees in Austria, raising £106.

Early in the new year (1957) a meeting was held to arrange a presentation for Fr Quille. The activities announced from the pulpit which give a flavour of parish life (ranging from the intellectual to the industrial) were meetings of the Whittaker Society, the Catholic Railway Guild and the St Joseph's Men's Guild. On 7 April 1957 the whole parish celebrated St Peter's golden jubilee with a dinner dance on 16 May at the Assembly Rooms in George Street, the scene of so many of Edinburgh's most glittering functions over the centuries, at which parishioner, Lord John Wheatley, proposed the toast to St Peter's.

Preaching at the celebratory Mass, Archbishop Gordon J. Gray quoted Canon Gray's words that 'Church building is a collective act' and went on to observe that this was the case with the building of St Peter's in which hundreds of benefactors collaborated.<sup>82</sup> He went on to say that 'St Peter's is still in the building ... Your church is alive — fair to the eye, pulsating with life, a life that emanates from the Tabernacle and the Font, and communicates itself to all who enter ...' He concluded by commenting that 'Church, family and school have combined to give to the children of St Peter's a solid Catholic formation in doctrine and spirituality ...'

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<sup>81</sup> Fr Robert MacKenzie (with degrees in Sacred Theology from San' Anselmo, Rome and in Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute) became a secular priest in July 1988 working in Canada (Regina) and is currently parish priest at Cupar in Saskatchewan.

<sup>82</sup> SCA GD27/71/1 Card Gordon J Gray: sermon (typescript), 1957

In a circular letter of 29 November Fr Glancy summarised the challenges facing the parish: maintenance costs were beginning to be felt, replacement had, in some cases, become essential, especially in the roof, whose coverings were of ceramic tiles, not slate or copper. Fr Quille had already replaced the two side wing coverings, but the main roof needed attention. Fr Glancy preferred to raise the money from parishioners rather than borrow from the diocese. At the time, the chief source of income was the Offertory collection (an average of £20 per week), the door collection averaging £1 per week. Fr Glancy had concluded that it was essential to establish a capital fund for which contributions would be made by outdoor envelope collections.<sup>83</sup> As a broad guideline Fr Glancy suggested that contributions should be made on the basis of sixpence in the pound (£).<sup>84</sup>

The following year (1958) was notable for the death of Pius XII on 12 October. St Peter immediately marked the occasion by praying the solemn 'De Profundis' after Sunday mass. Already courses to develop lay spirituality ('Theology for Laity' lectures) were planned to begin at Bonnington House a fortnight later and parishioners also looked forward to a function on 10 December for Fr Falconer's presentation.

For the Catholic Church worldwide the defining event in the second half of the twentieth century was the Second Vatican Council. On 28 October 1958 Cardinal Angelo Roncalli was elected Pope John XXIII; three months later he announced his intention of calling an ecumenical Council.<sup>85</sup>

That was a period of rapid change as Catholics suddenly realised that their faith and traditions were under worldwide scrutiny as never before and the impending Vatican Council became a topic of intense media speculation. It was also a period of great excitement, not least for journalist Rennie McOwan. 'My road to Rome and St Peter's,' McOwan recalls,

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<sup>83</sup> SCA GD27/64/1 Fr Walter Glancy to parishioners, 29 Nov 1957

<sup>84</sup> SCA GD27/64/2 Fr Walter Glancy to parishioners, Jan 1959

<sup>85</sup> SCA DE411/5 John XXIII: motu proprio, 25 Jan 1959

‘began after a rather wild newspaper party in 1959 when we all ended up sleeping in a flat on the floor or on chairs and couches.’<sup>86</sup>

‘By today’s standards it was rather a mild party, but I remember being very impressed when my (new) Catholic girl-friend emerged from a couch in the early hours of the morning and went to Mass. She also argued well with friends when they heaped scorn/criticism on the Church of Rome. Our relationship developed and I eventually agreed to attend instruction at St Peter’s. I had a flat in Bruntsfield Crescent. I had never met a priest close up and was greatly taken by the manner, demeanour and knowledge of Father (later Canon) Lawrence Glancey, one of three priests (those were the days!) who staffed the parish. He never pressured me and if I rang up and said I couldn’t make our appointment, he would cheerfully say he would see me when it was convenient for me. There were similarities to Mgr Ronald Knox’s remarks that the silence or apparent inactivity of a priest was like that of the patient angler. He opened and broadened my horizons. He had a wide-ranging mind and immense enthusiasm and sometimes we just chatted ranging over all aspects of Church belief and history. I came to enjoy these sessions and sometimes at Mass when he was the preacher, I could detect traces of our conversation the week before. Eventually, the day came when I asked to be received. I owe him a great debt and grieved when he died.

‘St Peter’s became a special place for me and for years I paid an annual midweek visit of thanksgiving there until the sad day came when I found the church temporarily locked because of vandalism. I was outraged when I read that the original ‘shape’ of the interior of the church had been liturgically gutted in modern times and I thought it an act of ecclesiastical vandalism and a betrayal of the benefactor.

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<sup>86</sup> Rennie McOwan letter to author, 19 April 2006

‘St Peter’s will always be a special place to me and, come to think of it, it’s time I went back there on another visit. After all, as Lawrence Glancey was fond of remarking: “we’re all on a pilgrimage.”’<sup>6</sup>

One of the principal challenges faced by the Second Vatican Council was to offer the laity a new sense of self-worth and a fresh understanding of their central role in the life of the Church, motivating them to see the Church as intimately bound up with their own lives — at a time when few of the clergy were prepared to share responsibility. The growing concern over sexual ethics, particularly birth control, led to a conflict between the Church's teaching *magisterium* and existing pastoral practice.

Already there were signs that the Church was also concerned that the presentation of the Catholic point of view was being undersold in the media. On 12 April 1959 letters were read to the people on the importance of the apostolate for Radio and Television. Towards the end of May, as part of the advance work undertaken by the Vatican Secretariat for Press, Cinema, Radio and Television, Archbishop Gordon Gray was invited (along with other British bishops and Catholics working in ITV and the BBC), to a meeting at St Gabriel's, Hatch End, Middlesex — the Catholic Centre for Radio, Television and the Cinema — aimed at gathering ideas on how best to present the work of the forthcoming Council to the general public.<sup>87</sup> But industrial tragedies were a constant reminder of the price which the world had to pay for its modern lifestyle: boxes were placed at the back of Edinburgh churches to collect funds for those who had suffered in the recent pit disaster at Auchengeich.

### **1960-70**

The 1960s were a period of rapid change. It was what Canon James Rae described as “the ‘Swinging Sixties’, when, after the agonies of war and its stringent aftermath, a vibrant

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<sup>87</sup> SCA DE135/37/7 Bp G. Andrew to Abp G. J. Gray, 24 May 1961

hope in the possibilities of peace and prosperity seemed to explode upon society with an unrestrained exuberance. It was the hopeful era of the youthful John F. Kennedy, the Beatles, of Women's Lib, of 'anything goes' and of many other weird and wonderful 'isms.'"<sup>88</sup>

In the early 1960s Lent was a time for penance and mortification when the solemnisation of marriage was forbidden. But Lent was above all an opportunity for change: in St Peter's, Lenten Alms donations were collected for the Catholic Adoption Society; the St Vincent de Paul Conferences in the diocese had taken a decision to co-operate with the Edinburgh Committee for Refugees and invited 40 men to come forward for house-to-house collections (which raised £106).

The Golden Jubilee of St Peter's School, with its headmistress Miss Mary Lawlor, was celebrated on 30 March 1960 with a solemn pontifical mass with Archbishop Gray, the schoolchildren forming the choir; a concert in St Mary's Street Hall followed. The following day was a school holiday granted by the Education Authority. The recognition and integration of older age-groups was also not neglected as, that September, an Over-20 Club, a new inter-parochial Catholic club, was opened at the Sacred Heart church in Lauriston.

Tentatively, as the bishops at the Second Vatican Council showed themselves keen to use the vernacular in place of Latin, English began to be used in daily parish services such as Compline, which St Peter's first recited in English on Sunday 16 October 1960. The following year (1961) saw the ordination of Fr Michael Bell on 2 July and a presentation (in spite of his protestations to the contrary) to Fr Lawrence Glancey on 5 November.<sup>89</sup> Later that month, drawings for a possible new scheme for the Lady Chapel were displayed at the back of the church.

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<sup>88</sup> Canon James Rae: letter to author, April 2006

<sup>89</sup> Fr Michael Bell (b 1927. educ Holy Cross; Campion House, Osterley; St Sulpice. Ord Edin 1961)

*St Peter the Apostle*

In the early 1960s the boundaries of the parish were confirmed.<sup>90</sup> They were: *East* from Thirlestane Road right side of Marchmont Road, Kilgraston Road and Blackford Avenue, past junction of Ladysmith Road and Observatory Road, Golf Course to junction of West and East Frogston Road; *South* from junction of West and East Frogston Roads running West to Fairmilehead then south to Lothianburn and along it to Caerketton; *West* From Caerketton Hill skirting Swanston Village, along Swanstyon Road to right of Craighouse Road and Gray's Loan, Polwarth Terrace; *North* Polwarth Gardens, Grabville Tearrce, Gilmore Place, Montpellier Park, Brunstfield Crescent, Whitehouse Loan, Thirlestane Road.

Canon James Rae remembers that 'All during this period, the parish was most ably underpinned by the fatherly house-to-house visiting of the indefatigable Fr Willie Loftus, latterly with the assistance of Fr Harry Reid. Nor should it be forgotten that the life of the parish was being handed over to God night and day in the prayer of the Sisters of Charity in St Peter's Convent, of the Carmelite Sisters in Spylaw Road and the Ursulines of Jesus at St Margaret's Convent in Strathearn Road.'<sup>91</sup>

By 1961 the church roofs had been completely renewed in copper at a cost of £5,625. A legacy of £1,000 enabled a new organ to be bought. Two new stained glass windows by Scottie Wilson were about to be installed, the gift of friends of Canon Gray as a memorial. The condition of John Duncan's Stations of the Cross was deteriorating rapidly and urgently needed to be replaced. Fr Glancy attempted to put them up for auction in London but was advised that, in their present condition no one would buy them; he also received a report from the restoration experts at the National Galleries of Scotland that Duncan's paintings had been cleaned at some unknown date and that the cleaning agent used had badly damaged the paintings at and below the surface.<sup>92</sup> Hew Lorimer, son of Sir Robert, understandably

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<sup>90</sup> GD27/84/1 St Peter's boundaries (1961?)

<sup>91</sup> Canon James Rae: letter to author, April 2006

<sup>92</sup> SCA GD27/22/1 Fr Walter Glancy to Hew Lorimer, 11 Jan 1967

concerned, suggested to him that the Stations might be restored but Fr Glancey accepted the view that the paintings had reached the point of no return.<sup>93</sup>

The chairs were also nearing the end of their useful existence, the Lady Chapel (Canon Gray's first interest) needed to be tackled and Fr Glancey was considering 'the discreet use of marble on the pillars to lighten up the church and link up with the altar.'<sup>94</sup>

Fr Glancey pointed out that it was a matter of regret 'that lack of hall facilities prevents social life in the parish', but the cost of building a hall was quite beyond the resources of the parish. The 1961 Parish Reunion, for example, was held in the nearby Locarno Ballroom. However, he did envisage that in a few years time there would be a new St Peter's School constructed on the Canaan Lane site. He would then take over the old school building for parish purposes.

There had been repeated requests for an evening Mass on a Sunday. But priests could say no more than two Masses on a Sunday: at present the parish was already committed to two masses at Kirknewton Air Base but by the summer of 1961 the American Air Force would be supplying a chaplain of their own and the matter could be looked at again.

Religious education for the wider community continued in the city. In March 1962, Catholics in Edinburgh were invited to attend a dramatized narrative on the life and martyrdom of Blessed John Ogilvie (with slides and music) at Lauriston Hall; meanwhile, St Peter's made copies of the encyclical *Mater et Magister* available in English on the CTS book rack.

At the beginning of the following year (1963) Fr Glancey's annual letter to the parish revealed that total income from all sources in 1962 was down on 1961, partly because some parishioners had been transferred to the new parish of St Mark's, Oxgangs. The ordinary

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<sup>93</sup> SCA GD27/222/2 Hew Lorimer to Fr Walter Glancey, 12 Jun 1967

<sup>94</sup> GD27/64/4 Fr Walter Glancey to parishioners, Feb 1961

income of the parish was roughly £2,000, but, without supplementary income (such as periodic legacies), the parish could not survive.

In the church itself there were already significant changes. The work currently in hand was the embellishment of the Lady Chapel for long a priority of Canon Gray's). To bring in more light, three new windows were to be put in with coloured glass designed by Pierre Fourmantraux of the Whitefriars Studio in London. These would face a teak statue carved by Miss J. Dempster of Edinburgh. A black marble altar was also in process of being completed by Messrs Allan and Son.

In the sanctuary the stone steps needed to be replaced as they had become worn. There were plans to widen the floor area slightly. New Stations of the Cross were being designed by John Kingsley Cook, Head of the School of Design at Edinburgh College of Art at a cost of £3,500. They would be made from local stones and pebbles, marble and Venetian Enamel Mosaic. These materials were set, first in concrete and then (when the weight began to be a problem) in fibre-glass and installed over a period of three years by George Garson, then a junior member of the lecturing staff at the College of Art. Carefully tilted to reduce reflection from the enamel *tesserae*, the Stations would be formally erected on 26 February 1967). Other improvements to be made concerned the tabernacle, seating in the church and the parish room.

Fr Glancy was careful to explain the theological basis underpinning these changes in the layout and furnishing of the church. He addressed parishioners on the chief document of Vatican II, the *Constitution of the Church*. 'It is so full of thought, so thrilling in the new life and hope opened up for Catholics, that it will be many years before its full implications can be worked out in practice.'<sup>95</sup> To create an informed public opinion Fr Glancy planned to start a newsletter, following the exhortation of the Conciliar document that 'They (lay people)

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<sup>95</sup> SCA GD/27/64/8 Fr Walter Glancy, 'The Constitution on the Church', nd

should openly reveal to them (the hierarchy) their needs and desires with that freedom and confidence which is fitting for children of God and brothers in Christ.' He added 'There must therefore be open dialogue between clergy and laity and among the laity.' He continued that 'There was a time when the clergy had to take on many roles because of the lack of formal education among the layfolk. Today there is need for the reverse process. Priests and Bishops need the advice and consultation of laymen in the areas of life which are of particular concern of laymen, eg business and marriage; the good of the Church demands it.'

The role of the priest and his training was brought to the attention of the ordinary Catholic with an Open Day at St Andrew's College, Drygrange in June 1963. A few days later came the annual St Margaret's Convent procession and a parochial function for Fr Glancy's Jubilee of his ordination as a priest. On 30 June Fr Glancy suggested to the parish that, as most people would probably want to watch the coronation of the Holy Father that evening, there would be no evening service.

It was announced in February 1964 that records were to be made of carols and motets sung by the parish choir. That year was the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Mary's Cathedral parish and the occasion was celebrated with a Grand Ball on 29 June in the Assembly Rooms. Other celebrations later in the year included a dance in St Columba's Hall, sponsored by the Catenian Association to raise funds for St Raphael's Hospital. Two months later the special bond between St Peter's and the Pontifical Scots College, Rome was acknowledged by the cancellation of Benediction on St Margaret's Day (16 November) to allow parishioners to view the TV recording of the opening of the College by Pope Paul VI, screened at 6.15pm.

Professor Nicholas Pevsner had written to Archbishop Gray on behalf of the Victorian Society, concerned over the alterations taking place at St Peter's, principally the removal of Sir Frank Brangwyn's painting (originally installed as the climax of the church's architecture) from behind the high altar onto the opposite gable of the church. Fr Glancy replied that he had

taken a great deal of professional advice and that the painting (largely executed by Sir Frank's students under the direction of the artist) was now seen to better advantage.<sup>96</sup> Fr Glancy was supported in his view by the writer, painter and itinerant monk Peter F. Anson who had known both Canon Gray and André Raffalovich and who added that, were they both alive, they would have approved of the new arrangements: 'The new holy table is just right, and the way the new Stations merge into the brick wall, sheer genius.'<sup>97</sup>

More visible results of the Second Vatican Council were continuing to appear. In January 1965 the parishioners' attention was drawn to 'the experiment of receiving Communion standing' for which they were asked to 'come forward in twos down the centre aisle.' The heightened awareness, which the Council had brought, of the power of radio and television was also evident in a call for donations to be made after Sunday mass.

All parishes in the diocese had a Mission in 1966. For St Peter's this would come in October for a fortnight but would take a new form. Fr Glancy added that the Mission would be modern and would address the real concerns of parishioners, '[the] Four Last Things will not be lost sight of but they will not be emphasised exclusively. It will be given by the Jesuit Fr Charles Pridgeon who will talk about the issues raised by the Second Vatican Council and the problems facing Catholics in the modern world.' Canon James Rae, then a curate at St Peter's, recalls that 'who had asked whether we wanted a "Trad mission or a Vatican Two mission?" Unanimously, we chose the latter, which was to prove a sound launching-pad for the vision and work of the ensuing decades.'<sup>98</sup>

There were other less visible changes at St Peter's: parish societies which had flourished in the past had difficulty in surviving, for a variety of reasons. Their place was being taken by groups of parishioners meeting in their own homes. Several such groups had

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<sup>96</sup> SCA GD27/242/7 Fr Walter Glancy to Prof Nicholas Pevsner, 6 Jul 1964

<sup>97</sup> SCA GD27/242/9 Peter F. Anson to Fr Walter Glancy, 19 Feb 1967

<sup>98</sup> Canon James Rae: letter to author, April 2006

already formed in the parish for monthly discussions. Fr Glancyr added that ‘all concerned found more advantage in discussion than in listening to lectures.’

The groups were largely the brainchild of curate Fr James Rae: ‘Since student days I had been captivated by the pastoral strategies of two French Dominican priests in Paris who had brought a whole parish back to the Faith by evangelising and catechising groups of married couples meeting in each other’s homes and I longed to try the method here. On consulting my older colleagues on the wisdom of embarking on such a project, replies varied from “I wouldn’t, if I were you” to “Over my dead body”, but Fr Walter jumped at my proposition and encouraged an immediate start. So, from November 1962, ten such groups were formed, giving themselves to study of the Scripture and, subsequently, of the documents of the second Vatican Council, while establishing strong bonds of friendship in a delightful process of faith formation. Two youth groups were also set up to work in appropriate ways at faith and community formation. The social effects were many. The foundations were laid for an effective communications system, a thriving parish council and a realistic ecumenical outreach.’<sup>99</sup>

Around 1967 preparations were put in place for a parish mission to be given by the late Fr Charles Pridgeon SJ, who had asked whether we wanted a ‘Trad mission or a Vatican Two mission?’ Unanimously, we chose the latter, which was to prove a sound launching-pad for the vision and work of the ensuing decades.

In Easter 1966 there were more innovations: the Holy Week ceremonies were to be in English, with books for the services available for sale at the back of the church and contact with the Second Vatican Council was more immediate as one of the ‘Council Fathers’, Abbot Butler of Downside, came up to Edinburgh to deliver a lecture on the Second Vatican Council at the Lauriston Hall. Liturgy continued to be at the forefront of parishioners’ minds in 1966

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<sup>99</sup> Canon James Rae: letter to author, April 2006

and a questionnaire on the matter was handed out to the people as they left the church, asking for their views on liturgical needs and developments.

In November, parishioners were also asked to pick up a guidance leaflet on the proposed Abortion Bill and to write urgently to their MPs expressing their strong opposition to the Bill.

That year was also memorable for the ordination of a young man from the parish, Ian Ashley. Born in Edinburgh in 1938, he was educated at Holy Cross Academy, and had begun training as an architect before joining the RAF for National Service. His seminary training was at Drygrange (1960-66). After ordination at St Peter's, Fr Ian served at Broxburn (1966-67), Kirkcaldy (1967-69) and Larbert (1969-75). Tragically, he would die in Edinburgh on 11 September 1975. Requiem Mass was offered at St Peter's (where he was once an altar boy and a Scout) by Cardinal Gray, assisted by Mgr John Barry, rector of Drygrange and attended by a vast number of people (including two busloads of parishioners from Larbert) who had come to pay their respects to a young priest who had been so active in the parish, particularly in the Stirlingshire Lay Apostolate Youth Committee and the Stirlingshire Lay Apostolate Council where he had shown how to achieve progress through understanding and considerate co-operation.

Educational change and the inevitable difficulties it brought was symbolised with a mass in May 1966 for the late headmistress of the School, Miss Lawlor. Unhappily, that August the Sisters of Charity were forced to withdraw from Falcon Gardens — 'a matter of great regret to the Order and to ourselves,' commented Fr Glancy. Their departure was due to a lack of vocations but also to the call for new kinds of work for the Sisters to pursue. Nevertheless, one Sister continued as a teacher at St Peter's but would now be living across the Meadows at George Square.

There was challenge and change also for the parish personnel. Fr Loftus received his presentation in February 1967. Lay members of the parish felt the wind of change and a change of emphasis: special collections were taken that June for the new Lay Apostolate (instead of the Catholic Education Fund), its purpose being to pay the expenses of parish delegates to conferences and ecumenical gatherings.

Visitation by the parish clergy was becoming more and more difficult because of other calls on priests' time. In a parish letter of 6 October 1967 Fr Glancy explained in that he was the diocesan representative on the Edinburgh Education Committee, while one of his curates, Fr James Rae, was also assistant treasurer to the diocese and had just been promoted to secretary of the Finance Committee — which would entail much daily office administration and travelling around the diocese.

The year 1968 started peacefully enough. During Christian Unity Week in January Ronald Walls gave a talk to the parish in which he pointed out that in 1949 Pope Pius XII in a Holy Office Instruction observed that the unity movement among non-Catholic Christians had been awakened 'under the inspiration of God.' Mr Walls commented that this 'fruitful ecumenical action pre-supposes complete loyalty of all participants to their own churches ... At the root of the Ecumenical Movement lies mutual respect.' But then in March ??? saw the promulgation of the encyclical letter 'Humanae Vitae' (25 July 1968) on the regulation of births which raised a storm in the Catholic Church both at home and abroad. In the parish newsletter that autumn, 'An Exile' based in London, was critical of 'Humanae Vitae' which he called 'That Encyclical', adding that 'As long as the decision and the use of contraceptives are made with love, there is no need to fear the consequences ...'<sup>100</sup> What was clear was that Catholics worldwide were puzzled, disappointed and confused by the process through which

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<sup>100</sup> St Peter's Parish Newsletter, No 8, Sept/Oct 1968

‘*Humanae Vitae*’ was developed and issued and that the pastoral implications would be serious.

The parish notice book for 1968, however, reveals how Catholics were being repeatedly challenged and the positive ways in which the Church was trying to respond. A parish meeting was held early in 1968 to explore the possibility of starting an Adult Club, while traditional links with the Sacred Heart at Lauriston were renewed in an appeal from the Jesuit church for St Peter’s men to join the choir for rehearsals for a broadcast ‘Songs of Praise’ in September. Other contemporary issues were addressed in a talk at the Laity Centre in October on what was called ‘Racialism’.

A parish census taken in 1968 found there to be 907 parishioners at St Peter’s. Even as Pope Paul VI issued his encyclical letter ‘*Humanae Vitae*’, in St Peter’s there was evidence of the shrinkage of the Catholic population and a reduction in the birth rate: 78 under the age of five; 164 between 5 and 14 years; 597 between 15 and 64 years and 68 over 65 years.<sup>101</sup> Mass attendance was around 650 (*circa* 70%), with some 320 communicants (*circa* 35%), while the number of persons ‘going to Confession’ (receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation) ranged from 64 on Holy Saturday to 39 (25 May) and 42 (20 July). This was a percentage of only 7% — attendance at Confession was therefore negligible and reflected a suspicion, widespread in society, that the Establishment (including the Church and its structures) was of diminishing relevance; the ‘Crisis of Authority’ was underway, priests and nuns were giving up their formal vocations — all developments which the Second Vatican Council (perhaps a little belatedly) was designed to overcome.

In St Peter’s the new parish council held its inaugural meeting in November 1968. Fr Glancy had drafted the council constitution so as to be ‘deliberately broad reserving the

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<sup>101</sup> SCA GD27/88/5 St Peter’s statistics, 1968

position of the parish priest and allowing re-election for lay members and also co-option.<sup>102</sup> The committee had been elected from the 39 districts in the parish, but only 27 representatives accepted the invitation to serve.<sup>103</sup> Presiding at the meeting were Fr Glancy as president and his curate Fr James Rae as vice president. The purpose of the committee was to prepare a constitution for an elected Council which would follow. Sub-committees were to be set up, with duties in the fields of liturgy (the form of services, pass-keeping, readers, singing), ecumenism (inter-church relations between (neighbouring churches of differing denominations), publications and communication and youth liaison. Other areas subsequently added to the council's responsibilities were: social (parish functions — the area which showed the most activity), pastoral (visiting the sick) and finance (mainly dealing with covenants).<sup>104</sup> It was agreed that the parish priest would have the right to appoint the Council and its members. A number of assessors would also be invited to join the Council. The chairman was Eugene Mooney.

The service provided by readers was specifically targeted by Fr Glancy as being at the heart of the success of the liturgy:

In future the Reader will play a greater part in the Liturgy of the Mass. He will be Leader as well as Reader ... A lot more is expected from the reader. In fact a great deal of the success of the new form of the Mass will depend on the reader — on his [sic] bearing, his clarity of speech.<sup>105</sup>

By the time of the second meeting on 1 December, the Liturgical committee was tasked with integrating the new Baptismal rite into the parish Sunday Mass and with considering the layout of the Church with particular reference to the high altar and the placing of the Blessed Sacrament as laid down by the documents of the Second Vatican Council. Fr Glancy pointed out that the relocation of the altar would need to be considered.

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<sup>102</sup> SCA GD27/38/7 Fr Walter Glancy to Fr John McAllister, 6 May 1970

<sup>103</sup> SCA GD27/36 St Peter's Parish Council, Nov 1968-Nov 1971

<sup>104</sup> SCA GD27/38/1 St Peter's Parish Council, nd

<sup>105</sup> SCA GD27/38/3 Readers (1969?)

Canon James Rae points out the difficult choices facing a parish priest at the time: 'In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, Fr Walter would find that his many insights and professional contacts encouraged him in immediately tackling the invidious question facing most parish priests at the time — how to re-order a parish church in a manner which was sympathetic to its architectural legacy and yet in keeping with the mind of the then new 'Decree on the Sacred Liturgy'. The resulting arrangement naturally provoked varied opinions (and still does) but the essential purpose was met, and met promptly, for the spiritual enrichment of all who worship there.'<sup>106</sup>

One of the first acts of the parish council was to issue a questionnaire on Latin in the Mass and on sung masses. The results of the questionnaire were to show that only 2.4 per cent of the parish felt a strong desire for a mass in Latin.

The Ecumenical committee was chaired by the convert former Church of Scotland minister, Ronald Walls and consisted of 13 members while, under curate Fr Henry Reid, youth liaison would examine new ways to interest and involve young people in the life of the Church. There were two youth clubs in the parish, one of which consisted of forty boys and girls of mixed denomination.

The year 1969 was marked by increased ecumenical activity in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. Parishioners from St Peter's attended a Church Unity service at Braid Church on 19 January, (an event reciprocated on 2 November when St Peter's Ladies Guild entertained ladies from neighbouring churches). It was a case of 'Ave atque Vale' as the community celebrated the raising of parishioner Hugh Shannon to the subdiaconate on 23 February and, on 28 December, envelopes were issued to the parish for a presentation to Fr Rae who was leaving the parish.

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<sup>106</sup> Canon James Rae: letter to author, April 2006

However, Fr Glancy alerted parishioners to the growing problem of the shortage of priests: 'we have not managed to find a replacement for Fr Rae, due to the shortage of priests. Priests are fewer and commitments greater. A review is taking place of the disposal of priests and it is likely that Masses will be considered on a deanery basis or even a City basis. The total number [of masses] will certainly have to be cut down.'<sup>107</sup>

In the parish newsletter in an article entitled 'The End in Sight', Fr Glancy wrote of the liturgical changes that 'One final stage remains ... This final stage has been discussed by the Liturgical Sub-Committee ... and shortly a meeting will be arranged for the whole parish.' There were two chief points to consider: the position of the High Altar and the place for reserving the Blessed Sacrament.

On 14 Dec 1969 Fr Glancy called a parish meeting on the reconstruction of the sanctuary which more than fifty parishioners attended: '... all new churches now require to be designed so that Mass is said facing the congregation and with a separate and fitting shrine for reservation of the Blessed Sacrament and private devotion' commented Fr Glancy. After some discussion the meeting decided that the sanctuary should be redesigned with a new permanent altar in the place of the present temporary one and that the present altar should be removed. The Lady Chapel (or perhaps the Sacred Heart altar) would then become the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Fr Glancy added that 'During 1970, the Mass will take its final shape.'

At a presentation in January to mark Fr Rae's departure to Currie as parish priest, Fr Glancy spoke to the more than 100 parishioners present of the special contribution made by Fr Rae, namely to make the church services as fitting as possible, his organisation of discussion groups, his relationship with neighbouring churches in the ecumenical movement, and his vigorous advocacy of covenanting for the Church. Fr Glancy added that '... In fact,

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<sup>107</sup> 'GD27/65/7 Fr Walter Glancy to parishioners, Dec 1969

any success that the [Parish] Council has had to date stemmed from his organisation of secretaries throughout then parish for communication, clearing seminary boxes.

Of his time at St Peter's Canon Rae would later write that 'I consider myself truly blessed to have witnessed in St Peter's the beginnings of a renewal process so palpably imbued with the power of the Holy Spirit and brought to birth by a people seriously ambitious for the glory of God and the building of His Kingdom.'<sup>108</sup>

### **1970-80**

In early February 1970 there was a meeting of women willing to form the nucleus of a new parish choir. Easter brought changes which Fr Glancy outlined to the parish: 'In order that we can more fully participate in this greatest Week of the Church's Year, the Holy Father has reformed the liturgy of Holy Week. In general the Rites have been abbreviated and simplified, in accordance with older and more authentic traditions making them easier to follow and to take part in more intelligently. To do so it is recommended that you purchase one of the booklets for Holy Week, as all missals are now out of date for these services.'<sup>109</sup> The booklets, published and printed in Baltimore, USA, featured colour reproductions on their covers of paintings of religious subjects.

Liturgical changes moved fast; at the parish council meeting of 30 January 1970 the design for a new altar was discussed (and rough sketches made) and also training for celebrating the new order of the Mass.<sup>110</sup> By June 1970 a gospel lectern had been placed on the high altar, thus completing the renovations for the time being. Fr Glancy, Miss Clare Hannavy and Ronald Walls were engaged in compiling a new parish hymnal. It was already

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<sup>108</sup> Canon James Rae: letter to author, April 2006

<sup>109</sup> SCA GD27/61/5 Holy Week Services at St Peter's, nd

<sup>110</sup> SCA GD27/38/5 St Peter's Parish Council, Meeting of Conveners, Fri 30 Jan 1970

clear that the choir was making a valuable contribution to the liturgical life of the parish and it was evident that it was encouraging the congregation to participate to a greater degree.

For those Catholic children who (for one reason or another) did not attend St Peter's school, arrangements were made in 1970 for their catechesis on Saturday mornings in the parish room. The parish also offered a wide variety of opportunities for young people to become involved in the church: a youth club, a girls' club, an altar boys' club and a crèche. The parish council, meanwhile, was active and had produced a report of its latest meeting.

Speaking early in the year, in advance of the 46th St Peter's Guide Company's Golden Jubilee on 2 June, Fr Walter Glancy went on to encourage all forms of vocational service by young people. At a Saturday Mass he focused on the altar boys who were already formed into a guild which, among other things, would draw their attention to the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood.

In the parish newsletter, the diocesan vocations director, Fr K-H Kruger, gave his *Reflections on the Theology of Vocation to the Priesthood*. 'The current "problem of vocations", said Fr Kruger, should be seen as simply one aspect of the general 'crisis' of personalism — the conscious or unconscious shift in emphasis to the "identity of the person" [which was affecting] each and every sector of present day society ... With the shift of emphasis to the personal, the distinction between the personal and the *official* element in the priesthood tends to become more difficult and less clear, and would seem to be the root cause of the "problem of vocations". He concluded that 'The problem of this image [the priest's] today is simply a particular aspect of a more general problem — the "crisis of authority". The greater personal responsibility given to young people today in most spheres tends to make the priesthood less attractive ... the solution would seem to lie ultimately in a deeper realisation of the role of the priesthood ... by laity and priests alike — [this] would seem to be the most central and basic factor in solving the problem of vocations.'

This was also a period of ecumenical progress. Ronnie Walls drew attention through the parish newsletter to the Scottish Bishops' recent publication through the National Ecumenical Commission for Scotland of 'Guide Lines for Ecumenical Activity.' St Peter's ecumenical sub-committee had indeed written to Greenbank Church of Scotland that 'In an attempt to develop the ecumenical understanding which has been growing in this part of Edinburgh during the past few years ... [we] would like to invite you to send three representatives to an informal meeting [at St Peter's] ... on 24 May 1970.'

The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for different Christian communities to get to know one another better. The main result of this initiative was a decision to carrying out a study of the needs of the churches' catchment area and to increase inter-Church dialogue. A second meeting on 25 June 1970 proposed the setting up of a Morningside Christian Council, a suggestion unanimously approved.

The annual St Peter's parish report for 1970 emphasised the success and the importance of the envelope system of Covenants (that would in future be processed through a new diocesan Covenant centre) which brought an additional £1000 back to the parish. However, the average weekly parish collection was only £87, as against a feu duty of £84 per annum, annual fire insurance was £110, annual heating and lighting £300. Nevertheless, a sale of work organised to raise money to carry out improvements on the Convent premises (to make them more suitable for parochial purposes) had raised over £650.<sup>111</sup>

Fr Walter Glancy continued to challenge his parishioners but also to guide them through the bewildering changes of modern life. In June 1971 he wrote in the newsletter on 'The Future of Confession': 'There is no doubt about the fact that frequent confession is declining and declining rapidly among Catholics. The causes of this decline are varied and complex — there is dissatisfaction with the present form of confession; our notion of sin is

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<sup>111</sup> SCA GD27/65/8 Fr Walter Glancy to parishioners, Dec 1970

changing to emphasise collective sin; Church teaching has in the past focused on forgiveness but there is now returning an idea which played a vital part in the life of the Church, the concept of reconciliation as experienced in the Mass and through Penitential Services.’

Three months later Fr Glancy turned his attention to the changes in the Liturgy and their implications. He described sermons in the past as urging us to ‘despise the things of earth and seek the things of heaven.’ ‘The sad result of that attitude,’ he continued, ‘was to make worship something apart from life. It is this that the Church is now trying to rectify in the liturgy. For too long now the liturgy has been felt to be a little world apart. The liturgical renewal sets about the business of doing away with the “little world of its own,” but the only justification for such a drastic change in our worship is to link it again directly with the problems of the world. The way is open for a new proclamation of the Word, for a vital prayer life. The Holy Spirit is not caged. The world today needs a new Pentecost. A good question to ask today is this: with all the changes we have made in the liturgy have we succeeded in producing a structure and content which will make an impact on the modern world? The answer must be an emphatic *NO*. Not yet. The first requirement is a sense of community for two reasons. Firstly, people come first. God lives in men not in buildings. And men have an instinct to celebrate; secondly, we have to bring Christ’s message to the world.’

Ecumenical initiatives increased in 1971: an invitation from the Baptist church to witness a Baptismal service, ‘at homes’ in the Congregational church, St Peter’s and Greenbank Church of Scotland.

Following the success of the ‘at homes’, local ecumenical study circles were set up in December 1972, with meetings at three centres: Morningside Congregational Church Hall, Braid Church Hall and Greenbank Church Hall. The purpose of the study-circles was to find if there was a common factor in the faith of Christians of the local denominations and if the faith differences between them were serious enough to justify the continuation of separate

communions. There were other signs that Catholics were widening their perspective, namely a vigil of prayer for racial harmony.

In answer to a query in the parish newsletter, Fr James Rae, now parish priest at Currie, confirmed early in 1972 that the Archdiocesan Covenant Centre was fully operational. In less than a year the Centre had secured the Covenant business of 52% of parishes in the diocese, with 2,600 covenants on its computer listing, and stood to gain a tax refund of £36,000.

The Ecumenical subcommittee was very active. Dr Archie Craig, a former Moderator of the Church of Scotland, gave a talk to Morningside Christian Council on inter-Church relations on 6 February at the Churchhill Theatre (once itself a church), and ended the series on 26 March at Morningside Parish Church. By June St Peter's was once again looking at ways to improve parish liturgy. A parish council meeting examined music in the church, the need for practice and guidance, and recommended that Masses should not exceed one hour in length.

Easter 1973 saw the retiral of Miss Rachel Maxwell, who had been associated with St Peter's Guides for many years. She had enrolled as a guide in 1927 and first took Guides to camp ten years later. During the war, despite great difficulties, the Brownies continued to meet regularly until 1942 when Miss Maxwell joined the Forces. However, when she returned in 1947, she discovered the Guides had been disbanded, so she started them up again!

That year (1973) was also the scene of a major parish event. A televised Mass at 10.30am on Sunday 16 September, with celebrants Fr Glancy, Fr Harry Reid and Fr Charles Barclay was introduced for the BBC by Fr William Anderson with a choir conducted by Clare Hannavy, and Charles Napier playing the organ. The theme of the Mass was 'commitment' —

as Fr Glancy observed in his sermon, also the subject of the Brangwyn painting on the gable wall of the church — achieved through serious personal reflection and community dialogue.

The broadcast was made with power from the intake point in the presbytery provided by the South of Scotland Electricity Board and two mobile generators parked in Falcon Avenue (bringing back memories to some of the infamous events of 1935). Four cameras were used, three on mobile mountings, the fourth on a pre-fabricated rostrum built adjacent to the south aisle.<sup>112</sup> During the hours when the BBC staff were not on duty and the vehicles were on site, they were guarded by a watchman from Security Rangers.

The Mass was broadcast all over Britain. Reactions from viewers were very positive. One wrote to the BBC that ‘the sense of participation by all was terrific’. Unhappily, the recording equipment used by the BBC for domestic consumption at St Peter’s failed and was also of inferior quality. No reusable recording resulted and a planned viewing for the parish did not take place, much to the fury of Fr Glancy and the dismay of the parishioners.

As the busiest of all parish committees, the Social Committee continued to organise a wide variety of activities, from a senior parishioners’ outing in September 1973 to an Autumn Fair in October, for which as promoter (on behalf of the parish council) Fr Glancy applied to the Town Clerk for registration under Section 45 of the Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Act (1963) for the promotion of a small lottery or draw. The draw took place on Saturday 20 October, with tickets priced at 5 pence.

In order to help parishioners gain a fuller perception of the nature and the universal mission of the Church, and to promulgate the teachings contained in the decrees of the Second Vatican Council, the Edinburgh deaneries set up a Lay Apostolate Council in August 1973, basing its constitution on that of its Stirlingshire equivalent. Mgr Patrick Quille was president of the new LAC, which met at the Laity Centre where Fr Hugh Gordon reported on a

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<sup>112</sup> SCA GD27/76/17 Roy Smith (BBC) to Fr Walter Glancy, 31 Aug 1973

proposed course for parish councillors. Action (such as writing to MPs) was also urged against the Abortion Act and Mgr Quille spoke briefly about the possibility of a *Lifeline* pregnancy service being established in Edinburgh.

At the beginning of 1973 Fr Glancy congratulated the parish: 'The health of a parish can be judged by the way the congregation participates at Mass. In this regard the obvious interest and involvement of the congregation in the liturgical services at St Peter's has been growing and is a great source of encouragement to the clergy.'<sup>113</sup> There were also other successes (for what was a small parish with quite a floating population). The introduction of the new envelope system in 1968 had rapidly increased parish income to just over £6,000.

A sombre event took place in the parish. Helen, wife of Ronald Walls, died on 28 May 1974 as a result of a tragic motor car accident two weeks before in which her husband was also injured. Requiem Mass was celebrated at St Peter's by Fr Walter Glancy; after Mass it took almost an hour to clear the cars from Falcon Avenue and the adjoining streets.<sup>114</sup> Ronald and Helen Walls had both been received into the Catholic Church by Fr Glancy at Sancta Maria Abbey, Nunraw on 23 December 1948 and later received Holy Communion for the first time at St Raphael's Hospital where Fr Glancy was chaplain.

Ronald Walls played a key role in developing ecumenical relations in Morningside, through his brother-in-law, the Revd Roddie Smith, minister of Braid Church, and the minister of Cramond Kirk, the Revd Campbell MacLean (also a relative by marriage). He was also related to Fr James Rae, curate and later parish priest at St Peter's.

A programme of ecumenical education ran in the district from January to May 1974, with a series of five services, the fruit of a previous thought-provoking address by Dr Archie Craig. Subsequent initiatives included a 'Witness to Neighbourhood' with an Easter 1976 procession which would feature members of the local Christian churches carrying banners

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<sup>113</sup> SCA GD27/65/11 Fr Glancy to parishioners, Jan 1973

<sup>114</sup> Ronald Walls, *Love Strong as Death* (Loeminster: Gracewing, 2000), 301

marching four abreast from Braid Church to Braidburn Valley Park. The first procession was a success but the following year support was too small for the procession to continue the following year. By 1980, after a talk by Lord Lauderdale, a former journalist and the moving-force behind the venture, the churches at Morningside began to participate in the East Lothian ecumenical pilgrimage from Whitekirk to St Mary's, Haddington.

Over the years, ecumenism still continued to be well supported and was a regular and well-appreciated feature of parish life. In April 1977 St Peter's took its turn to be 'at home' to neighbouring congregations. As there were many overseas people living in the parish, a special invitation was extended to them. As Cardinal Gordon Gray was present, the other Churches welcomed the opportunity to acknowledge his recent Jubilee.

A unique page in the history of the parish was written when Ronald Walls was ordained a priest for the diocese of Aberdeen by Bishop Mario Conti in St Peter's on 30 June 1977, having completed his studies at the Beda College in Rome. The following year on 12 December parishioner Fr Michael Bagan, a former student at Drygrange, was also ordained.<sup>115</sup>

On 8 September 1979, a parishioner of St Peter's, Br Giles Conacher (1949-) was ordained priest at Pluscarden Abbey by Bishop Mario Conti. Nicholas Conacher was educated at George Heriots and Edinburgh University, where he began in the Science faculty but transferred to Arts. After University he worked as a photographic technician at Jessops in Edinburgh before he entered Pluscarden and has been a keen photographer ever since. Br Giles' ordination was the first under the roof of the Abbey Church since the sixteenth century, and took place in the presence of his family and friends, with priests from many parts of the diocese concelebrating Mass — including Fr Ronald Walls. Fr Giles succeeded Fr Maurus as Cellarer (1989) and Prior (1991). He held both posts until he went out to Ghana in 2005. Since Easter 2006 he has been Superior of the monastery at Kristo Buase.

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<sup>115</sup> Fr Michael Bagan (b Edinburgh 1953. educ. Holy Cross Academy; St Augustine's High School; Drygrange)

The continued presence of popular uncertainty at changes in the Liturgy was evident in the title of a talk delivered at St Peter's that September on 'The History of the Tridentine Rite'; the very contemporary theme of authority and the supremacy of individual conscience was also explored in a September production by St David's Drama Group of Robert Bolt's play, 'A Man for All Seasons' at the Church of Scotland's Netherbow Centre in the High Street.

Looking back at the thirteen years lifespan of the Morningside Christian Council, Fr Walter Glancy commented in November 1979 that the MCC 'represents the united efforts of seven congregations in a variety of fields. We have 34 visitors dealing with special cases in the area, a very useful 'Friends Group' working at the Royal Infirmary, a car pool, as well as a Christian Aid and Oxfam shop. This social work activity is supplemented by ecumenical lectures and by four joint religious services each year. Everything has operated harmoniously so far.'<sup>116</sup> However, looking at the broader picture and at the danger of making liturgical changes that would confuse the laity, Fr Glancy was also concerned about 'priests jumping the gun or forcing changes on them [lay people]' against the guidelines issued by the Hierarchy. He cautioned that 'there should be agreement on the side of the clergy and that the laity should be consulted and if necessary instructed.' When the Archbishop's guidelines were issued St Peter's held a joint meeting specifically on the Eucharist attended by 400 people.

Looking back in 2006, Canon James Rae assessed the achievement of Fr Walter Glancy as being central to the modern development of the parish. Fr Glancy's pastoral style was '... the enlightened leadership of a pastor of open mind and courageous enterprise ... his successful efforts in the 40s and 50s in mustering and developing the skills of Catholic men and women to wrest the local trade unions from the grip of Communist infiltrators bent upon the destruction of Britain's economy ... such an apostleship for social justice was seen by

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<sup>116</sup> SCA GD27/149/14 Fr Walter Glancy to 'John' [Barry?], 22 Nov 1979

many in those days as an uncalled for interference in politics which had should have no place in the life of a priest. His reward was to be reckoned by authority as suspect, thought of by his colleagues as himself a Communist, but to be resoundingly vindicated by the Vatican Council. Fr Walter's lifelong work for Catholic Education so often went unrecognised and unrecorded, particularly his earlier years when, as a lone voice in Councils, he had to withstand much abuse from outside (and, sadly, sometimes from inside) the "fold".

'Under Archbishop Andrew Joseph McDonald Fr Walter Glancy had to manage the building and repair of Diocesan property in days of post-war austerity and licensing restrictions. His quick grasp of associated disciplines in law, architecture, finance and politics, together with his charm in dealing harmoniously with civic officials and clergy, bore much fruit for a Catholic population that was on the move and rapidly expanding. Cardinal Gordon Gray appointed Fr Walter as secretary to the Finance and Planning Committee of the Archdiocesan Trustees that would oversee the building of some thirty-odd churches and ancillary properties.

### ***1980-90***

The year 1980 was marked by a sense of great loss. On the evening of Wednesday 27 February 1980, as Fr Glancy prepared to celebrate Mass he was called to God. As he had not appeared in the sacristy, two altar-boys were sent to find him. They discovered him in his study, where he had died from a massive heart-attack. Later, as his body was taken from the house which had been his home for 25 years, some of his parishioners were standing by and one of those present remarked that 'Father looked so small — to be such a big man.'<sup>117</sup>

At the Requiem Mass at St Peter's on 1 March, before a packed congregation, Fr Harry Reid delivered the panegyric prior to Fr Glancy's interment at Mount Vernon. Fr Reid

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<sup>117</sup> *The Catholic Directory for Scotland* (1981)

commented that it was not unusual physical size that made Fr Walter a big man, but rather his moral stature, the width of his interests, the depth of his insight, the scope of his vision, and his outstanding. In West Lothian, in the early years of his priesthood, he had directed his energies to teaching Christian social principles and ethics to workers, trying to motivate them to take a more active part in the trade unions and in politics. This he did, not in the furtherance of any political cause, but to try to ensure that the justice of Christ would be present in the new industrial age he saw emerging: and in doing so he suffered the accusation of being tainted with Communism.

Fr Reid continued by saying that for much of his life Fr Walter was involved in the temporal affairs of the diocese as a member of the Finance Committee. The determination and astuteness he brought to this task did not arise from any venal desire to conclude a sharp deal but from the firm conviction that the people should have the best possible churches in which to worship God.

Succeeding Fr Walter Glancy was an awesome challenge. Fr Anthony McNally stepped into the void created by Fr Glancy's death, with Fr Ryszard Holuka as curate, and strove manfully to continue the life of the parish. Slowly the parish adapted to life without Fr Glancy — as he would undoubtedly have wanted them to.

A sense of fun dispelled some of the gloom. The June 1981 parish outing to North Berwick was memorable for the flying escort Fr Ryzard Holuka provided to the bus, in his scarlet jumpsuit and matching motor bike. By now the parish council had divided into areas or groups of houses (c 12 houses per group) with a councillor attached to each group. At the end of the year came parishioner Kitty Royan was delighted to find many things that brought back poignant memories of the parish in the City Art Centre's exhibition, 'Dogs of the Lord' on the work of the Dominican Order. Among these was a charming drawing by Bill Reid of two

bewildered priests standing outside St Peter's in 1935 with men in raincoats and slouched hats cutting the cable before the BBC broadcast with Fr Fabian Dix.

The Youth Club, which had been a roaring success came to an abrupt end in January 1982, after just five weeks — because the premises constituted a fire hazard. The club restarted but only the under 15s returned. While the year was also notable for the Scottish Bishops' statement on Disarmament and Peace, the preparation for the Papal visit caught the imagination of every Scottish Catholic. To help cover the cost of the visit of Pope John Paul II each parish in the country was levied according to its population; in St Peter's case this amounted to £1200. Pope John Paul at Murrayfield would never be forgotten by young people like Alison Dale, aged 14, who wrote 'Then the Pope spoke his first words to us: "Dear young people of Scotland ..."' Immediately the 45,000 people, including me, burst into shouts of "John Paul", and we clapped and cheered ... I will keep the memory of Murrayfield with me forever.' At Christmas, enjoying the church's newly-installed sound system (at a cost of £2600) and the efficiency of the rewiring (£2200), Fr McNally summed it all up 'the Holy Father bound us together, made us conscious of our identity, and proud to belong to the community of faith.'

The Archdiocesan Directory reappeared in 1983 for the first time since 1958. This coincided with changes in the liturgy at St Peter's. The parish council urged that the new Offertory procession needed to be extended to the 5.30pm Mass and in June Fr McNally invited the parish to put forward their views on the repositioning of the tabernacle.

The Youth Group, which had started playing at Wednesday evening Masses, had quadrupled the attendance. Seeing this, Fr McNally commented that 'We are a shrinking Church in a post-Christian world and the stress must be on being a credible, believing, welcoming community.' But one lady, writing in the parish newsletter, was less optimistic,

adding, in the aftermath of the Papal visit that ‘Many of us have squandered a year of potential re-growth in the Church.’

November 1983 brought a Conference at Craiglockhart on 24 September, attended by over 500 parish representatives. Leading the Conference, American Fr Tom Caroluzza told his audience that the Church should be a credible Christian community, demonstrating compassion, companionship, communion, conviviality. It should be *theopolitan* (facing outward to the outward world) and leadership and ministry in the Church should be defined as serving. He added that the laity must use their gifts to help build up the community, while the role of the priest was to be an ‘enabler of ministries’ who made the mission of the laity possible.’

While Fr McNally planned to implement the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults), he also pondered the November letter from the Bishops on the new code of canon law and its implementation, which raised immediate questions on holy days of obligation and Friday abstinence.

More threats and rationalisation followed in 1984. There were proposals from the Education authority to reorganise Catholic primary and secondary schools which saw 450 people attend a Aquinas Association meeting in February on ‘The Threat to Our High Schools.’ At St Peter’s there was also concern over the potential redevelopment of land beside the school.

While the stained glass windows of the church had been cleaned and double-glazed (at some cost) with ‘Lexan’ to prevent leakage and heat loss, parish income had fallen from £2331 in 1982 to £2038, yet the parish fund had increased by over £1000 to £7718.

Plans were afoot for a new parish survey and parish directory. At a wider level Deanery Pastoral Councils had been established to fill the gap between the parish councils and the Diocesan Pastoral Council. And there were other parochial successes: by November

1984 the Youth Music Group was playing regularly at Wednesday evening Mass and there was a Children's Liturgy at 11am Mass. But there were still some divisions over Folk Masses which led to some parishioners asserting that 'For me worship without music is like food without salt', while others asked 'Where is the joy we all felt last year at Murrayfield; the vitality, the feeling of love, so tangible you could almost put your arms round it?'

January 1985 opened with a Conference on the Scottish Bishops' call for a Nuclear freeze ('A letter for Peace'), which was supported later in the year by the British Churches (the Catholic Bishops, the Church of Scotland and the British Council of Churches) who endorsed the notion of a Nuclear Freeze. Three weeks after the Bishops' letter, another conference (sponsored by Medical Ethics Group of Rutherford House) saw Professors John Marshall, Ian Donald and the Very Revd Thomas F Torrance making presentations to stimulate responses to the Warnock Report on Human fertilisation and embryology. Marriage Encounter, meanwhile, was promoted at St Peter's by Rhona and Gerry McPartlin who explained that the basic unit of a ME weekend was a talk by one of three Team couples or by the Team priest.

The character and purpose of a forthcoming parish Mission led by London-based Jesuit Fr John Edwards was described as 'a privilege,' 'a joy' but also containing inevitably 'dark things.' It was sometimes disheartening for missionaries to be 'flogging round the pavements all day in the rain and finding Catholics who do not want to know.' Yet the Mission was not universally appreciated, one parishioner claiming that the missionary was out of touch with Scottish concerns and had failed to reach the youth of the parish.

In May a FIRE rally was held at Ingliston (the Catholic Alliance of Faith, Intercession, Repentance and Evangelism). Founded in 1983 in the USA, FIRE described itself as a 'Catholic evangelistic force seeking renewal.' Closer to home, the Pastoral Foundation at Morningside's Holy Corner Church Centre provided consultation for those involved in

helping others. It existed to equip Christians to care for one another and to access resources of training, knowledge, information and experience so as to prevent a decline in health, especially in older people.

Youth was very much to the fore in 1985: St Peter's School raised over £1100 for SCIAF; the Diocesan youth project raised money for an educational project run by missionaries in the Cameroons, West Africa and Lifeline Pregnancy Counselling and Care (based in Edinburgh since 1976) helped well over 100 people a month (from 15 to 50 years old) in problems of childlessness, miscarriage, stillbirth, adoption. As for the parish Youth Folk Group, sympathetic parishioners pleaded that it was 'time to let them out of organ loft and give them opportunity at 11am Mass.'

Renewed fears were raised by the suggestion that Lothian Regional Council social work department were considering pulling out of the grass area and nearby former Canaan Lodge children's home and adult training centre. The Parent Teachers Association suspected that the land would be sold off for house-building.

In September 1985 Fr McNally was made a vicar-general and given the title of 'Monsignor.' He left St Peter's to become parish priest in Musselburgh and Fr Holuka also left to work at Craiglockhart Convent. In future there would be only one priest in the parish. When Fr Stephen Judge arrived he was asked 'How are you going to manage on your own Father?' His response was 'How are *WE* going to manage priest and people together?'

As the year ended there was more food for thought: the Morningside Christian Council arranged for local MP Malcolm Rifkind to speak on 'Food and Development', while the Morningside Peace Group debated the question 'What about Trident?' But the district also provided other resources: as well as the ever-present Open Door in Morningside Road (which offered a venue for meeting and sharing with other Christians and non-Christians), five Sisters of the Sacred Heart had established a House of Prayer and Retreat in Nile Grove.

*St Peter the Apostle*

The following year (1986) opened with an honour for one of the parishioners. John Wastle received the Papal medal 'Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice' from Archbishop O'Brien. At the ceremony Cardinal Gray praised John's work as chairman of the Cardinal's advisory group on Education in face of the school rationalisation plans presented by Lothian Region. Fr Judge meanwhile, shared with the parish the challenge which he faced as their pastor by listing his other responsibilities; 'With my personal belongings and books I brought with me my work for the Scottish National Tribunal, for the Secretariat for Christian Unity (Glasgow), for the Aged and Infirm Clergy Fund and the Catholic Union of the Sick.' One of his first acts was to suggest widening the composition of the Special Ministers of the Eucharist. At the time all were religious Sisters, but the possibility of involving lay people would benefit from a weekly hour of prayer.

By November 1986 Fr Judge was able to announce that he had invited a group of twelve parishioners to become Ministers of the Eucharist at Sunday Mass, as well as to work in the church, in people's homes and in nursing homes and hospitals. Meanwhile, the Parish Renewal programme organised by Archbishop O'Brien was begun over several weekends of talk, discussion, prayer, focusing on training the 'parish family.'

There was great excitement in the parish at the news that St Andrew's College, Drygrange in the Borders would be moving in the summer of 1986 to a new site at Gillis College in Whitehouse Loan. The new College was opened on 7 September when 3,000 guests, including Cardinal Gray and the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Barbarito met on a day of sharp, cold wind when Archbishop O'Brien concelebrated Mass in the presence of nearly 100 priests. In his homily Archbishop Thomas Winning spoke of the historic links between Glasgow and Edinburgh in Bishop James Gillis' day, concluding that 'We live in exciting time with the Second Vatican Council calling for the spiritual renewal of the Church. The priest is a key figure, the spiritual leader of his people.'

The parish Renewal weekend at Gillis College on 13 March was attended by 28 parishioners; by the end of the year around 90 parishioners had attended the seven Renewal weekends, part of what was a 5-year Renewal plan. That year also Anne and John Hargreaves of St Peter's promoted the benefits of Marriage Encounter, explaining that it was 'important to make an effort to share our feelings despite all the distractions of our busy lives.'

On 28 July 1988 a distinguished parishioner, Baron John Wheatley of Shettleston, died. Educated at St Aloysius and Glasgow University, after war service, he was appointed Lord Advocate (1947), Solicitor General and Lord Justice Clerk (1972-85). In what was a solemn and prayerful event for the parish, Lord Wheatley's funeral generated much unwarranted publicity because of the attendance of a senior legal figure, Lord Mackay of Clashfern. As an elder of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, Lord Mackay's presence at a Roman Catholic Mass was considered to be a grave offence by the Free Presbyterian Church authorities and he was suspended from Church office. This led to a split in the Free Church and the formation of the Associated Presbyterian Church (1989).

An equally sad day for St Peter's came on 17 January 1989 when a Requiem Mass was celebrated in the Sacred Heart Church at Lauriston for Marco Cecco, a pupil at St Peter's School from 1975. In October 1981 he became seriously ill with a viral infection and, after a long illness, died on 13 January. At the Mass the congregation prayed: 'Into your hand, O Lord, we humbly commend our Brother, Marco. You have led him to the joy of heavenly Paradise.'

In early February there was better news. A letter was received from the Education office to say that the land in front of the Priory and the swing park had been transferred to the Education account for use by St Peter's School In march

medals were presented to the Primary 5 boys who had won the Morningside Association Hogmanay Tournament. Then, on 1 December 1989, at the request of Mrs Parker, a group of Primary 7 children sang at the funeral Mass for Professor Parker, a renowned scholar and grandfather of two St Peter's pupils. In January 1990 the school children would also take an active part in the Mass of Thanksgiving for teacher Mrs Elizabeth McArdle, delivering the readings, the prayers of the faithful and making up the Offertory procession.

Fr Francis Kerr replaced Fr Stephen Judge at the end of May 1989. As a child in Edinburgh he had narrowly escaped being killed by a lone German bomber on 29 September 1940 which destroyed the flat the Kerr family had just vacated! His family already had links with St Peter's and, much like Canon Gray many years before, he had an uncle who was transferred to St Peter's School because of the healthier climate supposedly to be found in Morningside.

Having been Cardinal Gray's private secretary and later Chancellor and Trustee of the Archdiocese, Fr Kerr was publicly welcomed to his new parish by Robert Goudy — with whom he had worked when the latter was Archdiocesan solicitor. Over the next few years Fr Kerr would serve as Dean of St Thomas Aquinas's Deanery, as well as Chair of the Gillis Management Committee and of the Archdiocesan Fabric and Planning Committee — all experience which he was able to put to good use in the care and development of St Peter's church and community.

### ***1990-2000***

When Fr Kerr came, he found St Peter's deeply involved in the archdiocesan Parish Renewal programme, then at the stage of starting a Mission and conducting door-to-door visitation. Fr Kerr organised the Mission, inviting preachers from several

religious orders, including the newly-established Jericho Benedictines and the students at the nearby Gillis College. A new parish census was begun and the faithful 'distributors' set up under Fr Kerr's predecessors were formed into 'district visitors', an invaluable part of the parish communication process, along with a weekly newsletter organised by parish secretary, Mary Wastle.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) was one of the products of parish renewal. This work, as well as Baptism preparation, would have been difficult to carry out successfully without the assistance of Margaret Fraser (who, with her distance learning BA (Divinity) from the Maryvale Institute in Birmingham was the inspiration behind the parish study groups). Margaret was also the driving force in organising one-day parish pilgrimages to sites of religious interest such as Scalan, Whithorn and Pluscarden.

Perhaps most successful of all was the parish SCIAF project which, through parish social events, for many years raised large sums to fund projects in the Philippines, Uganda and Latin America.

Wet and dry rot was discovered in the Old Convent building in February 1990 and a meeting was held to decide how the costs were to be shared by the Diocese and Lothian Regional Council, whose responsibility was internal maintenance. In March officers from the Regional Council inspected the School as a preparation for carrying out a feasibility study to find a way of housing St Peter's School in one building. Less auspicious was the demolition a few days later by Council workmen of a beautiful stone arch which protruded over the front door of the Priory! The resources of the School were shown to good advantage that April when Mrs Knowles played the church organ for the hymn singing at a First Communion liturgy held for the parish and for St Columba's children, including meditations on the Stations of the Cross.

Two parents read the stories of the 'Lost Sheep' and the 'Prodigal Son', showing the close and fruitful integration of church and school at St Peter's.

Sadly, however, many of the stalwarts who gave such sterling service to the parish in recent years were no more. Jack Conboy had administered the Covent scheme, as well as acting as sacristan. Jack died suddenly on 16 March 1996 and his role as sacristan was filled by John Anderson and Margaret Addly, with Andrew Thackrey in charge of what became known as the Gift Aid scheme. Esther Dorrian, a devout and loyal parishioner since 1912, passed away on 11 January 1998. Another long time servant to the parish and the wider community, Derrick Roarty, parish council secretary active in other key ministries for many years, died on 11 August 1998.

Among the challenges which faced Fr Kerr was the pastoral care of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital and the Astley Ainsley, which had previously been under the care of the Jesuits from the Sacred Heart, Lauriston. The parishioners rose to the challenge: Eucharistic Ministers took Communion to the housebound and the St Vincent de Paul Society were active in visitation to homes and hospitals.

Sr Patricia Fogarty, of the Ursuline at St Margaret's Convent, was recruited to the chaplaincy team at the Royal Edinburgh and was later succeeded by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and the Society of Helpers. Sheila Duffy, a graduate of the Loyola Institute of Ministry extension programme and a qualified chaplain, was appointed to the Astley Ainsley.

In her 'Father John's Island Adventure' Sheila also contributed an interesting side-light to the history of St Peter's. Her account deals with the strange story of how, in 1902, André Raffalovich came to finance the construction of a church on the little island of Eriskay through the advice of his friend Fr John Gray.

*St Peter the Apostle*

One of the liturgical changes introduced by Fr Kerr was to move the Tabernacle from its place at a side altar to the apse of the main altar. This he did at the suggestion of Cardinal Gray. He also moved the original lead baptismal font to that part of the church indicated by the Second Vatican Council documents, after restoration with gold leaf.

When Fr Kerr arrived the presbytery was modern and comfortable but work needed to be done in the church itself. He supervised the repair of the flat church roof, installed a replacement heating boiler with new fans, repainted the white walls and carpet-tiled the nave. Architect Sir Robert Lorimer's design for St Peter's had made no provision for easy access to the roof area, so a vertical ladder was installed on the north wall of the church, so easing longstanding problems for contractors with significant cost savings for the parish. Additionally, planning permission for a dedicated parking area within the grounds of the church was secured.

In this essential maintenance work he was assisted by Eugene Mooney, formerly a member of the Mount Vernon Management Committee and Chair of the Parish Council. Eugene was indispensable in identifying and recruiting firms and tradesmen to carry out the refurbishment programme, including the cleaning and restoration of the external stone sculptures and the installation of the Tabernacle on a marble podium blending with the marble of the altar. In an associated sphere, the needlework of the late Margaret Molloy has provided then parish with vestments, altar cloths and seasonal banners, a permanent reminder of her devoted service.

Much of this work was funded by two donors. Parishioner Annie Aitken left a generous legacy to the parish, as did a doctor in Morocco who, as a medical student at Edinburgh University many years before, had been touched by the penury of St Peter's curate who had wanted to smoke but could not afford to do so. The medical

student, out of courtesy for the curate's predicament, always refrained from smoking in his company!

### **2000-2006**

Meanwhile, St Peter's School was also facing the winds of change. In August 2003 St Peter's School was decanted to Darroch Campus in Gillespie Street, near Tollcross to allow the old school buildings to be demolished. The new St Peter's School was constructed on a site near Canaan Lane, built by Amey for the Edinburgh Schools Partnership. The building was designed by Yunming Thomson-Holmes and built by the Miller Group.

The new School was opened by the Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, Cardinal Keith Patrick O'Brien on 28 September 2005, in the company of Councillor Revd Ewan Aitken (Executive Member of Children and Families), Mr Roy Jobson (Director of Children and Families) and Mr Donald Anderson (Leader of Edinburgh City Council). Today, in a new and modern educational environment the School can truly live up to Its motto: *St Peter's holds the key to learning.*

The School serves a wide catchment area — from Princes Street to the City by-pass and from the City Hospital to Arthur's Seat. The parish of St Peter's, parts of the parishes of St Columba, the Sacred Heart, St Albert the Great and St Patrick's also fall within this area. Today (2006) there are fourteen class teachers and many specialist teachers and a variety of support staff. The district secondary school is St Thomas of Aquin's. The school roll is 390.<sup>118</sup>

As St Peter's parish moves into its centenary year, the parish is not standing still. St Peter's is busy implementing Cardinal O'Brien's 'Together in Hope' programme. This has involved a complete revamp of the parish council, all of whose members willingly stepped down to allow elections for a new parish pastoral council of twelve members.

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<sup>118</sup> For more information see *St Peter's Primary School: Information Booklet, 2006*

*St Peter the Apostle*

Opening the spiritual preparation year for the celebration of St Peter's centenary on Tuesday 25 April 2006, parish priest Fr Francis Kerr reminded parishioners that, a century before (when St Peter's mission was first established), there were only a few Catholics in the area. 'The sad thing,' he continued, 'is that there are not many of us today who come to St Peter's regularly for Mass on a Sunday ... so many have deserted us — young and old alike. If our numbers drop much lower, we shan't really need this church any more. So that is why I decided that the main over-all purpose of our year of spiritual preparation for the centenary must involve everyone doing everything possible to encourage people who have lapsed from the practice of their Catholic Faith to think again, to consider the few who do make the effort, to consider perhaps even the broken hearts of parents and grandparents who genuinely feel let down by their offsprings' desertion — many do feel hurt, others (I know) are so great-hearted and generous of spirit that they try to understand ... We do not want St Peter's church to become just a monument to the past, do we? May St Peter, our Patron, pray for us that we may all strive to do God's will this centenary year!'<sup>119</sup>

Today, therefore, the community at St Peter's faces the future with some trepidation — but also with the confidence that it has developed enough resources within the parish and beyond to meet the challenges which the twenty-first century has already begun to pose.

Let us hope that this history of St Peter the Apostle, Falcon Avenue, will not be its obituary.

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<sup>119</sup> Fr Francis Kerr: homily preached at the opening of the spiritual preparation year for the celebration of the Centenary of St Peter's.

**CLERGY**

*Heads:* 1905-34 John Gray (1901). 1934-48 Michael V Bruce. 1948-56 Patrick Quille. 1956-80 Walter Glancy. 1980-85 Anthony McNally. 1985-89 Stephen Judge. 1989- Francis Kerr.

*Assistants:* 1909-15 Edward Mellon. 1915-18 Charles Daly. 1919-20 Michael V Bruce. 1920-23 Philip Murphy. 1923-26 William Maccabe. 1926-29 Thomas Moore. 1929-32 John Breen. 1932-35 Peter Macfarlane. 1935-39 John McGeown (1933). 1939-40 John McKee (1936). 1940-53 Reginald Hodgson. 1950-51 John Rogerson. 1951-58 John Falconer. 1955-61 Lawrence Glancey. 1958-66 William Loftus. 1961-69 James Rae. 1966-74 Henry Reid. 1974-76 Gerard Rooney. 1976-77 Alistair Lawson. 1978-80 Matthew McGovern. 1980-85 Ryszard Holuka.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Christine Johnson, *Scottish Catholic Secular Clergy, 1879-1989* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd., 1991), 80