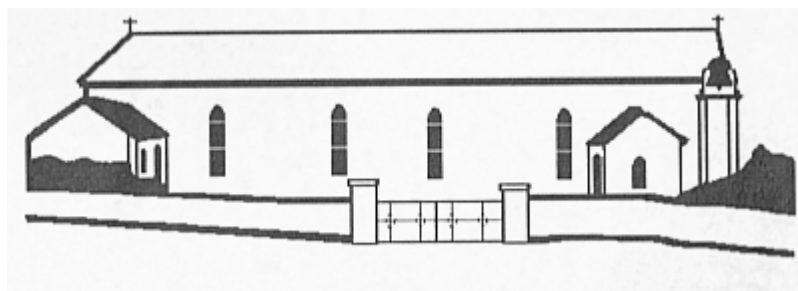




THE CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND ST JOSEPH, ATTYMASS



Vigil Mass Saturdays: 7.30pm
Sunday Mass: 10.30am
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday: Mass 9.30
Friday Mass: 7.30

The beautiful church which stands in Attymass today is believed to have been built in 1835 and has been much added to and improved since that time.

The original church, without porch, sacristy or gallery was commissioned by Fr. Denis O'Kane [PP 1835-1845] and it seems to have replaced an earlier thatched cabin used to celebrate Mass at the same location.

An entry in the Parish Inventory dated 2nd May 1912 states:

"It is of solid structure, oblong form, 107ft by 34ft – 8in clear on the outside lighted by eight windows of various size and gothic in shape Tradition here says the Church was begun building about 1835 and replaced and old thatched building that served, as church and school at this time."

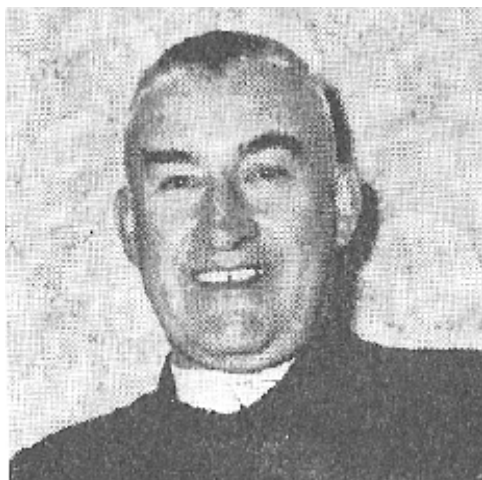


The present PP **Father Tom Mulligan.**

And Patrick Flannelly NT in his Ecclesiastical History of Attymass c1930 from the same inventory:

" The 'bad thatched cabin' which served the Baptism Society for its school was most likely the first building used as a church for a small thatched church stood on the site of the present one which was not built until 1835 he began the building of the new church about the old, which was not disturbed until the new roof was secured. Free labour, coupled with Fr. O'Kane's zeal, contributed to the early accomplishment of the work."

A later entry in the inventory from 1957 tells us that the church:



" ... was truly a monument to the faith of the people of the Parish. It was built in an area where lived the very poor and it is said of them that in their eagerness to prepare a building for Divine Worship they did what was most unusual. They carried the stones for the future building on their shoulders where they gathered for Sunday Mass."

After some 120 years a major renovation of the church was required. Work began on 15th of July 1957 led by the Very Rev. Fr. Hannon, PP 1954-1960.

From the inventory entry 1957-58 again:

"At the turn of the century the structure began to show signs of progressive deterioration. The roof was a source of headache to successive pastors. By the turn of the second half of the century it seemed certain that this roof was in danger of collapse and therefore to avoid a calamity the fabric would have to be attended to without further delay."

Funding for the project was required:

"A representative gathering of parishioners with the Parish Priest decided that the first thing to be done was to establish a fund for the purpose and that a preliminary contribution of £12 should be handed in by each family. This continued for two years."

Funds were supplemented by family and friends overseas.

An architect was employed to oversee the proposed works and *"He decided that nothing could be retained except the bare walls"*.

"The work commenced on 15th July 1957 and all was complete for the most important event i.e. The Dedication

Ceremony which took place on 15th July 1958 and was performed by Most Revd Dr. Fergus during which the Church was given The Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph as titulars."



Various improvements and modernisation continued throughout the rest of the last century.



A beautiful grotto was constructed opposite the church by FÁS workers in 1998. The original Baptismal Font of 1918 removed during the 1958 renovations now stands near the grotto.

NOTES:

Complete transcriptions from the Parish Inventory referred to here can be found in the Historical Documents Archive at <http://www.attymass.ie>.

Inventory entries believed to be by then serving PP's Fr. Walter Henry & the Very Rev. Fr. Hannon & signed by Bishop Most Rev Dr. Morrisroe 1912 & "JF" [believed to be that of the Bishop of Achonry, James Fergus] 1957-58.

