

The Revd. Barry Anthony Tunstall 1929-2015 RIP

A legacy of 18 years - a tribute from Martin Ferdinando



Most regular parishioners will be aware that a former vicar of St Mary's passed away on 23 December 2015. His ministry at St Mary's began in 1963 and ended in 1981.

During his time in the parish he saw through a number of changes and was instrumental in the fund raising and establishment of the North Mymms Youth and Community Centre, as well as developing and nurturing the establishment of two very successful Church youth groups, known as the Saturday Night Group, for younger members, and the Sunday Night Group, for those in their late teens and early twenties.

In addition he saw the building of the original Parish Room, later to be extended into our current St Michael's Room, and became the first incumbent of the 'new' Vicarage, after the Diocese made a decision that the 'old' Vicarage was becoming too costly a burden financially and no longer fit for purpose.

For Barry, the move meant a lot more work, transforming what had been a field into a garden. The old Vicarage gardens had been a source of great pride and initially a great loss to him, but he soon had the new garden laid out. He was also a keen supporter of a number of highly popular Flower Festivals, which drew in visitors to the splendid displays inside and outside the Church from far and wide.

He also led a number of pilgrimages to the Holy Land. During his time at St Mary's he mentored and trained four curates to priesthood: John Abdy, Graham Hardwick, Basil Munro, and Nicholas Fennemore; many in the Parish will remember them all.

Barry started his ministry as curate at All Saints, Croxley Green in 1955, and was subsequently appointed Priest- in-Charge at St Benedict's, Bennett End, in 1958 which was part of the Apsley parish. He was appointed Vicar at North Mymms in 1963.

In 1981 Barry moved on to be Rector at All Saints, Kirkby Overblow, in the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds, retiring in 1994.

His later years were spent in Wells, Somerset. His wife Edith, who many will remember for her encyclopaedic memory of events in history, died in 2011. Barry and Edith are survived by their daughter Helen, her husband Hugh, and their three sons, Edward, David and Matthew. They live in the Somerset village of Compton Dundon, where Barry and Edith now lie in the churchyard to the Parish Church of St Andrew.

The funeral service for Barry took place on 11 January at St Andrew's Parish Church and was well attended by family, friends and many of those whose lives were touched by his 40 years of Ministry. Former curate Nicholas Fennemore who now holds the title of Canon delivered a moving tribute to Barry, and Martin Ferdinando, one of our current churchwardens led the prayers. Martin was one of the Sunday Night Group and Barry encouraged him to join the PCC whilst still in his teens!

But that was Barry, someone who touched many lives, encouraged participation, and made a difference.

Barry, may you rest in peace and rise in glory.