

Representatives from other churches included Canon W Brunner and Father J Beasty, Redcar, Canon J McMullan and Father A Storey, of St Joseph's, Middlesbrough, Mgr N R Dunne, St Philomena's, Middlesbrough, and Father T A Nolan, St Alphonsus, Middlesbrough.

The new statue of Our Lady of Guisborough is the gift of Mr Thomas Bedford of London, formerly of Middlesbrough, president of the City of London Circle of Catenians. Erected in Ancaster Stone by Mr Lindsey-Clark FRBS, London, the statue has been copied from the old Guisborough Priory Seal.



OUR LADY OF GUISBOROUGH

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Restored Shrine



OUR LADY OF GUISBOROUGH

Restored 1949



Restored Shrine

Diocesan handbook 1946

Our Lady of Guisborough by A.T. Mercer

Guisborough, the ancient capital of Cleveland, was once a veritable “Mary’s town!” The Priory of Austin Canons was founded in 1119 AD and dedicated “for ever” to the Blessed Virgin Mary! For several centuries Mary’s praises were regularly sung by Canons and layfolk. Her image was set up and soon became well-known and loved as “Oure Ladie of Gisburn”. Pilgrimages and offerings were made at the shrine of this Glory of Cleveland. The layfolk banded themselves together in an association known as the Fraternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Its object was to promote the honour of Our Lady of Guisborough. In his will, a Guisborough man made a bequest of a sum of money to provide lights to “lyghten of Oure Ladie”.

The Prior and the Canons of Guisborough not only held the patronage of numerous North Riding parishes, but in many cases the canons were the Parish Priests, as for example the parish church of Guisborough town. By all these means, devotion to Our Lady of Guisborough spread far beyond the district of Cleveland itself.

Now that the war is ended, the Catholics of Guisborough are anxious to revive the ancient veneration for

their Gracious Protectress during those dark days. Although the town was on the direct route which the enemy planes used on their bombing raids, no damage was suffered. The Bishop has given permission for the erection of an altar-shrine in St Paulinus’ Church. It will be the first step in the effort to bring back to Cleveland the knowledge of Our Lady of Guisborough. The altar has been made of antique panels and a carved wood ante-pendium, the gift of a devout client. The image of Our Lady will stand on a block of stone which was formerly part of the Priory Church. At this shrine will be offered frequent Masses for the return of Cleveland to its ancient Faith and practice. The 14th century “Fraternity” will find its modern successor in the two Guisborough Marian societies: The Third Order of the Servants of Mary (Servite) of which a Congregation has recently been erected in Guisborough; the other in a local Presidium of the Legion of Mary, which has a Junior Presidium also doing active work. Petitions for this shrine, and offerings for lights to “lyghten of Oure Ladie” can be sent c/o the Parish Priest.

May Our Lady of Guisborough in her own town, once more become the Glory of Cleveland!

Evening Gazette

Pulpit and Pew – Friday, June 10th, 1949

Next Sunday will be a landmark in the history of Guisborough Roman Catholics. The altar and statue to Our Lady of Guisborough, erected in thanksgiving for the protection of the town during the war, will be blessed by the Rt Rev Canon Brunner, Bishop of Elide.

Guisborough’s connection with the Roman Catholic Church is centuries old. So long ago as 1119 there was a priory of Augustinian canons authorised by Pope Calixtus II.

Like all other religious houses, the priory was dissolved in 1540, but in days of greater toleration the Roman Catholic Church has become re-established at Guisborough.

The new statue is copied from the old Guisborough Priory Seal of 800 years ago, and is the work of Mr Lindsey Clark, of London. It was given by a former Middlesbrough man, Mr Thomas Bedford, now of London.

Copies of the seal made from the original die, now in the British Museum, are incorporated in the altar.

Also to be incorporated in the altar is a crucifix of pre-reformation date, found some years ago at Handale Abbey by Mrs H Elgee, a former curator of Middlesbrough Museum.

Evening Gazette

New Shrine Blessed at Guisboro’ – Monday, June 13, 1949

Guisborough yesterday saw the revival of a pre-reformation custom of devotion to Our Lady of Guisborough, with the blessing of a shrine in her honour installed in St Paulinus R.C. Church, Guisborough.

In 1540, Guisborough Priory was dissolved and with it went the shrine of Our Lady. Restoration is mainly due to the Rev A T Mercer, parish priest at St Paulinus Church, who has done so much to unearth the history of Our Lady of Guisborough.

The blessing of the altar and statue was performed by the Rt Rev G Brunner, Auxiliary Bishop of Middlesbrough, who also conducted the benediction. The Very Rev Father Egbert Cole, O. P., Prior of Hawksyard, preached.

“Pride and devotion”

“The first shrine in the priory church at Guisborough was the great pride and devotion of our fathers at Guisborough, who earned for England a proud title of Dowry of Mary”.