

### The design of the church.

The church was designed in 1843 in Early English style by Charles Hansom, a Coventry architect (and the City Surveyor) who was a parishioner and much favoured by Fr William Bernard Ullathorne (Parish Priest at the time). Hansom went on to design several other churches in the Archdiocese (including SS Mary & John Wolverhampton and Our Lady and St Alphonsus, Blackmore Park) and further afield and is regarded as an excellent and competent Gothic revivalist.

### A brief history of the building.

The earliest pictures of the church show a rood screen in front of the chancel with a door, opening high up above the Sacred Heart Statue. It was reached by an internal stone staircase behind the arch. This was to enable the candles on top of the rood screen to be lit. The ambo/pulpit was of carved wood at the front of the chancel on the Lady Chapel side. The statue of St Benedict was in place. There was stencilling around the Stations of the Cross, which had wooden frames.

In 1890 a major restoration of the church was required because the roof was rotten and had to be replaced. At this time the architects raised the height of the gable end walls above the roof to allow for adequate lead flashing.

At this time the rood screen was removed. The architect designed an ornate altar rail to replace it. There were two gates of brass. Each one showed an angel holding a shield in front. One depicted a Host and Chalice, the other a Pelican and her chicks feeding from the blood of her pierced breast. At this time too, a new stone pulpit was erected around the second column on the Sacred Heart side.

On the night of the Blitz the chancel was hit by a high explosive bomb which completely blew out the south side of the chancel, and the chancel roof, destroyed every window, and the altar. The church was open to the elements for some three years until a temporary roof could be fixed. The chancel, side chapels and sacristy, had to be completely re-plastered. The mural of the seated Risen Lord above the chancel arch was lost.

In the early 1970's the sanctuary floor was extended forward, a new altar facing the people was erected, and simple altar rails and lectern made. The floor of the church was completely covered in green vinyl tiles. The wall above the chancel arch and the west gable were both painted in dark green.

In our new scheme there are six big candles, on top of the screen, lit from a movable step platform.

### How to find St Osburg

The church is situated on Upper Hill Street close to the city centre. It is easily accessed over the St Osburg bridge or under the subway, on foot or by car. The church is just off the City Centre ring road, leaving at Junction 9. It is about 2.5 miles from the A45, along Holyhead Road.



### Mass Times

Sunday:

Saturday: 5.30pm, Sun: 8.30am, 10.30am, 12.15pm

Monday: 12.10 pm

Tuesday: 12.10 pm

Wednesday: 12.10 pm Eucharistic service

Thursday: 12.10 pm

Friday: 12.10 pm

Saturday: 11.30 am

Sung Vespers: Sunday 6.00 pm

Confessions: Saturday 12.00-1.00 pm, 6.15-6.45 pm

Weekdays: After the 12.10 pm Mass

### Contact Details

Canon Garry Byrne, Parish Priest,

Church of The Most Holy Sacrament & St. Osburg,

Barras Lane, Coventry, CV1 4AQ.

Tel. 024 76220402

email: [father.garry@gmail.com](mailto:father.garry@gmail.com)

website: [www.coventry-catholicdeanery.org.uk/StOsburg](http://www.coventry-catholicdeanery.org.uk/StOsburg)



# Church of the Most Holy Sacrament and St Osburg



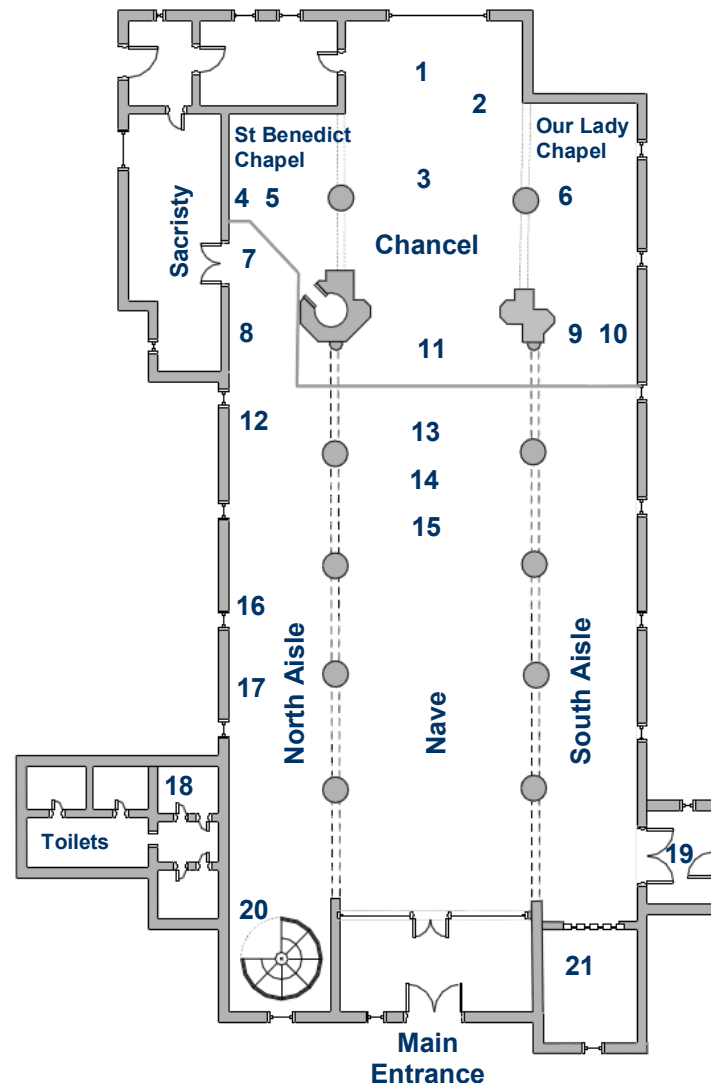
The Catholic Mother Church  
of Coventry since 1807

1. Symbols. In the major restoration of 1890 the rood screen was replaced by ornate marble altar rails. There were two brass gates in the middle, each with an angel holding a shield. One shield depicted the Host and Chalice, the other The Pelican Our new glass screen at the back of church features these symbols, and the crèche, the symbol of the sheaf of wheat.
2. Chancel windows. East Window commemorates the solemn definition of the doctrine of The Assumption of Our Blessed Lady into Heaven by Pope Pius XII in 1950, Other windows in the chancel depict the four evangelists: St Matthew St Mark, St Luke, St John.
3. Tabernacle
4. The mosaics in St Benedict's Chapel depict incidents in the life of the Saint.
5. St Benedict's Chapel windows. The Pelican and chicks feeding from her pierced breast, and the Lamb bearing a standard.
6. The mosaics in The Lady Chapel show the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, the central image that of the Annunciation.
7. The statue of Our Blessed Lady above the sacristy may be the one brought from Belgium by Margaret Hallaghan, one of the earliest statues of Our Lady venerated in England after the Reformation. She later founded the English Province of the Dominican Sisters here. The Sisters at Alton have an identical statue.
8. The large stone statue by the sacristy is of St Benedict, next is St Joseph and the Child Jesus, then The Sacred Heart.
9. The Baptismal Font has been moved to the front and restored to its natural stone.
10. On the other side of the chancel arch there is the statue of St Theresa of Lisieux, and Our Blessed Lady. (The plinth beneath this statue had previously been covered over in formica and has been beautifully restored).
11. Altar. The statues in the altar are St Denis, Bishop and Martyr on the left, Our Blessed Lady in the middle, and St Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr, with the grid iron on which he was put to death.
12. Stations of the Cross. The Stations of the Cross have been restored. Previously the wooden frames had been painted. The restorers removed this and discovered there had been some stencilling detail in the corners, which they have replicated. Damage was repaired. The colours of the figures were very

## Church Layout

***“My House shall be a house of prayer for all the nations” (Isaiah)***

*As you enter the church I invite you to lift your eyes to see in the grandeur of the building a glimpse of heaven. May your visit bring you an experience of Gods presence, an encounter with the saints and a moment of prayer. May you depart enriched in the Spirit to continue Life's journey.*



anaemic and are now more vivid.

13. Nave. There are windows depicting male saints on the north side and female on the south side. On the north side nearest the front, St Augustine of Canterbury, then St Benedict, St Cuthbert, St Bede.
14. Nave. On the south side nearest the front, St Osburg, then St Scholastica (the sister of St Benedict), St Gertrude, St Hilda.
15. The twelve angels high up on the walls of the nave hold shields, each one depicting a different symbol of The Blessed Sacrament, because this is The Church of the Most Holy Sacrament and St Osburg.
  - North side (nearest the altar)
    1. The sacrificial lamb
    2. Incense
    3. Host & Chalice
    4. Grapes
    5. Lamb
    6. Loaves of offering in the Temple
  - South side
    - 1 The pelican, and chicks feeding from her pierced breast.
    - 2 Monstrance
    - 3 Wine and Water
    - 4 Wheat sheaf
    - 5 The raven brought food to the prophet Elijah in the desert (1 Kings 17: 4 - 6)
    - 6 Loaves of offering in the Temple
- 16 St Cuthbert's window. All the stained glass is post war, designed and made by Earley's of Dublin in 1952. The signature is in the bottom right hand corner of the window.
- 17 Memorial plaque to William Bernard Allen Collier, first bishop of Port-Louis in Mauritius, who died at St Osburg's on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1890. Our former Archbishop, Maurice Couve de Murville, was born on the island of Mauritius. It was the Benedictine Bishop of Mauritius who sent the young Father William Ullathorne, aged 28 years, to be the Vicar General for the whole of Australia and Tasmania, at the time of the transportation of convicts. It was on his return to this country that he was appointed parish priest here in 1841 and had this church built.
- 18 Confessionals.
- 19 Above the side entrance door there is a statue of St Osburg, which dates from the major restoration of the church in 1890.
- 20 Organ and Choir.
- 21 Bell Tower.