

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PARISH

At the beginning of the 20th Century there was no formal Catholic provision in Thame.

Thame was only a small market town with the main interests being farming, shop-keeping and military occupations.

5th January 1913 Colonel Harman Grieswood allowed his wife – a Catholic – to open the Prebendal chapel at Thame as the ‘Chapel of the Holy Family’.

THE PREBENDAL HOUSE & CHAPEL

The chapel within the grounds of the Prebendal House is thought to have been built around 1234, and the records of the community of prebendal monks at Thame begin in that year. Bishop Robert Grosseteste succeeded to the see of Lincoln in 1235.

He was a great churchbuilder, and in the year 1241 he caused the rebuilding of the parish churches at Thame and a number of other churches. He may also have improved the Prebendal House and its chapel around that time.

THE ORIGINAL NEW CHURCH

A new church in Brook Lane was dedicated to St. Joseph in 1922. A little later further modifications were undertaken to the church to increase its capacity to meet the need of the growing Catholic Population. In 1958 the parish numbered 270 souls.

FURTHER EXPANSION — 1960S

In the early 1960s St. Joseph’s Hall was built next to the Church to cater for the social needs of the Catholic population. After the 2nd World War the population of Thame started to grow rapidly as employment changed from farming to engineering — in factories large and small in the Oxford and High Wycombe areas. An industrial estate sprung up alongside the Railway Station.

TIME FOR A NEW CHURCH

The Town grew rapidly in the 1980s. Pressure in turn grew for a larger church. The original church of 1922 was demolished in January 1997. The new church commenced build in September 1996 – completed in June 1997. Many of its stained windows in the original church were preserved and restored in the new Church. A gallery of these can be viewed [HERE](#) The church was opened by Archbishop Couve De Murville

THE PARISH PRIESTS OF ST JOSEPH'S

1913-1916 Fr. Randolph Traill

1916-1918 Served from Cowley, Oxford

1918-1938 Fr. Randolph Traill

1938-1941 Fr. Joseph Francis Rowland

1941-1958 Fr. George Watts

1958-1959 Fr. Timothy John Dinan

1959-1969 Fr. Douglas Carter

1970-1978 Fr. Philip Garrett

1978-1988 Fr. Cuthbert Bower Brown

1988-1990 Fr. Joseph McKenna

1990-1993 Fr. Hugh Thwaites S.J.

1993-2001 Fr. Christopher Marsden, O.S.A.

2001-2016 Fr. Mark Lagorio

2016 – Fr. David Hartley