



ST. GABRIEL'S NOTES

4th August 2024



The Story of the Statue

Some years ago when our maintenance team were clearing out sixty year of abandoned items from upstairs in the bell tower, they came across a very dilapidated statue of our Lady. Covered with dirt with chipped paint and a few cracks, the statue had two serious faults - the two hands were missing and the snake's head was broken, probably why it had been abandoned in the attic.



Many will remember Brendan Burke from the time he worked here and the results of his artistic talent are everywhere - visitors to the sacristy will know his great sketch of Fr. Pat! Brendan's artistic curiosity was aroused and he wondered firstly if he could make new hands. He took a model of the hands of our crib statue of St. Joseph and worked from there, eventually being able to make and attach a perfect pair of hands. He then proceeded to research what needed to be done and what materials and paint etc. to use. Eventually the statue was moved down to our working sacristy and Brendan came to work on it, as time allowed, and with the help of his colleague here, Tom Kane. We all watched in awe as it took shape. Finally, it was so beautiful that everyone agreed it had to have a special place where everyone could see it and perhaps stop for a short prayer.



We are so very grateful to Brendan for sharing his wonderful talent with St. Gabriel's. Grateful thanks too to Sean McKeon and his team, who took charge of the building of the shrine and the beautiful planting around it.