

Introducing The Revd. Canon James Coutts



One of the pleasures of our last summer's holiday in the Wye valley was to stumble across James and Stephanie Coutts. We stumbled across them in a church in Penalt, a little village near Monmouth. After the mass, we were invited to a coffee morning which was attended by several members of the congregation and during the conversation, it transpired that James and Stevie, as she is known, were familiar with Greenford. Then we finally unravelled the situation and he discovered that I was the rector of Greenford Magna and I discovered that he had been a curate here in Greenford in the 1960's. It happened in the kitchen of our welcoming host and it was a lovely moment and a lovely discovery.

When we started to think about who to invite to Holy Cross on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the opening of the New Church, my mind found itself wondering if I could entice James and Stevie to leave the beauty of the Wye valley and come to Greenford to make our day a very special day indeed. I am delighted to announce that he readily agreed to come and that he and Stevie will also be bringing his daughter who lives in Surrey, and two grandchildren.

James successfully studied at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge and at Lampeter, University of Wales, and has two B.A. degrees, one from each institution. He studied at St. Michael's College Llandaff before being ordained Deacon in 1960 and priest in 1961. He served his title in Cardiff at St. Mary's parish church before coming to Greenford in 1963 when Fr. Brian Oman was the rector. After three years in Greenford, James returned to Wales and after a third curacy, became vicar of two parishes before finally going to be vicar of Monmouth in 1984. In 1994 he was appointed a Canon of St. Woolos Cathedral and from 1999 to 20001, rural dean of Monmouth before retirement in 2002.

The Coutts' kindly invited Marion and I to dinner during our two week stay and provided us with an excellent meal as well as being excellent company. I am very much looking forward to meeting them again and introducing them to everyone at Holy Cross on what I hope will be a delightful trip down Memory Lane and a re-acquaintance with Holy Cross Greenford, 44 years after leaving us.

Neil Richardson