

Dennis Philip Higgins 1932 - 2017

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Born 14 January 1932 Nottingham Parents: Ivy and William Higgins Brother: Arnold Higgins, married to Christine.

Education: Primary School, Nottingham Grammar School, Nottingham Work Experience.

Studied for the Priesthood: St Mary's College, Oscott, Birmingham Ordained Priest, 05 July 1972, at Holy Cross, Hucknall.

Assistant Priest: St Anne's, Ratcliffe on Trent, 1972 - 1973 Our Lady of Lourdes, Hackenthorpe, 1973 - 1977 St Bernadette's, Ashby, Scunthorpe, 1977 - 1980 St Patrick's Leicester, 1980 - 1985

Parish Priest: St Gregory's, Silby, 1985 - 1987 St Anne's, Buxton 1987 - 2017

" While appearing in the Clergy Review, I introduced the clergy chorus line - dancers, by rendering, "I was born under a wandering star". As the dancers were awaiting their cue, they debated as to whether I would begin in the right key. I never did, until I got to "wheels were made for rollin'... However my good friend, Father John Formby, assured me that I did have one thing in common with Jesus; He was born under a wandering star! The rest of the cast unanimously agreed. I have long since wondered why. Perhaps my star came to a halt in 1954 when I became a member of the Catholic Church. Having been reluctantly persuaded by my Parish Priest, to become sacristan to the local church, or he would be saddled with "another". I first realised some of the difficulties priests would have to endure.

In 1962, I decided there must be more to life than making money. I found myself in Aberystwyth, embarking on a two year course of Latin and Humanities. My second year saw me being virtually head cook and bottle washer, along with "holding the prior's hand" whenever the cooks decided to leave. This was an invaluable experience. In 1964, I entered Grove Park, a starter year, before going to St Mary's College, Oscott. From a group of twenty students, we literally knocked together a Football Team to beat an Oscotian Eleven, the first time ever! Drawing the short straw, I had to be the first up each morning and go round to wake the others with " Benedicamus Domino". On feast days, I had to sing it! After the next two years in Oscott, I decided to take two years off. This proved to be quite fortuitous; when I returned, the whole procedure had changed. no longer was it a case of what sort of priest you are going to be, but rather asking the question, "what sort of priest are you going to be?" That was not the end of it all.

Forty years later, I still find myself wandering and wondering. There are still questions to be asked and answered. So there you are. Now should there be any chaps out there wandering and wondering, give it a go. As Father Dandia SJ said to me, " Don't worry, if God wants you as a priest, you will be a priest." Nothing ventured, nothing gained."

D P Higgins, from his Ruby Jubilee of Ordination 05 July 2012