

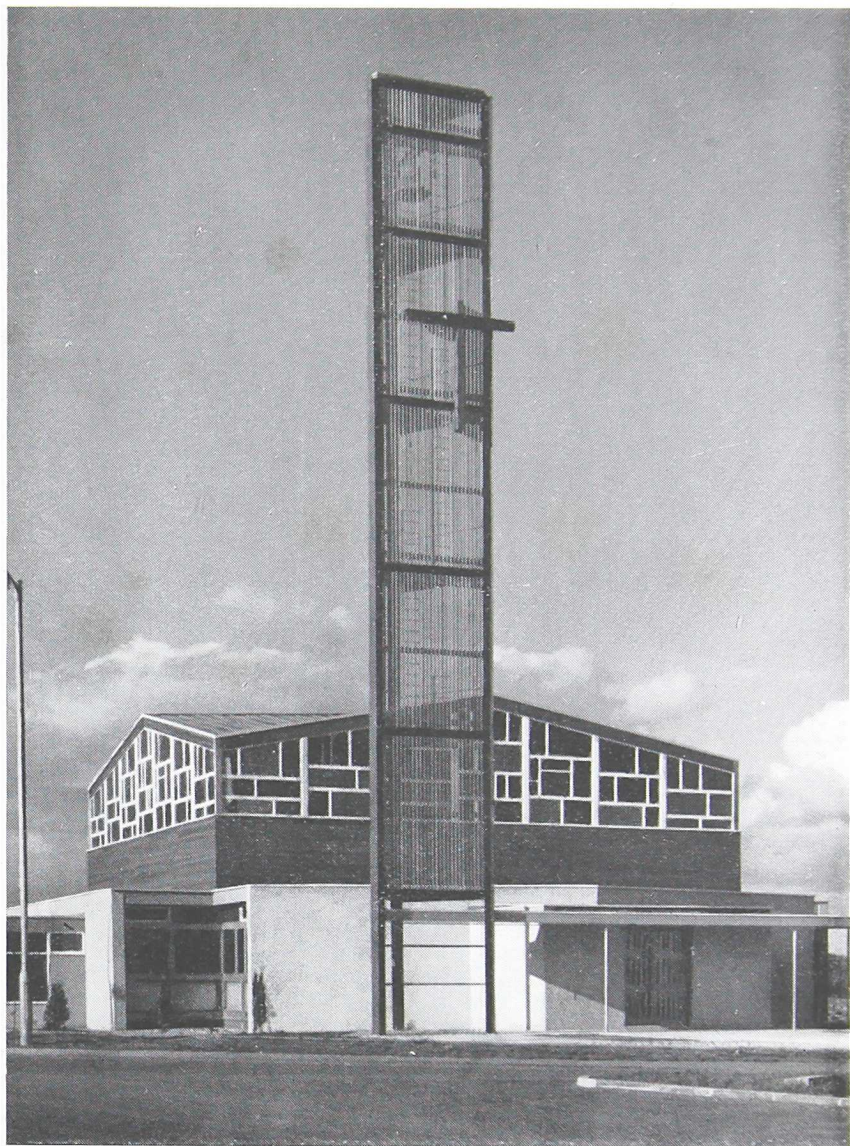
Saint Columba's Parish Church, Glenrothes

THE Parish Church of Saint Columba stands at the south west corner of the Town Centre in the New Town of Glenrothes. It is the second Church to be built in the Town by the Church of Scotland, and will be the largest and principal of the three Parish Churches planned to serve this growing community. Its parish covers the precincts of Rimpleton and South Parks, much of Auchmuty and part of the Town Centre with an eventual estimated population of 10,000. In addition, being in the heart of the Town, it is expected that close contact will be kept with the Civic authorities and a link made with the Town's industrial enterprises.

An already established tradition of Saint Columba's is the recognition of its mission within the parish, and the will of its Kirk Session to serve and seek the people, both in Church and home, nourishing their faith, deepening their understanding, encouraging their greater participation in corporate and private worship and leading them to a fuller commitment to the work of the Church.

The first sod was cut on the site in a simple ceremony on Sunday, 24th April, 1960, and on the 4th June the Foundation Stone was laid by the Earl of Wemyss and March, the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland of that year. He was assisted by Douglas Muir, an Edinburgh boy who had made the first contribution towards the cost of the building. This was most fitting as Saint Columba's is the current Children's Project, Sunday Schools throughout Scotland being responsible for the cost of building and furnishing the chancel of the Church. The completed buildings were dedicated on Friday, 14th April, 1961, by the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy, the Congregation worshipping together for the first time in its new Church on the following Sunday.

The architecture of the Church arises simply and directly from its plan in a form to satisfy the needs of Presbyterian worship. Of late, there has been a growing realisation that many Churches do not meet these requirements and that the spirit and form of the worship has suffered thereby. The architects have sought to remedy this by returning to the principles of the Scottish Reformation whereby the Holy Sacraments of the Word, Baptism and Communion were



ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH, GLENROTHES : EXTERIOR



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INTERIOR — SHOWING PART OF MURAL

With Acknowledgment to Church of Scotland Home Board,

placed in the midst of the gathered family of God's people. In this new Saint Columba's, as in the old Saint Columba's at Burntisland, the first Church to be built in Scotland after the Reformation, the pulpit, the font, and especially the Communion Table, are set in the centre of the Church with the Congregation seated on all sides.

The Church forms part of a group of buildings which includes large and small halls, kitchen, cloakrooms, vestry, session room and manse. Saint Columba's is the first post-war parish to be equipped with such a complete suite of accommodation and the Congregation is conscious of its good fortune in this respect.

The most noticeable features of the Church from the outside are the tower and the band of stained glass around the high walls. The tower, 65 ft. high and erected in one piece, carries the cross and the bell. The latter came from a Church in Ochiltree, Ayrshire, and is rung automatically by an electric motor controlled by a pre-set time clock. The glass, of Belgian origin, is so arranged that the colours are muted as they move round to the north wall away from the direct sunlight and towards the mural painting inside the Church. Also to be seen on the outside is the Foundation Stone, to the left of the main door, and, at the external corners of the Church, are paving slabs in the form of Celtic and Jerusalem crosses set in cobbles.

On passing into the Church one is aware of the light and spacious atmosphere within, of the soft, slow movement of the sun through the glowing glass and of the quality of peace and reverence. To a great extent this flows from the simple grace and dignity of those elements in our heritage of Presbyterian worship, the Communion Table, the Baptismal Font and the Pulpit, standing before, and yet in the heart of the Congregation. They are of rich, dark Swedish Palasander Rosewood, and on the Table stand the tokens of our reformed faith, the Common Cup and the open Bible. Behind the pulpit is the chancel where small services may be held, and on the north wall is a mural depicting incidents at the end of Christ's life on Earth. This is the work of Alberto Morocco, A.R.S.A., and is a gift from the Austin Abbey Memorial Trust for Mural Painting in Great Britain. The three scenes show Pilate and the crowd, Our Lord carrying His Cross, and the Crucifixion. The large cross on the outside of the panelling is to be seen as part of the Mural, rising out of the Crucifixion scene, the sign of Christ's victory. The panelling above the chancel and the low tran-

septs is of beech and the flooring is West African Sapele. The facing bricks are from Blairadam, near Dunfermline, built in Monk bond. On the canopy over the door to the Halls is the range of organ pipes, the instrument being single manual with three straight stops and pedalboard.

The architects were Messrs. Wheeler and Sproson of Kirkcaldy and the General Contractor was James Ramsay of Leslie. The Church seats 600, the Halls 300 and 80 respectively. Heating throughout is by oil fired low pressure hot water through radiators and convectors, and the total cost of the group was £41,000. At the time of the Dedication the Congregation was nearly 700 and is now 1,450 with youth organisations accounting for a further 1,000 young people.

The Church is open for prayer, meditation and inspection all day and every day, there being a Host or Hostess on duty forenoon, afternoon and evening, to give information and assistance. The Church Lounge is in use for rest and reading, books and magazines will be available, and tea or coffee can be had at a small charge.

There is daily worship in the Church as follows : Sunday—9 a.m., 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m. ; Daily—Evening Prayers, 9.30 p.m.

Baptisms are on the first Sunday of every month and Communion is celebrated on the last Sunday of every month.