

# Holy Rosary

Ennis Road, Limerick (1951)

Modern church architecture was still very much a Cinderella when, in 1948, a competition was held for a new parish church at Ennistymon, Co. Clare. The winning design, by Corr and McCormick, was eventually built in 1954. In the meantime, the Church of the Holy Rosary, Ennis Road, was built in 1951. When it was constructed, the parish at Ennis Road had grown from sixty households to over six hundred in twenty-five years. It was decided to erect a structure which could be built quickly and, if necessary, dismantled and re-erected elsewhere as the area expanded further. The method of construction was, therefore, an important factor in the approach to the design. Perhaps this is the main reason how the first post-war modern church appeared in Ireland. Liturgical changes were still twenty years or so away. This is one instance where architectural manifes-

tations heralded eventual functional requirements.

A long rectangular plan, thirty-four feet wide, was constructed with a light steel frame clad externally with weatherboarding. The roof structure is a steel-framed inclined lattice girder which was assembled and welded on the ground. Although the sanctuary has since been refurbished, it is worth recalling the original altar in timber with its large dorsal in rich folds of maroon and gold hanging from a tester at ceiling level.

Externally, the building uses natural materials in a sympathetic way, and has a distinguished campanile with a life-size Madonna carved in white teak by Oisín Kelly.

