



# FRIENDS OF ST DIONYSIUS

## Parish Church of Market Harborough

### THE FRIENDS VISIT to Southwell Minster, Nottinghamshire

On Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May, twenty-eight Friends and Supporters met for a 9am departure from outside the Market Hall to embark on a coach trip into nearby Nottinghamshire.

The weather was slightly overcast, but after an uneventful journey in traffic terms and enjoying the scenic panoramic beyond Tilton on the Hill to Melton and thereafter, the rolling hills of north Leicestershire, we arrived at the small town of Southwell near Newark around the expected time of 10.30am. Organizer for the day Chairman John allowed us free time for exploration of this small attractive town full of individual shops, ample coffee houses and restaurants.

A few supporters and friends ventured off on foot to visit the National Trust Workhouse. Another small group went passed The Last Whistle and the impressive Stationmaster's house returning via the Community Orchard alongside the Southwell Trail footpath. A most interesting visit and stroll eventually returning to the open space around the Minster where we enjoyed a picnic lunch.

The afternoon visit to tour the Minster was delayed slightly due to a funeral service although at the appointed time of 1.45pm the Friends were able to split into two groups for an informative, interesting and educational explanation around the exterior of the Minster, Palace Gardens and then inside to the magnificent interior.

The extensive history to Southwell Minster included the stone work of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century Norman arch, the beautiful leaf carvings, Balls sculpture of Christus Rex right through to the Millennium Pilgrim by Young. There was also the Bramley Apple window acknowledgement of the famous fruit tree introduced here in Southwell over 200 years ago.

Another striking window over the west door was the 2014 Great War Memorial glass depicting Sacrifice.

Probably the most treasured windows however are the four lower stained glass panels at the high altar depicting the life of Christ. Originally designed and made in 1528 for the Temple Church of Paris which was destroyed by fire in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, these four panels were incredibly recovered from a Parisian pawnshop in 1818 by a local Nottingham member of parliament and High Sheriff Henry Gally and gifted to the Minster.

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At the conclusion of the tour the party had tea or coffee and cake in the adjacent refectory before rejoining the coach for the return journey home reaching Market Harborough late afternoon or early evening depending on how you judge time. An enjoyable day without doubt thanks to those who with chairman John set this up and whetted your appetite for a return visit in the future.

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