



*It is with deep regret that I inform you of the death
of our dearly loved confrere Father Timothy Lyne
who died suddenly on 29th January 1977.*

Timothy Lyne was born on 27th October 1900 in Killarney, Co. Kerry and after his schooling joined the then Great Southern Railway as a booking clerk at the age of 18. He served in this capacity in various places, including his native Killarney, for 16 years. While stationed in Killarney he gave evidence of his great interest in youth by founding the first Scout troop in the town and for many years he led it and saw it grow and mature. The qualities of leadership were clearly shown then as was his interest in all social matters. He was deeply involved in Killarney's social and cultural world over many years and he was widely known and esteemed in his native town. After his death, the Killarney Urban District Council in passing a vote of sympathy said that "the people of Killarney had a special memory of a great churchman and priest" and referred to all his work there in the years long ago.

He was a young man when Ireland once again reopened the struggle for freedom and he joined the forces which carried on that struggle, being actively engaged for some three years.

After the death of his parents, of whom he was the sole surviving child, he no longer felt called upon to postpone the decision to follow God more closely and in 1934 he went as an aspirant to the Salesian College, Pallaskenry. Here, as a man among boys, in humility he sat with them to study Latin and other subjects to prepare himself for the Novitiate. He continued as an aspirant in the Salesian House at Cowley, Oxford, England in 1936-37 and in this latter year he entered the Novitiate at Beckford where he made his first profession in the August of 1938. Philosophy followed in Cowley and in Shrigley from 1938 to 1941 after which he did his Theological studies in Shrigley and at Blaistown Hall, Gloucester. Here he was ordained by Bishop Lee on 15th July 1945.

His wide business experience and his great aptitude for organisation made him an obvious choice for an administrative post and this he was given in the position of Provincial Archivist and assistant to the Provincial Economer, a post he held from 1945 to 1952. In 1952 he became Provincial Economer and in 1954 he was appointed the first Provincial Delegate for Ireland.

He had been out of his beloved Ireland for 18 years and in his happiness at returning he did not spare himself in his endeavour to develop the Salesian presence there. His interest in all aspects of youth work was seen in his concern for the work of the Boys' Clubs in Dublin and there are some who still remember his help and encouragement with affection and gratitude. As Provincial Delegate he was busier than ever and after four strenuous years he was forced into semi-retirement by heart trouble. He came to Ballinakill in 1958 where he became the boys' confessor and took charge of the Mission Office.

Once again his organizational ability was called into service to set the records of the benefactors in order and to keep proper account of the many who wrote in support of our work. Never on the Foreign Missions himself, he was extremely Mission conscious and gradually over the years he established contacts with centres of our missionary activities overseas and regularly sent contributions which came to him from his many friends here in Ireland.

However, his main role in these years in Ballinakill was that of counsellor and guide. He was at the disposal of anyone who needed advice or help – from the highest to the lowest; devout nuns and sinners found in him a source of inspiration and wisdom. As a spiritual guide he was much in demand in the local convents and nuns were frequent visitors to Ballinakill to talk to him while in the house itself the confreres went to him to find a true Salesian spirit to which they could turn for sure guidance in their work of education and to get the true flavour of Don Bosco's system.

He had a very wide circle of friends in the fields of Government and business. A life-long friend of his writing an appreciation in a newspaper says "he knew his way around Government corridors" and "the Cabinet itself, fields of commerce, the media were all (used) to accelerate the unending work of education".

This, then, was the pattern during the last period of his life – the real work of his Salesian vocation came then, not in the hurly-burly of office but in the peaceful days of retirement. Not that he ever really retired – he never opted out of the full round of community life and up to his death he was involved in the affairs of the people who came to him and in several matters pertaining to the Province. And underneath all his association with influential people and his negotiations there was the simple Salesian priest, loved by all, a model of a community man, whose life can be summed up in the words of someone who wrote after his death to say: "He was a wonderful priest and friend".

About the Christmastide of 1976 his confreres began to notice a slowing down and a deterioration in his appearance. Shortly afterwards, he entered hospital to be treated for a kidney complaint and three weeks later on 29th January at about 7 p.m., without any immediate warning, he suffered a massive heart attack and died almost at once. The local Bishop presided at the concelebrated Requiem Mass in the presence of a very large attendance and afterwards Fr. Tim was buried in the little peaceful cemetery here where he had lived so long and served so many.

Please keep him and all his confreres in your prayers.