

FATHER PATRICK MOLLOY. SDB.

Fr. Patrick Molloy's unexpected death on the 16th April 1966 came as a sad surprise to his many friends. For a long time he had not enjoyed the best of health but few were prepared for the news of his premature death at the age of fifty-five.

Fr. Patrick is remembered as a Salesian after the heart of Don Bosco whose first and abiding interest was always and everywhere the welfare and education of the young. To this end he worked as Catechist at Pallaskenry from 1938-45, then as Rector of the Missionary College of Ballinakill from 1948-50. The night of the disastrous fire that destroyed the College on the feast of Don Bosco 1950 inflicted on Fr. Molloy a shock from which he never recovered. At the time of his death he was acting as chaplain to our Sisters in their house at Brosna, Birr.

Patrick came from Coalisland, Tyrone, and was brought up in the best tradition of a Catholic family, in an area where the faith grew stronger as it was the more attacked. His great love for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, for Our Lady, and for all that concerned the Church combined to make him a priest of profound piety. During his active life as a priest and especially as Rector of Ballinakill his zeal expressed itself in the work of promoting vocations. He carried on a fruitful apostolate for the young members of the Legion of Mary and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the neighbouring parishes. He also welcomed at the College the "Summer Camps" and the boys of the "Don Bosco Clubs" from Dublin. For older people he organised week-end retreats for the Legion and SVP members. As a Rector he enjoyed the complete confidence of both community and boys for his shining goodness and his paternal interest in them.

For some years he was concerned in the search for vocations, both for the Salesians and the Salesian Sisters. After some years in this apostolate he was called to be the chaplain to the Sisters at Brosna, Co. Offaly and until his death he was their spiritual father. To his splendid faith was allied a corresponding love for the spiritual purity of his country. This revealed itself in his great interest in the Irish language and his love for the literature of Ireland which he unceasingly encouraged his youngsters to study.

At his funeral, the participation of the crowds was a marvellous tribute to his vast popularity. The President of Ireland, the Hon Eamon de Valera, was present at the Requiem Mass and this in spite of his heavy commitments in the week commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the 1916 insurrection. It was certainly a worthy tribute to his friend and an honour which will certainly ever be remembered by his confreres, family and friends. Let us pray that Fr. Patrick will in Heaven enjoy the reward he has earned by his exemplary life and fruitful ministry.

May he rest in peace.

Fr. J. Cummins. SDB.