

FATHER EUGENE RABAGLIATI. SDB.

Once again, it is our sad duty to inform you of the death of one who, for the past forty years was a well known figure in the West Battersea parish. On January 27th 1928, Fr. Rabagliati was on his way from Battersea to Chertsey when he collapsed on the way to the railway station. He was escorted back to the Salesian House where he died shortly afterwards. Fr. Rabagliati was born on February 10th 1866, at Occimiano in the diocese of Casale Monferrato, Alessandria, Italy, and his death took place almost on the eve of his sixty-second birthday. He entered the Salesian Oratory, Turin in 1880, at the age of fourteen, and four years later went to the Salesian Novitiate at San Benigno, where he received the religious habit from His Eminence the late Cardinal Cagliero, then Fr. John Cagliero. In September 1888, he received the four minor orders and was later ordained sub-deacon by the same Prelate. He was ordained in Turin on the 13th October 1889.

He came of a family which had given several of its members to the Church as Religious. He was himself one of four brothers who became priests, three of whom were Salesians, whilst two of his sisters joined the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians. His elder brother, Fr. Evasius Rabagliati was a well-known missionary in South America, where he passed the greater part of his life, and he, with Fr. Unia, will ever be remembered in the history of the Salesian Congregation for their great work among the lepers in their settlements in Columbia. Fr. Eugene shared his brother's keen desire for the salvation of souls and when Don Bosco asked him to go to England he set out with that same single-mindedness of purpose as if it had been any other part of the Lord's vineyard. For several years he was the bursar at Battersea and he took no small share in consolidating the work accomplished in the countries that were under the jurisdiction of the English province. He is perhaps best known to the outside world for his untiring zeal and excellence as choirmaster at the Sacred Heart Church, Battersea, a duty, faithfully discharged for thirty years. He showed a keen interest in the spiritual and temporal welfare of his fellow countrymen in London, and he was an ardent friend and enthusiastic supporter of the Salesian Old Boys Association. Fr. Rabagliati was of an amiable and loveable disposition; he had a wonderful influence for good and exercised that influence in so many ways that he made many staunch friends. He had a genuine and charming simplicity of soul. He was an indefatigable worker himself and abhorred the sight of idleness and he had the courage of his convictions from which nothing could daunt him. But no matter how you might differ from him in opinion, he bore no ill will and was one of the truest and most loyal of friends. It may be truthfully said of him that he was in harness to the end. On the morning of his death, he offered Mass, and he was setting out to fulfill an engagement connected with his priestly office, when he was stricken down, and he died as he would probably have wished to die, in the land where he had given so many years in the service of his Divine Master.