

Dear Confreres,

On the 11th of March, 1976, God called to Himself, at the age of 88, after 62 years of profession and 55 years of priesthood,

FATHER DAVID REEDY.

In his words of advice to the young, Saint John Bosco warns them that "the second snare which draws people away from being good is the hope of a long life".

In his eighty-nine years of happy life, Father David Reedy illustrates the rewards of living right from the first as an apostolic layman and later as an outstanding Salesian priest.

Tenacious of even the tiniest tenet of doctrine and praxis, he embodied the manifesto of our Holy Founder; fervent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, a tender devotion to Our Blessed Lady, and an unswerving dedication to the service of the Holy See.

He will be remembered by so many for the old-world charm of his conference style, cloaking with a Lancastrian's laconic phrase a very real, deep and loving knowledge of the Scriptures, the teachings of Holy Mother Church and the traditions of the Salesian Society.

To those sterling qualities of mind and heart which are exacted of any young man who obeys the call to be one of Don Bosco's priests, David Reedy brought that characteristic mixture of twinkling wit and ponderous anecdote which are the badge of the Northcountryman, salting the candid utterance of the truths of the Catholic Faith.

His conduct was in every respect both priestly and apostolic. Holy Mass, the administration of the Sacraments, the ceremonies of the Church, the salvation of souls—these constituted his only interest. He was totally a Community man, and it was here, among his fellow Salesians, that his puckish humour and winning smile, his relish for the thrust and parry of amiable debate, and his ability to recall the conventions and mores of a world quickly passing away that he endeared himself to so many, especially in his later years. On numerous occasions one marvelled at his facility to cap an argument with a quotation from an author whom he had conned and never forgotten in Father Lester's study, in a Lancashire parish, so long ago. For David Reedy, with his life-long friend, Father William Walsh, was a member of that heroic band of young men who travelled south to Osterley with this remarkable Jesuit priest to form the nucleus of a movement to assist mature students to the priesthood, a most unorthodox procedure in those far-off days. Later, it was our own Salesian College in London, which by accepting them as Aspirants, at one stroke acquired two outstanding Salesian priests and conferred respectability upon the Osterley foundation.

There remains in our possession a most charming letter from Father Edmund Lester to the Salesian Superior, dated May 2nd, 1911, St. Aloysius's Church, Oxford.

"It is with great satisfaction that I write these words of recommendation for my young friend, David Reedy. I have known him from a youth of fifteen and have watched his steady advance in all that is good. I may add that he was for eight years of immense help to me in my work at Accrington among the young men. Always willing, ready to help and of considerable benefit by his excellent example. I am sure his superiors will soon appreciate his value, and I have no doubt that he will continue to be to all around him a great example of devotedness and real piety."

The bare recital of the details of his life could never convey to those who had not the privilege of knowing him, all the virtues of this good priest, but here are the key dates from the chronicle of his life.

He was born in ACCRINGTON on the 12th of March, 1887, when St. John Bosco was still alive in Turin.

After his years of aspirantate at Battersea, 1911 and 1912, and his life as a Novice and young professed cleric at Burwash until 1915, he commenced his years of philosophy there, as well as practical training and the first two years of theology, completing them in the college at Battersea during 1918 to 1921. He was ordained deacon at Southwark Cathedral on the 18th December, 1920, and finally raised to the Priesthood in Battersea Parish Church on the 6th of March, 1921. He exercised his apostolate from '22 to '24 as assistant Prefect there, and then at Farnborough from 1924 to 1935 as Catechist and teacher. From here he left for Bolton, where for twelve years he fulfilled the task of Catechist and then Prefect of the House. The next three years found him in charge of our House in Guernsey, 1947-50, until ill-health obliged him to leave for Farnborough to be the confessor there for two years. To Oxford next, again as Confessor and also bookkeeper until 1962, when he was asked to return to his beloved Bolton, to be confessor, and as our earlier jottings have shown, so very, very much more.

We commend this good soul to the charity of your prayers.

Yours sincerely in Don Bosco,

John Docherty, S.D.B. (Rector).

For the Necrology. Father David Reedy, S.D.B., born Accrington, March 12, 1887, died at Bolton, March 11, 1976, in the 63rd year of his religious profession, and the 55th year of his priesthood. Aged 88 years.