

My Dear Confreres,

On 17th October last, one of the confreres of this House:

BRO. PATRICK SHEEHY

passed to his eternal reward.

Where the Atlantic breakers thunder against the rugged coast of Kerry after three thousand rolling miles of ocean, there nestles, behind the sheltering bulwark of Sleah Head, the little town of Dingle. There, in April, 1898, Patrick Sheehy was born.

From his God-fearing parents the young Patrick learned that simple piety that sprang from their strong faith, a piety that was later to blossom into a vocation for the religious life in Don Bosco's Salesian Society. After he had finished his schooling with the Irish Christian Brothers in his native town, he spent some time at business in the county town of Tralee.

But a quietly persistent call made him restless and unsettled. It was the still, small voice of the Saviour's whispered invitation: "Come; follow Me." He was twenty-four years of age when he came to the newly-opened College in Pallaskenry, Co. Limerick, to offer himself as an Aspirant to the Salesian Society. That was in the year 1922. Three years later, in 1925, he crossed to England to begin his Novitiate at Cowley, Oxford. After his Religious Profession he returned to Pallaskenry where he was to pass all but one of the remaining years of his life.

Except for that one year spent in Warrenstown, Co. Meath, Bro. Patrick worked as a member of the Staff in Pallaskenry. All who knew him during that period of more than thirty years testify to his exemplary devotion to duty and his unsparing efforts to make a success of whatever task was entrusted to him. For very many years his energies were expended in the work out of doors, and succeeding generations of students will recall his devoted work on the poultry department.

In later years when the uncertain state of his health counselled a change to less strenuous duties, Bro. Patrick was transferred to indoor work. Here the same light-hearted approach, the same praiseworthy devotion to his allotted portion, characterised all that he did.

For some months before his death, the failing state of his health gave his Superiors grave cause for concern. Everything possible was done for him, but still he continued to grow less robust, and his old energy seemed to desert him. Yet, as long as he could summon strength to devote to his work, he courageously applied himself, insisting that he could never be happy without something to do.

Eventually he had to relinquish his duties and take to his bed. But all his confreres thought that after a little rest he would be back at his post once more. Even when he was moved to hospital everybody thought it would be only a short while till this genial Laybrother would be back amongst them.

God, however, had other designs for His faithful servant. On October 17th, 1955, Death came and beckoned him away. His Superiors and fellow-Salesians in Pallaskenry could hardly believe the news that Bro. Patrick had left them for Paradise. The announcement came as a shock to the dear Brother's relations and his many friends. Past-pupils especially found it hard to imagine Pallaskenry without Bro. Patrick to greet them when they returned to the College for a visit and to go over again the old stories and episodes that would always be associated in their minds with their happy days in Copsewood and the jovial Laybrother who had helped to make those days fruitful and memorable.

The large number of Mass Cards on his coffin and the very many letters of sympathy received by the Rector of the College testify to the high esteem in which this humble brother was held by all. For his Requiem, the church was packed to capacity, and when his remains were laid to rest in the College Cemetery near his good friends Fr. Michael McGinty and Fr. Fahey, all felt that a valued friend had gone away from them, but that from heaven he would continue to be mindful of their welfare.

May the earth rest lightly on this kindly son of St. John Bosco who laboured so hard and so long for the furtherance of Salesian work in Ireland. It was a cause dear to his heart. May his good prayers from heaven continue in the interest of this most desirable goal.

We earnestly recommend the soul of Bro. Patrick Sheehy to the charity of your prayers, begging also a remembrance for the needs of this house.

Requiescat.

I am,

Yours very devotedly in Don Bosco,

T. LYNE, S.D.B.

Provincial-Delegate

Data for Necrology: 17th October, 1955.

Brother Patrick Sheehy, Laybrother, born in Tralee in 1898, died in the 57th year of his life and 31st of his Religious Profession.