



SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO

ST. JAMES',
CHESTNUT GROVE,
BOOTLE L20 4LX.

JUNE 1989.

Dear Confrères, Family and Friends,

Laurence Sheridan was born on the 3rd September 1914 in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, the eldest of eight children (three boys and five girls). Educated first by the Christian Brothers, he went to the Salesian school at Pallaskenry in 1931 at the age of 17 years. Pallaskenry was then a new and very small school which was to send out a good number of young men to the Mission lands which were so close to the heart of Don Bosco. These were stirring times. The boys went to the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin in 1932 and there, I believe, he met Cardinal Hlond, the Salesian cardinal from Poland. Here may have begun Fr. Larry's interest in Bishops and Cardinals which was evident in so many of his conversations over the years.

During the next year an Irish-Argentinian priest called Fr. Usher came to Pallaskenry and the result of his visit was that four aspirants, including Larry Sheridan, went to Argentina to begin their novitiate. One of the first letters which he received from home brought the sad news of the death of his sister. After twelve years in Argentina, he was transferred to Chile to study theology and there in November 1948 he was ordained. Before his ordination he was to suffer the loss of both his father and mother within a year. Ordination was followed by six years as teacher and assistant in boarding schools and ten years as a text-book type missionary up and down the Andes on horseback. His great strength and powerful voice could scarcely have been better employed. On his return to the Anglo-Irish province in 1962, he was appointed first as Prefect in Crumlin, Dublin and subsequently as assistant priest in the parishes of Farnborough, Battersea and Cowley. His last appointment was to semi-retirement in Bootle but he remained active, insisted on cycling, and was only too glad to be involved in 'supplies' in the area until within two weeks of his death. His three years in the Bootle community made a deep impression on us all - we admired his tremendous courage in facing his illness. He never complained of his sufferings and was obviously keen not to be a burden in any way but rather to be involved in priestly work until the end.

He died after only a few days in the nursing home at 4.00 a.m. on Friday 19th May. In the hours before his death he spoke Spanish, providentially one of the nurses with him was from Chile. He had said Mass the previous day for eight of the residents of St. Gabriel's. The nursing home was run by an Irishman and from his bedroom window Fr. Larry could see the Sealink boat heading for the Emerald Isle. Five of his confrères visited him the day before he died. The Gospel of the Mass of the Friday he died was from Mark 5:35; "he who loses his life for the sake of the Gospel will save it".

That brave Salesian who as a young man had left father, mother and family for the sake of the gospel was still working to the very end. What a privilege for the people who attended his last Mass and what an effort it must have been for Fr. Larry! It was an effort he was determined to make. He was buried where his missionary journey had begun, in the beautiful grounds of Pallaskenry surrounded by his confrères, family and friends in the shadow of the cross.

Fr. Michael Duggan, S.D.B.

For the Necrology: Fr. Laurence Sheridan born in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford on September 3rd, 1914. Died in Bootle on May 19th, aged 74 in the 40th year of his sacred priesthood and the 53rd year of his profession as a Salesian.