



Salesian School
St. Patrick's
Sliema, Malta

22nd August, 1977

Dear Confreres,

It is my sad duty to announce to you the recent death of

FATHER PAUL VELLA S.D.B.

which occurred during the early hours of Sunday, 10th July, 1977 in the 67 year of his age, the 49th of his religious profession and 39th of his Priesthood.

Fr. Paul Vella was born in Valletta, on the 8th January, 1910. He completed his first studies in Valletta and Sliema. In spite of more attractive offers made to him from different quarters, Fr. Vella left Malta in 1925 for Sicily, where he made his Novitiate and took his first vows in 1928. He completed his theological studies in St. Callistus, Rome, where he was ordained Priest on the 26th June, 1938. The present Rector Major, Fr. Luigi Ricceri, was on the formation staff at the time.

Fr. Vella spent most of his Salesian life in Italy — 43 years to be exact — and 16 in Malta. He was well known for his rare qualities as administrator. When a house was faced with financial difficulties he was sent in order to put things right.

Fr. Vella was also entrusted with the office of Prefect of Studies and Catechist both in Italy and Malta.

He was all along a hard worker and carried out his work with enthusiasm and efficiency. But above all he was a good Religious. In his long life as a Salesian he worked in many Houses: Bariera, Caltagirone, Randazzo, Trapani, Messina, Macerata, St. Callistus, Florence, Perugia, Faenza, Forli, Ravenna, Loreto, Ortona, Aquila, Malta.

Fr. Paul was operated upon just over a year ago, but unfortunately it was discovered that he had a malignant stomach cancer. The doctors did the best they could.

After the operation he believed that everything was alright, for the doctors and his relatives thought it was better not to alarm him by telling him the truth; but Fr. Paul was doomed.

Gradually he returned to his work at the "Catechetical Centre" which he took so much to heart and which, through his dedication, became so well known on the Island. He was happy in the thought that so much good was being done through this apostolate and his conversation always reverted to this subject. But before long, a pain developed in his abdomen, which in spite of every attention on the part of the doctors never really left him. It was a year of purgatory for him. Yet he went on faithfully with his work. Soon he began to lose weight. He contracted yellow jaundice: then two weeks before the end he had to be taken to hospital, where he was taken care of by our old friends the Blue Sisters; but nothing could be done for him except controlling his pain by drugs. He remained calm and peaceful till the end. The following day his remains were brought to St. Patrick's Chapel for the Requiem Mass. Some 20 Salesian Priests concelebrated. Fr. J. Borg, Provincial Delegate, presided and gave the Homily.

Fr. Paul Vella's remains were laid to rest in the Salesian grave at the Addolorata cemetery.

Fr. Paul may have gone through his purgatory here on earth, but God's judgements are not our judgements and so I commend his good soul to the charity of your prayers. Please remember also the many needs of this School where he will be long remembered.

Fr. John Giorgio S.D.B.
Rector.

Dates for the Necrology: Fr. Paul Vella, born in Valletta, Malta on the 8th January, 1910. Died in Sliema, Malta on the 10th July, 1977 in the 67th year of his age, 49th of his religious profession and 39th of his Priesthood.