

FATHER WILLIAM JOSEPH WILSON. S. D. B.

Father Wilson died in Leeds on the 22nd May 1963 aged 47 years.

Father William was born on the 2nd July 1915 in Grantham, Lincoln. He started his Salesian life when he entered the novitiate at Cowley, Oxford when he was just seventeen. Having successfully completed his year, he was professed on the 9th of September 1933.

After his profession as a Salesian, he remained at Oxford for two years studying Philosophy. He then went to the Salesian Juniorate at Shrigley to join the staff and do some practical training as a teacher and assistant. Having successfully completed his work there and taken his final vows, he went to Blaisdon to study theology, in preparation for ordination. He was ordained there by Bishop Lee in 1942.

After ordination Father William remained at Blaisdon for two more years as a member of the staff. He then moved to the Novitiate at Beckford as Catechist from 1944-5. He then joined the community at Burwash where he was catechist for one year, headmaster for four years from 1946-50 and finally the bursar for one year from 1950-51.

In 1951 he went to Blaisdon as bursar for two years and then as a teacher for three years. In 1956 he went to Cowley, Oxford as a member of the teaching staff. He remained there for six years and then moved to Farnborough in 1962 as confessor for the boys and community until his death in June the following year. As a student, Bro. William was known as "Big Ben", because he was a very large, heavily built young man, towering over others. He was somewhat unique in that he came from Lincoln, an area not known for catholicity. He was always popular amongst students and also after ordination. He took his personal spiritual life and his Salesian religious life very seriously and he made a special effort to imitate St. Dominic Savio and St. Aloysius.

Fr. William was always most conscientious in his work for the boys as headmaster at Burwash and as a teacher and assistant in other schools, and finally as the confessor at Farnborough in the final years of his life, when already showing signs of the cruel cancer of the marrow of the bone, which took him, in spite of his physique, to an early grave, to our great loss.

Having served his God faithfully here on earth, may Fr. William now enjoy the vision of God for ever in Heaven and unite with all God's faithful people in praising him for ever.