

BROTHER BARTHOLOMEW BONDIONI. S. D. B.

Bartholomew was born in Niardo, Brescia, Italy, a beautiful alpine area, near Switzerland, on the 18th February 1898.

His mother died when Bartholomew and Maurice were quite young and they were cared for by two aunts. Their father was a good practising Catholic and, for many years, he was the sacristan at the local church. Both boys went to the Catechism classes and the Festive Oratory, organised by the church. In 1917, during World-War 1, when he was 19 years old, he was called up for military service. After leaving the Army, he thought about the idea of dedicating his life to the service of God and he enquired about joining the Salesian Congregation as a laybrother. After spending a year as an aspirant he applied to go to the Salesian novitiate in 1922.

He started his novitiate in Foglizzo in October 1922 and he then made his first profession on the 12th October 1923. Soon after his profession he volunteered to go to South Africa and he went to Lansdowne to prepare the grounds for the building of the new school there.

Brother Bartholomew worked on the gardens and on the farm at Lansdowne for several years. He helped in the development of the school and other works by selling the produce from the gardens and the farm. After several years of really hard work he was advised by the doctor to take a good rest. It was found later that he was suffering from diabetes. He died at the relatively young age of 47 and he was the first Salesian laybrother to die in South Africa on the 24th March 1945. He had been professed as a Salesian for just twenty-two years.

BROTHER MAURICE BONDIONI. S. D. B.

Brother Maurice was a brother of Bartholomew, about six years younger. He also became a Salesian, making his novitiate in Foglizzo in 1923 and his first religious profession on the 4th October 1924. He also went to South Africa and worked at the Salesian House, Daleside for many years.

He died in Daleside on the 6th December 1981.

May the souls of these two good and faithful Salesian Brothers rest in peace. Amen.