

Salesian Oratory,
Sliema – Malta.

January 1932.

Dear Confreres,

The Angel of the Lord visited this Oratory for the first time when our dearly beloved and perpetually professed

FATHER PHILIP BORG. S. D. B.

went to Heaven on the 13th January. He was 47 years old and he had been professed as a Salesian for 21 years and a priest for 14 years.

Philip was born in Sliema on the 25th August 1885 of very good Catholic parents who gave him a good christian foundation. When he had finished his elementary education he attended the local seminary as an external student. He was a frequent visitor to the Salesian Oratory and he was one of the first catechists there at the time of Fr. Urso and Fr. Allegra. During this time he gradually conceived the idea of becoming a Salesian.

He made his novitiate at Lombriasco in the years 1910–11 and, after a successful year, he made his first religious profession on the 29th September 1911 at Lombriasco and his perpetual profession at Ivrea in 1914. For his priestly studies he went to the diocesan seminary in Malta for his philosophical studies – having Fr. Farrugia as his tutor. For his theological studies he went to Turin and he was ordained in St. Gregory's Church, Sicily, by Mgr. Ferrais on the 22nd September 1917. Fr. Philip was, in fact, the first Maltese Salesian to be ordained a priest.

After ordination, Fr. Borg was asked to act as assistant to the novices at St. Gregory's in Catania for a year, he was then asked to assist the aspirants at Caltagirone the following year. In 1919 he returned to Malta and he remained there for the next 13 years as a member of the Sliema Oratory community. In 1929 he was appointed the Rector of that community.

Unfortunately his health began to deteriorate and he suffered greatly during this time. In fact he was in hospital in the care of the Blue Sisters for over a year. He took this trial with great resignation into God's hands. Towards the end of 1931 the Superiors relieved him of the office of Rector and shortly afterwards he was given the Last Sacraments. He died on the 13th January 1932 at the age of 47 and the 21st year of his religious profession. His funeral was a real triumph – attended by all the Salesians in Malta, many clergy, secular and regular, co-operators, past-pupils, boys and parishoners – and the Oratory band.

May he rest in peace. Amen.