

FR. JOHN DEVINE. SDB.

The news of the death of Fr. John Devine at the Salesian School, Cape Town, South Africa, came as a great shock and caused no little grief among his confreres and friends in England and Ireland, by whom he was held in high regard and affection.

Hailing from Killishill – his home town in Co. Tyrone, Ireland – Fr. Devine entered the Salesian College, Battersea as a student in May, 1902, with the intention of studying for the Civil Service. However, being of a very devout disposition, he soon received from God the grace of a religious vocation and joined the Salesians at Burwash in June, 1903. After finishing his novitiate, he volunteered for the missions and was sent to Chile where he completed his studies and was ordained in January 1911. His health was never robust and his many years in a very hot climate told on his constitution, and, on doctor's orders he had to return to England.

From then onwards he served in different houses of the Province in various offices, but his chief work lay in the confessional. He was a deeply religious character and he combined with it a very cheerful disposition and thus attracted many to a greater love of the spiritual life. He made many friends and his generosity was proverbial. It was well-known that he never refused anything he possessed to anyone in need or who wished for any little article he may have had on his person or in his room.

One great desire he had, and it was granted to him, which was to be among the little band of Salesians who went to open the first Salesian House in Ireland. In Copsewood, Limerick, the "Holy Priest" and his memory will long be treasured there by those who received his spiritual help in times grave and difficult. He returned to Battersea in 1926, as Catechist, but the following year he departed for Cape Town, South Africa, and he remained there until his death.

As might be expected his end was most edifying and consoling. He was well prepared and joyfully received the Last Sacraments. He peacefully passed away, surrounded by the sorrowing confreres of both Salesian Houses at the Cape. A Solemn Requiem Mass was sung by his Lordship, Bishop Hennemann, in the presence of the clergy of the Peninsular at Cape Town on Thursday, 12th July, after which the interment took place, the Bishop officiating at the graveside.

May he rest in peace and may perpetual light shine upon him.

– Fr. John Devine, born in Killishill, Ireland, on the 25th March 1882, died at Cape Town, South Africa on the 10th June 1934, in the 52nd year of his age, the 29th of profession and the 23rd of priesthood.