

FR. PATRICK DIAMOND. SDB.

Father Patrick was born in Kilrea, Co. Derry, Ireland on the 1st May 1863. He was the son of Manus Diamond and Isabel O'Fee. He received his early education in the schools of his native place and later studied at St. McCarten's College, County Monaghan.

To completely understand how young Patrick Joseph Diamond came to join the Salesian Congregation it is necessary to follow Archbishop Lynch of Toronto on his 'ad limina' visit to Pope Leo X111. After seeing the Pope, Archbishop Lynch paid a visit to Turin to call on Don Bosco, the fame of whose sanctity had already begun to spread to the far corners of the world. Archbishop Lynch was in need of vocations for his Archdiocese, and he had this need very much in mind when he spoke to Don Bosco. However, the entreaties of the Archbishop for students to take back to Toronto with him were of no avail because Don Bosco had no students to spare. Don Bosco suggested to the Archbishop that he make the journey to Ireland and try there. "You go to Ireland", Don Bosco said in effect, "bring me the vocations and I will train them, after which they will be at your disposal." So, Archbishop Lynch followed Don Bosco's advice and went to Ireland. Seven young Irish students responded to his call and Patrick Joseph Diamond was among them.

Back to Turin went Archbishop Lynch with his young students to start their formation under the guidance of Don Bosco. Patrick Diamond, Charles Redahan and Patrick O'Grady were so impressed with the sanctity and earnestness of Don Bosco that they decided to join the Salesians and study for the priesthood together with many other young students, who had decided to spend their lives in the Congregation founded by Fr. John Bosco, who was later to be universally honoured as St. John Bosco.

Patrick Joseph Diamond began his studies in Turin in 1881. He went to Buenos Aires in the same year, continuing his preparation for the priesthood there until 1887 when he was ordained by Archbishop Aneiros in October 1887. Following ordination he was asked to teach in Buenos Aires for a year. In 1888 Fr. Diamond was asked to go to the Falkland Islands to minister to the small Catholic community there. On his return in 1896 he was appointed the Superior of the Salesian Mission House in Puntas Arenas, the southernmost missionary settlement in the world. Coming to America in 1903 Fr. Diamond worked as a missionary in the Salesian Mission House, New York, until 1921, when he moved to San Francisco to become the pastor of the Italian National Church of Corpus Christi in the Excelsior District. Eloquent testimony in themselves to the zeal of Fr. Diamond at Corpus Christi are a modern parochial school, which he built, and a beautiful church, free from debt. These are some of the monuments which Fr. Diamond left behind. He died on the 26th March 1937 aged 73. May he rest in peace.

(Account taken from "The Leader" San Francisco.)