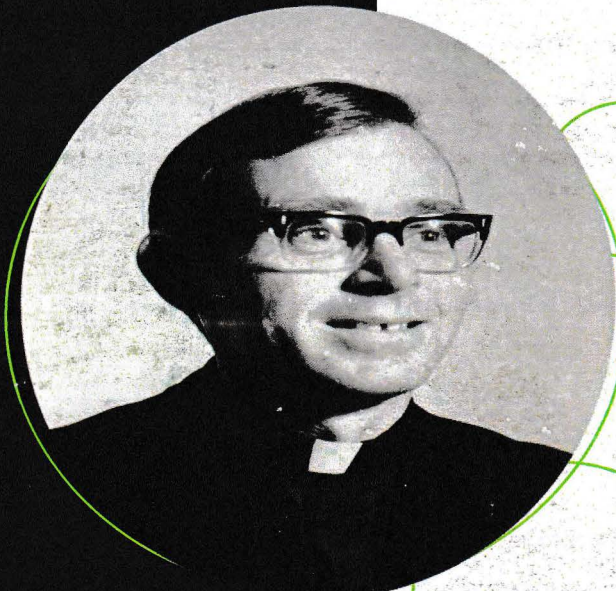


**Fr. Sean Francis
Murphy (SDB)**



*** 24 July 1934
† 21 November 2023**

FR SEAN FRANCIS MURPHY SDB

Born 24 JULY 1934 Died 21 NOVEMBER 2023

BORN TO PARENTS MICHAEL MURPHY AND TERESA MAHON both of whom have passed on ahead in 1988 and 1999 respectively. Fr Sean's family comes from the County of Rathadaire Emo Laoighis, and the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin in Eire (Ireland).

Fr Sean entered the Novitiate in 1962 in Drumree – Ireland, and made his First Profession in 1963 on the 31st of August, at the age of 29.

Before joining the Salesians, he had joined a government employment, to support the family, and was engaged in doing a sort of auditing and Land records job in the agriculture sector, if I am not mistaken.

After his first profession along with four (3 or 4) other companions he was sent as a missionary to Northeast of India and joined the Post Novitiate Formation along with university studies in BA, at the Salesian College in Sonada, near Darjeeling which is the famous town of the base camp for those climbing the Mount Everest and other Himalayan Mountain ranges.

Fr Sean Murphy completed the BA degree with First Rank in the University. His First Rank Medal remained one of the secrets until now!

After the Post Novitiate Formation and BA studies, he did Practical Training at the Salesian Aspirantate of Savio Juniorate in Mawlai, Shillong in 1965 and then three more years in the Don Bosco High School in Guwahati, Assam from 1966 to 1969. From there due to the changes in the Government policies, and political atmosphere, Sean and his companions were advised to return to their native countries. Fr Sean then studied Theology at Maynooth from 1969 to 1973 and was ordained a Salesian Priest on 29th April 1973 at Rath, his home place.

Since he could not return to India, the missionary spirit in Fr Sean brought him out to Swaziland soon after his ordination and he worked at the Cathedral Parish of Manzini from 1973 to 1992, going on to become the Cathedral Administrator as well. During this time, he also administered to prison inmates who were on death row. Through this prison ministry, he brought many of them the Lord's comfort and compassion.

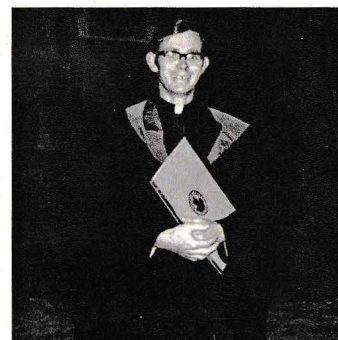
In 1992 he was sent to Maputsoe in Lesotho for some rest and to pick up the Sesotho language, while also substituting for Fr Angel Izquierdo who had gone for holidays to Spain. But at the sudden death of Fr Angel, while on holidays, Fr Sean had to take up the parish responsibility at Maputsoe where he continued for ten years, till 2002.

FR SEAN FRANCIS MURPHY SDB CONT...

From 1995 he was also the Rector of the Maputsoe community, which then also had the Novitiate house, besides the parish with an outstation, the schools and the Daily Oratory.

In 2002, after a short break for home leave, he was asked to take up the pastoral work at St Dominic Savio Parish, at Daleside, which was a part of the community of St John Bosco Youth Centre. During this time, he also reached out to minister to the migrant population at Jackson's Drift where the FMA sisters had started an informal primary school. By the end of 2003, Fr Sean was moved to Ennerdale, All Saints Parish, where after the murder of Fr Declan Collins in November 2002, the parish had no steady resident priest. Fr Sean was supplying for a time from Walkerville, until a new residence house was bought at the present site of the Salesian Community on the Seventh Avenue in Mid-Ennerdale.

He joined Fr Tomasz Grzegorzewski at Ennerdale, but then was soon left alone for nearly two years; until in 2005 the Novitiate was moved from Rynfield in Benoni to Ennerdale thus making a fuller community. Fr Sean continued to serve as the Parish Priest caring for the three centres of Ennerdale, Lawley and Fine Town churches, bringing about a lot of development and growth through pastoral care in Catechesis and the Sacraments, until 2013 when he was freed a little bit to care specially for the communities of Lawley and Fine Town. Three more years later, in 2016 he was given a change to go back to his original field in Swaziland, as parish priest at Malkerns, St John Bosco Parish. However, after two years, in 2018 he returned to Ennerdale as an assistant for pastoral work and as Spiritual Director. He held this portfolio till his death in 2023 on November 21st. His death happened while he was away in his homeland in Ireland, on holidays with his family, celebrating his 89 years of life, Diamond Jubilee of Religious profession, and the Golden Jubilee of his priestly Ordination.



Graduation 1965 – Medal for 1st place at Bengal University

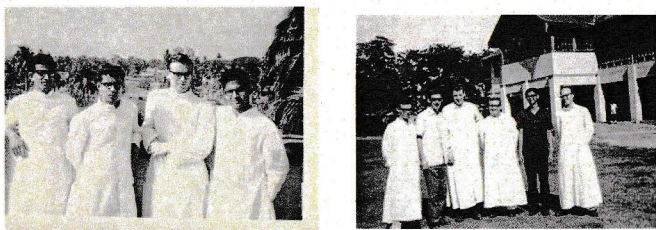
FR SEAN FRANCIS MURPHY SDB CONT...

His death came as an unexpected and shocking news to the wide community of Ennerdale Parish. Fr Marian Kulig, the Rector and Parish Priest at Ennerdale was able to fly out and join the Family and the Salesians in Ireland, for the Funeral of Fr Sean Murphy. It is said the last act that Fr Sean did before he had his 'health crash' and hospitalization was to transfer whatever money he had collected to the Ennerdale Community, for the continued missionary work (t)here!

Fr Sean had repeated invitations to visit on holiday in India where he had his practical training, but he never took such a holiday, preferring instead to give himself totally to the missionary work here in Ennerdale, South Africa. Fr Sean was a man remarkable for his diligence and dedication to the work of building up the Christian community. He said openly that he believed not in putting up buildings, but to build up the community of people. He was scholarly and very thorough yet used the simplest language in his preparations; researched and updated his inputs for catechism, instructions, power point presentations, talks and homilies and each time re-edited before delivering it. He was also very meticulous in keeping records, reports and accounts.

He lived a very simple lifestyle, always available for the people with a big smile; he enjoyed sports and news channels on the TV and the 'Gaelic' singing and dancing in family gatherings. He visited every family in the parishes he worked in, and especially of the children and adults preparing for reception of the Sacraments each year. At every parish he worked in, he made it a priority to train the lay ministers and engage them as collaborators in the various ministries.

He had a soft heart for the vulnerable and poor and provided a monthly supply of essential food items to the families that he had identified with the help of the local leadership; he also provided bursaries for the schooling of hundreds, perhaps thousands of children. In all these he had the big support of the family and friends from back in Ireland, including the Salesian Past Pupils, and he kept up a regular correspondence with them giving updates on the mission front while extending prayers and well-wishes for the special occasions of Christmas and Easter.



Gauhati, India

FR SEAN FRANCIS MURPHY SDB CONT...

Today, we gather in prayer and gratitude to commemorate this great missionary of the Salesian Congregation; - Fr Sean Murphy's daring journey to share the message of Christ with the world, answering the call to bring education, evangelization, and hope to the young people in need, which he did here in the three countries of southern Africa – Eswatini (Swaziland), Lesotho and South Africa, - lands in need of faith, love, and pastoral care, especially among the youth. He laboured under the guidance and inspiration of St. John Bosco, and Mary Help of Christians; his missionary journey across the seas was a journey of the heart — to spread the Salesian charism that we continue to embrace and live today.

The Salesian charism, which is rooted in the principles of love, reason, and religion, calls us to be missionaries of hope and peace, particularly for the poor and abandoned youth; we are to become sanctuaries where young people can encounter Christ's love, grow in faith, and build a future, just as the legacy of Fr Sean Francis Murphy is. May our life and work also contribute to the Salesian mission, fostering a culture of education, evangelization, and love that continues to touch the lives of countless young people today.

As we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first Salesian Missionary expedition and reflect on the courage and faith of the first Salesian missionaries who set sail on November 11, 1875, from Genoa in Italy, and the numerous missionaries that followed from then on, from various nations going out to various other nations, and continuing even today, let us be inspired by their example. They trusted in God's providence and responded generously to the needs of the young, embracing the mission to bring hope to the hopeless, light to the darkness, and the love of Christ to all corners of the world. Along with Fr Sean Murphy, we recall in this same month of November two other Salesians, Fr Declan Collins and Fr Christopher McMahon, who also died while serving in this parish community of Ennerdale in 2002 and 2005 respectively, besides the many other missionaries that have returned to the Father in heaven.

Let us pray that we, too, may live the Salesian charism with the same zeal, faith, and dedication, so that through our lives, the message of love, reason, and religion may continue to shine brightly in the world. May we be bearers of hope, especially to the young; and may the work of the Salesian missionaries in this "great journey" begun in 1875 - Fr Sean Murphy being one of them setting out in 1963, - continue to bear abundant fruit through the generations to come. May the souls of Fr Sean Murphy, Fr Declan Collins, Fr Christopher McMahon and all the faithful departed through the Mercy of God rest in Peace. Amen.

The following was a submission from Fr. Sean to the 2014 Provincial Assembly. We speak so often about 'the youth problem'. In meetings of Dioceses and of Salesians it is almost always a topic. But there is an 'adult problem'. Maybe when the adults of the present time were young, they were the 'youth problem'. I don't know how many generations we would have to go back when we could speak of 'a youth problem' only.

Now we have a 'youth problem' and an 'adult problem'. Human life is about relationships. Good human relationships are needed for good human life.

- A person is a person through people.
- Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu.
- Motho ke motho ka batho.
- No person is an island.

The great challenge for evangelisation and catechesis at the present time is: How do we help people to develop a deep personal relationship with God and loving caring relationships with others.

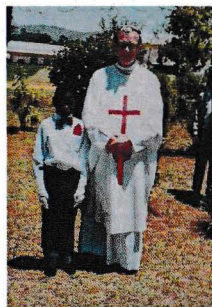
This is where the 'adult problem' arises. We have made tremendous progress in areas of technology and information technology, but we seem to be going backwards as regards human relationships. We are aware of the prevalence of divorce all over the world and the fragility of relationships.

The foundation of good human relationships is no longer being laid in families. For many adults at the present time this foundation was not laid by their parents, and they find it difficult to lay it for their children. We are aware that there are serious defects in the human gene pool which can be transmitted to the next generation. We seem to be unconcerned with the defects in the human emotional and psychological pool, which can impair very seriously the ability of the next generation to form meaningful relationships, and the lack of this ability is increasing at an alarming rate.

Patrick Maselwane, who is responsible for the Family Desk in the Archdiocese of Johannesburg, mentioned a very disturbing statistic at a meeting of the Vaal Deanery. He said that there are nine million children in South Africa who do not know their fathers. This means that there are nine million relationships that should be laying the foundations of a stable society and of a strong Christian community, but they are non-existing. Again, this is a very disturbing situation.



Maputsoe, Lesotho



Eswatini (Swaziland)

Another statistic I heard some time ago on the Radio; 37% of children are living with two parents. 63% are not. Of the 37% living with both parents, we know that many of these families are dysfunctional in one way or another. I can't put a figure on the number of children that are living in families where both parents are striving to create loving, caring and self-giving relationships.

If parent have no faithful relationships with God, it is very difficult for children to grow up aware of the presence of God in their lives. If children do not have a loving relationship with their fathers, how can we teach them that God is a loving Father. How can we get away from being nice pious devout Catholics and get down to the serious and joyful task of becoming disciples of Christ and accompanying others as they grow into disciples of Christ.

How can we form a generation that grows into freedom and not into slavery. In the prayer of exorcism and anointing before baptism we pray: "Free these children from original sin." The only people that I see before me at the baptismal ceremony that need to be set free are adults. Many of them have grown into slavery.

When I stand before a group of young people in a Confirmation class or on Confirmation Day or during a retreat or vigil, maybe 50 young people, I reflect a little and ask myself: "What a wonderful group of young people. But I wonder how many in 15 years' time will be living in fulfilling, stable, loving, and caring relationships whether in marriage, or religious life or diocesan priesthood or a self-giving single life? How many will be alive and healthy in 15 years' time? Maybe, a few.

The sad aspect of this situation is that many are longing for such fulfilling and loving relationships, and they find it hard to find someone with the same longing. At a vigil held a few years ago held at Finetown by the young people of Lawley, Finetown, and four parishes from Soweto, I said to them, especially to the girls: "When someone says to you: 'I love you,' stare him in the face and answer: 'Thank you.' And then ask: 'How do you wish to show me your love? What do you have in mind? Do you mean that you want to sleep with me tonight and use me for your own pleasure? Or are you thinking of beginning the process of creating a relationship which is loving, respectful, self-giving, and faithful?" And it is a process. And there is massive difference between the two intentions. Sadly, the first one is winning by a wide margin at the present time. So, few are ready to work at the task of getting to know each other and finding out if they are compatible and able to build a life-long relationship.

How do we form a generation of young people that can form stable, loving, caring, and self-giving relationships, and in doing so, do a great service to themselves, and to society and to the Church? How do we form a generation of young people who can enter a lifelong commitment to faithful relationships? This is the challenge facing us.

It should be the priority of the Church at the present time.

Hope it is at the top of the list of priorities in the new pastoral plan which is

SALESIAN ASSEMBLY OCTOBER 2014 CONT...

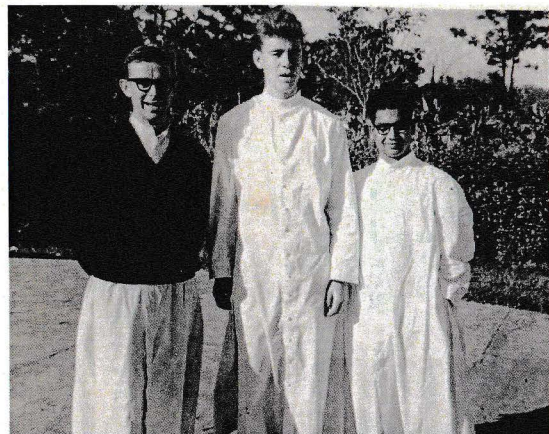
is being prepared for the Church in Southern Africa.

If it is not, I think we are out of touch with the reality of life at the grassroots. Family life and marriage must be the priority of our catechesis.

We should not be blaming the government and the police for the prevalence of crime at the present time. We should accept our share of the responsibility for the failure to form families where children can grow up to be 'good citizens and faithful Christians.



From the Himalayas viewing the plains of now Bangladesh



Shillong, India

TRIBUTES FROM FR MARIAN KULIG SDB, RECTOR AND PARISH PRIEST, ENNERDALE - 2023

I'm Fr Marian from Ennerdale in South Africa from the Salesian Community where Fr Sean lived and worked recently.

I'm bringing very warm greetings, very heartfelt condolences, a lot of love and prayers and spiritual support from all those among whom Fr Sean has been working for so many years: in Eswatini, Lesotho and South Africa.

I would like to greet all those from Lesotho, Eswatini and South Africa who relate to us through the media platform. All those who are participating with us in celebrating Fr Sean's life. In our parish in Ennerdale those who don't have the opportunity to relate to us in their homes are gathered in our parish church at All Saints where they can be with us through the live streaming. They are participating in this Liturgy, on the big screen celebrating with us Fr Sean's life.

Fr Michael said a lot about Fr Sean, but I would like to share my personal experience of Fr Sean. When I arrived in South Africa in October 1995 I was sent to Lesotho and Fr Sean was there as the Parish Priest and Fr Michael was Rector of the Community.

Before going to Lesotho, I spend a few months in Swaziland (now Eswatini) to learn English. I arrived in Lesotho on a Friday, and on Sunday Fr Sean send me to say Mass in the outstation, at Ha Chaka. Of course, I had to say Mass in English, but I promised the people that next Sunday Mass will be in se Sotho. Fr Sean gave me a lot of materials, among them recorded Mass in Sesotho. I've been listening to hundreds of times trying to familiarise myself with the sounds completely new to me. I managed to prepare only half of the Mass but on the following Sunday I was able to say the whole Mass in Sesotho thanks to Fr Sean's support.

And really Fr Sean was to me as a father, I'm so grateful that he accepted me and helped me so much at finding my feet in Africa. When I arrived in Lesotho, he was very much rooted in the local culture, so he was able to lead me and help me to grow in understanding the new situation.

As we heard from Fr Michael, Fr Sean was a very hard-working person; he never had a secretary in his office; he was doing everything himself. Filling all the registers, keeping all in right order, he was very well organised. He would share his homilies with me at the beginning when I could only read se-Sotho without much understanding. His homilies were short, simple, and straight to the point. So, the people loved the homilies of Fr Sean.

He was very much caring for the poor, as Fr Michael said he was a "pope Francis in flesh". He had a very big heart for the poor youth, he would provide school fees for those who were not able to afford it and cared for the poor

TRIBUTES FROM FR MARIAN KULIG SDB, RECTOR AND PARISH PRIEST, ENNERDALE. 2023 CONT...

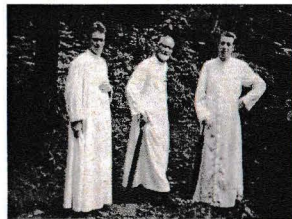
families by supplying them with food. So many transports of food went to the villages where the village committees would distribute to the families in need. And it was of course thanks to the donations from here, from Ireland, and mostly from the family of Fr Sean. So, I would like to express my gratitude for your great support, for your open heart to the needs of the people in Africa. And even recently, just before coming to the funeral, we have received from Fr Sean's family very big donation for the relief of the poor in our Parish community. Thank You! it's really appreciated very much. Thank you very much for the support, thanks to this, Fr Sean's charity work will be able to continue.

While providing such a great support to the others, he himself would live a very austere life. If you look into his cupboard, you will find a pair of sandals, a pair of shoes, a couple of pairs of trousers, shirts, jersey, a jacket and I think that's all. I was amazed that a person can live such a poverty life. He really practised his religious vows.

He was also very much in touch with the sick people in the parish, and the elderly, he would visit them very often. Last year when he was celebrating his 88th birthday, he didn't want to have any celebration, but we felt that it was very important to celebrate. On the day of his birthday people helping with the distribution of the goods to the poor brought representatives of the sick and elderly whom Fr Sean was visiting very often. When Fr Sean came out and noticed them his face brightened up like a sunshine, he was so happy to see them. He said: "I was coming to visit you and today you have come to visit me, thank you!" And he was so happy, his heart was with the sick, the poor, with those who were in need.



With his Rector Fr Patrick Burns & others, Gauhati, India



Eswatini (Swaziland)

TRIBUTES FROM FR MARIAN KULIG SDB, RECTOR AND PARISH PRIEST, ENNERDALE. 2023 CONT...

He was great at visiting families; he would know every family in the parish. Before administering the sacraments like First Communion, Baptism of Catechumens, Confirmation, he would visit the family to find out the background and the situation in the family. In this way he identified those who needed any assistance, be it spiritual, or material need. He discovered many families where marriage wasn't blessed in the Church, and he would encourage them to rectify their situation. Very often he would meet them in their home for the preparation of the marriage. He rectified so many marriages while in Eswatini, in Lesotho and in South Africa. Wherever he was, he was very caring about the spiritual needs of his flock. He was a great evangelizer. He organized workshops for different ministries in the parish, helping people to get involved in the life of the Church. He was great in organizing and preparing catechism teachers and materials to be used for the teaching.

He was a man of prayer, he would be the first person to be in the chapel, be it in the morning, during the day or in the evening, whenever we were gathering in the chapel, he would be the first to arrive. He would prepare everything for the Mass, irrespectively of whether it was his day or somebody else was presiding; he would organize everything beforehand; he made sure that everything was ready.

He touched so many hearts; and people really loved him so much. When we got the message that he has extended his stay in Ireland because of his health conditions we were getting so many messages with assurance of prayer for him. But when he passed on, hundreds and hundreds of messages with condolences and prayers of thanksgiving for his presence among the people. Please allow me to read just a few of them.

"Good day Father. Condolences to the Salesian family on the passing of Father Sean. Please convey our sincere condolences to the family of Father Sean. Father Sean was a remarkable priest and has touched the lives of many Catholics in a positive and spiritual way. May his legacy continue with the passion that he served so unconditionally. May Father Sean rest in eternal peace."

"A Priest of his kind, we shall always remember him. He touched lives of many wherever he ministered, he knew the families of all his Christians, he was gifted and very strong, doing everything for Himself. He never had office clerk. Condolences to his entire family and Salesian family at large, it's a great loss. But his name was called."

"May his Soul rest in peace. We are grateful to God for many blessings he gave to us.

TRIBUTES FROM FR MARIAN KULIG SDB, RECTOR AND PARISH PRIEST, ENNERDALE - 2023 CONT...

SALESIAN ASSEMBLY OCTOBER 2014

through Fr Sean Murphy. A great Pastor. He loved the poor with all his heart. I will never forget the many times I saw him Praying Rosary behind the Parish house in Maputsoe."

"You have accomplished many good things in life. You worked hard and always followed the path of honesty. Sleep well father. I hope and believe that God has a reward for you. May you find eternal peace."

And so many of this type of messages. So, we are very grateful to the Murphy family for this great gift of Fr Sean, the great missionary, a wonderful example to all of us in the Southern African Salesian province. He was the character that we never forget. It's easy for me to praise, but its very difficult to imitate Fr Sean. So, thank you once more for this wonderful gift to the Salesian Congregation in Southern Africa.

Thank you and may God bless you!

PRISCILLA KING, A SPIRITUAL DAUGHTER OF FR. SEAN MURPHY

May we learn from The gifts Fr Shaun taught us , humility, discernment , compassion, and love which is the greatest commandment of all ,whoever has hurt U in Ur life always say the prayer of our Lord "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" and when a pandemic touches the world, he would do, We Must do, conversation closed, I thank U Father Sean Murphy for all that I learnt from U, indeed, I have learned all that u taught us , Ur chuckles as u explained the gospels, during mass, Ur ever presence in times of difficulty , I am eternally grateful to U for so much U taught me with Ur smiling face , rest in God's eternal peace ,and please pray for our children , Amen!



Eswatini (Swaziland), with Fr George Williams

VANESSA MCEVOY, FR SEAN'S NIECE

Lovely to hear from you Fr Joy.

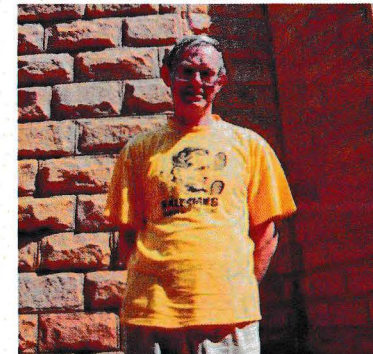
I will prepare something small for you tonight and if you wish to include it.

We still miss Fr Sean so much, he brought calmness wherever he was, we always looked forward to his visits back to Ireland and hearing about his work in Africa. We treasure all the gifts he brought with him.

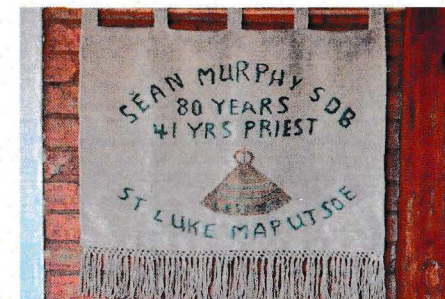
We are hoping to keep his legacy alive by fundraising for Ennerdale. I visited there in 2004, I could see how dedicated Sean was and how loved he was by all the people. Sean told us at his golden jubilee how blessed he was to come back to Ireland to his family even though he had left over 50 years ago. He said he was lucky he had lived such a fulfilled life.

Sean very much wanted to go back to Africa and continue his work last year. God had other plans. We are very lucky he didn't suffer. We are so honoured to have Fr Sean in our lives.

I hope Fr Marian is doing ok, we were so honoured that he made that huge journey to Ireland, he was a great comfort to all the family. We could have sat all day and listened to him talk about Fr Sean.



In front of St Luke Church Maputsoe, Lesotho



Lesotho Souvenir

SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Salesians of Don Bosco in Southern Africa give thanks for the life-long witness of Salesian, Priestly, and Missionary life of Fr Sean John Francis Murphy (1934-2023), who passed away in Dublin, Ireland on 21st November. You may read again his interview in the recent Don Bosco Echo, Issue 20, 2023 (August, p.14-15) and may be touched by his simplicity in missionary zeal in telling his life-story.

Fr Sean touched the life of many people as seen in social media entries:

We have an intercessor in Heaven, a great and vibrant missionary left us!

He baptized all my siblings; it was interesting to watch a game with him.

A great pastor, he loved the poor with all his heart!

I will never forget as he prayed the Rosary behind our house in the evening.

Thanks for his uninterrupted service and devotion to the Church.

He has left an indelible mark on many Catholic faithful.

He loved us equally and made us all feel equally important!

A humble priest, who had positive impact in our life in eSwatini, Lesotho!

His rich missionary life was spent between India (Darjeeling, Shillong, Guwahati), eSwatini (Cathedral parishes, Manzini, Malkerns), Lesotho (Maputsoe) and South Africa (Savio Parish in Daleside, All Saints Parish – Ennerdale, Finetown, Lawley).

We admire his passion for faith education of the children, young, adults and catechists. We may follow his passion for learning and using the African languages in his ministry: SeSotho, SiSwati and Zulu. His numerous catechetical aids or handouts for Don Bosco Preventive System are being circulated worldwide.

Good Lord, give him the reward of the good and faithful servant.

You made a difference in our lives, and you were loved by us all!

Rest in peace, Father Sean!

Hamba Kahle chawe leNkhosi!

FROM NANCY CHOWTHREE: A SPIRITUAL DAUGHTER.

How can I not pay tribute to Father Sean as he has been so involved in my spiritual journey? I recall in 2005 while in Rome, I had the opportunity to be present at the time Pope John Paul the 2nd had taken ill. I was on holiday but paused to take in all these beautiful stories of a Pope that never interested me before. During that time in Italy, I had the opportunity of visiting the Vatican, lighting a candle, watching the black smoke and waited anxiously for the white smoke. A fire was lit in me, but it died down.

The next year I had to come to All Saints to be a witness to a marriage which was conducted by Father Sean. That fire was reignited by this priest. There was something in him that just made me want to come to the church.

I started coming to All Saints and remember uncle Danny Netnow saying to Father Sean “you should tell her to join our adult class” and Father Sean responded, “when the time is right, she will join”. Yes, so true, when the time was right, I did join Uncle Danny’s class and never looked back.

Father Sean was just not a parish priest to me. He was my mentor and my spiritual guru. I have had many, many fond memories with him. Never missed my birthday, never missed sending me a Christmas card. Likewise, I never missed his birthdays. We celebrated many of his birthdays together whether it was at the Salesian house or at my house. I recall Father Sean McEwen putting together Father Sean’s 80th birthday at the Salesian House, I was honoured to be invited to that celebration. I recall in 2016 when he went to Swaziland, I was so concerned about his health and not having medical aid over there. He reassured me that he was fine, but I could not just accept what he said to me. I decided to go visit him on his birthday, just so that I can ensure that he is okay. It was the most memorable time. Father Sean took us around to all the out stations and reminisced about the early days when he would walk the hills and valleys of Swaziland to meet the many families. That Sunday celebration in Malkerns was notably a community coming together to celebrate and honour a remarkable priest. The cake that the parishioners baked for Father Sean was bigger than me.

As we all know, Father Sean was a simple man who asked for nothing. If you asked Father “how are you”, he will simply respond, “I am still standing”.

Father Sean, you will continue to still stand tall in my heart and I am sure in the hearts of many. You have left an indelible mark on me, and I will treasure the many memories we shared.

Go well Father Sean, till we meet again.

Thank you and God Bless!

ELAINE- NEVILLE (A LONG-TIME COLLABORATOR, CATECHIST AND LAY MINISTER)

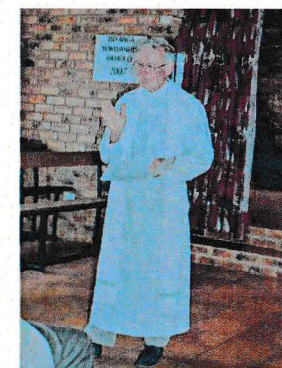
Fr Seàn Murphy came to our Parish with much enthusiasm and was ready to hit the ground running. Some of us were introduced to him at a Wednesday evening Mass by late Fr Tomasz Grzegorzewski, before being introduced to the Parish community that weekend. As soon as a new PPC was elected, Fr Seàn started implementing new things at the Parish. Occasionally in the PPC meetings he would point at himself saying 'the buck starts and ends here'. It was much appreciated because it kept us on our toes. Fr Seàn had an absolute love & passion for Catechesis. Being asked by him if I will take over from Sr Giovanna (at her behest) as Co-Ordinator, I told him I'll pray about it and speak to my family as well. When I accepted, a beautiful, strong, and blessed relationship grew between us. He was a very firm Priest; his yes was yes, and his no was no. It was very admirable because he made no exceptions. We were about 18 catechists during his time. This worked very well, as classes started on time, no class left unattended and no young children wandering around. We always got the young ones involved in any celebration at the Parish and tried to do it at all 3 Masses over the weekend, and the children were thrilled. Fr Seàn would have such a big smile from the beginning to the end. The last year of Fr Seàn being Parish priest at All Saints, we had quite a few candidates for Confirmation, including those from Sancta Maria and Francis de Sales. After Mass on the day of Confirmation, Archbishop Buti sent Jaryd (an Altar Server then) to call me. I was a bit concerned what it was all about. As we walked to the Parish Hall, His Grace said he wanted to say thank you because every time he came to Minister the Sacrament of Confirmation, everything was very well-planned. My reply to His Grace was 'Fr Seàn and I work very well together, and I consult with him before going ahead with anything'. We've had Joyous celebrations during Fr Seàn's time as our Parish Priest: The Year of the Priest - The Ordination of Frs. Joseph and Peter - The Relics of Don Bosco. His dream was always to go and do missionary work in Africa if he no longer was assigned a Parish. 2023 was a very sad year for many of us to see his health deteriorate very fast, particularly his memory. Many times, if he Celebrated Mass on a Saturday evening, he would speak to parishioners as though he was fully aware of who they are. After they left, he would ask me who they were. I am very grateful to God that I was part of the flock that Fr Seàn came Shepherd. As an All Saints Community, we were blessed to have celebrated his 89th birthday (though belated) with him 2 days before he left South Africa. I thank God for His Mercies upon Dear Fr Seàn during his illness. December the 16th, last year, I had a dream about Fr Seàn: Fr Marian and I were up in the air kneeling, Fr Seàn was ahead of us standing next to a white cloud. He was dressed in pure white vestments,

ELAINE- NEVILLE (A LONG-TIME COLLABORATOR, CATECHIST AND LAY MINISTER) CONT...

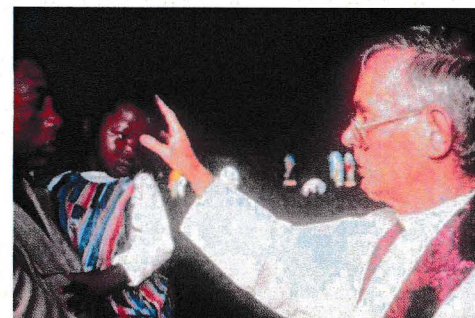
except for his famous brown sandals. He was only looking at this cloud with the most beautiful smile. Suddenly Our Lady appears on the cloud, says to Fr Marian and I we can go and takes Fr Sean's hand and disappear on this beautiful cloud. When I shared this dream with Fr Marian and a few parishioners after the Wednesday evening Mass, Fr Marian made the Sign of the Cross looked up into the sky and said: Fr Seàn is resting in peace. Fr Seàn has left an indelible mark on many lives wherever he did God's work. Rest In Peace, My Dear Fr Seàn. Forever in my heart, the hearts of my family and the hearts of all those who met you along life's pathway.



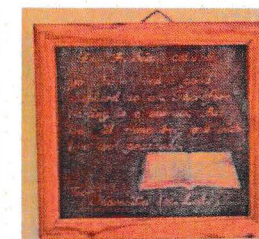
Marriage Blessings



The Catechist



The Good Shepherd



From St Cecilia Sodality, Maputsoe

FR SEAN FRANCIS MURPHY, RIP 1934 – 2023: TESTIMONY

Salesian Old Boys might remember Fr. Sean Murphy, a Salesian Priest who served for 17 years in Eswatini:

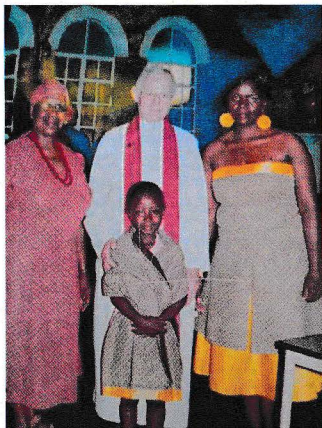
Salesian Father Sean Murphy, who served much of his 50 years of priesthood in Southern Africa, has died at the age of 89.

in October 1973, He left for missionary work in Swaziland (now Eswatini).

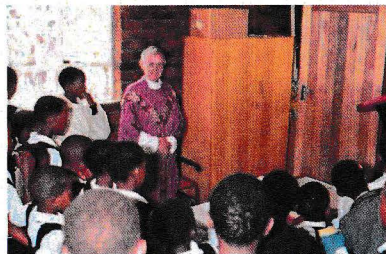
In his five decades in Southern Africa, he served 17 years in Eswatini (Cathedral parish, Manzini, Malkerns), learning SiSwati by visiting parishioners in their homes every day. When he was posted to Maputsoe in Lesotho in 1992, he did the same to learn SeSotho.

Starting in 2002, Fr Murphy served in South Africa, at All Saints parish in Ennerdale and St Dominic Savio parish in Daleside. There he learnt isiZulu. After a two-year stint in Eswatini in 2016-17 he returned to Ennerdale, where he served until his retirement this year.

Fr Murphy was known for his passion for faith education, especially of children, young, adults and catechists. His numerous catechetical aids and handouts for the Don Bosco Preventive System have been circulated worldwide. 🙏



Lawley, St Francis de Sales



Lawley, Ennerdale

FROM FR MCCORMACK MARTIN SDB

I see you've got the message I gave to Fr Eunan about ministering to death row inmates in Matsapa prison in the 1970's. It was a ministry that affected him deeply and he avoided talking about it as it was painful for him.

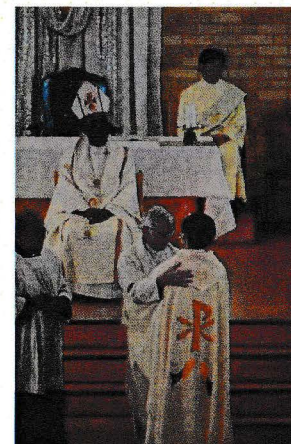
Sean gave me my first advice as a missionary - he told me "go out the first day, connect with people, language will follow but go out and mix". I've followed that advice ever since.

He was an inspiration to me as a cleric in Swaziland in the 1970's when I was on practical training. Always a word of encouragement, encouraged me to get into catechetics which I did after my theology, doing a higher dip in the area and teaching religion full time in Limerick Ireland for 17 years.

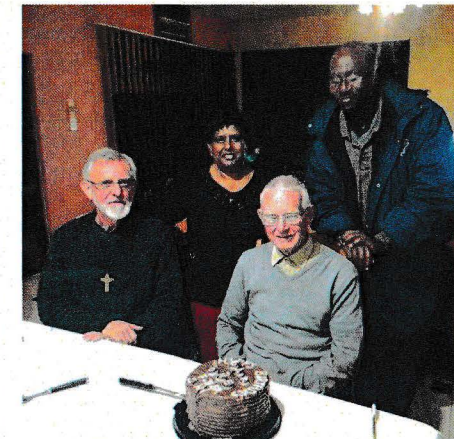
He came to Salesian high to hear confessions from the cathedral. His commitment to catechesis was beyond words and his hard work producing material was admirable, even in his later years with me in Malkerns.

Liked his football on TV over my years with him in Malkerns.

Sean Was a very humble and simple man to live with, who believed in our witness to the wider community in how we lived our lives. He wanted us to live simply as people around us were poor and in need.



2012 Ordinations at Ennerdale



With Fr Emmanuel, Fr Marian and Nancy

FROM FR MCCORMACK MARTIN SDB CONT...

I was humbled to have journeyed with him in his final weeks of illness. He came to Crumlin to plan for his operation, and I took him to local doctor to get everything moving. He was unsteady in his feet as he came out from the doctor with me. We chatted a lot over the intervening days, and I could hear he was ready for the inevitable in life and death. I found him having a seizure in the bed and got him to the hospital where I spent as much time as I could with him over the next few days. I had everything set up for him for an operation on the Sunday, but he collapsed on the Saturday. The Friday night before his collapse I helped him transfer monies to Ennerdale. It was our last act together.

He was proud of his Laois roots and these words from a song come to mind:
Lovely Laois, I hear you calling in my dreams I hear you say.
Come back home to dear old Ireland Lovely Laois, I'll come back to you some day.
The view from the Sliabh Bloom, dreams I still can see A beauty just as rare as you will find.
See those scenes from childhood, once more I will return and meet those folk, so friendly and so kind.
It is ironic that he did return to be buried in his native place.
Martin



Last family photo Oct. 2023 @ jubilee celebration

VERONICA MARIA SMITH

Fr Sean would say things the way it is.
I clearly remember one Sunday morning when he visited my Catechism class, I had a concern about a few children that did not attend our Confirmation classes, his response to me was,
"Work with those that want to work with you."
Another incident this must have been 10 or 15 years ago, it was a Sunday morning, as Father Sean got onto the Altar, he told us the Parishioners,
"You that like to complain about me, you can go to the Bishop, I am already a retired Priest, I am only here because I'm doing you a favour,"
Everyone in church was quiet and Father Sean carried on with Mass, yes that was our dearly beloved Fr Sean, he did not beat around the bush.
Veronica Smith.

This is a short poem in honour of Fr Sean.
God's Garden
God looked around his garden, and found an empty place,
He then looked down upon the earth and saw Fr Sean's tired face,
He put his arms around him and lifted him to rest,
God's garden must be beautiful, he always takes the best,
He knew that Fr Sean were suffering,
He knew he were in pain,
He knew that he would never get well on earth again,
He saw the road was getting rough and the hills were hard to climb, so he closed Fr Sean's weary eyelids, and whispered, "peace be thine,"
It broke our hearts to lose him, but he didn't go alone,
For part of us went with Fr Sean, the day God called him home.
Anonymous.



Seniors Christmas Party with Ennerdale Santa Claus

**“A GOLDEN PLATED AND DIAMOND ENCRUSTED” SALESIAN OF DON BOSCO!
DEAR FR SEAN**

Dear Fr Sean

To celebrate 60 years as a Salesian of Don Bosco, and 50 years as a Salesian priest, is no mean feat! So, congratulations on reaching this 50/60th milestone.

I regret that I will not be able to attend the celebrations in honour of your double jubilee but be assured of my “bestest” good wishes and prayers.

Stay forever young even as you move towards your 90th birthday!

With all your confreres in our AFM province, we admire your missionary zeal, your passion for catechetics, your dedication to promoting marriage and family life, your fluency at local vernaculars, your prayerful persistence, your taste for simplicity and your ability to make do with the minimum resources.

The few health challenges you faced in recent years have never diminished your pastoral enthusiasm and self-sacrifice. With you I praise the Lord for the gift of your 50/60 years as a Salesian and a Priest.

May God bless you with plenty more and may you continue to inspire the next generations of confreres by your fidelity and your perseverance in serving the Lord.

May the witness of your dedication to God and his people encourage couples to live out their vocation with similar commitment.

May your devoted service of others be an inspiration to young people to follow in your footsteps.

Thank you, Siyabonga, Baie dankie, re a leboha, for the service you have given to the mission of Don Bosco in Eswatini, Lesotho and South Africa for 50 years.

Ad Multos Annos!!!

Francois Dufour SDB

SALESIAN OLD BOYS

Salesian Old Boys might remember Fr. Sean Murphy, a Salesian Priest who served for 17 years in Eswatini:

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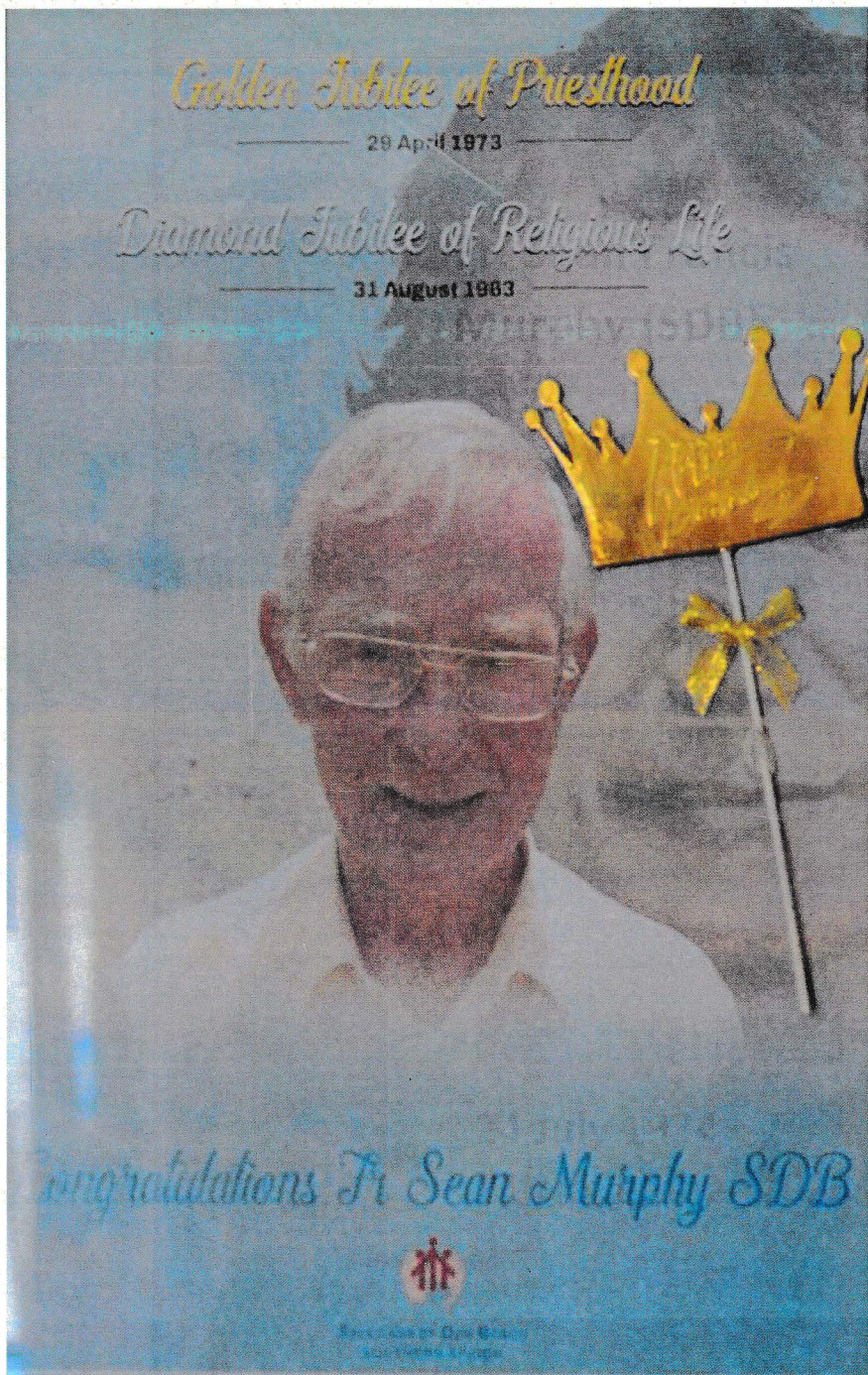
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Rest in eternal peace Fr Murphy you ran your race; you changed many lives and give hope to some of us.

Pass our kind regards to Fr Macdonald and the rest.



With Mr. Reeves and Fr Michael, Ennerdale



Archivio Centrale - Roma