

St. Patrick's School,
Malta.

Dear Confreres,

On Wednesday, 5th June, 1974, at the age of 73, after 46 years of profession, and 37 of priesthood,

FATHER BERNARD GAFFNEY. S. D. B.

gave back his soul to Almighty God.

He was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on the 5th September 1901, and after his early studies at St. Andrew's and St. Cuthbert's Grammar School, he trained and was employed in engineering for a time before going to the Salesian Aspirantate, Cowley, Oxford at the age of twenty-five, as a student for the priesthood. He was to spend many of his years at Cowley, a house for which he formed a deep attachment. During his early period of formation he also worked in the communities at Battersea, Chertsey and Shrigley, before going for his theological studies to Turin, where he was ordained priest in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians on July 4th 1937.

On his return to England, he taught in our colleges at Chertsey, Farnborough, Bolton and Cowley. His principal subject was music, in which he had qualified with the A. R. C. M. and the L. C. M. For a spell of four years he was on loan to the Province of Quito in Ecuador, where he gained a fine command of the Spanish language, which enabled him to be of great spiritual comfort to a number of religious, who called to see him when he lived in Oxford.

Latterly, in 1970, Fr. Bernard came to St. Patrick's, Sliema, Malta, as confessor and chaplain to the English-speaking Catholics who attended St. Patrick's Church. Here he worked quietly in the apostolate, endearing himself to many by his priestly concern. For some months he had not enjoyed good health and had spoken of tiredness and occasional discomfort. On the advice of the doctor he had remained in his room for two days and was hoping to be about again soon. However, this was not to be, and he passed away so quietly in his sleep that it left the confreres with a sense of shock and deep sorrow. A Concelebrated Mass with the Community and Boys present was offered at St. Patrick's and interment followed at the Addolorata Cemetery.

Fr. Bernard's life could be briefly described as one of quiet simplicity. He was never very robust, preferred to keep out of the limelight, but he was well aware of the various activities of the apostolate centred around the community in Sliema and we often enjoyed the dry "Geordie humour" of his comments. He possessed a very fine knowledge of music and, though he rarely played in public, he derived great enjoyment from the piano in his leisure moments. Both the Community at Sliema and the Congregation have lost a kind priest and dear friend.

Anthony Sutherland. S. D. B. (Rector)