

FATHER WILLIAM JOHN KELLY. SDB.

Among the many whom Almighty God has deigned to call to Himself during these recent times through war or illness, are several members of our province, and it is our sad duty to inform you of the death of Fr. Kelly, who recently died of pneumonia. As has been so frequently the case in these recent deaths, those have been taken who seemed to have before them many years of useful life. But, without our knowing it, their work was done, and now its reward remains.

The house at Battersea and the whole of the district had grown so accustomed to the familiar figure of the Parish Priest, that no such idea as their separation had been imagined and his memory will doubtless be long associated with the Salesian School and the neighbourhood.

Fr. Kelly was born in London on the 20th October 1875. He was one of the very first to receive the clerical habit at Battersea, the ceremony having been performed on the feast of the Immaculate Conception 1892. His profession was made on the same feast a year later, and having passed the next seven years in the scholastic duties appertaining to Salesian life and, having completed his studies, he was ordained a priest on the 22nd September 1900.

With the exception of a brief period, his life as a priest was spent at Battersea in the various duties which attach to the position of a Parish Priest in a populous and important centre. He devoted his time to the parish and especially the care of the children. No one was better known in Battersea. He was on many local committees of general welfare, his ministry and cheerful presence winning for him respect and regard from many outside his own church and community. Among the earliest expressions of sympathy which were received from all quarters were letters from the Cardinal and the bishop.

There was a remarkable and very representative gathering at the Solemn Requiem Mass in the Church of the Sacred Heart. Among them were the Mayor, the Vicar and Rural Dean, District County members, etc. His Lordship the Bishop of Southwark assisted at the Mass. At the end of Mass the Salesian School cadets formed a guard of honour as the remains were borne to the hearse in which they were taken to the cemetery attached to the Novitiate at Burwash. Owing to serious indisposition the Rector, Very Rev. Fr. C. Macey, could not perform the last rites at the grave, his place being taken by Fr. Hawarden. The Community at Burwash sang the Benedictus and other parts of the burial service.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE.