



Fr. James Kinsley

OBITUARY



Salesian House,
St. Teresa's Rd.,
Crumlin, Dublin 12.

Dear Confreres,

It is with sadness and a sense of deep loss that I record the death of Fr. James Kinsley. This kindly, warm hearted priest died on September 5th, 1988 and those of us who knew him are the richer for the memory of him.

“Don Rua passed the torch to me” was one of James’s little jokes. As Don Rua died James was born on April 6th, 1910. He was born in what James regarded as the heart of the real Dublin – Mercer St. Like Don Bosco, his father died when James was but a child. Then to his mother Mary fell the responsibility of parenting a very young family. And they were hard times; times referred to in Ireland as “The Troubles” and the early years of the newly founded State. Not without reason, then used he recall the memory of his mother with a tear in his eye.

The Providence that rules our ends directed James beyond Mercer St. out the Navan Road and further until he came to the Salesian Agricultural College in Warrenstown. That was 1926 and James was just 16 years old. This was his first contact with Don Bosco. Now his sails were set. He commenced a three year aspirantate. The first two years (1926 – 1928) spent in a country College could not have been easy for someone from the city heart and, as James often recorded, neither were they. But they were happy years and that was important. His final year of aspirantate – 1928/29 – was spent at the Salesian House, Cowley, Oxford. Here too he commenced his Novitiate in September 1929 which concluded with his first profession in September 1930. For James this was the beginning of the cobbled road to the Priesthood in 1940.

Priesthood for James was a prized grace. Then at the end of one quiet and uneventful year after ordination, without warning or by your leave, he was pushed into the swim at the very deep end. The undercurrents were many and strong: nor did he have the luxury of a life belt. That was 1941 and James was now lecturer in Theology and Canon Law to his fellow students. His students remember him with affection for James was approachable beyond the ordinary run of lecturers and professors. He had a way with him which put students at their ease for he took out much of the formality and brought even more humanity to the teaching of Theology.

That first call to priestly service through the teaching of Theology lasted through intermittent periods in Blaisdon, Shrigley, Pallaskenry and Dublin for a span of twenty two years. A short time prior to his death I asked him what was the happiest time of his Salesian life. He said, “The happiest time of my life was teaching Theology in Blaisdon 1941 – '44”.

But James was not just a good teacher of Theology. He excelled as a music teacher. He had a gentle way of inspiring his students who still speak of the love he gave them for music. During the years he was music supervisor and teacher in Pallaskenry, the School Inspectors held him in great respect and esteemed him as a model for music teachers.

Then as the years passed by, so did James pass out and away from the lecture hall and class room but not without a Jamesian tear and a sniffle. Perhaps his transfer to Dublin, the city he loved, rendered his parting with classroom and students less painful. He spent the last 21 years of his life with our Community here in Dublin. Like the early years of childhood and youth those latter post Conciliar years were not easy for him either. There was many a bump on the way but James always seemed to take it with a titter of ready wit and a smile.

He was Bursar here in Crumlin for a few years. Then he commenced the last period of his life helping out in the parish of St. Agnes. It was here that James really came into his own. He was especially good with the elderly folk who needed solace and comfort for he had his own unique way of emphathising with those who ailed or ached.

Finally his health began to fail noticeably for the last year or two of his life. The end signs became more marked after Easter 1988. He died in St. Vincent's Private Hospital on September 5, 1988. No doubt "*Bhi a lá istigh, bhi a sheal caite: tá Dia buioch dō.*" (His day had come; his span of life was over. The Lord is greatful to him.)

For us who remain here, it was good to have known him.

Ar dheis Dé fo raibh a anam croíuil.

(At God's right hand may his loving spirit be.)

Yours sincerely,



A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Vincent Kinsley". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

FOR THE NECROLOGY

James Kinsley, born Dublin, Ireland in 1910, died Dublin, 5th Sept., 1988 in the 58th year of his Religious Profession and 49th of Priesthood.