

Funeral of an Irish Redemptorist Missionary - Fr. Paddy Martin, CSsR

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Last Monday, Fr. Paddy Martin died of pancreatic cancer. He was 71 years old and had been working as a missionary in the Philippines since 1964. The last time I met him was in October last year during the funeral of Fr. Abdon, another confrere who also died of cancer. At that time he had already been told that he had terminal cancer and was given a few months to live. What impressed me most about him was that he was at peace with himself and was already ready to make his final journey.

I knew Fr. Paddy since my college days in the early 1980s when we occasionally had lunch at the Redemptorist monastery. He told us stories of his mission experience in the mountains of Cebu. In 1982, when I was given my first assignment after ordination, we were in the same community in Iligan. After overcoming a problem with alcoholism he became active in Alcoholics Anonymous, organizing AA groups wherever he was assigned. Fr. Paddy was well-loved by many people because of his interest and concern for them, especially the poor.

During the last weeks of his life, his sister Maureen (whom I met in Dundalk in 1993), came over and accompanied him until his last breath. Last night, Cardinal Vidal and three other bishops celebrated the Eucharist (the cardinal couldn't attend his funeral since he was leaving for Manila today).

We celebrated the funeral mass at 2 pm today which was presided by Redemptorist Bishop Manny Cabajar, bishop of Pagadian, and concelebrated by many priests. The church was packed by many people, many of them his friends and confreres and other religious sisters.

Fr. Paddy was buried in the Redemptorist plot at the Carreta cemetery.









