

Rev. Fr Daniel Healy, C.S.S.R. (1848-1898)

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Father Healy was a native of Donegal. He was born on 14th May, 1848. Having been ordained Priest at Maynooth College on 19th June, 1874, he worked for five years as a secular Priest in the diocese of Down and Connor. In the summer of 1884, he entered the Redemptorist Novitiate and was professed at Bishop Eton on the 15th October, 1885.

Of his thirteen years of Redemptorist life, a few years were spent in Perth, Scotland; from the July of 1887 to the May of 1893, Father Healy was attached to the Limerick house, where he filled the office of Sub-Director of the Confraternity of the Holy Family, and later on was Minister in the Community for three years; then three years were spent in Clapham, when he again returned to Limerick – this time as Rector. This was quite at the end of 1896. He fell ill not long after his appointment as Rector, and his health was several times in a critical condition, but constant and fervent prayers were said for his recovery by the people who esteemed and loved him, and he lingered on for a year and ten months. During all this time Dr. Malone and Dr. Holmes were unwearied in their attention, visiting him almost daily. Their skill and generous kindness did much to prolong his life and relieve the great pain from which he was almost always suffering. At last, on 2nd November, All Souls' Day, 1898, death came and brought, we may hope, an everlasting relief.

In illness, Father Healy's most striking virtue was Christian fortitude; it was the source of much edification to the Community. He prayed much. In times of very severe suffering it was his custom to pray aloud to God and the Blessed Virgin to give him patience.

As a missionary his characteristic virtue had been love of labour. He is considered by many who knew the life he lived on missions, to have shortened his days by overwork. Nor during the years of his active missionary life was he free from those sufferings that crowded so thickly upon him towards the end. When quite a young Priest, Father Healy had met with a serious railway accident, which prostrated him for a long time. The spine had been injured, and other internal injuries received. It was believed that he would not recover. That he did recover sufficiently to take up again his work as a Priest, is in a great measure due to the care bestowed upon him by some kind Priests of his diocese, who took him to Dublin and placed him under the care of the most eminent medical men in that city. But the evil effects of that accident remained with him to his death, and must often have made doubly hard to bear, the hardships which he was so willing to take upon himself.

This sketch may well end with the words of a Priest who knew him for many years: "Father Healy," he writes, "was one who liked to work hard and to live unnoticed. Many are the weary hours which he spent in the confessional, and he walked by night and by day through courts and lanes, and up and down rickety stairs looking for the careless Catholic. I knew that he still suffered from his spine, but he once said that his part was not to complain but to go on doing Gods work while he had strength." †



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