

# Rev. Fr James Hartigan, C.S.S.R. (†1899)

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Father Hartigan's life was one full of promise of great things to be done in priestly work. But God willed that it should be a short life, for death came when he was still at the early age of thirty-three years. He was born at Banogue, Croom, in County Limerick. His early studies were made in Mungret College, where he received a good classical and religious education. In his school days he was looked upon as one of very earnest genuine piety. He was sincere in friendship, and possessed a kindly humour that made him to all an agreeable companion. His intellectual talent was well above the ordinary.

From Mungret College he entered the Redemptorist Novitiae in 1887. He made his Vows on the 15th October of the year following, and then spent some years at the House of Studies in Teignmouth, Devonshire. Here he distinguished himself chiefly in the study of Philosophy. His Theological studies were made partly in Teignmouth, partly in Dongen, Holland, where he was ordained Priest on 27th August, 1893. He then went for a year to teach at Teignmouth.

Father Hartigan was a great lover of Astronomy, and it was a genuine pleasure to him when night came on, and the stars were visible, to go out on the balcony with his students and his telescope. It is to be feared that it was

on one of these occasions he caught a cold, which affected his lungs so seriously that he was brought very near to death. He recovered, however, owing, the doctor declared, to the most painstaking and constant nursing which he received at the hands of the good Father and the infirmarian who attended on him.

Towards the end of 1894 he was removed to the Limerick house. For two years he taught in the Juvenate and then spent a year giving missions. Since his illness in Teignmouth he had never been the same in strength, both voice and lungs were weak. When in 1898 some Fathers were being sent to Australia, Father Hartigan was one of those who were chosen as well suited for the work there. It was hoped, too, that the climate would be more in his favour owing to the weak state of his lungs. His stay in Australia, however, was not a long one, only for eighteen months. He caught a severe cold at a mission given by him in Singleton, New South Wales, and one of his lungs was attacked. Notwithstanding every care his second lung became affected, and the doctor declared that a sea voyage was the best chance he had of recovery, if, indeed, there were any. Unfortunately there was not.

He arrived in Limerick in October, 1899, with Brother William who had come with him from Australia and nursed him most devotedly through all his illness. After an examination of the state of his lungs, Dr. Malone declared that there was no hope of his ever getting well. Father Hartigan himself was not deceived as to his condition, he knew he was going to die, and expressed a wish that he should die before Christmas, lest his death should cast a shadow of sorrow on the joys of the Christmas season. This was characteristic of him, he ever thought of others rather than of himself. During his illness two things were most noticeable in him, his spirit of cheerfulness and his spirit of prayer. He had prayed well in life, now at death it was his strength and comfort.

Making a most conscious and resigned offering of his young life to God he breathed forth his beautiful soul on Wednesday evening, November 13th, the Feast of St. Stanislaus. †



*Rev. Fr James Hartigan, C.S.S.R.*