

## Memories of Fr. Joseph Jones C.Ss.R

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Fr. Joseph Jones or Joe Jones as he was usually called, he died in Plymouth in 1976.

Joe was ordained at Hawkstone in the mid-30s, and he went out to Rome immediately to study canon law. He came back from there and taught on and off at Hawkstone for the next 10 years until 1948.

He was then moved to Clapham, his successor having already begun studies in Rome, Fr. Gerard Sugden and Joe Jones had two jobs in Clapham. He was working part time as advisor to the apostolic delegate in the delegation there, as a canonist, and the other part of the week he would be working on the parish.

It was while a member of the community in Clapham he had one way of catching out young members of the Province if they were appointed to the community or if they visited for a few days and happened to be sitting opposite him at table. He had a way of saying with a dead straight face; well you're getting to know me a little bit now would you say on the whole would you say I live a couple of the vows all right? And invariably the young man would respond being a bit shy – Oh yes I think so, and with a quick retort Joe would come back with well which one am I not living? Give me an example of why you think so.

Joe Jones was very much appreciated by the apostolic delegation for the work he did, and for his knowledge of canon law. He was equally appreciated by the parishioners in Clapham and was very well known especially in the district or part district that he looked after himself so carefully.

He continued his work in the delegation and so in the parish for a little over 20 years and when it came to an end he thought it time to move from Clapham and make a new beginning and he was asked would he go to Plymouth.

It was interesting that in reflecting upon his work, first of all in Hawkstone lecturing on canon law, and secondly as using canon law in advising the apostolic delegate, he very often said that despite his study in Rome, despite his lecturing at Hawkstone, on looking back he felt that he only began really to understand canon law when he started work at the delegation.

A little while after Joe moved to Plymouth, I Beverley Ahearn was visiting Plymouth and one morning at breakfast Joe asked if I would give him help. At the time I had been in charge of our retreat house in Liverpool, I had been giving various retreats around the county and Joe asked me if I would give him a hand and in particular he had finished one talk, that he was preparing retreats and he had finished one talk, which he hoped to give in a retreat and he would like to go over it with me.

So a little while later we went over that talk together and discussed it, and when we had finished he said to me oh in a little while I am going out to give communion to a sick person, and I said "do me a favour", I said "if you come across I've been looking for a reference in St Paul, I live no longer do I live but Christ lives within me. I said if you come across that reference please let me know", and with that I went back to my room, and opening my door just a little later I heard a shout from down stairs it was Joe Jones just going out of the house with communion, he shouted up to me "Is that you Bev", I said "yes" he said "Galatians 2:20", so I went back into my room and made a note of that reference Galatians 2:20.

About an hour and a half later, maybe two hours I went out of my room, and on the corridor in those days we

didn't have phones in our rooms, but there was an extension at the end of the corridor and lying on the floor with the phone in his hand, in his outdoor clothes was Joe Jones. He had come in from bringing communion, gone to make a phone call, collapsed and died.

I couldn't remain in Plymouth for the funeral because I had a retreat arranged, the Provincial though arranged for him to be buried away from Plymouth because we didn't have a cemetery in Plymouth, we weren't looking upon Plymouth very much as a permanent foundation. And so rather than buying a plot in the cemetery the Provincial decided he should be buried in Teignmouth in the Notre Dame convent cemetery, because back in the 1880s we owned Teignmouth, it was our house of studies for the combined English and Irish Province. And we had several Redemptorists buried there, so the superior was quite agreeable that Joe Jones be buried with the Redemptorists in that part of their cemetery in Teignmouth. May he Rest in Peace.