

2 July

Fr BRYAN GAVAN DUFFY

7 May 1886 - 2 July 1956



Born in Nice, France, the child of the third marriage of his father, who came from Ireland and was at one time Prime Minister of Victoria, Australia, Bryan Gavan Duffy entered the Society in 1903 and was educated at Stonyhurst where he won many prizes. He taught at Preston before theology and was ordained in 1919. He then went to Wimbledon College where he won a reputation for 'winningness'. 'He was one of the most devoted and selfless I ever met' (John Manning). Seemingly, anything he turned his hand to was a success. He was involved in the Sodality (CLC), the Catholic Evidence Guild, the SVP, a school magazine and 'real' pilgrimages to Lourdes –

'not just holiday jaunts'. 'The most remarkable thing about him was that he never seemed to be in a hurry. In spite of all his involvements 'he always seemed to be free and at the disposal of everyone'.

1927 saw him at St George's as Prefect of Studies but after six years his heart gave trouble because of the altitude and he moved to Cape Town. He started the student chaplaincy there which eventually became Kolbe House and he was in much demand as a preacher, retreat giver and broadcaster. He became diocesan inspector of Christian Doctrine teaching in Catholic schools. He also kept bees.

He was also a great host and would welcome visitors to the Cape and put himself at their service to drive them round. In 1950 he moved to St Joseph's College, Rondebosch, as chaplain to the Marist Brothers and it was while there that he died. He had 'one of the biggest funerals Cape Town has ever seen'.