

13 October

Fr DENIS CORBOY

13 May 1851 – 13 October 1911



Denis Coboy came from Pallasgreen, Co Limerick, the same part of Ireland as his namesake, James, who became the first Bishop of Monze. He studied for the priesthood at the diocesan seminary in Thurles and was ordained in 1874. He immediately went to South Africa (1874-83). During this time he discerned a religious vocation and was accepted as a novice in 1883. He was asked to ‘top-up’ his theology for a year and a half and then went, first to St Aidan’s and then Dunbrody.

In 1897 he was at a new parish at Bedford in Cape Town and also did some work at Uitenage and Port Elizabeth. He worked too in the prisons and accompanied condemned men to the scaffold. But he had pulmonary consumption and was not strong even though he was a tall man (6’ 5”).

When he died ‘the whole of Beford turned out’ and ‘every house had its blinds drawn’. The *Bedford Enterprise* celebrated his ‘broadmindedness and respect for the views of others. The Catholic Church has lost a priest. We have lost a good citizen and a good man. ... When he was in Dunbrody, the (local people), who are grand judges of character discovered the true kernel and spit out the rough husk.’