

TO THE SISTERS WHO KNEW MONSIGNOR DANIEL TWOMEY AT ST. PHILOMENE'S

Dear Sisters,

All of you know that Msgr. died on Jan. 17th, 1968, and was buried today, the 19th. He had had a stroke in October, then last Sat., Jan. 13th, he fell and broke his hip. Mr. Schuster and Mr. Ambrein and others who were working with him at the moment, said that he was less concerned about the pain, as he lay there awaiting the ambulance, than he was about the bother he was going to be to everyone. The hip surgery on Sunday was successful, but on Tues. he had a heart attack. Sister Perpetua and Sr. Lucia went to the hospital with Father Brady, but Msgr. was unconscious; so, "nobody said good-bye". He died at about 4 P.M.

Father Brady (assistant here only since Sept.), Father O'Donnell, Sr. Perpetua, and Sr. Edwards in their respective areas of parish and schools, coordinated swiftly and efficiently with Bishop Bell and Msgr. O'Neil, Director of Liturgy. We have just spent two beautiful days of prayer together. Thursday at 8:30 was a requiem Mass in the Loretto gym for the students. Fr. O'Donnell in his homily honored Msgr. for bringing the Loretto Nuns to Sacramento in 1949; for his "secret" care of the poor; for his gentleness; and for being a man of action rather than words. "These buildings and gardens that have sprung up around us on this property are a tribute to his energy. When I saw him in the hospital on Sunday night, I saw a man, tired, old, broken, who had given all that he had to give." At 11:00 there was a Mass in St. Philomene's Church for the children;

Father Brady reminded them that Msgr. had loved all children, especially them; that he had done his homework every night, that is, he had prepared himself for the great test of the Judgement Day, "...and you children know what it is to take tests!" He said that Msgr.'s last moments here were spent lying on the ground that he loved so well.

At 8:00 P.M. they brought Msgr.'s body from Lombard's Funeral Home to the church which was packed with grieving people who had come to say the Rosary. Msgr. lay there with his own well-worn brown beads twined in his hands. Everyone was pleased with his appearance: his white hair was "teased" a little bit at the sides---you know the way it was after he had washed it. He had a strong smile on his face, "his whimsical self". He wore purple vestments, the Roman ones that he preferred. In the sanctuary were four men who,

(Father Brady explained to the people) had served Msgr's Mass a week-about for years: Mr. Farrell, Mr. Fanning, Bob O'Brien, and Pete Barry. Each one of these led us in one decade of the beads. Afterwards some sisters from Assumption, Presentation and St. Ann's came to the convent for refreshments.

This morning at 10:30 we took our places toward the front of St. Philomene's Church. The altar boys surrounding us had been trained by Sr. Lorraine to be classically perfect. The pallbearers ahead of us were some of Msgr's best friends and workers: Joe Amrhein, Art Hagus, Fred Schuster, Matt. O'Gara, Tom Thompson, and Nick Tomich (architect whose first church had been St. P's in 1955). The bidding prayers were a work of art and grace: Mr. Flowers was announcer, Mr. Tom Hayes read the Epistle; I'm sure that no one of the 120 priests present could boast of finer lectors in his parish. Mrs. Slaughter had arranged the altar facing the people (borrowed from LHS); there were large white mum arrangements on the main altar, and good-looking new black leather chairs (from the re-decorated east sacristy) made the sanctuary very elegant. Sr. Perpetua had provided a lovely purple wreath for each side.

The Bishop and 12 priests celebrated the Mass; these priest were the former assistants here and members of the Bishop's Consulting Board; they made an impressive sight as, robed in various colors of purple, they fanned out across the spacious sanctuary. Mr. Dorndoff and Mr. Brennan were with the choir, and the 120 priests and the congregation also sang. We all had requiem Mass leaflets in English, which had been arranged and printed at the School Board Office, and had been assembled and stapled by Sr. Edwards and some younger sisters. Msgr. McTague, Fr. D. T's best friend, gave the succinct homily, "since Dan Twomey didn't like long preachments". It was a forthright eulogy given by one who entirely loved and appreciated Msgr. (Text included, I hope) In case anyone wants his address: Rt. Rev. Patrick McTague, St. Joseph Rectory, 1717 El Monte Ave., Sacramento, 95815.

This funeral day has been one of exceptionally warm and radiant sunshine. Sister Perpetua had requested the County to sweep and shine up the corner of El Camino and Bell for this day, since Msgr. has been such an important civic leader here. The altar boys and about 30 Loretto Girls in uniform formed a colorful guard of honor. Most of us went to the cemetery where his grave is close to the statue of the Crucifixion Group which watches over the priests' graves (there are only 3 so far). One can see the snow-covered mountains from this point! We met Msgr's niece from L.A., and two cousins from San Francisco. Sister Mary Teresa found the Bishop to be very democratic as he mingled with the people for ever so long after the services at the gravesite.

Father Brady escorted us over the the hall for dinner. The place is newly decorated and looked lovely with long tables set with real linen cloths and napkins. Mrs. Thompson and the ladies served a delicious meal of roast beef, fried chicken, large crispy rolls, salad, apple pie, and burbon on the rocks. One man said that no one would have been happier than Msgr. that the sisters were having this treat. I thought that he would have been proud of the magnificent showing that his men, ladies, children priests and sisters had made on this day before all of the clergy!

Sister Mary Teresa, who was the first Loretto Nun to visit here with Mother Victorine most fittingly has been here during this time. Today she said that she had never seen a ceremony click along as perfectly as this funeral did, "And it had class!" she said, "Oh, Brother! It had class!" We are sorry that Sr. St. Mel isn't here after her 17 years of friendship with Msgr. Our maintenance man, Bert Vanderlands, scrubbed the fountain and started the water flowing because he wanted "everybody to see what Father had done for our parish plant".

Tomorrow we start a new era out here at St. Philomene's, but Msgr's spirit will stay for a long while to meet us in every building, patio, and garden. If he saw me writing this he would say, "Cut it out. Cut it out." Well, a little light has

blazed, gone out in many hearts!
 Your name has come up so often during
 these days. Many have asked for you. Love to all,
 I recalled how nicely you got
 along with Msgr. Twomey. You would
 have been gratified with the peoples reactions to all of this - e

Sister Camillus

TEXT OF THE HOMILY GIVEN AT MONSIGNOR TWOMEY'S FUNERAL BY HIS GOOD FRIEND

MSGR. PATRICK MCTAGUE, JANUARY 19, 1968

Most Rev. Bishop, Rt. Rev. and Very Rev. Monsignors, Rev. Fathers, Brothers, Sisters, Members of the Faithful, People of God and Friends of Monsignor Twomey.

Let us begin by expressing our sympathy to Msgr. Twomey's relatives in this country and abroad, to the Bishop and the Diocese of Sacramento, to those of his household in St. Philomene's, to the staffs of the elementary and high schools and to the people of this parish. Indeed the Angel of Death made a dramatic visitation of the clergy of this diocese on Jan. 17th, calling away two of its older priests on the same day (Fr. Fitzgerald, Pastor of Immaculate Conception), something that has not happened here since 1902. It might be of interest that one of the priests on that occasion was named Twomey also. We hope to be brief, as Msgr. Twomey was not fond of long preachments, so why inflict one at his funeral?

41 years ago God spoke the creative word that made Dan Twomey a priest of God. Like many young men, in his student days he had doubts about his vocation to the priesthood (this is the time to have these doubts and not afterwards); but having resolved these doubts he became the great priest we have known for 41 years. He poured out his life in selfless love and service of God, and the people; but never conscious of being anything but an unprofitable servant. He had the great humility of the intelligently strong.

He served 7 years as assistant pastor in places in the Sacramento Valley and Humboldt County, he was given sole and full responsibility for the Lincoln Parish in Placer County in 1934. All his life he adorned anything he touched, and despite Depression and War Time he added the parish house to the plant in Lincoln. He was promoted to St. Philomene's in 1947--a brand new infant parish. So, ^{he} has spent a little more than half of his life as a priest among you here in St. Philomene's. And under his guidance and leadership this infant parish grew great and strong before God and man. He went slowly, steadily and quietly; got property, rallied the people around him, established a school for elementary pupils, later doubling the school (driving the school bus himself for years) and a parish house, a convent, this great church, a girls' high school, a gymnasium and library; all in the period of 21 years. Without doubt he has been our most

successful parish priest in our diocese. His monument is all around us.

We do not have to be told that he was a completely dedicated man. I do not remember his taking a vacation in these 21 years here. He always said the early Mass or Masses, heard confessions at any and all times, and he could always be found somewhere on the parish premises. And he wasn't deadly serious about all this. He was endowed with a keen mind, and his dry sense of wit and humour touched most of his living. He had no particular hobby except perhaps the things of his church and parish and people. He loved music and could sing with the best. He was a man taken "from among men, ordained for men in the things that pertain to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins, who could have Compassion on them that err because he himself was encompassed by infirmity". If men are noted or remembered in our day for any personal quality--the great personal quality of Dan Twomey was that he was a quiet man. This he was in all his ways and doings. He was also a wise man, a kind man, a holy man. Like St. Joseph "He said little and did much". We shall not look upon his like soon again.

For him, he is now enjoying the reward guaranteed to the Faithful "Eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that God has prepared for those who love Him and serve Him".

Good-bye, Dan Twomey, for a little while, "Till we meet again.

Sister Mary Clare