



Father Desmond O'HARA
(1925 - 1979)

*Died 6 January 1979, in Ballyholme (Ireland)
aged 53, with 30 years of Religious Profession.*

Desmond Anthony O'Hara was born on 23 December 1925 in Rathmullen, a seaside town in Co. Donegal, in the north of the Irish Republic, into a family of deep Christian tradition. When he made his request to make perpetual vows, his superior noted: "In his family there are eight boys; four have already been ordained priests - one of them is a Trappist - and the other four are preparing for the priesthood."

He was the son of a police inspector, which no doubt explains why the family had to move and why he found himself in Northern Ireland for his primary and secondary education. These he did in Belfast, in the Holy Family school, then with the Christian Brothers at St Mary's College. He would complete his secondary education at Montfort College where he spent a year and a half.

After his novitiate in Totton and the scholasticate in Church Stretton, he was ordained priest on 13 March 1954 by Mgr. Joseph Murphy, the Bishop of Shrewsbury. His superiors seemed to hesitate over where to send him. He had had much difficulty in his studies, yet he was sent to Romsey as a teacher, and stayed there for three years. Then he was sent to Totton as assistant novice-master. He remained in this post for four years. But it was in the preaching of retreats and parish missions that he was to find his greatest fulfilment. This Irishman would have marvellous success among the Scots. He resided in Barrhead, near Glasgow, from 1961 onwards.

For the Christmas and New Year festivities, he went on holiday with his family. His sister welcomed him. On the morning of 6 January, he went to the church to celebrate Mass, then returned to the house to have breakfast. Then he went to visit the toilet. Worried that she did not see him come out again, his sister went in search of the parish-priest, and together they forced the door open, only to find Desmond dead. He was just a few weeks past his 53rd birthday.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE