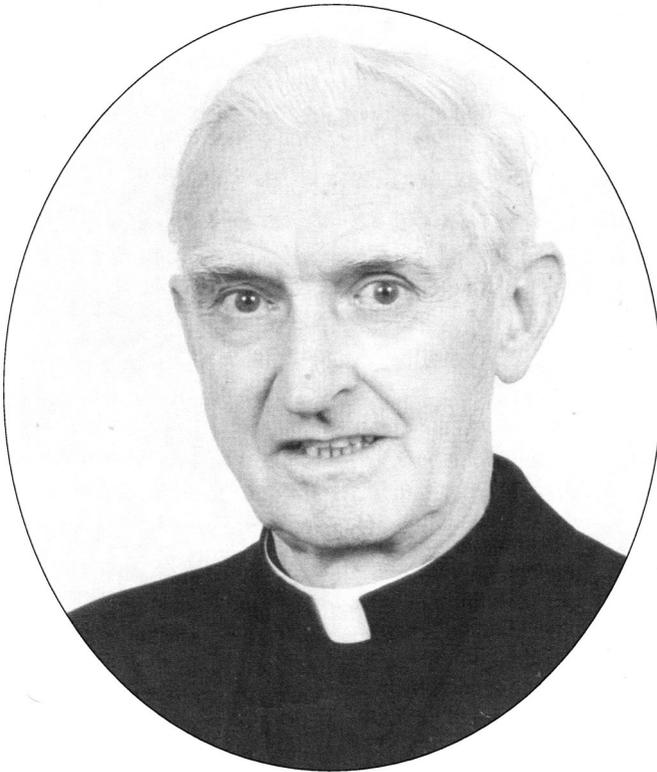


In Memory of



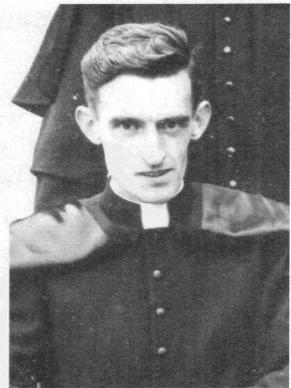
Dean Denis O'Connor

1922 - 2013

Our beloved Dean was born in Dromore, near Bantry in 1922. He attended the local national school, where his father was Principal and he went to Farranferris for his secondary education. At Farranferris he achieved a love and knowledge of the Irish language, engendered by trips to Ballyferriter in Co. Kerry with his school. He was ordained in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth on the 20th June 1948. The day after his ordination, Fr. Denis said his First Mass in Maynooth in the presence of his parents and family members.



Fr. Denis's first appointment was in Youghal. After ministering in the Cloyne Diocese he was appointed chaplain to the Reparation Convent in 1954 and from 1957 he served successively as curate in the South Parish, where he was very involved in the Scouts, Carrigfada (near Rosscarbery) and Kinsale.

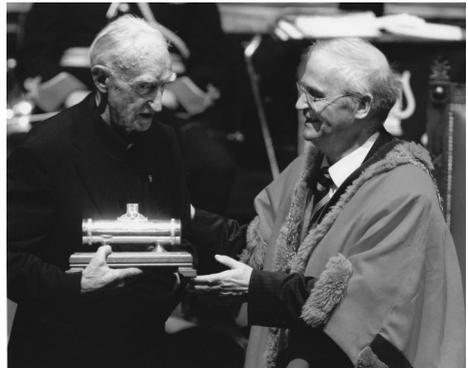


In 1970 he was appointed to Togher, which was gaining the status of Parish, and there he oversaw the building of the new church, schools and parish residences. He was a great support to his people during the National Rent Strike. He was appointed Administrator of the North Cathedral in 1977. Four years later Fr. Denis moved to Farranree, before coming to Dennehy's Cross in 1984.

In 1988 the late Bishop Murphy appointed him Dean of the Diocese of Cork and Ross. In 1998 he retired as Parish Priest of Ballineaspig, but to the delight of the parish stayed on in Dennehy's Cross. The Dean endeared himself to parishioners wherever he served.

On Friday the 22nd of May 2009 the Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Brian Bermingham and Cork City Council conferred the Freedom of the City of Cork on Dean Denis at a specially convened meeting. The ceremony took place in the Concert Hall of City Hall, filled to capacity with invited guests, His Lordship, Bishop John Buckley, the Dean's family, friends, confreres in religion and members of various groups active in the parish community.

The Lord Mayor thanked the Dean for his faithful service to the people and priests of the Diocese, in many parishes and in so many diverse ways. He remarked that the Dean was always forward thinking and open to fresh ideas, throughout his long ministry of sixty years.



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The Dean thanked the Lord Mayor and the city fathers for the honour which they had bestowed on him, an honour which was unexpected but much appreciated.

Amongst the many tributes was one from Michael Lehane, a parishioner and life long friend. "Through his encouragement, foresight and leadership, one of the first Pastoral Councils in the Diocese was formed in 1987. His earnest wish was that more and more lay people in the Parish would take an active part in the life of the Parish.

Dean O'Connor was endowed with many fine qualities. His commonsense and down to earth approach to issues that demanded his attention was evident in the way he approached and dealt with problems. He possessed a deep understanding

of human nature, of the difficulties of parents rearing families and of the problems that young people face in the modern world.”

President Michael B. Murphy of UCC, on hearing of the Dean’s death, wrote: “Dean Denis O’ Connor was for many years a Director of the Honan Trust at University College Cork. Established more than a century ago, it has provided spiritual nurture to generations of young people studying at UCC. Dean Denis exhibited the wisdom of ages, an extraordinary understanding of the mindset of free thinking youth in helping shape the services of the chaplaincy at the university over recent decades. Symptomatic of his low key, humble and self effacing approach to life, it is likely that most will have been unaware of his guiding hand.”

It was with deep sadness that the Staff and pupils of St. Catherine’s learned of the passing of our beloved Dean O’ Connor. His last visit to us was on Ash Wednesday just over 2 years ago - he and Fr. Kieran arrived to give ashes to all the pupils . Although weak, his smiling presence touched us on that cold and damp Spring day, as it always did. The children and staff could always sense the humanity and sanctity of this beautiful man and looked forward to every visit and every sacrament over which he so caringly presided. He served on the Board of Management of St. Catherine’s for several decades and began each meeting with a moving prayer for guidance that we would always do what was best for “the children and the teachers”. We have indeed been blessed to have known and been guided by such a wise and caring shepherd. R.I.P. Carmel O’ Sullivan, Principal, St. Catherine’s N.S.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a Anam Dílis agus ní bheidh a leithéid ann arís.