

# The Catholic Register.

"Truth is Catholic; proclaim it ever, and God will effect the rest."—BALMEZ.

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## DEATH OF MONSIGNOR ROONEY.



The melancholy duty devolves upon us to-day of chronicling the sad demise of a good man and a holy priest. Very Rev. Monsignor Rooney breathed his last at 1 a.m. of the morning of Thursday last the 27th December. It must be a subject of much consolation to all his surviving friends, and to his weeping relatives, to know, that a frequent and heartfelt prayer of his while living was answered, viz.: that he should be spared the peril of an unprovided and unforeseen death. Every possible provision that holy church has in reserve for the comfort and happiness of dying persons, was abundantly vouchsafed him in his last moments.

Besides the devoted and disconsolate niece who had been the prop and solace of his declining years, there were Sisters of Charity kneeling in prayer at his bedside, and the priests of the household, who impressed with the solemnity of death's approach, whispered to him words of hope, while suggesting a final petition for mercy and pardon. The last saving sacraments were administered on the evening previous by the hands of his Grace Archbishop Walsh. All the supplementary prayers for a happy release prescribed in the Roman Ritual had been recited, and the plenary Indulgence applied, ere the priest's shriven soul left its earthly tenement for the judgment seat accompanied with earnest pleading for mercy and laden with merits and good works.

Monsignor Rooney was born in the township of Cully-hanna, in the Diocese of Armagh, Ireland, in the year of grace 1821. After receiving an extensive and liberal an education as the times and the circumstances of his pious parents could afford, he was taken into partnership by his father, who did an extensive business in the linen trade between Belfast and Liverpool. Mr. Rooney was well advanced in years before his father's assured success in business allowed him to put in realization a thought which often pursued him, and which he was fully persuaded came from an inspired source. He abandoned a very lucrative position that just offered itself, and after obtaining full consent from parental authority, he opened corres-

pondence with Bishop De Charbonnel, as a result of which he reached Toronto, and entered St. Michael's College in May, 1851.

While pursuing his studies Mr. Rooney was able to render important services to the college authorities. He was appointed Master of Studies, and was brought daily into contact with the pupils, of whom some were diligent and exemplary and some were refractory and self-willed—but over all he gained ascendancy and mild control by his gentleness of character, by his prudential management and by his evenness of temper. After Father Rooney's ordination and appointment to the pastorate of St. Paul's parish, the qualities which rendered his services in St. Michael's so valuable were equally powerful in suppressing the agitations and misunderstandings which he found prevalent, and in establishing on a sure foundation a reign of peace and general satisfaction where an imprudent word or act might have raised a storm.

Father Rooney on taking possession of his first parish found the frame structures that answered for school accommodation in a very neglected and shabby state, no place to reside in but a small room in the House of Providence, itself lacking funds and almost the necessities of life. Soon, however, new energy was infused into the whole congregation, and liberal subscriptions came pouring in for ample equipment for the schools and for the erection of a grand parochial residence which was completed and paid for in a short time, and which, although not considered a perfection of architecture in our days of advancement, was looked upon away back in the fifties as quite a model home for a parish priest, and it stands to-day for solidity and finish a monument of the energy and substantial work that characterised all Father Rooney's subsequent undertakings.

With all his unremitting and severe parochial duties which were most conscientiously attended to, the good pastor never for a moment was oblivious of the calls of Charity. The orphans and destitute old age sheltered in the House of Providence were the constant object of his paternal solici-

tude. He went personally from house to house and interested not only the whole parish but this whole city in the sacred cause of benevolence and anxiety for the well being of those committed to his charge. The helpless derelicts who were gathered in daily and the zealous indefatigable sisters of St. Joseph who spared neither time nor rest in making the House of Providence a plentiful and happy home for all its inmates.

It was amid tears and sad regrets of both orphans and sisters that Father Rooney left St. Paul's to take charge of the more extensive and important parish of St. Mary's on Bathurst St. The late lamented Archbishop Lynch took into consideration the ever increasing demands on his solicitude of the western portions of the city's educational and spiritual interests. No priest in the Diocese was found more capable of attending to the new charge upon his Episcopal administration.

He created Father Rooney Vicar-General of the Diocese, and assigned to his chief pastoral care St. Mary's parish, and all the outlying districts north and west. In a short time by the new Vicar-General's industry and foresight the church at Brackton was erected, and valuable sites purchased at comparatively little cost considering the enormous sums that would be necessary to secure such advantages a few years later on, when the price asked for real estate in that quarter of the city arose to almost fabulous sums. After the schools in St. Mary's Parish were extensively enlarged and equipped, and school accommodation found on Peter street for several hundreds of children, and a magnificent convent erected, the grand new church which is an ornament to that portion of Toronto was built and decorated with all the adjuncts of modern art and finish. This beautiful church edifice was the pride and crowning of Father Rooney's life and labors. In testimony of his priestly virtues and successful career as a most zealous and devoted father to the flocks committed to his pastoral care, and as a reward of his constant fidelity and brave loyalty to every episcopal mandate or suggestion—he was promoted by Archbishop Walsh to the dignity of Domestic Prelate of his Holiness with the title of Monsignor, and investiture of the purple toga.

During the long time of Father Rooney's fruitful administration, a period of 37 years, he added to his many works a constant supervision of the Separate Schools of the city. Many a hard battle he fought and won in procuring their augmentation and successful results. Father Rooney was for many years chairman of the Catholic Separate School Board. He may well be called the Father if not the actual preserver of Catholic Separate Schools of this city and of the Province.

With hands full of meritorious work done for God and his fellow men, and laden with all the honours the church bestows on her most deserving and faithful toilers in the field of labour, Monsignor Rooney is gone to his rich reward leaving a memory that will be long cherished in the hearts of Toronto's grateful citizens, and an example that may be followed by all pastors of souls with ever-increasing advantage and profit to themselves.

The funeral took place from St. Mary's Church on the morning of Saturday Dec. 29th. His Grace Archbishop Walsh conducted the recitation of the office. Requiem High Mass was sung by His Lordship Bishop Dowling of Hamilton. Rev. W. Flannery, D.D., acted as deacon, Rev. P. Conway as sub-deacon, and Very Rev. V. P. Marijon, master of ceremonies.

Present in the sanctuary were Most Rev. John Walsh, Archbishop of Toronto; Most Rev. James Vincent Cleary, Archbishop of Kingston; Right Rev. Thos. J. Dowling, Bishop of Hamilton; Right Rev. Richard O'Connor, Bishop of Peterborough; Right Rev. Dennis O'Connor, Bishop of London; Mgr. Heenan, Dundas; Mgr. McEvay, Hamilton; Dr. E. B. Kilroy, Stratford; Dr. W. Flannery, St. Thomas; Dean Harris and Father Allaine, St. Catharines; Dean Egan, Barrie; Vicar General McCann, Revs. W. Bergin, J. L. Hand, Jas. Walsh, P. Coyle, J. M. Cruise, J. Lynett, F. Ryan, J. P. Treacy, F. C. Carberry, J. Muehan, F. Rohleder, J. Reddan, P. Lamarche, Toronto; Fathers Marijon, Brennan, Mulcahy, Frachon, Murray, and Mr. Finegan, of the Community of St. Basil, Toronto; Fathers Wynne and Grogan of the Redemptorist Order, Toronto; Kileullen, Adjala; Conway, Norwood; Labouriau, Penetanguishene; Sullivan, Thorold; Jettcott, Oshawa; Morris, Newmarket; Moyna, Stayner; McPhillips, Orangeville; McEntee, Port Colborne; Trayling, Dixie; Duffy, Orillia; O'Malley, Niagara Falls; Gibney, Alliston; Cantillon, Brock; McMahon, Thornhill; Kiernan, Collingwood; Wilson, Whitney, Caldwell; Brotherton, Downeyville; Gearin, Phelpsdown.

The church was filled to its utmost capacity. The Christian Brothers, the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Ladies of Loretto occupied seats in the front of the church. Among others noticed were Messrs. Edward Murphy, W. Ryan, Eugene O'Keefe, Patrick Hughes, B. B. Hughes, D. A. Carey, James Pape, James Gormally, H. Kelly, M. Walsh, M. O'Connor, Thos. Flynn, John Coffey, Hon. T. W. Anglin, Patrick Boyle, P. O'Connor, F. P. Lee, M. Stock, E. F. Clarke, H. H. Cook, E. King Dobbis, L. P. Kribs, R. Riddell.

After Mass His Grace Archbishop Walsh advanced to the sanctuary rail and delivered an impressive address on the character and life of the late Monsignor Rooney, who had been an intimate friend of His Grace for thirty-seven years. His Grace said:

The sad event which has assembled us together to-day, dearest brethren, though long expected, has filled with grief the hearts of the faithful parishioners. For well nigh twenty-four years Monsignor Rooney has ministered to the spiritual wants of the people of this parish with priestly zeal and fidelity. For twenty-four years he has preached to you the Word of God, has told of the goodness and the justice and the mercy of God. And now that he lies here in the coffin within the sanctuary he preaches his last sermon. "He being dead, yet speaketh." He here preaches his last sermon on the certainty of death, on the brevity and uncertainty of life and on the duty of preparing for that greater life which is beyond the grave.

"Remember man, thou art but dust, and unto dust thou shalt return," was