

FATHER PARKER

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SUDDEN DEATH IN ORANGE

It is with extreme regret we have to announce the death of Rev. Father John Parker, who has been stationed at Orange since January last, and who was previously stationed at Gilgandra, the sad event occurring with tragic suddenness on Sunday evening.

Father Parker was engaged at the evening devotions at St. Mary's Church in East Orange, and had returned to the sacristy after delivering an inspiring sermon to vest for Benediction, when he was stricken with a seizure. He was immediately taken to Dudley private hospital, but, despite the utmost attention bestowed on him by Dr. Paton and the Matron and nursing staff, he died two hours afterwards, fortified by the rites of the church.

Father Parker was 49 years of age, being born at Caperlee on November 22, 1884. He was educated at St. Patrick's College, Manly, and ordained there on November 30th., 1909. Soon afterwards he commenced work in the Bathurst Diocese, and was stationed at various centres, including Gulgong, Wellington, Dubbo, and was Priest in charge of Gilgandra for 18 years. A few years ago, owing to ill health, he retired from Gilgandra, and took up duties as Chaplain at St. Joseph's Convent, Perthville. Owing to shortage of Priests he had been relieving in the Orange parish since January last.

Father Parker was one of nature's gentlemen, a popular and much beloved Priest, and his unexpected death, whilst coming as a great shock to all who knew him, will also mean a severe loss to the Bishop and the Diocese, particularly at the present time, when there is a great shortage of Priests.

Father Parker is survived by two

brother, and one sister, Mrs. P. Gaynon, of Gilgandra, who, on hearing the sad news, motored to Orange on Monday morning.

Solemn Obsequies

Thotabuls emitting mists of incense, altars draped in black, vigil candles and priests in vestments moving silently about the sanctuary, created an atmosphere of solemnity at the Requiem Mass for the Rev. John Parker, at St. Joseph's Church, Orange on Tuesday morning.

The congregation, which packed the church to its capacity, awed by the impressiveness of the ceremony rose, and with bowed heads watched the procession of surpliced priests which filed from the sacristy to the altar steps.

His Lordship, the Right Rev. J. Norton, Bishop of Bathurst, accompanied them. The impressiveness of the occasion was accentuated by the chant of the priests, before the mass was commenced. The Bishop was then robed with the rich vestments, and accompanied by Rev. Fathers Sheehan (deacon), Emilhainz (sub-deacon), Lonergan (assistant priest), Crowe and Scanlan (assistant deacons), and Dr. Gummer (master of ceremonies), ascended the altar steps in preparation for the Mass, which was silently followed by the congregation.

At the conclusion, the Rev. Father J. Kelly (Wellington, and formerly of Orange), delivered the panegyric from the pulpit; that the people were gathered together at the sacrifice of the Mass to offer their prayers for the repose of the soul of the Rev. John Parker before the consignment of his body to the depth of the grave. The tragic suddenness of his death came as a great shock to the Catholics of Orange, and other places where the beloved priest was known. The Rev. John Parker was 49 years old, and was born at Caperlee in 1884. He commenced his theological studies, and was ordained at St. Patrick's College, Manly in 1909. He commenced the carrying on of his priestly services shortly afterwards, and God had given to his care the people of many towns in the State.

and God had given to his care the people of many towns in the State. After leaving Gilgandra because of ill-health, he took up duties as chaplain at St. Joseph's Convent, Perthville.

All of those who were acquainted with the deceased priest, continued Father Kelly, were struck by his kindly disposition and hospitality, and his generosity to the poor was a feature of his character. His work in his Master's vineyard was finished, and he was called to God to give an account of his stewardship. Could it be said, in answer to Christ's query, "Are you prepared?" that we are ready to die.

Father Kelly concluded by asking the congregation for the prayers for the repose of the soul of the Rev. John Parker.

The coffin, lying in the main aisle of the church, was then approached by the Bishop, with his attendant train of clergymen. After the coffin had been sprinkled with holy water, and the priests had chanted over the

body, it was raised aloft by the pall bearers, Messrs. G. Cuzner, F. Say, Norris, W. Sharkey, M. Carol and L. Hammond.

Father Emilhainz preceded the remains with a cross raised aloft, and with two acolytes bearing candles. Children of the Catholic schools followed, and members of the Children of Mary, then the priests and the Bishop, accompanied by Rev. Father Sheehan. As the procession wended its way along the main aisle of the church the bell tolled, and the congregation knelt with bowed heads, until the cortege had passed through the doors.

The coffin was then delivered into the hearse, and the impressive funeral proceeded to the cemetery, via Hill and Summer Streets.

All business houses paid their respects to the deceased priest with closed doors.

Other priests in the sanctuary were:—Right Rev. Monsignor O'Donnell (Dubbo), Fathers O. Hennessy

(Narromine-Wilcannia-Forbes diocese), G. Bartley (Koorawatha-Goulburn dioceses), J. P. Kelly and J. Bayliss (Wellington), Casey (Carcoar), Brosnan (Molong), Dunne and Duffy (Cathedral, Bathurst), Searson (Cumnock), Wisely (Rockley), E. Crowe and P. Kelly (Gulgong), T. Evison (Gilgandra), Phillips and Sacristan (St. Stanislaus College), J. Nolan (Eugowra), P. Masteron and J. McMahon (Cowra), T. Reen Healey (Kandos), M. Henry (Coonamble), G. O'Byrne (Mudgee), E. Fahy (Canowindra), O'Herilhy (Coonabarabran), J. Corcoran (Dubbo).

The last prayers were recited by his Lordship Right Rev. Dr. Norton, assisted by the clergy.

The last sermon preached by the late Rev. Father Parker was at the 7 o'clock mass at St. Joseph's Orange, on Sunday. The subject was "Purity," and it was a masterly effort, the members of the congregation being greatly impressed by his fervor.