

Roscommon in America

Father Coman Brady

1935 - 2009

Chaplain to the Roscommon Society 1959-2009

By Father Kevin Flanagan

My Good friend and classmate Fr. Coman Brady was called to the Lord on July 20, 2009. A few weeks before, he had celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his priesthood with his beloved parishioners at St. Vincent Ferrer Church in Brooklyn, New York. It was a well deserved two-day celebration for a special and dedicated priest and spiritual leader.

Fr. Coman had served the community of St. Vincent, as their good pastor for almost twenty five years. Because of his mission to Christ's poor, he made a choice to stay with his parish family, most of whom were immigrants from Haiti. Many times during his priesthood, he could have gone to a more affluent parish, but he chose to stay with his "beloved Haitians". There was a natural mutual love and respect between shepherd and flock. This was so evident on the occasion of his funeral celebrated before a packed church. They truly loved and appreciated all that Fr. Coman had done for them.

The Roscommon Society has been most fortunate to have such an outstanding priest as its Chaplain. Each year he celebrated the November Mass for the deceased members, attended and participated in every function, got to almost every meeting and seemed to be always available. Fr. Coman was always the true and gracious priest. He was a true Roscommon man and always proud of his native Elphin. Fr. Coman was born on February 17, 1935. His faith was enhanced in his home on Main Street, through the loving example of his parents, Patrick and Kathleen (nee Collins) and siblings: sisters-Marie and Patty and brothers-Sean, Fr. Pat, Eamon, Aidan, Joe and Kevin. His older brother, Fr. Pat was ordained eight years before.

We met for the first time in Summerhill College, Silgo at the age of thirteen. Little did either of us know that we would spend the next eleven years together in College and Seminary in St. Patrick's College, Carlow as classmates, roommates and friends. In later years we traveled together and always kept in touch. He was ordained on June 13, 1959 and was appointed

to the Diocese of Brooklyn serving first at St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Brooklyn and subsequently serving the parishes of St. Mary Magdalene, Springfield Gardens, Queens and St. Vincent Ferrer, Brooklyn. Fr. Coman had a special relationship with his younger brother Kevin, Meta and family, and their home was a second home for him.

Fr. Coman was tall in stature, but more important he stood tall for principle and what he believed in. He sincerely desired peace and justice for all people, and he lived by these principles every day of his life. His motto in life was: Expand your heart. Be open to new ideas. Live gently. Live simply. Laugh often. Love deeply. Be hospitable. Give generously. Stand for a cause. See good everywhere. Dream into being a world without war.

Fr. Coman Brady epitomized and lived every article of this. He lived gently and simply. He loved everyone deeply and laughed often with a wonderful sense of humor. His home was always open and strangers were made welcome day and night. He always stood for the cause of peace and an absence of war and showed tremendous courage and fortitude. Above all he was deeply spiritual and for me the ideal priest. He was a true example of his Lord and master Jesus Christ and followed his example throughout his earthly life. Fr. Coman was a life long member of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association and Chaplain to the New York Association.

Today, there is a labyrinth and garden of Remembrance dedicated to his memory at St. Peter's College, Jersey City, NJ and a statue of St. Therese donated by him in St. Therese Church in Brooklyn, NY.

May his gentle and noble soul rest in peace as he always desired.
Ar dheis De go mbeigh a anam!