

On this Feast of Pentecost, as we celebrate the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, by happy coincidence, we also have the joy of celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the Priestly Ordination of Canon John Daly and Father Eugene Boyce. We join in thanking them for their many years of dedicated service and we congratulate them both. We will mark this very important occasion in their lives at concelebrated Mass at noon on Sunday.

Fr Gerard

Canon John Daly



In the course of fifty years as a priest of the diocese of Limerick I had the privilege of serving in six parishes, St Joseph's, Our Lady of the Rosary, St Nicholas, Bruff / Grange and Meanus and St John's. My feeling is one of gratitude to God for the grace he bestowed on me for during those fifty years I feel very privileged to have the opportunity to work with so many committed priests, Salesian Sisters, Mercy Sisters and FCJ Sisters and Irish Christian Brothers, Unit Pastoral councils, Choirs, Sacristans, Folk Groups and many generous volunteers and the many friends I have made on the way.

I acknowledge the unfailing support of my family who were with me at the various stages of my life. To Bishops Jeremiah Newman, Donal Murray and Brendan Leahy our present Bishop who were each such good shepherds each in their unique way imitating Jesus our Shepherd.

Fr Eugene Boyce



Golden Jubilee celebration of the Priesthood

It amazes one at how quickly the years speed past and one finds, having lived some fifty years in a profession, that those years are filled with its special faith-filled and delightful moments, its many good moments, combined with difficult and horrid moments, one wishes to forget.

On the 8th June 1975 in the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes church, Diocese of Limerick, began with the ordinations by Dr Jeremiah Newman, D.D., of Canon Johnny Daly, Fr Mossie O'Sullivan, Fr Gerard Cantillon, RIP, Fr Eugene Boyce and Fr. Tommy Keane, RIP.

From this time the priest quietly leaves his family to engage in the daily life of the communities they are assigned to, giving to others the skills and talents of their own lives, moved with a gentle love and caring to spread the Word of Christ to a people searching for a place to graze. Here one spreads the alive message of Christ, sharing the mercy and compassion, being close to his people, trying to be a servant, soothing the wounded, with a sympathetic ear, showing a gentle mercy.

The priest with hands blessed from ordination shares God's mercy at the service of the people in the confessional. Each priest is different in the style of confessors. It is not easy to tread the road between lax and rigorist in bearing witness to Christ. The rigorist washes his hands of them, treating them in a cold and rigid way, while the laxist washes his hands of them, being apparently merciful, but in reality he does not take seriously the problems of conscience by minimizing the sin. True mercy takes the person into one's care, listens to them attentively, making every effort to approach the situation with respect and truth, as one accompanies them on the journey of reconciliation.

The Eucharist which we daily share with those present, is a discovery of our identity as shepherds. In every Mass we truly try to make the words of Christ our own. "This is my Body, which is given up for you." This is the meaning of our life. These words can daily renew the promises we made at our priestly ordination.

The priest must be above all be a man of prayer. It is in union with God, that one overcomes the countless temptations of evil, which one frequently encounters. As a priest one gives daily time to the prayer of the Church, in the Breviary, the Rosary prayer, the Divine Mercy prayer, and the silent meditations on the various Scripture readings, and the quiet peace within oneself sharing our God's presence with others.

The Kingdom of God which we live on this earth is a struggle for many who are poor and voiceless. We as priests must not remain on the side-lines as we struggle for justice in our world. At the last judgement we will focus precisely on what we have done for Christ in the poor, sick, strangers and prisoners. We will be judged on how we have loved and cared for others. St. John Paul II said, there can be no love without justice.

The priest also displays a joy and a sense of humour to spread the word of God as the laity whom they work with, prays for them that they will be good shepherds filled with the smell of the sheep.