

CANON WILLIAM ANTHONY



William Anthony was born on Saturday the 20th July 1912 into a Scottish Presbyterian family. He was educated at Berwickshire High School and Dunbar Grammar School before commencing work as a van driver for a local Ironmonger company. His first visit to a Catholic Church was at Edinburgh Cathedral on 25th October 1933 and he first attended Mass at the age of 22 on 16th June, Trinity Sunday, 1935.

His first instruction in the Catholic Faith was from Fr Patrick Lynch and he was received into the Church on Thursday 19th December 1935 and made his First Holy Communion a few days later on Sunday 22nd December 1935. At this time his ambition was to become married to a Catholic girl however this was not to be and after his romance had ended he persisted with his conversion to Catholicism. He was confirmed on Sunday 3rd April 1938, Passion Sunday.

Later that year he was approached by Dr John Ward of Dunbar who asked him if he had ever considered that his vocation was larger than just becoming a Catholic and had he ever considered the Priesthood? After a period of consideration and prayer he set out on what was to become a period of study for 10 years before his ordination.

On 16th September 1938 he commenced his studies under the tutelage of the Society of Jesus at Campion House Osterly. After a period of almost 3 years at Osterly, Fr Anthony left for Blairs Seminary in Aberdeen where he received the Tonsure on the 23rd September 1942. After further studies he left Blairs in 1942 to attend St Edmunds College in Ware where he received First Minor Orders on Sunday 28th October 1945 and then Second Minor Orders on Sunday 3rd November 1946. After yet more study at Ware he received Major order of the Sub diaconate on Saturday 31st May 1947 (Pentecost Ember Saturday) and the Major Order of the Diaconate on the feast of Christ the King, Sunday 26th October 1947.

Fr Anthony was ordained a Priest at Saints Peter and Paul's Cathedral Edinburgh on 29th June 1948 by His Grace Joseph Archbishop McDonald.

In September 1948 he arrived here in St Patrick's Kilsyth on his first Parish mission where he was to remain until 1956 working with his Parish Priest Michael Canon Downey and the other Assistant Priest at that time Father later Monsignor James K Brennan.



Fr Anthony in 1955 on pilgrimage to Lourdes with St Patrick's Parish with rear l-r Miss Grace Coyle, Fr William Anthony, Miss Alice Melling (behind) unknown front row l-r Miss Polly Kelly and Miss Sarah Mulligan.



Fr Anthony in 1955 on pilgrimage to Lourdes with St Patrick's Parish with l-r Miss Liz McCart, Miss Polly Kelly, Fr William Anthony, Miss Sarah Mulligan, Miss Grace Coyle.



**1954 on pilgrimage to Lourdes with St Patrick's Parish
with l-r Ann Deering, Fr Anthony and Nan Penman.**

Fr Anthony left Kilsyth in August 1956 shortly before the death of the Canon Downey in December of the same year.

From Kilsyth, Fr Anthony went to St Francis Xavier's Falkirk from 1956 until 1964 and then went to St Columba's Edinburgh from 1964 to 1969. After leaving Edinburgh he returned to Duns to Our Lady Immaculate and St Margaret's on Thursday 13th March 1969 again as assistant Priest.

On the 9th November 1972, Fr Anthony arrived as Parish Priest of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Bernadettes, Larbert, back again in the Falkirk area he knew so well. His final Parish was to be Sacred Heart in Grangemouth where he arrived in October 1979. Fr Anthony was installed as Honorary Canon of the Cathedral Chapter at Edinburgh Cathedral by Archbishop Keith O'Brien on Tuesday 9th February 1988. He retired from Parish life shortly thereafter in September 1989 and he went to live at a private address within the Parish of St Anthony's Polmont close by his former Parishes of St Francis Xavier's Falkirk and Our Lady of Lourdes and St Bernadette's, Larbert.

Fr Anthony continued to take an active part in the life of his local Parish helping when and where he could and also in the life of diocesan activities. During his period of retiral he could often be seen at

events and occasions throughout the diocese. After a period of illness following a stroke in 2000 he was admitted to Nazareth House, Lasswade where he died on 30th August 2006 at the age of 94.

His funeral Mass took place on Mon 4th September 2006 in the church of The Sacred Heart in Grangemouth where the sermon was preached by his friend Fr Leo Glancy.

Funeral Mass for Canon William Anthony at the Sacred Heart Church, Grangemouth.

Homily Preached by Fr Leo Glancy. Monday 4th September 2006.

Canon William Anthony will be greatly missed by his sister Peggy and his brother in law Bob Blair, his niece Moira and his faithful housekeeper, Winnie Norcott and by the many individuals and families who became part of his life and prayers over the past 94 years. Today we join with him in prayer as he is with the Lord, face to face.

A very organised person, he left me a little notebook entitled: 'Dates in my life.'

'Born Saturday 20th July 1912 at Manuel Junction Stirlingshire.'

'Baptised by Rev David Bayne, Church of Scotland, 19th September 1912.'

'First day at school 17th April 1917.'

'Left Manuel 9th July 1920.'

'Arrived Duns 10th July 1920.'

It read like a railway timetable as a list of 50 events unfolds including on a lighter note:

'Saturday 16th December 1922, began to follow Celtic!! Score: Hearts 0, Celtic 3.'

'Started work in George Graham, Ironmonger 3rd Nov 1928. Became Van Man 31st May 1922.'

'Courtied Catholic girl 16th December 1922. First visit to a Catholic Church (Edinburgh Cathedral) 25th October 1933.'

'First instructed in the faith by Fr Paddy Lynch 4th June 1935. First Holy Communion 19th December 1935.'

'Romance broke down Sunday 5th July 1936 and finally ended Thursday 15th May 1937.'

'Confirmed 3rd April 1938. Approached about the priesthood by Dr John Ward at Dunbar on Tuesday 16th August 1938.'

His journey towards the Priesthood took him from Companion House, Osterly in 1939, to Blairs in 1942, St Edmund College, Ware in 1944 until his ordination by his Grace Andrew Joseph MacDonald, in St Mary's Cathedral Edinburgh on Tuesday 29th June 1948.

He arrived at his first mission of St Patrick's Kilsyth on the 25th September 1948. In 1956 he came to St Francis Xavier's Falkirk; in 1964 he was appointed to St Columba's Edinburgh, and in 1969 he returned to Dun's – this time as Parish Priest. From there he came to Our Lady of Lourdes and St Bernadette's, Larbert and in 1979 to Sacred Heart, Grangemouth. He was installed as Honorary Canon on the 9th February 1988 and retired to Polmont in 1991. He records how he came to Nazareth House on 29th November 2001. His final entry reads: *'Date of Death: Unknown - no advance information.'*

Canon Anthony then goes on to provide us with the readings and the Hymns for his funeral Mass which MUST include *'Jesus the very thought of thee with sweetness fills my breast'*.

Every day of his life he set aside time for prayer. Daily Mass, the great prayer of the Church, the Rosary were the main stations where the train of a busy Priestly life stopped. I remember his prayer book, *'The Keys of Heaven'*. It was almost falling apart as he knelt in the church. One day we were talking about the list of people that he was asked to pray for. Fr Anthony said that his list was taking up too much time. He would have to cut it down a bit and leave it to the Lord who knows all that is in our hearts.

The first reading from the book of Job is the prayer of one who can look back on life and see events

through the eyes and the heart of God. *'After my awakening he will set me close to Him. He will set me down at table and wait on me.'*

When look at where vocations to the Priesthood have come from we find some very interesting stories. Canon Anthony was called to the Priesthood from a railway cottage at Manuel Junction, the home of a very faithful family of the Church of Scotland. His story resonates with that of Fr Jack McKee, a great friend Fr Willie McLaughlin, former Parish Priest of St Columba's. The story of his vocation begins with that of his grandfather a railway signalman who lived with his wife and seven children in a small railwayman's cottage in Balerno. From that cottage and over the next generation came four Priests; Fr John McMahon, Mill Hill, Fr John McKee PP in Broxburn in 1937, Mgr Francis Duffy and Fr Jack McKee. Certainly, our God is full of surprises and what a wonderful tribute to the faith of that generation.

The second reading from Romans can be a wonderful reminder of the times in our faith journey when we stop to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation. *'It is God therefor that each of us must give an account of himself.'* Each confession a new awakening as we journey through life. Go now and sin no more: *'The Lord is Compassion and Love'*: never forget all His love. I wonder how many confessions Canon Anthony celebrated as Priest and Penitent over 54 years in the Priesthood?!

The Gospel Story begins with Jesus coming with his disciples to mourn the death of his friend, Lazarus. Martha makes that wonderful act of faith: *'Yes Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the son of God, the one who is to come into this world.'* Jesus responds by going into the tomb and calling Lazarus out from the darkness and into the light, from death to life, from bondage to freedom.... unbind him.

In every Mass we proclaim the mystery of Faith: *'Christ has died Christ has risen, Christ will come again'* as we receive the risen Lord in Holy Communion. He invites us to rise to new life in Him and share his love with those most in need.

Canon Anthony as Chaplain to the SVDP Conferences was never slow to help those in need. He also supported many of the mission congregations in their work.

Thank you to Winnie his faithful house keeper over the years, to his family and all those who have cared for Canon Anthony especially in his later years. He always loved to care for others. It is wonderful to know that his own needs did not go unnoticed or forgotten.

By special request of Canon Anthony we now sing the Offertory of our Mass:

'Jesus the very thought of Thee with sweetness fills my breast; but sweeter far Thy face to see and in Thy presence rest.'

Sing it with hope and with joy and remember Canon Anthony in your prayers!

CANON WILLIAM ANTHONY

Born 20th July 1912: Ordained Priest 29 June 1948 : Died 30 August 2006

DATES IN MY LIFE

Written by hand in pencil by Canon William Anthony and faithfully copied by Fr Leo Glancy in Sacred Heart, Grangemouth on the 31 January 2007.

1. Born Saturday 20th July 1912 at Manuel Junction, Stirlingshire
2. Baptised as Presbyterian, Church of Scotland by Rev David Bayne, 19th September 1912
3. Went to school 17th April 1917
4. Left Manuel 9th July 1920

5. Arrived Duns 10th July 1920
6. Went to primary School 27th September 1920
- 6a. Saturday 16th September 1922 began to follow Celtic!! Score Hearts 0 Celtic 3
7. Went to Berwickshire High School 8th September 1924
8. Left above school 16th September 1928
9. Left Duns, arrived Dunbar 17th February 1928
10. Went to Dunbar Grammar School 21st February 1928
11. Left same 2nd November 1928 (Aged 16)
12. Started work in George Grahame, Ironmonger 3rd November 1928
13. Became van man 31st May 1932
14. First Driving License 2nd September 1932
15. Left Work 31st August 1939. Tried various other jobs.
16. Courted Catholic Girl 15th December 1932
17. First visit to Catholic Church (Edinburgh Cathedral) 25th October 1933
18. First attendance at a Catholic Service 23rd May 1935
19. Attended Mass for the first time, Sunday 16th June 1935, Trinity Sunday.
20. First instruction in the Faith by Fr Paddy Lynch Tuesday 4th June 1935
21. 21 instructions finished 12th December 1935
22. Duly received into the Church Thursday 19th December 1935 by Fr Paddy Lynch
23. First Holy Communion Sunday 22nd December 1935 (4th in Advent)
24. Romance broke down Sunday 5th July 1936
25. Same, finally, Thursday 13th May 1937
26. Confirmed Sunday 3rd April 1938, Passion Sunday. Note, still residing in Dunbar.
27. Approached about Priesthood Tuesday 16th August 1938 by Dr John Ward in Dunbar
28. Left for Campion House, Osterley 15th September 1939
29. Arrived Campion House Saturday 16th September 1939
30. Left Osterley Wednesday 29th July 1942
31. Arrived Blairs College, Aberdeen Thursday 27th August 1942
32. Received Tonsure at Blairs 23rd September 1942 (Wednesday)
33. Left Blairs College Thursday 6th July 1944
34. Arrived St Edmunds College, Ware Monday 25th September 1944
35. Received First Minor Orders Sunday 28th October 1945 (Christ the King)
36. Received Second Minor Orders Sunday 3rd November 1946 (21st Sunday after Pentecost)
37. Appointed Senior Divine Monday 14th April 1947 (Low Monday)
38. Received Major Order Sub diaconate Saturday 31st May 1947 (Pentecost Ember Saturday)
39. Received Major Order Diaconate Sunday 26th October 1947 (Christ the King)
40. Ordained a Priest Tuesday 29th June 1948 Saints Peter and Paul, Cathedral Edinburgh.
Notes: Tonsure by His Lordship George Bishop Bennett. First Minors conferred by His Eminence Cardinal Griffin. Second Minors and Sub diaconate by His Lordship Edward Bishop Myers. Diaconate by His Lordship George? Bishop Craven. Priesthood by His grace Joseph Archbishop McDonald
41. Arrived on First Mission Saturday 25th September 1948 St Patrick's, Kilsyth
42. First only real car accident Sunday 17th October 1954
43. Left Kilsyth, arrived St Francis Xavier's, Falkirk Saturday 25th August 1956

44. Left Falkirk arrived St Columba's Edinburgh Friday 11th September 1964
45. Left Edinburgh arrived Our Lady Immaculate and St Margaret's, Duns Thursday 13th March 1969
46. Left Duns arrived Our lady of Lourdes and St Bernadette's, Larbert Thursday 9th November 1972
47. Left Larbert, arrived Sacred Heart, Grangemouth, Wednesday 24th October 1979
48. Installed as Honorary Canon, Cathedral Edinburgh Tuesday 9th February 1988
49. Left Grangemouth, arrived at private address St Anthony's parish, Polmont Thursday 7th September 1989
50. Thursday 16th May 1991: Became ill, not fully recovered.
51. Unknown Date of Death: no advance information!
52. Friday January 2000. Stroke. Last drove a car.
53. Tuesday 20th November 2001 Arrived Nazareth House, Lasswade on a temporary basis, then decided to stay.

Readings at my Funeral

1st: Job 19: 1, 23-27 or Paschal Time Acts 10:34-43

Responsorial Psalm 7 Ps.102; 8,10,13-18 First Response

2nd Romans 14, 7-12

Gospel Acclamation John 11, 25-26

Gospel John 14

HYMNS to be arranged

Firmly I believe and Truly

Jesus the very thought of Thee (A MUST)

The King of Love my Shepherd is

Soul of my Saviour

Mary Immaculate Star of the Morning

Holy God we praise Thy Name

O God we give ourselves to today

Jesus my Lord, my God, my All

I am the Bread of Life (Bishop Constant's version)

Hail Queen of heaven

Please all verses of all hymns

Only two hymns at Holy Communion

Forbidden! Veiner's "Our Father": The Lord's My Shepherd (Crimmond tune)

Our Father again: recited!



Canon William Anthony donating a crucifix to Blair's College.

A parishioner remembers Fr. Anthony

“This is a lovely note from Grangemouth regarding Fr. William Anthony assistant Priest at Kilsyth St Patrick's. It made me laugh and it also made me cry when I read it!

I particularly like his dry sense of humour in his notes when he says, ‘*became a Celtic supporter*’, ‘*dated a Catholic girl*’ and had ‘*my first **real** car crash*’..... begging the question - how many other car crashes did he actually have?!

The only mention of Fr William Anthony in the Parish History is the text below where he is contrasted and compared to the athletic figure of Fr Brennan.

‘Shall those who knew Father Brennan ever forget his colleague for many years, Father Anthony?’

In many ways the exact contrast to Father Brennan in stature, mannerisms and habits - he was nevertheless in his own way an immensely popular curate, and his pawky humour and typically Scottish character endeared him to young and old alike. None was more assiduous in carrying out his duties, and he is remembered with affection by all.’

Fr. Anthony was by contrast to Fr Brennan a smaller man with pointy features and a speech impediment. He was greatly loved, and I remember watching how he was greeted by many in the

Parish on his return for a social event or celebration in the Church Hall. He was extremely popular even then, 30 years after he had left St Patrick's to go to Francis Xavier's, Falkirk in August 1956.

It's funny how small things have large consequences - being jilted by his girlfriend of 4 years and deciding to become a Priest instead, gifted the diocese with a wonderful wee man who touched so many that would otherwise not have known him."

Two of Canon Anthony's Prayer Cards

