



THE LATE FATHER PIUS McDONALD

**REV. (Capt.) PIUS A. McDONALD**

Father Pius was born at Glencoe, Vernon River, on March 26, 1878. His youth was blessed by the atmosphere of an ideal Catholic home, where he was carefully taught his first lessons of religion and brought up in piety and fear of the Lord.

He attended the district school and matriculated to the Prince of Wales College, and having attended that institution for one year and obtained a teacher's license, he began teaching in the Public Schools.

Teaching in the Public Schools is an excellent medium for self-development, as it requires strength of character to rule well and wisely, and necessitates clarity of thought in presenting to others the subjects taught, and continuously makes demands upon resourcefulness and initiative. Many owe the foundation of a successful career to experience garnered while acting in this capacity.

His soul however, longed for a fuller measure of usefulness. He entered St. Dunstan's College in 1900 and was graduated in June, 1904. During his College course, he was a careful, painstaking, and conscientious student, and always took an active part in College activities. He was Captain of the football team—the best ever foregathered on St. Dunstan's Campus—that in the autumn of 1903 defeated the Wanderers of Halifax on their own grounds. To be elected Captain of such a team was a tribute to his prowess as an athlete and a mark of the confidence and esteem in which he was held by his fellow students.

In September 1904, he entered the Grand Seminary, Montreal, to pursue his studies in Theology and prepare for the priesthood. He was ordained priest on January 5, 1908, by His Lordship Bishop McDonald in St. Joseph's Convent Chapel, Charlottetown. His first appointment was to the staff of St. Dunstan's College, but in the summer of 1908 he joined the Cathedral Staff where he labored for the next seven years. During those years he found ample scope for the exercise of his priestly zeal and he unstintingly gave the best that was in him in the performance of his various duties. He was director of the League of the Cross, and by his energy, foresight, and zeal opened up a new epoch



for this society. He proved himself to be an admirable leader of young men. His judgment was good and sound, and he could visualize a situation from the young man's viewpoint, so that he was able to gently but irresistibly give them true leadership.

This work prepared him well for the burden that was to devolve upon him later as Chaplain to the 105th and the other units in which he served both in England and in France. Now his opportunities for doing good were greater, but the foundation of his great success in working among the soldiers was acquired in his earlier work., and consisted of the exercise of the same zeal, coupled with his sound judgment and power to visualize the other's viewpoint. All who associated with him attest to his great influence for good, his generous giving of himself for the service of others, and to his high and noble character. No doubt he fills an early grave, because he was a martyr to duty.

On his return home after the war, he took up parochial duties again, and became absorbed in the interests spiritual and temporal of his flock. In his parish of St. George's he consolidated the senior classes of the different schools of his area into one central school room, and so great a success attended his efforts in this direction, that in the first year of its existence, his school matriculated eight pupils and captured a provincial scholarship. By a practical experiment he showed how the grave problem of rural education can be solved in this country.

But the hand of death was upon him, yet he faltered not, but went on courageously with his work, and maintained his cheerfulness to the end. Facing death was nothing new to him. Many a time had he faced it on the battlefields of France, and when the end came he went forth with the faith and confidence of a child, the courage of a true soldier, and the charity and resignation of a martyr.

Requiescat in pace.

