

# One in Heart and Mind

## Patrician Generalate Newsletter



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## Reflections of a Patrician Past Pupil

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Tullow has been this writer's home town since the early 1950s, which means that he has been influenced by the Patricians for more than a quarter of their history. As the author looks around Tullow and its surrounding areas he can see the buildings and the sites where the Brothers lived and worked - Bishop Delany's Penal Parish Church which served as the First Monastery (1808 – 1825), the Day School, Primary & Secondary (1818-1978), the Monastery, including Scholasticate (1825 – 1975), the Monastery National School (1910 - ), Mount St. Joseph, including Juniorate (1925 - 1994), Ballykealy House, Novitiate (1858 – 1980), Patrician Generalate (1975 – 2000), Tullow Community School (1978 - ) and Delany House (1994 - ).



**Christie and Mary  
McQuinn**

In 1958 he was in his final year of Primary School in the Monastery N.S. and ready to embark on his Secondary career in the Day School. The celebrations of 150 years of the Patrician order were coming up. His class was experiencing welcome breaks from the classroom by taking the short walk from school to the Church of the Most Holy Rosary where it was joined by pupils from the Brigidine Convent Primary School to rehearse Latin Gregorian Chant for the up-coming Mass of celebration, under the tutelage of Bro. Michael Malone RIP and Mother Michael Vaughan. The pupils had taken part in a similar exercise the previous year for the Brigidines. As, dressed in their white surplices and red soutanes, they participated in the ceremonies which were presided over by the late Bishop Thomas Keogh, with preacher, the late Mgr. Conway P.P., V. G., Bagenalstown, they did not realise that we were experiencing a high point in the Catholic history of Tullow and of Ireland.

The Tullow of the writer's childhood and youth was mainly taken up with the pursuit of the activities of agriculture and education. Every morning, come hail, rain or shine, the footsteps of Juniorate students could be heard as they walked the mile or so from the Mount to 7.30. a.m. Mass in the Parish Church. There, under the right hand gallery and behind, they closely packed the pews along with Novices, Scholastics and a large number of professed Brothers. The Convent Chapel opened on to the Sanctuary and was filled with Postulants, Novices and Professed Sisters. Boarders from the Convent Secondary School filled many rows at the front left of the Church. This school provided many of the Brigidine vocations in those years. The "young monks" were a frequent sight on the roads around Tullow, walking two-by-two, in full black, complete with hat.. They went swimming in Ballymurphy or played football on their pitch sited on the Sroughawn. Both institutes had farms to help feed their many mouths. These educational campuses were of significance to the local economy. There was even a tailor, Dan O'Brien, working in Mrs. Angie Johnson's, Mill Street, whose full time task seemed to be making suits and soutanes for the Patricians.

In the 1950's Tullow boys spent Junior and Senior Infants in mixed classes with the Brigidine Sisters. A week before the Summer Holidays they were escorted by a female lay teacher from the Convent to the Monastery School to begin their Patrician education. From age seven to age eighteen this author's teachers were exclusively Patrician Brothers.



**Bro. Robert**

His first teacher in the Primary school was Bro. Columban Cronin RIP, who helped to progress the class in the three Rs. Bro. Columban also led them in rousing communal singing. Bro. Robert Ruane RIP was their next teacher for two years. He, like the writer's father was from Co. Galway. His dynamism and presence as a teacher impressed the class, who looked forward to Friday Catechism class when he read interesting excerpts from the Lives of the Saints. He taught potential altar boys the Latin responses for the Mass in a clear way. When these started to serve Mass they learned to mumble them like everybody else! Bro. Robert was the organiser of the first servers' outing, which took two years to work and save for. The servers had monthly meetings to review progress. How they looked forward to the trip! They were not disappointed.

1808



Patrician Bicentenary



2008

After school Bro Robert trained the under 14 Gaelic Football team which won the County Final in 1953. The town celebrated with pride. The same boys formed the nucleus of the senior teams which won the County Final in the early 1960's and also played on the great county team of those years. Bro. Robert led in organising the local Feis, which was a competition in Gaelic culture – language, music, dancing and sport.

The writer's next teacher was Bro. Bosco Mulhare. He was very young at the time and was awaiting a place in teacher training college. Possessing a natural flare for teaching, he was just beginning a career which won him the respect of his pupils and of the wider community, both in the classroom and as a dedicated Gaelic Football mentor.



**Bro. Bosco**

The School Principal for those years was Bro Francis Redmond RIP. As the annual summer holidays approached the pupils were filled with the excitement. Bro Francis would caution the whole school assembly to be safety conscious over the many weeks which stretched ahead, especially with regards to swimming. In his role as Principal the present author did likewise. There was a difference however. The modern world is a more dangerous place for youth.

Bro. Francis was then appointed Superior General. He was replaced as Principal by Bro. Michael Malone RIP, who taught the writer's class for the last two years of its primary school career. He sparked the author's interest in History with his many stories of the centuries struggle for Irish freedom – which Ireland always seemed to lose! From him the writer learned to pick out the main points of material to be studied. He would get his classes to cross out the "padding" in their text books.



**Bro. Francis**

Brothers Robert, Francis and Michael taught two class groups together in the one room. They must have had over fifty pupils each at the one time. Present day teacher unions would not approve of such pupil-teacher ratios! As well as their weekday classes, all the brothers, who taught in the primary school, also conducted Catechism classes in the Church on Sundays after 11.15 Mass and sat with their class groups at 8.00 a.m. Mass for their monthly Communion Mass. This was a direct continuation of the work of the catechists of Bishop Delany's day and of the first four Patricians who were chosen from their ranks. In the hallway of the school was a display case which we called the "museum." It contained artefacts from the Brothers' missions around the world. From a young age the pupils had a global view based on this museum and on the stories they were told of life as experienced by the Patricians in India, Australia or America.

In 1958 the author's primary education came to an end. The class went three separate ways. Most boys left school on reaching fourteen years, which marked the end of compulsory education. Some went to the newly opened Vocational School, next door, as a preparation for a trade. Three or four went to the Patrician Day School, where they were joined by new classmates from other primary schools in the area. The first year class size was fourteen.



**Bro. Otteran**

The author found that the Day School, although it was modest in size, really opened his mind to the world of learning. The school shared the same teachers as the Mount and the Monastery. Bro. Valerian Whelan RIP was the First Year Latin teacher. He helped the author with an appreciation of languages and of our classical heritage. On one occasion he played L.P. records for the class of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas which led the writer to consider the value of other musical genres other than the current popular favourites. The elderly Bro. Austin O'Connell RIP gave the pupils the basis of geometrical theorems and algebraic techniques, skills on which the writer built to become a Mathematics and Science teacher. Bro. Ronan Cook encouraged his reading of English through the school library, which consisted of one glass-fronted press. Yet in that first year the writer was introduced to Sir.



**Bro. Valerian**

Walter Scott, John Buchan, Charles Dickens, Robert Louis Stephens and other writers who whetted a boy's appetite for adventure stories. Bro. Otteran Mohan taught the writer for his full secondary career. From Bro. Otteran, he got a love of English language and literature, a deeper insight into Latin and the classical world, an appreciation of the physical world through Geography, a deeper understanding of History, whether secular or church. He also introduced his pupils to the Gospel of St. Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, to the study of apologetics and of the Church's social teaching.

In their school-boy world, the Headmaster, Bro. Justinian D. Kelleher was a legend. Even today, when past pupils meet, anecdotes are recounted. Some could imitate his sayings and his accent to a tee. Again he was a constant presence for the writer's five years of secondary education. Name the subject and "Justie" could teach it. In a small school there was need for adaptation. He taught the author Religion, Physical Education, Irish, Commerce and Bookkeeping, History, Geography, Mathematics and Physics. He also taught the pupils public speaking and debating skills as well as giving them career guidance. Educational tours were a rarity in those days. He brought the whole school in a small bus on a tour to the main industries in Carlow town. He also brought the senior class on a bicycle tour to Wicklow.

When the author began in First Year in the Day School there were only three year groups. The furthest one could go academically

was to the Intermediate Certificate. If you wished to go further the only practical option was Boarding School. The school building consisted of four class rooms – two upstairs and two downstairs. The stairs was made of granite and was outside at the end of the building. The first year room was the first one that one met upstairs. You had to pass through it to get to the Second and Third Year room which was accessed through a glass partition. Both Second and Third Year pupils were taught together. Downstairs the third class, from the Monastery Primary School, were taught. There was a shortage of accommodation there.

John Cummins, Seamus Lawlor and the writer were neighbours, classmates and friends. When they sat the Intermediate Certificate in 1961 they did not know where or how they could continue their secondary education. Their three fathers RIP went to Mount St. Joseph, met with the then Superior General, Bro. Francis, and requested that provision be made to continue in the school up to Leaving Certificate. The Brothers were willing to accede to this extra demand on their resources. If the author’s memory serves him correctly, the annual fee went up from £7 for Intermediate Certificate to £21 for Leaving Certificate tuition. This was much cheaper than boarding school.

When seven of the author’s class came back to school in September to prepare for Leaving Certificate, they found that Bro. Justinian and Bro. Otteran had introduced themselves to the world of Science at a summer course. Bro. Otteran started the junior school with science while Bro. Justinian initiated the Leaving certificate group into Physics with the Laws of Motion. Needless to say they did very well in Physics in their final examinations.

For the new Fifth Year the teaching staff was joined by Bro. Sylvanus Commins and Bro. Linus Walker. Although Bro. Sylvanus had come back from retirement to teach us Leaving Certificate Mathematics, there was no doubt about his ability to do it. The author can still see him coming into class, the black soutane, the green sash and nothing in his hands – he didn’t need anything - it was all in his mind. The pupils did the work on the blackboard. From memory he would tell on which page were the homework questions. Bro. Linus taught us Irish. He demanded high standards. It was he who was largely responsible for developing the author’s enthusiasm for Gaelic language and culture as well as his interest in local history. The writer was privileged to have had him as a work colleague and friend in later years.



**Bro. Linus**

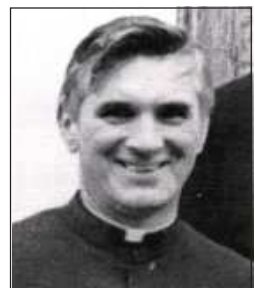
The school week consisted of five days plus a half day on Saturday. This half day was not as academically demanding, as it incorporated visits to the Blessed Sacrament, Confession, Stations of the Cross and the Memorare led by Bro. Justinian. Bro. Justinian promoted the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association in the School. It was through the medium of this association that the present writer first appreciated the formalities involved in meeting procedure

As the final examinations approached the class was given extra lessons in the evening by the Brothers. There was no talk in those days of grinds. When the first Leaving Certificate class graduated in 1963 it was crowned with success. This outcome justified the efforts and backing of the Patrician Community, the support of the parents and the work of the pupils. This writer was fortunate to gain the first place of three university scholarships awarded by Carlow Co. Council, which meant that he could afford to study Science at St. Patrick’s College Maynooth.

The writer was privileged to do some part-time teaching in the Day School as a prelude to embarking on studies for the Higher Diploma in Education. He had Bro. Otteran as Headmaster and Bro. Bosco and Bro. Vincent McCarthy as colleagues. The fraternal relations in the Dining Room impressed him. Bro. Bosco, punctual as always, wasted no time in the daily delivery of the curriculum. Bro. Vincent was bringing his vast teaching to the service of the school. He also made a major contribution to the setting up of the local Cheshire Home for the disabled. Bro. Otteran continued to be a thorough gentleman to work with.

In 1968 the writer, following the death of his father, took up a post as a teacher of Science and Mathematics in the local Vocational School. It was the beginning of free Post-Primary education. A sense of commitment to the more disadvantaged sections of society, no doubt rooted in Patrician ethos, was influential in this decision.

The year 1978 saw the amalgamation of the Brigidine Secondary School, the Patrician Secondary Day School and the Vocational School to form Tullow Community School. This school was to have three Trustees, the Provincial of the Brigidines, the Provincial of the Patricians and the Chair of the Vocational Education Committee. The Board of Management has nominees from each group and also teacher and parent nominees. Once again the writer found himself with Patrician colleagues. Bro. Justinian was by now suffering from ill health. He made valiant efforts to keep going in the school but was forced to retire in March of 1979, passing away on the following 6 August. Bro. Dermot Dunne, as a Teacher of Woodwork and Mechanical Drawing, brought sincerity and a work ethic that dovetailed perfectly with the Vocational element of the new school. He and Bro. Daniel did much to cement good relations and to help to integrate the three teaching staffs. Bro. Daniel Egan had been Headmaster of the Day School. His great sense of humour made a major contribution to staff morale. All his colleagues were heartbroken when he became ill on Christmas Day 1984 and died on 27 March 1987. Bro. Matthew Hayes and Bro. Martin O’Leary were skilled teachers who combined work in Mount St. Joseph with work



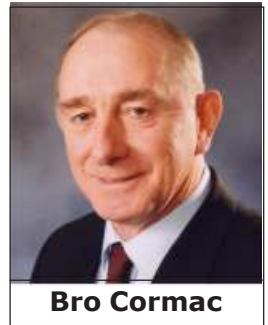
**Bro. Daniel**



**Bro. Dermot**

in the Community School. Bro. Linus was the last brother to teach in Tullow Community School. He added an academic gravitas and his own brand of humour to the life of the school. He could be described as the father figure of the school’s Gaelic department.

Bro Valerian was the first Chair of Tullow Community School’s Board of Management. This writer was privileged to become school Principal in January 1989, succeeding the late and distinguished Mr. C.H. Finlayson. Bro. Cormac Commins was then serving as Board Chair. He acted as Chair for another two terms of the writer’s time as Principal. Bro. Cormac’s experience, commitment and skill were much appreciated by the Board and by this writer. He carried out this role in the new context of educational and equality legislation, changing curricula, school development planning, policy evolution and implementation. This was in response to a changing world, a changing Ireland and a changing local scene. Other Patricians



Bro Cormac

to serve with distinction, and to make a unique contribution to the Board, were Bro. Camillus Regan and Bro. Linus. In 2004 the Provincial Superior, Bro. James O’Rourke wrote, commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the school:

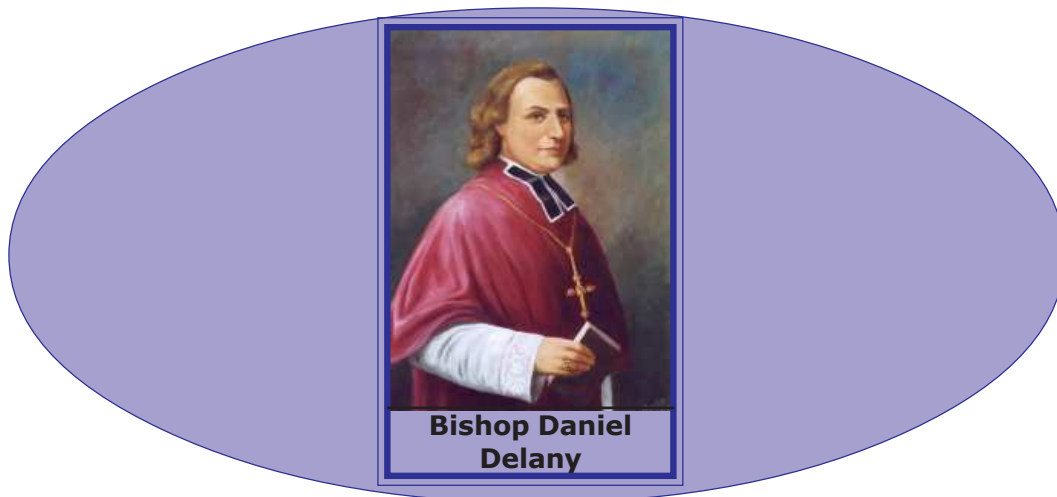


Bro. Camillus

“My experience tells me that Tullow Community School has never lost sight of the ideals and intentions of our Founder and that Christian values permeate every part of school life. Long may this continue.”

Given the extent of investment in personnel and in real estate in the Tullow area, and elsewhere, over two hundred years, what can be deduced as an explanation of the success of the Patrician project at home and abroad? The Brothers I have known had a wide spectrum of personalities and of talents. What they had in common was humanity, tough-mindedness, determination, resilience, energy, a sense of community, local commitment, and a global-vision. Their motto: “Pro Deo et Patria” was not mere words. We were taught, by word and by example, the love of God and the practical patriotism that is love of neighbour. The Brothers gave us the tools for our own upward social mobility, but they also instilled in us a sense of duty to use our talents for the wellbeing of others. They, themselves, led an austere lifestyle and invested their salaries in the schools in which they taught. Their only reward seemed to be the knowledge that their pupils had done well. Possessing a supportive fraternal culture, the Patricians nurtured a strong sense of mission among themselves. Organisational research has shown that such a sense of mission is necessary for success, whether on an individual level or on the level a sports team, political party, business venture, family or any enterprise.

From the nucleus of four founding Brothers, Bishop Daniel Delany left a legacy that has made a difference to the lives of many generations in Tullow, in various parts of Ireland and around the World. This writer is one of countless people who have reason to be grateful for having crossed the path of the Brothers of St. Patrick, and to have walked some of life’s journey in their company.



Bishop Daniel Delany

**Editor’s Note**

*This article, by Christie McQuinn, was originally submitted as a contribution to the collection of memoirs to be featured in the regular issues of the “Generalate Newsletter”. It is too large an undertaking to fit in with the limited space in the Newsletter and any attempt to edit it does not do it or its author justice. So here it is as a Newsletter Special. Our thanks to Christie for a Chronicle rather than a Memoir.*

