

ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. LYME ROAD, AXMINSTER EX13 5BE

BLESSING AND DEDICATION OF THE CALVARY WAR MEMORIAL ON 29TH MAY 1919

Report from Exeter & Plymouth Gazette dated 30th May 1919

"FALLEN HEROES

MEMORIAL CALVARY. DEDICATED AT AXMINSTER

Yesterday afternoon a solemn service was held at Axminster of blessing and dedicating the Memorial Calvary which has been erected outside the Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary, Lyme Road. The inscription in parallel columns is as follows:-

"In memory of the soldiers and sailors who have fallen in the Great War fighting for King country and home." "Eternal rest grant them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace."

The service was impressively conducted by the Rector the Very Reverend Monsignor Canon Gandy who was assisted by the Rev. Fathers Barney, (Exeter) Van Heede, (Lyme Regis) and Cyril Smith (Okehampton), the latter carrying the processional cross accompanied by four acolytes.

After a hymn had been devotionally rendered by the schoolchildren, an address was delivered by the Rev. Father Barney who spoke of all that the Cross should mean to Christians and appealed for a fuller realisation of the great sacrifice of Calvary. What we did not really agree about was the memorialising of Christ's death and sacrifice. Did we, however, take offence and charge our fellow-countrymen who erected memorials to the sacrifice and death of those who had laid down their lives in the war with being idolaters? We had not the slightest fear of being called idolaters or memorialising or having resource to statuary carving and poetry and prose and pictures and in every way showing forth what had been done in order to make it a standing memorial that future generations might be able to realise it in a way that they would not otherwise do. The sacrifice of Calvary had given the cue and the genius to every kind of sacrifice offered before had in mind the Redeemer to come. We must, emphasised the preacher, go back to memorialise it for the inspiration of every sacrifice.; we must never forget it, or be ashamed of it and memorialise it.

Canon Gandy, after another hymn by the children, performed the ceremony of blessing and dedicating the memorial after which the psalm "Out of the Depths" was recited. A solemn Benediction followed in the church which was crowded to overflowing. Sister Gabriel was at the organ and the service was of the most impressive character.

After the ceremony, many of those present partook of tea in the Presbytery grounds at the invitation of Canon Gandy"