

Father Francis Kerr

Francis Kerr was born in 1912 in Ballybay, County Monaghan, Ireland. He was educated at St Macartan's College in Monaghan and then the Irish College, Paris. He was ordained there in Paris at the Irish College on the 6th June 1937 by Bishop Thomas Keogh of Kildare and Leighlin for the Clogher Diocese.

Fr Kerr was then loaned to the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh in Scotland and unusually was placed directly into a regular Parish here at St Patrick's Kilsyth in 1937, where he was to stay until 1940. More usually young Irish Priests on loan to Scotland went through an induction process by spending a short period in one of the metropolitan great churches such as St Mary's Cathedral or St Patrick's Cannongate in Edinburgh before venturing out into the rest of the Archdiocese. Fr Kerr became assistant Priest to the highly regarded and much-loved Patrick Canon Macnamara, later Monsignor Macnanara. It is perhaps such a measure of the trust that the Archbishop had for Patrick Macnamara that he was asked to induct a young priest on his first mission in a foreign land.

Sadly during Fr Kerr's time in St Patrick's, Monsignor Macnanara his PP was to die suddenly in 1938. Fr Kerr together with Fr McGettigan, his fellow assistant Priest in St Patrick's, were involved in organising a period of mourning and managing the Parish through the transition to the appointment of a new Parish Priest in the shape of Michael Canon Downey.

In 1940 Fr Kerr was transferred to Ss Ninian and Triduanan at Restalrig in Edinburgh. He was then transferred to the diocese of Nottingham in England where he served at the Parish of the Holy Family in Chesterfield in Derby.

After this date the records for Fr Kerr in Scotland no longer continue and it is unknown to us whether he returned to Ireland after a period of missionary work in the UK as was common practice at the time or whether he continued his mission in England. If you have any further information regarding Fr Kerr after his departure from Scotland, please contact us and we will update this page.