

MAY 2, 1958 Fr. Joseph Quinn, CM



In 1958, at Ashfield, the death of **Fr Joseph Quinn**, aged 67. He was born at Elmore, Victoria, where he worked on his parents' property and became an expert in agricultural matters. His vocation to the priesthood came late in his life, but with characteristic humility he accepted its trials and difficulties and went back to school, attending first the Marist Brothers' College at Kilmore, Victoria, and coming later to St. Stanislaus College, Bathurst, before entering the Vincentian seminary at Eastwood. He was 39 years of age when ordained a priest in 1930. For a year subsequently he taught at Bathurst and was then appointed to work in various parishes. With Fr Patrick Meenagh he was at Southport from its beginning as a house of the Province, and he showed remarkable zeal in the country areas which had been neglected for years, baptising whole families. He also moved a church at Coomera 4 miles by bullock teams. His care for the sick both in the parish and the hospitals was legendary in Rockhampton and Ashfield especially. In World War II he was chaplain throughout, and sailed with the second convoy overseas with the 6th Division. He served in Palestine, the African Desert, Greece and New Guinea. His influence over the troops was very considerable. Before they sailed he had 72 soldiers confirmed, a large number of these being his own converts. He was very lucky to escape death in Greece. During the retreat he paused to hear a soldier's confession. The soldier insisted on carrying his pack, containing among other things Fr Quinn's mission sermons. As they moved down the beach to the boats the soldier was in a group which received a direct hit from a bomb. On demobilisation at the end of the war Fr Quinn held the rank of Colonel. After the war he remained on the parish staff of Ashfield, where he spent the last 12 years of his life engaged in parish activities. He was well known there at the Masonic Hospital for his care of the sick. Two non-Catholic ministers attended his requiem, and a good number of military personnel.

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