

Tribute to Fr. Fintan Sheeran, ss.cc.

Br. Soane Siua, ss.cc.

Arriving here in Fairhaven, MA in January, I was greeted by the brothers in Damien Residence, who welcomed me as every Sacred Hearts brother does—making everyone feel at home. I was assigned here for my pastoral year, and I was happy because this was the only place left in the province to go to, and I was glad to be here.

After settling down and getting to know the brothers in the residence better, I became friends with one of the oldest professed members, Fr. Fintan. I started taking him out and spending more time with him, and he seemed happy to have someone's attention. He would recount all the achievements in his life, including his 12 years in the general government of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, lecturing in the seminary in Jaffrey, New Hampshire, and being a Provincial of the East Coast Province before the United States became one province. It was a joy to know that he was the oldest professed member by age in the congregation, and I was the youngest, and we got along well.

I was happy to hear all his stories and felt blessed to listen to a lifetime of experiences. Often, he would ask me where I was from. I would say I am from American Samoa but culturally Tongan. Later, he would ask again, and I would tell him I am from the North side of Ireland, which would prompt him to share detailed stories about Ireland in the 1930s and the Second World War. If you asked him anything about history, he could give you a whole day's lecture. I felt fortunate to hear his stories and knew in my heart that he was looking for someone to listen to him.

Last week, I visited him at Our Lady's Haven, and he was always happy to see me because I would bring him outside to breathe the fresh air that God created for us. After spending a few hours outside, I took him back to his room, but he wanted to hang out in the recreational room. He and other residents started singing "Silent Night." I laughed at the out-of-season song but ended up singing with them. It was a special moment, and if it made him happy, I was glad to support him. He always called me "my friend," and I began to call him that as well.

He will be greatly missed for all the wonderful things he did for the congregation, and I will miss my window-shopping buddy at the mall. He always knew exactly where we parked, even when I tried to trick him. Although we are saddened at Damien Residence in Fairhaven, we know he is at peace now and that God has gained another angel. He will continue to whistle in heaven.

I thank God for bringing me such a great person to journey with in life and for helping me see life in a different way. I will continue to seek his prayers for me in this journey of life.

Chomh fada sin mo chara. Go dtí go gcasfar le chéile muid arís, mo dheartháir.

I will definitely miss our times together my friend Fr. Fintan Sheeran, ss.cc. Till that glorious morning where we will whistle again.

To the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Honor and Glory





