

# Father Dan Carl Fouhy -1913-1986

## - Pa Raniera -

The eighth child of Timothy and Rosina Fouhy, Dan was raised in Wellington (New Zealand) where he received a Catholic primary, and secondary education in the capital.

1933 saw Dan professed as a Marist religious and then ordained into the priesthood four years later. The next forty eight years of his life were spent in loving service to the Maori people, first at Hiruharama (Jerusalem) on the Wanganui River (where he was kindly initiated into te reo Maori), followed by seven years between 1944 through to 1951 in North Taranaki (Okato and Waitara). Father Dan Fouhy returned for a second stint at Hiruharama before he was moved to Pukekarakara (Otaki) during the years of 1957-65.

The final twenty one years were spent on the Manawatu Mission based first at the Marist Novitiate, Highden 1965-81 and then in semi-retirement at Hato Paora College, 1982-86.



What were the qualities of this priest of God which would attract Maori and Pakeha from all over the southern half of the North Island to the tangihanga? Why did so many distinguished Maori speakers honour the Paepae? What drew such large numbers to honour Father Dan's body as whanau pani and give him Christian burial?

Father Dan spoke bluntly and honestly. His occasional gruff exterior disguised a generous and affectionate nature. His love for daily Mass, the Prayer of the Church, for sacramental life in Christ, were articles of faith demonstrated by word and example. Those who knew him well recognized rare insight and scholarship in matters of local and regional history respected his understanding of taha Maori, the solid support and loyalty given to the Maori in their quest for human and cultural dignity, the comfort and guidance given in times of trouble and sorrow, the joy he felt in the presence of youngsters, the humour and happiness shared at times of celebration.

And when his search for honesty in daily living seemed to be confounded or ending in mystery, Fr Dan would say..."Well, almighty God knows all these things!"

One of the speakers at Fr Dan's funeral recalled that he had certain favourite phrases. One was "To be perfectly honest"- and he did try to be honest in his judgments. "to be perfectly honest" about his own distinctive contribution, it was not in anything very tangible, it was in something that seems hardly worth mentioning as a contribution, only that it is comparatively rare, and also because it has an important lesson for those who would want to improve race relations in this country.

