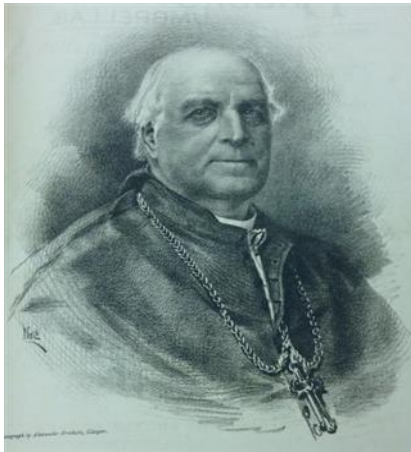


John Canon Murphy

Father John Murphy was born in Killeely, Co. Limerick, on 13th October 1842. He entered the Diocesan College of St Patrick's, Thurles in Sept 1860 where he studied Humanities and Rhetoric and then went on to St. John's College, Waterford in 1863 where he studied Theology and Philosophy. He received the Tonsure and Minor Orders there from Archbishop Thomas W. Croke of Cashel on the 26th June 1868 and was ordained Sub Deacon and Deacon on the following two days. He came to the Eastern District of Scotland on 12th November 1869. He was subsequently ordained a priest at St. Andrew's Cathedral Glasgow, by the Most Reverend Bishop (subsequently Archbishop) Charles Petre Eyre, on 25th November 1869.



**Archbishop Charles Petre Eyre of
Glasgow.**



**Archbishop Thomas W Croke
of Cashel, Ireland.**

His first parish was St. Mary's, Dundee as Parish Priest (!) from where he came to St Patrick's Kilsyth in 1873.

It is true to say that much of the structure of the Parish we know today was founded by Father Murphy. He laboured in Kilsyth for 17 years, during which time he built St. Patrick's School in 1874 and also the first addition to it in 1896. In 1886 he appointed Mr Stone the first Headmaster of St Patrick's with whom he was to work closely for some years, until the then Canon Murphy left the Parish in 1889. Mr. Stone remained the Headmaster of St Patrick's Parish School until 1907. Canon Murphy added a second storey to the chapel house, extended the sanctuary and introduced central heating to the church.

During his stay in Kilsyth the restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy took place in March 1878, and when the Cathedral Chapter was formed in December 1885, Father Murphy was made a founding Canon. He was a strong advocate of a Catholic education for the children of his parish and was most persistent in this cause, even to the extent of teaching the pupils of the upper classes himself.

Over the years during which he was parish priest, Canon Murphy consolidated the work done by his predecessor and increased the stability of the parish by his influence in educational matters. The high esteem in which he was held was reflected in the magnificent testimonial he received from the people of the parish and district when he was transferred to West Calder in 1889. The emphasis on Catholic education established by Canon John Murphy was to be carried on by many of the successor Parish Priests in Kilsyth - but none

more so that by Canon Michael Turner who was to closely follow on Canon Murphy as Parish Priest a year after his departure.

Our thanks to Ailish Larkin, Librarian of St. Patrick's College, Thurles, Co Tipperary Ireland for helping with our research.

Canon John Murphy - Obituary Notice

Pray for the soul of the Very Rev. John Canon Murphy, who died at Edinburgh on the 7th July, in the 76th year of his age and in the 49th of his priesthood.

The Very Rev. John Canon Murphy was born in Kilteely, Co Limerick on the 30th October 1842. [*13th Oct in other sources - Ed*] His early training was begun at the Diocesan College of Thurles and completed at St John's College, Waterford. He came to the Eastern District of Scotland on the 12th November of 1869 and on the 25th of the same month he was ordained priest by Archbishop Eyre in St Andrew's Cathedral Glasgow.

His first appointment was to St Mary's Dundee where he had the good fortune to come under the tutelage of the Very Rev. John MacPherson. In 1873 he was given charge of Kilsyth – a wide district embracing what are now the missions of Croy and Kirkintilloch. During his stay in Kilsyth he became a member of the Cathedral Chapter of St Andrew's and Edinburgh, being nominated Canon at the time of the erection of that body on the 23rd Dec 1885.

In 1890 he was transferred to West Calder – the centre of a big mining district. Here as at Kilsyth he laboured arduously and with great success for the welfare of his parishioners. Hand in hand with zeal for their spiritual interests went an enthusiasm for their social uplifting. He strode incessantly to forward the cause of temperance and with the aim in view established St Andrew's Catholic Total Abstinence Benefit Society.

Realising also the benefit of education he built schools at Kilsyth and West Calder which are amongst the best in the district. He took a special delight in catechising the young and was generous to a fault towards poor and needy children. On his retiral he left a fund to provide boots and clothing for children in poor circumstances, that they may be able to attend school.

After 25 years of strenuous missionary work in West Calder he retired from active service and went to live in Edinburgh. He died on the 7th July 1918. The funeral took place on Wed 10th July. Requiem Mass was celebrated in St Columba's Edinburgh, by the Very Rev. Canon Mullen in the presence of the Archbishop of St Andrew's and Edinburgh. The body was conveyed for burial to the Catholic cemetery of Mount Vernon, Edinburgh.

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OBITUARY

THE VERY REV. JOHN CANON MURPHY.

We regret to record the death at Edinburgh, on the 7th inst., of the Very Rev. John Canon Murphy, formerly of West Calder, but for some seven years retired, one of the oldest members of the Cathedral Chapter of St. Andrews and Edinburgh.

Born in Ireland eighty years ago, he received his education and was ordained to the priesthood in his native

land. He laboured successfully for several years in Dundee, from which city he had many long and weary journeys to reach the faithful in his far scattered district. With his appointment to Kilsyth, larger opportunities were given the young priest for that initiative which was characteristic. In Kilsyth and the neighbouring missions of Croy and Kirkintilloch he consolidated the work, and there did much to spread the gospel of total abstinence. He was next appointed to the charge of West Calder, the centre of a big mining district, where again he tackled the problem of intemperance, and he established the St. Andrew's Catholic Total Abstinence Benefit Society. A keen educationist, he built schools at Kilsyth and West Calder, and often walked miles to have the (for him) inestimable privilege of catechising his "bairns". The "bairns" always loomed largely in his schemes of private charity. Nothing touched his warm heart more than ill-shod or ill-clad children. On his retirement after twenty-five years' continuous service in West Calder, he left a sum of money to provide boots and clothing for the poorer children of the mission. Since his retirement he has resided in Edinburgh with his old friend, Canon Mullan, St. Columba's, Newington. The funeral took place on Wednesday of last week in the Catholic cemetery of Mount Vernon. Requiem Mass in presence of his Grace the Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh and a large attendance of the clergy, was said in St. Columba's Church by Canon Mullan. —R.I.P.

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