



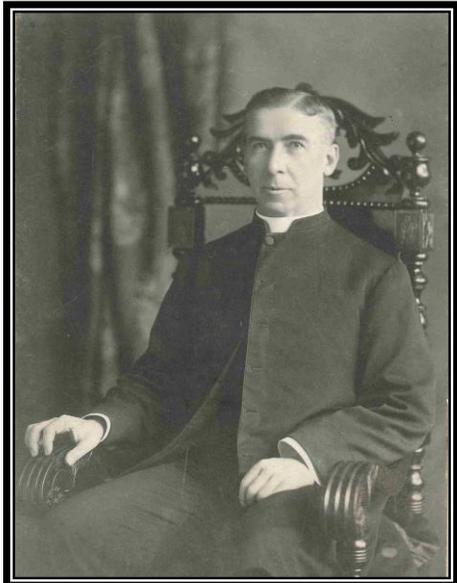
Reverend John Thomas Aylward

Born on January 17, 1863 to Thomas Aylward and Catherine Joyce, John Thomas Aylward spent his early years in Quebec, attending Lévis College, and later undergoing studies at the Grand Seminary in Montreal, as well as Laval University. He was ordained on December 18, 1886 by Bishop John Walsh at St. Peter's Cathedral in London, Ontario.

Immediately, he was sent to St. Augustine's Parish in Wawanosh, as assistant pastor to a Rev. West, but he did not stay there long: by October of 1888, he was sent to St. Thomas as assistant pastor of Holy Angels' Parish, where he remained until 1890.

From there, he became pastor at Port Lambton, a position he stayed at until 1901. From 1901 to 1914, he was pastor at St. Peter's Cathedral in London. During this time he participated in a number of significant events, including accompanying Bishop McEvay to Rome in 1905, and in 1910, Rev. Aylward represented the diocese as a theologian at the Plenary Council of Quebec. In 1911, Pope Pius X made him a Domestic Prelate.

During his time in London, he played a role in establishing St. Peter's Seminary, encouraging Bishop Fallon with the project, and acting as the Seminary's bursar for the first two years. He also established St. Peter's Cemetery and built a parish hall. He was often described as an "indefatigable" worker, and his time in London was proof of that.



The best proof of his work ethic, however, was his time as pastor at Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Sarnia, a position he remained in from 1914 until his death in 1933: while there, he cleared the parish debt; served the mission of St. Joseph's until a parish was established in 1923; carried out a massive redecoration of Our Lady of Mercy Church in 1923; enlarged the Our Lady of Mercy School as well as built St. Joseph's and St. Patrick's High Schools; and hosted the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress at the parish in 1925.

Monsignor Aylward was remembered fondly after his passing, and even today, his influence can still be felt in the parishes he served.

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