

Henry Edward Dormer, Servant of God



Servant of God, Henry Edward Dormer who was born in Warwickshire, England, and after studies in Europe and in Ireland, made a retreat at age 19 under Father Rudolph Suffield, a Dominican friar, an event which apparently changed his outlook on life.

Stationed with the King's Own Royal Rifles in London, Upper Canada, (now London, Ontario) in 1866 during the era of the Fenian Raids, Dormer is reputed to have led a life of selfless devotion to God, attending to the needs of the poor, sick and elderly of the colonial garrison town. Dormer bestowed money, clothing, food and other necessities to those in need, and gave religious instruction to children and soldiers, if they requested it, all the while wrestling with the question of his own possible vocation to the priesthood. Dormer contracted typhoid fever and died on October 2nd, 1866, the feast of the Guardian Angels, just as he had decided to enter the Dominican novitiate. As word of Dormer's death spread contemporary newspaper accounts reported that "the saint is dead."

A plaque in Henry Edward's honour is located at St. Peter's Cathedral Basilica, London, Ontario, Canada. He is held as a local example of how growing in holiness assists us in the discernment of our vocation.