

# A DAY IN THE LIFE....

Father Denis McGillicuddy is chaplain to the National Federation of Demolition Contractors.

I am an early riser and am usually out of bed by 6.30. My day starts with a shower followed by a breakfast of porridge, fruit and tea or coffee that sets me up for the day. I usually take a quick glance at the Daily Telegraph before starting on the post and preparing for mass at 9.00, which is usually the last predictable part of my day. I generally have a good idea of what I would like to achieve during the day but my job is all about dealing with the unforeseen; I guess that is something I have in common with demolition contractors. I make daily visits to St Mary's Hospice, the local hospital and a number of local schools. But with a single phone call, my day can be turned on its head. This might entail dealing with the sick and the dying at the hospice, making funeral arrangements with bereaved families, or organising baptisms. No two days are ever the same and some days can be extremely distressing and stressful.

Like most working people these days, I don't generally stop for lunch. My midday meal usually constitutes a sandwich and a cup of tea on the go.

As a teenager, I wanted to be a doctor. I always knew that I

wanted to help people. But as the years passed, that ambition slowly vanished and I was drawn increasingly to helping people in a different way and that was what led me to entering the priesthood. Having gained degrees in theology and philosophy, I was eventually ordained at the age of 26 and have been working in and around the archdiocese of Birmingham ever since.

It was my work in the area that first brought me into contact, purely by chance, with the National Federation of Demolition Contractors. The NFDC's Convention Chairman Patrick Williamson and his wife Jackie were regulars at my church and when their son Monty was born, they asked me to perform the baptism. Patrick and I became firm friends and he started to invite me to Federation events both here in the UK and overseas. At one gala dinner, I was asked to say Grace which I gladly did, and that really sealed my relationship with the Federation. When I was asked by President John Wring to become the official chaplain to the Federation earlier this year, I was honoured to accept. My working day generally ends at 8.00 in the evening but it's not unusual for it to



extend to 9.30. To wind down, I like to visit friends and I actually find dealing with the demolition industry strangely relaxing. I don't play golf so my exercise is generally restricted to a run on the treadmill.

My day usually ends with

another scan of the Daily Telegraph and by watching the news on TV. I try to be in bed by 11.00 but it's often past midnight before I eventually get to recharge the batteries in readiness for another day of the unforeseen.