

Difficulties Oliver Plunket, Primate of Ireland had with the Franciscan order

(extract from a letter written in 1690)

« I am consoled by hearing of the calumnies of an apostate [Franciscan] friar, Anthony Daly, *dimidium animae* of Father Phelim O'Neill. This Father Anthony sought to take away my life here, instigating the tories to kill me. They came at midnight about six years ago to the house of my vicar-general, where I then was. They broke open the doors and took away all the money from myself and my vicar-general, and my secretary, Michael Plunket, who is now in Rome, and they held a sword to my throat. The chief of this band was afterwards taken and before death declared in prison to the parish priest of Armagh and to his curate, that Father Anthony told him to kill me and that afterwards he would give him absolution. The curate, Patrick O'Donnely, is now in Paris and before embarking swore this in the presence of the Bishop of Clogher. I have in my possession a letter written by the same Anthony in which he says: "If God tried to injure the Franciscan order, I would rise up against God" [...]. I suspended him from preaching and hearing the confessions of the laity [...]. He nevertheless continued to preach and to hear confessions sacrilegiously ».

Brendan Fitzpatrick, *Seventeenth-Century Ireland. The War of Religions*, Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1988, p. 241.