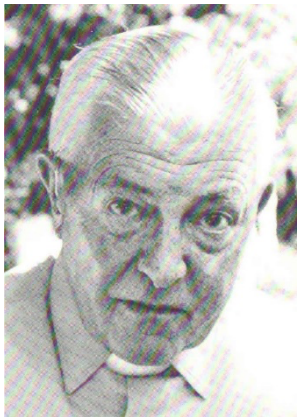


12 March

Fr JOHN BROGAN

13 May 1919 – 12 March 1991



Though born in Richmond, Surrey, in the UK, Johnny Brogan moved to South Africa in time to start his schooling with the Marist Brothers in Johannesburg. He later moved to St Aidan's and entered the Society in 1937. Fr Bruno Brinkman remembers being welcomed to the novitiate by him whom he described as 'an archetypal good man'. His first vows coincided with the outbreak of war and Manresa, where he began his philosophy, was bombed in 1941 and one of the scholastics was killed. He was ordained in 1952 and taught for many years in Stonyhurst and Beaumont until he was called to be rector of St George's in 1968.

He found himself in the grimy atmosphere of the Rhodesian government trying to enforce its segregationist policies. Brogan, as the new rector, put up a stout resistance. Terrence McCarthy later wrote in the St George's Centenary book, 'The government attempted to force the College to field white only teams by introducing regulations whereby, if any government school parent objected to their child playing against a multiracial College side, then, either the game was cancelled or the black players had to be withdrawn.' Brogan reacted with vigour; 'This directive on which we were not consulted and of which we had no direct official notification, is quite unacceptable to us. ... for several years now we have been striving to run a multi-racial school ... we are quite unwilling to put the whole enterprise at hazard by re-introducing a principle of discrimination ... we Jesuits have a reputation for being masters in the art of equivocation – or to use the modern term 'double talk' – but I submit that we are apprentices in the craft in compared with the recent standards of performance set by the Ministry of Education. ...'

David Dryden says Johnny had a bad limp all his life but never complained about it. He drove a car and even played golf, walking all the way. He had a severe coronary in 1971 but soldiered on. He was responsible for the new chapel, extending the science labs and building the new swimming pool. When his term was over, he moved to the School of Social Work and later the Cathedral. In 1984, he returned to South Africa where he was a curate at Yeoville for his final years.