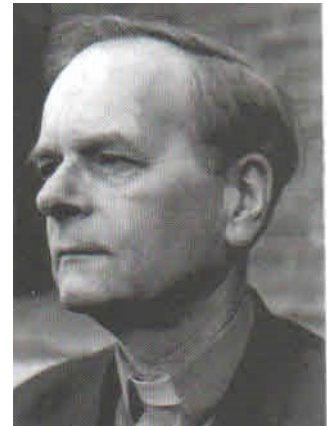


5 April

## Fr BERNARD PARKIN

25 May 1922 – 5 April 2012

Bernard Parkin spent only one of his almost ninety years in Zimbabwe: 1960, when he taught physics and chemistry at St George's as a regent. Mark Hackett remembers him visiting Musami that year and fixing a problem on their TV beyond local competence.



Bernard was 34 when he joined the novitiate in 1956. He had been at school at St Ignatius, Stamford Hill, and wrote a history of that school which Brian Enright feels got bogged down in detail and is a hard read. He went on to London University where he passed a degree in Electrical Engineering with first class honours which he then used in the Royal Navy. Tony Bex recalled that he did research into submarines and later made a contribution to the production of Decca Records as well as improving communications through the postal codes.

A man of many talents, he produced *A Man for All Seasons* while at Heythrop for Theology and he played the violin in the college concerts. Peter Griffith remembers him as a teacher for his 'clarity of expression'. After theology Bernard studied philosophy at Warwick University and became chaplain at Keele where was noted for his 'accessibility to students and staff'.

His next task was socius to two provincials (Bernard Hall and Johnnie Maher) where he was 'quiet and efficient with good humoured patience and careful advice.' In 1979, he was parish priest of Stevenage and later Brixton where he encouraged the 'diverse gifts and talents of the parishioners'. Some nearby diocesan priests thought he would be aloof but, on the contrary, he reached out to them. 'People grew to love him.' There was a serious burglary in the parish house in his time and on another occasion, a prisoner was allowed to marry in the parish and asked for the handcuffs to be removed for the solemn moment. He immediately fled and it took the police six months to track him down.

In 1988, he became rector of St Wilfreds, Preston and chairman of the board of Stonyhurst. In 1994 he was minister at St Ignatius, his old school, where he was noted for his 'quiet and gently manner'. Eventually, failing health drove him into hands of the sisters at St Anne's, Stoke Newington, in 2008 and he died there four years later on Maundy Thursday, 2012.