

20 April

Fr JOSEPH HORNIG 29 September 1855 – 20 April 1931

Joseph Hornig met Fr Henri Depelchin at Farm St, London, in 1878, the year he entered the Society, and immediately volunteered for the Zambezi Mission. He was born in Herzogwalde, in Silesia, Germany (then). He did his novitiate, philosophy, regency and theology all in Africa and was ordained by Bishop Ricards in 1888. At one point he was sent to Quilimane as humid climate was believed to help his eyes which were giving him trouble and preventing sleep.



By 1890 he was in Keilands, a mission founded by Fr Fraser in a rather impossible place because of the dry climate and sparse population. In that year there were 200 Catholics as a result of Fraser's work. The mission was eventually handed to the Mariannahill Society but not before Hornig had spent some fourteen (one account says seventeen) years there. After a break in Europe he returned to St Aidan's where he had been in the early 1880s and then moved north to Chishawasha where he learnt Shona and, in 1907, moved to Driefontein and on to St Joseph's Hama in Chirumanzi. It was then a new area and the missionaries met some hostility from the locals as well as other churches. One, from the latter, was Henry Quin, who became a Catholic and then a Jesuit, partly as a result of Hornig.

Hornig used to walk to the out schools as he found the donkeys too slow. He lived at Hama, often alone, until 1925 when he retired to Chishawasha. A great celebration took place in 1928 for his Golden Jubilee.

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Fr. José HORNIG

Born in Herzogwalde, Silesia, on September 29, 1855, he entered the Society of Jesus on July 15, 1878. He was assigned to the Zambezia Mission where, as a scholastic, he worked in Quelimane in 1884 and 1885. He took his final vows on August 15, 1890. He died on April 20, 1931, in Bulawayo, Rhodesia.