

May 2

Fr EDWARD WARNER 16 September 1903 – 2 May 1987



‘Ted’ Warner was born in Bow, London, and became a Catholic when he was 17. He worked on the railways until he entered the Society in 1924. He volunteered for India and did his second year of novitiate at Shembaganur, Madurai, with this in mind. But that was his only contact with India. After a first in English at Oxford, he did some teaching. WWII came just as he finished tertianship and he volunteered as a chaplain. He found himself in Narvik, Norway, just when they were evacuating troops after the German invasion. In a bombardment, he made for an isolated hut, thinking it a safe place, only to be stopped by a sergeant

saying, ‘I wouldn’t go in there, sir, its full of ammunication.’

Back in London he became principal RC chaplain to the army, that is, he worked in the HQ in administration for the 5-600 RC chaplains spread throughout the war zones. He was ‘chaplain of the chaplains’. For his great work he was awarded the MBE in 1947.

Then, aged 44, he started his life as a Jesuit teacher, first at St Aidan’s (1947-49), then at the Mount, St Francis Xavier and Beaumont – 38 years in all. At SFX, he had the added work of moving the school from its cramped quarters to the more spacious grounds at Woolton. He was a meticulous teacher and his notes almost guaranteed a student passed.

But he had a half serious, half humorous, dark outlook on life. Every new class was ‘the worst I ever had’ but the boys still passed. His foreboding not only covered the classroom, but the world, the Society and the province – even the weather! ‘It is getting worse’ should have been his motto in life but in fact his classes, sermons and retreats were always lively and the very opposite of pessimistic and boring.