

June 26

Br JAMES McGUIGAN

23 March 1903 - 26 June 1971



Jimmy McGuigan was born in Glasgow and died there 68 years later. He started life as an engraver's apprentice and also learnt carpentry. He entered the Jesuits in 1921 and came to Africa in 1925. He was basically at two places: Driefontein and Monte Cassino. At the former, Edward Callaghan remembers him as 'chirpy, sparrow like, thin and wiry'.

His main task in both places was putting the roof on each building as it went up. While he was said to be slow by those who did not know what went into the work, he gained the reputation for thoroughness such that no

McGuigan roof ever gave any problems. And they all survived storms and *zvipupuri* (whirlwinds). His roofs were solid and safe.

And Br Jimmy was methodical. He had a list to hand divided into 'urgent' and 'not so urgent'. If your request was on his list, it would always be attended to. He liked to integrate his work into his life in the Spirit. He imagined Nazareth. His tools were closely guarded and beautifully cared for.

In community he would always remember birthdays and anniversaries. He had an intense interest people. After Mass on Sundays he would invite the parishioners to tea and buns. The wireless was an extension of this. He seemed less interested in individual programmes than in what part of the world he could reach. It connected him with people all over the world even if he had no clue of their language.

His mother was a widow in Glasgow and depended on him in the days before the state provided pensions. But she let him go. And when she was ill and dying, she refused to let him know. 'He will have enough grief when I am gone, so why trouble him now.'

Jimmy himself returned to Glasgow when he was ill and, while hoping he could return to Africa, was too ill to do so and died in his home city.