

23 July

## Fr GERALD FINNIESTON 21 April 1910 – 23 July 1986



Gerry Finnieston was born in Glasgow and educated at St Aloysius there. He joined the Society in 1927 and did regency at Mount St Mary's. He was ordained in 1942 and taught in Preston and Leeds.

In 1950, we find him at Musami for the first time and after a year he went to Marymount which was still in its early days. Günter Gattung, who was there with him, remembers what a struggle Gerry found it. He moved to St George's in 1953 and Mhondoro a year later. He was in Chishawasha in 1955 and then went back to Musami, this time for 14 years. Mark

Hackett remembers him being exhausted after a week in the classroom and then going to the outstations at the week-end. Sometimes he just couldn't face teaching on a Monday morning.

In 1971 Gerry was back in Chishawasha, serving the outstations, one of which was Mabvuku where the present writer used to work with him. In his file there are long detailed accounts which he wrote of his journeys around Chishawasha ministering to the sick and old. He had a terrible experience one day when he was attacked by dogs and badly bitten. It was unlikely the dogs were vaccinated against rabies and there was considerable worry about his life for a while.

In the late 1970s, an American Jesuit, William O'Malley, wrote a book, *The Voice of Blood*, on recent some recent Jesuit Martyrs, including our three at Musami. Gerry seems to have been one of his informants and he failed to warn O'Malley about the language current among many whites at the time who talked about the guerrillas as 'terrorists', a choice of word which totally obscured the aims of the liberation struggle. The provincial, Henry Wardale, tried to stop the publication of the book when he learnt of the situation. But it was too late. In the event the book was a damp squib and was hardly noticed. But it caused anger in Jesuit circles.

In 1984 Gerry went to Monte Cassino as chaplain to the sisters.