18 August

Fr AUGUSTINE WHITESIDE 16 December 1883 – 18 August 1965

Austin, as he was called, was one of five brothers who entered the Society! Born in Blackpool, Lancashire, and educated at Mount St Mary's Jesuit College, near Sheffield, he entered in 1902. Ordained in 1916, he was a military chaplain during WWI. He came to Africa in 1921 and taught at St George's Bulawayo, becoming rector in 1926 just before the move to Salisbury. Quiet and retiring, he was nonetheless disappointed when taken off as rector after four years as he had plans for the development of the college.

He seemed to move constantly during the next thirty years and wherever he was he was usually superior: Driefontein, Musami, Triashill, Driefontein again, Makumbe, Loreto/Que Que (Kwekwe), Makumbe again, Que Que again and finally he returned to Musami in 1954 where he died.

Fr Geoghegan said of him, 'His was not a life that caught the eye but it was one of devoted service'. A pastoral man, he liked to visit people in their homes 'on their own ground' and chat. And he had a knack, seemingly, of challenging pretentious people. A government official, who was boasting about someone who built 30 schools in 30 days, was simply asked by Austin, 'Why?'