

23 August

Fr ALPHONSUS VOGT

1 October 1866 – 23 August 1933



Fr Vogt was born in Gerstein, Alsace, France, entered the Society in 1885 and did part of his novitiate at Graaff Reinet and later studied at Dunbrody. He completed his studies in Europe and was ordained in 1895. In 1897 he was at St Aidan's where he stayed for four years. There followed fifteen years serving the people in the vicinity of Dunbrody on the Sundays River. Droughts were constant and just feeding the people became a major work. The ostriches helped for they provided a good income for the mission for a while until the market collapsed.

From 1917 until his death he served the people in the 'location' at Grahamstown. 'Nowhere', his obituarist wrote, 'is a location exactly a savoury place; for the natives are out of their tribal surroundings, and are herded together in miserable and unhealthy dwellings, with all the predispositions for a low state of morality. It is a great call for the Fatherhood of the priest, for their will be many heart-breaking failures, many

deceits, many prodigals and many Magdalens'

Fr Vogt lived in a cottage similar to the people. 'There was a small garden ... the living room was devoid of every suggestion of human habitability. The bed was a litter of miscellaneous objects, for he never went to bed, but slept in a chair so as to ready if he were wanted at night. ... He lived in what an ordinary man would call circumstances of great discomfort and poverty. Yet he was supremely happy ...' The rector, Fr Corish, had great difficulty in taking him to the doctor when he became ill. He did not want to leave his people.