

30 August

## Fr GILBERT BINNS

10 April 1886 – 30 August 1951



A Yorkshire man through and through according to Michael Hannan though 'Binjey' was born in Essex in the east of England. Educated at Stonyhurst, he joined the Jesuits in 1904. At one point he volunteered for the Russian mission. He taught at Leeds for 15 years and started a Students' Missionary League to make the province's mission in Guyana and Southern Africa more widely known among the students and beyond. In 1936 he was called to London to edit the combined *Zimbabwe Mission Record* and Guyanese record into one *Missionary Magazine*. At the same time he was province procurator.

In 1941 he came to Southern Rhodesia to gather more information about the mission but, as it was war time, he could not return to the UK and so settled down, first at Musami and Campion House, and later, for 17 years, at the seminary. He never left the seminary except for his monthly visit to Bindura where he learnt Chi Nyanja to be able to minister to the farmworkers and miners there. He had a ready smile and became a personal friend to the seminarians. He taught Church History and Scripture but was not, seemingly always a clear teacher. Many asked him questions for clarification and he would give long answers - so long that on one occasion the questioner fell asleep. Everyone laughed included Binjey.

He suffered from nausea which would hit him while he taught and he would have to excuse himself or a while. He was interested in art and literature, photography and stamp-collecting and library systems. He had a zest for life and was a fountain of fun!