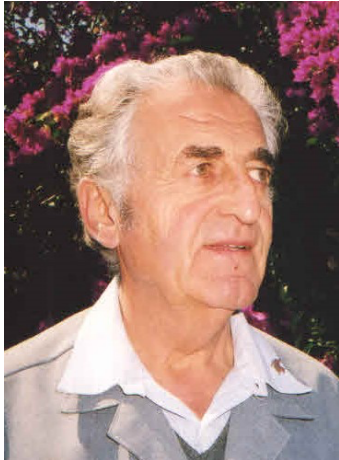


20 September

Fr CHRISTIAN WEICHSEL 30 March 1932 – 20 September 2012



In January 1945, Christian was 13 years old, the youngest in a party of ten fleeing their home in Rittersdorf, Silesia, in front of the Russian advance. They had three wagons drawn by horses and they had to make a long journey in the midst of a cold winter to the west. This was the first of three dramatic moments in Christian's life. He settled in the west and studied maths, science and sports (especially rowing and skiing) at university with the idea of being a teacher.

But he soon turned his attention to a religious vocation and saw that he could be a teacher as a religious. This was his second drama. He joined the novitiate of the East German Province in 1954 and it was there he met Wolfgang Thamm. In the course of their studies together, Thamm introduced him to the idea of being a missionary and Christian asked him if he had a book on this kind of life. Thamm gave him a life of Terörde, the German who died soon after obtaining permission from Chief Mweemba to found a mission on the north bank of the Zambezi, below the Falls. It was not a romantic picture but one full of frustration, suffering and, in the end, death. Christian was immediately attracted to this life and said 'this is for me' and he volunteered, his third drama.

He spent his time on the Sinoia Mission both as a teacher – at St Alberts's – and a pastor – at Marymount, where he was a regent, Mount Darwin, Makonde, Mutorashanga and Banket. As a teacher he was creative and gave out prizes for the best work. Also he loved the life of a pastor, even painting MARYMOUNT IS SUPER on his truck. He adjusted to African ways with regard to time and one never knew where he was! He discovered an attraction to the charismatic movement, especially in praying for the sick and he shared this with many others. He was a quiet person but could be quite tough and once stood up to a n'anga who was troubling people and brought a case against him in the courts.

His last days at Richartz House were hard as he developed Alzheimer's and when he broke his hip, it never healed