

24 September

Fr **BERNARD LICKORISH** 17 June 1872 – 24 September 1961



Born in London, Bernard Lickorish was educated at Beaumont College and joined the Jesuits in 1890. He was thought a good teacher when he was in regency at Stonyhurst but was seen as ‘strange, eccentric and lonely’ by his contemporaries.

In 1908 he came to Africa and started at Chishawasha, learning the language, before becoming the first priest exclusive to St Peter’s (Mbare). In 1914 he moved to Gweru where he continued the same type of pastoral work. He then moved briefly to Bulawayo and back to Chishawasha before settling in Kadoma for 22

years. It was there that his ‘routine’ was observed and noted. He was up at around 4.00 am and said all his prayers, including the breviary, before Mass. He would then have a substantial breakfast in the hotel (2 shillings a day) which kept him going until he had his second and only other meal. He would then fill ten or eleven pipes for the day. He had no servant but prisoners would sweep the chapel and even his room ‘if they could get into it’ for all the clutter for 6 pence per person per day. His sermon never exceeded five minutes. He would visit all the European families briefly (ten minutes) once a week and then go to the outstations. He taught catechism in the government school.

He would say the stations briefly (seven minutes) eight or nine times a day and constantly had rosary beads in his hands. He had a great devotion to the Holy Souls and would pray for them and to them constantly for healing of sick people and even for a batsman who was out of sorts and whose scoring only reached single digits. After Bernard’s waylaying the Holy Souls, he regained his old self and was again hitting sixty runs. He would have a bath once a week in the hotel and retire to bed at 8.00 pm.

His last years were in Emerald Hill Children’s Home (see picture of him with orphans) where children were always in his room. He used to cycle everywhere and in his old age used his bicycle to give the brothers their annual retreat at St George’s. He was ‘evicted’ from Emerald Hill, Mark Hackett tells us, by Mother Rose, as they did not see it as their job to provide nursing care and he spent his last days at Musami. There was no Richartz House then. ‘Unfortunately he was bitter about it and became upset with Brian Porter and myself kept him awake with our laughter after supper. He had gone to bed long before.’