

2 October

Fr PATRICK LEWIS

8 April 1916 – 2 October 2004



Pat Lewis was one of those Jesuits who served in a hidden way – accounts and archives – and relished what he was doing. He was born in London (Blackheath) and began his education at St George’s, Weybridge, with the Josephites. In 1923, their father drowned mysteriously off the coast of Brittany. ‘Mysteriously’ because Pat once shared with this writer that he did

not think it was an accident. At any rate, the family emigrated to Australia, where the boys continued their education at Riverview. After an odyssey, covering much of the globe, he entered the Society in London in 1934 with his brother Langlois (from l’Anglais, a name going back to their Huguenot origins when they had to flee France. Langlois also came to this country and served for many years in Mutoko).

As a regent in wartime, Pat taught in three schools for a total of six years: Sunderland, the Mount and Southbourne where he taught (and occasionally beat!) Mark Hackett. After ordination in 1948, and a return to the classroom at Beaumont, his gifts in accounts and administration became evident and he held a succession of posts in this genre. He moved to be secretary to the provincial in Garnet House (Wimbledon) and later treasurer to the provincial in Garnet House (Harare). He worked systematically and thoroughly and had all the accounts of the province up to date on the 31st of December, each year.

At the same time Provincial Henry Wardale asked him to continue the work of developing the archives. His obituarist quotes Horace, *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice!* (If you want to find lasting evidence of Pat’s work, look around the archives). And he notes that Pat’s gifts in accountancy blended perfectly with this new field for he searched for accuracy everywhere. He wrote to a former British provincial, John Coventry, ‘I find the archives great fun, very interesting and attracting a growing number of researchers, primarily from the University of Zimbabwe.’

Pat had heart trouble and constant headaches and one of his solutions was to take a ten-day cycle ride to some distant place, claiming the way he held himself on the bike kept him well. So he would set out with his bike, for example, to Kariba, stopping at Banket, etc, and spend a day or two there before riding back the same way. In his old age he would get a lift to Richartz and visit the people there and walk back to Canisius House. Eventually he joined Richartz as he knew his time was coming and he welcomed being cared for by Br Benedict Ngawaseke.