

13 October

## Fr CHRISTOPHER FARWELL 10 June 1910 – 13 October 2004



Chris Farwell was born in London and was educated at Stonyhurst before entering the novitiate in 1928. Both before and after ordination in 1941 he taught at Donhead, the preparatory school to Wimbledon College, and at the college. Peter Milward told him many years later that it was he, Chris, who proposed a missionary in him and he eventually spent his whole life in Japan.

In 1950 Chris came to St George's and when Hartmann House started in 1957, he was put in charge there. He was kind and thoughtful to small boys entering a big school. He returned to the college after some years and is remembered for his dramatic productions. The Passion Play in 1971 was put on for five nights in the open, using the college as background and was viewed by around 1000 each night. He was called 'Face' simply because he continually reminded his players to face the audience.

A moment the community remembered was when they were building a new science block and there was anticipation of the work beginning any day. At the same time, Fr General's Visitor from Rome, Fr Gordon George, was expected and his reputation for closing colleges had preceded him. Chris did not know the Visitor had actually arrived when he breezed into lunch where the community were unusually silent and announced for all to hear, 'The bulldozer has arrived!'

During the war he felt terribly the deaths of the pupils he had taught. In 1972 he moved to Mabelreign and later Mount Pleasant but he was weakened by hepatitis and returned to England where he took up a parish in St Ives, Cornwall, in the South West. There he would arrange little plays on the altar to illustrate the readings. He had a gift from making everyone feel important and his parish bulletins not only mentioned the readers and the choir but the flower arrangers and the floor sweepers.

This writer visited him in his retirement at Nazareth House, Hammersmith and he had a list of questions written out inquiring about people in Zimbabwe. He enjoyed life and towards the end he asked someone fifty years younger than him to direct him in his annual retreat. He would have agreed with Lord Palmerston, 'Dying? That is the last thing I will do.'