

17 October

Fr JOHN RYAN

25 July 1842 – 17 October 1926



John was born in Carnarvon, Wales and educated at Stonyhurst. He entered the Society in 1860 and was ordained in 1874. He did five years teaching at Stonyhurst before ordination and in 1878, went to Jamaica, one of our missions at the time. During his time there, a cyclone destroyed three churches.

In 1886 he was in Bournemouth and in 1893 he sailed to the Cape where he was vice-Rector at St Aidan's. Fr Colley, the rector, wanted to make the curriculum more 'liberal' but the feeling in the colony was that it should be practical. At any rate, Ryan and Colley had their way and Greek was added to the syllabus!

He was present at the early death of Shomberg Kerr and took over as acting Superior of the Zambezi Mission until a new superior was appointed (Sykes). Leboeuf and Ryan were the two that held out against the idea of selling Hartmann Hill which we were not using at the time. In the end St George's had somewhere to move to when they left Bulawayo in 1926.

In 1904, John Ryan was back in Wales at Holywell where he seems to have been stationed at the Holy Well of St Winifred. It seems an unusual apostolate but he welcomed visitors there without being overawed by the claims of miracles. At one point the water dried up and mild consternation ensued but engineering works had interfered. Later the water came back.