

30 November

Fr JOSEPH MURPHY

16 May 1869 – 30 November 1925



Joseph Delerue Murphy only spent a few months in 1897 in Africa (St Aidan's) for the good of his health. It was not a success and the provincial gave him a further year at home with his family to see if that would help. It did. He would play music (the classics) to his blind mother and read to her. Much recovered, he worked in the parish in Clitheroe and the colleges in Preston and Wimbledon and used to edit their school magazines.

Born in Liverpool he was educated at the Mount where he was a 'walking dictionary'. Shy and apologetic he was highly intelligent and studied Classics at London University. He used to astonish people by sending them postcards in Greek. He was interested in social questions and gave a huge boost to the fledgling Catholic Social Guild (CSG) in Liverpool where he taught adults Social Science, Housing, Citizenship, Industrial History, Economics and Moral Philosophy. When we think this was the 1920s and what happened to these disciplines subsequently, we can surmise he had some influence in their development. He was so committed to this work that, during the holidays, he would send his students postcards (presumably not in Greek) pointing out points they had missed and generally encouraging them. Pneumonia was a killer in those days and he contracted it and died while at Liverpool. He was due to give a class to the CSG that afternoon.