

9 December

BR MARTIN KLEY

17 May 1863 – 9 December 1929



Martin Kley was born in Justingen, Württemberg, Germany and started life as a farm worker before he was employed at the Jesuit college at Feldkirch as a domestic worker. After staying there for four years, he asked to enter the Society but was, at first, rejected. When he was eventually accepted, he started his novitiate at Blyenbeck, Holland in 1887.

His first task after vows, was cook and buyer at Ditton Hall near Liverpool, the theologate of the exiled German scholastics. He was known by local trades men as ‘Please’ as he did not know the name of what he was buying and would just put his hand on what he wanted and say ‘please!’

When Ditton Hall closed in 1895, he moved to Valkenburg as cook. Seven years later he was granted his request to go to Africa and went to Chishawasha where he looked after Manica Farm, some distance from the Mission. he used

to travel on horse back but when the horse died in 1913, its replacement was a bit too frisky for his liking and he took to a bicycle. But he fell off and damaged his arm. He took no notice of the injury but eventually it became serious and the superior took him to Germany when he was going there. They were unable to help and Martin returned to Chishawasha and was given a donkey and cart. One day he decided to try a mule but it suddenly reared up and lifted him off the ground damaging his arm even more. He was now virtually incapacitated and spent his last years as a semi-invalid at Chishawasha. He spent much time in the chapel saying a rosary for each member of the community (there were sixteen or seventeen). He died in 1929.

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