

11 December

Fr CHARLES RAYMOND BARKER

16 January 1859 – 11 December 1955



Charles' Anglican priest father was a nephew of Dr Pusey and so Charles grew up in the thick of the Oxford Movement, an intellectual search for the origins of Christianity which opened up points of convergence and divergence between the Catholic and Anglican communions. Newman and Pusey were among the best-known leaders of this investigation and they both drew different conclusions from it. This was the charged atmosphere in which Charles grew up and his mother soon became a Catholic and young Charles and his sister followed her. Feelings ran high in the family and the three 'Romans' had to leave home and settle in

Paris.

One result was that Charles went to a variety of schools: Hurstpierpoint (Anglican), Grenoble (France) and Stonyhurst. He entered the Society in 1878 and was ordained in 1892. He was at St Aidan's from 1894 to 1899 but beyond that the record says nothing about his time in Africa. He was a choir master and organist all his life. And he composed motets and wrote hymns all his life.

Returning to England he worked in Great Yarmouth and then, based in Rhyl from 1909, he worked all over north Wales until 1933 when the Jesuit parishes were handed over to the diocese of Menevia. But there was a break during the great war when he was a chaplain mainly based at Gibraltar.

He had a great interest in Newman, presumably because he could identify with him in his own lifetime.

He returned to North Wales to St Beuno's in his old age to retire and used to go sometimes to St Asaph's to play the organ there in the cathedral.