15 December

Br JOHN I. CONWAY
23 April 1900 – 15 December 1960

John Conway was born in Glasgow, educated at St Aloysius and was called up for military service soon after he entered the novitiate in 1918. After the armistice he was on duty in Germany and loved to tell how he met Winston Churchill there. 'Oh', was the awed response, 'and what did he say to you?' 'Get out of my way!'

After vows he studied carpentry and in 1924, he was posted to Empandeni. Soon after he moved to St George's where he remained until his death 35 years later. He made every chapel bench and school desk in the place and built the Beit Hall. Besides, every convent in the city asked for his help. He did work in Cape Town, Grahamstown, Bulawayo, Salisbury and Umtali (Mutare). When asked if he had finished a work, he'd say, 'Don't be daft. That's the last thing we do.' He had an uncanny way of foreseeing inconveniences his work might lead to and forestalling them.

He spurned all shoddy work and timber merchants who sold him their material came to know how demanding he was for quality. He had an enormous influence on all those he worked with; tradesmen, bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers, boys in the school, etc.

He died of double pneumonia and heart trouble.