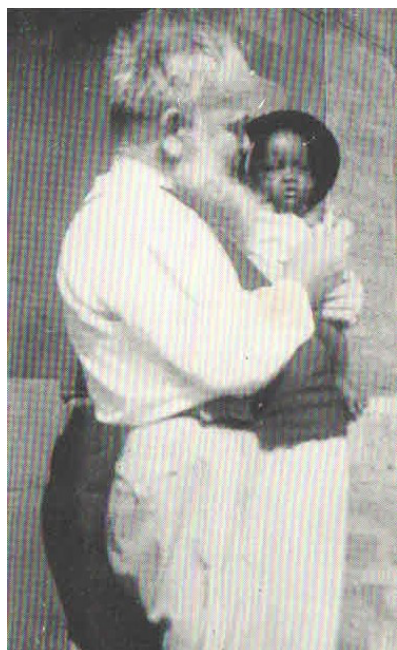


16 December

Fr JOSEPH HECTOR 12 September 1889 – 16 December 1953



The eldest of 16 children, Joseph Hector was born in Trevers, Saarbrücken, Germany. He joined the Society in 1912 but was called up for medical duty in World War One for four tough years. Ordained in 1921 he spent some years giving missions in East Germany and Poland. Pressure from the Nazis on his activities led to his leaving the country with a car and a camera in 1937 and heading for Africa. He grew a beard. Arriving in Cape Town he drove all the way to Salisbury 'on the wrong side of the road, waved on by the police' (trying to tell him we drive on the left).

He visited every mission he could on the way – and some off the way – to familiarise himself with the country and the work. His first posting was to Triashill where he drove his car until it collapsed and then took to horse back or foot. His horse, Dick, was his reliable companion and together they got swept away by swollen rivers.

When Triashill and St Barbara's were handed over to the Carmelites, he moved to Driefontein until it too went to the Bethlehem Society. He then went briefly in turn to Mhondoro, St Benedict's and Marymount before settling in Musami in 1951. He would preach in a mixture of Shona, German and English – 'Hosi von angels' - and once a child wandered up to him while he was preaching and he simply lifted the child up in his arms and went on preaching. Then the child started to play with his beard and he continued preaching.

When he died people walked through the night, including Chief Mangwende, to attend his funeral.