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Statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Mutare Priory

Foreword

It is hard to believe that it was just seventy years ago, in November 1946, when Fathers Donal Lamont, Anselm Corbett and Luke Flynn arrived in Zimbabwe. So much has been done since that moment to the building up of the Church and Carmel in Zimbabwe. And it's important to celebrate those seventy years and the enormous amount that has been achieved in this relatively short space of time. However, it's probably true to say that the depth of sacrifice of all those who ministered in Zimbabwe over these years will never be fully known.

I believe, as part of celebrating our platinum anniversary of Carmelite presence in Zimbabwe, that it is very appropriate that this book be published. Its editor, Father John (Jack) McGrath, has followed a noble tradition in the Province (which includes Fathers Peter O'Dwyer, Leo Gallagher, Michael Hender and others) in meticulously recording events over time. This is a vital task for any generation.

Yet a work such as this is much more than the mere recording of information. It is our shared family history and as Martin Luther King once said, "*We are not makers of history. We are made by history*". We need to understand our past, learning from those who have gone before us. Our history models for us who we are to be. As I read these pages, I am struck by the strength of dedication, courage and witness of the friars and others to the spreading of the Gospel in Zimbabwe. These pages also reflect their good humour and downright positive humanness in achieving so much in such a brief period of time. Standing on 'the shoulders of giants', we are then challenged to continue their work for this present age, according to the signs of our times, and forge our own history.

I congratulate the Commissariat and all those who are part of the Carmelite Family in Zimbabwe on reaching seventy years of Carmelite presence in Zimbabwe. The Order of Carmel has huge admiration for how much you are still contributing to the Church and Carmel in Zimbabwe today in so many different ways.

I congratulate John McGrath who has gathered and preserved the events in the Commissariat over recent years. Like all of his endeavours, he has approached this task with dedication, diligence and love. He has put together a very fine collection that helps to link us with our shared heritage, giving us an opportunity to learn about our family history. I thank especially Father Dave Twohig for his enormous work in the typesetting and layout design of this beautiful production. May God continue to bless all our endeavours, and, may Mary, Mother of Carmel, our model and inspiration, support and guide us in our lives and ministries in Zimbabwe and beyond.

Makorokoto!

Father Richard Byrne, O.Carm.,

Prior Provincial.



Father Vitalis Benza, Commissary Provincial, Zimbabwe

Foreword

During 2011, Father John McGrath presented, with the approval and on behalf of the then Commissary Provincial in Zimbabwe, Father Simplisio Manyika, a 'Collection' in Four Sections, on the history and developments of the Catholic Church in Manicaland and on the activities of the Carmelites in Zimbabwe. He now continues to present this collection with the approval and on behalf of the present Commissary Provincial in Zimbabwe, Father Vitalis Benza. The collection has been updated and revised and informs the reader on general information, personnel and events of interest in the diocese of Mutare and of the Carmelites in Zimbabwe from 1946 – 2016.

In this collection, Father McGrath has made an effort to combine, with the consent of Father Leo Gallagher, extracts from his book, *The Catholic Church in Manicaland 1896-1996*, published during 1996 and other prepared material put together by Father McGrath from 2011 – 2016. The late Father Michael Hender was very dedicated to preserving the different aspects of our history. He wrote in *The Carmelites in Zimbabwe Magazine* (June 2012) *Special Edition for the Provincial Chapter 2012*, edited by Father Alexio Makokowe, "Hope points to the future but it is good not to neglect our knowledge of the past. Any extra effort done towards preserving different aspects of our history is welcome" (p. 27). In grateful memory of Father Hender, there are also extracts in this collection from his publication, *A Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee of The Irish Carmelites in Zimbabwe 1946-1996*. I hope that you find the details and the information which has been put together in this collection, 'Mavambo' (The Beginnings), of interest and of value. The main focus is on the diocese of Mutare and the activities of the Carmelites in Zimbabwe.

Father Vitalis Benza, O.Carm.,

Commissary Provincial, Zimbabwe

April 30th 2016.



Fernando Millán Romeral, O.Carm., Prior General, Bishop Paul Horan, Bishop Alexio Muchabaiwa, Father Jerry Galvin, O.Carm., and Father John McGrath, O.Carm.

Preface

The year of the Golden Jubilee of Carmelite presence in Zimbabwe, 1996, saw several important publications. Two works of note are *The Catholic Church in Manicaland 1896-1996*, compiled by Father Leo Gallagher, O.Carm., and *A Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee of the Irish Carmelites in Zimbabwe 1946-1996*, compiled by Father Michael Hender, O.Carm.

In his Introduction, Father Gallagher states: *“the book chronicles the main historical events that relate to the development and growth of the Catholic Church in Manicaland over the past hundred years and on the different missionary groups who together with the Manyika people have created this history. Many missionaries came to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ in a land that was not their own, the publication reveals some of their experiences in the meeting of different people, cultures and religious beliefs.”*

In the Foreword to the same publication, Bishop Alexio Muchabaiwa wrote that the work done by many people, *“has been a great and noble task, it records and affirms the contributions of those who made that history. It is a fitting tribute to those who are living and those who are dead”*.

The work of Fathers Gallagher and Hender in the publications mentioned, and other publications in this collection, are of immense value. They are referenced extensively in this collection. The excerpts from Father Gallagher are contained in green boxes. The excerpts from Father Hender are in blue.

During 2011, I also came across a ‘hundred page document’ with information on the beginnings of the mission stations in Manicaland. I believe it was probably written by Father Desmond Anthony Clarke, O.Carm., around 1979/1980. The document contained fascinating details and anecdotes about the development of mission stations and the diocese of Mutare. I have made some modifications and additions to the document, which is referred to as ‘Manuscript A’. The excerpts from Manuscript A are contained in yellow boxes.

In presenting this ‘Collection’, I have relied on various sources of information, all of which are appropriately indicated. I would also like to thank Fathers Dave Twohig and Martin Kilmurray for their additional editing of the text. The aim of this collection is to bring together these different sources to tell the story of the Church in Manicaland, and to update the reader on developments in the diocese of Mutare and on the activities of the Carmelites in Zimbabwe since 1996. I hope this collection will be of interest and value to all who are part of and who serve in the diocese and to all who are part of the Carmelite Family.

Father John McGrath, O.Carm.

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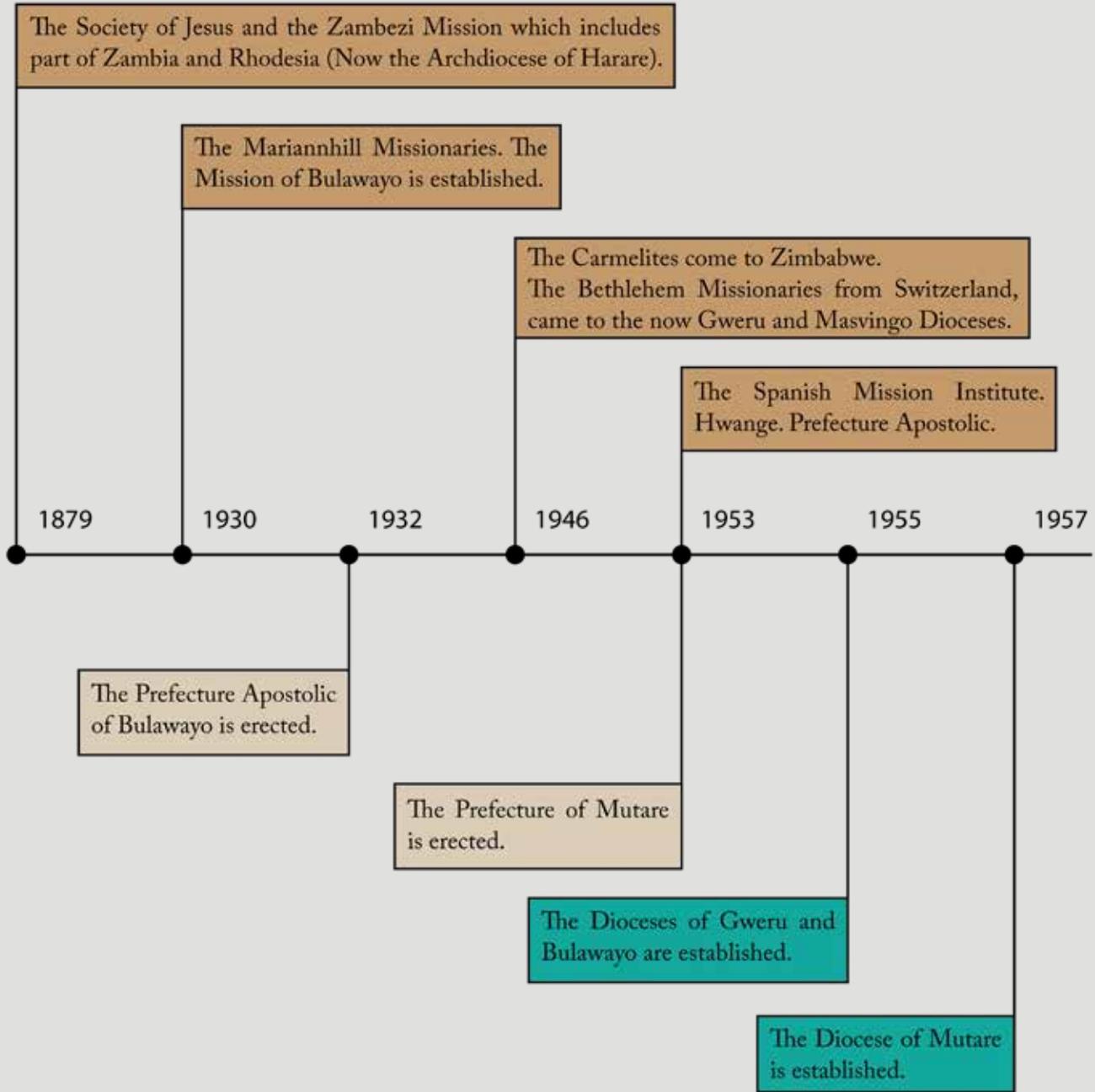
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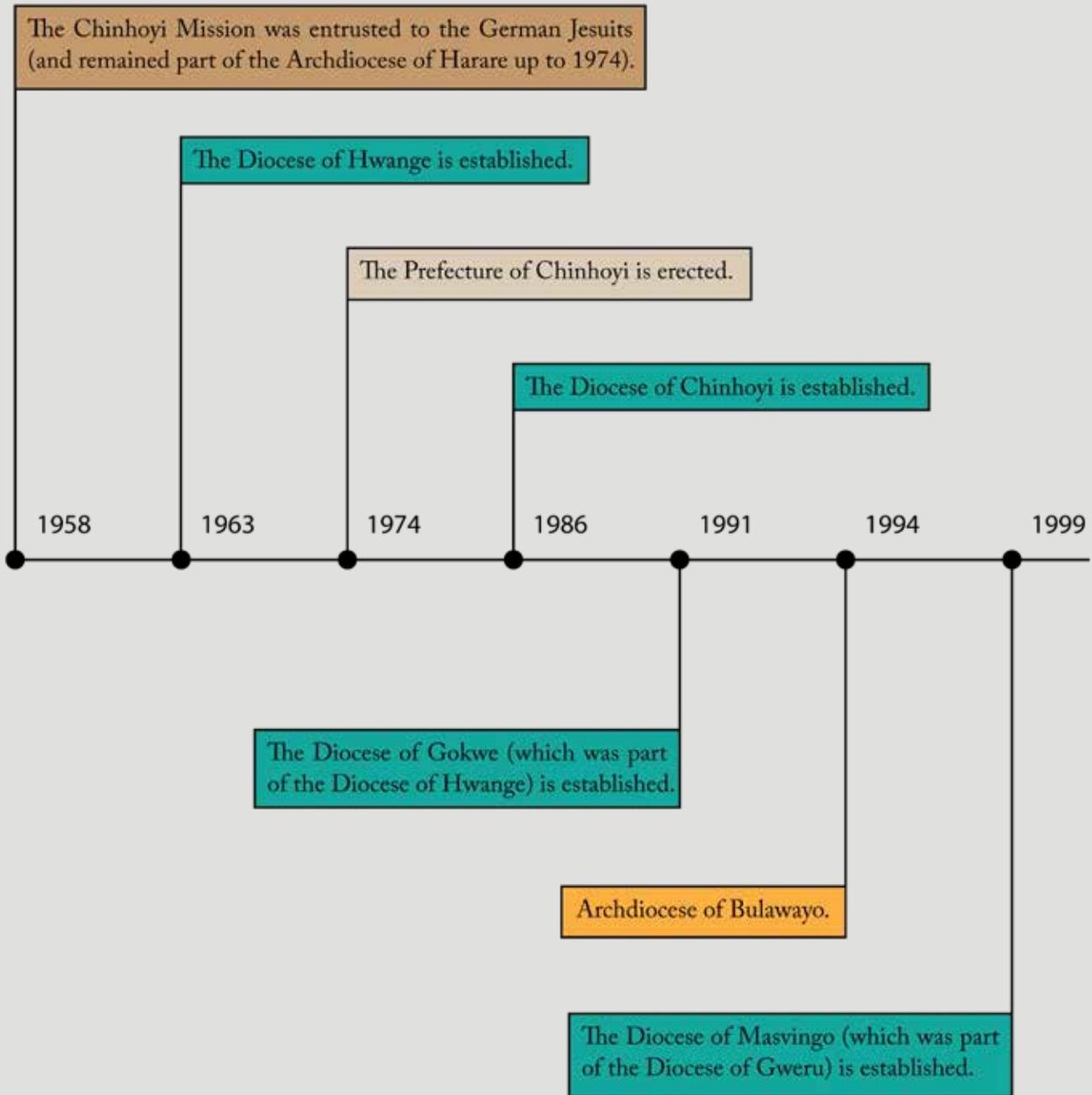
The following is taken from the *Catholic Directory of Zimbabwe 2008-2010*, p. 2:

“The first attempt to evangelise Zimbabwe was made in the 16th Century by a Jesuit Father, Concalo da Silveira of Portugal. His mission was very short lived as he was martyred on March 16th 1561 near the present border with Mozambique, not far from Tete. Next came the Dominican Fathers who established themselves south of the Zambezi and remained until 1775.

“The Jesuits made a second attempt during 1607 and remained until 1759. After 1775 all Catholic Missionary work ceased in Zimbabwe until 1879 when Catholic Priests and Sisters once again entered Zimbabwe. The Jesuits and the Dominican Sisters came with the Pioneer Column and established Chishawasha Mission in 1891 and the Dominican Convent School in 1892 in Harare. Prior to these institutions, the very first Catholic Mission in the Country was established by Father Prestage, SJ, at Empandeni Mission near Plumtree in 1887.

“The original Zambezi Mission of the Catholic Church which included part of Zambia was entrusted to the Society of Jesus by Rome on February 7th 1879. During 1930, the Mission of Bulawayo was erected, followed by Gweru, 1946 and Mutare 1953. On January 1st 1955, by Papal Bull, the Ecclesiastical Province of Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe was set up. Today there are eight Dioceses in Zimbabwe with a growing number of Local Diocesan Clergy, Local and Missionary Religious Priests, Sisters and Brothers, Catechists and a great number of lay leaders.”







Bishop Donal Lamont pictured with members of the various Orders of Sisters 1953

1

Profiles of Missionary Groups (1896-1996)

What follows are brief profiles of missionary groups of priests and religious who are integral to the history of the past one hundred years in Zimbabwe.

i. The Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood, 1910 – 1977¹

Writing in 1949 for the November/December issue of *Whitefriars*, Father Donal Lamont (later Bishop Lamont) a newly arrived missionary working at Triashill said: “One of the very important facts about any mission and one of the facts which the average Catholic is likely to overlook is that much of the work of the mission is not performed by the Fathers and Brothers but by others, and that much of the truth of the Fathers’ work depends upon the efforts of their helpers. All who subscribe to the upkeep of a mission help it; as do those who collect for it; so, in a special degree do those who pray for it. But the most direct and powerful help undoubtedly comes from the devoted women of the Missionary Congregations who give their whole lives to the noble work of spreading the true faith in pagan lands. It is almost impossible to overestimate the part they play; their labours, their prayers and their example are an immense contribution to the success of the mission.”

Father Lamont continued, “Here in Triashill we are fortunate in having the cooperation of a community of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Their congregation is now over sixty years old. In the year 1885, Abbot Franz

Pfanner of the Trappist monastery at Mariannhill, Natal, received the first five members and formed them into the new congregation intended to assist the work of the Mariannhill Fathers and other African missions. A large number of the clergy then in Africa were German, or at least German-speaking, a fact which decided Abbot Pfanner to seek for these co-workers among his compatriots; and so the Congregation of the Precious Blood has been predominantly German in membership. It is not sufficiently realised what a debt the Church in Africa, especially South, and Central Africa, owes to Germany; and not least for the devoted work of the Sisters.”

In 1909 they first came to Rhodesia. Monte Cassino, near Macheke, was one of their first foundations. In the following year four Sisters set out for Triashill, where Father Adalbero of the Mariannhill Fathers, with three brothers eagerly awaited them. Sister Olympia who is still at Triashill was one of the first four; and her account of the earlier days of the mission is vivid. “When we arrived at Rusape, in October,” she says, “we were met by a mule wagon which was to bring us the last thirty miles of our journey to the mission. But the wagon could only take three Sisters so one of us had to ride. It was twelve hours before we reached the mission. In December Rev. Mother General arrived and brought a fifth Sister to the mission.

“Things were not easy at that time; all the cattle had died because of an outbreak of disease and the garden, then only begun, was unable to supply us with food. Transport of

goods was very difficult, as was travel. A visit from the doctor meant a sixty mile journey and a fee of fifteen pounds! Triashill mission consisted of a small building which was used as both church and school; several huts of the native pattern, housed Father Adalbero and the Brothers and the Sisters' convent, which consisted of only one room. This room served as refectory, laundry and dormitory. There were also a few roughly constructed sheds and there was a small piece of ground cleared for tillage.

"In the year after we came, the mission opened four out-schools which we visited every week. The nearest was three hours walk from the mission. The Sisters taught the native girls and women how to sew and make clothing. During the same year work was begun on building the new church. The following year a larger convent building was started. Shortly afterwards two of the Sisters resided at St. Barbara's mission."

"Towards the end of the war, in 1917," Sister Olympia continues, *"the Sisters received notice that being of German nationality they were to be interned in Salisbury. It was very hard to leave Triashill and to abandon the work which, through the grace of God, was bearing fruit there. But we had not been long in Salisbury before we found that there was much that we could do there also."*

Bishop Lamont concludes his article: *"This new work was indeed a work of great charity and was undertaken willingly by all the Sisters. The great influenza epidemic had reached Salisbury and the existing hospitals and hospital staff were not adequate enough to deal with the situation. The Sisters volunteered to nurse the sick and their devoted zeal earned them the gratitude of all the people of Salisbury which was publicly expressed when at last they departed for Triashill again."*

"Since that time the Sisters have been an integral part of Triashill mission and many of its activities could not have been carried out without them. The hospital and the orphanage are their special care and they do much of the teaching also. Now that the mission has been confided to the Carmelite Fathers, it is only fitting that we should pay tribute to the work of the Sisters of the Precious Blood who have done so much to make the mission what it is."

What the Bishop wrote is true also of the Sisters' apostolate in neighbouring St. Barbara's mission. They continued to serve over a period of sixty years. Sister Olympia spent nearly fifty years at Triashill never once returning to her native Germany. The Sisters left Triashill and St. Barbara's in 1969 when the Carmelite Sisters took over. Yet they continued with their valuable service through the newly founded Handmaids of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

For eighteen years (1959 – 1977) Mother Consolatrix Boese was their Directress of Novices. From 1963 to 1977 four Precious Blood Sisters were Superior Generals: Mother M. Ruth Hullas 1963 – 67; Mother M. Hildegrim Becker 1967 – 73; Mother M. Maria Benito Goller 1973 – 75; Mother M. Guntilde Ruhl 1975 – 77.

The Handmaids first took over the apostolates previously performed by the Precious Blood Sisters at St. Benedict's in 1963, St. Barbara's and Triashill in 1969. In February 1977, Sister Gertrude Bbobho, HLMC, became Mother General and Sister Brigid Mauye, HLMC, became the new Directress of Novices. Seeing the Handmaids thus firmly established, the Precious Blood Sisters were able to leave.



Father Leo Gallagher pictured with Mother Consolatrix, novices and prenovices at St. Benedict's 1969

ii. Dominican Sisters (OP), 1926 – 1976 and 1990 – 1996 ²

The Dominican Sisters began their work in Mutare in January 1926. Sisters Reginald, Salesia, Rosaria and Emmanuel came to teach and catechise. They lived in the old presbytery on 5th Street and taught in the parish church. (The new Holy Rosary church was opened about this time, on present day 'C' Avenue and the priest, Father Marconnes, lived next door on 3rd Street.) The building in which the Sisters taught was a tin building known locally as 'Tin Town'.

In 1937 three classrooms were built on the present site of St. Dominic's and the first boarders were accepted

in 1939. They boarded in 'Tin Town', and the Sisters lived in the tin huts until their new convent was opened in 1937. By 1940 the Dominican school catered for primary pupils and the beginning of secondary school level was started with Form 1. For the next thirty-five years the Sisters continued their work of teaching, evangelising and prayer in a spirit of self-sacrifice and dedication. Their lives and work gave witness to all their deep faith and love of Jesus and of His Church. In the best German tradition, tempered by other nationalities, they prayed, worked and offered hospitality to all missionaries.

During the 1970s, the political situation led to a decrease in the number of students. The number of Sisters available for teaching grew less and eventually it was decided with reluctance to close the school in 1976. This decision was very much regretted by all Mutare people — especially by Catholic parents, by Bishop Lamont and by the people of St. Martin's, Florida, where the Sisters had also worked for many years.

From 1945 – 1949, the Dominican Sisters also worked in Mount Melleray mission. They were the pioneers with Father Kaibach and later Father Swift. When the Presentation Sisters came to Mount Melleray the Dominican Sisters withdrew. From 1976 – 1990 there were no Dominican Sisters in the diocese of Mutare. However, at the invitation of Bishop Alexio Muchabaiwa and with the encouragement of the Dutch Sisters who were leaving, the Dominican Sisters returned in 1990 to take charge of and run the TB Hospital at St. Joseph's mission, Sakubva. Once again the Dominican presence in the diocese of Mutare is restored.

iii. Little Children of Our Blessed Lady (LCBL) ³

The Little Children of Our Blessed Lady, known locally as the LCBL Sisters, worked in Manicaland for very many years. These Sisters were founded by Archbishop Chichester in 1932 and they started their work in Manicaland in the same year. In the beginning they stayed at Triashill, St. Barbara's and St. Benedict's and later went to St. Kilian's. They began as candidates and postulants and then went to Makumbe mission for their novitiate.

Many of these Manyika Sisters returned to the diocese where they taught in school and acted as nurses and catechists. They visited the sick and helped the priests in their work of evangelisation. They took care of the orphans and looked after the destitute. They also looked after the girls who were boarding, taught art and craft, needlework and basketry. They worked in the vegetable gardens, kept poultry and, on occasions, livestock. They ran various women and girls' chitas and in general were very helpful. Their greatest contribution was in how they helped the Catholic women and girls. They made a great impression on the young women in Manicaland and as a result many joined the LCBL Sisters.

iv. Presentation Sisters (PBVM), 1947 – 1980 ⁴

The Presentation Sisters arrived from Ireland on May 16th 1947 and went to work in Mount Melleray mission. They were received there by the Dominican Sisters, Fathers Swift, SJ, Aherne, O.Carm., Simon Tsuru and by Brothers O'Toole and McGuigan, both Jesuits.

They settled in to teach in Standards 2 and 3 and to work as nurses. They were very versatile and highly qualified

and they readily adjusted to the conditions prevailing in Mount Melleray at that time. To quote from their annals: *"In 1955 a convent was completed and for the first time each Sister had her own room painted with yellow sand from the river mixed with lime while wooden butter boxes served as cupboards. The Sisters' work continued as they taught the children, looked after the widows and orphans, cared for the sick, made vestments for the church, habits for the priests and brothers, baked altar bread and trained girls to sew and to make dresses and veils for the girls who were later to become Carmelite Sisters."*

In 1951, two Sisters went to live at St. Kilian's mission where they were involved in teaching in the primary school and in helping girls with sewing, cooking and housekeeping classes. Over the years, various Sisters came and went until they were withdrawn in 1963 when the primary school had been firmly established.

Early in 1956, Mother Peter and Sister Lourdes went to Avila mission to establish a hospital. They worked successfully with the Carmelite Fathers for many years. A feature of their work was their outreach to many outstations where they attended the sick and provided preventive medicine mainly for children. The nursing Sisters did much more than nurse the sick and administer the hospitals: in many cases they were surgeon, doctor, dentist, confessor, counsellor, confidant and all-round angel of mercy.

In 1971, Sisters Francesca and Nora went to St. Benedict's mission to teach in the secondary school but the situation of 1971 was very different to that of 1951, as material conditions had much improved. The Sisters in 1971 were provided with a good home and their own car for which they were most grateful. They spent six happy and fruitful

years at St. Benedict's. In 1976 the Sisters withdrew from Avila and in 1977 they left Mount Melleray. They also worked at St. Therese's, Chiduku, for a few months but, as the area was not politically stable at that time, they were withdrawn in 1980.



Sister Anne Barat Corcoran, RSHM, with a young patient in Zimbabwe 1988

v. Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM), 1956 – 1996⁵

As early as 1956, two Sisters – Stanislaus and Peter – arrived from New York to supervise the building of Marymount College, Umtali. Father Jerome O'Dwyer, O.Carm., was instrumental in inviting the RSHMs there since he had known the community in Tarrytown, New York. Although the building was still under construction in June 1957, it was the site of the consecration ceremony of the first bishop of Umtali, Bishop Donal Lamont. This took place in an open air service held on the steps of the college.

The first community arrived in September and October 1957, in time to prepare for the opening of Marymount

on January 1st 1958. The college opened with forty students in Forms 1 and 2. Thirty-three pupils were boarders. Marymount grew from strength to strength adding on a new class each year, until they reached Form 4 in 1963. Sisters Richard, Denise, Veronica, Bernardine and Florence proved foundational and inspirational figures in fostering the growth and development of Marymount College over the years.

Until 1964 the Sisters' presence was only in Marymount but, in that year, three Sisters went to St. Kilian's mission, Rusape. There was a secondary school for boys and girls there. The school flourished during the following years with the constant presence of the RSHM Sisters. In 1976, however, Sisters Consilia, Catherine and Francesca left the mission because of the war of liberation, which made living in such a remote area extremely dangerous.

During the years until 1976 Marymount College continued to expand adding several new buildings and facilities. Then the war hit Umtali and the school had to close at the end of 1976 because of its close proximity to the Mozambique border. All the Sisters, except Sisters Denise, Veronica and Florence, returned home. Sisters Denise and Veronica went to the archdiocese of Harare and, until 1980, Sister Florence remained alone in the Umtali diocese.

After the war several Sisters came to the diocese. Three came in 1980 – Sisters Patricia, Virginia and Tendai – and went to work in Dangamvura township. Sister Florence taught and continues to teach in Mutare Teacher Training College; in the early 1980s she, together with other Sisters, was very much involved with CADEC and in the setting up of the Integral Development Programme (IDP).

From 1976, when Marymount closed, until 1979, the College was unoccupied but in that year the minor seminary, Melsetter, had to move because of the war and they used the Marymount facilities for about a year until they could return to their own premises. The college was eventually acquired by the government and has been used as a teacher training college up to the present day.

In 1981, two more Sisters, Consilia and Catherine, came to the Mutare diocese to work in the Minor Seminary, Chimanimani. The RSHMs stayed there until 1989.

In 1996, Sisters Florence, Doris (Tendai) Russel and Eilish White are involved in tertiary education, hospice work, catechetics and pastoral work both in Mutare city and Dangamvura township.

During the past forty years the RSHMs have served in the diocese of Mutare working with the Carmelite Friars in many different apostolates.



Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mother of Mercy (SCMM)

vi. Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mother of Mercy (SCMM), 'Dutch Sisters', 1957 – 1994⁶

At the request of Bishop Lamont, four Dutch Sisters of Charity arrived in Zimbabwe on April 14th 1957. A quote from the annals: *"It was a real challenge. We had difficulties in adapting to a new environment, adjusting to Shona, Irish and English cultures, learning the languages, teaching under stress, working without hours off in our hospitals."* The annals continue, *"The working method which we used in all our mission stations was to establish and develop education and health services."*

Places where SCMM Sisters worked

Regina Coeli: Sisters of Charity (initially four) worked in the hospital and school from April 1957 to December 1974.

St. Joseph's School and TB Hospital, Sakubva: The building of the modern St. Joseph's school and the TB hospital began in 1957. On September 12th 1958 three Sisters from Holland arrived – Sisters Damiaan Sandkuyt, Leonardo van de Ven and Margareta Zwart. Sister Camilla Heinemann came later in 1966 and worked there until 1991.

In 1958, Sisters Petronella Cooymas and Crucifix Baars came to work in the primary school. Sister Laurentina Styger started to teach cookery, sewing, gardening, laundry and religious education to girls who had finished primary school but lacked money for secondary education. She used the domestic science classroom in the primary school of St. Joseph's mission when it was unoccupied. Most of the time she taught under the trees or in a garage. The school started with twelve girls in 1969. In time it

attracted many girls and young women from Sakubva township. A multi-purpose hall was built in 1973. Part of the hall was used to teach the many students. Later a new block was built and called St. Anne's Homecraft School.

St. Joseph's Secondary School was built in 1969. Sister Maria Goretti officially opened it. Later, in 1976, Sister Adelaide van den Berkmortel took it over.

Mount Melleray: Mount Melleray was founded in 1945 by Father Kaibach. The first congregation to work there were the Dominican Sisters. When they left they were followed by the Presentation Sisters. Then they too left. After the war in 1981 the Sisters of Charity were asked to work in the hospital. Two of the Sisters, Sarah and Margaret, worked there from 1981 until 1985.

St. Therese: In 1958, the Sisters of Charity came to teach at this mission. Sisters Adelaide van den Nerkmortel and Jose van der Pol taught in the primary school. Sisters Maria Goretti, Janseen op de Haar, Josephine Gosseling and Paulus de Bruyn taught in the teachers training college.

Kriste Mambo: Property near Triashill mission was donated to the diocese by Miss May Bloomfield. Bishop Lamont gave this property to the SCMM Sisters to build a school for girls. The building of classrooms began in September 1963. Kriste Mambo School for Girls opened on January 21st 1964. The first headmistress was Sister Marie Jose. Two more Sisters, Ancilla Tuerlings and Doreen Baars, later joined her on the staff. The Sisters also built a beautiful church on the compound at Kriste Mambo. People from the surrounding villages would come to attend mass there instead of walking six kilometres to Triashill mission. The Sisters were living

in Miss May Bloomfield's cottage on the premises but, as more Sisters came – Sisters Therese, Agnes, Petronella, Josephine and Beata – the cottage became too small. A new convent was built. At one time nine Sisters lived and worked in Kriste Mambo. The school had three streams of students from Form 1 to 4; almost all were boarders. It was a modern, fully-equipped, well-built and well-run school, considered to be one of the leading rural secondary schools in Manicaland.

Health: The Sisters witnessed to Christ's healing ministry at Regina Coeli mission hospital, St. Therese's hospital in Chiduku, Mount Melleray hospital in Nyanga and St. Joseph's hospital, Mutare. Regina Coeli became a training college for nurses. The first doctor to work at Regina Coeli was Doctor Irene Baroness von Furstenburg – well known as Doctor Irene. These hospitals and clinics are now well established.

St. Joseph's TB Hospital: Perseverance in little things for love is heroism. A little act done for love is priceless. The Sisters of Charity in the diocese of Mutare have proved this saying countless times. The TB hospital at St. Joseph's mission has developed unity, new life and hope for the patients, staff and for all who were and are involved with the hospital. It is the only one of its kind in Manicaland province. As well as catering for TB patients, it now cares for those suffering from HIV/AIDS.

The Sisters of Charity were highly qualified women and had all the aptitudes and skills needed for their work. Sister Camilla worked in the TB hospital for more than twenty-five years as the matron and was responsible for extending the hospital to its present status. Sister Camilla left when the Dutch Sisters finally withdrew from Zimbabwe in 1990. The Dominican Sisters took over the hospital.

The SCMM Sisters did not only teach in schools and work in hospitals, they extended their knowledge and talents to many fields. For example, Sister Petronella was much involved in the old folks' home in Sakubva. Sister Laurentina taught all forms of handcraft and encouraged the youth to be self-reliant. She was much involved in pastoral work, especially with the Chita women and the scouts to whom she taught many useful skills. Like all the other Dutch Sisters of Charity, she will be sorely missed.

Sister Adelaide was a teacher and administrator and for many years was education secretary for the diocese. She also worked with the Catholic Development Commission (CADEC) and was its co-ordinator from 1992 – 1994. She took the place of Sister Dymphna van Weesenbeck after the latter had left the country. Her work in CADEC enabled people to become aware of and to work for justice. She was involved in projects – the building of dams, boreholes, etc. – which bettered the lives of the poor, especially in the rural areas. Not only were her ideas constructive and useful but she went to great pains to see them through. In keeping with her spirit of perseverance and tenacity of purpose she was the last of the Dutch Sisters to depart from Zimbabwe and what a sad day it was to see her and those wonderful Sisters leave.

vii. Marist Brothers, 1959 – 1996 ⁷

In 1959, Bishop Lamont invited the Marist brothers to build a secondary school for boys at Mount Melleray mission. Brother Paul began to build the first classroom in 1959, and ten students were accepted into Form 1 in 1960. They were taught by Brothers Augustus and Ernest. New buildings and new forms were added each

year and in 1996 there are 515 boarders from Forms 1 – 6. In 1985 the school, known as Nyanga High School, celebrated its silver jubilee. His Excellency the President, Robert G. Mugabe, was the guest of honour. Being a past pupil of Marists' Kutama, he is a great admirer of the Brothers. On that visit he arranged that electricity be brought to the school. This indeed was a great jubilee gift.

Brothers who lived and worked and taught in Marist Nyanga High School were Ernest, Anthony, James, Robert, Louis, Jude, Marcel and Jacques. The scope of the Brothers' apostolate spread to Nyatate secondary school. Brothers Louis and Leon were involved in building the school and the Marists continued to sponsor it over the years. The Brothers are fine educators and Nyanga high school has consistently produced excellent results every year.

viii. Franciscan Missionary Sisters for Africa (FMSA), 1975 – 1996 ⁸

At the request of Bishop Lamont, the Franciscan Missionary Sisters came to Mutare diocese in 1975. The first group of Sisters took over the running of Regina Coeli hospital and some also taught in the secondary school at the mission. Sisters Catherine O'Hare, Anna Stephenson, Ancilla Roderigues, Julia O'Connor, Maria Deans, Ivanna Ennemoser, Sheila Rice, Jude Lloyd, Giles Joulighan, Frances Mary Dunnigan, Louise Malone, Agnes Bradley, Patricia Speight and Karoli Dalton have all contributed to the missionary task at Regina Coeli mission over the past twenty-one years.

In 1977 the Sisters had to leave Regina Coeli mission and moved to Mutare where they were welcomed by

the Dutch Sisters of Charity in St. Joseph's mission. Eventually they moved to their present house in 42 Park Road.

In 1980 some of the Sisters returned to Regina Coeli mission to both the hospital and the school. In 1996 Sister Agnes Bradley is the sister-in-charge of the hospital, while Sister Patricia is involved in home-based care programmes for AIDS patients and their carers. Sister Karoli Dalton has just completed twelve years of teaching at Regina Coeli school. In 1977, Sisters Alcantara White, Kathleen Hickey and Elizabeth Murphy became involved in assisting the HLMC Sisters with their on-going education programme at Park Road house, Marymount and finally at Mt. Cannel centre. At this time Sister Ann McAllister went to St. Charles Lwanga seminary in Chimanimani where she taught for some years.

In 1983, Sisters Alcantara, Kathleen, Elizabeth and Sheila went to St. Benedict's mission for a number of years. Then in 1989, Sister Elizabeth went to St. Andrew's mission and was followed by Sister Eunice. They both taught at Mweya Mutsvene school at the mission until December 1993. Since 1981, when the former Dominican school became a diocesan secondary school, Sisters from Park Road community have taught there: Sisters Eunice, Elizabeth, Clare O'Brien, Deidre Burgess and Mary Inglis. Sister Madeline Brophy was the school bursar for a number of years before she went to work in the Bishop's office. Sisters Madeline, Kathleen and Deirdre were involved in the Cathedral parish with First Communion classes. In 1996, Sisters Mary Inglis and Eunice continue to teach in St. Dominic's while Sister Ancilla Roderiques is involved in pastoral care work in Chikanga and with the Cathedral parish youth group.

ix. The Little Company of Mary (LCM), 1970 – 1996⁹

St. Anne's hospital in Harare and the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary ('Blue Nuns') were well known to the priests, brothers and sisters of the Mutare diocese long before they sent Sisters to work in the diocese. The Sisters at St. Anne's looked after and nursed sick missionaries from the beginning of their ministry in 1937 and continue to do so to this very day. Their care of sick priests was heroic and the Sisters have the deep gratitude and love of the priests of Zimbabwe.

In 1970, Sisters Noreen and Catherine were asked to go to St. Peter's, Chisumbanje, on the banks of the Sabi River, and to begin medical work among the vaNdau peoples living there. They built a big clinic and later a hospital. A mobile clinic was provided to help them do outreach work throughout the vast area of the Sabi Valley. The seriously ill patients had to be transported either to Chipinge hospital or to Chiredzi hospital.

Lay missionary nurses from Los Angeles worked with the Sisters until the hospital was closed down in 1976 due to the prevailing dangerous war situation. It was reopened after the war by the Carmelite Sisters. In 1980 the Blue Nuns returned to Mutare diocese, this time to Mutare city, not primarily as nurses but as pastoral workers. Sisters Boniface and Fanahan work in the parish of St. Martin's in Florida where they minister to the sick and the aged and help Christians in establishing small Christian communities. They are involved in building up the domestic church in its various sections and in the work of justice and peace.

x. Killaloe Mission in Zimbabwe, 1983 – 1996 ¹⁰

In the early 1980s, many dioceses in Ireland became very aware of the missionary or outreach dimension of every priest's vocation. In this context, some Killaloe priests visited a number of African countries with the aim of beginning missionary work. Zimbabwe was chosen because it was newly independent, and Bishop Lamont and the Bishop of Killaloe were friends. In September 1983, the first three priests from the diocese of Killaloe were sent by Bishop Harty to work with the Carmelite Friars in the diocese of Mutare.

Between 1983 and 1996 nine priests have served in the diocese, working alongside Carmelites in the following mission stations: St. Charles Lwanga, St. Kilian's, St. Columba's, St. Simon Stock in Rusape, Regina Coeli-Avila, St. Barbara's and St. Joseph's.

During their thirteen years in Mutare, the Killaloe priests have made many friends in the parishes in which they have served, and among their fellow priests and their bishops. They are greatly respected, and their expertise is highly appreciated, particularly in the areas of catechesis, youth work and education.

xi. The Spiritans in Zimbabwe, 1984 – 1996 ¹¹

The Spiritans in Zimbabwe belong to an international congregation known as the Congregation of the Holy Spirit ('Spiritans'), or the Congregation of the Holy Ghost Fathers and Brothers. The congregation was first started on Pentecost Sunday, 1703, by Francis Poullart des Places, a Frenchman. In 1848, two congregations – Holy Ghost and Most Holy Heart of Mary – were merged under the name Holy Ghost Congregation.

Thus the congregation has two founders – Francis Poullart Des Places and Francis Libermann.

The charism of the congregation is "*availability to the Holy Spirit and to the people of God*". This enables its members to respond creatively to the needs of evangelisation. Based on this charism, their aim and purpose is the evangelisation of the poor. They minister to groups and individuals who have not yet heard the message of the Gospel, to those whose needs are the greatest and to the oppressed. They also willingly accept tasks for which the Church has difficulty in finding workers.

The Spiritans first came to Zimbabwe from Nigeria in 1984 and worked at St. Andrew's, Marange. In 1996 they are working in three dioceses: Harare (archdiocese), Mutare and Gokwe. Their members in Zimbabwe now form a 'district' within the Congregation whose headquarters are at Fern Valley, Mutare.

xii. St. Patrick's Missionary Society, 1989 – 1996 ¹²

The members of St. Patrick's Missionary Society are popularly known as the 'Kiltegan' Fathers after their 'home' in Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow, Ireland. They first came to Zimbabwe in January 1989 at the invitation of Bishop Muchabaiwa.

Initially four priests came: Fathers Noel McHenry, Fintan Byrne, Joe O'Connor and Mick Morris. After a period of orientation at Triashill, two went to St. Paul's, Dangamvura, while the other two went to St. Benedict's. Later Joe O'Connor took over St. Columba's in the Honde valley.

There are ten Kiltegan priests working in Zimbabwe

in 1996, six in the diocese of Mutare and four in the archdiocese of Harare. They are very experienced in missionary activity and their dedication and expertise is respected all over the continent. They have members working in Nigeria, Kenya, Zambia, South Africa, Malawi, Cameroon, Sudan and Rwanda. They are also active in Brazil and in the West Indies.



Abbot Francis Pfanner (1838 - 1909)

Mariannahill in Mashonaland¹³

Eager to spread the faith far and wide in Africa, Abbot Francis Pfanner, the founder of Mariannahill in Natal, met Cecil Rhodes, the founder of Rhodesia, in the Transkei and succeeded in getting from him a grant of 12,140 hectares of farmland in order to begin mission work among the Mashonas in the northeastern part of Rhodesia. Three years later the Amandebele were defeated and the land came under British rule.

In 1896 Father Hyazinth Salomon and a few brothers arrived from Beira on ox-wagons to start a mission station on the land given by Rhodes. The place where the first Mass was said is still kept in honour. The brothers started to make bricks at a place, later called Bethlehem, about a mile east of the present Triashill mission station on the slope of three hills. The hills reminded them of the Blessed Trinity and suggested the name. Brother Nivard Streicher, the right-hand man of Abbot Francis in all his new foundations, was stricken with fever so badly that his companions got ready for his death by digging a grave for him. During the night shooting was heard; the rebellion had started. They hastily loaded their belongings on ox-wagons and left for Mariannahill via Umtali and Beira. In the excitement, Brother Nivard's fever was forgotten and it actually subsided altogether. Later he could joke about it, saying, "*There is no better remedy for fever than a rebellion.*"

Only in 1901 did the Trappists return to Rhodesia to resume their interrupted missionary activities. Triashill, thirty miles from the railway and in mountainous country, was judged unsuitable to be the centre to supply the future mission stations with food

and the necessary timber. A good farm therefore was bought near Macheke and christened Monte Cassino. Father Hyazinth, Father Amadeus Stacke and some Brothers started this mission that year, seven years later Triashill was also reoccupied by the monks. In the same year Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood (CPS) arrived from Mariannahill. At Monte Cassino both priests died during the first year. Their successors had good results in missionary work by opening many out-schools, which proved excellent springboards for evangelising the people. The teachers employed in those days had little professional training, yet proved to be excellent catechists.

Triashill developed into an important mission centre. The Manyika people were eager to become Christians, so much so that Father Adalbero Fleischer and his associate priest, Father Ignatius Krauspenhaar, were able, after instructing the catechumens thoroughly, to baptise several hundred adults every year.

On Triashill mission farm, a second mission station, St. Barbara's, was started in 1914. Whilst Brothers Kassian Zangel, Zacharias Riedl and, later on, Mauritius Buerger saw to the erection of the necessary buildings on the mission, including the church, Brother Aegidius Pfister did great work as a catechist. He traversed on foot the whole mission territory to seek out new places for opening out-schools and mission stations proper. He became an expert linguist of the Chimanyika tongue. Together with Father Francis Mayer, a secular priest from Tyrol, he compiled the first books in Chimanyika: a catechism, a prayer book and a Bible history. Father Francis also wrote the first Chimanyika grammar.

During the First World War all Mariannahill missionaries were interned, with the exception of the two Americans, Fraters Benno Pierson and Bruno Schrimpf. First they were interned in Rhodesia, but later they were allowed to return to the Monastery of Mariannahill. After the war they returned to Rhodesia. In 1920 Father Adalbero Fleischer was elected the first Superior General of the RMM (Religious Missionaries of Mariannahill, as they were then known) and in 1922 was appointed Vicar Apostolic of the Vicariate of Mariannahill. Father Ignatius succeeded him as superior of Triashill, but died of influenza the same year. Thus Father Alberich Reinhard took his place. In 1924 he became Rector of Monte Cassino Mission and Dean of the Mariannahill missionaries in Rhodesia.

When he read in the *Vergissmeinnicht* that Father Ignatius Krauspenhaar's death caused a serious gap in the ranks of the Mashona missionaries, Father Ignatius Arnoz joined the Mariannahill missionaries and was determined to replace him. For this reason, he chose as his religious name Ignatius. He became Rector of Triashill while Father Peter Ebner became Rector of St. Benedict's (St. Benedict's had its beginnings before World War I.). Father Conrad Atzwanger was put in charge of St. Barbara's.

In the period between 1922 and 29 several mission stations were in preparation but could not be staffed, as the motherhouse Mariannahill could not supply the priests. Father Peter started from St. Benedict's a new mission at Mtoko, becoming pastor of both. From Monte Cassino a new mission was prepared in the Wedaz Reserve by Brother Leopold Schimmel: he ploughed fields and erected some temporary

buildings. The same spirit of expansion prevailed at Triashill mission: Brother Zacharias went into the North Inyanga Reserve and Brothers Theophil Klosak and Rudolf Brandys into the Makoni Reserve. Brother Zacharias was badly mauled by a leopard and almost lost his life. The first mission doctor, Doctor Pattis, worked at Triashill and Mtoko, where he was also in charge of a leper camp.

The Mariannahill missionaries were the first to foster vocations to the priestly and religious life in Rhodesia. They were fortunate to send some minor seminarians to Mariathal, South Africa; there was no seminary in Rhodesia. One of the seminarians from Triashill, Kilian Samakande, became the first priest of Rhodesia. He now belongs to the diocese of Umzimkulu, South Africa.

The Holy Trinity Sisters¹⁴

The Holy Trinity Sisters were a group of widows founded on September 16th 1923 by Father Adalbero Fleischer, superior of the Mariannahill Fathers. The Sisters brought another great blessing to the spiritual and material life of Triashill and St. Barbara's mission.

These widows left their homes and came to work on the mission. In some cases they brought their children with them and joined the Chita. There were about thirty altogether. The Trinity Sisters worked in the gardens, orphanages, laundry, and looked after the boarders and in general they were a great help on the mission. They wore a grey habit with a distinctive white cross on the veil. They made Promises which were renewed yearly during Mass on Trinity Sunday.

It was quite usual each evening in the church at Triashill or St. Barbara's to find four groups of religious women at prayer. The Precious Blood Sisters prayed their office in the side chapel, the Carmelite Sisters did the same in another section, the LCBL Sisters recited the Little Office on the right side of the altar and the Holy Trinity Sisters prayed in unison in their place in the church.

In 1957 it was decided to discontinue the Holy Trinity Sisters because their numbers were dwindling. There were nine of them in 1958. Father McGivern had received the last two Trinity Sisters in 1955: Christina Dumba and Crescentia Benz.

End Notes:

1. Gallagher (1996), pp. 69 – 71.
2. Ibid., pp. 71 – 72.
3. Ibid., pp. 72 – 73.
4. Ibid., pp. 73 – 74.
5. Ibid., pp. 74 – 75.
6. Ibid., pp. 75 – 78.
7. Ibid., 78.
8. Ibid., pp. 78 – 79.
9. Ibid., 79.
10. Ibid., pp. 79 – 80.
11. Ibid., pp. 80 – 81.
12. Ibid., 81.
13. CMM (1980), pp. 1 – 4.
14. Gallagher (1996), 13.



2

The Founding of Missions (1896-1946)



Cecil Rhodes (1853 - 1902)

The Beginning of a Mission – Triashill, 1896 ¹

The following extracts, from Mariannahill, a Century of Prayer and Work, by Helen Gamble (1980) record the recollections of Brother Nivard Streicher, a Mariannahill missionary brother and one of the first four missionaries to reach Triashill in 1896.

In 1895 when the prime minister of the Cape Colony, Cecil Rhodes, was on tour of inspection in Kokstad, a small town in East Griqualand, Abbot Francis, the Founder of Mariannahill, was at Lourdes, a mission 72km away.

For a long time Abbot Francis had the intention of starting a mission in Rhodesia. Therefore, as soon as

he heard that Cecil Rhodes was in Kokstad, he left Lourdes to speak himself with the prime minister about this matter. But it was already too late. Rhodes had left Kokstad when Abbot Francis arrived. He had already travelled many miles and his horse was very tired, yet Abbot Francis was determined to see the prime minister. By the kindness of Rev. P. Howlett, CMI, he was able to get a carriage with a team of four horses and with these he drove full speed after the prime minister.

Late in the evening he overtook him at Mount Ayliff. Mr Rhodes, exhausted after the strain of his journey, had retired. He was not in a good mood and had no desire to receive a stranger at such an unusual hour. The abbot, in his turn, was unwilling to have made a journey of almost 120km in vain. He asked to be shown at least the bedroom of this famous man. The voice he heard from within was indeed anything but inviting. But the prime minister soon discovered that the abbot was his equal in tenacity, perseverance, persistence and determination. Abbot Francis not only managed an interview with the prime minister but secured a plot of one thousand morgen in the Inyanga district of Southern Rhodesia for mission purposes.

In the beginning of the year 1896, Father Hyacinth was sent to Rhodesia to inspect the country. On his return to Mariannahill his report on Rhodesia suggested that it was a favourable time to begin a mission there. Within a few

weeks he returned to Rhodesia accompanied by Brothers Nivard, Simon, Romuald and Father Boos, SJ. Father Boos had just given a retreat in Mariannahill and joined the group on his way back to Rhodesia.

Brother Nivard recalled: We took a supply of every possible item that might be necessary to start a mission in wild, unknown country, and boarded a ship setting sail for Beira. We also took with them four strong weighty mules. It was intended that the mules would carry part of the burden of luggage as the railway from Beira to Salisbury was not finished. We disembarked in Beira in 1896 when the harbour was just being built. The quay side for landing was temporary and therefore hazardous for passengers when disembarking. But it was a mammoth, dangerous, and difficult task to harness four stubborn, obstinate kicking mules from a high ship into a moving crane. By the grace of God the mules and ourselves landed safely.

It took many long trying exhausting weeks of travel by river, train, and wagons, including some extraordinary adventures which were impossible for us ever to have imagined. Our mules were more than troublesome for they had never carried anything on their backs, they ran away and proved to be useless. It would take another book to write of the many hardships, adventures and dangers we encountered on our journey. We finally reached the destination of what would be the new mission. It was a picturesque, beautiful mountainous region. To find the demarcation of such a big piece of land was not easy, however. Eventually we found the boundary stones on the very top of a high mountain. When the boundary was finally marked out we chose the site. It was a mountain slope, almost in the centre of our mission district, with three prominent mountain peaks in the background. We determined to name our new mission 'Triashill' in honour of the Blessed Trinity.



An Ox-wagon at Monte Cassino 1946

Father Hyacinth dedicated the mission to the Holy Trinity remembering his parish in Poland.

This was our first dwelling place though not for long. We were all suffering from malaria, sickness, exhaustion and Brother Romuald was on a crutch as he had dislocated his foot. We were indeed a sorry-looking band of missionaries. However, together we mustered enough strength to erect a primitive dwelling place to give us shelter until we could start making bricks for building.

However, this was not to be, as a letter arrived from Mr Fannaner, President of the Municipal Council of Umtali. I quote: *“The indigenous in the Makoni district (the district in which our mission was situated) are in rebellion against the white people. More than a dozen Europeans have been killed. If the Brothers at Triashill are anxious for their lives, they must come to Umtali.”*

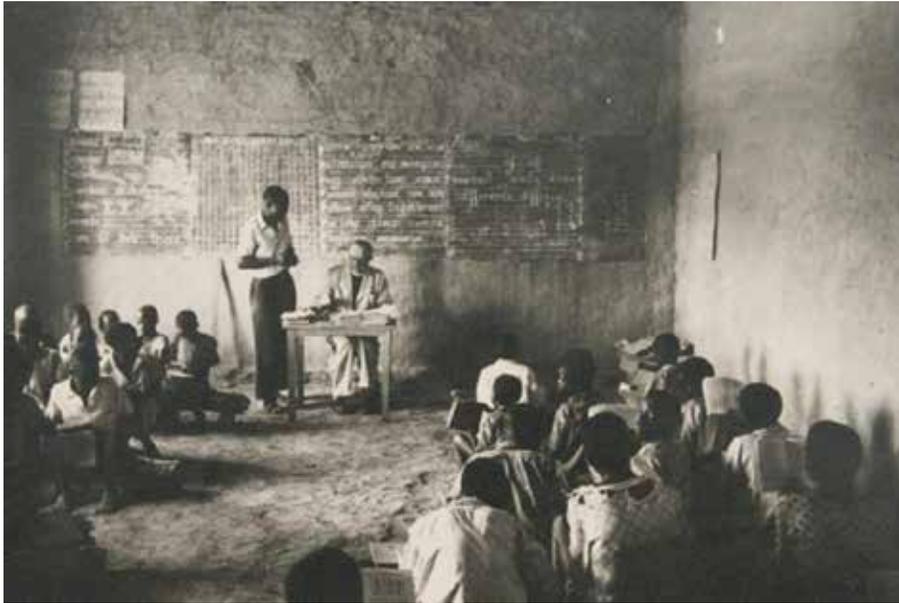
We made haste and packed our most essential needs. But it was with a heavy heart that we had to leave behind our valuable tool kits, tents, provisions and such like. However, we set off and travelled by remote ways to avoid the enemy and arrived exhausted in Umtali. We were warmly welcomed by Captain Montgomery at the camp and were made as comfortable as possible. After a short time of recovery, I prepared to return to Mariannahill as my instructions were to set in motion the newly-founded mission in Rhodesia. Father Hyacinth, with the two Brothers, remained in Umtali for another month hoping for the cessation of the rebellion and the resumption of the mission work in Triashill. Unfortunately, their hopes were not realized and they also returned to Natal in October 1895, and for the next five years Rhodesia was inaccessible for our

mission work. However, although it was postponed, it was not abolished. The title deeds for the land was given to Abbot Franz Pfanner by Cecil Rhodes on December 10th 1895.

In 1901, Abbot Gerard, who succeeded Abbot Francis, reverted to the plan of his predecessor and on his way to Europe (where I had the honour to accompany him) he travelled from Beira to Mashonaland. By this time the colony had made great progress. There was a fine well-built railway from Beira to Salisbury. Triashill was, of course, very far from the railway and seemed too mountainous and rocky to become a great mission centre. Therefore, we decided to find a better place near the railway. A small farm near Macheke seemed to suit the purpose. So the Mariannahill mission of Monte Cassino was founded.

In 1907 the magistrate of Umtali warned Father Whitnell, SJ, who was ‘minding’ the Triashill property, that unless the Trappists occupied the farm they would lose it. So Father Robert, from Monte Cassino, was sent by the Abbott of Mariannahill to resume occupation in September. As Monte Cassino was now well established, plans were made for the resumption of the interrupted work at Triashill. Father Robert was joined by Brother Zacharias in 1908 and by Father Mayer in June 1910. The project proved so prosperous that its success was above all our expectations and today Triashill is a great and flourishing mission.

I have sometimes humbly thought that the sacrifices and difficulties borne by the first pioneers brought many graces and blessings from the Lord for the success of the mission.



An early Jesuit Mission School in Zimbabwe (Image credit jesuitmission.de)

The Jesuit Period, 1929 – 1948²

In 1929 the Jesuits took over Triashill and its dependent station of St. Barbara's with Father Emil Schmits as superior and three Brothers – Goeb, Linder and Mellor. Father Brosig was Superior from 1936 – 1939; Father Kaibach from 1939 – 1944; Father Friedrich from 1944 – 1948. In January 1948 Triashill was handed over to the Carmelites.

At St. Barbara's, soon after the 1929 transfer, it was decided to start the mission on a different site (the present site), about a quarter of a mile away from the old site. It was not until 1943 that old St. Barbara's was finally vacated. The present church was built in 1931.

Under the first bishop, the Rt. Rev. Bishop A. J. Chichester, SJ, who was consecrated in January 1931, and

with the help of the first motor car, brought to Triashill by Father O'Hea, the work continued. But Brother Aegidius, that great missionary brother, died in December 1932 and this proved a great loss but we struggled on.

Sr Ennatha's work in the hospital and in visiting the sick in their homes was appreciated more and more. The patients started coming to the hospital in increasing numbers. By 1937 all the sick were being treated in the hospital so that visiting the sick in their homes was no longer necessary.

1934: Saw the first profession ceremony of the LCBL Sisters at Makumbe and among the newly professed Sisters were three from Triashill: Sisters Rosa/ Laetitia and Pia.

1935: Father Brosing, Brothers Jashke, Lisson and Heim arrived at Triashill.

1936: Boarding was introduced in Triashill. There were 135 boarders: 54 boys and 81 girls.

1937: The number of boys boarding increased to 75 and the number of girls increased to 108.

The Pre-War Years (1938 – 1939): These years saw the arrival of new missionaries from Germany: Father Otto, Brothers Eisner, Werner and Taminkaviatiso. Fathers Boekenhoff and Friedrich, and two Jesuit scholastics, Bruno Gasse and Muschalek as well as Brother Andijuskas also arrived. All these new missionaries were stationed away from Triashill.

1938: In his report for the year Father Kaibach, who replaced Father Brosig as superior stated: *“There has been visible progress in matters material. Within the past three years one new school building, a Sisters’ convent, a new*

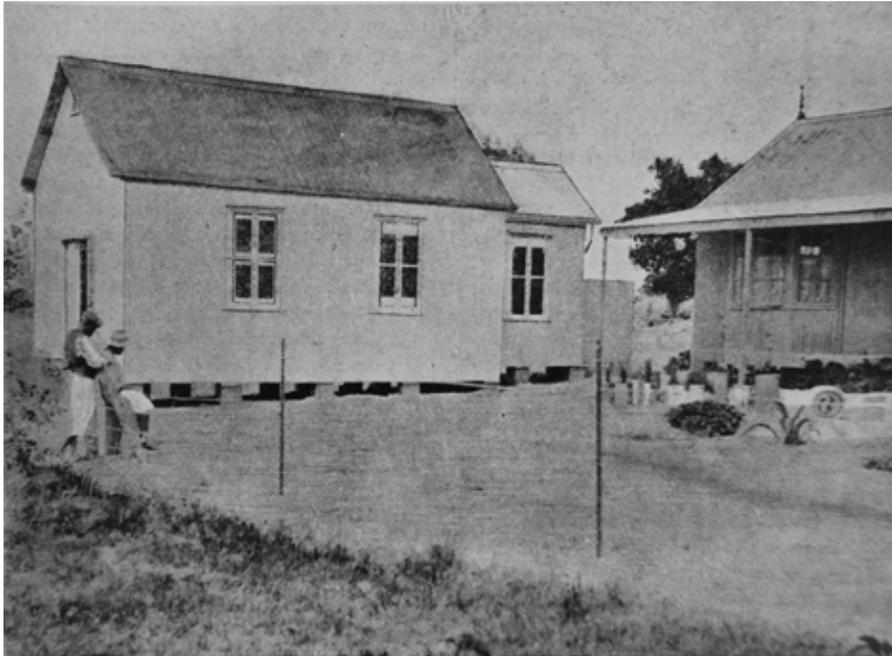
dam and a pigsty have been built. A new hand plane and a power plane were bought. Three rubber-tyred wagons were made and a cow stable built.”

Much progress was made in the scholastic and industrial performance of the schools. Pastorally the performance was not so good. Standards 5 and 6 began in 1938 but this project was not successful at this time.

1939: War raised its ugly head again when Britain declared war against Germany on September 3rd 1939, and in the following week all the German missionaries were restricted to the mission. They were allowed, however, to visit the people in the outstations. The number of patients attending the hospital increased and in 1945 there was a total of 1,139 in-patients and 126 infants were delivered.



Communion Day Triashill Church 1949



The first church built in Umtali

Mariannahill Missionaries, 1895 – 1929 ³

Umtali: Towards the end of the 19th century, Penhalonga, Old Umtali, became a place of settlement where churches were granted land.

Further opportunities were offered to churches to expand their influence beyond Penhalonga and over a much wider area. These opportunities were sometimes impossible to pursue. For instance, Father Herr, SJ, was granted 100,150 morgen at the head of the Sabi River (in the present day Marondera area) for building a mission. He was also granted a stand but both mission and stand were never accepted. The mission territory was too vast, comprising present-day Zimbabwe and much of Zambia. The Jesuits' commitment to this enormous area was called

the Zambesi Mission. In 1895 they were invited to open a mission in Umtali. The Trappists were called upon to come from Mariannahill.

In 1898 a site was purchased opposite the side entrance to Holy Trinity Cathedral at the corner of the present-day 5th Street. Father Ronchi was the first priest in charge. Mass was celebrated at the courthouse, part of which was used as a 'church' for railway men.

A wood and iron church measuring 34ft by 15ft was constructed and opened on October 1st 1899. This church and the little presbytery, also made of iron, were called 'Tin Town'. The presbytery was a tiny cottage behind the church. It was built from scraps taken from old demolished buildings in the town.

Beginnings of Evangelisation in Manicaland

In 1896 Father Hyacinth and Brothers Nivard, Romualdo and Simon, all members of the Trappist Order, arrived in Chief Mutasa's area under sub-chief Mandeya. They travelled from Mariannahill via Durban-Beira and through the country as far as Chimoyo. They arrived there on the Feast of the Holy Trinity 1896. From there they went on foot, using porters and mules to Old Umtali and Triashill.

The first Eucharist was celebrated at Changunda's kraal village. The event is commemorated annually by the celebration of mass at the site.

Preparations were made to build houses, and bricks were being made when the first Chimurenga war began. The Fathers and Brothers returned to Umtali and later went back to Mariannahill. Triashill remained unoccupied and undeveloped for the next twelve years but the Jesuit Fathers, who had established themselves in Umtali, looked after the site.

In 1908 Father Robert came from Monte Cassino with two African catechists, Alphonse and Robert Turo. He was later joined by Brothers Zacharias and Aegidius and they began to establish the mission. In the following year Father Francis Mayer and Brother Flavian came to Triashill. On March 10th Father Adalbero Fleischer and Brother Nivard joined the community.

1910: The Year of Halley's Comet: The year was an extraordinarily active one. Mass was celebrated for the first time at St. Barbara's and the first baptism and wedding were celebrated at Triashill. The erection of brick buildings was begun at Triashill and the Apostolic

Prefect, Father Jortahan, SJ, paid his initial visit to the mission. In November the first Sisters arrived: Agatha, Olympia, Polykarp and Maxima. They were joined later by Sister Dulcissima. Three outstations were begun: St. Anthony in the area of Sanyatwe; St. Boniface in Chief Makoni's area; and St. Paul's also in Chief Makoni's area.

Plans for building a proper church were made and the building materials collected. This was an enormous undertaking. Volunteers had to transport materials 30 miles from the nearest railway point in Rusape to Triashill. Two journeys were made. About 150 young men and women undertook the first and about 100 the second. On October 3rd the actual building of the church began and on Christmas Day the First Communion ceremony took place. Expansion continued over the next few years.

1911: A school for boys was begun at Triashill. Outstations were established at St. Cassian's, Dombo, St. Michael's, Nyarumbo, and Santa Maria, Chikunguru.

Catechists, Mr Martin Chinamasa and Mr Taringapedza, went with Brother Aegidius to the Nyanga area, intending to establish schools. They succeeded in establishing two schools: St. Bernard and St. Benedict.

The cemetery was opened at Triashill and the first person to be buried there was Maria from Manjoro.

1912: It was a year of drought and to help the people the missionaries sold 620 bags of maize, which the brothers had grown, at 15 to 18 shillings a bag. Many people were saved from starvation. Expansion continued: St. Joachim at Nyakwima and St. Robert's at Sadziwa were begun. Brother Aegidius visited Weya with catechists Alois and David. This led to the founding of St. Benedict's mission

in 1913. There were many baptisms at Triashill. Thirty-five couples were married and the First Communion ceremony was performed. Monsignor Sykes, SF, confirmed many persons. The great event of the year was the official opening of the new church on Christmas Day and the solemn celebration of the Eucharist in the new church.

1913: The main event was the appointment of Father Ignatius as the first priest in charge of St. Barbara's mission which had previously been served from Triashill.

1914: This year saw St. Joseph's school in Rusape opened and four young men went to Mutoko to open a school. Paul was sent to Chikore as a catechist and Brother Aegidius helped Father Bruno to start St. Benedict's mission. The first Sisters, including Sister Monica, a new arrival, were sent to St. Barbara's. In November the Precious Blood Sisters moved into their new convent in Triashill.

1915: The missionaries, nearly all German nationals, were restricted to the Triashill farm area due to the Great War, and so missionary activity was very much curtailed. But earlier in the year, Loretto outstation was established and work had begun on building a church at St. Joseph's, Rusape.

1916: The first Holy Mass was said in Rusape.

1917: The German Fathers and Brothers and Precious Blood Sisters were interned. The Sisters were interned in Salisbury while the Fathers and Brothers were taken as prisoners to Fort Napier in Natal. But in October they were allowed to go and stay in Mariannahill. Father Bruno, an American, remained as manager of the missions and

Father Gardner, SJ, did the pastoral work until Father Ignatius arrived towards the end of August 1919.

1919: Father Ignatius died, and Father Alberia, with Brothers Theophill and Basil arrived in Triashill on October 12th. Father Adalbero returned in November and in 1920 Brothers Zacharias and Aegidius returned.

1922: The beautiful main altar we all know and the lovely side altars were erected in Triashill church. In this year drought relief was undertaken: six hundred bags of maize were provided for the starving people from what the Brothers had grown.

1923: This year saw the start of a teacher training school at Triashill and the reopening of St. Benedict's mission. On September 2nd the 'Chita chaWana waTrinitas' was started by Bishop Fleischer, and St. Elizabeth's school was opened.

1924: The name Mwari (God) was replaced by "Yave". Brother Zacharias went to live at the new 'mission site' near Sanhani where he was badly mauled by a leopard in the following year.

1925: On December 2nd, Brother Theophill went to occupy the mission site at St. Killian's.

1926: On April 2nd the new church at St. Benedict's was started. A 100,000 bricks were made at St. Barbara's by the local people for the building of the new church there.

1927: This year saw new expansions and new horizons appearing. Two women candidates left Triashill to join the Precious Blood sisterhood in Natal at the same time three young men – Kilian Samakande, Oscar and James

– went to the seminary also in Natal. The year 1927 saw expansion in the area of education. Four new schools were opened: Njerama in the St. Barbara area, Crossdale in the Nyamaropa area, St. Francis and St. Elias in the Nyanga north area.

1928: In January of this year Dr Patlis, the first Catholic doctor for missions, arrived and the building of the dispensary at Triashill was started. St. Edmund's school was opened in the Mutasa reserve area. Nine girls were received as candidates for the Sisterhood by Bishop A. Fleischer.

1929: This year saw the closure of the teacher training school and the departure of the Mariannahill Fathers. Fathers Schmits and Kaibach and Brother Goeb, all Jesuits, came to take over Triashill on August 30th. The Precious Blood Sisters continued to work with two other missionary groups, the Jesuits and later the Carmelites. The convent of the Trinitas Sisters (widows) was blessed on September 8th. The Jesuits would remain at Triashill until 1948 when the mission was entrusted to the Carmelites.



Open-air Ordination at Monte Cassino 1947

St. Benedict's Mission ⁴

When the Prefecture of Umtali was established in 1953, St. Benedict's mission belonged to the Diocese of Salisbury. It had been founded in 1913. The Jesuits were reluctant to let it go because with Monte Cassino mission (only a mere twenty miles distance by road) both missions were regarded as forming the boundaries of the Salisbury Diocese. However, after much debate and soul searching it was decided to hand St. Benedict's mission over to the Prefecture of Umtali during 1953 and retain Monte Cassino in Salisbury.

St. Benedict's mission was well-kept and well developed. The church was a magnificent structure, German in design with a long slanting roof. The presbytery was well built and spacious, with an excellent veranda.

Father Otto, SJ, was the priest-in-charge at the time of the handing over of the mission. There were two communities of Sisters at the mission: the Precious Blood Sisters and the LCBL Sisters. The mission was built on a farm which in turn was on the boundary of the Weya-Chindambuya Communal Land.

Fathers Matthew Aherne, Cormac Kennedy and Brother Elias O'Connell (later Father Elias) formed the first Carmelite community at St. Benedict's. Father Aherne was the priest-in-charge, Father Kennedy looked after the out schools and Brother Elias looked after the farm and milling, becoming an expert in the Shona language. The people at St. Benedict's became aware that Father Aherne had a phobia about germs!

St. Barbara's Mission

The land around St. Barbara's mission was very fertile and flat and a few hundred acres were reserved for the use of the missionaries. When Ambrose Majongwe was at school in Triashill, he and his companions were asked to walk to St. Barbara's to till the fields and do general chores. Apparently the missionaries got tired of the 16 mile trek and decided to remain around the St. Barbara's area in order to supervise their tillage and so the mission was founded in 1927. During 1926, three aspirants for the priesthood had come forward from this mission area: A. Majongwe, M. Sedze and K. Samukandi. Kilian Samakande was eventually ordained and ministered in South Africa. Ambrose Majongwe, later an MP, decorated by Pope Pius XII and awarded an MBE, was murdered during 1978. (See Appendix 1d)

When the Jesuits came to take over St. Barbara's in 1929 they did not spare themselves in the building of the mission, which could be regarded for that particular time as a masterpiece. There was a well-constructed church, built during 1931, with a magnificent convent for the Sisters at the side of the Church. Unfortunately, the Jesuits at that time were unaware of ant-courses or any other form of ant-deterrent and, during the following years, the ants simply played havoc with the mission despite the well-structured buildings. The original plan was to build a presbytery on the other side of the church but they never got around to it and the missionaries lived in another building nearby.

Up to 1948, the grinding of maize was done at Triashill and a big ox-wagon, pulled by eight oxen, made the weekly journey to and from Triashill with maize and upfu, which is 'ground maize'.

As St. Barbara's was on the border of the Makoni and Manica communal lands there existed a number of outstations or out schools. It was the custom that one priest remained on the mission, generally the priest in charge who looked after the mission and school while another priest acted as 'superintendent of the out schools'. This arrangement did not give a very good impression as over time missionaries came to be seen as civil servants.

St. Barbara's had some of the finest out-schools in the

area such as Bethania, Loretto, and St. Anna's which was later to become St. Columba's mission in the Honde Valley. Father Schmitz, SJ, was the last Jesuit to serve at St. Barbara's mission.

When the mission was taken over by the Carmelites, there were three communities of Sisters also: the Precious Blood Sisters, the Trinity Sisters and the LCBL Sisters. There was a hospital, an orphanage, a very well arranged farm and farmyard.



Father Ambrose Roche with African Chiefs

Saint Kilian's Mission

The site for St. Kilian's mission, comprising 100 acres, was granted by the District Commissioner of Makoni to the Mariannahill Fathers around 1926. St. Kilian was an Irish monk who founded the church in Wurzburg in Germany, and it was the German Mariannahill Missionaries who chose the name of this mission.

Brother Theophill (Mariannahill) resided at St. Kilian's Mission for some time and was replaced by Father Hector, SJ, during 1939. Father Hector did not have any transport and went about the area on horseback. Many interesting and amusing stories are told about him; he called his horse 'Bob', constructed lots of 'not so good buildings' with grass roofs which had cow-dung floors. He could not tolerate any form of frolicking by young girls, many of them ended up at the mission doing penance! He roamed the wide open spaces of Makoni on 'Bob' and spent very little time on the mission. He preferred the wide open spaces! Father Francis Markall took over from Father Hector for a short time but, due to the shortage of personnel, the Jesuits handed St. Kilian's over to the Carmelites during 1948.

Father Ambrose Roche was assigned together with Father Luke Flynn to St. Kilian's. Again there are many interesting and amusing stories about Father Roche. He insisted on the 'regular life' at St. Kilian's with the reading of the *Imitation of Christ* at meals. Father Barty McGivern replaced Father Flynn and again experienced the 'regular life' and chapter after chapter of the *Imitation* until he had enough of it!

Father Roche did have success at St. Kilian's when he succeeded in sinking a bore hole on the mission, something the Mariannahills and the Jesuits had not succeed in doing. He had a great interest in everything African and even wrote a grammar on the Shona language which was never published. Father Roche often neglected his personal health in his zeal as a missionary.

Mount Melleray Mission

Mount Melleray was originally known as the Rhino Valley Farm with 3,000 acres stretching over hills, kopjes and fertile plains or valleys. The farm had been bought by Bishop Chichester immediately after the Second World War because a number of the African people living in the Makoni-Rusape areas the government had been moved by the Government to Inyanga. The Bishop wished to care for the large numbers of Catholics among those people. While on a visit to Ireland, some kind benefactor gave Bishop Chichester six hundred pounds and, in gratitude, he called the new mission, Mount Melleray after the Cistercian Monastery in Ireland. He also wished to remember the work done by the Trappists in the Eastern Districts of Rhodesia.

Father Kaiback, SJ, founded the mission in 1945. He was a good and saintly missionary but the world's worst builder! In time all the buildings and sites were found to be unsatisfactory because of white ants and it was decided to erect permanent buildings on a higher plateau.

Father Boehi, SMB, from Fort Victoria was drafted in to help Father Kaiback and later wrote: "*We started*

immediately with the new school and made furrows for irrigating the wheat fields. As there was no road to the top of the plateau, we made and built a short cut by hand almost two miles from the main road which took six weeks to build. The wheat fields yielded a good crop which nearly paid for the new threshing machine which was driven from the back wheel of a one ton truck. We also threshed the neighbours grain, altogether over 1,000 bags." To draw water for the mission, Father Boehi also built a large water wheel which was twenty-five feet in diameter.

Mount Melleray was a poor and impoverished place when it was taken over by the Carmelites in 1950. Father Swift, SJ, was the priest-in-charge at that time together with two or three Dominican Sisters. Father Mel Hill, O.Carm., spent his first African Christmas at Mount Melleray on supply and often talked afterwards of his Christmas dinner which consisted of two fried eggs!

The Presentation Sisters at Mount Melleray

The Presentation Sisters (who were mainly Irish) came to Mount Melleray shortly after the Carmelites. The Presentation Order had a presence in India for over one hundred years and, after Independence, some of the Irish Sisters decided to come to Africa. Contacts were made and six Sisters arrived in Rhodesia during 1949.

On arrival at Mount Melleray, the Sisters became aware of the primitive conditions of the place. The Dominican Sisters were still in residence and were able to show the new Sisters how to cope with the difficulties, how to manage and improvise,



Mount Melleray Church 1950

when to fight and when to give in and laugh! The Presentations began their work by opening a basic and much needed hospital. Father Anselm Corbett, O.Carm., was resident at Mount Melleray at this time. Soon afterwards, Doctor Jim Barnes, with his wife and family came to help in the new hospital. Father Mel Hill reported at the time that *"women have been coming down the mountain in great numbers*

drawn by his bedside manner. When the first few women came everything was alright but when more and more women arrived there was nowhere to put them. There was one male patient in the men's hut and he was moved out of this 'hut' and put under a tree to make room for the women. Ever since the tree has been referred to as the men's ward"!

Mount Melleray lies directly underneath a mountain called 'Mousi', and today St. Patrick's High School, (Marist Brothers) is just some minutes' drive to the left of the mission. The view from the mission can be fascinating on a clear and sunny day, and the sunsets spectacular.

The Church in Mutare City⁵

The story of Mutare began in 1888 when a piece of metal, later discovered to be gold, was found at Nyautave in Penhalonga not far from Chief Mutasa's village. Two years later, after careful investigations, negotiations and preparations, a group of adventurers, led by A. B. Colquhoun built a fort at Penhalonga. Large numbers of men flocked there lured by the rumours that gold was to be found and they started to build. But Penhalonga was found to be unsuitable and in 1891 the settlement was moved to a site near the Mutare River. This site is where the present Old Mutare Methodist mission is built.

This second settlement only lasted for a few years. When the railway line reached Mutare its owners wished to push on to Salisbury. It was impossible to bring the railway line over the Christmas Pass to the settlement, so it was suggested that the owners of the stands in Old Mutare transfer their stands to the railway side of

the Christmas Pass. Some compensation was paid. A survey of the new site was made by Mr Fairbridge and his son, Kingsley. The changeover was completed in 1898.

In 1899, the first Catholic priest took up residence in 5th Street. He was Father Joseph Ronchi, SJ. He ministered to the Catholics for sixteen years and was succeeded by Father Whitnell also a Jesuit. In the beginning the priests worked mainly with the railway workers, many of whom were Catholic, but as the town grew the Catholic population also grew.

The Catholic Church in Umtali 1898

The first resident priest stationed at Umtali was Father Joseph Ronchi. He arrived there during 1898. He stayed in Darlington at the house of Mr Sykes. Father Ronchi acquired two stands on 5th Street, between A and B avenues, and built a wood and iron house and church. Mr Richard Leslie Bell and Miss Martina Agnes Denhan were the first couple to be married in this church on February 14th 1900. Father William Withnell, one of four brother priests, succeeded Father Ronchi during February 1907 and started the monthly Mass at Penhalonga the same year.

Father Bontemps succeeded Father Withnell during 1913 and he was succeeded by Father Marconnes, who built the Church on 'E' Avenue. He was assisted by a very noble band of parishioners. The foundation stone was laid by the Monsigneur Brown, SJ, on April 15th 1923 and the church was blessed and opened on April 11th 1926. After eleven years of devoted service, Father Marconnes was succeeded by Father Henry Quinn, SJ.

The Dominican Sisters arrived in Umtali on January 26th 1926. Sister Reginald and her Sisters took over the old wood and iron Church on 5th Street and began their school there on February 2nd 1926 with 30 pupils attending. During 1936 the Dominican Sisters secured a site at the foot of Cecil Kop and began building their convent and school on April 29th. The school was opened by the Governor, Sir Herbert Stanley, on August 5th 1937 while Bishop Aston Chichester, SJ, blessed the convent and school buildings. The Sisters were to continue their ministry at St. Dominic's until 1976.

In the very early days of the Catholic Church in Umtali, there were very few Catholics in Sakubva. Those who were Catholic in Sakubva went to Mass at the Holy Rosary Church on 'E' Avenue. Father Quinn began night school for the people of Sakubva in the sacristy on 'E' Avenue.

Father Quinn erected a multipurpose building which was used as a church and school, he also built a small priest's house and the site became known as St. Robert's, just outside the town of Umtali (1927 – 1930). Fathers Quinn and Stratton, both Jesuits, lived at St. Robert's and served the faithful in the Umtali area. Fathers Seed, Binns and Francis Ketterer, also Jesuits served the Catholics at St. Robert's and at Holy Rosary on 'E' Avenue. 1,200 baptisms were recorded between 1900 – 1936 at Holy Rosary Church and St. Robert's.

Father Donal Lamont, O.Carm., took over from Father Ketterer, SJ, on March 17th 1950 with Father Andy Wright, O.Carm., assisting. The Holy Rosary Church on 'E' Avenue accommodated about 150 people and was in good condition at the time.

Father Andy Wright ministered in the Umtali area for two years and returned to Ireland during 1952. He found the Shona language difficult, but nevertheless he made a tremendous contribution to the missions for the eight years he spent in Rhodesia. The Carmelites at that time would say that Andy was one of the few capable of putting Father Lamont in his place'. He had a pleasant and humorous way of saying hard things! The story of his driving test was a legend for years. With a policeman as examiner sitting beside him, Andy was trying to negotiate the crossing of a very narrow bridge and was not sure of the brakes. He did succeed in crossing and passed his test. The policeman was heard to say after that he "*would not go through such an ordeal again for all the gold in South Africa*".

End Notes:

1. Gallagher (1996), pp. 7-9.
2. Ibid., 14-16.
3. Ibid., 10-13.
4. Manuscript A.
5. Gallagher (1996), 44.



*Bound for Zimbabwe 1947: Back row: Brothers Angelus Kinsella and Bernard Clinch
Front row: Fathers Ambrose Roche, Father Andy Wright and Father Mel Hill*

3

The Arrival of the Carmelites (1946-1954)

A Chronicle of Events ¹

1946

On July 22nd the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith granted permission to the Carmelites to work in the Vicariate of Salisbury, Rhodesia. Three Carmelites arrived in Rhodesia. Two went to Mhondoro for orientation while Father Lamont, with Bishop Chichester, gave retreats and parish missions.

1948

Triashill mission, Manicaland, entrusted to the Carmelites. St. Kilian's mission, Makoni, entrusted to the Carmelites.

1949

St. Barbara's mission, Manicaland, entrusted to the Carmelites.

1950

Holy Rosary Parish, Mutare, and St. Robert's, Sakubva, entrusted to the Carmelites. St. Robert's was later

absorbed into St. Joseph's mission. Mount Melleray mission, Nyanga, entrusted to the Carmelites.

1951

St. Anna's mission, Wengezi, established. Closed 1955.

1952

St. Simon Stock mission, Rusape, established.

1953

Church built in Rusape. Teacher training and carpentry schools established in Triashill. Avila mission started. St. Benedict's mission entrusted to the Carmelites. On February 2nd the Prefecture of Umtali was erected, its territories defined, and a new administration, independent of the diocese of Salisbury, established. The new Prefecture was entrusted to the care of the Irish Province of Carmelites and Father Donal Lamont, now Monsignor Lamont, was appointed Prefect Apostolic.

1954

Carmelite Priory, Mutare, built. Regina Coeli mission, Nyamaropa, established. 'Drumfad' purchased.



Fathers Luke Flynn, Donal Lamont and Anselm Corbett

The Coming of the Irish Carmelites.²

From 1890 the entire area of Rhodesia was entrusted to the Jesuits. It was the policy of the Jesuits to parcel out their vast area to any Missionary Congregation which showed an interest. Bulawayo and Wankie were given to the Mariannahill Fathers. The Fort Victoria area was given to the Bethlehem Fathers from Switzerland, while the Jesuits retained the Salisbury and Umtali areas. The Eastern Highlands, a most scenic part of the country, was posing problems for Bishop Chichester, the Bishop of Salisbury. He had very few priests and on the ending of the Second World War, he offered this area to any interested group of missionaries. The Irish Carmelites showed an interest and they were invited to Rhodesia by Bishop Chichester. During 1946 the first group of Carmelites: Donal Raymond Lamont, Anselm

Corbett and Luke Flynn arrived in the country. Father Corbett wrote the following amusing story of how they were 'welcomed' to Salisbury: *"It was all so new to members of a Religious Order that had no missionary tradition, yet it was a great adventure. It was seven o'clock on a November morning in 1946 when our train pulled into Salisbury station. Our heads were at the windows looking out for someone to meet us. The train jerked to a halt at a platform that was almost deserted except for a lone clergyman who was dressed in crumpled khaki and wore a wide soft hat with a floppy brim. We climbed down but he did not move until we walked up to him. Then without shaking hands he gave us a crisp 'good morning' and looking at a big silver watch which he wore in his breast pocket said sharply 'you're late'. Not exactly a red carpet welcome but that was the way with Father Seed, SJ, whom in years to come we got to know and like so much."*

Vision and Courage³

It was a time for new beginnings, a time for new hope, a time to embark on new ventures. World War II had just ended. Europe was recovering from its latest and worst nightmare. Leaders in many countries were trying to revitalise old institutions and to create new ones on a global scale. Church leaders, including Carmelite authorities, were anxious to get involved in this recovery and process of international development — to make sure that Christ was not forgotten in attempts to construct a new world order.

It was 1946, the year when the missionary effort in Africa of the Irish Carmelite Province began. The vanguard comprised three men from three different provinces of Ireland: from Connaught, Father Luke Flynn of Mayo; from Munster, Father Anselm Corbett of Tipperary; from Ulster, Father Raymond Lamont of Antrim. Many fine missionaries from the fourth province of Leinster would follow them soon afterwards. Their task was not always an easy one. Shortly after their arrival Father Anselm Corbett, who later became renowned for his mastery of the local language, wrote:

“Luke Flynn and I spent Christmas 1946 at St. Michael’s Mission, Mbondoro, to where we had been posted to learn the Shona language while Raymond Lamont remained in Harare at the disposal of Bishop Chichester, SJ. All I can remember of that Christmas is that we felt very lonely”

The place chosen for the Carmelites was the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe, a land of beautiful hills and valleys, of tree-covered slopes and fantastically-shaped balancing rocks, an area ranging in altitude from nine

thousand feet between the missions of Triashill and Regina Coeli, to one thousand two hundred feet near the most northern Mission of Avila and the most southern Mission of St. Peter’s, Chisumbanje, and ranging in temperature from light frost in winter in the higher Missions to nearly forty degrees Celsius in summer in the lower ones. Most important of all to the new missionaries were the people of this region. They were friendly, polite and, for the most part, willing to listen to the message of Christ, a message of love and forgiveness, a message of freedom from fear and from evil — *“I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly”*. It would also be freedom from disease and ignorance, as hospitals and schools were soon put high on the agenda of the new missionaries.



Procession at St. Michael’s mission, Mbondoro, 1947



Father Anselm Corbett at Triashill mission

Triashill Mission⁴

The Carmelites were entrusted with Triashill Mission during 1948. Father Friederich, SJ, a German Jesuit, the priest-in-charge, as he was reluctant to see the big complex go to inexperienced missionaries. At that time Triashill had a primary school, an orphanage, a hospital, and three convents of Sisters: the Precious Blood, the Trinity and the LCBL Sisters. The Trinity and LCBL sisters were indigenous. There was also a good farm with cattle, sheep and pigs, a workshop which was well stocked with carpentry tools, a grinding mill, a forge and even a wine press. After Father Friederich left and Father Lamont took over accompanied by Father Andy Wright and Brother Angelus Kinsella.

Triashill Farm had been originally given to the

Trappists by Cecil Rhodes. It was a great tract of land comprising some 26,000 acres. However the acquisition of such an amount of land was soon to prove difficult. The missionaries retained a few hundred acres of good land for themselves and rented out the rest to recent converts from all over Manicaland. The priest-in-charge of Triashill, consciously or unconsciously, became a landlord with all the attendant burdens. The tenants were requested to pay a monthly rent. The priest-in-charge was responsible for the maintenance of the road, eleven miles of it, and to see to it that contour ridges were put in place to avoid erosion.

The policy of the Jesuits which was later inherited by the Carmelites was to concentrate on the central mission, and the people were obliged to go to the mission for all their requirements. This often involved walking great distances.



Father Mel Hill with the people of Triasbill

A Time of Transition ⁵

Five more Carmelites arrived in 1947 and in 1948, the Bishop handed over Triashill mission to the Carmelites and Father Corbett was its first Carmelite Superior.

St. Kilian's mission was staffed by the Carmelites from 1948 and St. Barbara's was entrusted to them in 1949. Father Francis Markall, who was to become Archbishop of Harare, worked with his German Jesuit colleagues and later with Carmelites in the St. Barbara and St.

Kilian areas. Another happy combination at this time of transition was Father Ketterer, SJ, and Father Andy Wright, O.Carm. The latter took responsibility, in the name of the Carmelites, for both the Holy Rosary and St. Robert parishes in Mutare from Father Ketterer. They made an excellent pair and became great friends. Their different types of humour blended perfectly, and both had the same friendly approach to people. One Carmelite came in 1948, two others in 1949, and six in 1950.



Father Donal Lamont, Bishop Aston Chichester and Father Francis Ketterer, SJ

1950 saw the transfer of responsibility for Mount Melleray mission. The transfer of Jesuit missions to the Carmelites was completed in 1953 when Father Otto, SJ, handed over St. Benedict's mission to Father Matthew Aherne, O.Carm. Meanwhile new mission stations were being established. The handing over of the missions by the Jesuits to the Carmelites was facilitated greatly by the friendly relationship between Father Donal Lamont and Bishop Aston Chichester.

Vision and Courage ctd. ⁶

The wild animal population was much greater in 1946 and the human population was much less than it is now. Kudu, buffalo, eland, bush-buck, hyenas and leopard were plentiful especially around new missions carved out of virgin terrain by the Carmelites such as Regina Coeli, Avila, St. Columba's, St. Charles Lwanga, St. Patrick's and St. Peter's.

During that period different forms of construction began to appear. Father Anselm Corbett in 1950 writing about St. Anne's, now St. Columba's Mission, in Honde Valley: *"A letter from Enoch Sanebwe informed me that he had erected the first classroom, a pole and mud structure at St. Anne's and that he was about to make a hut for the priest. So next time I go down there I shall have at least a decent grass roof over my head."*

Roads in 1946 were often a problem, especially in areas inhabited by the indigenous population, among whom the missionaries lived and worked. Asphalt roads were non-existent in most parts of the country. Tracks rather than roads were common. The favoured means of transport were the army-type four-wheel-drive vehicles and motorbikes. In the rainy season some roads became

impassable because of mud and the absence of bridges.

In 1952 Father Martin McMahon wrote: *"One of our small trucks got embedded in a river, bonnet facing downstream. We brought our famous tractor to the scene but it too got embedded — in the bank-side muck. Some hours later we got the tractor out with the help of oxen! The tractor eventually hauled out the truck."*

These were some of the elements which formed the backdrop to the lives of the Carmelite missionaries during their early years in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. But they hadn't come to admire the scenery and the local fauna and flora, or to bemoan the condition of roads. Their attention was focused on the people of the territory of Manicaland, known from 1957 as the diocese of Umtali/Mutare. A few Carmelites would also minister in the diocese of Salisbury/Harare.

Almost every year after 1946 new Irish Carmelites reached Zimbabwe until there was a peak in the sixties of over fifty Carmelites present in the country including some members of the Order from the U.S.A., Australia and Britain.



Founding of Missions and Parishes ⁷

St. Anna's, Wengesi 1951

Around 1951, Father Lamont was given a plot of land about forty miles to the South of Umtali. It was a small farm in the middle of a white farming community. Father Lamont had a house constructed on the property and a small school to provide education for the local children of the workers on the surrounding farms.

Father John O'Sharkey was appointed to the area. The venture proved a dismal failure as there was nothing static about the farm workers, they were always on the move. After a short time Father O'Sharkey found there were too few children to make the school viable and the whole project was abandoned during 1955.



Father Mick Ardiff at St. Simon Stock, Rusape

St. Simon Stock, Rusape, 1952

The next area to receive the attention of Father Lamont was Rusape Town. There was a 'foundation' in Rusape during the time of the Trappists. It was situated near the railway station and was known as 'St. Josephs'. It was a fairly sizable cottage and most of the Trappists and later the Mariannahill Brothers spent their first few days there, having arrived by train. The plot of ground is still marked 'The Trappist's site' on the old survey maps of Rusape. The cottage with its small plot of ground served as a storage place for goods collected from the train prior to their being taken to the missions.

During 1952 the 'old church' was erected (now a hall situated beside the present Church and Priest's residence). The first Mass was said in Rusape during 1916. Initially, Rusape was an outstation of Triashill. While at Triashill, Fathers Martin McMahan and Gabriel O'Brien took turns in saying Mass in Rusape and all the services were conducted in English. The first priest took up residence in Rusape during 1958.

Significant dates for St. Simon Stock include:

- St. Simon Stock Parish (1952)
- St. Joseph's Primary School (1963)
- St. Joseph's Secondary School (1965)
- Sacred Heart Children's Home (1980)
- St. Therese Convent, Carmelite Sisters (1982)
- Emmaus House (Building began during 2003)
- St. Elijah Convent, Carmelite Sisters (2005)



Avila mission church

Avila Mission 1953⁸

Avila mission, about 100km north-east of Nyanga village, was the first mission station to be actually built by the Carmelites. Father Tony Clarke and Brother Simon Noonan went there in 1953. An effort had been made previously to begin a mission station at Wengezi, south of Mutare, but this was not successful. Triashill, St. Barbara's, St. Benedict's and Mount Melleray missions were given to the Carmelites as going concerns, so Avila was the pioneer Carmelite mission.

Father Clarke had already worked in Mount Melleray

and in St. Kilian's when Monsignor Lamont asked him to go to Chief Katerere's country. The Trappist Brothers from Triashill had visited Chief Katerere's territory in earlier times. Brothers Aegidius and Zacharias had included Katerere on their itinerary from Triashill to All Souls' mission in Mutoko. The people in Katerere still remembered the Brothers thirty years later. Father Clarke relates: *"Brother Simon and I set out in a second-hand Landrover with some supplies from Mount Melleray. The fifty-mile journey took five hours. We took possession of a small round hut into which we squeezed two camp beds and a small table. This was to be our home for many, many months until enough bricks were made to build a permanent structure."*

We wonder what the two men were thinking of as they travelled past the Mica hills and past Sanhani where Brother Zacharias had been mauled by a leopard, and where elephants and lions were to be seen now and then. Avila was a very remote area, the land of the Vahwesa people. The two missionaries went, stayed, built and preached in season and out of season. They established schools and a clinic, and the Presentation Sisters who came later worked as nurses and teachers. Thus the foundations were laid for what is now a thriving mission with many outstations. The weather there remains the same — very hot and very dry nearly all the time — but the mission personnel have changed.

Father Clarke, now a veteran missionary, was again asked to found another mission, this time south of Mutare in St. Peter's, Chisumbanje. Later on he founded two other mission stations: St. Patrick's, Nyanyadzi, and Chimanmani. In 1964 Bishop Lamont brought Father Clarke to Drumfad as his personal secretary. Father Clarke acted as Vicar General of the diocese and as Vicar Administrator during the war years.

Avila mission now has large primary and secondary schools, a fine clinic and the most beautiful rural church in the diocese, some would say in the country. Father Clarke writes: *"It is a building of rare beauty both in design and construction and is made almost entirely of local materials comprising three thatched rondavels joined together. The church is truly African in concept and execution, fits in admirably with the surrounding countryside. It is a lasting tribute to Father Peter Senan Egan who designed it and built it with the help of the local people when he was parish priest there from 1964 to 1976"*.

Avila Mission 1953⁹

To the north and east of Mount Melleray there were scattered villages of Christians or people who were interested in Christianity. Father Anselm Corbett put the whole situation in perspective when he wrote: *"Across the mountains and over towards Mozambique there were scattered villages of Chief Nyamaropa's people who were still pagan and rather primitive when compared with those living near Umtali. Further north there was the big undeveloped area called Nani-Katerere. Mount Melleray was the jumping off place for expansion north and eastwards"*.

During 1953 Monsignor Lamont started to organise his new Prefecture. The area of Katerere was the first to claim his attention. In the early twenties, two Trappist Brothers, Aegidius and Zacharias, reached as far as Katerere from Triashill, a distance of over 100 miles.

The two made such an impression on Chiefs and people that it was easy for the future missionaries to continue in their footsteps. When the Carmelites made their first contact with Chief Katerere, he asked them one very searching question 'was Rome the same Church as that of Brothers Aegidius and Zacharias'? When Father Corbett told him that it was the same church, he gladly and joyfully gave permission for the Carmelites to come to his area.

During the rainy season of 1953, Monsignor Lamont, Fathers O'Shea and Corbett set out for Katerere, which may not have been a good idea because of the heavy rains at that time. Donal Lamont always liked a challenge, and he liked to impress visitors and probably wanted to introduce Father O'Shea to mission life in the raw! The three travelled with two local teachers and left Mount

Melleray early in the morning intending to return the same day. On the journey they encountered many hold-ups due to the wet conditions, especially crossing rivers and streams, but with the aid of chains and a lot of pushing they got going again. Father O'Shea later wrote: *"after travelling through very isolated country, we reached a pass in the mountain from which we could look down on a wide expanse, a thousand feet below, covered with lush vegetation broken by kopjes and low hills"*. They bumped down the very steep incline to the plain below. It was their intention that day to visit some villages, as permission had previously been granted to build schools in the area, but they only succeeded in visiting one, Chitembara, that day.

Father Anthony Clarke also described the journey covered by the three brothers to Katerere: *"They pulled away from Mount Melleray, leaving behind them what had been up to this, the last outpost of the missions. Ahead lay 50 miles of bad road and about 35 miles north of Mount Melleray they stopped at the spot where many years ago the Trappist Missionaries held school under a tree and gathered people of Nani village and gave them their first lessons in the faith. The three missionaries continued their journey and within a short time descended quickly into the vast Katerere country which appeared like a giant bowl, ringed around by distant mountains. A great haze lay over the district and this dry and arid looking land seemed to simmer in the merciless heat of the sun. The journey continued and after some miles they met with the Land Development Officer who happened to be in the area on Government duty. The missionaries informed him that they were intending to establish a mission in the area. He advised them to come well prepared with mosquito nets as the fever was terrible in this part of the country. He then told them that elephants and lions had been killed in the area in previous days."*

They were now travelling through the bush, no apparent road, and eventually rounded a large rocky mountain and before them lay the future mission site."

Father Corbett was later to write: *"It was not easy to find a favourable site for a central mission. The one chosen was close to the Rwenya river but was rejected by the District Commissioner of Inyanga. The Elim Evangelical Mission, whose members were mostly from Northern Ireland, objected to the coming of Irish missionaries representing the Catholic Church. We had to look for a site which eventually took us over three miles from the river and where water was very scarce"*.

Having obtained permission from the District Commissioner, the local Chief and headman, a site was chosen for the central mission. It was decided to send two Brothers there to establish a mission because it was too lonely for one. The two chosen were Anthony Clarke and Simon Noonan.

Two men, experienced in water drilling, accompanied Anthony and Simon to Katerere as the site was without any water and far from the Rwenya river. Father Clarke in a later letter recalled: *"we arrived safely and settled into our new home, a small hut, set-up our two camp beds and placed a small table in between the two beds. We said our rosary and crawled under our mosquito nets and settled down for the night. The next morning, we fixed up a bell on a pole that had been wedged between the forks of two trees. Then for the first time the Avila mission bell rang across the remote land, announcing the first Mass at the new mission station."*

After the Mass the headman of the village came to welcome the new missionaries. Father Clarke recalls: *"There was much hand clapping in African style greeting and*

when the formalities were completed, the headman offered me a rare gift: twins of his brother's wife who had died leaving two little boys of five months! The twins were looked after by the Sisters at Mount Melleray and were baptised Anthony and Simon.

Another headman came along with a different story. This elderly headman was a quasi-Christian having been instructed by Brother Zacharias twenty-nine years earlier. He was able to recite the Gloria, sing hymns and make the sign of the cross. It was this same headman, together with his people, who attended to Brother Zacharias after he was mauled by a leopard so many years ago. Katerere was a great spot for wild animals, lots of elephants were killed, snakes were plentiful, leopards, hyenas and baboons were also plentiful."

During 1955 the Presentation Sisters came to Avila mission and opened a hospital for the people of the area. Mother Peter was in charge, a dedicated Sister, qualified nurse and a good cook! The Sisters worked in the hospital and in the school. The Presentation Sisters also played a major role at Mount Melleray, St. Kilian's mission and St. Benedict' mission. Later they served at St. Therese mission, Chiduku, and much later at St. Mary's school, Chikanga, Mutare.

In 1955 Father Patrick (Tom) Norton came to Avila mission, stayed for some time and was then transferred to Regina Coeli mission. Anthony Clarke remained for some years and was transferred to Melsetter/Chimanimani to begin the mission at Charles Lwanga. Father Michael Kenny replaced Anthony Clarke as priest-in-charge during 1959. Simon Noonan did not remain in the Order.



Fathers James Carmel O'Shea and Father Tony Clarke

The Priory, Umtali/Mutare, 1954

Father James O'Shea came to Rhodesia during 1954 sporting a large pair of dark spectacles, as he had been told, prior to his coming, that there were a number of bare-breasted women around Umtali. Andy Wright was blamed for this misinformation. Father O'Shea was sent as the Regular Superior to replace Father Lamont who had been appointed Prefect Apostolic.

Father O'Shea wasted little time before he got down to the task of building a new Priory in Umtali.

This fine building served many purposes, it was a Carmelite community, a residence for the cathedral clergy, a place of hospitality for Carmelites and others when they came to town. The Priory had eight bedrooms, an oratory, two parlours, community room, refectory, kitchen and laundry. Father O'Shea was delighted with the outcome and observed that there would always be sufficient Brothers around the Priory to form a choir for Office and live the Carmelite life. Father O'Shea returned to Ireland during 1955.

Early Mission and Parish Foundations in Manicaland

Up to 1948 the Church in Manicaland consisted of the Pastoral Area of Umtali Town and five Mission centres and their out-stations, namely, Triashill mission, St. Barbara's mission, St. Kilian's mission, St. Benedict's mission and Mount Melleray mission. In 1953, the ecclesiastical area which became, in time, the Diocese of Umtali/Mutare ranged from the St. Benedict area to the Mpudzi River, fifteen miles south of Umtali. Between 1948 and 1953, the Carmelites were entrusted with the five missions already mentioned together with the Church of the Holy Rosary in Umtali Town and St. Robert's Centre, Sakubva, Umtali Town.

From 1951 onwards, the ecclesiastical area entrusted to the Carmelites began to expand. Many new mission foundations were started, out-stations developed and, in time, hundreds of out-station churches were built

throughout the diocese, from Katerere in the north to Chisumbanje in the south. Parishes, hospitals, clinics, many primary and secondary schools, clergy houses, religious houses, diocesan administration centres, childrens' homes, formation houses, refugee services, a training centre and many other centres have been established.

The Prefecture of Umtali was erected on February 2nd 1953, its territories were defined and a new administration was established. The Prefecture was entrusted to the care of the Irish Province of Carmelites. Father Lamont was installed as Prefect Apostolic of the newly erected Prefecture in May 1953. For some time, Monsignor Lamont with Father Gerard Meagher as secretary, financial administrator and general confidante, lived in the cottage on the grounds of the Dominican Convent. As this cottage proved too small over time, Monsignor Lamont purchased a farm and dwelling known as 'Drumfad' from a Mrs Condy in 1954. The farm was situated on the border with Mozambique. The present Bishop's house is located on the same site.

End Notes

1. Gallagher (1996), 29.
2. Manuscript A.
3. Hender (1996), pp. 9 - 10.
4. Manuscript A.
5. Gallagher (1996), pp. 17 - 18.
6. Hender (1996), pp. 10 - 11.
7. Manuscript A.
8. Gallagher (1996), 18 - 19.
9. Manuscript A.



Brother Bernard Clinch and Father Andy Wright

4

New Missions (1955-1960)

Father Mel Hill¹

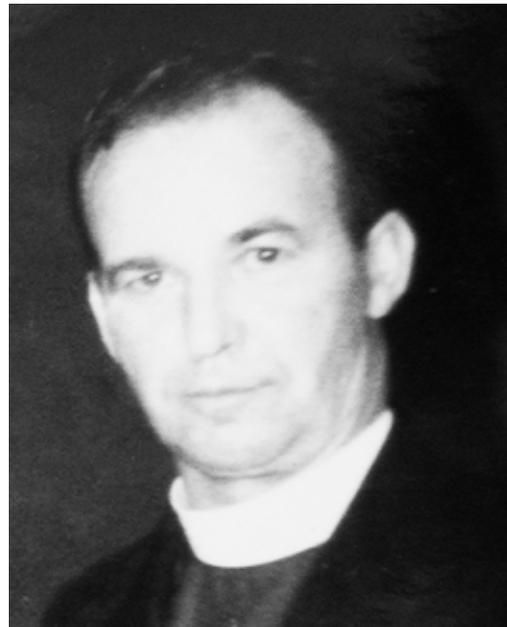
A Provincial Chapter was held in Dublin during 1955 and Father Mel Hill was elected Regular Superior of the Carmelites in Rhodesia. He was a popular choice and a good one: Mel was a linguist, poet and, above all, an excellent missionary. During this time, new missionaries coming from Ireland were not learning the local language. The same was happening with the Jesuits in Salisbury. Father Hill wanted to rectify this situation and he began a Shona course for newly-arrived Carmelites and those who wanted to learn the local language. He taught the Shona language himself and introduced the newcomers to Shona customs and traditions with his own wit and humour. In 1955, Father George Fortune, SJ, published the first real Shona grammar and this proved to be a great help to all missionaries. It was decided that all newly-arrived Carmelites had to study the language and customs for at least six months before being assigned to a mission.

Mel insisted on the recitation of the Divine Office, even on missions where there were only two Carmelites in residence. All the Brothers had to spend at least one day each month either in Umtali or Salisbury.

The Provincial Chapter of 1955 made adequate provisions for the upkeep of the Regular Superior. All Mass stipends, retreat stipends and other monies went

to the Superior as directed by the Mission Statutes. Father Hill was adamant that all the Brothers got overseas leave once every six years.

People who knew Mel would testify that he was a kind and hospitable Superior, a man of extraordinary wit and charm. Mel shared a religious 'Thought for the Day' on Radio Rhodesia from time to time, but he was removed from broadcasting after remarking that "*Christ died for blondes as well as brunettes*"!



Father Mel Hill



Regina Coeli Mission Church

Regina Coeli 1955

The local people were being constantly shifted and changed by the District Commissioners and many had been moved from the Makoni, Manica and Triashill areas to the Nyamaropa area. Monsignor Lamont was very conscious of this fact and in 1954 he contacted the District Commissioner of Inyanga and Chief Nyamaropa with a view to opening a mission in Nyamaropa. Permission was granted and Father Senan Egan was asked to go there. A site was identified which was to become Regina Coeli mission.

At the start Father Egan lived some miles away from the site, at St. Bernard's out-school, sharing a house with a teacher, his wife and family. Few missionaries have ever roughed it as Father Egan did. His transport was very inadequate for the work and for the road conditions of Nyamaropa. He began to build on the site, and his first construction was a multi-purpose building in which he slept and from which he supervised the development of the mission. Most of the building on missions up to this

time had been somewhat haphazard, but Senan wanted to change this. He planned the mission with meticulous care: provision was made for the erection of a church, hospital and Carmelite residence. The bare essentials were put up in the beginning. The new complex was to be circular shaped and, when completed, it would be possible to take in the entire mission at one glance. Father Egan learned from the stories emanating from Avila about the misery of water shortage, so he pumped water from a local river, installing filter plants to clear the water.

Father Senan made friends with a Mr Van Roiyan, the Government official in charge of an irrigation plant in Nyamaropa, near the Gairezi river. As a result of the friendship Senan got tons of cement, sand and building materials at a reasonable price and most of the haulage was done for nothing.

Father Tom Norton came to Regina Coeli around 1957 and looked after the out-schools while Senan continued to administer the mission and oversee the building programme. The Sisters of Charity from The Netherlands came during 1957. There were four Sisters, two nurses, one teacher and one to look after the convent. They had to learn English as well as Shona which was not easy for them.

With two qualified nurses on the mission, Father Senan suggested the opening of a nurses' training school but to do this he had to get a doctor. A doctor was soon found. Doctor Irene Baroness Von Furstenburg was attracted to the Developing World shortly after qualifying in her native Germany. She got in touch with the Bethlehem Mission Fathers from Switzerland and came to work in Rhodesia, spending a number of

years at the Silveira Mission Hospital. However, there were a number of doctors being specifically trained for the Gwelo Diocese and Doctor Von Furstenburg found herself redundant. Father Egan built a doctor's house, bought a land-rover, with a driver thrown in for good measure, and the Baroness found herself at Regina Coeli mission.

In time the training school for nurses was established and proved to be a great success. Girls who had completed standard six of upper primary school were eligible for the course, which lasted three years. When the girls passed their finals they were Junior Assistant Nurses and rendered invaluable service working on the mission and at outlying clinics.

During 1959 Father Egan started the building of the church on the mission. The walls of the church were about eight to ten feet high with a massive slanting roof, which was supported by iron girders, some feet for a place as remote as Nyamaropa. Senan had the gables filled in with off-cuts from local trees. A local farmer, Robin Waddacker, supplied all the off-cuts for both gables.

The completed church dominated the mission and surroundings. In a way, it dwarfed the other buildings but as one local man remarked "*the house of God should do just that*". Robin Waddacker was so impressed by Senan's humble lifestyle, his selfless dedication and many skills, that he converted and was received into the Catholic Church. (Robin remained in the Troutbeck area up to recent years, was a great friend of all the missionaries at Regina Coeli, but due to the land reform in Zimbabwe, he had to leave the Troutbeck area. He now lives in England)

The Arrival of Australian Carmelites 1955-1961 ²

When Fathers William Morganti, Berthold Dowd and Brother Augustine Parsons arrived in Africa on July 16th 1955 they were met in Beira by another Australian, Brother Aloysius Farnsworth, who had been already in Rhodesia for two years. After the usual learning period the three went to St. Benedict's which now became an Australian outpost. They were big, strong men: rugged, hardworking, knowledgeable and very handy. They knew their own minds and there was no nonsense about them. They got down to work immediately.

Father Bill built the Novitiate House for the Carmelite Sisters, a huge undertaking, and he ran a very efficient mission. Father Bert was the pastoral man in charge of outstations and Brother Augustine ran the school. Father Bill died suddenly in 1961 and is buried at St. Benedict's. Brother Augustine, by now a well-known teacher, went on to co-found Carmel College in Umtali with Father McGivern in 1964. Father Dowd built a secondary school at St. Benedict's. However his health began to wane as missing meals and sleeping out in the bush took its toll. Bert retired to Australia but often said that "*My heart is still in Tanda; for me... the most beautiful place in the world*". Brother Aloysius worked for twenty years in Rhodesia before returning to Australia in 1973.

Other Carmelites who came to Zimbabwe around this time were Father John Lamont of the English Commissariat and Father John Neinhous of the Dutch Province.



St. Therese Mission 1962

St. Therese Mission 1956³

During 1956 Monsignor Lamont turned his attention to the Chiduku area as there were about 50,000 people living in the area at that time. Before the establishment of this mission, Chiduku had been cared for from Monte Cassino and had about eight Mass centres and out-schools. St. Clement's Mass centre was singled out as a possible site for a future mission. The District Commissioner of Makoni/Rusape and the local chief, Chief Makoni, were consulted and both readily gave their consent to the establishment of a mission. Father Cormac Kennedy and Brother Bernard Clinch were assigned to the task. Bernard Clinch was a master builder.

Monsignor Lamont wanted to open a teacher training school for girls at this mission as there was already a teacher training school for boys at Triashill mission. The Department of Education allowed him to do this but he had to close the Triashill training school.

The result was that St. Therese mission became a teacher training school for both girls and boys.

Cormac Kennedy and Bernard Clinch lived in a grass roofed classroom for some time. As the Carmelite residence neared completion, at Christmas 1956, the Brothers moved in, bringing only their beds, intending to move their other bits and pieces at a later date. That very night, around midnight, the classroom in which they had been living was hit by lightning. In the resulting fire practically all the mission files, baptismal books, marriage registers, school books, Bernard's building tools and most of their clothing were destroyed.

Bernard Clinch finished the building of the teacher training block in 1957. It was a fine building with modern flush toilets, showers, a kitchen unit and the most up-to-date dormitories. A convent was also constructed for the Sisters from the Netherlands. Cormac Kennedy and Bernard Clinch continued to develop the mission. Cormac also looked after the out-schools, a huge area stretching from Rusape to Dowa and southwards to Maranke. When Cormac Kennedy went to Ireland, Fathers Tom McLoughlin and Cyprian Kennedy came for some time. Father Tom looked after the mission and Father Cyprian the out-schools.

In 1958 four of the Dutch Sisters of the Charity arrived in Chiduku. Three came from the Netherlands and one was transferred from Regina Coeli: two were to teach in the teacher training school, one to teach in the upper primary school and one to look after the convent. Initially, there was some misunderstanding as to who was in charge of the teacher training school, the Sisters or the priest-in-charge. The matter was referred to the Bishop and it was resolved amicably.

The area was badly affected by lightning due to a certain rock formation. Many buildings were struck, the telephone was blasted off the office wall, and other dangerous strikes were recorded. Brother Bernard erected a massive conductor to resolve the problem. It was interesting to hear the lightning hopping off the conductor during an electric storm. Another interesting story is when the Sisters purchased one hundred day-old chicks. The idea of day-old chicks fascinated the local people at that time, as chicks without a mother was beyond them and they actually thought that it was magic, especially when they saw the little chicks crowding around a lamp after sunset.

Once the teacher training school was completed, Bernard began building the primary school classrooms. The local people helped greatly and came forward to mould bricks and do other necessary chores. The number of Catholics was expanding and the church building was becoming too small. Tom McLoughlin had difficulty in getting permission to build a larger church because of finances, but after some agreement with the Bishop, permission was granted. Tom would source funds, the people would contribute and the Diocese would also contribute. The same design as Regina Coeli mission was used.

Since coming to the mission, Father McLoughlin became very interested in the Catholic Association, (C.A.) The Bishop appointed Tom the diocesan representative of the movement and at the mission he organized and trained groups of lay people from every walk of life and went to outschools and outstations to promote the movement. The teacher training was very successful and, while Tom was regarded as a strict disciplinarian, it was a happy place.



Sister and Trainee Teachers doing blackboard work

St. Joseph's Mission, Sakubva, 1958

During the Jesuit period (1929 – 1948) of the Catholic Church in Umtali, the people in Sakubva attended church at the Holy Rosary on 'E' Avenue in town. There were very few Catholics in Sakubva in those early days. As their numbers increased, they assembled under a tree on the site of the future St. Robert's. It was some time later that the Jesuits built a small church and a lower primary school at this site, and lived nearby in a small house. The Catholic community of Sakubva now attended church services and catechism classes at St. Robert's church and school. In 1957, Bishop Lamont applied for a mission site in Sakubva and the Municipality offered him one acre of land, which he turned down. At this time, St. Robert's was proving to be hopelessly inadequate due to the size of the buildings.

Doctor Montgomery, the Government Medical Officer for Health, had been asking the Bishop for some years

if he could find an Order of Sisters who would run a TB Sanatorium in the Umtali area. The Bishop was very keen to do this, but he had another project which he wished to carry out and this was to establish a large school to replace St. Robert's which was now totally overcrowded. Bishop Lamont had his eye on a piece of property adjoining Sakubva and was wondering how to set about getting it when the question of the sanatorium came up. He felt that if he could find an Order of Sisters who would run the sanatorium and school, then his problems would be solved!

The Municipality granted the Bishop twelve acres for the hospital site and allowed him to purchase twenty

more on adjoining land. St. Joseph's mission, Sakubva, was founded on September 12th 1958. The Carmelites were entrusted with the pastoral care of the mission from 1958, serving it initially from the Priory in Umtali Town. The Dutch Sisters of Charity, responding to the Bishop's invitation, opened a one hundred bed sanatorium to care for TB patients. On December 30th 1958, the TB Hospital was officially opened by Lady Dalhousie and the first patients were admitted. In 1959 all the classes from St. Robert's were brought to the primary school at Sakubva. In 1962 the building of a fine church was completed and Father Conall Collier took up residence. He was soon joined by Father Brian Kiernan



Father Conall Collier teaching Chbita Women at St. Joseph's, Sakubva

The Arrival of American Carmelites.

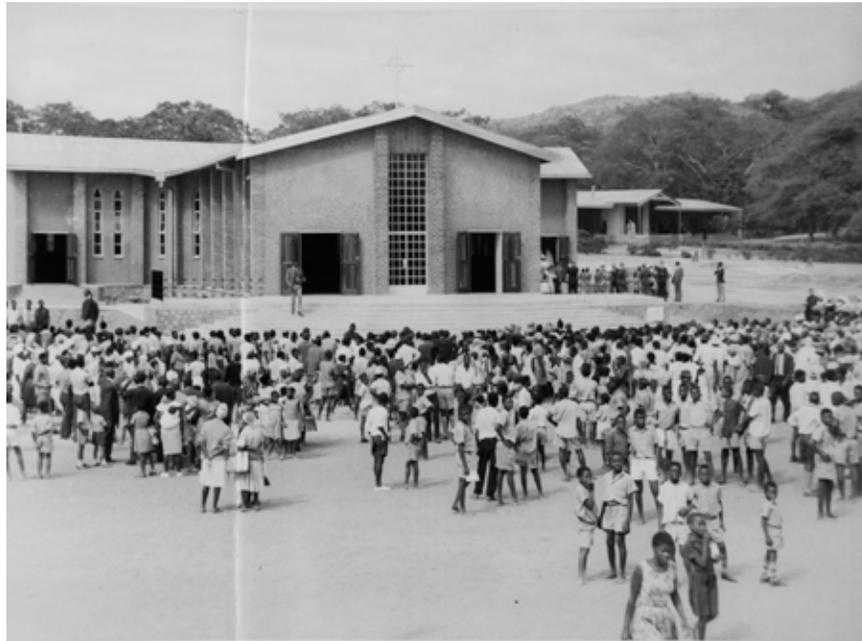
Fathers Paul Feeley and Charles Haggerty from the New York Province of St. Elias arrived in the Umtali Diocese during 1959. Both stayed at St. Therese mission in Chiduku where they studied the Shona language. Paul Feeley was then transferred to St. Andrew's mission in Marange. Father Paul in time built a very fine church at St. Andrews, funded by the St. Elias Province. Charlie Haggerty was first assigned to St. Andrew's and then transferred to Regina Coeli where he ministered with Father Senan Egan. Father Haggerty returned to his Province during 1965. Fathers Matthias James Des Lauriers and Martin Millar came to the Umtali Diocese during 1961. Father Matthias ministered at St. Patrick's mission Nyanyadzi while Martin Millar was assigned to Avila mission and later to St. Barbara's mission. During 1963 Father Stephen Josten came to join his Brothers and was assigned to the Seminary at Melsetter, now named Chimanimani. During 1967 Matthew Vargo came and, after some time at Carmel College, was assigned to St. Patrick's mission.

All the American Brothers were most zealous, hard-working and dedicated in their varied ministries. During 1968 Paul Feeley was transferred to Tanda where he founded and constructed the now St. Michael's mission. The American Brothers were anxious to minister in the south of the diocese, in specific missions, and also requested a contract with the Bishop of Umtali. The Bishop was unable to accept both requests and by 1971 only one Brother from America remained, Father Stephen Josten, who continued to minister at St. Columba's mission.

St. Andrew's Mission 1959

The area South of Umtali was virtually untouched apart from the abortive attempt at St. Anna's in Wengesi during 1951. There were very few Catholics from Umtali to Birchenough Bridge during the 1950s. In 1959 Fathers Paul Feeley and Charles Haggerty came from the USA, both spent six months learning the Shona language and Shona customs, and were then assigned to the Marange area. Brother Bernard Clinch had built a house at the site of the future mission in preparation for the coming of the American Brothers. There was no other building on the site at this time. During 1960 Fathers Paul and Charles began to establish what would become St. Andrew's mission. They began with a lower primary school. The next structure to go up was a convent for the Carmelite Sisters. Next on the building list was a clinic which was looked after and supervised by the Sisters. Marange was a hot area, low, windswept and desolate. Diseases like malaria and bilharzia were rampant so the clinic was kept busy. Many Mass centres and outstations were opened in the area within a short time. Father Haggerty was transferred to Regina Coeli after some months. Fathers Matthias Des Lauriers came during 1961 and, after a short time at St. Andrew's, he went to Nyanyadzi to begin work on the construction of St. Patrick's mission.

Father Feeley began to organize the building of the mission church and Brother Bernard Clinch was once again called to do the building. Paul's wish was that the church would be truly African in design. Most of the finances to build the church came from America. Brother Bernard completed the building and the interior of the church was decorated by Sister Bernadette Crook, RSHM, an art teacher at Marymount College, Umtali.



St. Andrew's Mission Church

It was indeed an unique church, cruciform in shape, gothic windows, coloured glass panes, beautiful colours and zig-zag lettering of appropriate scriptural excerpts on the walls around the whole church. It was blessed by Bishop Lamont on July 10th 1966. Following the completion of the church there was a lull at St. Andrew's and work followed a certain routine.

During 1968 Father Feeley went on holidays to the USA and Father Michael Kenny took his place. On his return, Father Feeley was asked to go to the Tanda area as there were plans to begin a mission there, the future St. Michael's. Father Feeley was very annoyed with this as he had put a lot of work into the development of St. Andrew's and the beautiful church there. In time, Father Kenny had the mission wired and electricity installed. Father Kenny was then transferred to Avila

mission and Father Patrick Bodkin took his place.

Father Ambrose Vinyu followed Patrick Bodkin as priest-in-charge until he was appointed Rector of St. Charles Lwanga in Melsetter. Father Alexander Sakarombe was then appointed priest-in-charge.

Father Sakarombe and the Sisters suffered greatly during the war years. Father Sakarombe was arrested three times and on one occasion he was put into the 'torture cage' and told to confess to things which had never happened. All these horrors were perpetrated by the security forces. Three Carmelite Sisters were arrested and subjected to the most degrading and humiliating experiences. The whole of St. Andrew's mission, including the beautiful church, was totally destroyed during the war.

St. Columba's Mission, Honde Valley, 1959

The Honde Valley is deep and wide and the mountain cliffs rise for thousands of feet above the valley. From below the valley, one can see the silver streaks of the waterfalls joining the river which runs through thick vegetation. In places the villages are hidden by the vegetation. There is a big population and the valley is tropical and very humid in places.

Brother Aegidius, Mariannahill, came to this area from Triashill mission, some priests followed and baptised people but there was little evangelization. When the Carmelites came, they found very few Catholics as the area was mostly of the Apostolic sect. Father Anselm Corbett came to the valley during 1949 and met with Chief Rori who seemingly was a prosperous man, had lots of land and many wives. Near his homestead there was the remnants of a school which was build by



Father John O'Sharkey

Brother Aegidius and the name of the school was St. Anna. The Honde Valley area, prior to the opening of the mission, was under the care of St. Barbara's. Outschoools were founded in the area and by 1959 there was a large number of children attending the schools.

By 1960 Bishop Lamont had the intention of opening a mission there and sent Fathers Cormac Collier and John O'Sharkey to investigate. The obvious site for a central mission was one of the existing out-schools but John O'Sharkey, after obtaining permission from the District Commissioner of Inyanga, began building on the banks of the Ruda River. The site was partly in a forest and right across the river was Mozambique. There were few people living nearby and the place resembled more a hermitage than a mission! The building, designed by Father John, was a rarity. He built the church, priests' quarters and office all under the one roof. It was a long building with a corresponding veranda. He called the mission after St. Columba.

John O'Sharkey was a great and learned naturalist. He knew the name of every bird, animal and plant. What a pity he never wrote about them! He was a kind man to the sick, had the rarest of friends and fancied himself as a musician and played the cello. During 1964 he went on holidays to Ireland and did not return to the Honde Valley. Michael Kenny replaced him there. Father Kenny lived at the 'hermitage' for many years and spent lots of his time out and about ministering to the people. It was often remarked that the valley had three geographical areas: the highlands where timber was grown, a low region with a rainfall of over a hundred inches per year where tea and coffee were grown, and the maize belt where a big number of the local people lived. Father Kenny was a keen reader all his life, he



Father Michael Kenny at work with local people

had a great interest in African customs and culture. He enjoyed a glass or two of wine which he was able to purchase locally, as Mozambique was just across the river. Wine was cheap in those days in Mozambique and Michael supplied the Brothers also. During 1967 Michael went to Ireland on holidays and was replaced by Father Stephen Josten from the New York Province.

Father Josten was not happy with the mission site established by Father O'Sharkey and began constructing a new mission at the site of the former St. Anna's. Out of respect for Father O'Sharkey, Father Josten retained the name St. Columba and so Brother Aegidius' old foundation eventually became the mission. Some years earlier, Father Kenny had built a church, a primary school and a few teachers' houses at St. Anna's. Father Josten also brought the Carmelite Sisters to St. Columba's, even though there was no proper convent

for the Sisters. Their convent was completed, some years later, by Father Jerry Galvin.

With the coming of the Sisters, a clinic was opened and later a small hospital served the local people who frequently suffered from malaria and bilharzia. Father Lar Lynch came to St. Columba's but he was soon transferred to the Tanda area and Father Jerry Galvin was assigned to St. Columba's. Father Galvin stayed at the mission for many years. Father Josten had the structures built by Father O'Sharkey dismantled and anything moveable brought to the new St. Columba's and so ended the confusion between Columba One and Columba Two. Father Stephen then began to plan a school at the mission, got the necessary land and permission, cleared the land of bush and began to develop a non-boarding school, as there were many children in the local area.

Father Josten became unwell and during 1975. He went to Ireland but never recovered fully. He ministered in Dublin and at Knock Marian Shrine for many years and died in Ireland at the end of December 2000. During 1975 when Stephen had left the Honde valley, Jerry Galvin became priest-in-charge of St. Columba's. Father Michael Hender joined Jerry at the mission. St. Columba's is close to the Mozambique border and, as the liberation war developed, the area became very dangerous with land mines on the road and many people crossing the border for training in Mozambique.

In July 1977, the freedom fighters came to the mission and encountered friends of Jerry's in the house. There was an exchange of gunfire and Jerry was shot through the shoulder and had to be transferred by helicopter to Umtali General Hospital.

After the war, the mission continued its work. Father Michael Hender ministered there and, in time, the Killaloe Fathers replaced the Carmelites. Sister Irene Dumbura, Carmelite Sister, was headmistress at the

secondary school which later became St. Columba's High School. The mission is now in the pastoral care of the diocese of Mutare.



Bishop Lamont with the Handmaids of Our Blessed Lady of Mount Carmel

The Foundation of the Carmelite Sisters 1959³

During 1959, Bishop Lamont founded a congregation of Sisters, the Handmaids of Our Blessed Lady of Mount Carmel' often called the Carmelite Sisters. It was common practice for almost every Bishop in the country to have his own congregation of Sisters. Umtali was no exception. When written, the Constitutions of these Sisters were based on those of the Carmelite Order. The Sisters took the three vows, and their habit

is brown with a blue veil. At the start, the novitiate was at St. Benedict's mission and the Novice Mistress was Mother Consolatrix, a member of the Precious Blood Sisters.

What generally happened in those days was that the girl expressed a desire to join the Sisterhood and in time the parents were contacted by a Sister or a Priest. This proved difficult as the parents sometimes demanded 'labola' or a bride price for their daughter. Since their

daughter was to be 'married', some compensation was to be made to the parents.

Having gone through all the necessary channels, and with a proper understanding of what the girl was requesting, and if all concerned were in agreement, she was taken into the congregation as a candidate. The aspirant spent some years as a candidate and then became a postulant. As postulants they received academic education such as teacher training or nursing or whatever was appropriate. Having spent at least two years as postulants, they were admitted to the novitiate which was for another two years.

From 1959 – 1977 the three Mothers General of the Congregation were all Precious Blood Sisters. Sister Gertrude Bbobho became the first Carmelite Mother General in 1977. Around 1978 the Dutch Sisters of Charity donated their convent at Kriste Mambo to Sister Gertrude as the Generalate. Around the same time, Mother Consolatrix of the Precious Blood Sisters, who had been Novice Mistress since the beginning of the congregation, returned to Germany. She was replaced by a Carmelite Sister. The Franciscan Sisters in Mutare, as well as Fathers Sean Murphy and Conall Collier, assisted Sister Gertrude in developing the Congregation.

Carmelite Sisters ⁴

Foundation: In 1954 fourteen girls were received with the intention of starting a new congregation. February 1959 saw eleven of the fourteen girls admitted into a newly built novitiate at St. Benedict's mission near Macheke. This marked the beginning of the congregation of the Handmaids of Our Lady of Mount Carmel also known as the Carmelite Sisters. The Right

Rev. Bishop Donal Lamont was their founder. Bishop Lamont entrusted the training of the Sisters and the running of the Congregation to the Precious Blood sisters who faithfully carried out these two tasks from then on until February 1977 when they handed over the congregation to the Carmelite Sisters themselves. The Sisters elected Mother Gertrude Bbobho as their first Mother General on February 10th 1977. By then, there were fifty-eight professed Sisters who were involved in various apostolates in the diocese, such as, domestic work, nursing, teaching in secondary and primary schools, pastoral work, secretarial work and house visiting.

War Years: Meanwhile the struggle for independence in the country was intensifying, eventually making it almost impossible for the Sisters to continue their work on the missions. On Sunday October 10th 1978, after narrowly escaping death the previous night, the sisters and novices at St. Benedict's mission quietly packed what few belongings they could load onto two small trucks. They fled to Mutare where the Sisters of Charity kindly offered them their convent at St. Joseph's mission. This was only the beginning of similar hasty quiet departures from mission stations all over the diocese by priests and sisters. The beginning of 1979 saw them settling in at Marymount College until independence in 1980.

After the War: With independence, the priests and sisters went back to the missions, some to rebuild and others to make repairs before settling down again. Among the destroyed buildings was the novitiate at St. Benedict's mission. While another site for a novitiate was sought, the Carmelite Sisters' novices stayed at Vumba until December 1983 when they moved to the present novitiate near Kriste Mambo.

In 1996 the congregation has a membership of eighty-nine professed Sisters who are engaged in pastoral work, nursing, teaching administration, co-ordination of pastoral programmes, caring for orphans and domestic work. The Sisters are deeply involved in the administration of the diocese. They are co-ordinators for the diocesan pastoral programme, women's affairs and CADEC. A Carmelite Sister is education secretary of the diocese.

The Sisters are in charge of youth programmes and training. They also work in the Bishop's office. They run two orphanages and many women's clubs. They have their new and beautiful novitiate house and plan to build a new generalate. They have nineteen girls in the novitiate and pre-novitiate programme. As members of the Carmelite Family they are connected with the wider Order throughout the world.

Letter from Mother Immaculata Mvere, Mother General of the Carmelite Sisters on the occasion of the centenary year (1996): *"Bishop Donal Lamont, one of the pioneer priests in this diocese founded our congregation in 1959. The congregation is proud to be affiliated to the Carmelite Order. We commit ourselves to follow the Holy Gospel in the spirit derived from the Carmelite Rule and the Spiritual traditions of the Carmelite Order. The Carmelite sisters are women of prayer, community life and service in the midst of the people. Our models are Mary and Elijah. Since 1959 until today we have been working hand in hand with our Carmelite brothers in mission centres in the diocese. We have been invited as a group to join in ongoing formation courses in Rome at St. Albert's, to attend meetings of the Carmelite family, to participate in congresses of the Carmelite family in Africa and to attend courses on the Carmelite Rule. We have always responded positively. Our present experience*

with regard to guidance or spiritual direction has mostly come from our Carmelite brothers. We appreciate the support and solidarity that we receive from our brothers and sisters throughout the whole Order. We share a common faith and charism within the Order.

Our Diocese: *The Carmelite sisters believe in full co-operation with our bishops in the present pastoral programme policy of the diocese.*

Our Dream: *We look forward to the day when we bring our spirit, the Spirit of Carmel, to other dioceses in Zimbabwe and to other countries in Africa.*

Vocations: *We are getting many vocations at the moment. Our last general chapter made it a priority to have trained formators to meet the requirements of the church and our community in the area of formation."*

Mother Immaculata concludes by quoting from a letter dated May 17th 1991 from their founder Bishop Lamont. This letter explains why he chose the name Handmaids of Our Lady of Mount Carmel for their congregation: *"When choosing a name for the Chita I carefully chose a title which would express the kind of life which you sisters would try to live in the great family of the Carmelite Order. I wanted you to be very special and to have a name which would very briefly tell of the kind of dedication to the service of God which you would try to live by your profession of the vows and your faithfully fulfilling these promises in your lives.*

That is why I chose the word "handmaid". It is a word used in English for a very long time in the Gospel version of Our Lady's reply to the Archangel Gabriel's announcement that she had been chosen by God to be the mother of our Redeemer. It is in some ways an old fashioned word not much used in modern English. It has a very special meaning. It describes

a woman servant who has been chosen by a great lady, by a queen for instance or a lady of noble birth, to be her most trusted helper, almost like a sister, but still a servant. She is someone who would live in daily contact with her mistress, whom the mistress would trust completely and with whom she could share her most intimate secrets, confident that the handmaid would be loyal and loving in her service: not just like any servant but very special. The word "handmaid" also suggests that she would be almost like another "hand" to work with, giving to the mistress extra ability, ready to do anything that had to be done and not expecting any reward. That is why I chose this special title for the Chita. I wanted you to serve Our Lord in His Church, following the example of Our Lady who replied to the angel almost in these words: "Of course I want to do whatever you wish. I am the Handmaid of the Lord"

Mothers General of the Carmelite Sisters 1977 – 2010.

- Sister Gertrude Bbobho, 1977 – 1989.
- Sister Immaculata Mvere 1989 – 2001.
- Sister Therese Nyadombo 2001 – 2007.
- Sister Evelyn Kadzere 2007 to the present day.

The Mother General now resides in the Murambi area of Mutare together with the Sisters in the General Administration. There are 83 Sisters in Solemn Vows, 27 Sisters in First Vows and 18 Sisters have gone to their eternal reward. (March 31st 2011)

Generosity & Sacrifice ⁵

It goes without saying that work on the missions would not have been so successful without the financial as well as spiritual assistance of many in Ireland. Benefactors

were numerous and generous even though many of them were by no means rich. The annual Sale of Work became a household word among all relations and friends of Carmelites in Ireland. It was held each year in Dublin from the 1940s to the 1970s. While raising funds for the missions, it also strengthened the community spirit among the participants. The following reminder appeared regularly in the Irish Carmelite magazine: *Helpers for the Annual Sale of Work in aid of the Carmelite Foreign Missions meet in Carmel Hall, Whitefriars St., Dublin, on the first Tuesday of each month at 8.00 p.m.*

Money raised from the sale of used stamps also went to the Missions. In 1953 in the same magazine: *We collect used postage stamps for the Missions. Our good friends in Ireland and abroad send their used stamps to us here in Gort Muire. So please don't throw away any more stamps. If our supplies greatly increase, we will be able to supply all the finance needed by one Mission in Africa.*

Raffles, sponsored walks, coffee mornings, etc., are still organised to help local people in need in the mission areas, especially in times of drought.

Gratitude is also often expressed by missionaries for the wonderful support they receive from MISEREOR and MISSIO of Holland and Germany, in particular for the construction of churches and the provision of vehicles.

End Notes

1. Manuscript A.
2. Gallagher (1996), 36.
3. Manuscript A.
4. Gallagher (1996), pp. 41-43.
5. Hender (1996), 18.



Father Brian Pio Kiernan teaching in St. Joseph's mission, Sakubva

5

Years of Growth (1960-1970)

A Chronicle of Events ¹

1961

St. Peter's mission, Chisumbanje, established.

St. Charles Lwanga Minor Seminary, Melsetter/
Chimanimani established.

1962

St. Patrick's mission, Nyanyadzi, established.

1963

Kriste Mambo School established.

1964

Carmel College, Mutare, established (Closed in 1973).

1965

Father Edward Matara was ordained in St. Joseph's Mutare by Bishop Lamont on August 29th 1965. He was the first Manyika priest to be ordained for the diocese of Mutare.

1969

St. Michael's, Tanda, established.

St. Peter's Mission, Chisumbanje, 1961 ²

Back in 1930, Father Quinn, SJ, said that the Sabi Valley lay wide open for missionary work because in that great area, from the mountainous districts of Melsetter and Chipinga to the vast stretches of the lowveld, there was only one mission, that of the American Board at Mount Selinda.

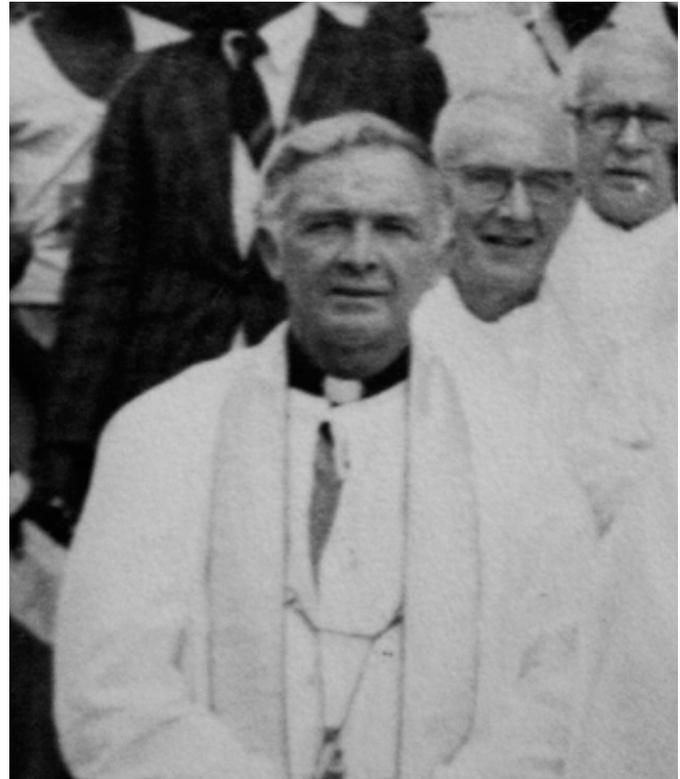
The altitude in this area was one to two thousand feet only, very high temperatures were experienced and the area measured unreliable rainfall. In many parts of the valley the soil was very rich, ideal for farming, but without water nothing could be done in the way of crop growing. Yet, through this unproductive district at that time flowed the mighty Sabi river, reinforced by the Odzi and Nyanyadzi rivers. During 1919, a Mr Tom MacDougall realized the potential value of the area and began an irrigation scheme in the lowveld where sugar, wheat, citrus, vegetables and fruit were grown. A missionary at Mount Selinda, a Mr Alvord, from Utah University began irrigation schemes at Nyanyadzi, Mutema and Chivuwe in the early nineteen thirties. These schemes were very successful and there were now many thousands of people using the irrigation schemes.

During 1955, Father Anthony Clarke had identified Chisumbanje, named after a local Chief, as an ideal area for a new mission. In 1953, the Department of Agriculture had decided to turn a hundred acres of the land at Chisumbanje into a Research Station to find out what crops the local people could grow in the soil. Work was started and it was eventually found that the soil when irrigated would be ideal for wheat. Mr John Janke, the Government Agricultural Officer in Chisumbanje, was living with his wife on the banks of the river next to the Research Station.

On a Saturday afternoon in November 1960 a blue car pulled up outside the Janke home and out jumped Bishop Lamont, Father Clarke and three Sisters from Marymount College. Over a cup of tea, the visitors discussed with Mr and Mrs Janke the lack of medical facilities and the lack of schools in the area. The nearest hospital was Chipinga, ninety miles away from Chisumbanje. They discussed a possible site for a mission which could provide the above amenities and left with the idea of asking the Government for a grant of fifty acres.

Several weeks later, Father Clarke arrived in a land-rover with authority from the local District Commissioner to pick out fifty acres for a mission site. He asked Mr Janke to accompany him and show him suitable sites. Father Clarke finally decided on fifty acres alongside the Sabi river about one mile from the Janke homestead. Father Clarke lived in a hut for the next week or so and he engaged a local builder to make bricks and do general clearing of the area. He chose the site of the residence on the bank of the river and marked out the foundations. For the next few months, Father Anthony travelled many miles between Umtali and Chisumbanje

bringing cement, door frames, window frames and roofing materials and also to supervise the building of the residence. Slowly a house materialised and the local people used to appear at the mission and ask what was going on, and watch with fascination when Father said Mass under a tree. Mr Janke often called around to see how the work was going and shared a cup of tea with Anthony. During May 1961, the house was nearly completed and Bishop Lamont paid a visit and told Mr Janke that Father Cyprian Kennedy would soon be coming to the mission. The Bishop also told them a little of the background of Father Kennedy.



Father Cyprian Kennedy

Mr and Mrs Janke awaited the arrival of Father Kennedy with interest as he was to be their only European neighbour for over fifty miles. Little did the Jankes realise what a great change the advent of this Carmelite would make in their lives before the year was out. Mr Janke travelled around the vast area with Father Kennedy and introduced him to many of the local headmen and Chiefs.

As the water had not yet been connected to the house or mission, a way had to be found to get the water up from the river for household and building purposes. A well-point was put down about ten feet under the sand near the bank of the river, a pump was placed on the bank of the river just beside the priest's house. The water was then pumped up to a tank and began to flow through the pipes.

During the next few months, Father Kennedy built a convent for the Sisters as he was expecting the Carmelite Sisters to come to St. Peter's. He also built two classrooms, a clinic and a small chapel. During September 1961 four American lay helpers arrived at St. Peter's. They were volunteer nurses who came to serve the people. They remained at St. Peter's for about twelve years, and cared for the people with great dedication.

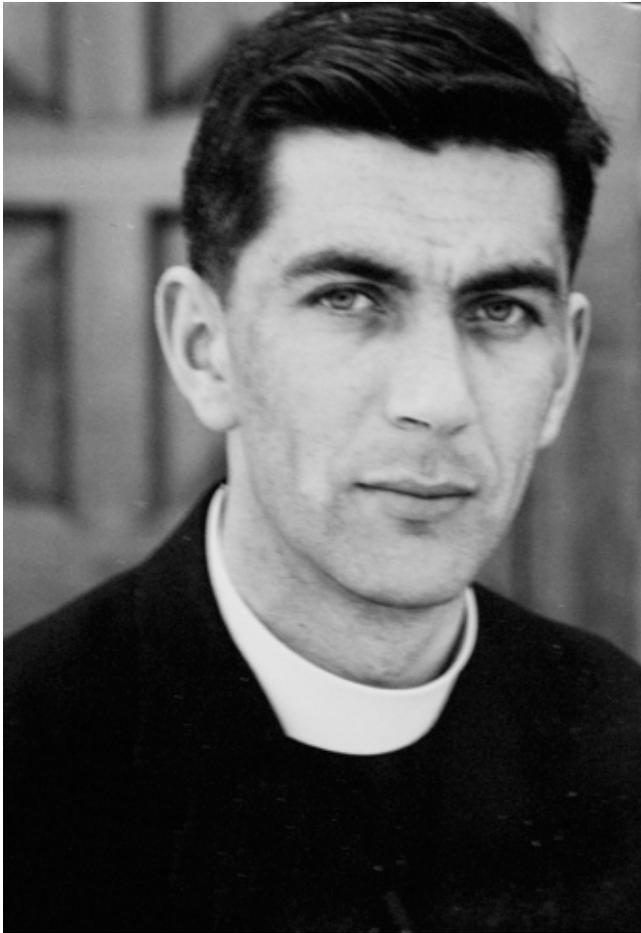
The Carmelite Sisters arrived two months after the volunteer nurses. Sisters Bridget, Margaret, Boniface and Thomas were recently professed and had just completed their novitiate. They were very frightened when they first came to Chisumbanje, as it was wild country for them. They were terrified of hippos, crocodiles, snakes and the other wild animals. Other Sisters from the same novitiate went to Maranke

and Avila and often wrote to each other comparing conditions. The people of Chisumbanje were 'strangers' to the Sisters, due to language difference and the style of clothing worn by women in the area. The Sisters soon had a vegetable garden near their convent, began catechism classes and clubs for women. Early in 1962 Sister Thomas began to teach at the mission. Many of the children were happy, intelligent and friendly but did not consider it a priority to attend school every day due to family or local demands. Mr and Mrs Janke were very impressed with the Sisters: their prayer life and their varied ministries, including teaching, nursing, ploughing, planting, cleaning, mending and visiting the people. It was with great rejoicing when the first converts were received into the Catholic Church at St. Peter's, and they were no other than Mr and Mrs Janke and their two children, also a local man who had been working on the mission. Lots of water problems emerged as time went on because of pump problems, flooded rivers, pipes filling up with sand, and so forth. With the assistance of Mr Janke, many of the difficult situations were solved.

Around 1967 Father Kennedy was transferred to Mount Melleray mission. Father Philip O'Dwyer replaced Cyprian. Philip stayed for a few years at St. Peter's and was replaced by Father Kenny. Fathers O'Sharkey, Bodkin and Tom Power all served at St. Peter's. What Father Egan did for Avila Mission, Tom Power did for St. Peters. It was a case of the desert blooming all over again in the Sabi Valley!

Around 1973 the American helpers left St. Peter's and the Little Company of Mary Sisters came and worked at the hospital. Those Sisters owned and ran St. Anne's Hospital in Salisbury. It was also during this time

that the mission was wired for electricity. With the coming of electricity, Tom Power was able to begin the irrigation of the fifty acres around the Mission. He opted for wheat and cotton, involved the local people in the scheme, created employment for many people, made a modest profit, and the mission for the first time in its existence was able to sustain itself.



Father Tom Power

During the war years, Fathers Power and Cyprian Kennedy (who had returned) stayed on the mission and did what they could in very difficult circumstances. St. Peter's mission became a Red Cross base for the area and arrangements were made for the Carmelites to travel by plane whenever they wanted to leave.

During 1980, after Independence, Tom Power went to Ireland and to the USA for studies. During the Provincial Chapter of 1982, he was confirmed as Commissary Provincial, and returned to Zimbabwe some weeks later. During his short term in office, Tom was very anxious that young Zimbabweans would share in the Brotherhood of the Carmelite Order. This wish was fulfilled by the Lord within a short time. A formation programme began in the Bvumba area and was transferred in February 1985 to Kriste Mambo. Tom did not live to see his dream fulfilled, he became seriously ill and died in Harare in March 1984, having returned from Ireland, as it was his wish to die in Zimbabwe. The priests of the Diocese of Mutare continue to minister at St. Peter's mission, assisted by the Carmelite Sisters.

St. Patrick's Mission 1962

St. Patrick's mission is situated in Nyanyadzi, a low-lying area, very arid with stifling heat. It is the hottest mission in the Diocese. Nyanyadzi happens to be one of the first successful irrigation schemes in the country. People who applied for a 'plot' in the irrigation scheme were given four acres and they could easily raise three crops annually. At first, the plot holders in the irrigation area came from outside Nyanyadzi. The plot holders in time approached the Bishop with the request of having a mission in the area. The District Commissioner gave

permission for a site but the Methodists objected to the presence of Roman Catholics. They maintained that there were too many missions in the locality.

However, Bishop Lamont was adamant and the building of St. Patrick's mission went ahead, even faster than anticipated. Father Clarke was again involved when the mission began. Bruno Gassi, the ex-Jesuit who build the seminary at Melsetter started the buildings at St. Patrick's. He built the residence, the Sister's convent and the Primary school. There was a lack of water in the area so a bore hole had to be sunk which functioned pretty well.

Father Clarke and Bruno Gassi soon moved from the mission after the first few buildings were completed and Father Matthias Des Lauriers moved in around 1962. In time, Father Des Lauriers and Brother Bernard Clinch built the church at St. Patrick's, using the same plan as at St. Andrew's mission, Maranke. The local people contributed the sand, stone and bricks. Financial help for the building came from America and Ireland. The colours on the walls and the glass panes were as at St. Andrew's. There are four stones in the floor near the altar, which were taken from places in Ireland that St. Patrick is known to have visited. With the irrigation scheme in the area it was logical to open a vocational school to teach farming as well as academic subjects.

The school catered for boys and girls, and had boarding facilities. The classrooms were fairly modern but the boarding facilities left a lot to be desired. These facilities were improved in later years. During 1971, Matthias Des Lauriers left St. Patrick's and Father Lar Lynch replaced him. Father Lar was replaced by Father Sean Fallon.

Father Sean, who had a Degree in Engineering, set about installing an irrigation scheme near the mission. He acquired land from the local authority, built cement ducts which he designed himself, wired off the area for irrigation and when he reached the stage that the water could flow to the tillage, he installed blocking mechanisms which were controlled manually. With plenty of school children, he had plenty of helping hands. Many crops thrived, as with the irrigation the soil proved amazingly fertile, maize grew abundantly. The whole project was in accordance with the school syllabus or curriculum.



Joseph Clinch, Tony Clarke, Tommy Brennan, Bernard Clinch, Brocard Boyle at Triashill, November 12, 1950

It was a sad morning during July 1972 when Brother Brocard Boyle, O.Carm. died of heart failure at the mission. Father Ambrose Vinyu was at St. Patrick's that morning. Brother Brocard had been transferred to St. Patrick's just months previously and had recently returned from his holidays in Ireland. He was buried at Triashill mission.

Father Fallon did not stop with his irrigation project. With the aid of Father Tommy Fives, he successfully applied for funds to erect dormitories, dining rooms and kitchens for the school. Sean designed the buildings himself. They were functional, simple and were suitable to the climatic conditions of Nyanyadzi.

For some unknown reasons, the mission escaped pretty well during the war years. However in late 1978, the freedom fighters visited the mission and ordered that the Mission close at once. The primary and vocational schools closed but the people were allowed to attend Mass and the Fathers and Sisters remained at the mission for some time.

By 1979 life had become more difficult because of 'demands' made by the fighters and the Fathers and Sisters withdrew to Umtali. The mission buildings were not destroyed at any time during or after the war. The Jesuit Refugee Service, Tongogara, Middle Sabi (1986) is an outstation of St. Patrick's mission. The Carmelite Sisters are now resident at Tongogara.

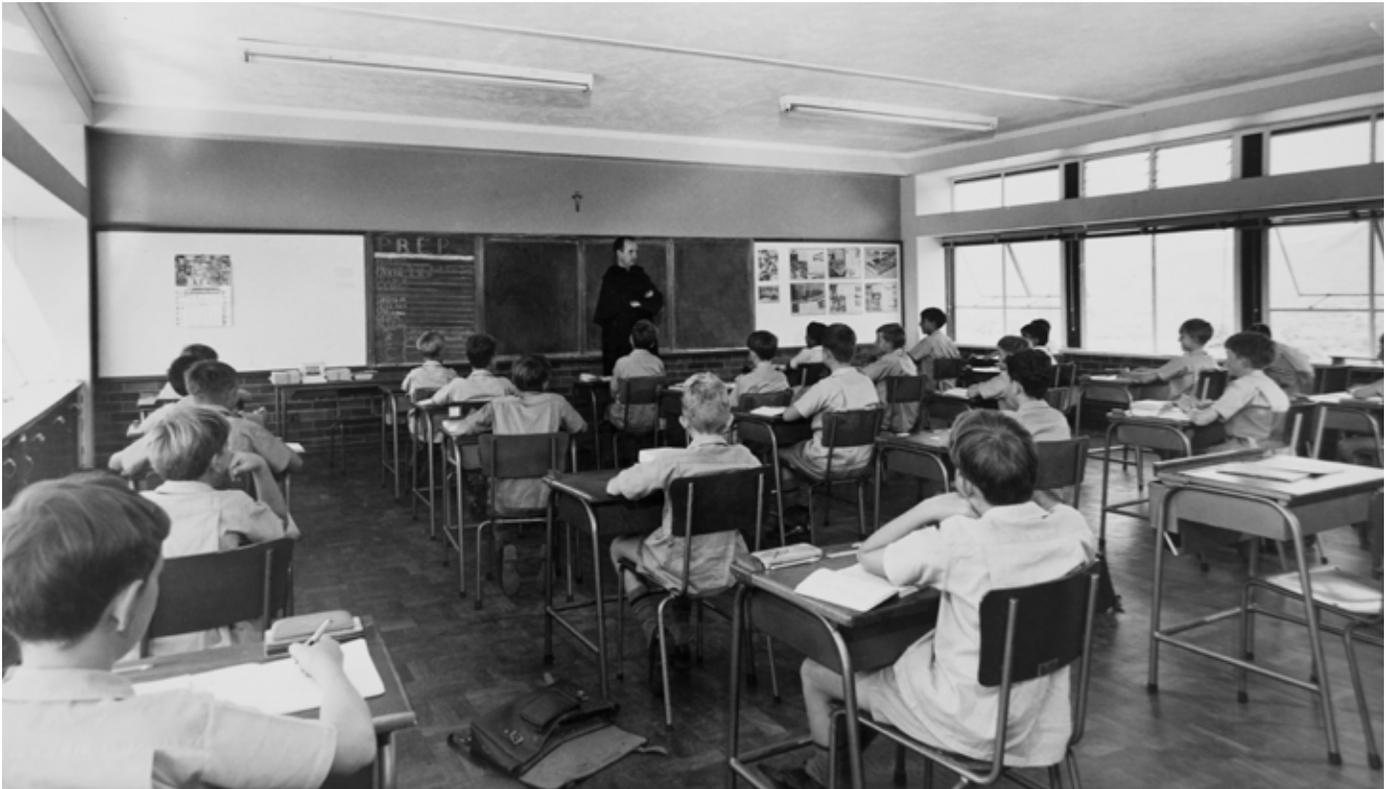
Carmel College, Umtali/Mutare, 1964

The Irish Christian Brothers had a boys' school in Bulawayo, the Jesuits had St. George's in Salisbury and the Carmelites began to develop Carmel College in

Umtali. Father Seán Coughlan who was the Regular Superior, together with his Council, put a lot of thought into what eventually became Carmel College in Umtali. Father Coughlan consulted all the Brothers before the final decision was made, yet there was some indifference towards the project. In 1963 land was acquired from the Municipality of Umtali. In the beginning a junior and senior school were planned and a boarding school was envisaged for the senior section. Sixty acres were acquired for 'Religious and Educational purposes'. It was a magnificent site which overlooked Umtali and was about two miles from the town. The cost of the land was five thousand pounds. Work was started on the site during 1963 by John Sisk and Company, and finished during 1964. As Carmel College was being built, Father Barty McGivern and Brother Augustine Parsons started 'the school' in the Parish hall, beside the present day Priory.

During the early years of Carmel College, Brother Albert Breen was instrumental in the development of the grounds and playing fields. Albert set about turning the 'bush' into playing fields, cricket-creases and tennis courts. Large amounts of money were spent on the layout and arrangement of the fields and on the necessary equipment for the sports.

1964 was a good year for the country but in 1965 Mr Ian Smyth declared the Unilateral Declaration of Independence or UDI. Nevertheless, for the next few years the College functioned pretty well as it was a day school. Father McGivern left the College and Father Cyprian Kennedy took his place. Father Kennedy had been born in the country and went down well with the white community.



Father Martin Farragher teaching at Carmel College, Mutare

He was a visionary and he prevailed on the Local Superior of the Carmelites to extend the boarding facilities at the school and develop a science laboratory. His wish was approved and both facilities were developed. During 1969 the secondary section of the school was opened but it became apparent very soon that the number of pupils was hopelessly inadequate.

By 1970, Father Tom McLoughlin, as Commissary Provincial, had to close down the secondary section and concentrate on the primary section. This was a death blow to the college as pupils who had completed primary education had to seek places in other schools for

secondary education. After the closing of the secondary section every effort was made to make a success of the primary school.

In 1971 Father Cyprian Kennedy left Carmel College and was appointed Administrator of the Cathedral in Mutare. Father Sean Coughlan was elected Assistant General at the Carmelite General Chapter in Rome and after a few months he had to reside in Rome. Father Martin Farragher was appointed prior of the College and a Mr Michael Browne was asked to be headmaster. Again there was an injection of money for advertising in an attempt to save a sinking ship but the numbers

kept dropping. Umtali was a border town, people were beginning to leave. It was taking on the appearance of a garrison town. Talk of war was in the air, things were not good for the school.

As time went on it was thought that Marymount College or the Dominican Convent and Carmel College could complement each other, both in subjects and teachers but this did not materialise. At the 1973 Provincial Chapter in Dublin, the Commissary Provincial and the Delegates to the Chapter requested that Carmel College in Umtali be closed. At the time of closure, the College was in its ninth year.

Martin Farragher and Albert Breen went to Mount Melleray Mission and Sean Murphy became Secretary to Bishop Lamont. Father Dunstan O'Connor looked after the disposal of the College and its contents. It was sold eventually to the army. As the war developed in the Country and in Umtali, Marymount College and the Dominican Convent had to close their schools.

Kriste Mambo Secondary School 1964

The Sisters of Charity from The Netherlands decided to build a secondary school for girls during 1963. While the school was being built, the Sisters together with Paul Hughes and Joseph Clinch taught Form 1 girls at Triashill mission. Miss May Bloomfield, a convert to Catholicism from Anglicanism and who had been a lay mission-helper at Bonda Mission, owned a property about three miles from Triashill. Miss Bloomfield donated some of her property to the Sisters of Charity for the girls' school.

The school was built by John Sisk and Co. and when



Kriste Mambo Community House

completed, it was one of the finest schools in the country. However, the school had the customary drawback, no water near the site. Two bore holes were sunk and they operated very well. The Sisters of Charity managed the school and there was a Carmelite friar either on the staff or as chaplain. Father Paul Hughes was the first chaplain, followed by Fathers O'Sharkey, Edward Ward and Jim Doyle.

Kriste Mambo continued to function during the war years and it was only towards the end of the war that it had to be closed down. The Sisters had moved away from Kriste Mambo beforehand and the school was run by a headmaster. The Sisters offered the Kriste Mambo Convent to the Carmelite Sisters during the 1970s and they occupied the building for some years.

Later the Carmelite friars took over the convent section and eventually took possession of the entire Kriste Mambo complex. In taking over the running of the school, they appointed a friar as manager to work with the headmaster in the school. From 1985 the friars used

the convent building as their novitiate and some years later the pre-novitiate was introduced at Kriste Mambo.

Many of the brethren have served at Kriste Mambo over the years either in formation, education or in pastoral ministry. Kriste Mambo High School as it is now known offers quality education up to Form 6 and is staffed by a dedicated headmaster, manager and staff, both teaching and non-teaching. The Kriste Mambo Formation Centre, Novitiate and Pre-Novitiate continues to accept aspirants who wish to follow the Carmelite way of life.

St. Michael's Mission, Tanda, 1969

When Bishop Lamont applied for permission to begin a Mission in Tanda, he was given a small portion of land in the area. When Father Paul Feeley went to the Tanda area during 1968, there was a flourishing upper primary school at one of the out-stations. When Father Peter Claver Marimanzi was in charge of the out-schools at St. Benedict's mission, he built a priest's house at an outstation. This out-station was to be the future site of St. Michael's mission. Tanda had always been regarded as a part of the St. Benedict's area but as the number of Catholics increased it was decided to open a new mission.

When the Carmelite Sisters came to Tanda, they lived in the priest's house and Paul lived in another building nearby. In a short time, Father Paul set about building a church at St. Michael's and this was completed during 1971. A clinic was opened in due course, and teacher's houses were erected. When Father Feeley left in 1974, Father Jerry Galvin was assigned to St. Michael's. A lot of building had taken place at the mission by then,

and Father Jerry was able to concentrate on the pastoral ministry. The school nearby was run by a school council and did not come under the management of the mission. Father Galvin was transferred and was succeeded by Father Lar Lynch. Father Lar had a modest residence constructed at St. Michael's. In time Father Lynch was transferred to Mount Melleray and Father John O'Sharkey took his place. How Father O'Sharkey was not shot dead by the Security Forces during the war is a miracle! He openly befriended the freedom fighters and was rude to the security forces. Eventually he went to Umtali and the mission was closed down by the security forces.

Development of Avila Mission

The Carmelite Sisters came to work at Avila mission in 1963. In the same year, Father Philip O'Dwyer was transferred to St. Peter's mission in the Sabi Valley while Father Martin Millar was assigned to St. Barbara's. Father Senan Egan came to Avila as priest-in-charge also in 1963. Mel Hill remarked that 'Egan was the man who could make the desert blossom', and Senan certainly did just that in the case of Avila.

As already mentioned, Avila had a very poor water supply and was described as a desert area. Senan Egan was to spend the next fourteen years at Avila, and these were possibly the best and happiest years of his life. The first thing Senan tackled was the water supply. There were two options available to him, either bring the mission to the water or bring the water to the mission. He chose to bring water from the Rwenya river which was eight miles away. He felt that he would be able to finance the water project as he had been to the USA and had met influential people there including Cardinal



Father Senan Egan working with others on the construction of the Avila mission church

Cooke of New York and the wife of the US President, Jacqueline Kennedy. When President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas in November 1963, Senan wrote to Mrs Kennedy and afterwards he often spoke of the reply he had received from the President's widow.

Within months water was being pumped in from the river to the mission. Senan started growing crops by irrigation and made thousands of pounds out of tomatoes. He could grow them during the dry season when most other places were either affected by ground frost or shortage of water. The people around the mission also benefited from the water supply, and prosperity came to the dry and desolate Katerere.

Having supplied water to the mission, Senan turned his hand to the development of the buildings and pulled down many old structures and rebuilt them with a

difference. He had always wanted to build a truly African Mission complete with thatched roofs and African art. To do this he had to get a real thatcher, one who could comb the dried grass, clean it, put it into sheaves and who knew how to sew on the thatch with twine. The finished building, with poles treated against termites, would last for a good twenty years. Katerere was a hot area, but with thatch, the houses would be cool and comfortable.

Father Senan designed and built a round church capable of holding about 500 people. The church was built in the style of an African hut. A great friend and benefactor, Mr Con A. Smyth, paid for the building of the church. The entrance was a smaller hut decorated with local stone of every conceivable colour. The sacristy was another hut and two elephant husks served as candle holders on the main altar.

Unfortunately, Con A. Smyth was killed in an air crash in London on the day of the opening of the church at Avila. He had been invited to the opening and blessing ceremony but due to commitments he was unable to attend. He is remember by a plaque in the main entrance of the church and his wife, Gemma, is honoured by a statue of St. Gemma Galgani.

Father Egan had completed the re-building of Avila mission by 1975. By 1977 Father Senan and the Presentation Sisters had to leave the Avila mission because of the security situation in the country.



Father Senan Egan and Con Smith

Development of Regina Coeli Mission

Around 1962 Father Norton was transferred to St. Therese Mission, Chiduku, and Father Charles Haggerty of the St. Elias Province, came to minister at Regina Coeli. Around this time also, Doctor Irene Von Furstenburg took up the offer of a job in the Antelope Mines of Rhodesia and Father Robbie Luke MacCabe came to Regina Coeli. Father MacCabe was a qualified doctor who had become a Carmelite. After ordination

he was assigned to Rhodesia and appointed to Regina Coeli. Father Robbie was a great diagnostician, held a gold medal in tropical medicine and was a tremendous asset to the nursing school. The hospital at Regina Coeli went from strength to strength, with nursing Sisters, a doctor, nurse training school, ambulance service, its own lighting plant, library, classrooms and operating theatre.

However Father Robbie did not like to operate! One of Senan Egan's workmen got a nail through his foot and he was sent to Robbie. An hour passed and nothing happened. Senan lost his patience and descended on his workman with a pliers, removing the nail and dousing the wound with dettol. He gave the 'patient' a shot of whiskey and the two returned to the job of roofing the church!

Senan Egan left Regina Coeli during 1963 and Father Charles Haggerty took over from him. The building of the mission was complete, a model for all missions and a proof that it is worthwhile to plan a mission station in advance. The commitment to the hospital and the outstations continued. When Father Haggerty returned to his Province in the USA during 1965 and was replaced by Father Patrick Staunton.

It was around this time that a secondary school for boys and girls was opened at Regina Coeli and in a short time the school had pupils sitting for Cambridge examinations. Regina Coeli became an important centre with a nursing school, secondary school, an orphanage and with mission helpers from Holland, Germany, England and Ireland working in the hospital and school.

Father Martin O'Regan joined the community at Regina Coeli and catered for the out-schools in the area. Brother Ignatius Moore also came at this time, a master builder but with a short fuse! Father Staunton applied for a grant for a swimming pool and, with two schools on the mission, it was soon forwarded. Father Martin, in the meantime, was instrumental in building a splendid church at Crossdale. The church was built by Brother Ignatius and blended in well with the surrounding hills. Great credit was due to Father Martin, Brother Ignatius and the people of Crossdale who helped with their time and money. When Father Staunton returned to Ireland during 1974, Father Martin O'Regan became

the priest-in-charge and was joined by Father Dom Aloysius Carruth, OSB, a Benedictine monk from Scotland who joined the Diocese of Umtali. 'The Dom' taught at the secondary school for many years. During 1975 the Dutch Sisters of Charity indicated that they were having difficulties with personnel and wished to withdraw from Regina Coeli.

The Franciscan Missionary Sisters for Africa were interested in Rhodesia and Bishop Lamont offered them a place at Regina Coeli. The Mother General of the Franciscan Sisters came to view the mission and, within a short time, four Sisters arrived at Regina Coeli: two



Father Robbie MacCabe with Regina Coeli Staff

were nurses, one was a teacher and the fourth looked after the Convent. Regina Coeli escaped the 'troubles of the war' for a number of years as it was situated on one of the main routes for those who were going to Mozambique for training. The mission is only a few miles from the border with Mozambique. However, in 1977, the freedom fighters started to come into the mission. During this time there was a contact between the security forces and the freedom fighters and many people lost their lives. As a result, the mission was closed down, Father Martin O'Regan was arrested, imprisoned and later deported. Dom Carruth and the Franciscan Sisters took refuge in Umtali. Some time later, Father Max Muzungu, Diocese of Umtali, was sent to the mission, but left within a short time.

Development of St. Joseph's mission, Sakubva

Father Conall Collier came to Rhodesia during 1958 and Father Pio Kiernan came during 1960. Both were associated with St. Joseph's mission from its early years. The residence and church at the mission were built in 1962 and the church has the same design as the churches at Regina Coeli and St. Therese, Chiduku, though somewhat larger to accommodate the huge Catholic population of Sakubva.

The people of Sakubva subscribed six hundred pounds towards the building which was a huge amount of money in those days. The people also cleared the ground for the building. During the month before the opening of the church, they battled to get the surrounding grounds



Father Martin O'Regan on the left

in order. The work entailed the shifting by hand of thousands of barrows of clay from one side of the church and putting in of drains.

Every Mission can boast of one good storm, be it rain, wind or lightning hitting it and St. Joseph's is no exception. On Holy Thursday of 1962 a shower of hailstones hit the mission and broke over fifty window panes. According to one account: *"Everybody was hard at work and another hour's work would have seen things fairly neat when hurricane 'Katie' struck. From then onwards it was 'operation mud' as we tried desperately to clear mud and water and make a path around the church to enable Father Meagher, in the absence of Bishop Lamont, to walk around it during the blessing. Eventually planks were used and on Sunday the rain stopped for the blessing. We were indeed blessed because immediately after the ceremony finished, a terrific shower came down"*. There had been a near-tragedy the day before when Father Coughlan at six in the morning was driving to St. Joseph's mission to say Mass at the Sister's convent. When crossing the concrete drift over the Sakubva river, his car was suddenly swept away in the strong current. Father Coughlan managed to get out of the car but was carried a long distance downstream. He managed to pull himself out of the water and walk to St. Joseph's. It was a lucky escape for Father Coughlan and he even got some dry clothes to put on at the Mission.

The Scapular Confraternity has always been very strong at St. Joseph's mission. The uniform of the Scapular Confraternity has been modified in modern times. In years past the members were like sisters, with long flowing garments, blue veils and wore very large scapulars. The members continue to attend Mass on Saturday mornings and have weekly meetings. The

Sisters from the Netherlands also built a large hall at the mission. The intention was to use the hall for youth gatherings, but, over time, the hall began to be used for many purposes.



Father Brian Pio Kiernan with two ladies

Development of St. Therese mission

During 1961 Father Cyprian Kennedy was transferred to St. Peter's mission in the Sabi Valley and he was replaced by Father Tom Norton. Father Tom McLoughlin went to Ireland on holidays and Father Leo Gallagher was assigned to St. Therese mission.

Father Leo did a lot of work on the grounds of the mission, planted flowers and made the place very attractive for the people living there and for visitors. Father Leo also built a hospital with the help of the Dutch Sisters of Charity who also staffed the hospital.

When a priest went to the outstations for Mass and to the out-schools, a Sister from the hospital accompanied him so that the 'whole person' could be catered for, body and soul. An orphanage was also opened at the Mission at this time.

Father Gallagher built an outstation church at Dowa. This was an important development, as it was the first of such churches to be built for a small and active Catholic community at a Mass centre with no school. Mr Ambrose Majongwe was instrumental in organising the people to support the building of the church. Mr Majongwe was also very active in the Catholic Association movement.

Other centres like St. Rita's and Padua soon got their own churches. During the early sixties, the St. Therese pastoral area was divided. Padua, Inyazura and Tandi came under St. Simon Stock, Rusape, while St. Therese retained the rest of its centres or outstations.

In the late sixties the teacher training at the mission became a school for girls only under the title of T4

(Junior Teachers). Father Gallagher got a name for being one of the finest educationalists in the country and when the teacher training school eventually closed, the Department of Education offered Father Leo several assignments which he turned down. Father Paul Hughes replaced Father Leo when he returned to Ireland. Father Peter Toner replaced Father Hughes when he returned to Ireland during 1976. Peter Toner had to leave the mission because of the security situation in the country during 1978, and everything ceased at the mission shortly afterwards.



Fathers Leo Gallagher and Tom McLoughlin

End Notes

1. Gallagher (1996), pp. 29-30.
2. Manuscript A.

Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity

UMTALI

The Right Rev. Donal R. Lamont, O. Carm., D.D.,
Bishop of Umtali.

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Telephone 2347.

Vicars General : V. Rev. P. G. Meagher, O. Carm.
V. Rev. D. A. Clarke, O. Carm.

Administrator : V. Rev. D. A. Clarke, O. Carm.

Assistant : Fr. C. P. T. Collier, O. Carm.

Priests' Residence : The Priory, 3rd Street, P.O. Box 259.
Telephone: 3413. Office hours only: 2252.

MASSES

Sunday — 7.30 a.m. and 9 a.m. — 3 p.m. Shona
— 7 a.m. at Dominican Convent.
— 8 a.m. at Florida.

Saturday — 9 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.

Monday to Friday — 9.30 a.m.

First Fridays — 9.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.

BENEDICTION

2nd Thursday of the month — 7.45 p.m. at the Priory.

CONFESSIONS

Saturday — 11.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.
5.00 p.m. to 5.25 p.m.

Sunday — 7 a.m. to 7.25 a.m., 8.30 a.m. to 8.55 a.m.

At any other time by request at Cathedral or Priory.

MEETINGS OF PARISH SOCIETIES

St. Vincent de Paul	— Mondays 5.20 p.m. (Hall)
Umtali Catholic Lay Association	— 1st Thursday 8 p.m. (Hall)
Catholic Women's League	— 2nd Thursday 7.45 p.m. (Benediction Priory) 8.00 p.m. (Hall)
Parish Council by Notification	(Hall)

6

Other Developments in the Diocese

Sisters ¹

Bishop Lamont realised that 'not by man alone' can the work of Christ be done in Manicaland. He saw the need for the new diocese to have its own Sisterhood, and so was born the Handmaids of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, their first Sisters being professed in 1961. The new congregation was nurtured by the Sisters of the Precious Blood under the authority of German Sisters: Ruth Schneider, Heldegrim Becker, Benita Bonefass and Gunthilda Ruhl. Sister Consolatrix Boese was the Handmaids' long-serving and much esteemed novice mistress. At present there are now over ninety Sisters. They elected their own first Mother General, Sister Gertrude Bhubho, in 1977.

The Bishop invited the Sisters of Charity from Holland, the Marymount Sisters from the U.S.A., and the Irish Sisters of the Presentation and of the Little Company of Mary to cater for education and health needs in the diocese. This resulted in the creation, by the Dutch Sisters, of Kriste Mambo Secondary School and the complex of primary and secondary schools, adult education centre

and a TB hospital at St. Joseph's, Mutare, as well as their involvement in teacher training and nursing at St. Therese mission and personnel requirements at St. Charles Lwanga Minor Seminary; the Marymount Sisters' College at Mutare and staff responsibilities at St. Killian's Mission and at St. Charles Lwanga; the Little Company of Mary's hospital work at St. Peter's Mission in Sabi Valley; the Presentation Sisters in education and hospital care at Mount Melleray, Avila and St. Killian's and at a later date the Franciscan Sisters (FMSA) at Regina Coeli, St. Benedict's, St. Andrew's and St. Dominic's, Mutare.

Dominican Sisters were already involved in education in Mutare before 1946 as also were Precious Blood Sisters and Little Company of our Blessed Lady (LCBL) at several Missions.

He also invited the Marist Brothers of Canada to establish a large Secondary School in the diocese. It was built beside Mount Melleray mission and is now renowned for its excellent 'A' Level results and a high standard of achievement in sport.

More welcome collaborators ²

Men and women, besides Priests, Brothers and Sisters, came from Ireland and elsewhere to work at the Missions in Zimbabwe or became associated with them. They came on their own account or as members of Aer Lingus, Viatores Christi, VMM, VSO etc.: Dr. Jim and Joan Barnes; Dr. Baroness von Furstenberg (Germany); Dr. Michael McGovern; Drs. Paul and Marie' Rompa (Holland); Phillip Brady; Helen Ryan; Rosaleen Corcoran; Joan McKenna; Margaret Slattery; Carmel Kelly; Breda O'Brien; Helen Fahy; Marian Leahy; Angela Slattery; Anne Plunkett; Edel Altman; Siobhan Boyle; Clare Patton; Anne Karney; Noreen Coffey; Pinola Higgins; Louise Whelan; Olive Lynch; Aileen Finnegan; Myra Goodwin; Susan Fanagan; Ann Fitzpatrick; Eileen Clohessy; Ann Travers; Deirdre Greenan; Edel Finn; Lily Murphy; Patrick Fay; Patricia Jordan; Angela Potter (UK); Cathy Rodacy (USA); Mary Val Lieshout (USA); Celina Bigos (Poland).

Formation ³

Part of a letter written in January 1960 by the Carmelite Provincial in Ireland, Father O'Shea: *"With our missions being firmly established, the time would now seem to be ripe for a further and most important advance — the acceptance and training of African vocations for the Carmelite Order. Already the Bishop has his African students in the regional seminary, thus laying the foundation for the future African clergy. We too must lay the foundation for the African Carmelites of the future who will live their Carmelite life and exercise the apostolate of Carmel in the midst of their people...."*

Looking forward in prayer and hope to the day when African

Carmelites will devote their lives to God and to Our Blessed Lady of Mount Carmel in their own country."

Soon afterwards, efforts were made to implement this suggestion. Father Marimanzi and Father Maunde were the fruits of this initial endeavour. It was over twenty years later that a Zimbabwean-based Carmelite Vocations programme was initiated. This was mainly the undertaking of Father Tom Power in 1982. The first formation house was for a short time located in the Vumba before moving to Kriste Mambo.

Willow Grove Mission – The Seminary ⁴

St. Charles Lwanga. 1959 – 1962

The Seminary, Melsetter, was built on Willow Grove Farm in the district of Melsetter. Mrs Hilda Richards wrote the following article many years ago: *"Willow Grove Farm Melsetter was purchased by Bishop Haene in 1946 when the district of Melsetter came under the jurisdiction of the Apostolic Prefecture of Fort Victoria. On the establishment of the Apostolic Prefecture of Umtali in 1953, Melsetter was one of the civil districts given to Umtali and Willow Grove Farm has been handed over to the Umtali Prefecture."*

On March 10th 1959, Father Clarke took occupation of the Willow Grove farm house and started the apostolate in all the districts south of Umtali.

As a result of his labours, St. Andrew's mission, St. Peter's mission, St. Charles Lwanga Seminary and St. Patrick's mission were all established".

The farm which Bishop Haene purchased amounted to 3, 400 acres in hilly and mountainous terrain. His intention was to have a holiday house in the mountains



St. Charles Lwanga Mission church, school and staff residence, built in 1963

for the priests and brothers in his prefecture. Father Clarke made contact with many Catholics in the area, he also made contact with the Chiefs with a view to opening up schools and Mass centres in the area. During 1961, Bishop Lamont began the process of building a Junior Seminary some distance from the old farm house, the present St. Charles school. The old house was way across on the other side of the valley.

The location of the seminary was and is about eighty miles from Umtali. When the seminary was completed and up and running, the priests were able to minister

to the Catholics in the vast area of Melsetter, Chipinge and surrounding areas. The seminary was planned and constructed by an ex-Jesuit, Bruno Gassi, who was German. Bruno built the seminary right into the hills. It was and is a solid structure, other buildings were constructed in the years which followed. As we are aware, the seminary is near the main road, there is always a good supply of water from springs in the mountains, plenty of firewood, plenty of ground for growing vegetables, maize and whatever. The seminary was opened and blessed in January 1962.

As time went on, students from the Archdiocese of Salisbury and from the Diocese of Chinhoyi joined the students from the Umtali Diocese. Boys who finished Standard 6 in those days and who expressed a wish to become priests were sent to Melsetter. Father John Lamont, O.Carm., became Rector soon after the Seminary was opened. John's knowledge of the local customs and language was very limited.

The Seminary began with students attending Form 1. Father Jerry Galvin went to the Seminary to assist Father Lamont. The second year began, with Forms 1 and 2 and Father John O'Sharkey took up residence at the Seminary. Mr Joe O'Neill, a mission helper, spent some time there teaching Latin. It was then decided that they would follow the London G.C.E. 'O' Level syllabus as it was a subject examination as distinct from a group examination, if a student failed any particular subject, he could repeat it. The subjects offered at that time were: English Language, English Literature, Latin, Mathematics and Bible Knowledge.

In 1965 Father John Lamont left the Seminary and Father Tom McLoughlin was appointed Rector. Tom McLoughlin introduced many changes for the better at the Seminary, the Junior Seminarians used to wear red cassocks and got a monthly allowance, all that and other privileges went. The Seminarians were to be treated like any other group of young men studying G.C.E. They were also at this time asked to pay school fees, though it was a small amount. They also competed in sport activities with other schools. A much healthier atmosphere prevailed at the seminary. During this time, Fathers Ward, Josten and O'Sharkey were on the staff. Father Senan Egan together with Brother Ignatius Moore built the church at the seminary and

Father O'Sharkey added a unique bell tower, it was in imitation of the first American rocket taking off from Cape Canaveral in the USA!

Fathers O'Sharkey and Ward left the seminary during 1966 and were replaced by Fathers Jim Doyle and Stan Hession. Another staff member came some time later. There were now five on the staff, including Fathers McLoughlin and Josten. Stan Hession was appointed Dean of Studies and a proper curriculum was drawn up. Two new subjects were added: Geography and the Shona language. The number of seminarians increased greatly. In 1968, Stan Hession was advised that they must have a science subject on the syllabus in order to get recognition at University level and so biology was introduced. Tom McLoughlin began to build an extension to the present Sisters' Convent in 1967 as new Sisters were expected at the seminary. Other buildings were also added at this time. During 1968 the Carmelite Sisters came and began their work at the seminary and with the people, especially women in the surrounding areas.

Some of the Carmelites questioned the value of the seminary and so many able-bodied men involved with seminary education. Yet it was necessary that the country prepare for its own clergy and religious. Students for the Archdiocese of Salisbury, Chinoyi and Umtali were all studying at Melsetter.

When Father Tom McLoughlin was elected Commissary Provincial in 1970, Father Jim Doyle was appointed rector of the seminary. As rector, Jim Doyle began to extend the seminary buildings after receiving funds from overseas donors. The State Lottery donated funds to build a swimming pool. Other buildings were

added as time went on, together with an outstation church just outside Melsetter town. Many of the Carmelites served for a short time at Melsetter and when two left in early 1972, Father McLoughlin returned and taught English Language and Literature four days each week at the Seminary.

Sister Paulus de Bruyn began to teach history at the seminary in 1972. At that time there were four Carmelites involved: Jim Doyle, Stan Hession, Tom McLoughlin and John McGrath. Father Stan Hession went for studies in England during 1974, and he was replaced by Father Thomas Fives. During 1976 Father Ambrose Vinyu, Diocese of Mutare, was appointed rector and Jim Doyle became the bursar of the seminary. During the war years, the seminary was relatively unscathed. However, Father Tom McLoughlin, the Sisters and the cook were ambushed but not killed on the road to the seminary on December 31st 1976. Father Tom and the cook were shot. The Sisters escaped injury. The Datsun truck was hit nineteen times and sixty spent shells were found along the road by the security forces the following day.

Up to 1977, the security forces and the freedom fighters left the seminary in relative peace but in 1978 the security forces accused the seminary personnel of helping the freedom fighters and the seminary was closed down. Afterwards the Seminary buildings were vandalised and destroyed. The life of the seminary transferred to the Marymount College in Umtali during 1978. After the war it took a huge amount of finances to restore the seminary buildings. Fathers Jim Doyle and Thomas Fives worked very hard, together with other people, on the restoration of the buildings.

Marymount College 1957

The Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary announced towards the end of 1957 that their College in Umtali would open its doors for the Form 1 and Form 2 intake during February 1958. The Marymount College for girls accepted boarders and day students of all races even though it was mostly white pupils who enrolled at the College. Academic and general courses were offered which included the Cambridge Higher Certificate. Full facilities for Art, Music and Athletics were also available. The property consisted of fifty-eight acres in a setting of great natural beauty, very scenic and situated near the border with Mozambique. The property was purchased from the Bishop of Umtali, Donal Lamont. The Dominican Sisters in Umtali had once run a boarding and day school for senior girls but were forced to give up their senior section because of a shortage of personnel. With the opening of Marymount College, the local Catholic girls were accommodated in Umtali even though as time passed pupils of all denominations attended the College and many girls came from Zambia. Father Jerome O'Dwyer was very dedicated to the College and remained a faithful friend of the Sisters and pupils for many years. On completion of his term as Parish Priest of Umtali, Jerome joined the Staff of the College and became the College Chaplain. During 1964 two of the Sisters went to teach at St. Kilian's Mission, the school soon boasted of the finest results in the country. Other Sisters joined the St. Kilian's community in later years.

Marymount College and the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary continued their excellent record for many years and offered quality education to all who enrolled. Due to the security situation in the country during 1977, the College was forced to close.

During 1978, the Junior Seminary which was situated in Melsetter, and again forced to close because of security reasons transferred to the Marymount College in Umtali. The College was sold to the Government of Zimbabwe, to the Department of Higher Education after the war (c. 1982) and is now a Teacher Training College for Primary school teachers. The RSHM Sisters continue ministry in Mutare and in Harare to the present day.

The Marist Brothers, St. Patrick's Secondary School 1959

Bishop Lamont invited the Marist Brothers to Inyanga and offered them part of the farm at Mount Melleray mission. A fine secondary school was established for boys by the Brothers and, to this day, continues to offer quality education to all who attend. According to Brother Brocard Boyle, O.Carm. the Marists inherited a most fertile part of the Melleray farm for their school and farm. Fathers Pio Kiernan and Lar Lynch were the first chaplains to the school and the priests of Mount Melleray have continued as chaplains. The Marist Brothers were a qualified group of men, each Brother was highly qualified in his own subject and skilled through his own industry in farming and building. The Brothers came from Kutama to St. Patrick's Secondary, Inyanga. Kutama is a famous institute of learning dating back to the early days of the missions in the country. Their buildings were far superior to the ordinary mission style and their grounds and farms were kept and ran most efficiently. The Marist Brothers have always welcomed many boys to come and share their vocation in the Marist family and have always appointed a Director of Vocations for the Brothers. They established 'Maristvale' beside the Secondary School to cater for local vocations.

During October 2010 St. Patrick's High School celebrated their Golden Jubilee. Many people came to celebrate the fifty years of quality education by the Marist Brothers and to remember the many People who have served at St. Patrick's and Maristvale. The event was attended by the Bishop, clergy, Sisters, Headmaster, former headmasters, teachers, parents, friends, the local community and past and present pupils. The High School has been greatly developed over the years thanks to the Marist Community and to all the people who have served in their own capacity over the last fifty years.

Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity⁵

The gem of all the churches in the diocese is the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity. As early as 1960 Bishop Lamont had plans for a cathedral to replace the Holy Rosary church which had been built in 1923. This church had face stone walls but its tin roof and walls were defective. After much consultation and much fund raising the new Cathedral of the Holy Trinity was built and blessed by Bishop Lamont in 1971. Father Sean Coughlan was the first cathedral administrator. John Kirkos, as mayor of Mutare, was proud that the catholic cathedral was blessed during his term of office.

End Notes

1. Hender (1996), 27.
2. Ibid., 21.
3. Ibid, 19.
4. Manuscript A
5. Gallagher (1996), 23-24.



Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity 1971

7

Tension and War (1971-1980)

A Chronicle of Events

1971

The Blessing of the Most Holy Trinity Cathedral, Mutare, took place on July 11th.

Two African Carmelites, Fathers Raymond Maunde and Frank Tandi, are ordained.

1974

Ordination of Father Max Muzungu. Before his calling to priestly ministry, Max trained to be a carpenter and teacher. He had been a Carmelite aspirant for a short time. He was ordained for the diocese of Mutare and served at Avila, Mount Melleray and St Michael's, Tanda. He served the early years of his priesthood during the war. He was a patriot. He was an un-assuming, calm and friendly man, a hard worker, interested in spiritual and material things. He died in 1991 and is buried in Triashill.

1975

St. Martin's Parish (Florida, Mutare) established.

This parish was administered by the Cathedral parish up to 1989 when the Spiritan Fathers took over. The Immaculate Conception Church in Chikanga was incorporated into St. Martin's. The building of this church commenced around 1998. The Spiritan Community and the LCM Sisters (1982) are resident in the Parish.

The Franciscan Missionary Sisters for Africa came to the diocese of Mutare.

1977

Father Anthony Clarke, O.Carm., was appointed the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese when Bishop Lamont was expelled from Rhodesia.

1979

Father Patrick Mutume was consecrated as Auxiliary Bishop of Umtali on June 17th.

1980

Independence in Zimbabwe on April 18th.

Pre-War Tension between Church and State ¹

Missionary Integration

Missionaries, although often white and expatriates, live and work mainly in rural areas. They desire to become an integral part of the local community. They try to learn the language of the people, and their customs. They get to know the people, their families, their problems and they try to help where possible. They are involved, not only with the spiritual lives of the people, but with the life of the community at all levels. Missionaries in rural areas make an essential contribution to health, education and to the general development of the community. The problems and concerns of the community are shared by the missionaries.

Changes

By the end of 1959 it was becoming apparent, even to the most isolated missionary, that dramatic changes were taking place on the African continent. African nationalism could no longer be ignored. From about 1959 to April 1980 the Catholic Church, represented by its Bishops, were on a collision course with the Rhodesian Government. Oppressive legislation made it increasingly more difficult for the Church to exercise her mission of unity, reconciliation and evangelization. The Church reacted strongly and one of the loudest voices was that of Bishop Donal Lamont.

Bishop Lamont

Donal Lamont was born in Northern Ireland in 1911.

He became a Carmelite in 1929, and was ordained priest in Rome in July 1937. Father Lamont came to Rhodesia in 1946, was made Prefect Apostolic in 1953 and, four years later in 1957, was consecrated the first Bishop of Mutare.

Bishop Lamont was an outspoken man, a resolute opponent of social and political discrimination in this country. This concern for social justice and his desire to oppose the blatant social inequalities in Rhodesia were sharply aroused by his appointment as Bishop. He himself said, "*I was innocent enough not to question the situation as I found it when I first came to the country in 1946. However, when I became Bishop in 1957, I became appropriately concerned, it was from that time that I began to consider the need formally to denounce the system of racial discrimination.*"

- *The Catholic Church in Zimbabwe: 1879-1979*, Dachs and Rae, 79:206.

Two years later, in 1959, he did not hesitate any longer but issued his personal manifesto in his pastoral letter *Purchased People* which proclaimed, among many other things, the necessity for the Church to speak out through her bishops. Written almost forty years ago and six years before the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), this was undoubtedly 'prophetic witness through proclamation'.

Bishop Lamont said: "*The Church through her bishops must speak, no matter what the fears, what the criticism. Unless she does, the notion of God having anything to do in the affairs of the nation and of individuals may be lost and the ideal of a social order based on the Christian*

principles of justice and charity may be abandoned as an unrealistic, impractical and visionary illusion.”

Purchased People includes a detailed treatment of the evils of discrimination, segregation and the denial of individual rights. It called for a new attitude on the part of Rhodesia's white citizens and their government to abandon those evils. This pastoral letter was the first of many written by the Catholic bishops in condemnation of the injustices rampant in the country. This first letter of Bishop Lamont caused the bishops and Church leaders to examine their respective roles. How should the Church respond to the claims of nationalism and the issues of land, legislation, segregation, and education? What was the relationship between Church and State? Their conclusions were to form the basis of numerous joint pastoral letters during the next twenty years:

1959: *Purchased People*

1961: *Peace through Justice*

1963: *Problems of our People*

1965: *Plea for Justice*

1967: *Pastoral Message*

1969: *A Call to Christians*

1970: *A Crisis of Conscience*

1973: *Pastoral Message*

1974: *Reconciliation in Rhodesia*

1974: *Racial Discrimination*

1976: *Road to Peace*

1977: *United by Consent*

1978: *A Plea for Reconciliation*

1979: *Centenary of the Catholic Church*

1980: *Welcome to Zimbabwe.*



Bishop Lamont playing with children

Justice & Peace²

Carmelites, however, from the beginning, were not happy with the laws of discrimination which were in force against Africans in their own country. Other conditions in Zimbabwe were not dissimilar to the situation that had prevailed in pre-Independence Ireland, such as ownership of land, commerce, education and administration of justice. This is why they could understand the struggle of Africans to gain their independence, eventually by force, when all avenues to meaningful negotiations for them were closed.

Carmelites were pleased to let Bishop Lamont be their spokesperson in trying to solve this major problem. He fulfilled this role courageously and tenaciously. He spoke out frequently against the unfair government of the time and against injustices of every kind towards Africans. It was a constant theme of his pastoral letters and his articles in magazines and newspapers. In 1959 he wrote *Purchased People*, his most famous treatise, defending the rights of the indigenous people and condemning the system of government being forced upon them. He stated more than once that armed rebellion would eventually erupt if their rights were not recognised and respected. The accuracy of this prediction became evident in the seventies.

In 1975 many pupils of our mission schools absconded. They crossed the border into neighbouring Mozambique to train as freedom fighters. From 1976 to the end of 1979 our missions were enmeshed in a country-wide web of the guerrilla war that culminated in a ceasefire and formal Independence for Zimbabwe in April 1980.

During these years, besides trying to continue with

normal pastoral activities, Carmelites were busy dealing with the almost daily requests of freedom fighters. Carmelite Sisters also helped with this problem and with other difficulties connected with the liberation war. Their advice and co-operation were greatly appreciated by every mission authority. The couriers for the fighters were usually young girls, and sometimes women. They were years of great tension and danger and some Carmelites escaped death by the proverbial 'hair's breadth'. They thank God that nobody died in the conflict. Two received bullet wounds: Father Jerry Galvin and Father Tom McLoughlin. Father Laurence Lynch was arrested and imprisoned in 1977. This was followed by his trial and deportation. In 1978 Father Martin O'Regan suffered a similar fate after Regina Coeli mission had been the site of a military contact.

Carmelites were also active in procuring legal assistance through Scanlen & Holderness (legal practitioners based in Harare) for people detained unjustly and for those wounded or maltreated or whose property was destroyed or whose relations had been killed by the army in controversial circumstances. This facility was organised for all missions by the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission of Zimbabwe. In addition, Carmelites worked in co-operation with the International Red Cross, supplying war-affected communities with food and medicines including those who had to live inside special fences erected by Government, called Protected Villages, as was the case for the whole population of Honde Valley.

The Carmelite Provincial, Father David Weakliam, and his councillors organised the moral and material support of the Irish Province for their colleagues in Zimbabwe during those difficult years. As a result, much-needed

assistance for victims of this war came from generous donors in Ireland, the U.S.A., Britain, Holland, Germany and Australia. Irish people were especially active and generous in shipping out large amounts of clothing for Zimbabweans displaced by the war.

Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, wrote in his Foreword to the report for 1976 of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, *“The Rhodesian Commission for Justice and Peace has a commendable record of concern and action in defence of Christian principles, in line with the teaching of the Church. Unhappily its work has attracted considerable hostility from the Rhodesian authorities. This hostility has now focused on the person of the Rt. Rev. Donal Lamont, Bishop of Umtali and President of the Commission, who is being brought to trial for allegedly failing to report the presence of guerrillas and inciting others to do likewise. I would like to take this opportunity of identifying myself with the recent statement of support for Bishop Lamont by the Rhodesian Catholic Bishops’ Conference”*.

After Bishop Lamont’s trial and deportation, Father Anthony Clarke was appointed Apostolic Administrator for the diocese of Mutare. Zimbabwe became an Independent Republic in 1980.

The Experience of War³

There were experiences of war in each of the three periods of missionary work during the past one hundred years. During the Mariannahill period, there was the First Chimurenga and the First World War. During the Jesuit period, there was the Second World War, and during the Carmelite period there was the Second Chimurenga.

The First Chimurenga and the First World War did not inflict great hardships on the people. The Mariannahill Fathers, however, had to leave the country in 1896 and did not return for ten years. During the First World War, the German missionaries were interned in Natal and the sisters in Harare. During the Second World War, they were restricted to the Triashill area. The Second Chimurenga War brought great suffering to the people who lived through those violent times.

Unilateral Declaration of Independence: The Church had been well established in many parts of the country before 1975 and generally had tried to champion the cause of the oppressed people. The Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965 curtailed missionary activity and was the catalyst that caused the whole struggle. The bishops opposed UDI, spoke out and wrote against it. The Bishop of Mutare, Donal Lamont, was one of its greatest critics and even when he was placed under house arrest and put on trial, sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment and finally deported, he was not silenced.

Firm Stand: A significant aspect of the liberation struggle in this diocese was that no priest or religious was killed. One reason for this may have been the firm stand taken by Bishop Lamont. He opted for the people and told his priests and religious not to report the presence of freedom fighters in their area. In saying this he was acting against Rhodesian law which stated that the presence of ‘terrorists’ must be reported to the security forces and very severe penalties were enforced individually and collectively if this was not done. Bishop Lamont told his priests and sisters that he himself would be entirely responsible for their actions, both in giving medicine to the terrorists and in not reporting their presence. The freedom fighters told the missionaries

not to report their presence in the area. The security forces usually visited the missions during the day and the freedom fighters usually came in the evening time.

It was a time of great tension, but the clear unequivocal leadership of Bishop Lamont helped the individual missionary to do the correct thing. Bishop Lamont said: *“If the Christian missionary is the informer, the whole community understandably blame him, and they blame not only him but the whole organization to which he belongs. Not only the Church gets the blame but Christianity itself is condemned as a fraud, as an agent of oppression, and is accused of preaching the brotherhood of all men in creation and in redemption, and of contradicting it in practice – even becoming the willing accomplice in the bombing and destroying of villages and in the killing of innocent women and children.”*

He told his priests to support, as best they could, those who required their help. The priests lived in the midst of the people. They knew many of the leaders of the freedom fighters and had taught many of them in their schools, and the Sisters had attended them in their clinics. The people stood by their priests, advised them in certain difficult situations, informed them of possible impending dangers and spoke up for them at various ‘Pungwes’.

A missionary recalls:

“My mission was quite near the police camp which also was used as a camp for soldiers during the war. We were also near many places where the guerrillas filtered into Zimbabwe from Mozambique. We were often visited by the security forces during the days. The ‘Vakomana’ usually came just after dark. On one visit the security forces wanted

to take over the sisters’ convent and on another occasion wanted their wounded men to be attended to. It was very painful particularly when I realized that I had taught some of these men in Carmel College. To this day I wonder why they called at all because their camp was less than 3km away and they had all the necessary facilities there.

On the ‘Boys’ first visit I felt safe as there were a group of us together, another priest and the Sisters. We were having a farewell supper as I was due to go on leave the following day. They barged into the house with guns ready and without the usual local ‘Go go goi’ expression as used when coming near or into the house. I suppose I was annoyed at first at the intrusion but I quickly realized that these men needed to be understood, living as they were under great tension and tremendous physical hardships.

Another reaction on that first contact was one of annoyance when they walked around the church building – as they smoked cigarettes – with their guns ready. But understanding and tolerance came quickly and curbed my naturally impatient self. But the overall feeling was one of security. We had opted for the people and we were on their side and therefore we felt safe, though not always at ease because of the unpredictability of these men holding the guns, and some of them were quite young. I was flown by a small plane out of the mission the following day and so began my leave.”

Close Bond: The people grew very close to each other during this era and a bond of loyalty grew between the Carmelites and the faithful, as they remained steadfast to each other in the most difficult circumstances. Father Michael Kenny and Joseph Neville – to mention two out of many – come to mind here. They remained on their missions throughout the whole war.

The Rhodesian government and their security forces continued to be hostile to Church personnel. For example, after much suffering and torture, Bishop Mutume and Father Ignatius Mhonda were sentenced to four years' imprisonment for failing to report guerrillas. Bishop Mutume said: *"We were moved from prison to prison, each one worse than the other... We never knew what was going to happen next."*

The missionaries often provided legal aid as well as food, clothing and medicines. President Mugabe said in Maynooth, Ireland, on September 9th 1983: *"We thank the missionaries, especially those along the eastern border of Mozambique who suffered more than anybody else during the war of liberation."*

A Difficult Period: It was a very difficult period, with helicopters roaring overhead and noisy, ruthless, armed soldiers passing on the streets or elsewhere. Other soldiers were driving heavy army vehicles recklessly and made every one afraid. These soldiers were suspicious, dangerous men ready to kill. There were road blocks, searches of vehicles at gunpoint and interrogations in the middle of the night. People were tortured in the police camps ('dirty trick squads') and killings occurred every day. Freedom fighters mostly moved at night: pungwes, accusations, counter-accusations. Death sentences and executions took place at random.

Christianity suffered as hatred flourished. Most mission stations and churches were closed. In some cases, they were occupied by the security forces. Churches in towns remained opened but the people in towns did not experience the sufferings of the rural community. In the rural areas the people were herded into what were called 'keeps' behind security fences and they were only

allowed out for short periods to attend to their fields and cattle. Teenagers, sometimes young children, disappeared overnight into Mozambique to be trained for the liberation struggle. Many never returned.

Pastoral work became impossible. In some areas, many Africans thought the 'white man's religion' was colonialism rather than Christianity so they returned to the African traditional religion. A major breakdown of morality and discipline followed, and parental authority was ignored. Young people got carried away with the excitement of war and the belief that 'power comes from the barrel of a gun'. Under such conditions it was difficult for missions to function properly. Some mission stations remained open for much of the war period until the missionaries eventually had to leave and go to Mutare. But St. Barbara's and St. Kilian's remained open for the duration of the whole war.

Casualties: Some outstanding Catholic laymen were killed at this time. Mr Ambrose Majongwe (Chiduku) was killed. Mr. Alois Dota, a catechist in St. Kilian's mission, was killed. In St. Barbara's Mr. Alfred Sambaza, a teacher, was killed as was catechist Pius Mutizamhepo in the Regina Coeli mission area.

Many other catechists and members of the laity survived but they still bear wounds – physical, mental and emotional – from being caught in the struggle while doing their duty. For example, Mr. John Sunwa of the Honde valley. During 1976 – 1977, Mr. Sunwa, Father Michael Hender and the Carmelite Sisters carried on doing pastoral work up and down the valley by bicycle. It was not possible to use a pick-up truck because of land-mines embedded in the roads.

Carmelite Sisters: A number of Carmelite Sisters were interrogated and beaten. The Sisters were both brave and courageous. The Mother General was new and young. She visited the stations where her sisters had remained alone without the support of a priest. Her presence among her Sisters suffused them with renewed courage. The sincerity of her concern for the safety of each Sister and the love and care she showed to them was a source of great comfort. The laity who were at the mission were also much encouraged by her visit.

Diocesan Priests: The diocesan priests were the most vulnerable because the security forces used physical force

more readily on them than on the missionaries. It is a credit to their Christian faith that they are able to forgive as they relate their respective stories of being tortured and interrogated by government forces. Bishop Patrick Mutume can recount his terrible prison experience in Nyanga without the slightest bitterness. Likewise, the late Alexander Sakarombe could give his story with peace and calm and without any trace of hatred for his captors and torturers. Bishop Mutume's intervention on at least three occasions saved Carmelite priests from death.

Wounded and Ambushed: Two Carmelites were wounded in 1977. On January 1st, Father Tom



Back row: Father Joe Neville (far Left), Bishop Patrick Matume (centre), Father Alexander Sakarombe, Father Ned Ward (far right)

Front row: Father Jerry Galvin (far left) and Father Michael Hender (far right)

McLoughlin was ambushed while returning to St. Charles Lwanga seminary from Mutare. He was saved by the prompt action of Sister Rita and he was taken to Mutare General Hospital for surgery. But splinters of shrapnel still remained in his back and he returned to Ireland to recuperate. He later made a brave attempt to come back to missionary work in Zimbabwe but without success. The war was still in progress and he had not recovered psychologically.

On Whit Monday of the same year, Father Jerry Galvin was wounded in the shoulder during a night time visit to St. Columba's mission. The bullet penetrated under the shoulder blade and came out over the collar bone. He also returned to Ireland and in 1986 he came back again and was able to take up missionary work in Zimbabwe. He is happily still with us.

Father Michael Hender and his catechist, John Sunwa, were ambushed in the hills of Mutasa in October 1977. Father Pio Kiernan and Father Michael Hender were taken out at gun point to be shot at midnight on the veranda of their house at St. Joseph's mission, Mutare, in November 1979. Only intense persuasion and somebody's prayers prevented the cocked triggers from being pressed.

Solidarity: Terence Ranger, who had at one time lectured in history at the University of Zimbabwe and who had been deported himself, writes of the war experiences of the Carmelites in Triashill, St. Barbara's, St. Killian's and the Chiduku area. He interviewed some of the priests and people in those areas after the war. His admiration and respect for Fathers Kenny, Neville, O'Loan, Toner and Hughes are obvious, and he attributes the popularity of these priests to their solidarity with the people in their suffering.

The Carmelites understood the circumstances of the people and sympathised with them. They were known and accepted by them long before the war years. They had taught their children in schools and had carried pregnant mothers to the maternity wards in Rusape Hospital. They were good hardworking Christian men and were accepted as such by their flock. Good Christian leaders like Mr Majongwe, Mr Bopoto and Mr Mukonyora in Chiduku, the holy man Mr Patrick Kwesha in St. Kilian's, and Mr Alfred Sambaza in St. Barbara's also encouraged the people to continue to support their priests.

Bravery and Narrow Escapes: Father Anthony Clarke and Father Mutume (later Bishop Mutume) showed great bravery on a number of occasions in rescuing priests and Sisters who were in danger of losing their lives. On one occasion they were informed that Father Sean Fallon would be killed if he were to remain another night in Nyanyadzi mission. Risking their own lives, Fathers Clarke and Mutume travelled to Nyanyadzi to get him out. On other occasions Sisters in St. Benedict's, Nyanyadzi, Avila and Marange were in dangerous situations and were rescued by either or both of the priests. These incidents occurred in 1977 and 1978.

Stories of narrow escapes are told. Father Ned Ward was one day driving in a hurry from Avila mission to get to Mount Melleray. The bus which was following him was blown up by a land-mine. Father Ward's car just missed it. Father John O'Sharkey drove a wounded freedom fighter over 200 miles to a hospital, and fortunately encountered no road block on the way. Father Ward went to St. Barbara's to celebrate Christmas with Father Kenny although he knew that

the freedom fighters were occupying the mission. He did not know what kind of mood they were likely to be in so his visit was a brave act of kindness. Yet again, he was protected from harm.

During the war years the policy among the different groups in the diocese was to maintain a presence among the people. Mission stations and schools were kept open for as long as possible.

Deportations: Some priests were deported: Father Laurence Lynch from Mount Melleray and Father Martin O'Regan from Regina Coeli. They were accused of failing to report freedom fighters at their mission. Father Robbie McCabe got into serious difficulties with the health authorities for treating freedom fighters who had been wounded. He had to leave. He was also from Regina Coeli mission. Bishop Lamont was tried in court in Mutare. His trial attracted world-wide

attention. He was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment but was later deported. In a short essay like this, it is impossible to do justice to Bishop Lamont and his outstanding contribution to the Church in Zimbabwe. It is hoped that in the future a proper tribute will be paid to this great Irishman and Carmelite.

Honoured Guest: When Bishop Lamont was deported, Father Anthony Clarke, who had worked in Drumfad as secretary to Bishop Lamont for years, was appointed Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese until Bishop Patrick Mutume was consecrated in June 1979. Bishop Lamont was an honoured guest at the installation of the first African Prime Minister, Robert G. Mugabe, of the newly independent Zimbabwe and he took up office again as the Bishop of Mutare. In 1983 Bishop Lamont decided to retire and the new Bishop of Mutare, Alexio C. Muchabaiwa, was consecrated on February 21st 1982.



Father Robbie McCabe treats a patient

End Notes

1. Gallagher (1996), pp. 47-48.
2. Hender (1996), pp. 22-23.
3. Gallagher (1996), pp. 49-53.



Back row: Jim Doyle, Peter Toner, Tony Clarke, Mel Hill, Pio Kiernan, Peter Marimanzi, Tony McDonald and Sean Fallon

Second row: Patrick Bodkin, Cyprian Kennedy, and Barty McGivern

Third row: Sean Murphy, Joe Neville, Cormac Collier and Martin O'Reagan

Front Row: Mick Kenny, Sean Fagan (Marist), and Cormac Collier 1981

8

New Life (1981-1996)

A Chronicle of Events

1981

The Carmelite Sisters took up residence at Mount Carmel Centre, Mutare. St. Dominic's Secondary School re-opened. St. Dominic's School had closed during the war (1976) and St. David's School for Girls (Bonda) occupied the school buildings up to 1980. St. Dominic's High School has offered Forms 5 and 6 since 1999.

Parishes of Zengeza, Hunyani and Seki rural entrusted to the Carmelites.

1982

The Diocesan Administrative Office, CADEC, DPP and other Diocesan departments began co-ordinating the Diocesan apostolates from St. Dominic's.

Bishop Alexio Muchabaiwa was consecrated Bishop of Mutare on February 21st on the retirement of Bishop Donal Lamont. During the early years of Bishop Muchabaiwa's administration, the present Bishop's House was constructed on the site of the old 'Drumfad' building.

The Peace and Justice Office was established in Mutare.

1983

The Killaloe Fathers came to the Diocese of Mutare.

1984

The Spiritan Fathers and Brothers came to Zimbabwe. Carmelite Sisters' Novitiate established near Kriste Mambo.

1985

Carmelite friars established their novitiate at Kriste Mambo (transferred from the Bvumba). The Carmelites took over the administration of the secondary school at Kriste Mambo. They established their Novitiate (transferred from the Bvumba) and Pre-Novitiate at Kriste Mambo.

1987

Carmelite House of Studies, Mount Carmel, established in a section of Nazareth House.

1989

St. Patrick's Missionary Society, the Kiltegan Fathers, came to the Diocese of Mutare.

The church and priest's house were constructed and the St. Paul's parish were established with the coming of the Kiltegan Fathers. St. Paul's parish, Dangamvura, was previously an outstation of St. Joseph's mission. A hall was built many years before by Father Collier and the faithful attended Mass in the hall on a regular basis until the church was built. The RSHM Sisters came to Dangamvura in 1982. The Sisters provide various

services to the parish community and at DOMCCP at St. Joseph's mission.

St. James' Parish, Chipinge town, was an outstation of St. Charles Lwanga, Chimanimani, until 1989. It now has its own Parish Clergy and Carmelite Sisters. The Franciscan Sisters went to Chipinge in 2000 and the Carmelite Sisters replaced them in 2008.

Father Louis Bouthillette was ordained priest at Kriste Mambo.

1990

The Carmelite Sister's Motherhouse was opened in Mutare.

1992

Building started at the Diocesan Training Centre in Mutare.

DOMCCP Office began at St. Dominic's School, Mutare. (The Offices are now situated at St. Joseph's mission, Mutare.)

1994

Bishop Patrick Mutume took up residence at Hospital Hill, Mutare.

1996

The Spiritan District House, Fern Valley, was purchased and was blessed and opened on February 14th 1996.

Early post-war renewal ⁴

Aftermath of War: After the suffering endured over the fifteen years of conflict there was a great desire for peace among the people of Zimbabwe/Rhodesia. In December 1979 a great relief was experienced in the country, with the successful conclusion of the Lancaster House Agreement which gave Zimbabwe its constitution. However, there was uncertainty as to whether the peace would actually hold. There was great fear that the assembly points for the freedom fighters would be attacked and bombed by the security forces. This fear was not realised.

Confidence in the new era of peace was established very quickly, and the people generally adjusted to the new way of life. There were some exceptions, however, as some people assumed the role of peace-makers in an over-zealous way and caused a degree of tension. The presence of unarmed freedom fighters in the rural areas was a further cause of anxiety. As time went on,

however, the situation improved and peace became more and more established.

The changed political scene had tremendous repercussions upon the people. The freedom experience was much more than political. People were affected emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. They also experienced a degree of confusion.

Political Philosophy: A new political philosophy was being enunciated by a new government. This socialist philosophy was Marxist-Leninist in orientation. It invited some of the citizens of Zimbabwe to turn more to the State and less to the reality of God in their lives.

The Church in Zimbabwe had to deal with this new political philosophy at the same time as it struggled to renew the lives of the faithful. The war had left many scars. Many people had died for the sake of freedom: most families lost at least one member, But people also suffered because of their faith. Many Catholics

were killed, including catechists. While no priests or religious were killed in the diocese of Mutare, a number were shot and wounded, and others were tortured, imprisoned and deported.

The war also brought great destruction to the infrastructure of Zimbabwe. The diocese of Mutare, bordering Mozambique, was particularly affected. Many roads were still mined after the war and much property had been destroyed.

Initial Steps and Difficulties Encountered: After the war the work of renewal in the diocese of Mutare began. The initial task was to visit the missions, see the situation on the ground and talk to the local people as to how the mission and ministry of the Church could be renewed. This was no easy task as no one knew what to expect. Was the presence of the Church still welcome in a particular mission? Did the people still want to practise their faith? Did they desire the presence of the Church in education, health and other social services?

Answers to these questions gradually became clear as the missions were visited. The people wanted the life of the church to become visible among them again. But certain conditions had to be fulfilled by them in order for this to be possible:

1. Security had to be ensured on mission compounds
2. The people had to agree to undertake a programme of reconstruction.
3. They had to show their willingness to return to Church.

These conditions were not easily fulfilled since there was uncertainty as to the relationship between Church

and State. Could Christians give their allegiance to one without denying the other?

Providing an answer to this question became easier in view of the actual practice of the government. While the theory of the Marxist-Leninist political philosophy was advocated, practice on the ground was different. The new government welcomed and encouraged the presence of the Church in the promotion of social facilities and services for the people. The people, too, welcomed whatever services the Church could provide. Most wished to return to the public practice of their faith but were initially afraid of the consequences.

Encouragement: They were much encouraged, however, by the presence and the official prayer of Archbishop Chakaipa of Harare at the proclamation of Independence on April 18th 1980. This helped to remove the fear of being seen to meet and pray in public worship. Gradually the people saw that they could give their allegiance to both Church and State without placing them in opposition. Development of body, mind and spirit was a joint task.

Carmelites since 1980²

*The War is Over... Independence... Euphoria...
Freedom... Elections... Great Joy... Renewal...
Fresh Hope... New Life... New Beginnings*

Many of the missions had to be rebuilt as some were virtually destroyed. Father Michael Hender extended the schools in St. Columba's. Father Ambrose Vinyu rebuilt St. Benedict's and Father Jim Doyle restored St. Charles Lwanga Seminary. Generous grants were provided by many donor agencies. Propaganda Fidei

helped, the Dutch Sisters of Charity were as usual very generous and the Irish and German Carmelites also helped. The American Carmelites were generous too.

Most missions had buildings that needed to be restored and gradually the work was done. The missions that suffered most during the struggle were those in the commercial farming areas and those who suffered least were in the communal lands such as St. Therese, Triashill and St. Barbara's. No buildings were damaged at St. Columba's mission even though there was much military activity in the Honde valley. St. Kilian's, Avila and St. Michael's were also not affected. However, St. Benedict's mission was almost totally destroyed and the mission had to be abandoned. When Father O'Loan left, some European farmers who were still in the area came into the empty mission and removed the engines. When the local people saw this happening they also came in and removed as much mission property as possible. Roofing materials, doors and window frames, timber and all movable goods were taken by the looters. St. Charles was stripped and St. Andrew's was almost completely destroyed.

Gradually the missions were restored and life returned to normal. But the war had taken its toll. There were far fewer Carmelites available and those who remained had got older.

No new Carmelites had come to Zimbabwe from Ireland during the war. The strain of war had affected the health of some priests, for example, Father Tom McLoughlin and Father Senan Egan. Others remained overseas in other apostolates. Some retained their former missionary activity. The last missionaries to come from Ireland were Fathers Thomas Fives and

Ambrose Costello in 1972. So other missionary groups were approached and fortunately were able to help.

In 1996, there are twenty Irish Carmelites working in Zimbabwe and two Zimbabwean Carmelite priests, Fathers Conrad Mutizamhepo and Constantine Masarira. Two Carmelites are on sick leave, Fathers Jim Kinahan and Michael Hender, while Father Raymond Maunde is on study leave in Alaska.

Priests from the Killaloe diocese in Ireland help the Carmelites. Fathers Tom O'Halloran, Michael Leonard and Michael Hogan are working in the diocese of Mutare in 1996. The Carmelites have pastoral responsibility for ten missions in that diocese. They also serve in three houses and in three parishes in the Archdiocese of Harare.

Four priests are involved full time in formation: two at Kriste Mambo and two at Mount Carmel, Harare. Father Ambrose Costello also works full time as Vocations Director. The Irish Carmelite commitment to personnel is lessening as the Zimbabwe Carmelite commitment increases. This is a very welcome change and, in this context, the words of John the Baptist about his successor are becoming more and more pertinent.

The Carmelite Novitiate: With the war of liberation over and Independence established, reconstruction was in full swing and the country was beginning to settle down to normal life under its own freely elected leaders. Father Tom Power, unlike his predecessor Father O'Loan, could now concentrate on Carmelite affairs as distinct from survival. He decided and planned for the opening of a Carmelite novitiate.



Father Chris Crowley, Prior Provincial, Timothy Kinembeya, Timothy Mukuckere, Constantine Masarira, Father Paul Graham, Theophillus Mundzuniko and Conrad Mutizamhepo

The Carmelites had wished to help establish a local secular clergy before opening a novitiate of their own. Under Bishop Lamont they had staffed and taught in the minor seminary in Chimanimani from its beginning in 1961 to its forced closure in 1978. By 1982 the number of local diocesan priests was increasing, and there were African bishops in Mutare. Father Tom Power felt the time was ripe to begin a Zimbabwean Carmelite novitiate.

The Italian Carmelites had succeeded in setting up their novitiate in Zaire; while the German and Dutch Provinces had successfully established their novitiates in India and Indonesia respectively. The Prior General and Father Sean Coughlan, Assistant General, in Rome, together with the Irish Provincial, Chris Crowley were

very encouraging. A start was made in the Vumba with Fathers Paul Graham and Ambrose Costello. At the beginning of 1985 the novitiate was moved to Kriste Mambo where it is until this day. The first novices to make their first profession at Kriste Mambo were Brothers Constantine Masarira and Conrad Mutizamhepo.

Almost from the beginning, the young men joining the Carmelites spent a two-year period at Kriste Mambo. The first year was a pre-novitiate while the second was the novitiate proper. After first profession the young Carmelites went to a newly acquired house of studies at Nazareth House/Mount Carmel in Harare. From there commuted daily to the major seminary at Chishawasha where they completed their studies for the priesthood.

The numbers entering the pre-novitiate were small in the beginning. For example, in 1987, two joined but both left later. Two were professed in 1989 and three in 1990. There was one professed in both 1993 and 1994. However, the numbers are increasing and in 1996 the largest number so far, four, made their first profession. Currently, there are nine pre-novices and nine novices at Kriste Mambo, with thirteen students in the house of studies, a total of thirty-one in the initial formation programme. The first two post-Independence Zimbabwean Carmelites were ordained to priestly ministry at Kriste Mambo on September 17th 1994.

The Modern Missionary

The missionary today does not have the same physical and material problems as those in earlier times. The missions are now well established. Trained staff run the schools, while there are trained personnel in hospitals and clinics. Most missions have electricity, running water, good transport, good roads, telephones. Some even have television, while the occasional mission has a fax machine! When one of the earlier missionaries was asked about the problems he faced on a remote and rather isolated mission station, he wrote this reply: *"I am the pastor of the mission and ten stations. I am the administrator, accountant, maintenance manager, clerk of wages, correspondent, chronicler, statistician, recordist, fund-raiser, postmaster, ambulance driver, truck-hauler, housekeeper-shopper, celebrant, teacher, catechist, homilist, chaplain to school and hospital, counsellor, liturgist and pray-er. I am also an employer, an overseer and a formator."* He later added: *"The superior got the message and I now no longer drive the ambulance, pay the wages, act as hospital administrator or as postmaster (at least not full time). As a result, I can spend more time on what I consider to be real priestly activities."*

The missionary today is as busy as his predecessors, but his work schedule will take on new forms as more trained people and more material resources become available. This is happening. The local Christians are now taking greater responsibility for the running of their church. In those areas where the local Church has grown and matured, the expatriate missionary, his task completed, is gradually leaving.

New life and growth, 1980 – 1996 ³

While renewed growth and development were taking place in the different rural and urban missions, parallel developments were taking place within the overall structure of the diocese of Mutare itself.

In 1981 St. Dominic's convent primary school was handed over by the Dominican sisters to the diocese and became a diocesan secondary school. In the same year a Spiritan priest, Father Tony Byrne, conducted a survey of diocesan structures and recommended the setting up of an integral development programme. Integral development is a concept that relates to the development of the whole person – body and soul. From this initiative, the office of the diocesan pastoral coordinator was set up and its role in initiating and coordinating pastoral affairs gradually developed. Another important aspect of this initiative was the coordination of already-existing diocesan programmes, such as CADEC, youth, women groups, justice and peace, within the integral development programme. As these developments were taking place there was an increasing need for personnel to run existing missions and institutions, and to start new ones.



A group shot taken at the consecration of Bishop Alexio Muchabaiwa 1982

Need for personnel

In 1981 the Brothers of Our Lady Mother of Mercy, from Holland, were invited to the diocese to explore the possibility of starting a university or teacher training college at Marymount College, a multi-racial girls A-level secondary school, run by the RSHM sisters. Two brothers came for a few days but did not have the resources to start such a venture. Eventually the college was acquired by the Government and became a State teacher training college.

In the same year, 1981, a number of lay missionaries from Ireland came to help in the diocese. They included nurses, teachers and secretaries and they contributed to the development of the diocese in both rural and urban situations. At this time, too, invitations were sent out to a number of Missionary Congregations, including the Kiltegan Fathers (Ireland), the White Fathers (via Rome), the Spiritans (via Rome), the Maryknoll Fathers (U.S.A.), the Salesians (via Rome) and several dioceses in Ireland.

The follow-up in relation to these invitations was done very thoroughly by Father Anthony Clarke, O.Carm. Father Clarke not only contacted these different groups but visited a number of dioceses in Ireland seeking the help of local clergy. His efforts and those of others were rewarded by the arrival of priests from the diocese of Killaloe in 1983. The Spiritans from Nigeria also came in 1983. The Kiltegan Fathers were to come later in 1989. The White Fathers (Missionaries of Africa), the Maryknoll Fathers and the Salesians came to look at the diocese but they were unable to make any commitment to work there.

While some missionary personnel came, bringing a new and vital spirit to the diocese, others completed their

work and withdrew. They simply lacked the personnel to continue. These included the Presentation Sisters who left in 1981; while in February 1993, the last four Dutch Sisters of Charity were recalled to Holland.

Consecration of Bishop Muchabaiwa

In 1982 Bishop Alexio Muchabaiwa was ordained Bishop of Mutare in the Holy Trinity Cathedral upon the retirement of Bishop Lamont. Bishop Lamont returned to Ireland that same year and took up residence in Terenure College, Dublin.

HLMC Sisters (Carmelite Sisters)

The Handmaids of Our Lady of Mount Carmel have also been blessed with a healthy number of vocations. The work of the Sisters in the different missions has been invaluable – particularly so in missions where no priest was available.

The sisters are in charge of clinics, hospitals, schools; while they also run women's clubs and youth activities. They organize and administer pastoral work in the parishes. Recently they have become very involved in the AIDS awareness programmes and in home-based care for those who are sick and terminally ill.

Their work in the schools and hospitals in post-Independence Zimbabwe deserves particular mention. During an era when the socialist rhetoric was being promoted, their care and compassion for the poor, the uneducated, the orphans, and the sick was exemplary. Their witness of faith and Christian love reduced peoples' anxiety and tension and helped greatly in the work of reconciliation.

Missionary Sisters

The different Missionary Congregations of Sisters also provided a powerful witness in the different situations in which they were involved. While they were much fewer in number than the Carmelite Sisters, their work was highly effective and influential in the diocese and in the country. Being international in origin, their spirit and culture brought a broader vision of Church to the diocese enriching it greatly. Their experience and work in the educational, medical, social and pastoral fields provided and continues to provide a great service.

Church and Laity

In the middle of the 1980s the Church of the laity slowly started to emerge in a renewed way. In the light of the Second Vatican Council many workshops and retreats were held, promoting the vision of church as the People of God. People were encouraged to respond to leadership roles, conduct services without a priest on Sundays, teach catechism, give marriage instruction, and promote youth work.

Women: Women took a prominent role in all these activities. There was significant growth of the 'chitas' in the diocese. The sick, the unevangelised and the



Participants in the Better World Retreat, Marymount 1990

lapsed were visited. A renewal of faith and family prayer took place, and many marriages were celebrated and blessed. Often women enabled the life of the church where no priest was available or where a priest could only visit the mission or outstation after a long period of absence. Even where there was a priest or parish council, women were and continue to be very active in the life of the Church and in its leadership.

Men: Men are much less prominent in Church affairs. The problem of migrant labour affects greatly the life of the family, and thus the life of the Church. Men working in towns and cities are often absent for long periods from their wives and families living in the rural areas. They also seem to adhere more to their cultural traditions than women, and some readily practise both traditional religion and Christian faith without any apparent contradiction.

An important aspect of pastoral practice in the past years has been the annual Congresses held at different missions. In 1995, for example, the theme of the Congress was Inculturation, a theme that requires ongoing reflection.

Youth: In the immediate aftermath of independence, the youth were very active in every aspect of life. The war had given them an experience of involvement and leadership. They brought these experiences into their homes. As a result, many parents found it difficult to control and discipline their families.

In the early 1980s youth had great hopes for the prosperity and freedom which they had longed for during the years of struggle. For their hopes to be realised, they needed education which many had

missed because of the closure of schools and the turbulence of war. Many went back to both formal and informal education but after completion only very few could gain employment. Frustration inevitably followed. This frustration increased with the advent of the ESAP (Economic Structural Adjustment Programme) in 1990, which increased unemployment.

The diocese embarked on a number of income generating projects for the youth but few have survived mainly because of their mobility. They are the largest group at church services. Spiritual, emotional and pastoral programmes, coordinated by the Diocesan Youth Council, are promoted to help them in their faith and moral life.

Catholic Schools: There has been a concerted effort by the diocese to renew the ethos of Catholic schools. This has led to the formation of an Education Board and the publication of an Education policy in 1996 by Bishop Muchabaiwa. This policy promotes and fosters a holistic education which will enable young people to cope with the challenges of adult life in Zimbabwe.

Small Christian Communities: The revival of the deaneries took place in the diocese in 1993 and this led to the formation of the Diocesan Pastoral Council. This has made it possible to implement effectively the policy of promoting small Christian communities. These communities, where life experience is reflected on in the light of the gospel, have become a feature of the life of the Church in many parishes. They promote the life of faith, not just in the communities, but also in the different families which comprise the communities.

The Bus Disaster ⁴

The night of August 3rd 1991 will be remembered for a long time at Regina Coeli. A bus carrying children, their teachers and bus crew crashed into a rock faced cliff about 30km from the mission. They were coming back from an inter-schools games competition when the accident occurred. Eighty-eight people were killed on the spot, most on impact, and one died a week later in hospital. Eighty school children, five teachers and the three crew members died in what has been described as the country's worst bus disaster. The mission staff and pupils were in a state of deep, deep shock and the whole country went into mourning for the dead and for their families. Some families lost more than one child, and one family lost three. A national fund was set up to help the bereaved families and very many donations were sent. Other monies were sent directly to the mission to help the families affected.

Twenty University of Zimbabwe students walked from Harare to Regina Coeli to raise funds. They were accompanied by the University catholic chaplain, Father Nigel Johnson, SJ. Schoolchildren from all over the country collected aid. It was a harrowing time for everybody and the whole mission area was stunned into silence. Most of the dead came from around Regina Coeli mission but there were also some from St. Barbara's, Triashill and Harare. Adults cried on the Sunday morning in churches throughout the country when they were asked to pray for the dead.

On September 19th 1991, a Memorial Service was held at Regina Coeli for the victims. The President, Robert Mugabe, Archbishop Chakaipa of Harare, Bishop Mutume, many government ministers and dignitaries,

the bereaved families and a huge number of friends and sympathizers attended. Bishop Muchabaiwa could not attend due to illness. Schoolchildren in their thousands were also there to pray, to sympathize and to show their feelings of sorrow. It was a very moving experience.

On the First Anniversary of the disaster, Mass was celebrated by Bishop Muchabaiwa at the scene itself. But since then the annual mass is celebrated at a special altar in the mission where a plaque bearing the names of the dead can be seen. It is a reminder to all who visit Regina Coeli of that terrible night of August 3rd 1991.

St. Charles Lwanga continues ⁵

The Effects of War: The liberation war came to Chimanimani in the late 1970s, and in November 1978 the Army Command in Chipinge closed St. Charles Lwanga, ordering the staff and students to leave. Two weeks were allowed to complete the end of year examinations. All movable items were taken to Marymount in Mutare. Marymount College had closed in 1976 but the RSHM Sisters made the staff, including Father Jim Doyle, and young seminarians welcome and they remained there for almost two years. The Lancaster House agreement marked the beginning of Independence. St. Charles Lwanga reopened for the third term of 1980. Massive damage had been done to practically all the buildings and the repair work was difficult and costly. Propaganda Fidei, the Dutch Sisters of Charity, the Irish Carmelites and the Lower German Province of Carmelites helped generously and St. Charles was restored and became functional. The local people, all of whom had been evacuated from their homes during the war, now returned but they had no food because no crops had been planted. The

seminary staff, with the help of CAFOD, distributed large quantities of food to the starving people.

Pastoral Work: The coming of the priests to Chimanimani made evangelisation easier in that huge area of Cashel, Chipinge and Chimanimani itself. The priests took an area each, forming small Christian communities, many of which grew into outstations later. Nine churches were built, the last one at Mhakwe in 1992. A feature of the post war work of the Carmelite friars at St. Charles was their expansion of pastoral activity. Before the war, their efforts had been concentrated in areas where there were already groups of Catholics, particularly in the urban areas of Chipinge and Melsetter, in the large forestry industries and on the large farms. The numbers of Catholics increased and churches were built to accommodate them. The first church to be built was in Melsetter. A recent convert to Catholicism, Mr Joshua Mudiripo, built the church, carried all the materials, and provided all the labour free of charge. He also advised the priests to extend their pastoral activities to the communal land areas because the Catholic populations in the forestry department and in the towns were transitory. This advice proved to be prophetic because large Catholic groups had moved back to their own areas and homes.

Chipinge got its church in 1976. Biriviri church was built in 1977. Churches were built at Ndima in 1983; Chayamiti in 1984; Shinja in 1986; Chikwakwa in 1987; Muuyuweburi in 1992 and Mhakwe also in 1992. The local Catholic communities were very much involved in the building of their churches. They provided all the materials, bricks, stones and sand, etc., and the unskilled labour. They did what they could. Missio of Germany kindly supplemented their efforts.

Recent History: St. Charles continued to function as a minor seminary until 1987. Then it was phased out. The Bishops were no longer sending their minor seminarians there because the number of secondary schools had increased and the Bishops accepted candidates who had obtained five passes in their ordinary level examinations, irrespective of where the boys had done their studies. St. Charles finally closed in 1990. In 1991 it was reopened for seminarians doing their spiritual year prior to their entering the philosophy course at the major seminary in Chishawasha. From 1993 to 1994, it became the centre for the philosophy students, all of them from the major seminary. Accommodation in Chishawasha was no longer adequate and a major building programme began there. The Carmelites returned to St. Charles to teach for those two years. Father Kenny was a lecturer in languages and spirituality. St. Charles had been handed over to the Spiritan fathers when Father Hender, the last Rector, left in 1992.

Local Vocations:

A number of vocations for the diocese of Mutare came from St. Charles Lwanga: Bishop Patrick Mutume, Father Alexander Sakarombe, Father Patrick Chiwara, Father Maximian Muzungu, Father Lucien Chimusitu, Father Ignatius Mhonda, Father Frederick Chiromba and Father David Maganyo. As the number of local priests began to increase, it was hoped that they would take over the missions and the parishes from the Carmelites.

Such a transfer had been made at St. Barbara's in 1968 when Fathers Matara and Shoniwa ministered there with Brother Peter Toner. But both priests

died young. Deaths have been a significant factor in slowing down the transfer. Termination of ministry and transfer to other dioceses and apostolates outside Mutare have also been responsible. In 1993 there was one Spiritan at St. Charles and the Carmelite sisters were also there. The sisters looked after the staff and the medical requirements of the seminarians in earlier years. They ran women's courses and clubs and taught catechism. They assisted Mr Daniel Saurowe, the ever-busy catechist.



Centenary Year and Carmelite Golden Jubilee ⁶

As the faith of the Catholic Church in Manicaland approached the end of its first one hundred years, the desire to celebrate and reflect on what had happened during that time had gradually grown. Preparations also began for the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the presence of the Carmelite Friars to whom the diocese of Mutare was first entrusted.

On December 8th 1995 the Centenary Year was officially opened with the Inaugural Mass in the cathedral, the proclamation of the Centenary Year and the issuing of the pastoral letter by Bishop Muchabaiwa. The programme of spiritual renewal among the people and the actual preparations for the centenary events to be held at Triashill from September 5th – 7th soon followed. The theme of the Centenary Year was *Christ our light in our hearts, homes and Church*. On September 5th – 6th a congress on this theme for all the people in the diocese was held at Kriste Mambo. The Centenary Mass was celebrated at Triashill on Saturday September 7th. The Centenary Year ended on December 8th 1996.

At the time, the Commissary Provincial, Father Ned Ward, stated:

“This Jubilee year is a time for the Carmelites in Zimbabwe to thank God for all the graces and blessings of the past 50 years. This is a time to look back with gratitude and also to look forward with hope and trust in God. Over 90 Carmelites missionaries have worked in Zimbabwe, some for a few years but many for most of their lives. Since the early 1980s our priority has been the Carmelite formation of African men. In September 1994 our first two Carmelites were ordained from this programme, and we have been blessed with many more vocations in recent years. We look forward to the Order taking root in Zimbabwe and bearing much fruit. I would like to pay tribute to all Carmelites who over the years have worked in Zimbabwe and in a special way I commend all Carmelites who have been involved in our formation programme. I ask Our Lady of Mount Carmel to intercede with her Son for the future of the Order in Zimbabwe.”



Father Ned Ward at the Jubilee Year celebrations in Triashill. Behind him is Father Joe Chalmers, former Prior General of the Order

End Notes

1. Gallagher (1996), pp. 57-58.
2. Ibid., pp. 26 -28.
3. Ibid., pp. 66-69.
4. Ibid., pp. 22-23.
5. Ibid., pp. 62-64.
6. Ibid., 69.



Pope John Paul II visits Zimbabwe in 1988.