

## **Historical Significance of Reichenau Mission**

In 1886 Abbot Francis Pfanner purchased the land from the Zulu Chief Sakayedwa, who wanted schools within his community. In 1887 the mission was named Reichenau after a Benedictine monastery situated on the banks of Lake Constance in Germany. The first nine missionaries arrived in six ox wagons which contained prefabricated living quarters manufactured at the Mariannahill Monastery to be used for accommodation, as well as food supplies, building materials and tools.

The Benedictine practice was to become a self-sufficient farming operation which could sustain the missionaries, then to build a place to worship and further more to uplift and empower the local community. This was achieved at Reichenau within a few years of the missionaries' arrival, for example the following were built: living quarters, a school, a chapel, a mill, a teachers training college as well as other farming and home industry related buildings were established.

Agriculture, animal husbandry, home industry and crafts were well established and these skills passed on to students.

The boarding school eventually closed down in 1956, however the day school did continued to operate. Currently there is school of 200 day pupils.