

18 January

Br KIZITO MAKORA 6 December 1952 – 18 January 2014



‘Br Kizito Chakadeyi Makora’s work with Mashambanzou Counselling and Care Centre took him to the heart of Harare and into the hearts of many people there living with HIV/AIDS,’ Courage Bakasa tells us. He was available to counsel and help people get their medicine and the necessary food at any time and those who lived with him would often see him begin to cook his own meal at 9.30 at night. Orphaned children treated him as a father and even in the UK, where he did a few years of study, he was in touch with Eritrean refugee orphans who would run to him calling ‘Keezito’. He knew the ‘smell of the sheep’.

Kizito was born in Triashill, NE of Harare, into a devout Catholic family and joined the Jesuits’ Candidate Programme in 1970. After his novitiate at the international Xavier House in Lusaka he returned to Rhodesia and went to Mhondoro for pastoral work. In 1979 he moved first to Makumbi and then to St Ignatius as boarding master. It was there that he shone as a father to the young boys who had left home for the first time and were finding their feet in boarding school. One of those who remember those days kindly was Chiedza Chimanda, later provincial, who preached at his funeral Mass.

In 1991, he was in Osterley, near London Heathrow airport, a Jesuit house for late vocations and supplementary education. The Eritrean children, mentioned above, helped him to find his bearings but he found it hard to be away from home at first. He did his tertianship in Belfast, where the troubles were not yet over, and returned to Zimbabwe in 1994 to be a Counsellor at Mashambanzou, while living alternatively at Mbare or Braeside. He shone at this work and people affected by HIV/AIDS sought him out at all times. He soon started visiting people in other townships.

He would pray with the sick and over the sick, sensing that he had a special gift of that. And he liked to pray with his charismatic group. When the situation in the country deteriorated and food and medicine was short in the townships, Kizito turned his attention to this. He would often go the food distribution points and join in the work.

In 2010, he had a stroke which was aggravated by his underlying condition of diabetes and kidney problems. He found it hard to accept his illness and hoped to return to work again. But he became worse and had to go on dialysis. He suffered a great deal towards the end and died in January 2014.

Large numbers came to his funeral, showing the appreciation in which he was held. Chiedza Chihmanda spoke of how ‘Nyamuzihwa (Kizito’s clan name) taught us to live happily and peacefully with one another. So simple was his life, so basic was his style, that some of us felt a little uncomfortable with him in community’.