



Br Peter Doyle, S.J.
(1932-2017. In Zambia 1981-2002)

21 February 2017

Peter Doyle was born on 6 September 1932 in Dublin, Ireland. He was raised in Fairview, north Dublin and had his early education in Marino, Dublin. His north Dublin accent remained with him for life.

On 7 July 1954 he entered the Society as a Brother in Emo, Ireland. After his vows he held a number of positions in the Jesuit institutions around Ireland: manager of staff and kitchen in Rahan College in Tullamore (1956-1957) and in Milltown Park (1957-1960); maintenance at the College of Industrial Relations in Dublin (1960-1964) and at Mungret College in Limerick (1965-1974); carpentry and general work at St Ignatius College in Galway (1974-1981). While he was in Mungret he took his final vows on 15 August 1964.

In 1981 he came to Zambia. He was assigned to the Canisius community in Chikuni, where he did general work and used his carpentry skills. In 1983 he returned to Galway for two years, but he was back in Chikuni again in 1985 where he lived and worked until 1992. In that year he was transferred to Nakambala parish in Mazabuka where he did maintenance work and continued using his carpentry skills.

Both in Chikuni and in Nakambala there were always a group of children around his carpentry shop. He did not know a local language and his Dublin accent was almost impossible to understand even for someone who spoke English as a first language. Yet he would rattle on and they would chatter away in return. Somehow he communicated warmth to the children and they loved to be with him.

In 2002 Peter returned permanently to Ireland where he was sent to Manresa Retreat House in Dublin taking care of the house and the grounds. He was quite a contemplative person and often enjoyed, as the poet says, 'standing and staring as long as sheep and cows'. He was always a welcoming presence in Dublin for any visitor from Zambia and he kept in contact with some of the children, now adults, who frequented his carpenter's shop years before.

Peter died on 21 February 2017 at Cherryfield Lodge in Dublin where he had spent the last few months of his life.