



Fr Edward Klimas, S.J.
(1902-1980. In Zambia 1935-1947)

23 February 1980

Edward Klimas was born on 9 March 1902 in Gdowo-Wieliczka in present day Russia, near the Estonian border. After finishing secondary school he matriculated in Myslenice in 1923. He entered the Society at Stara Wies in 1925. He studied philosophy in Cracow from 1927-1930 and went to Heythrop College, UK, for his theology (1930-1934). He was ordained by Bishop Williams of Birmingham in 1933. Immediately after his tertianship (1934/1935) he set out for Northern Rhodesia in 1935 and pronounced his final vows in Broken Hill the following year (1936).

He was among the small number of men who came out to the Mission in the thirties which was a time of great need in Poland when finally it regained its independence again after the Versailles Treaty of 1918. In the twenties and thirties both Polish provinces were at full stretch re-establishing themselves again in their former schools and opening new institutions to meet the demands of the deeply Catholic population. There were only nine men who came out to Zambia in the 1930s: Konopika & Zak (1931), Buran & Gajdos – a Slovak (1932), Froch & Klimas (1935), Folta (1936), Gozdzik (1938) and Lyszczarz (1939).

Fr Klimas' main apostolate was education wherever he went. He spent the first couple of years in Kabwe (1935-1936) and moved to Chingombe (1936) and then he spent some time in Chikuni (1936-1938).

Despite his great interest in the culture and customs of the local people, he stayed for only twelve years and returned to his home province in southern Poland in 1946, where he continued to work, first at Zakopane and then at Ruda Slaska. He lived quite a long life of 78 years and continued his labors in several other places. He passed away on 23 November 1980.