



**Fr Antonio da Cruz, S.J.**  
**(1896-1946. In Zambia 1910-1913)**

**23 March 1946**

Antonio da Cruz was born on 15 February 1886 in Milhais, Braganca in the north east of Portugal. He entered the Society at the young age of 15 in 1901. Having completed his novitiate, he spent some years in the juniorate. In 1910 he was sent to the Lower Zambesi Mission (Mozambique). While not the first scholastic to do his regency in the Zambezi Valley, he was the first to reside and work at the boundaries of the Mission in Miruru, very close to the border with Zambia.

He was deeply immersed in the educational apostolate and helped in the teaching and organizing of the early schools. He was quite a gifted person and years later would produce a number of linguistic books based on his years of regency. In some of the early photographs he is at the back standing with the brothers for he still had a number of years of formation to go before he would join the fathers in the front row!

When the Decree of Expulsion came out in 1910, he helped the superior of Boroma, Fr Baecher, to organize for a possible future mission over the Luangwa River in the British-held territory of Northern Rhodesia. With his usual energy and drive, he aided the small band of pioneers to cross over and get established at Kapoche and soon afterwards at Katondwe.

By 1913 all the men had returned to Europe, except for the five who settled on the other side of the river and who were soon joined by a few others like Brs Longa and Stofner. As he could no longer return to Portugal as a Jesuit, he completed the rest of his training in Europe.

When the expulsion came in 1910, the memory of the previous expulsion of the Jesuits with other religious that took place in 1820 would still have been in the memory of the older generation of missionaries. Eventually the harshness of the laws against the Church led to a popular reaction so that by 1923 the Jesuits felt able to return again to pick up the pieces for the second time in a hundred years.

During these years Fr da Cruz produced a number of linguistic studies, based on the material collected during his regency. He was able to consult the older writings produced during the long period of contact of the Portuguese with Mozambique. He wrote on *The Folklore of the Wanyunques* (1934) and produced a *Comparative Dictionary of the Chisenga and Chinyungwe Languages* (1934). He also produced a general work on the languages of Mozambique (1942) and even a history of the Lower Zambesi Mission (1938).

He was the province bursar and was constantly on the move among all the communities in the country during this period of painful and eventually successful reconstruction. He passed away in Braga, Portugal, on 23 March 1946 at the age of 50.

23 March

15 February 1886 – 23 March 1946

**Fr. António Joaquim Alves da CRUZ**

He was born in Milhais- Abreiro, Mirandela, on February 15, 1886. He studied at the Seminary of Formiga, in Ermesinde (Spiritans), where he did his primary and first year of his secondary school. He entered the Society of Jesus on September 20, 1901. He studied philosophy in Setubel and Oña, Spain. Then, in 1910, he went to the Zambezia Mission (Mozambique). He worked in the mission of Miruro, Zumbo. In 1913, he returned to Europe where, for one more year, he taught at the Nun'Alvres Institute, in Jette-St-Pierre, Brussels. He studied theology in Rome at the Gregorian University (1914-1919). He was ordained priest in 1917, in Rome. In his last year in Rome, he studied Oriental languages and, in 1919, he went to St. Joseph's University in Beirut to study Arabic. He took his final vows on February 2, 1920, in Beirut. From 1924 to 1925, he lived at the writers' residence, in Pontevedra, where he worked as editor of the Brotéria Journal. In 1926, he went to Braga and, in 1929, he founded the Braga Academic Center. He was a lecturer and spiritual director at the Archdiocesan Seminary of Braga. He taught philosophy at the Mâximo da Companhia College, Beato Miguel de Carvalho Institute, in Guimarães and Braga. He founded the Mission Procure, in 1938, which he directed until his death, on March 23, 1946.

(APSI, Necrológio; Livro das entradas no Noviciado do Barro, 1897 – 1810, 213/04; Dicionario Histórico de la companhia e Jesús, II, p. 1013; Mensageiro do Coração de Jesus, T. LXIV, p. 225).