



**Br Leon Kodrzynski, S.J.**  
**(1881-1951. In Zambia 1913-1951)**

**23 March 1951**

Leon Kodrzynski (Mularski) was born on 20 April 1881 in Lesnia-Olesna. He entered the Society at Stara Wies in September 1905 having worked as a bricklayer for some time. After the novitiate he was posted to Cracow where already his building skills were put to good use as he worked on the Church of the Sacred Heart. A few years later he was sent, with the first batch of missionaries from Poland, to Katondwe to take over the responsibility of the new Luangwa Mission. He travelled with Fr Kraupa, the first superior, and Br Paczka. Although Fr Kraupa died before he completed his term of office, he launched the Mission with creativity and energy. Years later Br Kodrzynski would always stand by the first superior whom he greatly admired. People found his name difficult to pronounce and so it was abbreviated to Dziuski, sometime anglicized to Dusky.

Within a short time his building career was launched, as he set to work to provide substantial community houses both in Katondwe and Kapoche that would protect the missionaries from the heat and harshness of the climate of the Luangwa Valley. Although the early men overexerted themselves in travelling and often paid the price with a shortened life, once they got to the mission centre they could recover and be cared for.

Taking the old villa at Orzechowska as a model Br Dziuski erected a fine mission house at Katondwe, which still stands firm today as it approaches its centenary. After some years he was sent to Chingombe in the early twenties, to organize with Br Markiewicz the water supply and erect the community house. Wherever a building was needed he was dispatched.

In 1928 he was missioned to Kabwe to prepare the residence for the new Prefect Apostolic, Mgr Wolnik, then residing at Kasisi. He also extended the Sacred Heart Church which was blessed in 1932.

The climax of his achievements was the Church at Katondwe. The Mission Magazine of 1945 says: "A magnificent heptagonal Church, in honor of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost to whom it is dedicated, was opened on Pentecost Sunday 1937 by Mgr Wolnik. The remarkable feature of it is that it was designed and erected on the spot, all the material having been prepared there: – stone quarried, bricks and tiles made, timber cut and dressed, doors, windows and furniture manufactured, everything under the supervision and most of it by the hand of the good, clever Polish Brother Leo who has put up most of the Churches and houses of the Prefecture. He was a building syndicate in himself! He has labored all over the mission for at least quarter of a century and was still hard at work though well over 60 years of age".

He was the builder of five Churches and five mission houses and many schools, convents, hospitals, and watermills in Katondwe, Chingombe, Kasisi and Kabwe. As well as his building achievements, when he had the time, he would also work on the farm. Once in herding cattle, he was hit by a cow and damaged his throat. For a few days it was touch and go and he was anointed. However he recovered and continued his valuable work.

In the official obituary his deep personal commitment to the Jesuit life was highlighted, as well as his great loyalty to the Mission itself. He passed away on 23 March 1951 at Kasisi where he is buried.