



Fr Hubert Delaney S.J.
(1929-2001. In Zambia 1995)

1 April 2001

Hubert Delaney was born in Dublin on 24 October 1929. After secondary school at the Christian Brothers in Dublin, Hubert entered the Civil Service for 15 months. However a higher calling brought him to the novitiate at Emo Park in 1948. He did the normal course of studies, B.A., philosophy, regency and then theology at Milltown Park in Dublin and crowned them with his ordination to the priesthood on 1962.

After tertianship, his life was lived in educational work. Up to 1974, secondary education occupied him first at Belvedere College as prefect of studies of the Junior School, followed by a year at Clongowes Wood College as teacher and higher line prefect. This was again followed by a three year stint as Headmaster at Gonzaga College in Dublin.

He moved from this into tertiary education and it was philosophy which absorbed his interests for the rest of his life. He lectured at the Milltown Institute in philosophy for eight years up to 1982. He continued lecturing but also studied for his M.A. in philosophy at Trinity College Dublin. He later obtained a Doctorate at Cork University and then went on a sabbatical 1989/1990. He went back to the Milltown Institute as lecturer and was also Director of the Lonergan Centre. He took a year off lecturing and went to Leeson Street as writer and researcher. For two years, 1993 to 1995, he was a tutor in philosophy at the Milltown Institute.

A complete change of venue brought him to Zambia, Africa, to the University of Zambia in Lusaka, invited by Fr Dillon-Malone, head of philosophy there. He stayed for a year lecturing and returned to Ireland to write but he moved to Korea to lecture for a semester at Sogang University in Seoul. He was back in Leeson Street in 1997 as writer and doing research work again.

His health had not been good. He developed a serious heart condition and other ailments which hospitalized him several times. A stroke in March 2001 sent him to the Mater Hospital. Cerebral apathy and liver disease were diagnosed. All these led to his death on 1 April 2001.

Spontaneous testimony came from two of his former students who later became members of the staff of the Milltown Institute. Both spoke of him as a wonderful teacher, interesting, stimulating, challenging, but most significant of all as inviting one to personal engagement and growth. In his teaching he was not only the educator but also the pastor and the priest.

Friendship and service were two of Hubert's qualities. There were many on-going friendships with his former pupils and their families, in the Jesuit communities in which he lived and in the family of his brother Peter. The Morning Star, the Patricians, the Cenacle Retreat House were some of the areas where Hubert was of service. He had a love of literature, of classical music and of football. He missed all these when he came to Zambia for a year. After all, he was 66 years of age when he came and it is so difficult to make new friends and to fit into a new culture at that age. However he was of service at UNZA when he did come. Hubert's life was one of developing the talents that God had given him, a life centered on his priesthood and on the Mass.