

Br Stephen Buran, S.J.
(1901-1950. In Zambia 1932-1950)

5 April 1950

Stephen Buran was born in Slovakia on 3 May 1901. He entered the novitiate in his own country in 1925 and in 1932 he was sent to the Lusaka Mission along with Br Gajdos. They were the first Jesuits from the Slovak Province to be committed to the Mission. Later they would be followed by Br Perdik and later still by Frs Hirjak and Smrzyk.

He spent his early years in Broken Hill (Kabwe), in Katondwe and then in Kasisi. He was a dedicated and tireless worker who was happy to do what had to be done despite all the difficulties. The early men were capable of putting their hand to anything that was needed. There was a great shortage of men and money in the thirties and forties and Mgr Wolnik described his main job as a holding operation till times got better. It must be said that Wolnik's first step was to hand over a large part of the Mission area to the Franciscans (the Copperbelt to the Conventuals and the Western Province to the Capuchins).

Br Buran worked hard on the large farm in Kasisi but in 1950 he developed chronic malaria which did not respond to treatment. Eventually he was brought to the hospital in Broken Hill. Despite a blood transfusion, his situation failed to improve and blackwater fever set in. He passed away on 5 April 1950, aged only 49 years. One wonders whether the wise regulation the Visitor, Fr Bert - promulgated in 1925 - of a daily dose of 5 gms of quinine was still being followed by everyone.