

3 May 2024

# Fr Henry Tafadzwa Masakare

16 September 1982 – 3 May 2024

*Henry Tafadzwa Masakare was in his 42<sup>nd</sup> year of life, 22<sup>nd</sup> year in the Society of Jesus, and 10<sup>th</sup> year of priesthood.*

Ort. .... 16 Sep 1982	Diac. .... 11 Jan 2014 by Archbishop Robert Christopher Ndlovu	Defunc. .... 3 May 2024
Loc. Nat. .... Rushinga, Mashonaland (Zimbabwe)	Loc. Diac. . Cathedral, Harare (Zimbabwe)	Loc. Defunc. .... Harare, Zimbabwe
Ingr. .... 4 Jul 2002	Ord. .... 26 Jul 2014 by Bishop Emeritus Dieter Bernd Scholz SJ of Chinhoyi (Zimbabwe)	Date of Funeral ..... 5 May 2024
Loc. Ingr. .... Lusaka (Zambia)		Place of Funeral: .... Chishawasha Parish, Zimbabwe
Mag. .... ???		Place of Burial: . Chishawasha Cemetery, Zimbabwe
Stud. .... Arrupe College (Phil.); Abidjan (Theol.)	Loc. Ord. .... Harare (Zimbabwe)	Prov. .... SAP
	Grad. .... SA	



Henry Tafadzwa Masakare came from Marymount Mission. The Jesuit priests, Fr Christian Wischel and Fr Wolfgang Abeler who served in that mission, made a good impression on Tafadzwa who became an altar server, assisting in Masses and also accompanying the priests to various outstations. He then thought of joining them and applied to the Society of Jesus. Tafadzwa was already a candidate to the Society of Jesus while doing A' level, which he completed in 2001. In the year 2002, Tafadzwa was accepted to join the Jesuits, beginning with a pre-novice program.

It is within the period of the pre-novice that fellow pre-novices started to call Tafadzwa, “*The Cardinal*”. This was because of his comparatively superior knowledge of the Church and its structures. Also, he had a special liking for reading Church related fiction novels, one such thick novel was entitled, “*The Conclave*” which stories he loved to share with others. Of course, Tafadzwa was clever enough to separate factual information from mere fiction.

Tafadzwa exhibited an aura of authority enhanced by his deep voice and articulative slow manner of speaking exuberating confidence, and this was an amusement to many. He later on gained a new nickname, “*Counter Intelligence*”, in short, “*Counter*”. This came from his particular interests in things to do with Secret State Services, through films and different literature.

From his time during Theology in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, Tafadzwa Masakare was greatly remembered for these words, “Relax, take it easy!”. He would tell other companions, particularly during periods of anxiety, like at examination times, “Relax, take it easy!”.

Tafadzwa was not an ardent sports fan, but his favourite football team of choice was ‘Benfica’. His other hobbies were drama, reading novels, following current affairs, watching investigative programs and films.

After ordination in the year 2014, the famous deep authoritative voice became a powerful pastoral voice. Fr Tafadzwa was a natural pastorally oriented priest, who took this work with great ease and magnanimity. With the command of his voice and articulation, he managed to keep his listeners glued to him.

When he was missioned to Makumbi Mission as Chaplain of the schools and assistant Parish Priest, he established that pupils at Makumbi Primary School (St Lazarus) should have offertory during their weekly Friday Masses, which was a new initiative, to teach them to be generous. This was a surprise to many as it was generally believed that most parents of children from low income families would decline. However, Fr Tafadzwa's idea was wholly accepted by the parents who would give their children some offertory money for Friday Masses, which is the practice even to this day.

Fr Tafadzwa Masakare was diagnosed with kidney malfunction in 2016, and had to be transferred from Makumbi to Harare where he could easily access medical attention. Fr Ken Simalalo recalls the hope and positivity Fr Tafadzwa had whilst at St Peters Kubatana as he hoped for a donor, and the determination and resolve in planning concretely to visit Malawi where he once made a hospital experiment 20 years previously. He started dialysis treatment in the year 2017. Despite his condition, he was always available to assist a number of parishes in the Harare archdiocese with celebration of Masses. Even though he had left Makumbi to reside in Harare, he always drove back to Makumbi Mission and its outstations to help and be present to many parishioners.

Mr Colbert Mpofo recalls with gratitude the pleasure he had of enjoying some Ignatian conversations with Fr Tafadzwa at St Peter's Kubatana about the work and the presence of the Jesuits in Mashonaland Central, notably Mount St Mary's; and Shepherd Muhamba, writing from Cairo, Egypt, said that:

...He was more of a brother to me than I was to him. He used to check on me regularly and only some few days ago, he called me asking for my permission to give my contact details to a mutual friend who had asked for them. This shows what type of a brother he was to me. In addition, despite being the one who was sick, he used to call and check on me regularly. Very few people knew about his kidney failure condition as he went on doing his priestly duties without complaining. After spending more than twenty hours a week on a dialysis machine especially in his last months, he used to get up on weekends and do pastoral work. He loved his priesthood and he found joy and happiness in it. He was indeed a good priest and he will be remembered by many people for that.

In spite of the suffering, Fr Tafadzwa Masakare made light of his condition, he never complained about going for dialysis 3 times a week, spending up to 5 hours in each session. He insisted on driving himself, and he drove himself the last on the day he died to visit his brother. Rest In Peace Beloved Tafadzwa Henry Masakare SJ – You fought the good fight!