



Fr Peter Titland, S.J.

(1939-2015. In Zambia/Malawi 1964-2014)

15 May 2015

Father Peter Titland was born in 1939 to two loving parents, Russell Titland and Marian White. He was educated, together with his three brothers, by the Franciscan Sisters of Glenriddle in Pendleton, Oregon. Being of Nordic descent, in his twenties he was a blond-haired, handsome guy and a good athlete who somehow said 'No' to the many admiring good-looking girls. He entered the novitiate in Sheridan, Oregon in 1957 and then did his philosophy in West Baden, Indiana and proceeded to further studies in Classical Languages. In 1964 he came to Zambia for regency and after three years of teaching in Kabwe, he returned to the U.S., to Berkeley, California, to do his theology before being ordained in Seattle in 1970.

Over the years, as an ordained Jesuit, Pete was missioned to be a Parish Priest (Bwacha 1972-1976; St Ignatius 1981-1984), a Rector of the community (Luwisha House 1987-1993), a University Chaplain (UNZA 1984-1993, CBU 2000-2007), a Novice Master (2007-2010), a Director of Formation (1987-1992), a Retreat Director and a Spiritual Father (Kimwenza, DRC 1994-1997); Ecclesiastical Assistant CLC (1985-1993, 1997-2000).

His outgoing personality led him to have many personal friends whose names he always remembered and whom he often found time to visit in their homes and with their families. (We can say he loved many people of all ages!) Maybe also because of this outgoing nature, at meetings he was never shy to voice his ideas and made sure he communicated these ideas completely to everyone present, no matter what opposition was voiced. So he was an invaluable presence whenever something had to be thoroughly discussed. Related to this determination to make a particular point to those present, was likewise a determination to win an argument and to fight indefatigably to win a basketball game (which he often did when he coached the Kamwala boys' team against Dave Norris' Kabulonga Boys' team). Some people could call this a 'stubborn streak', but others called it a tremendous dedication to what he thought was correct.

It was against his nature to remain silent when he thought something was incorrectly happening or going the wrong way. In discussing such an event, he would look at the ceiling or stare out the window or off into space until he found the right words to describe the situation in the way he saw it; that is, what was his correct version of the affair, his vision of what should be accomplished, his view of what the Church, the parish, the Society of Jesus, the Country, the Archdiocese or some individual should be doing. In such impassioned discussions, some people may have recognized something that seemed like anger while others saw a man of principle...the dedicated priest, the committed Jesuit, the determined participant in any group, the generous friend who willingly would do anything that had to be done correctly because all deeds should be done correctly.

Many of us will reminisce about the personable priest; a few will recall him as a refined friend who knew and appreciated art, music and good wine; and all will recall him as a smiling celebrant sincerely sharing his faith with his congregation.

Pete returned to the United States in 2014 and was assigned to work as an assistant parish priest in St Rita's parish in Tacoma, Washington. While doing hospital chaplaincy at the end of April the following year, he collapsed and was admitted to the hospital.

Advanced pancreatic cancer was discovered; Pete died two weeks later in the hospital.