



**Fr John S Doyle, S.J.**  
**(1931-2015. In Zambia/Malawi 1968-2008)**

**25 May 2015**

Fr. John (Jack) Doyle died early on 25 May in Pickering. He was in his 84<sup>th</sup> year and in his 60<sup>th</sup> year of religious life. His sister, Sister Anne, a member of the Religious Hospitallers of Saint Joseph, was at Jack's bedside when he passed away. Her congregation operates the Hôtel-Dieu institutions in Canada.

Jack was born at Brewer's Mills, Ontario, on 26 December 1931, the son of John Edward Doyle and Bridget Webb. After six years at Regiopolis High School in Kingston, Jack entered the Society at Guelph on September 7, 1955. After first vows he did the usual two years of juniorate and then went to Mount St Michael's in Spokane, Washington, for philosophy. In 1962, Jack began regency at Regiopolis High School. Theology followed two years later at Regis College, Willowdale, Ontario. After his ordination in 1967 at Regis College, John applied for the missions in Zambia.

In the summer of 1968, Jack flew to Zambia. He was the first Canadian to arrive here. First he studied chiChewa in Lilongwe under Fr Salaun. Afterwards he was assigned to start a secondary school in Katondwe. He was given some buildings that used to be part of the primary school which he transformed into a secondary school. Jack worked hard at the school. He also looked after the orchard below the Jesuit residence. He would load his 7-ton Ford lorry with oranges and sell them at the main market on ChaChaCha Road in Lusaka. Then he would load up with building materials and drive back to Katondwe. During this time he really gave of himself physically which eventually weakened him. He never seemed to have recovered fully from that time.

The Government was meanwhile building a secondary school a few kilometers away from the Mission. When the new school was completed, Jack moved to the new campus with the boys and continued as the school's headmaster. Jack left Katondwe in 1973 when a new head was appointed to the school. He then returned to Canada to do his tertianship.

When he returned to Zambia in 1976, he was sent back to Katondwe but as superior and parish priest of the Mission. He remained there until 1979 when he took a sabbatical in the Philippines. On his return in 1981, he was missioned to St Ignatius parish as assistant parish priest, then in 1986 to Matero where he became the parish priest of Kizito/Lilanda parish.

In 1989 he became the Socius of the Provincial and he served in this position until 1994. Then, while remaining at Luwisha House, he served the community as Minister. His final appointment in Zambia was in 1998 to St Ignatius from where he served as chaplain at the large University Teaching Hospital.

After Jack had spent 40 years in Zambia, in 2008 he returned permanently to Canada. He was assigned to Winnipeg to serve as assistant parish priest at St Ignatius parish. It was in 2012 that his health took a turn for the worse with a diagnosis of cancer. He took medical treatment in Kingston and in 2013 moved to the infirmary at Pickering for recuperation and ongoing treatment. Until the last weeks of his life, Jack took daily walks outside, no matter what the weather. He celebrated weekly Masses both at René Goupil House and La Storta Residence in Pickering. All of his homilies were well prepared and even at Pickering he never failed to print out his homily before each of his public Masses.

Of a pleasant and agreeable personality, Jack had no trouble making friends. He had strong views but would listen and allow for different views. With him there was no phoniness, but he was a 'true Israelite without guile'. Jack had an attractive boyish

enthusiasm. He could bring out the best in people. He was very comfortable around all types, welcoming, sharing a smile, eliciting cooperation from them or generously offering a helping hand.

When Socius, Jack was introduced to the world of computers. From that time the computer became part of his daily life for his work and also as a hobby. In Canada he became an avid fan of the internet, keeping in regular touch with Zambia and up to date on the latest Jesuit and ecclesial announcements.