



Fr Patrick Joyce, S.J.
(1937-2007. In Zambia 1964-2007)

10 July 2007

Paddy Joyce was born in Galway, in the west of Ireland, on 4 July 1937. He went to primary school to St Brendan's and to secondary school at the Jesuit school of St Ignatius, both in Galway. He joined the Jesuit novitiate at Emo Park on 11 September 1956. On completion he went to Dublin to the university where he studied Latin, French and Irish (1958 to 1961). This was followed by a three year course in philosophy, the first year at Tullabeg and the final two years at Alcala in Spain, where he added Spanish to the languages he already knew.

In August 1964, he came to Zambia for three years, the first year teaching at Canisius Secondary School, the second year he went to Choma with Frs Flannery and Clive Dillon-Malone to be the founder members of Mukasa Minor Seminary. The third year he spent at Chivuna learning chiTonga, still another language.

He returned to Ireland to study theology at Milltown Park, Dublin where he was ordained priest on 25 June 1970. In 1971 he returned to Zambia, to Mukasa, for a short spell as a priest. From then on he took up the work he was to continue for the rest of his life, namely, pastoral work in the parishes. Apart from a break for tertianship in Clarkson MI, USA, he spent his time in Monze parish (1971 to 1975), in Choma town parish (1976 to 1980), in Nakambala parish (1980 to 1982), in Itezhi-tczhi parish in 1982, in Chikuni parish (1981 to 1987, and 1993 to 1995). He was sent to Nakambala parish again (1988 to 1993). These names and dates give but a faint idea of his parish work, his travels to outstations, baptisms, marriages and visits to the sick. In time he became an expert in Marriage Encounter.

In 1996 he took over the position of National Director of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association which he still held at the time of his death. Fr Paddy moved to Lusaka from this time onward until his death, apart from a renewal year at St Anselm's in England.

He had gone to Ireland for eye treatment in Galway but developed heart trouble and had to go to the Regional Hospital there for open heart surgery on 9 July 2007. He did not recover consciousness but died the next day, 10 July.

The above outline is a factual account of Paddy's 70 years of life and tells us a lot about him. As a boy at school he was a good footballer and always kept up an interest in the game. He was quite enthusiastic in recounting the latest game he had seen on the TV. He was also a prize winning runner and an accomplished Irish dancer. This you will recognize when you see Zambian orphan children stepping out to the tune of 'the Walls of Limerick' !

Marriage Encounter and the Pioneers were to the fore in his apostolic work but, apart from these, Fr Paddy was most faithful in bringing the sacraments to the sick and dying, especially to the AIDS patients in the nearby hospice of St Theresa. Nothing would stop him from this. The poor had a special place in his heart. Any alms he got from Ireland he gave to them and they always knew when Fr Paddy was at home. He was most assiduous in preparing homilies for Mass, supplying outstations on Sundays and never refusing when a call came. He was a pastoral man to his finger tips.

He was also a man of prayer, praying for his own family, for his Jesuit brothers, praying for his friends and the people he came in contact with. At the same time he

enjoyed a game of golf, and liked a good joke, giving pleasure to the teller of a joke by his typical reaction. Here in Lusaka where he lived, Fr Paddy could be seen going for a walk in the cool of the evening with his rosary beads dangling from his hand. Fr Paddy has touched so many lives and he will be sorely missed.