



Fr Luka Lucic, S.J.
(1939-2020. In Zambia/Malawi 1973-2006)

26 September 2020

Luka Lucic was born on 16 March 1939 in Livinica (Tuzla) in Croatia. He went to the minor seminary in Zagreb for his schooling and entered the Jesuits in 1956 at the age of 17. He did his philosophy and theology in Zagreb but completed his STL in theology in the Gregorian in Rome.

After his ordination in 1968 he began his life's mission as a seminary professor. He taught in the major seminary in Sarajevo from 1969 to 1972.

He came to Zambia in 1973 and immediately took up a teaching post at Mpima Major Seminary from 1973 to 1976. He continued his lecturing in St Dominic's Major Seminary in Lusaka from 1979 to 1982.

He went for further studies in moral theology to the Redemptorist center, the Alfonsiana in Rome (1982-87). On his return he went back to St Dominic's. He then formed part of a Jesuit team to organize the program in the major seminary of St Peter's, Zomba, Malawi. He went there with Lom Loyens and Jimmy McPolin. On the completion of his contract in 1996 he accepted the offer of Bishop Assolari to go to his seminary of St John the Baptist in Mangochi. As an experienced member of staff and a rock of stability, he was a welcome addition. He was the right hand man of the Rector and a close friend of the Bishop who often invited him to share his Italian cuisine. He soon settled down in Mangochi and was still there ten years later, when health problems obliged him to return to his home country for treatment in 2006. On his return home he continued to teach in the Jesuit theologate in Zagreb up to 2010. Afterwards he went to the novitiate in Split until 2013 where he helped the novices in various languages. He spent the last years of his life in pastoral ministry in St Stanislaus Kostka residence in Zagreb.

He was a genuinely committed and zealous Jesuit who valued his daily prayer and Eucharist. His open and welcoming personality was always appreciated among the seminarians who valued his spiritual direction. He had a loner streak in him which enabled him to live mostly on the margins of a Jesuit community, but always welcoming his fellow Jesuits and availing of the opportunities of attending their gatherings.

For almost 30 years he stood out as a man who worked to give the Church well educated and well-formed priests, whom he accompanied with his affable and welcoming personality. He passed away on 26 September 2020 in Rebro Hospital, Zagreb. He will be fondly remembered by many younger priests both in Zambia and Malawi.