



**Fr John Lazarewicz, S.J.**  
**(1865-1930. In Zambia 1911-1930)**

**7 October 1930**

John Lazarewicz was born on 23 June 1865 in Rozesowskie (Lancut) in the south-east of Poland near the Slovakian and Ukrainian borders. He entered the Society at Stara Wies in August 1881. He had a missionary call from the start and his initial request was to go to Australia but permission was refused. On completion of his training he served as a curate in Cracow and Lviv for a number of years (1893-1909). Again he requested seriously to go to the missions and he was even ready to leave the Society in order to follow his missionary calling. In 1909 at the age of 43 he was let go to the Lower Zambesi Mission in Mozambique. On arrival he was sent to Lifidzi in Angonia but almost immediately the Edict of Expulsion of the Jesuits from Portugal and its colonies was promulgated. He crossed over the border to the White Father mission in Mua in Malawi, from where he could still serve his own parish but within a short time he had to desist and he headed for Katondwe arriving on 15 July 1911. Later, when he got established in Chingombe, the White Father contact proved useful.

Fr Lazarewicz was of medium height, well built, with grey hair which fell down over his shoulders. His great beard and his piercing eyes with a somewhat distant look, led the people to call him 'lion's face'. He was a tireless missionary, a preacher and organizer and a good communicator, using simple and straightforward language. His patience and kindness were his talents that opened the way to the hearts of the people and their Chief, so that he was quite successful in achieving what he wanted.

Initially on arrival at Katondwe he began with Fr Bulwiewicz to erect small schools that could be used as catechizing centers. They vied with each other in the number of catechumens and converts they managed to attract.

In 1919 he left for Chingombe where he remained in charge until 1930. He had with him Br Markiewicz and the remarkable builder Br Kodzynski. He initiated a substantial building program especially in his efforts to set up a network of small primary schools, like what he did at Katondwe. He requested the White Fathers in Malawi for catechists and hired nine of them to help in establishing his school system. He was a very zealous missionary and suffered at times to see his pastoral efforts wiped out by the appearance of religious sects like the Watchtowers, who had a brief but flamboyant success at one stage.

He was brought back to Katondwe in 1930 to replace Fr Drwiega who had returned to Poland, and to revive the pastoral ministry that was moribund after the deaths of a number of the young missionaries. However, before he could get to work himself, he passed away a few months later on 7 October 1930 at the age of 65.

7 October

23 June 1865 – 7 October 1930

**Fr. José LAZAREWICZ**

Born Rozesowskie, Lancut, Poland on June 23, 1865, he entered the Society of Jesus on September 28, 1881 in the Province of Galicia. He took his final vows on February 2, 1896. He went to Zambezia Mission (Mozambique) in 1910 and worked in the mission of São Francisco Xavier, in Lifidzi, Angónia. He left Mozambique in 1911 and went to Katóndue, Rhodesia. He died on October 07, 1930, in Katóndue.

(Cf. Catalogus Defunctorum in renata Societate Iesu ab a. 1814 ad a. 1970)