



Fr Stefan Mazurek, S.J.
(1891-1959. In Zambia 1924-1959)

16 October 1959

Stefan Mazurek was born on Christmas Day 1891 in Polubicz-Siedlce, north east of Warsaw. He entered the Society at Stara Wies in 1908. He did his philosophy at Cracow (1917-1918) and, because of the aftermath of the Great War, he pursued his theological studies, first at the city of the national Marian shrine Czechowice (1917-1918), then at Stara Wies (1918-1920) and finally at Cracow (1920-1921) where he was ordained. His first assignment was assistant to the Master of Novices (1921-1922). The following year he set out for Northern Rhodesia and arrived on 15 April 1924.

He was a man of small stature who competently worked in all the main stations of the Mission except Kabwe. He combined a deep interest in education with a first class knowledge of the language, so that, wherever he went, he was a source of revival both for the parish and for the schools connected with it.

His first assignment was to Chingombe (1924-1926) and then to Katondwe (1926-1928). In his first two months there he visited more than 20 schools. He then went further down the Valley to spend six years on his own in Kapoche (1929-1936). Fr Hankiewicz, who died in 1928, saw him as his successor because of his proficiency in chiNyanja.

However, at this stage he was sent to Chikuni and arrived some months after Torrend had passed away and stayed there for eleven years (1936-1947). He came after Mr Consterdine, the remarkable lay teacher of those early years, had completed his contract and returned home to England leaving a great gap in the newly founded St Joseph's TTC. Fr Mazurek stepped into the breach and taught (among other subjects) Christian Doctrine and Church History. A few years later in 1940, Fr Prokoph joined the Chikuni community to run the TTC, after his studies in education at London University.

It was at Chikuni that Fr Mazurek acquired quite a reputation with the parishioners for his pastoral ministry. Years later, one could hear the older Christians claiming that they were the ones of the true faith, for they had been baptized by Fr Mazurek. In his final year (on 1 November 1947) the first Lenje priest, Fr Stephen Luwisha was ordained by Bishop Chichester of Salisbury.

He spent the last eleven years of his life (1947-1959) at Kasisi, continuing his ministry in school and parish and he died there on 16 October 1959. He may have been small in size but he was tall in what he accomplished.