



**Fr Ivan George Boughardt, S.J.**  
**(1932-1995. In Zambia 1977-1991)**

**31 December 1995**

Ivan Boughardt (he was called Van) was born in Cape Town, South Africa on 29 March 1932. He came to Zambia from South Africa, in 1969. Before that time in South Africa, he trained as a teacher and went to the University of Cape Town to read English and History. He taught in Cape Town before coming to Zambia to visit his brother and then decided to stay on. He taught in Kitwe for two years and then moved to Namwala (1970-1977). He had close contact with the Fathers in Namwala and decided at the age of 45 to apply for admission to the Society. He was accepted and came to Lusaka for his novitiate. After the novitiate he went to Dublin, Ireland, for philosophy and then to Rome for theology. He returned to Mukasa in Choma, Zambia for his ordination 1983.

He taught in Mukasa for a spell, but moved to South Africa to work, first in Braamfontein, then at Rivonia and La Rochelle. In 1988 he went to Yeoville as parish priest and then back to Braamfontein in 1991 after a short visit to Australia to visit his mother who had emigrated there. All this time he was a member of the Zambian Province but in 1992 he became a member of the British Province, of which South Africa was a region. In 1991 he was appointed National Director of the Apostleship of Prayer and brought out his first edition of *The Messenger*. He contracted pneumonia and died suddenly in hospital in Johannesburg on 31 December 1995.

After Van died, a parishioner wrote: 'we have just lost a fantastic Jesuit. His funeral was more than well attended for he was so popular. He had been our parish priest - and what a preacher! He walked up and down the aisle while preaching and woe betide anyone who was unwise to be saying the Rosary during Mass'.

Van was a man of likes and dislikes, there was nothing neutral about him and he could be quite open about this. During his work in parishes in South Africa, he had a gift of preaching and teaching as well as being a popular confessor, as was seen by the number of people who came to confession. He became involved in the Knights of de Gama and the St Vincent de Paul Society; many of its members came to know Van quite well. A strong character, there was no compromise. 'If something was wrong, it was wrong and that was the end of the matter. And it didn't matter who you were, even if you were his superior or his Bishop, he would let you know you were wrong'.

He twice left the continent, once to the USA as chaplain for some months in Buffalo and Syracuse as he was researching material for the Sacrament of the Sick; and secondly when he went to Australia (1991), a place which did not impress him. He had his ups and downs in South Africa, personal clashes with fellow Jesuits he was working with. He did not want to be 'a spare wheel' (his own words) but wanted to be really involved in pastoral work. He was a very open letter writer to the Provincial in Zambia - open and positive. He had a time of depression with a lot of anger and resentment and pain to work through.

From the homily at his funeral Fr Chris Chatteris said: 'Van was a rich and unique character, a man of strong feelings and convictions. Although you never quite knew what Ivan's opinion on any subject would be, you knew that it would be definite and strong. He was a complex man and I think often more sensitive than we knew. He loved the Church and the Society in spite of the things he would say sometimes. But it was not an uncritical love. He loved people of all kinds and races and classes and

backgrounds as the Church is witness to today. He had a great gift of counseling and for confession. Especially as a confessor he had a unique touch. He had a sense of humor of those born in the Cape which never took anyone seriously, especially himself. His infectious laughter set other people laughing which would in turn increase his own which would go on for five minutes or more. And at the end of it, he would often say, "Bleddy hell! What a carry-on!".