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Africa

# SMA Region, Zambia

September 30, 2011



## SMA Region, Zambia

### A brief history

The Society came to Zambia at the invitation of Bishop Agnozzi OFM Conv of Ndola diocese. Following the Nigerian Civil War the Irish Province thought it worthwhile to open missions in other African countries. Following visits to different areas, the founding members of the SMA presence in Zambia arrived there on 17 January 1973.

The founding members of the SMA team were Fr Michael Igoe (Co Westmeath) and Sexton Doran (Co Down). Both had been missionaries in Nigeria for many years. Fr Doran had also served as Vocations Director and Local Superior in Dromantine. They were involved in pastoral work in Francisdale Mission, on the outskirts of Ndola, the second-largest city in Zambia. Fathers P J Gormley (Tyrone), Michael O'Shea (Cork) and Benno Wolff (born in Germany though raised in Cork) arrived in 1974. Frs PJ and Michael taught in local Government schools and Fr Benno worked in a Teacher Training College.



Our picture shows Frs Anthony Kelly (Regional Superior), Fachtna O'Driscoll (Irish Provincial Leader), Brian O'Kane, Tom Casey and Cathal McKenna during Fr O'Driscoll's visit to Zambia in 2010.

It is worth quoting here from 'Owen Maginn - A Missionary's Story', written by Fr Michael O'Shea SMA, to show that the work of the Society in Zambia was not just undertaken by our brothers and priests:

"At the end of 1978, almost six years after the SMA's arrival in Zambia, Sexton Doran's mandate as superior came to an end. Under his leadership, the pioneering steps of the confreres had been successfully taken, the group had settled down, and a lot of progress had been made in different fields. A few men had left, but more had arrived, including two priests from the Archdiocese of Tuam, Paddy Williams and Mick O'Malley. Called 'fiedj donum' priests, 'a gift of faith', they were volunteer diocesan priests who undertook a three-year renewable contract to work in Ndola diocese with the SMA." (page 195ff)

Our missionary work was not without sadness. Two of our members rest in the soil of Francisdale Mission cemetery. Brother Brendan Murray (from Dublin) died suddenly on 7 March 1996. Fr Fergus Conlan, who was Regional Superior at the time, died of a massive heart attack on

The early missionaries were all Irish; today there are 4 different nationalities represented in the SMA team: from Ghana, Ireland, Kenya and Tanzania.

In the interim, the Society also responded to requests to work in Solwezi and Livingstone dioceses. One of our number, Noel O'Regan SMA (Cork City) served as Bishop of Solwezi and later as Bishop of Ndola. True to the spirit of the SMA Founder, two of our priests serve on the staff of St Augustine's Major seminary at Mpima.

Following a decision of the 1983 General Assembly, the Society began to respond positively to requests from young Africans who wanted to be missionaries with the SMA. Today, the East African SMA Preparatory Programme for our seminarians from Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia is run at our Formation House in Kabwe, Zambia. The SMA has already ordained eleven Zambian priests. Ten of them are on mission in other parts of Africa; the eleventh is the Deputy Regional Superior in Zambia, Fr Gustave Mukosha SMA.

### SMA Zambia Today



The 15 SMA priests work in the Archdiocese of Lusaka and the diocese of Ndola. Click on the link to get detailed information on the SMA pastoral presence in Lusaka and Ndola. These two pages relate to matters of an SMA interest.

Eleven SMA's come from Ireland; two from Kenya and one each from Ghana and Tanzania.

### SMA Administration in Zambia



**Regional Superior:** Fr Anthony Kelly (from Co Galway)

Fr Kelly is also responsible for The Martyrs of Uganda parish in Chikumbi, Ndola as well as overseeing the development of Twafwani Village in Kitwe.

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### Deputy Regional Superior:

Fr Gustave Mukosha (from Zambia)

Fr Mukosha was the first Zambian SMA priest, ordained in 2001. He was among the first students at the SMA Formation House in Kabwe.

After serving for several years in the Central African Republic, Fr Gustave returned to Zambia and appointed to Mufulira Catholic Mission. He lives there with Fr Hope Klutsey (from Ghana) and Fr Tom Casey (from Emly, Co Tipperary).



Postal address: **P O Box 40940, Mufulira**

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