Rev. Fr Jozef Butaye, C.SS.R. (1877-1927)

Rev. Fr Butaye was born in Roeselare, Flanders, on 16 June, 1877, made his vows at Saint-Trond on 8 October, 1899, and was ordained to the Sacred Priesthood at Beauplateau on 25 September, 1904.

To save souls! To bring abandoned souls to Jesus the Redeemer — such was the life-long dream of Father Butaye. For this reason he became a Redemptorist, joining St Alphonsus the great missioner to the abandoned. For this reason he went to the Congo where he spent 8 years in very fruitful labour for the salvation of the many souls whom he brought to the knowledge Our Lord.

His health, broken down by work and self-sacrifice, he had to be sent home to Belgium, but he never forgot his beloved Congolese. In between his apostolic duties he consecrated his strength to his beloved work of the foreign missions through the raising of funds, slide presentations, and the spreading of books and cards about the work in Africa.

He often expressed the wish that he would die at his work and his desire was fulfilled. During a mission presentation at the Minor Seminary of Roeselare his strength suddenly gave way. He looked death calmly in the eyes, receiving the Last Sacraments very devoutly, and peacefully rendered his pure soul to God.

His last words at that conference were to have been about the eternal meeting and kiss-of-peace of the missionary with Our Lord in Heaven — a kiss-of-peace we may hope that he himself received in his Heavenly fatherland.

He, the missionary who had always such a childlike devotion to Our Blessed Mother, died in the town in which he was born, Roeselare, on the Feast of Our Lady's Assumption, 15 August, 1927. †

(From Father's mortuary card.)

Rev. Fr Jozef Butaye, C.SS.R.

Rev. Fr Butaye on Mission in the Congo at Kimpese in 1912. From Left to Right:
Br Lambert, Fr Braeckman, Fr Delwart, Br Emile, Fr De Ronne, Fr Vets,
Fr Jozef Butaye (seated in a white habit) Br Gregorius and Br Bernardinus.