

R.I.P Fr. Zephirin Ndongala Luyila C.Ss.R.

 africaredemptorists.com/news/r-i-p-fr-zephirin-ndongala-luyila-c-ss-r

admin

13 Nov, 2020

Redemptorists all over the world are in mourning. We have lost a much loved confrere, Fr. Zephirin Ndongala Luyila.

Fr. Zephirin was the Coordinator of the Redemptorist Conference for Africa and Madagascar, known as COREAM.

Our heart felt sympathies abound in abundance to Zephirin's brothers and sisters in the Democratic Republic of Congo:

Luyila Makengo Patrice,

Luyila Madilu Edouard,

Luyila Lusikila Jaqueline,

Luyila-Lua-Kanda Bernadette.

Luyila Masala Agnes.

The following time-line, captures the sadness and emotion of Zephirin's last day, as a treasured Redemptorist, and wonderful human Being. This account was shared with us by the Redemptorist Kenya mission.



OLYMPUS DIGITAL CAMERA



Today, 11th November 2020, around 11.00 am I got a frantic call from Fr. Toppo. Very disturbed, he was saying, 'I think Zephirin is gone'. Soon I called Cornel, who was sobbing said that Zephirin is no more. It all happened all of a sudden this morning.

Fr, Zephirin was not keeping good health for the past one month. He had blood sugar and BP. He was also under treatment for pneumonia at St. Odilia's Dispensary at Karen. For the past one week he was being taken to the dispensary for treatment. At times, Sr. nurses came to our house to give him insulin. On 9th he had a Covid-19 test and the result came out on 10th saying that it was negative. Zephirin was happy to know that result, because he was much worried about it.

On 11th (Wednesday), at 9.00 am Fr Cornel met Zephirin in his room. For the past few days Cornel was offering Mass in Zephirin's room. Today he said, that he would offer Mass on his own. Cornel made arrangements for the Mass. At 9.30 our cook, Helen, came with breakfast. Meanwhile Toppo also came to Zephirin's room and said that he will take him to the hospital once he had his breakfast.

After 10.00 Toppo came and knocked at Zephirin's room. There was no response. Again he knocked loudly. But since there was no response, he opened the door, and then Toppo found Zephirin leaning on a pillow with his legs crossed. Since there was no response from him, Toppo touched him and found very cold. Immediately he called Cornel and when they realized what has happened Cornel rushed to Odilia's dispensary to get the medical officer what was treating Zephirin. He came immediately with Cornel and examined Zephirin. The pupils were bilateral unresponsive to light, cold to touch and negative gag reflex. There was no chest movements. He was pronounced dead at 11.20 am by Nester Sila, the clinician.

Hearing the news, Fr. Raphael, who was preaching a retreat at Benedictine sisters, rushed to our house. Fr. Paul also was brought back to the house from another retreat place. Meanwhile our neighboring sisters came to the house. Toppo and Cornel went to the police station. With the medical report police also gave a report. But later police said, that it would be safe if we take the body for autopsy, since he died in his room. We had to wait a couple of agonizing hours waiting for the police forensic surgeon. He came around 3.00 pm and examined the body and the room, took some pictures and gave clearance to take the body to the mortuary. By 4.00 the body was shifted to St. Mary's hospital.

Meanwhile Fr General in Rome was informed of the tragic death of Zephirin. He contacted the Vice-provincial in DRC, Fr Jean Robert. Also our provincial in India was informed of this tragedy. The Vice-provincial was of the opinion if possible to send the body to Congo. Immediately Raphael got in touch with the embassy and a travel agent. Embassy officials gave an appointment for Friday. We can have an autopsy only when we come to know when the flights will be available.

At 6.00 pm we had a Mass for Zephirin in our chapel, in the presence of a number of sisters and brothers, and eight Redemptorists.