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JANANI LUWUM,  
ARCHBISHOP AND  
MARTYR OF  
UGANDA

The Most Reverend Janani Luwum (d 1977) was the sitting Archbishop of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi and Boga Zaire when 35 years ago this month he was murdered by the dictator Idi Amin. At the time the Church in Uganda was on the verge of centennial celebrations of its birth through the seed of the early Ugandan martyrs, and so Luwum became the first martyr of the second century of Christianity in Uganda. A statue of him stands in Westminster Abbey London.



Janani Luwum was greatly loved in Uganda. He was by all accounts an exceptional leader with a great personal godliness, pastoral compassion and evangelical fervour. Janani was born in 1922 at Mucwini in the Kitgum District of Uganda. He spent his childhood and early youth herding goats. Given an opportunity to attend a local school, he learned quickly, and was soon a teacher himself. Janani Luwum was converted to Christianity on 1 January 1948, started theological college the following year, became and was ordained a priest in 1956. He served in the upper Nile Diocese of Uganda and the diocese of Mbale, and was consecrated Bishop of Northern Uganda in 1969 and Archbishop of Uganda in 1974, three years after Idi Amin came to power in a military coup.