



NEW CONTACT

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KOTIDO DIOCESE CELEBRATES SILVER JUBILEE IN STYLE



The Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, His Excellency Michael A. Blume (centre) together with Archbishop Odama (right) and Bishop Filippi (left) dressed in traditional Karamojong cloth called "asuka" at Kaabong Parish on the second day of the celebration. Full story on Page 3

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*Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year*



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Editorial



On 25th December, we shall be celebrating Christmas, the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ. This important celebration in the Church is preceded by the four weeks of the Season of Advent, which has a double character. It calls us to prepare spiritually for Christmas when we recall the First Coming of Jesus and at the same time draws our attention to his Second Coming. Advent therefore is basically a period of spiritual preparation to receive the Lord in a new way into our life and getting ready to meet him at the end of time. We make these preparations through self-examination, repentance, reconciliation, prayer and acts of charity.

As we make preparations on what to give and share at Christmas, let us therefore not lose focus of the most important aspect of this period, namely, making peace with God and with one another through repentance and reconciliation. For it is only when we are at peace with God and with one another can we have a peaceful and joyous celebration of Christmas.

As we thank our readers and the advertisers, we wish everyone a spiritually nourishing Advent Season, a Blessed Christmas and a Peaceful New Year 2017.

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Fr. Philip Odii
Editor/Executive Secretary of
Social Communications Com-
munication
Uganda Episcopal Conference

Kotido Diocese celebrates silver jubilee anniversary in grand style

By Fr. Philip Lokel, Fr. Peter Loono Lorok & Fr. Charles Owiny Abungwen

Hundreds of faithful from across the country defied all odds to join Christians in the diocese of Kotido to celebrate its silver jubilee anniversary on November 19, 2016.

The historic celebration, which took place at the Good Shepherd Cathedral in Kotido, was commemorated in grand style amid jubilation, songs and dances from the faithful, host choir and the visiting choir from the Good Shepherd Parish in Kakuma, Lodwar Diocese in Kenya.

Dressed in their traditional attire, the vibrant choir led the celebrations in joyous songs and dances that were conducted in various local languages including Nyakarimoja, Kiswahili and Turkana which is the main language of the people from Lodwar.

The colourful event was celebrated under the theme: 'This Day Was Made by The Lord; Let Us Rejoice and Be Glad In It' (Psalm 118:24). The Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, His Excellency Michael August Blume, presided over the Holy Mass, which was concelebrated by Most Rev. John Baptist Odama, the Archbishop of Gulu Archdiocese and Chairman of Uganda Episcopal Conference. Other Bishops present were Rt. Rev Giuseppe Filippi, the ordinary Bishop of Kotido diocese, Rt. Rev. Joseph Franzelli, Bishop of Lira Diocese and Rt. Rev. Damiano Guzzetti, Bishop of Moroto Diocese. There were also over 30 priests from within and outside the diocese as well as several religious sisters.

In his homily, Archbishop Blume described the carving of Kotido diocese from Moroto which took place in 1991, as a special vision

in favor of the Christian community of Kotido. He offered a special prayer to the Lord to continue sending His Holy Spirit to ensure the vision and passion for Kotido Diocese remains strong.

The Nuncio called upon Christians to ensure that the current prevailing peace in Karamoja remains in the region, adding that peace is more than just the absence of war but an appropriate time to listen to Jesus the Good Shepherd to which the Cathedral of Kotido is dedicated.

"The image of the Good Shepherd should continue to be reflected in our church leaders as well as the lay faithful," said the Nuncio adding, "Priests should help parents to fulfill their Christian vocation of love and mercy towards their children to see that true peace remains within the communities and families."

Meanwhile, since the Silver Jubilee was also celebrated in the context of the closing of the door of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, the Nuncio also urged the priests to preach the mercy of God to all, especially to those who are no longer practicing their faith. "This is in order to bring everybody to experience the mercy of God," he said.

At the end of Mass, the Nuncio was offered a typical Karimojong head gear as a symbol of authority of the elders. He was also dressed in traditional piece of clothe called 'asuka' together with Archbishop Odama and Bishop Filippi when they visited Kaabong Parish on their second day of stay after the celebration. 'Asuka' is worn across the shoulder to depict the way Karimojong elders dress traditionally.

WISE QUOTES FOR REFLECTION

'Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are' – *John Wooden*

'Prayer is not like a shopping list with items that can be ticked-off once you purchase. If you remember that a prayer is a conversation with God, you will see God responds everyday' – *Anonymous*

'The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away' – *Pablo Picasso*

'Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you

did your best to become the best you are capable of becoming' – *John Wooden*

'The only way to do great work is to love what you do' – *Steve Jobs*

'The tragedy of life is not death but what we let die inside of us while we live' - *Norman Cousins*

'If you judge people you have no time to love them' - *Saint Mother Theresa*

'Peace is a precious gift which must be promoted and protected. Never has the use of violence brought peace in its wake. War begets war, violence begets violence' – *Pope Francis*

Kotido Diocese Silver Jubilee pictorial



The Apostolic Nuncio (right) in a traditional cap pose for a photo with Archbishop Odama and other bishops



The Nuncio, Archbishop Odama and other bishops in a procession during the celebration



The Nuncio receives a ciborium from one of the faithful during the Holy Mass



The liturgical dancers prepare for the procession during the celebration



The vibrant choir (in traditional attire) sing during the celebration.



The faithful present their petitions. All pictorial photos by: FR. PHILIP LOKEL

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Bishop of Kasese declares 'Day of Prayer' for peace in Kasese District

By Edward Makanika, Kasese Guide Radio

The Bishop of the Diocese of Kasese, Rt. Rev. Francis Aquirinus Kibira, has declared Thursday December 8 as a "Day of Prayer and Fasting in the Diocese of Kasese," in support of full restoration of Peace in the district.

The chosen prayer day coincides with the celebration of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Bishop Kibira, through a press statement that was accessed by Kasese Guide Radio on December 1, dedicated this day as a day of prayer and fasting for peace through Mother Mary because of her being the "Queen of Peace."

Bishop Kibira's declaration comes following the recent attacks on November 26 and 27, 2016, in the town of Kasese on the Buhikira Royal Place and the offices of the Obusinga Bwa Rwenzuru (Bakonzo) that left over 60 people dead and others injured.

Many details of the violence, including the total death toll, still remain unclear. Police have stated that 46 Royal guards were killed and 139 others arrested following the attacks on several police stations on November 26, during which at least 14 police officers were killed.



Burial of some of the victims of Kasese killings. (INTERNET PHOTO)

King Charles Wesley Mumbere of the Rwenzuru kingdom was also arrested on November 27, and eventually charged with murder.

The Ordinary of the Diocese underscored the need for the people of Kasese to believe in peace, to work for peace, and to pray to God for peace in homes and countries.

He asked all the people of Kasese to build their lives, homes, cultural institutions and nation on the foundations of God whom he said was their rock, life

and salvation.

Rwenzori region in Western Uganda is the site of past violence. A Human Rights Watch investigation found that between February and April, 2016, members of the Bakonzo and Bamba ethnic groups clashed following contested local elections and political infighting, resulting to at least 30 deaths. During the subsequent law enforcement operations, it is alleged that Ugandan police and military killed at least 17 people. One police officer and two soldiers were also killed.



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Kiyinda – Mityana Diocese marks 35 year anniversary



St. Noa Mawaggali Cathedral in Kiyinda – Mityana where the main celebration took place. (UEC PHOTO)

By Francis Jjunju

The diocese of Kiyinda-Mityana celebrated its 35th anniversary on Sunday November 20, 2016 at St. Noa Mawaggali Cathedral.

The celebration started with a Holy Mass which was presided over by Rt. Rev. Joseph Antony Zziwa, the Bishop of Kiyinda-Mityana, and concelebrated by over 30 priests and religious sisters from various dioceses. The anniversary was also



Bishop Zziwa during the 2016 Uganda Martyrs day celebration that was led by Kiyinda – Mityana diocese. PHOTO BY: JACINTA W. ODONGO

held concurrently with the closing of the door of the Jubilee Year of Mercy and the

launch of the domestic violence prevention campaign at diocesan level.

In his homily, Bishop Zziwa called upon all faithful to shun all events organized by the self-excommunicated priests and to guard against being misled in faith and practice by the said priests who are not in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

Bishop Zziwa cautioned the faithful while citing the recent incident of the purported ordination that was carried out in Mubende District, which is one of the deaneries of Kiyinda-Mityana diocese. The purported ordination was conducted by two self-made 'bishops'; one hailing from Kasese diocese and another alleged to be a Kenyan citizen in the company of three other self-excommunicated Catholic priests who include, Fr. Jacinto Kibuuka, Fr. Deogratias Ssonko and Fr. Vincent Byansi.

He also expounded on the press statement issued on November 10 by the Catholic Bishops in Uganda which warned the faithful to shun all events led by the 'rebel' priests. The bishop told the faithful that his diocese will follow up on each and every Christian to avoid being misled in their faith.

Also in attendance at the celebration, were religious leaders from other denominations and politicians including the State Minister for Kampala, Namugwanya Bugembe, who is also the Woman Member of Parliament for Mubende District. Namugwanya cautioned parents who neglect their parental roles and respon-



The liturgical dancer from Kiyinda – Mityana diocese during this year's Martyrs' day celebration that was led by the same diocese.

PHOTO BY JACINTA W. ODONGO

sibilities to cease from engaging in such irresponsible behavior as they are to be blamed for the high increase of indiscipline, laziness and irresponsible behavior among the youth.

Kiyinda-Mityana diocese was originally part of Kampala Archdiocese. It was erected on July 17, 1981, promulgated on August 21 and solemnly inaugurated on November 22, respectively in the same year. The Diocese comprises three deaneries which include Mubende, Mityana, Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, and Gomba. Bishop Emmanuel Wamala, now His Eminence Emmanuel Cardinal Wamala was the first bishop of Kiyinda-Mityana.



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PRESS STATEMENT

10th November 2016

THE POSITION OF THE UGANDA EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE ON THE PURPORTED ORDINATION IN MUBENDE

We, the Catholic Bishops of Uganda have learnt with dismay that on the 29th October 2016, two self-made 'bishops' carried out purported priestly ordination on the compound of the school belonging to Mr. Sylvester Rwaka at Namagogo in Mubende town. They were accompanied by Fr. Jacinto Kibuuka, Fr. Deogratias Ssonko and Fr. Vincent Kisenyi Byansi who also laid their hands on the two men at the centre of the function namely Sylvester Rwaka and Joseph Bizibu (later on called Birungi).

We would like to remind all our Catholic faithful and the general public that in July 2016, Fr. Jacinto Kibuuka, was suspended from the exercise of the priestly ministry by his Ordinary, Most Rev. Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga, the Archbishop of Kampala Archdiocese, due to disobedience. Fr. Kibuuka reacted by declaring his departure from the Roman Catholic Church. That action resulted into automatic self excommunication of Fr. Jacinto Kibuuka from the Catholic Church. Those priests who have openly and publicly joined the rebellion are automatically self-excommunicated from the Catholic Church and are no longer in communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

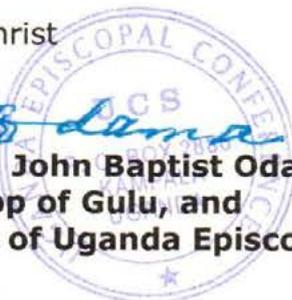
The said ordination event, therefore, was not in accordance with the tradition and norms of the Roman Catholic Church and we do not recognise it, neither its legality nor its validity.

We instruct our Catholic faithful to shun all events organized by the self-excommunicated priests and to guard against being misled in faith and practice by the said priests who are not in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

It is our prayer and hope that Fr. Kibuuka and the priests who have joined his acts of rebellion, come to the realization of their mistakes, repent, and stop misleading themselves as well as misleading the people of God.

Yours in Christ

Most Rev. John Baptist Odama
Archbishop of Gulu, and
Chairman of Uganda Episcopal Conference



Catholic Church re-launches national campaign against domestic violence

By Jacinta W. Odongo,

Media Officer, Uganda Episcopal Conference

As part of the church's effort to promote peace in families and Women Empowerment (WE) in the country, the Catholic Church in Uganda has re-launched a national drive on domestic violence prevention and women empowerment.

The campaign, which was re-launched on November 5 at St. Augustine Institute in Nsambya, Kampala, will run under the theme, "Merciful Parents, Peaceful Families" as extracted from Luke 6:36. The function was presided over by the Chairman of the Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC), Most Rev. John Baptist Odama, also the Archbishop of Gulu in the presence of several Archbishops, Bishops, priests, the Country Director of Trocaire, Ian Dolan and employees of UEC and Trocaire.

In his remarks, Archbishop Odama lauded the two Irish organizations which include Trocaire and Irish Aid, for coming on board to partner with the Church since 2010 in the campaign against domestic violence and the promotion of peace in families.

"We have been getting full support from our partners towards this campaign for a long time," he said. "I think we are moving in the right direction towards achieving our goal which is to see an end on domestic violence in the families and communities."

The National Coordinator for the Domestic Violence Prevention Desk of the UEC, Florence Kwesigabo said that the national drive, will run all year round, but will be intensified during the four weeks of the Season of Advent which kicked-off Sunday November 27. Advent Season in the Catholic Church is observed



Archbishop Odama (right), Mr. Dolan and Mrs. Kwesigabo hold campaign items during the launch. PHOTO BY: JACINTA W. ODONGO

as a period of penance and intensive prayer in preparation for Christmas. It is also a Season that coincides with the international commemoration of the 16 days of activism against GBV (November 25- December 10).

The campaign is aimed at creating awareness about the problem of GBV and to bring about behavioural change in the society such as women empowerment. It will be implemented in all the Catholic parishes and families in the 19 dioceses in the country. Material such as posters, t-shirts and info-packs will be distributed during the campaign as part of the effort to see an end to GBV.

"We chose our campaign to focus on Women Empowerment and Domestic Violence Prevention because currently, the issue of WE which includes gender balance and equality among other things

has come up loudly across the globe," said Kwesigabo.

According to the Uganda Police Annual Crime Report of 2014, domestic violence is one of the most common forms of abuse in Uganda leading to loss of lives and property. This for sure highlights the gravity of this cancer which is quietly destroying the fabric of the society which is the family.

"I THINK WE ARE MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION TOWARDS ACHIEVING OUR GOAL WHICH IS TO SEE AN END ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES."

God communicates salvation to humanity through the family

Extracted from the article, "A True Human Family Is Found In Faith and Bonded in Justice"

By Fr. Paulino Mondo

Of all the ways that God may have chosen to communicate the gift of salvation, God chose to do it through the bonds of family. There is no little significance in that fact. God as family, often called Trinity, has chosen to relate to human beings in the manner of a parent as God the Father, as sibling in the image of Jesus and of a driving life force as the Holy Spirit. That divine family spawned the human family

of Mary, Joseph and Jesus. This family has, in turn, inspired human families through the centuries. In their care for one another despite difficulties, misunderstandings and struggle, the Holy Family remains the measure for nuclear families everywhere. These families, in turn, have the potential for becoming a worldwide family of persons bonded not by genes or vows but by faith.

Radio Sapientia Ltd surprises listeners with an impressive sports gala



A local artist entertains the crowd at the gala.

By Francis Jjunju, Radio Sapientia

On Sunday November 6, 2016, Radio Sapientia Limited (Ltd) treated her listeners to a memorable fete during their annual sports gala dubbed 'Ekibittu'.

The ceremony, which was held at YES center in Nsambya, Kampala saw thousands of youth, children and adult (both men and women) come together to show their support for the radio.

The event kicked-off at exactly 7am with a Holy Mass at St. Peter's Parish in Nsambya. It was followed by a range of sports competitions including football, netball and ludo played amongst Radio Sapientia fans (the listeners), advertisers and Radio Sapientia staff. There was also a sports quiz competition.

During the football match, Radio Sapientia men's team 'The Saints' won 3-0 goals against their opponents, the advertisers while in netball, St. Peter's Senior Secondary School Nsambya beat Radio Sapientia women's team 'Saints' by 21-18 goals to emerge victorious to win a goat.

In the female category sports quiz, Christine Nakato of Lungujja defeated her two competitors to win a gomesi worth Ushs1m. Christine Najjemba of Makin-



The motorcycle that was won by one of the fans at the gala

dye and Esther Bwerenga of Maganjo finished in the second and third positions to win a sewing machine and a gomesi worth shs0.2m respectively. While in the men's category, Samuel Kahinda of Nsambya Police Barracks emerged the overall winner to win a motor cycle while Mark Paul Magero of Kyebando secured second place to scoop a generator, and David Ssemogerere of Nakaseke finished third to get a flat screen TV 21 inch. In the

fourth place, Joseph Mubiru of Nsambya Avemaria won an energy saving stove.

Meanwhile, the managing director of Radio Sapientia Ltd, Rev. Fr. Eustachius Lwemalika who is also the financial administrator of the Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC), together with other executive secretaries of the UEC and a group of advertisers handed out the prizes to the winners as way of giving back to the community.

In his speech, Fr. Lwemalika congratulated the finalists who emerged top in the different competitions adding, "The competition was meant to engage the youth in a more productive activity that gives them a start-up capital in form of prizes to support themselves."

Radio Sapientia is a commercial radio station owned by the UEC. The station has a mix of programmes, aired in both English and Luganda languages, which includes religious issues, local music, international and local news, announcements, social, economic and political shows.

"The competition was meant to engage the youth in a more productive activity that gives them a start-up capital in form of prizes to support themselves."

Tororo ecclesiastical province launches an association for the laity

By Fr. Philip Odii

It was all jubilation and thanksgiving to God as the Christians of Tororo Ecclesiastical Province converged at St. James Catholic Church, Bbina in Luzira to witness the launch of "Tororo Ecclesiastical Province Association of the Laity" (TEPAL). The event which took place on November 6, 2016, started with the celebration of the Eucharist presided over by the Most Rev. Emmanuel Obbo, the Archbishop of Tororo and concelebrated by Bishop Damiano Giuglio Guzzetti of Moroto Diocese and several priests from the Province.

In his homily, the Archbishop reminded the Christians that they were gathered as friends of Christ to undertake a very important project - the Association of the laity in Tororo Ecclesiastical Province. He challenged them to trust in God and to be firm in witnessing to their faith, following the example of the mother and her seven sons in the Second Book of Maccabees, who died for the truth and indeed for God.

The Prelate further called on the faithful to live responsibly as a way of preparing for the life to come and bearing in mind that the things of this world are passing. "It is our responsibility to live good lives because it is a way of preparing for the



Archbishop Obbo of Tororo (centre) and Bishop Guzzetti of Moroto (centre-left) pose for a photo with the congregation at Bbina Parish. PHOTO BY: JOSEPH OPIO

life to come. Our lives are in the hands of the Creator and not in our hands", he noted.

Bishop Damiano in his speech observed that the association which had been launched was coming from the will of God because it comes from the people. "The voice of the people is the voice of God", he stated.

Meanwhile, the Interim Chairperson of TEPAL, Mr. Robert Kamiza, urged the Christians to work together for the betterment of their home dioceses and the province. "You the people are our pillars, so we call

upon you to participate actively. We want to get back home and make our dioceses better places", he said.

The celebration which concluded with a fundraising and a luncheon was attended by various political and civil leaders from the Province. Tororo Ecclesiastical Province comprises the Dioceses of Jinja, Kotido, Moroto, Soroti and Tororo. The association launched has the mission of establishing a forum to unite, mobilise, coordinate, all Catholics from the province with a view to evangelise, support vocations and development in the province.

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Inter-religious and Ecumenism department calls for greater efforts to promote co-existence among tribal groupings

By Jacinta W. Odongo

As part of its efforts to promote a culture of peace and foster dialogue for social cohesion and community transformation, the department of Inter-Religious Dialogue and Ecumenism of the Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC) held a review and planning workshop for religion-cultural leaders, Head teachers and Local Government Officials (LGOs) in the northern region of Uganda.

The workshop, which was held in Moyo District from November 2-6, 2016, attracted over 40 participants. The northern region was chosen because of the persistent cross-border conflicts between the people of Madi in Uganda and the neighbouring Kuku from Kajo Keji in South Sudan, despite having lived together for decades.

The UEC Executive Secretary of the Inter-Religious Dialogue and Ecumenism department, Rev. Fr. Vincent Karatunga said that the conflict between the two groups has left many homes devastated, businesses and individuals hurt physically and psychologically.

“Earlier this year, the department organized a series of workshops on conflict management, resolution and mitigation for these groups due to the great impacts of conflict in the region,” he said. “Thus, we saw the need to hold a review workshop to evaluate their work so far in promoting conflict resolution,



Participants pose for a group photo after the workshop. PHOTO BY: FR. VICENT KARATUNGA

reconciliation, peaceful coexistence and management of conflict.”

Fr. Karatunga noted that religio-cultural leaders and LGOs have the capacity to remove the existing mistrust, suspicion, fears and hostility among the respective peoples and in the long run, restore the good neighbourliness, and sustainable reconciliation through dialogue.

He called upon the leaders to incorporate messages of peace, tolerance, coexistence and pluralism into their speeches and sermons as well as educational and outreach activities in order to create a social awareness in the society. “The role of religious leaders and teachers has been recognised through history, especially when it comes to the

issues of civilization, peaceful coexistence and harmony of communities. As a department we want to support the people of Moyo in finding a lasting peace,” he added.

As part of their recommendations, participants emphasized the need to incorporate the use of social media in addressing and resolving the root causes of the conflict. They also said that religious perspectives play an important role in empowering native leaders and the disarmament of civilians.

Meanwhile, the department trained two youth groups in Community Theatre for Development to assist the religious-cultural leaders implement the awareness campaign.

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Incarnation, God's Way of Communication

Fr. Lazar Arasu SDB

To incarnate is to take flesh, it is becoming body, it is building a relationship, and it is changing from one form to another. It is God becoming human. God took initiative to redeem us. God sent his messenger angel Gabriel to bring an important communiqué from heaven to earth. The communiqué announced that God who is Word, who is formless, and who is invisible is taking a form, becoming flesh, and becoming human. Everyone puzzled, including the prime receiver of

the message—Mary, a teenage girl from Nazareth. This is Christmas!

Incarnation, God becoming human, God becoming one of us, God sharing our life in human terms is central to our Christian belief. It is not just an idea found only in the New Testament. But this great Christian truth originates from the moment of creation and continues to take shape throughout the history of salvation. This is God's love for us!

Incarnation is the climax of God's communication with his people. It tells us of God's concern in human life. God needed human beings; he wants his own creatures to participate in his plan of salvation. When God made human beings in his own image and as the crown of his creation, he needed the cooperation

of Adam and Eve to create and recreate. He ordered them to rule his creation, to name them, to subdue the earth and bring it to fulfilment his creative work. This is God's joy and pride!

Incarnation should also be our own human principle of living. God who made us in his own image now he is taking our own image. Now we ought to make ourselves present to others. As God humbled himself as a child as the second person of the Trinity and was available to us... as Mary humbled herself and totally gave herself to the plan of God, we too can offer ourselves to God in his service and in the service of humankind. That too is God's joy and pride!

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

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Key events for November 2016

November 27 to December 24 - Advent Season

The Catholic Church has designated the four weeks preceding Christmas as Advent, a time to prepare the way of the Lord for His coming as our King and Savior. Advent Season in the Catholic Church is observed as a period of penance and intensive prayer in preparation for Christmas.

Thursday, December 1 - World AIDS Day

Every year, World AIDS Day events take place in different parts of the world to raise awareness and show support for people living with HIV. This year's celebration ran under the theme "Leadership, Commitment and Impact." According to UNAIDS report there are 78 million people who are living with HIV and 35 million who have died from AIDS-related illnesses since the first cases of HIV were reported.

Thursday, December 8- The Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Blessed Virgin Mary

This Feast celebrates the solemn belief in the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is universally celebrated on December 8, nine months before the feast of the Nativity of Mary, which is celebrated on September 8. It is one of the most important Marian feasts in the liturgical calendar of the Roman Catholic Church, celebrated worldwide. Since 1953, the Pope as Bishop of Rome visits the Column of the Immaculate Conception in Piazza di Spagna to offer expiatory prayers commemorating the solemn event.

The feast was first solemnized as a Holy Day of Obligation on December 6, 1708 by Pope Clement XI and is often celebrated with Holy Mass, parades, fireworks, processions, ethnic foods, and cultural festivities in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary and is generally considered a Family day, especially in many Catholics.

December 14-18, 2016- National Youth Day

The National Youth Day (NYD) is an event for young people organized every year by the Catholic Church in Uganda after the World Youth Day celebration. NYD is an opportunity for the youth to experience the universality of the church, to deepen their faith and grow closer to Christ in their daily lives, by means of prayer and the sacraments, together with other young people. This year's celebration will be held in the Jinja diocese in Tororo Ecclesiastical Province, and run under the theme, "Blessed are the Merciful, for They Shall Receive Mercy" extracted from Mathew 5:8.

Sunday, December 25, 2016 – Christmas Day

Christmas is one of the most important days of the Church year, second only to Easter. It is the feast of the incarnation, the feast of

God becoming flesh. It is a uniquely Christian teaching, the Divine choosing to become one of us. The liturgical season of Christmas begins with the vigil Masses on Christmas Eve and concludes on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. During this season, we celebrate the birth of Christ into our world and into our hearts, and reflect on the gift of salvation that is born with him including the fact that he was born to die for us.

The Christmas tree and the Nativity scene are popular symbols of the season and a tradition in many Christian homes. It is also traditional to exchange Christmas gifts with family and friends as a way to honor God the Father's gift of his only son to the world.

Monday, December 26 - Boxing Day/St. Stephen's day

Boxing Day is a holiday traditionally celebrated the day following Christmas Day, when servants and tradesmen would receive gifts, known as a "Christmas box", from their bosses or employers. In the Roman Catholic Church's liturgical calendar, the day is dedicated to St. Stephen, so is known as St. Stephen's Day to Catholics, and to the population generally.

December 27- St. John Day

This is the third day in the octave of Christmas. The Church celebrates the Feast of St. John, apostle and evangelist on this day. Born in Bethsaida, he was called while mending his nets to follow Jesus. He became the beloved disciple of Jesus. He wrote the fourth Gospel, three Epistles and the Apocalypse. His passages on the pre-existence of the Word, who by His Incarnation became the light of the world and the life of our souls, are among the finest of the New Testament.

December 28- Holy Innocents Day

Holy Innocents Day (also referred to as Childermas) commemorates the massacre of male children at Bethlehem by King Herod's order (Matthew 2:16). Also known as the Feast of the Holy Innocents, this day is observed in the Western churches on December 28 and in Eastern churches on December 29. These children are considered martyrs, Saints of God, by the church.

Friday, December 30 – Feast of the Holy Family

The Feast of the Holy Family celebrates the human family unit, as well as the ultimate family unit of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. The feast, not a solemnity, is usually celebrated on the Sunday after Christmas. If Christmas is a Sunday, then the feast is celebrated on December 30th.

Brazilian footballers killed in Colombia plane crash

La Unión (Colombia) (AFP)

A plane carrying a Brazilian football team crashed in the mountains in Colombia, killing an estimated 75 people while six survived, including several players, officials said Tuesday November 29.

The LAMIA airlines charter declared an emergency at around 10:00 pm (0300 GMT Tuesday), reporting it had suffered "electrical failures," and crashed a short time later near the city of Medellin, officials said.

The plane was carrying members of Chapecoense Real, a Brazilian football club that had risen from obscurity to reach the Copa Sudamericana finals, which were set for Wednesday November 30 against Atletico Nacional of Colombia. The Copa Sudamericana is the second most prestigious club football tournament in South America after the Copa Libertadores.

In all, there were 72 passengers and nine crew on board the British Aerospace 146. Brazil's President Michel Temer declared three days of mourning for the victims.

Football stars including Argentina's Lionel Messi and retired legend Diego Maradona led tributes to the players and messages of mourning.

The civil aviation authority said six of the 81 people on board were known to have survived the crash, which left the plane's wrecked white shell plastered over a hillside.

Chapecoense had reached the final after completing a victory on away goals last week over Argentinian side San Lorenzo in the semi-finals. Chapecoense is widely regarded as one of the minnows of Brazilian club football, having been founded relatively recently in 1973 in the city of Chapeco in southern Santa Catarina state.

Two weeks ago, the same plane was used to fly the Argentine national team with Messi on board to San Juan, Argentina for a World Cup qualifying match.

The following are other air disasters which have involved football teams:

On 6 February 1958 British European Airways flight 609 crashed on its third attempt to take off from a slush-covered runway at Munich-Riem Airport, West Germany.

On the plane was the Manchester United team, nicknamed the 'Busby



Rescuers search for survivors from the wreckage of the LAMIA airlines charter plane carrying members of the Chapecoense Real football team. Raul Arboleda/AFP/Getty Images

Babes', along with supporters and journalists. The squad were returning from a European game in Belgrade, Yugoslavia (now Serbia) when they stopped to refuel in Germany.

In total 20 of the 44 on the aircraft died. The pilot James Thain was blamed for the crash but it was later established that slush on the runway caused the accident.

1949: The plane carrying Italian club side Torino back from a match against Benfica in Lisbon crashed into the Superga hill during its approach to Turin airport. All 31 on board were killed including the 18-strong squad, devastating the finest team in the club's history.

Shortly afterwards, Torino went on to win a fifth Serie A title in a row, although they have only won it once since then, in 1975/76.

1960: Eight Danish footballers, on their way to a trial to select the Denmark team for the Rome Olympic Games soccer tournament, were killed when their plane crashed into the Oresund strait after takeoff from Copenhagen. Denmark went on to win the silver medal.

1969: Players from Bolivian team The Strongest were among 78 people killed when the flight carrying them from the lowland city of Santa Cruz crashed at Viloco, near La Paz.

1979: Seventeen players and coaching officials from Pakhtakor Tashkent were among 178 killed when the flight taking them to a Soviet league match at Dinamo Minsk was involved in a mid-air collision over what is now Ukraine.

Pakhtakor were the only team from present day Uzbekistan to play in the

top flight of the Soviet league.

1987: Sixteen players from Peruvian league leaders Alianza Lima, plus officials and coaching staff, were among 43 killed when a flight bringing them back from a championship match in Pucallpa crashed on approach to Lima airport. Only the captain survived.

1989: Fourteen Dutch footballers of Surinamese heritage were among 176 people killed when Surinam Airways flight 764 crashed on its approach to Paramaribo after a flight from Amsterdam. The footballers played for different professional teams in the Netherlands and had formed a team called 'The Colourful 11' to play exhibition matches against local side in the South American country.

1993: All 30 people on board a chartered Zambian Air Force flight, including 18 players from the country's national team, were killed when it crashed into the sea off the coast of Gabon shortly after taking off following a refuelling stop. The team was on its way to Senegal for a World Cup qualifier.

Kalusha Bwalya, the team captain and now president of the Zambia football federation, was not on board as he was travelling to the game separately.

In 2012, Zambia won the African Nations Cup for the only time, beating Ivory Coast on penalties in a final played at in Libreville just a few kilometres from the crash site.

Catholic Church in Tanzania to mark 150 years of faith



Bagamoyo the entry point of the catholic church in Tanzania from Zanzibar.

(AMECEA Photo)

By Mwenya Mukuka and Pamela Adinda

The Catholic Church in Tanzania is set to mark 150 years since arrival of the first catholic Missionaries in the country at Bagamoyo, the entry point of Catholic Evangelization to Main Land Tanzania.

Tanzania Episcopal Conference's Deputy Secretary General, Rev. Fr. Gallus Marandu while addressing participants of AMECEA ICT Workshop in Dar-es-Salaam Tanzania said that the ceremonies planned for year

2018 will be preceded by the centenary commemoration of the ordination of the first indigenous priests in the country.

"The conference launched a program for the celebrations in October 2016 at Bukoba Diocese and Christians are encouraged to renew their faith in preparations for the Jubilee," he said adding that the celebrations will last three years climaxing in October 2018.

The first Indigenous Tanzanian Priests

included Rev. Fr. Angelo Mwilabule from Kome Island Geita diocese; Rev. Fr. Celestine Kipanda from Ukerewe Island in Bunda Diocese; Rev. Fr. Osca Kyakaraba and Rev. Fr. Wilbard Mupapi both from Bukoba Diocese.

Among the activities earmarked for the celebrations include, renewal of missionary life of the Church, promotion of vocations through seminars and workshops, the teachings on the role of priestly vocation and religious charisms, strengthening the Small Christian Communities as well as renewal of Christian faith through pilgrimages at local levels beginning from the dioceses to the national level.

"We also want to show commitment to what the missionaries underwent and see what inspiration can be drawn from that," he said.

Bagamoyo was the entry point of the Missionaries of Africa popularly referred to as White Fathers who first evangelized the Island of Zanzibar, mainland Tanzania and other parts of eastern Africa.

Pope Francis donates \$500000 towards hunger situation in Malawi

By Prince Henderson-ECM
Communications Officer

His Holiness Pope Francis donated \$500 000 (about 365 Million Malawi Kwacha) to the hunger stricken families in Malawi who were affected by the dry spell.

Archbishop Thomas Luke Msusa, Chairman of the Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM) announced the Pope's donation during the consecration of St Joseph the Worker Cathedral Church of the Diocese of Karonga on Saturday last week.

The good news about the Holy Father's donation was brought by His Eminence Fernando Cardinal Filoni during his five-day Pastoral visit to Malawi.

"His Holiness has decided to give \$500 000 to Malawi to assist in drought relief as a sign of love for the poor and the marginalized," said Archbishop Msusa.

Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Malawi, Fr. Henry Saindi said in a separate interview that the distribution of this donation will be done through Catholic Church agencies like Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM).

Archbishop Msusa conveyed "sincere appreciation" to the Pope "for the timely spiritual and material interventions in favour of the people in Malawi.



Vice President Chilima greets His Eminence Fernando Cardinal Filoni during his trip to Malawi where he handed over the donation from Pope Francis.

PHOTO BY: PRINCE HENDERSON

Vice President Chilima also expressed government's gratitude to the Holy Father for his commitment to the poor. H.E. Chilima, who was guest of honour at the event, also encouraged the Catholic Church to continue working towards satisfying the spiritual needs of the citizenry.

In an exclusive interview before his departure to Zambia on a similar mission visit, Cardinal Filoni said he was impressed and described his visit to Malawi as a success. He challenged Malawians to be Merciful and love one another.

Bishop applauds AMECEA for making ICT a tool for evangelization

By Yohannes Makeda
 CBCE Communications and Public Relations
 Officer

Rt. Rev. Bishop Bernadine Mfumbusa, Chairman of Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) Communications Commission has lauded the AMECEA Secretariat for prioritizing new information technologies (ICTs) in its quest for evangelization. Bishop Mfumbusa stated this when he officially opened the joint workshop for National Communications Coordinators, On-line reporters and ICT officers organized by AMECEA in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on



The National Communications Coordinators, Online reporters and ICT officers from AMECEA region pose for a group photo before the workshop. PHOTO BY: PASCAL MWANACHE



Bishop Mfumbusa officially opens the joint workshop for National Communication Coordinators, Online reporters and ICT officers. PHOTO BY: JACINTA W. ODONGO

November 14 – 18, 2016.

“ICT is now part and parcel of everyday lives. It is a great thing that the Church in AMECEA Region has embraced the trend by establishing ICT Coordination office,” he said.

Reflecting on the Holy Father Pope Francis’ message about the relationship between Communications and Mercy, Bishop Mfumbusa said that ICT has the power to build and enrich society through its encounter and inclusion. He called on the participants of the workshop to use

the opportunity to understand and discuss new technologies, applications and implications of ICT use in Pastoral work.

And AMECEA Social Communications Coordinator, Rev. Fr. Chrisantus Ndaga disclosed that AMECEA was aiming to support each Episcopal Conference in the region to be equipped with ICT skills and increase their online presence through websites, blogs and other means.

“With this workshop the participants will understand and discuss new technologies and applications of ICT use and adoption with an emphasis on innovative technologies for connecting Conferences to Dioceses,” said Fr. Ndaga.

He added that the use of ICT in the region is growing at a very fast rate and the Church is invited to take advantage of this opportunity to explore ways of using ICT for evangelizing. He encouraged all Conferences in the region to continue participating in the AMECEA online newsletter bulletin and use it as a means of

communicating their work to each other and to the rest of the world.

“With the online newsletter bulletin the world is now more informed about what the Catholic Church in AMECEA region is doing. We have been receiving reliable news reports from each conference and this way we have become a major source of information about our Church,” said Fr. Ndaga.

The workshop created a space for the national coordinators, online reporters and ICT officers to discuss on how they could collaborate on developing the online presence of the Church in the region and share experiences with one another. AMECEA Social Communications department is building the capacity of the Conferences on communications and ICT with the financial support from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).





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Apostolic Nuncio Kasujja leaves Nigeria for Belgium



Apostolic Nuncio leaves Nigeria for Belgium.

Vatican Radio

On November 4, 2016 Pope Francis appointed Archbishop Augustine Kasujja as the new Apostolic Nuncio to Belgium.

Archbishop Augustine Kasujja, who hails

from Uganda, is an experienced diplomat who has served the Holy See for many years. Born in 1946, Archbishop Kasujja is the first non-European Nuncio to Belgium.

According to the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, Archbishop Kasujja leaves Nigeria

for Belgium, "after six years of meritorious service as the representative of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, in Nigeria. During the time of Archbishop Kasujja, at the Apostolic Nunciature, the Catholic Church in Nigeria witnessed tremendous growth in both spiritual and pastoral activities," reads the Catholic Secretariat statement.

Archbishop Kasujja was ordained priest on 3 January 1973 and was appointed Archbishop of the titular see of Cesarea in Numidia in 1998. He arrived to serve as Apostolic Nuncio to Nigeria in 2011. Apostolic Nuncio Kasujja is a career diplomat who has served as papal envoy in different parts of the world since he entered the Diplomatic Service of the Holy See in 1979. He has served in the Apostolic Nunciatures of Argentina, Haiti, Bangladesh, Portugal, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago. He was appointed Apostolic Nuncio to Algeria and Tunisia in 1998. Later, he was transferred in the same capacity to Madagascar, the Seychelles and as Apostolic Delegate to the Comoros and La Reunion. In 2004 he became the Apostolic Nuncio to Mauritius.

US bishops to dialogue with Trump on migration

Vatican Radio

The US Bishops are asking for "concrete actions" by the new Trump administration on the plight of migrants to the US who are seeking a better life.

Addressing the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' General Assembly on November 15, outgoing president Archbishop Joseph Kurtz named migration as one of their top issues of dialogue with President-elect Donald Trump and with the new membership of both houses of congress.

Archbishop Kurtz said: "Whether it is protecting the child in the womb and her mother or a family seeking a better life as they migrate from another country, it is our task to think not of our own interests but of the common good. We embrace that task with enthusiasm and enter respectful dialogue with President Donald Trump and with both houses of Congress.

"There's been unprecedented lack of civility and even rancor in the just concluded national elections. Now we are required to move forward with a respect for those in public office as we seek the common good based on truth and charity, without imposing but strongly proposing as we have done now for 99 years. We enter



Archbishop Kurtz greets fellow bishops at the USSB Assembly

dialogue with the Trump administration and leadership in both houses of congress – seeking as in the past concrete actions."

Trump was elected the 45th President of the United States on November 9 after he easily reached the 270 Electoral College vote threshold against his Democrat rival Hillary Clinton. Global stock markets and U.S. stock futures plunged, reflecting

investor concern over what a Trump presidency might mean for the U.S. and world economies and trade. Among those who sent their congratulatory messages to the president-elect were Russian President Putin and the President of the European Council Donald Tusk.

World Aids Day: Pope calls for solidarity and treatment for all



World Aids day banners in South Africa

Vatican Radio

Pope Francis has appealed to all persons to act in a responsible manner to prevent the spread of HIV-Aids.

Speaking during the weekly general audience in the Paul VI Hall on November 30, the Pope recalled that on Thursday, 1st December, we mark World Aids Day which is promoted by the United Nations.

"Millions of people live with this illness and only half of them have access to life-saving therapies" he said. The Pope invited all to pray for them and for their families and promote solidarity so that "also the poor can benefit from adequate diagnosis and treatment. "I appeal to all to act in a responsible way in order to prevent the further spread of this disease" he said.

HIV continues to be a major global public health issue. Recent statistics show that globally an estimated 36.7 million people are living with HIV (including 1.8 million children). The vast majority of this number live in low and middle income countries. Since the start of the epidemic, an estimated 78 million people have become infected with HIV and 35 million people have died of AIDS-related illnesses.

An estimated 25.5 million people living with HIV live in sub-Saharan Africa. The vast majority of them (an estimated 19 million) live in east and southern Africa which saw 46% of new HIV infections globally in 2015. Around 40% of all people living with HIV do not know that they have the virus.

Holy door closes in three Papal Basilicas



©ANSA

Cardinal Agostino Vallini closes the Holy Door of the basilica of St. John Lateran

Vatican Radio

Sunday 13 November saw the celebration of special Masses in churches and basilicas across the world – as well as in Rome's Papal Basilicas – which included the solemn rite of the closing of the Holy Doors.

That's with the exception of the Holy Door leading into St. Peter's Basilica which will be shut by Pope Francis himself on the feast of Christ the King, on Sunday 20 November, as indicated by the Pope himself in the bull announcing the jubilee.

Representing the Pope in the Basilicas of St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, and St. Paul Outside the Walls were the archpriests of the Basilicas, respectively: Cardinal Agostino Vallini, Cardinal Santos Abril y Castelló and Cardinal James Michael Harvey.

According to Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, it is estimated that 20.4 million people attended Year of Mercy events at the Vatican over the course of this year, many of them crossing the thresholds of the Holy Doors.

The opening of the door symbolically illustrates the concept that pilgrims are offered an "extraordinary path" toward salvation during the time of Jubilee, and walking through the Holy Door they were able to receive a plenary indulgence.

During his homily for the Mass at St. John Lateran, Cardinal Agostino Vallini spoke about how the Holy Door, was a visible sign of the Jubilee of Mercy, a year in which we learned "once again" that the fate of the world is not in the hands of men, "but in the mercy of God."

He said that meditating on God's mercy this year we have learnt that mercy is not a sign of weakness or surrender, but the "strong, magnanimous," radiation of the loving omnipotence of the Father, who "heals our weaknesses, raises us from our falls and urges us to do good."

Cardinal Abril y Castelló pointed out that although the Holy Door is being closed, "God's door of mercy is always open" and he urged the faithful to be strong in this certainty and become credible witnesses of mercy in the world.

And in his homily, Cardinal Harvey also referred to the solemn closing of the Basilica's Holy Door saying that "at the same time, we open an inner door to the next stage of our journey of faith, hope and charity".

During his Angelus address on Sunday Pope Francis also pointed out that Holy Doors were being closed across the world, signaling the end of the Jubilee of Mercy.

"On the one hand, he said, the Holy Year has urged us to keep our eyes fixed on the ultimate fulfillment of God's Kingdom, and on the other, to build a future on earth, working to evangelize the present, so as to make it a time of salvation for all."

Ordinary jubilee occurs every 25 or 50 years, and extraordinary jubilees are called for some particular occasions. Two extraordinary jubilees were called in the 20th century: in 1933, to mark the 1900th anniversary of Christ's redemption in 33 A.D., and 1983, its 1950th anniversary.

St. Pope John Paul II also held a 'Great Jubilee' in the year 2000, marking the 2000th anniversary of Jesus' birth and the start of the new millennium.

Pope Francis closes the Jubilee of Mercy: Let us always open “possible pathway of hope”



Pope Francis closes the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica. (INTERNET PHOTO)

“This Year of Mercy invites us to rediscover the core, to return to what is essential. This time of mercy calls us to look to the true face of our King, the one that shines out at Easter, and to rediscover the youthful, beautiful face of the Church,

the face that is radiant when it is welcoming, free, faithful, poor in means but rich in love, on mission”. This is what the Holy Father said during the homily on Sunday 20 November, solemnity of Christ the King, during the Mass he presided in St. Peter’s square for the closing of the Jubilee of Mercy. The Pope concelebrated Mass with the newly appointed Cardinals in the Consistory the day before.

“Today, dear brothers and sisters - said Pope Francis - we proclaim this singular victory, by which Jesus became the King

of every age, the Lord of history: with the sole power of love, which is the nature of God, his very life, and which has no end. We joyfully share the splendour of having Jesus as our King: his rule of love transforms sin into grace, death into resurrection, fear into trust. It would mean very little, however, if we believed Jesus was King of the universe, but did not make him Lord of our lives: all this is empty if we do not personally accept Jesus and if we do not also accept his way of being King”. Commenting on the Sunday Gospel passage, the Pope said among other things that “a people who are holy, however, who have Jesus as their King, are called to follow his way of tangible love” and that “God has no memory of sin, but only of us, of each of us, we who are his beloved children. And he believes that it is always possible to start anew, to raise ourselves up”.

Finally, Pope Francis urged: “Let us ask for the grace of never closing the doors of reconciliation and pardon, but rather of knowing how to go beyond evil and differences, opening every possible pathway of hope. As God believes in us, infinitely beyond any merits we have, so too we are called to instill hope and provide opportunities to others. Because even if the Holy Door closes, the true door of mercy which is the heart of Christ always remains open wide for us”.



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