

NEV CONTACT

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THOUSANDS CONVERGE IN GULU ARCHDIOCESE FOR THE PRAYER PEACE WEEK



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Editorial



In his book, 60 Principles for Success, Dr. A. Peter, a researcher and writer, outlines a series of principles that one can apply in order to achieve success in various aspects of life. He cites Prayer-applying Principle as the success principle number one. He describes prayer as "the mightiest power in the world", "the most powerful form of energy' and "the greatest power of life" He further notes that, "The golden key to success in your life is the way you pray. God always acts for you when you pray with faith". In Luke 17: 6, Jesus assures his disciples that if they had faith the size of a mustard seed, they would say to the mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea", and it would obey them.

As we make resolutions for the New Year, let us not forget to include prayer in our decision making, in the implementation of our resolutions and indeed in every aspect of our life, bearing in mind that whatever we have, including our life is a gift from God.

We are grateful to God for what we were able to share through New Contact in 2016 and we appreciate our readers and advertisers for the support. For any information regarding adverts, articles or any other related matters, please call +256-782746812/+256-702606851 or send an email to; ucsnewcontact2013@gmail.com or podii2002@gmail.com.

Let us keep in contact through New Contact.

Fr. Philip Odii
Editor/Executive Secretary
of Social Communications
Communication
Uganda Episcopal Conference

Thousands converge in Gulu Archdiocese for the Prayer Peace Week

By Fr. Tobby Okello and Mary Lilly Driciru MSMMC

Thousands of pilgrims braved the scorching sun in Gulu Archdiocese from January 9-13, 2017 to participate in the 12th edition of the Prayer Peace Week.

Prayer Peace Week is an annual event of peace pilgrimage, retreat and prayer. It was initiated in 2005 by Gulu Ecclesiastical Province which comprises of Gulu Archdiocese, Arua, Nebbi and Lira Dioceses (GANAL). This year's event was held at St. Monica Girls Tailoring School in Gulu Archdiocese. It attracted pilgrims from Acholi subregion (Gulu, Kitgum, Amuru, Pader), Lango subregion, Alur Subregion and Lugbara, Madi, Kakwa, Aringa, Teso subregions and other parts of Uganda. There were also participants from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan.

The week-long event was celebrated under the theme, "Non Violence: A Style of Politics for Peace." The event, which aims at fostering a culture of dialogue and forgiveness, encourages cooperation and joint responsibility as alternatives to achieve sustainable peace, prosperity, harmony and social regeneration in the Northern region following one of the longest insurgencies in Uganda (over 20 years).

It began with a 5km peace march in Gulu town led by Most Rev. John Baptist Odama, the Archbishop of Gulu and Chairman of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, Rt. Rev. Joseph Franzelli, Bishop of Lira Diocese and Rt. Rev. Sanctus Lino Wanock, Bishop of Nebbi Diocese. Several cultural and political leaders also took part in the peace march.



Archbishop Odama alongside other pilgrims take part in the peace march

The occasion was also marked with at interdenominational prayers, reflection papers, group discussions and presentations, entertainments (acrobatic show and traditional dances), speeches and shared meals; all geared towards peace building. A social space was provided to allow the interactions of peoples from different tribes, ethnic

groups, cultures, religious and political affiliations to confront prejudice, explore the dimensions of community peace, establish the importance of building peace into the fabric of society at every level, and to celebrate unity in diversity.

The event was graced by various dignitaries: politicians, religious and cultural leaders from various denominations. It was an occasion of affirming human dignity regardless of color, tribe, nationality, race and religious or political affiliations. Archbishop Odama demonstrated this by introducing all the 13 tribes in Northern Uganda and requested them to stand up for recognition.

In his speech, Archbishop Odama called on the pilgrims to pray for peace across the world especially in DRC, South Sudan, The Gambia and within Uganda in the Rwenzori region.

The director of the University of Sacred Heart in Gulu, Fr. Jino Mwaka, also reflected on the theme of the Prayer Peace Week. Fr. Jino used the Pope's message for the World Peace Day to caution the pilgrims against lust for power, glorification of violence in the entertainment industry and domestic violence.

He quoted Pope Francis' message saying: "Be non-violent, everyone can become artisan of peace, challenge the misconception of using violence to solve problems, a human being is where violence and peace meet, it is the heart that makes peace, non-violence is Jesus' way, failure to embrace would cause questions about one's Christian faith!..."

Many pilgrims greatly appreciated the peace building event. A peace pilgrim from South Sudan lamented that their country is devastated by lust for power, tribal differences, un-forgiveness, shallow faith and upholding cultural rituals that perpetrate violence. He promised to initiate peaceful harmony in his own family as opposed to violence. Meanwhile, the youth and other categories of people displayed their talents in music, dance, drama and acrobats. Pomp and excitement filled the air at St. Monica Girls when one of the seminarians took the stage with his lead song "We want Peace and Justice". His album was launched during the week by Hon. Grace Freedom Kwiyocwiny, Woman MP for Zombo District and State Minister for Northern Uganda.

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Pictorial for the Prayer Peace Week in Gulu



A section of the crowd at the prayer peace week



Archbishop Odama (right), Bishop Franzelli and State Minister for Northern Uganda, Hon. Grace Freedom Kwiyocwiny State Minister for Northern Uganda



Traditonal dancers perform during the prayer peace week



A group of acrobats demonstrate their acrobatic



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Bishop of Hoima chooses theme for 2017 Uganda Martyrs Day Celebration

By Jacinta W. Odongo Media Officer, Uganda Episcopal Conference

With exactly five months to go to the 2017 Uganda Martyrs Day celebration at Namugongo Catholic Shrine, Rt. Rev. Vincent Kirabo, the Bishop of Hoima Diocese has chosen the theme for this year's event due June 3rd.

"Stand Firm in the Faith That You Have Been Taught," is the theme chosen by Bishop Kirabo. The theme, which has been extracted from Colossians 2:7, was officially unveiled on New Year's Day, January 1, 2017 during the Diocesan Marian Pilgrimage at Murro Parish in Masindi Vicariate.

The Diocese of Hoima will animate the 2017 Uganda Martyrs celebration on behalf of Mbarara Ecclesiastical province. According to the chairperson of the Organizing Committee at Diocesan level for the 2017 Martyrs Day celebration, Dr. Emmanuel Kiiza Aliba, also the Executive Secretary of the Justice and Peace Department of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, the theme calls for a stronger witness in Christ from the faithful.

"This theme calls us to be stronger witnesses in our faith, our personal lives, families, places of work and areas where we go for leisure among other things," he said. "The Bishop believes we are stronger in our faith because we have celebrated a centenary of evangelization in more than five parishes in our diocese. Besides, we will be celebrating 52 years



Bishop Kirabo receives offetory from pilgrims from Democratic Republic of Congo during the 2016 Uganda Martyrs Day celebration PHOTO BY JACINTA W. ODONGO

of existence this year as a diocese so we are very mature in our faith and what we need to do is to deepen the gospel."

The annual celebration commemorates the heroic faith of the 45 Martyrs, both Catholic and Anglican, who were burnt to death on the orders of Kabaka Mwanga II, the then king of Buganda between 1885 and 1887. Twenty two Catholic Martyrs were beatified on June 6, 1920, by Pope Benedict XV, and on October 18 1964, Pope Paul VI canonized them as Saints.

In addition to the 22 Catholic Martyrs, there are two Catechists from Paimol: Blessed Daudi Okello and Blessed Jildo Irwa who were killed in 1918. The two Catechists were beatified by St. Pope John Paul II on October 20, 2002.

Of the 22 Martyrs who were canonized, two of them, St. Andrew Kaggwa and St. Anatoli Kiriggwajjo hail from Hoima Diocese. Meanwhile, the Bishop of Hoima has also launched a special prayer (novena) dedicated to the Uganda Martyrs. The prayer is intended to pray for the success of the June 3rd celebrations and for the intentions of all the pilgrims who will attend the celebration.

Bishop Kirabo has encouraged all the Catholic faithful across the country to observe this novena by reciting a short prayer then say Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be to the Father prayers as well as invoke the Uganda Martyrs at the end. Special prayer cards in both English and Runyooro have also been released.

The preparations and the actual celebration have been estimated to a cost of at least Ushs 500m. Hoima Diocese last presided over the Martyrs Day celebrations in 2001.



PRAYER FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE UGANDA MARTYRS DAY AT NAMUGONGO, 3RD JUNE 2017 "STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH: THAT WE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT"

(Colossians 2:7)

In the name of the Father...

Almighty God,

You are a loving Father who never abandons his children. We beseech you to support our cause of intensive preparation as the Diocese of Hoima, when we take on the role of animating Christians to celebrate the annual festival of the Uganda Martyrs. You raised these brave disciples and by their firm faith, they died confessing your son Jesus Christ.

We humbly implore you that the celebration of the

Uganda Martyrs' Day may help us deepen and stand firm in the faith that we received at the day of our baptism, when we became children of God and members of the Church. Mercifully grant that our efforts in preparing this festival may be fruitful for the greater glory of your name.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father..., Hail Mary..., Glory be to the Father....

Holy Martyrs of Uganda, pray for us x3

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Imprimatur + Vincent Kirabo BISHOP OF HOIMA DIOCESE 6 NEW CONTACT January 2017 ISSUE 1 VOL 5 DIOCESAN

Moroto Diocese celebrates golden jubilee anniversary in a colorful celebration



By Fr. Alfred Kotol

The Catholic Diocese of Moroto made a significant milestone in the history of the Catholic Church on December 3, 2016. The Diocese celebrated its golden jubilee since its establishment by the Comboni Missionaries in 1965.

The celebration was held under the theme, "Fan into Flame the Gift of God" (2Timothy 1:6). The colorful event began at about 10 am with a procession of priests and Bishops at Regina Mundi Cathedral. Hundreds of faithful from different parts of the country joined the Catholic faithful in Moroto Diocese to celebrate this historic event.

The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, His Excellency Michael August Blume and concelebrated by Rt. Rev. Damiano Guzzetti, the Bishop of Moroto Diocese, Rt. Rev. Giuseppe Filippi, Bishop of Kotido Diocese and Rt. Rev. Joseph Franzelli, Bishop of Lira Diocese. There were also over 30 priests including provincial superiors of the Comboni Missionaries in Uganda, religious sisters and brothers.

Speaking during the celebrations, Archbishop Blume congratulated the Christians of Moroto for the 50 years of existence and challenged them to continue with the evangelization that was started by the Comboni missionaries.

He urged them to thank God for all those who planted the seed of Christianity in the Diocese while citing the example of the Comboni Missionaries Congregation which was founded by the great Apostle to Africa, St. Bishop Daniel Comboni.

"These missionaries made their contributions in spreading the gospel, establishing schools, hospitals and providing social facilities in the region. Therefore, we must also share with others the faith that we have received free of charge," the Nuncio said.

He also expressed his gratitude to the first Bishops, priests, catechists and lay faithful who had to witness Christ and work under very difficult times when insecurity was at its highest peak in the region.

Archbishop Blume further called upon the Christians to embrace the Sacrament of Matrimony because through it they can start good Christian families which are the first domestic Church. "It is in the family that we learn to pray, act with kindness and love and above all share our faith. Besides, a Christian family is the seed bed of good vocations," he said adding that the Christian community should pray for more priestly vocations in Karamoja region following the limited numbers of priests.

Meanwhile, at the end of the celebra-

tion the Nuncio was dressed in a Karamojong traditional piece of clothe 'asuka' and a necklace made out of beads. He was also given a traditional karamojong stool for sitting and a stick as a symbol of a shepherd, and he was given a karamojong name 'Loru' which means a person who gives water to the animals.



The Nuncio dressed in a Karamojong traditional attire

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Thousands of youth participate in the 2016 National Youth Day celebration



Youths from Uganda and other countries particpate in a Catechisis session during the 2016 World Youth Day celebration in Poland.

By Jacinta W. Odongo

Over 3000 youths from Uganda and other African countries thronged the Diocese of Jinja last year from December 14-18 to mark the 2016 National Youth Day (NYD) celebration.

The NYD celebration, which is a Church's Day event for young people, is typically celebrated every year at national level. It offers opportunity to 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.

The 2016 celebration was held under the theme, "Blessed are the Merciful, for They Shall Receive Mercy" extracted from Mathew 5:8.

According to the National Youth Coordinator of the Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC), Joyce Zako, by coming together, young people are able to discuss their most intimate aspirations and experience the Church as communion, and make a commitment to the urgent task of new evangelization.

"This celebration helps to strengthen and enkindle the apostolate in the host diocese, to provide an opportunity for the youth to live and share in the universality of the Church, that in Christ we are indeed one and to create awareness among the youth on topical issues within their community and encourage them to

become change agents," she said.

She added, "As Catholic youth, they also contribute towards helping each other to know and experience the different realities in the North, East, South, West and Central, thus promoting solidarity. In doing so, they join hands, forming an immense circle of friendship; uniting in faith all the different cultures God has endowed Uganda with."

Apart from the 19 dioceses in the country, the celebration attracted youth from Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania and Sierra Leone. This was the first time ever for Sierra Leone to participate in the National Youth Day celebration.

Meanwhile, during the week of NYD, a number of activities took place including a welcoming ceremony, way of the cross, catechesis, confessions, devotions and reconciliation activities. There were also entertainment activities which included tourism, sports competitions, cultural exhibitions and cultural music performances

The final Holy Mass was led by Rt. Rev Charles Martin Wamika, the Bishop of Jin-ja Diocese and concelebrated by Rt. Rev Paul Ssemogerere, Bishop of Kasana-Luweero and Bishop Chairman of the Lay Apostolate Commission. There were also over 30 priests and religious sisters.



Uganda youths perform a dance during the 2016 World Youth Day that was held in Poland



Bishop Semwogerere poses for a group photo with Ugandan Youths in Poland

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UEC employees treated to a wonderful Christmas Picnic



The UEC Secretary General, Msgr John Baptist Kauta (center) enjoys a dance with other UEC employees. PHOTOS BY JACINTA W. ODONGO

By Jacinta W. Odongo

Every year, the Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC) organizes a special Christmas Picnic for its employees. On December 16, 2016 the employees of UEC were once again treated to a wonderful Christmas Picnic at Nabinoonya Beach in Kisubi.

The annual picnic hosted over 70 UEC employees. The event kicked-off at 7 am with a range of activities which were carried out by the staff members including food preparations such as maize roasting, salad preparations, cassava roasting, chips and chicken frying among others. There was also wonderful

music to entertain the staff and a variety of drinks that were offered throughout the day. At about 1 pm, the employees were served with special eats and later participated in a number of sports and dancing competitions.

The event concluded at 6.15pm with closing remarks from the Secretary General of the UEC, Msgr John Baptist Kauta who also presented Christmas gifts to all the employees.

"The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of love and of generosity and of goodness. It is the day that we all appreciate because it brings us all together," Msgr Kauta said. He added that he hoped the year 2017 would continue to see progress for the UEC, with good teamwork and new ideas for the future.



Some of the UEC staff participate in a football match

WISE QUOTES FOR REFLECTION

- "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." John F. Kennedy
- "There is no passion to be found playing small--in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living." Nelson Mandela
- "Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced." - *Soren Kierkegaard*
- "People grow through experience if they meet life honestly and courageously. This is how character is built." Eleanor Roosevelt
- "Remember your dreams and fight for them. You must know what you want from life. There is just one thing that makes your dream become impossible: the fear of failure." Paulo Coelho
- "What we think determines what happens to us, so if we want to change our lives, we need to stretch our minds." Wayne Dyer
- "Our greatest happiness does not depend on the condition of life in which chance has placed us, but is always the result of a good conscience, good health, occupation, and freedom in all just pursuits." *Thomas Jefferson*
- "Sometimes the best thing you can do is not think, not wonder, not imagine, not obsess. Just breathe and have faith that everything will work out for the best" *Anonymous*
- "What seems to us as bitter trials are often blessings in disguise" Oscar Wildo



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Gulu University honours Archbishop Odama with a PhD



Honoured. Gulu University Chancellor Prof Frederick Kayanja confers Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy on Bishop Odama during the university's 12th graduation ceremony last Saturday. PHOTO BY JULIUS OCUNG!

By Jacinta W. Odongo

Many universities, both public and private, recognize individuals who make notable contributions and achievements to society by awarding them with an honorary doctorate degree, which is the highest degree conferred upon a person.

On Saturday, January 14, 2017 Most Rev. John Baptist Odama, the Archbishop of Gulu and Chairman of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, received an Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) degree from Gulu University.

The honorary degree, awarded for his outstanding contribution in promoting

peace and reconciliation, is in recognition for his dedicated efforts to work for peace in Northern Uganda during and after the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels insurgency that lasted for over two decades.

The award was given by the Gulu University Chancellor, Prof Frederick Kayanja, under the "outstanding service to State" of the Honorary Degree Awards policy during the university's 12th graduation ceremony.

On his part, Archbishop Odama expressed his deep appreciation for his award and said he accepted it on behalf of children, mothers and peace promoters across the globe.

"It's a great honour for me to be involved in peace keeping since 1999

when I was installed as the Archbishop of Gulu. People are now breathing fresh air because peace prevails in the region but the struggle must not end," Archbishop Odama said, quoted in the Daily Monitor of January 16, 2017.

The civil war, which started in 1986 led by Joseph Kony, has had a disastrous impact upon the population in the region. Between 28,000 and 38,000 children were abducted by the LRA to serve as child soldiers, sex slaves and porters, and over 1.8 million people were displaced and forced to live in bad conditions of the Internally Displaced People camps. It is amidst this setting that the Archbishop has worked for several years to restore peace in northern Uganda. The suffering of the people and in particular the children immediately influenced his determination to work for the return of peace in the region.

Archbishop Odama served as the chairman of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) from 2002-2010. ARLPI is an interfaith peace building and conflict transformation organization that has been tirelessly working to end the war in Northern Uganda.

In 2005, he also initiated Prayer Peace Week in Gulu Ecclesiastical Province which comprises of Gulu Archdiocese, Arua, Nebbi and Lira Dioceses (GANAL). Prayer Peace Week is held every year with an aim of fostering a culture of dialogue and forgiveness, encouraging cooperation and joint responsibility as alternatives to achieve sustainable peace, prosperity, harmony and social regeneration.

The Holy Bible bonds the family together

Extracted from the article, "A True Human Family is Found in Faith and Bonded in Justice" By Fr. Paulino Mondo

Biblical writings like Sirach, Letters of St Paul and the four Gospels; all hold out the ideal of family for our consideration. Alongside that ideal, we are to be aware of the problems of using the image of family in the liturgy. Many people spend years trying to overcome the psychological burdens of a destructive family system. Many argue that the imagery of God as Father and Christ as Son reflects only the patriarchal society from which it arose and is best abandoned. Yet life remains in the image and some of its other possibilities are seldom explored. To that end, it may be helpful to realize that the New Testament offers other examples of family that are more in keeping with brotherhood or sisterhood. Take, for example, the family of Martha, Mary and their brother Lazarus, or even the growing group of followers of Jesus who recognized themselves as sisters and brothers of one an-

other because of their union in him. These families were bound by faith, shared service and economic needs. Thus the family imagery carries with it a dimension of justice based on the responsibility that derives from shared faith. By virtue of our birth into the family, we should find ourselves connected and committed to others. These connections and commitments are not a matter of choice. We are not allowed to choose only a few; instead, we are to see the small, tear-streaked faces of the vulnerable as brothers and sisters and realize that because of our faith, these make our family happy and real.

January 2017 **ISSUE 1 NEW CONTACT**

Archbishop Lwanga urges faithful to promote family rights and values during Christmas season

By Valerian Kkonde, Pearl News Service

Stressing that the family is at the center of celebrating Christmas, which is the joyful mystery of the Incarnation of our Lord, Most Reverend Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga the Archbishop of Kampala called on all Christians to promote family rights and values during Christmas Season.

"Christmas is indeed about people; being home, being in the family to celebrate the joyful mystery of the Incarnation of our God," Archbishop Lwanga said.

Addressing the press on December 23, 2016 at his residence in Rubaga, the Archbishop urged the people to work for peace and stability in the families and society at large. He used his Christmas message to remind the Ugandan citizens and leaders at all levels to implement Constitutional guarantee to protect and promote the family.

"Many couples no longer value faithfulness in their marriage and as a result the family suffers emotionally, spiritually and physically. Families are suffering due to alcoholism and domestic violence, poverty and laziness, lack of employment thus they have no peace and harmony," he said.

He cautioned against parents who are



Archbishop Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga

too busy to guide their children leaving them to the media that proposes a range of negative content. "Many people are getting addicted to pornography and sexual deviant behaviors like promiscuity, homosexuality and masturbation due to exposure to negative content. It is unfortunate that these occurrences are usually seen as a norm. Parents should be keen on what their children are taught outside the family and feed them with the right information."

The Archbishop pointed out that the

worst form of suffering for the family is the lack of faith, lack of self-reflection, loss of values and loss of hope. He urged the faithful to emulate the Holy family of Nazareth which all Christian families should take as their model, renewing their life with daily prayer.

Meanwhile, last year on October 8, President Yoweri Museveni declared 2017 the "Year of the Family." He called on the public to uplift the family values for the good of the country.

Key events for January 2017

Sunday, January 1- New Year's Day/ Solemnity of Mary, the

New Year's Day, also called New Year, marks the first day of the year on the modern Gregorian calendar as well as the Julian calendar. The start of New Year's Day, at midnight, is heralded by fireworks, parties and special events.

The Solemnity of Mary Mother of God commemorates the divine motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the God-Bearer, Mother of Jesus Christ who is God and human. This celebration, assigned on January 1, one week after Christmas, in conformity with the ancient liturgy of the city of Rome, is meant to commemorate the part played by Mary in this mystery of salvation. The Church puts the feast of this solemnity on the first day of the New Year to emphasize the importance of Mary's role in the life of Christ and of the Church. We commemorate various saints on different days of the year, but Mary is the most prominent of them all. She has a special role and mission given to her by God. As Mother of our Redeemer and of the redeemed. she reigns as Queen at the side of Christ the King. She is a powerful intercessor for all of our needs here on earth.

Friday, January 6- Epiphany of the Lord

The Greek word Epiphany means appearance or manifestation or showing forth. It marks Jesus' first appearance to the Gentiles. "Epiphany" refers to God's Self-revelation as well as to the revelation of Jesus as His Son. Epiphany is an older celebration than the feast of Christmas, having originated in the East in the late second century. In Italy and Spain, the gifts traditionally associated with the Christmas season are exchanged on the feast of the Epiphany.

Tuesday, January 9- Baptism of the Lord

Today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Baptism of Our

Lord. This brings to an end the season of Christmas. The Church recalls Our Lord's second manifestation or epiphany which occurred on the occasion of His baptism in River Jordan. Jesus descended into the River to sanctify its waters and to give them the power to beget sons of God. The event takes on the importance of a second creation in which the entire Trinity intervenes.

Friday, January 20- Inauguration of 45th President of the United States of America

The inauguration of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States will be held on Friday, January 20, 2017, on the West Front of the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. The inauguration will mark the commencement of the four-year term of Donald Trump as President and of Mike Pence as Vice President. The new 45th President of the United States of America will then officially take over from President Barack Obama.

Presidents have been inaugurated on Jan. 20 since Franklin D. Roosevelt took the oath of office in 1937, moving up from the previous day of March 4.

Thursday, January 26- NRM Liberation Day

NRM Liberation Day is one of Uganda's public holidays. The holiday commemorates the fall of Tito Okello's regime in 1986

Uganda proclaimed its independence from Great Britain in 1962. Unfortunately, the history of Uganda as an independent state was full of political unrest and included a succession of military coups and a civil war.

Thursday, January 26- NRM Liberation Day

NRM Liberation Day is one of Uganda's public holidays. The holiday commemorates the fall of Tito Okello's regime in 1986.

Uganda Cranes at 2017 AFCON



Ghana's Ayew celebrates his penalty goal against the Uganda Cranes.

PHOTO RY: soka oo ke

By Jacinta W. Odongo

After 38 years of absence in the African Cup of Nations also referred to as AFCON, Uganda Cranes returned to the 2017 AFCON that kicked off on January 14 in Gabon.

As it was in 1978, Ghana got the better of Uganda in the opening Group D match beating the Cranes 1-0. They were drawn in a very tight group which comprises African soccer giants including Ghana, who are in the 2018 World Cup qualifiers, Egypt, and Mali.

The Cranes will also face-off Egypt on January 21 before winding up the group business on January 25 against the Malians. Uganda is the only East African nation in Gabon.

Uganda secured the AFCON tournament place last year after beating Comoros 1-0 to qualify as one of the two best-placed runners-up.

Meanwhile, goalkeeper Denis Onyango, who recently won the 2016 African Player of the Year Award, is expected to play a key role for his country during the Group matches.

Onyango won the 2016 African Player of the Year (Based in Africa) Award at the Glo-CAF Awards 2016 in Abuja on Thursday, January 5, 2016.

He was instrumental in helping the Cranes qualify for the 2017 AFCON last year. Onyango, who also plays for South African Premier Soccer League club Mamelodi Sundowns also won the 2016 CAF Champions League with Mamelodi Sundowns.

AFCON has attracted a total 17 teams: Gabon(hosts), Uganda, Algeria, Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Tunisia, DR Congo, Togo, Gabon and Burkina Faso.



The squad consists of:

Goalkeepers: Salim Jamal Magoola (Al-Merreikh, Sudan), Robert Odongkara (St George, Ethiopia) and Denis Onyango (Mamelodi Sundowns, South Africa).

Defenders are Timothy Awany (Kampala Capital City Authority, Uganda), Shafiq Batambuze (Tusker FC, Kenya), Denis Iguma (Al Ahed, Lebanon), Isaac Isinde (St George, Ethiopia) and Murshid Juuko (Simba, Tanzania).

The others included Joseph Ochaya (Kampala Capital City Authority, Uganda), Nicholas Wadada (Vipers SC, Uganda), Godfrey Walusimbi (GorMahia, Kenya) and Hassan Wasswa (Al Nijmeh, Lebanon)

The midfielders are Khalid Aucho (Baroka FC, South Africa), Mike Azira (Colorado Rapids, the US), and Geoffrey Kizito (Than Quang Ninh, Vietnam).

Others are William Luwagga Kizito (Rio Ave, Portugal), Tony Mawejje (Throttur Reykjavik, Iceland), Moses Oloya (Ha Noi, Vietnam)

The forwards included Baroka FC, South Africa), Farouk Miya (Standard Liege, Belgium), Yunus Sentamu (Ilves Tampere, Finland) and Mohammed Shaban (Onduparaka, Uganda), and Geoffrey Sserunkuma (Kampala Capital City Authourity, Uganda).

Africa Cup of Nations fixture

Group A:

Gabon, Burkina Faso, Cameroon Guinea-Bissau

Jan 14: Gabon vs Guinea-Bissau (7pm), Burkina Faso vs Cameroon (10pm)

Jan 18: Gabon vs Burkina Faso, Cameroon vs Guniea-Bissau

Jan 22: Cameroon vs Gabon, Gunieau-Bissau vs Burkina Faso.

Group B:

Algeria, Tunisia, Senegal, Zimbabwe

Jan 15: Algeria vs Zimbabwe (7pm), Tunisia vs Senegal (10pm)

Jan 19: Algeria vs Tunisia, Senegal vs Zimbabwe

Jan 23: Senegal vs Algeria, Zimbabwe vs Tunisia

Group C:

Ivory Coast, DR Congo, Morocco, Togo

Jan 16: Ivory Coast vs Togo (7pm), DR Congo vs Morocco (10pm)

Jan 20: Ivory Coast vs DR Congo, Morocco vs Togo

Jan 24: Morocco vs Ivory Coast, Togo vs DR Congo

Group D:

Ghana, Mali, Egypt, Uganda

Jan 17: Ghana vs Uganda (7pm), Mali vs Egypt (10pm)

Jan 21: Ghana vs Mali, Egypt vs Uganda

Jan 25: Egypt vs Ghana, Uganda vs Mali

Quarter-finals: January 28, 29.

Semi-finals: February 1, 2.

Third place play-off: February 4

Final: February 5



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Sudan Catholic Bishops Conference gets a new President



Newly elected president of the S.Sudan Catholic Bishops Conference

By AMECEA Online News reporter

S. SUDAN

The Sudan Catholic Bishops Conference (SCBC) has elected Rt. Rev Eduardo Hiiboro Kussala Bishop of Tombura-Yambio Diocese as the new President.

According to the letter sent to AMECEA Secretariat by Rev. Fr. Jacob Odwa Paul, SCBC Secretary General, the meeting which elected Bishop Kussala was held from October 18-27 October, 2016 in Khartoum, Sudan.

The President started serving the conference on January 1, 2017. Bishop Kussala replaced H.E. Gabriel Cardinal Zubeir Wako who retired from the office.

Cardinal Wako retired as Archbishop of Khartoum upon reaching the age limit according to Canon Law. He celebrated his farewell Mass at St. Matthew Cathedral on Sunday November 20, 2016.

"The time has come for me to officially retire. ...it is not going to be the program of life as before," he told the congregation

Cardinal Wako's handover ceremony took place during the closure of the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

The new Archbishop of Khartoum now is Bishop Michael Didi, the former Bishop of El-Obeied. He was installed as Archbishop on December 9, 2016.

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Church Bodies make Peaceful demonstration against Abortion and Homosexuality Bills



Malawi A section of the particapants demonstrate against the abortion and homosexuality bill.







By Prince Henderson ECM Communications Officer

MALAWI

The Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM), together with the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM) have petitioned Parliament against passing of bill that will see women Terminating pregnancy and people of same sex getting marriage.

In a petition presented to parliament on December 6, 2016, the religious bodies described the bill as "evil", arguing that it is contrary to the teachings of the Bible and Quran.

The presentation of the petition was preceded by a march dubbed 'Citizens March for life and family' celebrated under the theme 'Lighting the candle.'

The nationwide march which took place in all the 28 districts in Malawi, brought together participants from various religious groups under their umbrella bodies such as the Quadria Association of Malawi, Church for Central Africa Presbyterian and the Rastafarian community. Participants spoke with one voice clearly indicating that they were strongly against the proposed Abortion Bill and Same Sex Marriages.

In his speech ECM General Secretary Fr. Henry Saindi said Malawi is a God fearing nation, hence no need to legalize abortion and same sex marriages as it is against the wish of God.

After receiving the petition on behalf of parliament, law maker, Juliana Lunguzi-who is also the chairperson of Parliamentary Committee on Health issues assured the gathering that they will act in line with the issues outlined in the petition.

"I am a Catholic, a woman and at the same time a professional nurse and I wouldn't accept the abortion bill and same sex marriages. Pray for us so that we are guided by the Holy Spirit when we are in the August house" said Lunguzi.

Notable personalities that were present as the petition was received included the leader of Opposition Political Parties, Peoples Party Acting President and the United Democratic Front Chief Whip. VATICAN January 2017 ISSUE 1 VOL 5 NEW CONTACT 15

Pope pleads for peace in a world broken by conflict and terrorism

By Vatican Radio



Pope Francis made an impassioned plea for peace on Sunday December 25, 2016 in a world broken by conflict, terrorism and injustice.

Speaking to an estimated 40,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square and to the world during his traditional Christmas Day "Urbi et Orbi" address, the Pope wished Christmas peace for people scarred by wars and for those who have lost loved ones to terrorism. Pope Francis said, the Church experiences the wonder and the joy that derives from the birth of the Son of God, the Prince of Peace.

And in a heartfelt cry for peace in a world disfigured by violence, the Pope said Jesus' message of hope goes out to the ends of the earth to reach all peoples, especially those scarred by war and harsh conflicts that seem stronger than the yearning for peace. Francis forgot no one. He cited those suffering in Syria and recalled the "most awful recent battles" in Aleppo and pressed the international community to find a negotiated solution.

He mentioned the beloved Holy land and urged Israelis and Palestinians to "have the courage and determination to write a new page of history, where hate and revenge give way to the will to build together a future of mutual understanding and harmony".

The Pope remembered Iraq, Libya and Yemen – whose peoples, he said, suffer war and the brutality of terrorism – be able once again to find unity and concord. He lamented that in Nigeria "fundamentalist terrorism exploits even children," and decried conflicts and tensions in South Sudan, in DRC, in eastern Ukraine, Myanmar, the Korean peninsula, Colombia and Venezuela, where he called for dialogue and reconciliation.

Pope Francis also spoke of the victims of terrorism and prayed for peace for those who have lost a person dear to them, or who were wounded, as a result of brutal acts of terrorism, that have sown fear and death in the hearts of so many countries and cities".

Peace – not merely the word, he said, but real and concrete peace – to our abandoned and excluded brothers and sisters, to those who suffer hunger and to all the victims of violence. Peace to exiles, migrants and refugees, to all those who are subject to human trafficking, to those who suffer because of the economic ambitions of a few, to those who endure the consequences of earthquakes or other natural catastrophes.

And the Pope concluded with a special wish for peace for children: on this special day on which God became a child- the Pope highlighted the suffering of those deprived of the joys of childhood because of hunger, wars or the selfishness of adults.

Only with peace, he said, is there the possibility of a more prosperous future for all.

Message Of His Holiness Pope Francis for the celebration Of The 50th World Day Of Peace January 1, 2017

Nonviolence: a Style of Politics for Peace

1. At the beginning of this New Year, I offer heartfelt wishes of peace to the world's peoples and nations, to heads of state and government, and to religious, civic and community leaders. I wish peace to every man, woman and child, and I pray that the image and likeness of God in each person will enable us to acknowledge one another as sacred gifts endowed with immense dignity. Especially in situations of conflict, let us respect this, our "deepest dignity", and make active nonviolence our way of life.

This is the fiftieth Message for the World Day of Peace. In the first, Blessed Pope Paul VI addressed all peoples, not simply Catholics, with utter clarity. "Peace is the only true direction of human progress – and not the tensions caused by ambitious nationalisms, nor conquests by violence, nor repressions which serve as mainstay for a false civil order". He warned of "the danger of believing that international controversies cannot be resolved by the ways of reason, that is, by negotiations founded on law, justice, and equity, but only by means of deterrent and murderous forces." Instead, citing the encyclical Pacem in Terris of his predecessor Saint John XXIII, he extolled "the sense and love of peace founded upon truth, justice, freedom and love". In the intervening fifty years, these words have lost none of their significance or urgency.

On this occasion, I would like to reflect on nonviolence as a style of politics for peace. I ask God to help all of us to cultivate nonviolence in our most personal thoughts and values. May charity and nonviolence govern how we treat each other as individuals, within society and in international life. When victims of violence are able to resist the temptation to retaliate, they become the most credible promotors of nonviolent peacemaking. In the most local and ordinary situations and in the international order, may nonviolence become the hallmark of our decisions, our relationships and our actions, and indeed of political life in all its forms.

A broken world

2. While the last century knew the devastation of two deadly World Wars, the threat of nuclear war and a great number of other conflicts, today, sadly, we find ourselves engaged in a horrifying world war fought piecemeal. It is not easy to know if our world is presently more or less violent than in the past, or to know whether modern means of communications and greater mobility have made us more aware of violence, or, on the other hand, increasingly inured to it.

In any case, we know that this "piecemeal" violence, of different kinds and levels, causes great suffering: wars in different countries and continents; terrorism, organized crime and unforeseen acts of **NEW CONTACT** January 2017 **VATICAN**

violence; the abuses suffered by migrants and victims of human trafficking; and the devastation of the environment. Where does this lead? Can violence achieve any goal of lasting value? Or does it merely lead to retaliation and a cycle of deadly conflicts that benefit only a few "warlords"?

Violence is not the cure for our broken world. Countering violence with violence leads at best to forced migrations and enormous suffering, because vast amounts of resources are diverted to military ends and away from the everyday needs of young people, families experiencing hardship, the elderly, the infirm and the great majority of people in our world. At worst, it can lead to the death, physical and spiritual, of many people, if not of all.

The Good News

3. Jesus himself lived in violent times. Yet he taught that the true battlefield, where violence and peace meet, is the human heart: for "it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come" (Mk 7:21). But Christ's message in this regard offers a radically positive approach. He unfailingly preached God's unconditional love, which welcomes and forgives. He taught his disciples to love their enemies (cf. Mt 5:44) and to turn the other

cheek (cf. Mt 5:39). When he stopped her accusers from stoning the woman caught in adultery (cf. Jn 8:1-11), and when, on the night before he died, he told Peter to put away his sword (cf. Mt 26:52), Jesus marked out the path of nonviolence. He walked that path to the very end, to the cross, whereby he became our peace and put an end to hostility (cf. Eph 2:14-16). Whoever accepts the Good News of Jesus is able to acknowledge the violence within and be healed by God's mercy, becoming in turn an instrument of reconciliation. In the words of Saint Francis of Assisi: "As you announce peace with your mouth, make sure that you have greater peace in your hearts".

To be true followers of Jesus today also includes embracing his teaching about nonviolence. As my predecessor Benedict XVI observed, that teaching "is realistic because it takes into account that in the world there is too much violence, too much injustice, and therefore that this situation cannot be overcome except by countering it with more love, with more goodness. This 'more' comes from God". He went on to stress that: "For Christians, nonviolence is not merely tactical behaviour but a person's way of being, the attitude of one who is so convinced of God's love and power that

> he or she is not afraid to tackle evil with the weapons of love and truth alone. Love of one's enemy constitutes the nucleus of the 'Christian revolution". The Gospel command to love your enemies (cf. Lk 6:27) "is rightly considered the magna carta of Christian nonviolence. It does not consist in succumbing to evil..., but in responding to evil with good (cf. Rom 12:17-21), and thereby breaking the chain of iniustice".

More powerful than violence

4. Nonviolence is sometimes taken to mean surrender, lack of involvement and passivity, but this is not the case. When Mother Teresa received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, she clearly stated her own message of active nonviolence: "We in our family don't need bombs and guns, to destroy to bring peace - just get together, love one another... And we will be able to overcome all the evil that is in the world". For the force of arms is deceptive. "While weapons traffickers do their work, there are poor peacemakers who give their lives to help one person, then another and another and another"; for such peacemakers, Mother Teresa is "a symbol, an icon of our times". Last September, I had the great joy of proclaiming her a Saint. I praised her readiness to make herself available for everyone "through her welcome and defence of human life, those unborn and those abandoned and discarded... She bowed down before those who were spent, left to die on the side of the road, seeing in them their God-given dignity; she made her voice heard before



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the powers of this world, so that they might recognize their guilt for the crimes – the crimes! – of poverty they created". In response, her mission – and she stands for thousands, even millions of persons – was to reach out to the suffering, with generous dedication, touching and binding up every wounded body, healing every broken life.

The decisive and consistent practice of nonviolence has produced impressive results. The achievements of Mahatma Gandhi and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in the liberation of India, and of Dr Martin Luther King Jr in combating racial discrimination will never be forgotten. Women in particular are often leaders of nonviolence, as for example, was Leymah Gbowee and the thousands of Liberian women, who organized pray-ins and nonviolent protest that resulted in high-level peace talks to end the second civil war in Liberia.

Nor can we forget the eventful decade that ended with the fall of Communist regimes in Europe. The Christian communities made their own contribution by their insistent prayer and courageous action. Particularly influential were the ministry and teaching of Saint John Paul II. Reflecting on the events of 1989 in his 1991 Encyclical Centesimus Annus, my predecessor highlighted the fact that momentous change in the lives of people, nations and states had come about "by means of peaceful protest, using only the weapons of truth and justice". This peaceful political transition was made possible in part "by the non-violent commitment of people who, while always refusing to yield to the force of power, succeeded time after time in finding effective ways of bearing witness to the truth". Pope John Paul went on to say: "May people learn to fight for justice without violence, renouncing class struggle in their internal disputes and war in international ones".

The Church has been involved in nonviolent peace building strategies in many countries, engaging even the most violent parties in efforts to build a just and lasting peace.

Such efforts on behalf of the victims of injustice and violence are not the legacy of the Catholic Church alone, but are typical of many religious traditions, for which "compassion and nonviolence are essential elements pointing to the way of life". I emphatically reaffirm that "no religion is terrorist". Violence profanes the name of God. Let us never tire of repeating: "The name of God cannot be used to justify violence. Peace alone is holy. Peace alone is holy, not war!"

The domestic roots of a politics of nonviolence

5. If violence has its source in the human heart, then it is fundamental that nonviolence be practised before all else within families. This is part of that joy of love which I described last March in my Exhortation Amoris Laetitia, in the wake of two years of reflection by the Church on marriage and the family. The family is the indispensable crucible in which spouses, parents and children, brothers and sisters, learn to communicate and to show generous concern for one another, and in which frictions and even conflicts have to be resolved not by force but by dialogue, respect, concern for the good of the other, mercy and forgiveness. From within families, the joy of love spills out into the world and radiates to the whole of society. An ethics of fraternity and peaceful coexistence between individuals and among peoples cannot be based on the logic of fear, violence and closed-mindedness, but on responsibility, respect and sincere dialogue. Hence, I plead for disarmament and for the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons: nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutual assured destruction are incapable of grounding such an ethics. I plead with equal urgency for an end to domestic violence and to the abuse of women and children.

The Jubilee of Mercy that ended in November encouraged each one of us to look deeply within and to allow God's mercy to enter there. The Jubilee taught us to realize how many and diverse are the individuals and social groups treated with indifference and

subjected to injustice and violence. They too are part of our "family"; they too are our brothers and sisters. The politics of nonviolence have to begin in the home and then spread to the entire human family. "Saint Therese of Lisieux invites us to practise the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures that break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness".

My invitation

6. Peacebuilding through active nonviolence is the natural and necessary complement to the Church's continuing efforts to limit the use of force by the application of moral norms; she does so by her participation in the work of international institutions and through the competent contribution made by so many Christians to the drafting of legislation at all levels. Jesus himself offers a "manual" for this strategy of peacemaking in the Sermon on the Mount. The eight Beatitudes (cf. Mt 5:3-10) provide a portrait of the person we could describe as blessed, good and authentic. Blessed are the meek, Jesus tells us, the merciful and the peacemakers, those who are pure in heart, and those who hunger and thirst for justice.

This is also a programme and a challenge for political and religious leaders, the heads of international institutions, and business and media executives: to apply the Beatitudes in the exercise of their respective responsibilities. It is a challenge to build up society, communities and businesses by acting as peacemakers. It is to show mercy by refusing to discard people, harm the environment, or seek to win at any cost. To do so requires "the willingness to face conflict head on, to resolve it and to make it a link in the chain of a new process". To act in this way means to choose solidarity as a way of making history and building friendship in society. Active nonviolence is a way of showing that unity is truly more powerful and more fruitful than conflict. Everything in the world is inter-connected. Certainly differences can cause frictions. But let us face them constructively and non-violently, so that "tensions and oppositions can achieve a diversified and life-giving unity," preserving "what is valid and useful on both sides"

I pledge the assistance of the Church in every effort to build peace through active and creative nonviolence. On 1 January 2017, the new Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development will begin its work. It will help the Church to promote in an ever more effective way "the inestimable goods of justice, peace, and the care of creation" and concern for "migrants, those in need, the sick, the excluded and marginalized, the imprisoned and the unemployed, as well as victims of armed conflict, natural disasters, and all forms of slavery and torture". Every such response, however modest, helps to build a world free of violence, the first step towards justice and peace.

In conclusion

7. As is traditional, I am signing this Message on 8 December, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary is the Queen of Peace. At the birth of her Son, the angels gave glory to God and wished peace on earth to men and women of good will (cf. Luke 2:14). Let us pray for her guidance.

"All of us want peace. Many people build it day by day through small gestures and acts; many of them are suffering, yet patiently persevere in their efforts to be peacemakers". In 2017, may we dedicate ourselves prayerfully and actively to banishing violence from our hearts, words and deeds, and to becoming nonviolent people and to building nonviolent communities that care for our common home. "Nothing is impossible if we turn to God in prayer. Everyone can be an artisan of peace".

From the Vatican, 8 December 2016 Franciscus

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Vatican issues new guidelines for priestly formation

By Vatican Radio

The Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy has issued an updated instrument for the formation of priests.

The document, entitled Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis or 'The Gift of Priestly Vocation', was promulgated on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, last year on December 8.

"The gift of the priestly vocation, placed by God in the hearts of some men, obliges the Church to propose to them a serious journey of formation," the opening line of the document reads.

In an interview with the Osservatore Romano, Cardinal Beniamino Stella, Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, says the updated Ratio Fundamentalis is meant to provide guidelines for the formation of priests, which "needed to be revamped, renewed, and restored to the centre". Below are the guidelines:

Updated norms

The last Ratio was published in 1970 and updated in 1985. Cardinal Stella said the new norms seek to take into account the rapid evolution in "historical, socio-cultural, and ecclesiastical contexts".

He said inspiration was drawn from Pope Francis' teachings and spirituality, especially regarding "temptations tied to money, to the authoritarian exercise of power, to rigid legalism, and to vainglory".

Innovation and continuity

Cardinal Stella said the guidelines take up "the content, methods and orientation produced up to this day in the field of formation", while at the same time building on the "existing patrimony" of the Church.

He said that "in the life of the Church innovations are never separate from Tradition, but, on the contrary, integrate it, and enhance it". The document, he said, draws on Pastores dabo vobis from 1992 to promote an "integral formation", that is, "the ability to unite, in a balanced way, the human, as well as the spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral dimensions, through a gradual instructional personalised course". One important innovation is the introduction of a "propaedeutic period upon entrance to the Seminary".

The Ratio Fundamentalis proposes the propaedeutic stage of formation be "not less than one year or more than two" and is meant to validate the vocation of candidates.



The document also emphasizes the need for dioceses and religious orders to guard against admitting potential sex abusers to the priesthood.

"The greatest attention must be given to the theme of the protection of minors and vulnerable adults," it says, "being vigilant lest those who seek admission to a seminary or a house of formation, or who are already petitioning to receive Holy Orders, have not been involved in any way with any crime or problematic behavior in this area."

Ratio Fundamentalis restates the language of the Catechism of the Catholic Church on the ordination of persons with homosexual tendencies.

"The Church, while profoundly respecting the persons in question, cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture'. Such persons, in fact, find themselves in a situation that gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women. One must in no way overlook the negative consequences that can derive from the ordination of persons with deep-seated homosexual tendencies." (cf. Ratio Fundamentalis 199; CCC nn. 2357-2358).

Cardinal Stella said the guidelines have added three stages to priestly formation: "the "stage of discipleship," "configuration stage," and "pastoral stage," to each of which corresponds with an itinerary and a formative content, orientated toward assimilation with the image of the Good Shepherd."

In brief, he said, "to be a good priest, in addition to having passed all the exams, a demonstrated human, spiritual and pastoral maturation is necessary".

Humanity, spirituality, discernment

Cardinal Stella told the Osservatore Romano the three keywords he would choose to describe the document are: 'humanity, spirituality, and discernment.'

He recalled Pope Francis' recent address to the Society of Jesus: "I am noticing," he said "the lack of discernment in the formation of priests. We are risking, in fact, becoming accustomed to 'black and white' and to that which is legal. We are quite closed, by and large, to discernment. One thing is clear, today in a certain quantity of Seminaries, a rigidity has been re- established which is not related to situational discernment."

Word for priests

The Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy concluded with a word for priests.

He said, "To each one of them I would like to say above all: do not become discouraged! The Lord never offers less than his promises, and if you have called upon him, he will make his light shine upon you, whether you live in darkness, aridity, fatigue or a moment of pastoral failure. I would like to recommend to priests that they not let the healthy disquiet, which maintains their progress on the right path, be extinguished!"

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Queen Elizabeth inspired by Mother Theresa



Mother Teresa

By Vatican Radio

In her traditional Christmas message delivered last year on December 26, British Queen Elizabeth II expressed her appreciation for Mother Teresa of Kolkata saying ordinary people can do extraordinary things with their quiet dedication. The 90-year old Queen spoke of being inspired by the medal winners from the U.K.

in the Olympic and Paralympic games this year, as well as the doctors, paramedics and crew she met while opening a new base for the East Anglian Air Ambulance. Then she added: "To be inspirational, you don't have to save lives or win medals." She said she often drew "strength from meeting ordinary people doing extraordinary things: volunteers, carers, community organizers and good neighbors; unsung heroes whose quiet dedication makes them special." "They are an inspiration to those who know them, and their lives frequently embody a truth expressed by Mother Teresa, from this year Saint Teresa of Calcutta," the Queen said in her Christmas message. She recalled Mother Teresa once said, 'Not all of us can do great things — but we can do small things with great love.'

The queen said she knew that sometimes the world's problems seem too big for individuals to affect. "On our own, we cannot end wars or wipe out injustice," she said. "But the cumulative impact of thousands of small acts of goodness can be bigger than we imagine."

Bishops of Africa Congratulate Pope Francis on his 80th Birthday



By Vatican Radio

Nigerian Bishop, Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo of Oyo Diocese and President of the Social Communications Committee at SECAM issued the following Press Release, on behalf of the Bishops of Africa, to mark the 80th birthday of Pope Francis which falls on 17 December 2016.

SECAM stands for Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar and has its headquarters in Accra, Ghana. The Social Communications Committee of the continental association of Catholic Bishops is known as CEPACS, it French acronym which stands for the Pan-African Episcopal Committee for Social Communications (Comité Episcopal Panafricain Pour Les Communications).

PRESS RELEASE FROM SECAM ON THE OCCASION OF POPE FRANCIS' 80TH BIRTHDAY

16 DECEMBER 2016
BISHOPS OF AFRICA CONGRATULATE POPE FRANCIS ON HIS
BIRTHDAY

On behalf of the President of SECAM, Most Reverend Gabriel Mbilingi; the Standing Committee of SECAM and on behalf of all the Bishops and Conferences of SECAM in Africa, I send the Holy Father Pope Francis filial greetings on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

The African church deeply appreciates the Holy Father's apostolate on marriage and love in the family and pledges to stand firm for the integrity of Christian marriage and the family at all times. May God grant the Holy Father Pope Francis abundant grace and wisdom still to continue to fulfil his Petrine mandate faithfully.

To the Holy Father, congratulations and ad multos annos.

Most Reverend Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo President of CEPACS SECAM



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