

THOUSANDS OF PILGRIMS THROG PAIMOL TO CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF THE BLESSED MARTYRS



The Bishops at the sanctuary during the celebration of the Mass at Paimol.

PHOTO BY: FR. SAMUEL MWAKA

By Rev. Fr. Samuel Okidi Mwaka,
Communications Coordinator, Archdiocese of Gulu

On October 20, 2016, thousands of pilgrims from across the country made a pilgrimage to Wi Polo Paimol Martyrs Shrine in Kalongo sub-county, Agago District, to commemorate the beatification of Catechists Daudi Okello and Jildo Irwa.

The two catechists, both of Acholi decent, were killed on October 18, 1918 for refusing to denounce their faith. They preached equality against the practice of slavery, witchcraft and clan discriminations of the time. They were beatified by St. Pope John Paul II on October 20, 2002. Since their beatification, the celebration has been gaining rapid momentum as far as the number and devotions of the pilgrims is concerned.

This year's celebration was animated by Lacor Deanery which comprises of five parishes in Amuru, Gulu and Nwoya Districts. It was held under the theme, "For me life is Christ, Death is gain", extracted from Philippians 1:21.

The Mass was presided over by Most Rev. John Baptist Odama, the Archbishop of Gulu and Chairman of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, and con-celebrated by Rt. Rev. Joseph Franzelli, Bishop of Lira Diocese, Rt. Rev. Sabino Ocan Odoki, Bishop of Arua Diocese, Rt. Rev. Linus

Sanctus Wanok, Bishop of Nebbi Diocese and Rt. Rev. Damiano Guzzetti, Bishop of Moroto Diocese. Besides the Bishops, there were over two hundred priests who concelebrated the Holy Mass.

In his homily Archbishop Odama said, the theme of this year's celebration recalls the experience of St. Paul of being won over by Christ.

"This year's Provincial Pilgrimage to the Martyrs of Wi Polo Paimol Shrine takes place in a special context of the year of mercy when the Holy Father has invited the whole Church following the example of Christ to make humanity that is wounded by sin and many other ills, experience God's compassion and mercy. We have as directed by the Holy Father designated the main door of the Church at this Shrine as a door of mercy," he said.

He called upon the faithful to pay tribute to God for the gift of the Blessed Martyrs as well as the Martyrs of Namugongo, for the courage they showed in witnessing to Christ at their young age and during the period of uncertainty.

"Coming for a pilgrimage to Paimol can be considered as, first gratitude to the Martyrs, secondly as a moment of paying tribute to them for their achievement, thirdly it is also a moment to learn from them how they lived

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JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

Luke 6:36

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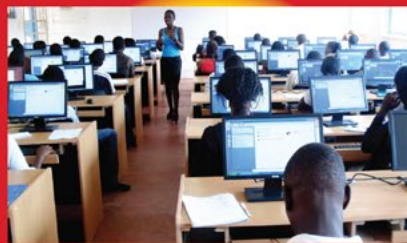
H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni officially opened Slau on the 8th November 2013 which he launched on the 14th October 2006.

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H.E. GEN. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, SLAU Chancellor J.C. Edward Kyumukya Sarikandi and The Chairman Board of Trustees Prof. Lawrence Mukiibi, Chairman University Council Hon. Midey Sebasa during the Official opening of St. Lawrence University on the 8th November 2013



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Editorial



When **New Contact** was first published in September 2013, I indicated in the editorial that it had started as a monthly electronic publication, but would eventually be available in hard copy. I am glad to announce that **New Contact** is now available in hard copy beginning with this issue of October 2016, at a cost of **Shs 2,000/=** (Two thousand Uganda Shillings only) per copy.

New Contact is a publication of Uganda Episcopal Conference and it is managed by the Social Communications Department of the Conference, located at Uganda Catholic Secretariat in Nsambya, Kampala. It has the aim of disseminating Catholic related news stories and information that promotes evangelization and human development. The publication provides the readers with first hand information on major Catholic events in Uganda and beyond, and an opportunity for Catholics and all people of good will to interact and share the joy of life.

As we thank our readers for the continued feedback, we request for support in form of news stories, reflections, commentaries, opinions and adverts. We receive articles on issues pertaining to faith, morals, culture, health, sports, education, business, governance, justice, peace and other relevant topics.

For more information regarding adverts, articles or any other related matters, please contact us on; **+256-782746812/+256-702606851** or send an email to; **newcontact2013@gmail.com** or **podii2002@gmail.com**.

Let us keep in contact through **New Contact**.

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

Thousands of pilgrims throng Paimol to celebrate the feast of blessed martyrs Daudi Okello and Jildo Irwa

faithfully their faith in Jesus Christ and finally it is a moment to praise God who's will succeeded in their lives hence making them our intercessor," the Archbishop explained. The Guest of Honour was the Vice President of the Republic of Uganda, His Excellency Edward Kiwanuka Ssekandi. He spearheaded the fundraising for the development of the Paimol Martyrs Shrine. In his speech, he encouraged the pilgrims to emulate the example of dedication and sacrifices portrayed by the Martyrs and contribute towards Paimol shrine that should be raised to the level of a National Spiritual Tourism destination. He made a contribution of shs5m towards the Paimol Development fund.

Also in attendance were several government dignitaries who included the Deputy speaker



A section of the Choir Members (in red) and the faithful during the celebration. PHOTO BY FR. SAMUEL MWAKA

of Parliament, Rt. Honourable Jacob Oulanya and Hon. Salamu Musumba. Oulanya made a contribution of shs10m towards the development of the Shrine.

The hosting Deanery for 2017 will be Christ the King Deanery in Kitgum Vicariate. Gulu University animated the 2015 celebration.



Profiles of Martyrs Daudi Okello (L) and Jildo Irwa (R)

The martyrs Daudi Okello and Jildo Irwa were two young catechists from Uganda at the beginning of the 20th century. They belonged to the Acholi tribe, a subdivision of the Acholi Luo group whose members even today live mostly in the North of Uganda, but they are also present in Southern Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan and Congo. They lived and were martyred in the years immediately following the foundation of the mission of Kitgum by the Comboni missionaries in 1915

WISE QUOTES FOR REFLECTION

'Don't become too preoccupied with what is happening around you. Pay more attention to what is going on within you,' – **Mary Frances Winters**

'Experience is the hardest kind of teacher. It gives you the test first and the lesson afterwards,' – **Oscar Wilde**

'Follow effective action with a quiet reflection. From the quiet reflection will come even more effective action,' – **Peter F. Drucker**

'You have got to say no to the things that don't honour you. No to the things that don't bring you joy. And you don't have to explain your no,' – **Iyanla Vanzant**

'Be a reflection of what you would like to see in others. If you want love, give love, if you want honesty, give honesty. If you want respect, give respect. You get in return, what you give,' – **Unknown**

'Forgiveness is a reflection of loving yourself enough to move on,' – **Dr. Steve Maraboli**

'Have a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires and a touch that never hurts,' – **Charles Dickens**

'Fearlessness maybe a gift but perhaps more precious is the courage that comes from cultivating the habit of refusing to let fear dictate one's actions,' – **Aung San Suu Kyi**

Over 3000 refugees and Host Community to benefit from Food Security and Livelihoods programme of Caritas Uganda



Sudanese gather to receive donor aid from UNHCR.

INTERNET PHOTO BY UNHCR

By Jacinta W. Odongo

Media Officer, Uganda Episcopal Conference

Over 3000 refugees and members of the host community from Yumbe District are set to benefit from Caritas Uganda for a one-year period. This is after Caritas Uganda received donor aid from its confederation members last month that will enhance food security and livelihoods.

Caritas Uganda, which is a department of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, in collaboration with Caritas Belgium and Irish Trocaire among other partners, have committed to assist 3000 newly arrived South Sudanese refugees and the host community that they are living in and around Bidibidi camp in Yumbe District. They will support them through food production and non-agricultural income generation. The South Sudanese refugees were forced to flee their country following resumption of war between forces loyal to President Salvar Kiir and rebel leader Riek Machar this year.

The Caritas Uganda Project Coordinator for the Refugee Emergency Response in Bidibidi Camp, Godfrey Onentho said that they will focus on food security and livelihoods without ignoring aspects such as health, nutrition, hygiene and environment.

"Malnutrition among the refugees remains high, particularly severe acute malnutrition, visible mainly among children below five. Yumbe District is well endowed with fertile soils, but the refugees do not have the farming implements and inputs for planting. Besides, every refugee received from the Ugandan Government a plot of land measuring 30mx30m for construction of shelter and gardening," he said adding "It is for this reason that Caritas Uganda is planning for an intermediary response

to provide targeted households with knowledge, skills and farming implements to produce food for themselves."

He also noted that women and girls in both communities will be provided with reusable sanitary pads and the host communities will be provided tree seedlings, for both fruit and timber.

Out of the 3000 households, 2400 will be households from the refugee camp itself and 600 will be households from the



S Sudanese refugees arrive in Uganda.

INTERNET PHOTO BY UNHCR

host community in order to avoid conflict between the two groups. It is the policy of the Uganda Government that whatever support is given to the refugees 25 percent of it must go to the host communities.

In a bid to further comply with this rule and avoid tension between the refugees and host community, 60 youths from the refugee community and 20 from the host community will be trained in various fields such as catering, tailoring, metal fabrication, agriculture and farming, motor

vehicle mechanic, hair dressing and beauty. Caritas Uganda hopes that after the three months intensive training in the institutions within Northern Uganda the youth will become self-reliant," he explained.

After the training the best 60 youth from the two communities will be awarded with start-up kits in every area of their specialization to help them set up a business, to become self-reliant and to strengthen their socio-economic resilience. The refugees will continue to receive relief food and other humanitarian support from Caritas Uganda and its partners, based on verified need.

He further explained that they will also organize the refugees in groups of 15-20 farmers, identify 10 Community Extension Workers (CEW) to act as everyday link between the beneficiaries and the emergency appeal by mobilizing the beneficiaries and providing basic agronomic support and post-harvest handling skills. Every group will elect a leader to go for a one-month training on agronomic practices (advanced level).

Caritas Belgium has procured the seeds and the agricultural tools to be used by the refugees and host community for this planting season. Both the seeds and tools were supplied and commissioned on Saturday, October 22.

Uganda currently hosts more than 480,000 refugees residing in nine rural settlements. These refugees rely heavily on external assistance. The time it takes for the refugees to achieve self-reliance depends on the duration of time spent in Uganda and access to productive land as well as the quality of their livelihoods.

Corporal Works of Mercy

Centered on the Merciful Heart of Jesus, whose love is poured into our hearts especially through prayer and the Eucharist, we are to let His merciful love flow through our hearts toward anyone in need whom we meet along life's way.

Mercy as it is here contemplated is said to be a virtue influencing one's will to have compassion for, and, if possible, to alleviate another's misfortune. The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They "are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs" (USCCA). They respond to the basic needs of humanity as we journey together through this life.

The seven Corporal Works of Mercy are as follows:

- To feed the hungry;
- To give drink to the thirsty;
- To clothe the naked;
- To harbour the harbourless;
- To visit the sick;
- To ransom the captive;
- To bury the dead.

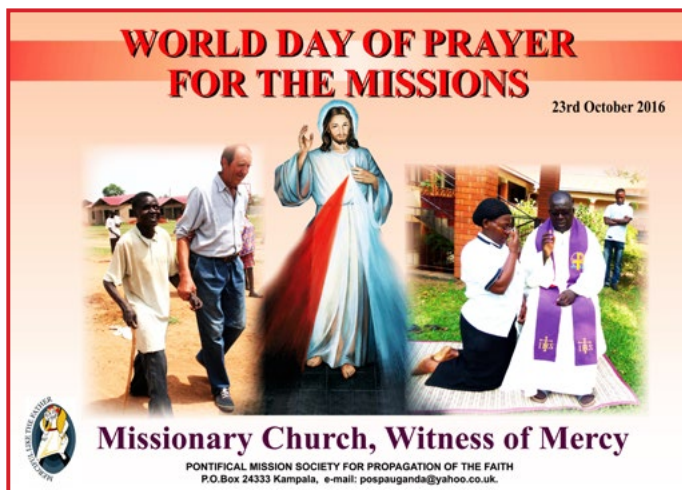
Moved by mercy and the joy of the Gospel we donate generously to support the missions

By Fr. Ssettuuma Benedict Junior

The Lord Jesus Christ, before he returned to his beloved Father, He who had sent him out of his eternal love for his creation and especially human beings, left his Church the mandate to make disciples of all the nations by going, teaching and baptising (Matthew 28: 18-20). The Church has continued until today to carry on this mission with dedication, zeal and commitment. In exercising this, the Church has always struggled to live it concretely by observing the more practical mandate that is found in Luke 4: 16-21.

St. Pope John Paul II, having visited India in the early 1990s and having seen the so many human beings there and the small number of Christians observed that , *"The Mission of Christ the Redeemer, which is entrusted to the church, is still very far from completion. As the second millennium after Christ's coming draws to an end, an overall view of the human race shows that this mission is still only beginning and that we must commit ourselves wholeheartedly to its service"* (Rm1 I). This kind of awareness also occurred to the young French girl Pauline Jaricot (born on July 22, 1799 at Lyon in France). In 1822 Pauline Jaricot founded a Spiritual Association, especially of the working youth who met for prayer and reparation of the despised Heart of Jesus brought about by the devastating effects of the French Revolution. In 1818, the group became a Missionary Association in the sense that it began sharing and diffusing materials that were sent by P. Rondot of the seminary of M. E. P (*Mission Extremes di Pari*).

The Association took on a universal character and was quickly recognised by the Holy See, thus taking on a new name of the Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith (POF). Its central offices were transferred to Rome to collaborate better with the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples in promoting the missionary spirit and activity. The



greatest achievement of this Association is the introduction of *World Mission Sunday* requested for by the foundress. This was quickly granted by the Congregation for the Propagation of Faith on 14th April 1926. It was then established to be celebrated on the **second last Sunday of October** and the first celebration took place in 1927.

With Pope Paul VI, the day was accompanied by a message calling for the undertaking of the missionary task of the church and its urgency. The Activities and Spirituality of the Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith is lived every day particularly and intensely on Mission Sunday. This indicates the fullness and maturity of the Christian, giving each baptised a chance to live his or her baptismal mandate. The work itself demonstrates the catholicity of the Church inviting the baptised to go beyond their tribe, culture and race and reach out to the whole world.

Whenever we celebrate World Mission Sunday, the Church focuses on three elements:

i. **Raise missionary awareness, reminding the faithful of their baptismal mandate "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations...(Mt.28.19-20)".** Real genuine love for the missions is the real concern here. Every Catholic must learn to consider the missions as part of his or her ordinary life as a member of the Catholic Church. He or she must read, hear and think about the missions as something of definite personal obligation. In doing so one progresses in Christian maturity. *"Faith is strengthened when it is shared with others."* Said John Paul II (RMi 2).

ii. **Prayer:** For the missionary work to be fruitful, it must be centred on prayer. This prayer for the missions must be offered in a true, convinced and genuine way in order to obtain the power from

above for the workers of the missions.

iii. **Material and Financial Assistance:** Every baptised catholic is encouraged to make a material and financial contribution in order to support missionary activity i.e. to care for Christian communities in need and for the proclamation of the Gospel to the ends of

the earth.

Pope Francis in his message for this year's World Mission Sunday, which also is the 90th year since its foundation, reminds the faithful that the Church has the duty to announce to the world Jesus Christ who is the true mercy of God. The Holy Father teaches us that *"All peoples and cultures have the right to receive the message of salvation which is God's gift to every person"*. Thus he invites all of us to "go out" as missionary disciples, each generously offering their talents, creativity, wisdom and experience in order to bring the message of God's tenderness and compassion to the entire human family. He therefore orders the whole church to destine all the offerings collected on this Mission Sunday in every diocese and all ecclesial communities throughout the world for the proclamation of the Gospel even to the ends of the earth. Let us, moved by love, mercy and the joy of the Gospel fulfil our baptismal mandate by contributing generously to support missionary activity throughout the World.

The Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith is one of the four Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS). They all share a common objective of raising mission awareness among all the baptised. The National office is located at the Uganda Catholic Secretariat – Nsambya. We are called to be missionaries every day of our lives, therefore you can send in your donation for the missions anytime throughout the year. May the Mother of Mercy and Star of Evangelisation assist us in this noble endeavour.

Contact us at the National office:

E-mail: pospauganda@yahoo.co.uk;

Website: www.pmsuganda.org

Tel.: 0312-261 093

The contribution of the Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC) towards closing the gap in pediatric and adolescent HIV care in Uganda



By Dr Daniella Busharizi Migisha
Maternal & Child HIV/AIDS Coordinator

The Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC) is a recipient of a Centre for Disease Control (CDC) grant to offer HIV care and treatment to patients and their families. Exposed children and adolescents living with HIV are offered care across 19 health facilities, 17 hospitals; Angal, Nsambya, Rubaga, Kisubi, Virika, Kyamuhunga, Lacor, Aber, Kalongo, Kitgum, Villa Maria, Nkozi, Kitovu, Nagalama, St Anthony Tororo, Bishop Asili, and Nyenga hospitals, 2 health centres, Kasanga HCIII and Kamwokya Christian Caring Community.

In the fight against pediatric HIV, UEC has been able to provide free HIV testing to mothers attending Antenatal care in these facilities. Those identified to be HIV positive are given Anti retroviral drugs for their health and their unborn infants to prevent maternal transmission; the

commonest mode of children to acquire the infection.

Uganda had a target of reducing mother to child transmission rates to less than 5% among breastfeeding infants born to HIV positive mothers by 2015. UEC has been able to contribute greatly to this noble cause as shown from the initial HIV test results from a number of these babies.

Since the national roll out of ARVs for HIV positive mothers for life in October 2012, infants born to these mothers who received their initial HIV tests were analysed and of the 7,728 infants tested, only 228 of these had acquired HIV from their mothers either during pregnancy, labour and delivery or even breastfeeding. This translates to a transmission rate of 2.95% which is way below the national target then set at <5% among the breastfeeding population. These were initial tests done in a period of three years (Jan 2103-Dec 2015).

Children and adolescents are seen on special clinic days to offer them an environment conducive for their needs. Special rooms have been set out with toys and reading materials to keep them busy as the clinic runs. To fight pediatric HIV, all pregnant mothers and their partners need to take the HIV test.

There is medicine to reduce the chance of transmitting this virus to your unborn baby.

Some children out there who are meant to be on treatment miss it because the caretakers have not taken the step to get them tested for HIV. Take the step now and get to know the HIV status of children in your care. There is a big role to play as a society, continue offering health education about HIV to the young ones, those on treatment should take their pills diligently. Social support to those on treatment is paramount. Religious leaders, you are a source of inspiration to the young ones and their families, your work is greatly appreciated.

The UEC is committed to the cause of closing the gap in pediatric and adolescent HIV care and will work closely with the Ministry of Health to achieve the national goal.



Key events for November 2016

Tuesday, November 1 – All Saints' Day

All Saints' Day is a solemn Holy day of the Catholic Church celebrated annually on November 1. The day is dedicated to the saints of the Church, that is, all those who have attained heaven. It should not be confused with All Souls' Day, which is observed on November 2, and is dedicated to those who have died and have not yet reached heaven.

All Saints' Day is also commemorated by members of the Eastern Orthodox Church as well as some protestant churches, such as Anglican and Lutheran churches. Generally, All Saints' Day is a Catholic Holy Day of Obligation, meaning all Catholics are required to attend Mass on that day.

It was formally started by Pope Boniface IV, who consecrated the Pantheon at Rome to the Virgin Mary and all the Martyrs on May 13 in 609 AD. Boniface IV also established All Souls' Day.

Wednesday, November 2 – All Souls' Day

All Souls Day is a Holy day set aside for honoring the dead. The day is primarily celebrated in the Catholic Church, but it is also celebrated in the Eastern Orthodox Church and a few other denominations of Christianity. The Anglican Church is the largest protestant church to celebrate this Holy day.

According to Catholic belief, the soul of a person who dies can

go to one of three places. The first is heaven, where a person who dies in a state of perfect grace and communion with God goes. The second is hell, where those who die in a state of mortal sin are naturally condemned by their choice. The intermediate option is purgatory, which is thought to be where most people, free of mortal sin, but still in a state of lesser (venial) sin, must go.

Sunday November 20 - Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy concludes

The Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy is a period of prayer held from December 8, 2015 (The Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary), to November 20, 2016 (The Feast of Christ the King). Like previous jubilees, it is seen by the Church as a period for remission of sins and universal pardon focusing particularly on God's forgiveness and mercy. It is an extraordinary Jubilee because it had not been predetermined long before; usually ordinary jubilees take place every 25 years. The Jubilee of Mercy was first announced by Pope Francis on March 13, 2015.

Bishop of Hoima appoints committees to spearhead the 2017 Martyrs Day celebration

By Jacinta W. Odongo

With exactly seven months to the 2017 Uganda Martyrs day celebrations, Rt. Rev. Vincent Kirabo, the Bishop of Hoima Diocese has appointed an organizing committee at Diocesan level to spearhead the June 3 celebration which will be held at Namugongo Catholic Shrine.

Bishop Kirabo, who was installed in February this year in a colorful celebration, commissioned nine organizing committees and leaders on Friday October 14, 2016 in Hoima Diocese. The diocese of Hoima will animate the 2017 Uganda Martyrs celebration on behalf of Mbarara Ecclesiastical province.

The nine organizing committees which have been allocated tasks include Liturgy, Security and Ushering, Finance, Publicity, Research and Documentation, Pilgrims, Transport and Accommodation, Catering and Welfare, Health, Decoration, beautification and sanitation.

The bishop appointed Msgr. Matthias Nyakatura as the overall overseer of all the nine committees, Rev. Fr. Robert Mugisa, who is the Diocesan Pastoral Coordinator, as the Overall Coordinator and Dr. Emmanuel Kiiza Aliba, the Executive Secretary of the Justice and Peace Department of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, as the chairperson.

Dr. Aliba said that the newly set up committees plan to handle the preparations of the 2017 Martyrs celebration in the most effective and efficient way.

"This isn't our first time to lead the Martyrs day celebration. From our past experience, we did a good job and we



Bishop Kirabo (Left) waves to the faithful after his installation as a Bishop this year.

PHOTO BY JACINTA W. ODONGO

believe we can handle this even much better," he said adding that they sent a team of 10 people to Kiyinda-Mityana Diocese to study how they conducted their preparations for the 2016 celebration so as to borrow a leaf.

He noted that the preparations and actual celebrations have been estimated to a budget of at least shs500m. "During our first meeting we decided that all the work of fundraising should be done in three vicariates of the diocese which includes Hoima, Kibale and Masindi," he explained.

He added, "Our system of fundraising is going to be very simple. We have over 800,000 Catholic faithful in our diocese and we plan to ask each Christian to contribute only shs1000. We also plan to involve school children whereby each child will be asked to bring an egg. We believe this plan is going to work out because each vicariate will involve all their parishes."

The committees will be holding their

meetings every third Friday of the month. The Diocese of Hoima last presided over the Martyrs Day celebrations in 2001.

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.

Of the 22 Martyrs who were canonized, two of them, St. Andrew Kaggwa and St. Anatoli Kiriggwajjo came from Hoima Diocese. In addition to the 22 Catholic Martyrs, there are two Catechists from Paimol: Blessed Daudi Okelo and Blessed Jildo Irwa who were killed in 1918. The two Catechists were beatified by St. Pope John Paul II on October 20, 2002.



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Inquiry for the Cause of the beatification of Fr. Simeon Lourdel Mapeera and Bro. Amans Delmas

By Rev. Fr. Richard Nnyombi

Many Ugandans, especially Catholics, are now very familiar with the church song "Twebaze Mapeera ne munne Amansi" composed by Fr. Mukwaya Gerald at the occasion of the centenary celebrations of the Catholic Church in Uganda (1979). This hymn has become one of the local "classic church songs" and hopefully one day the composer will be honoured with a 'medal'!

This beautiful and meditative song might make some think that these two first catholic missionaries in Uganda are already 'canonised'! The fact is that they are neither beatified nor canonised!

Since 1987, the Archdiocese of Kampala, through the late Emmanuel Cardinal Kiwanuka Nsubuga, initiated the process of opening up the inquiry in the life of Fr. Simeon Lourdel Mapeera and later on that of Bro. Amans Delmas, in view of their beatification and canonisation. Rome gave the green light (*Nihil Obstat*) to go ahead with the inquiry for the two 'Servants of God'. A lot has already been done and many people have witnessed to having received favours and miracles through their intercessions.

However, according to the rules and regulations of conducting this inquiry, there are specific procedures which have to be followed meticulously. One of these which marks the beginning of this inquiry is called the 'opening session' or the 'first session' in which the ordinary institutes all

the members of the diocesan tribunal to conduct it. This is the ceremony which will take place at Lubaga on the 6th November 2016 during the Eucharistic celebration (10.00am) presided by the Archbishop of Kampala, His Grace, Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga.



Fr. Simeon Lourdel Mapeera and Bro. Amans Delmas

The venue for this event, Lubaga Cathedral, is itself very meaningful in relation to this event. This is the very place where Kabaka Muteesa I said 'YES' in response to the request of Mapeera and Amans, to allow them and their confreres to settle in his Kingdom to teach the Catholic Faith. On the 6th of November, 137 years later, we will be going to the same spot with another request, this time not to an earthly king but to the King of heaven and earth and the source of all holiness, to do great things for us through the intercession of his two servants, Mapeera and Amans,

so that one day, they too, as it was for their spiritual sons, the Uganda Martyrs, may be counted among the blessed and Saints.

The Archdiocese of Kampala has also opened up an office to follow up on the activities – prayers, novenas, pilgrimages, book/souvenir shop, etc., intended to

promote the devotion of these two servants of God. It is located at Nabunnya, near Pope Paul VI Memorial Hotel, the place where Fr. Mapeera spent his last days in this country and where he was first buried in 1890.

Please come and visit us and for more information contact us on this office phone number 0392001448. You may also visit our website: <http://www.mapeeraandamans.org/>

The Family is where the human bond is honest

(Extracted from the article, "A true human family is found in faith and bonded in justice" By Fr. Paulino Mondo)

A story puts it that a mother lost her soldier son and the news of his dying came to her in dispatches from the war. He had died while fighting nobly at the head of his regiment. His mother was disconsolate. 'If only I could see him again just for five minutes'. An angel heard her prayer. 'For five minutes', said the

angel, 'you will see him'. 'Quick, quick,' said the mother, her tears turned to momentary joy. 'Yes', said the angel, 'but think a little. He was a grown man and there are 30 years from which to choose. How would you like to see him?' For a moment, the mother paused and wondered. The angel continued, 'would you like to see him at his post, brave in the face of danger? Would you see him again as on that day at school when he stepped forward to receive the award for highest honors in his class? Would you see him as the baby to whom you had just given birth?' After a while, the mother began, slowly, 'No, I would see him for five minutes as he was one day when he ran in from the garden to ask my forgiveness for having done something

wrong. He was so small and so unhappy and the tears were making streaks down his face through the garden dust. He flew into my arms with such force that he hurt me'. The one thing that the mother wished, above all, to recapture was **the moment when her son needed her**. There is nothing more moving in life than to hear another say, '**I need you; I cannot do without you.**' This story points to the essence of what we could celebrate on two levels: **the gift of the human family** as the **centre of shared need, shared sorrows, shared joys and shared hopes**; and the gift of the holy family, where all those needs and hopes, sorrows and joys can be addressed with a love beyond all telling.

Emong wins silver medal for Uganda in Paralympics



Emong (Left) in Rio DeJaneiro after winning a silver medal. (INTERNET PHOTO)

By Jacinta W. Odongo

A few months ago, Uganda sent a team of 21 athletes to Brazil to participate in the 2016 Summer Olympic Games that was held in Rio de Janeiro from August 5 to August 21, 2016. Unfortunately, all didn't go well for Team Uganda as the athletes returned home empty handed. In other words, none of the athletes bagged a medal.

When the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games kicked-off from September 7-18, 2016, Uganda decided to send only one athlete, David Emong. However, Emong, 26, defied all odds to win a silver medal after coming second in the T46 Men's category of 1500m race. T46 disability sport classification is a group for track and field athletes missing their arm from near the top of their arm.

Emong finished second with a time of 4:00:62 while Algeria's Nouioua Samir came first with 3:59:46. Samir is a seven time Paralympics gold medalist. Australia's Roeger Michael finished third and Rwanda's Muvunyi Hermers finished fifth with a time of 4:05:19.

This is Uganda's first ever medal in the history of the Paralympic Games since 1972 when it made its debut. Emong previously participated in the London Paralympics games in 2012 where he came fourth.

Emong started running in primary school after his arm was permanently injured and largely immobilized in a schoolyard accident. Although he was sometimes mocked, he never gave up on life. Rather Emong kept going, competing, and often winning, against able-bodied athletes.

In Uganda, he often competes with able-bodied athletes due to lack of local races for his category. Last year, the athlete who hails from Karamoja won silver at the All Africa Games in Congo Brazzaville. The Uganda Paralympics Committee hopes that Emong's achievement will help it get more sponsors who will support the disabled athletes.

The Paralympic Games are a major international multi-sport event for athletes with disabilities.

AFCON—Uganda in Group D



By John P. Ddembe

After 38 years of failed attempts the Uganda Cranes finally woke up last month to qualify for the Total African Cup of Nations (AFCON). Qualifying meant that Uganda goes through a draw to form groups for the tournament. The draw took place on 19th October in Gabon the host nation for the games. Uganda was in Pot 4 alongside teams Togo, Zimbabwe and Guinea Bissau. This meant that, after the draw, Uganda could not be in the same group with any of the teams in the Pot.

As a result of the draw Uganda is now in Group D with teams Egypt, Ghana and Mali. The 31st Edition of the tournament will

AFCON Group D

	Egypt
	Ghana
	Mali
	Uganda

start mid January and end early February next year taking place in four designated venues in Gabon.

Uganda in World Cup Qualifiers

By John P. Ddembe



Uganda is playing in the African qualifiers for World Cup 2018 to take place in Russia. The Cranes last played Ghana Black Stars in Tamale Sports Stadium in Kumasi, Ghana. The match ended in a goalless draw enabling Uganda come back home with a point. Egypt is currently on top of Group E ahead of other teams Uganda, Ghana and Congo Brazzaville after beating Congo 2-1 away getting the whole 3 points.

The Uganda Cranes coach Micho Seredjovic thinks Ghana or Egypt are the top contenders for the World Cup spot but this does not rule out Uganda's possibility of qualifying for the world Cup for the first time after proving itself as a force to reckon with in African football.

The Uganda Cranes will be continuing its World Cup campaign by hosting Congo Brazzaville in Mandela National Stadium on 12th November.

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Missionary priest, Father Scalabrini passes away

Fr. Scalabrini will always be remembered for his generosity

By Jacinta W. Odongo

On Tuesday October 4, 2016, Ugandans woke up with the devastating news of the death of one of its most popular missionary priests, Rev. Fr. John Scalabrini. He was 83.

Fr. Scalabrini, an Italian-born missionary priest who came to Uganda in 1969 just a few years after independence, died at St. Francis Nsambya Hospital after a long battle with cancer of the bone. Upon his arrival, Fr. Scalabrini popularly known by his first name as "Fr. John", was assigned to work in Awach sub-county in Gulu District.

One of the sources (a close friend to Fr. John) who spoke on condition of anonymity says Fr. John's passion was to understand the culture of the people in the northern region, besides his missionary work.

"He wanted to know who these people are, how they live, what they do for survival and what kind of language they speak. He became fluent in the local languages of Acholi and Lugbara in that you could even say he was a moving Acholi dictionary. He also adapted to eating their local food very well. The culture of the people became part and parcel of his life and that is why the community got so passionate about him," he says.

After understanding the culture of the people he came to know what their needs are and that they are divided according to tribes. "This gave him a vision that would change the face of the country without competing with anyone. He made sure that farming was adapted at the grass root level thus he introduced the growing of maize and sun flower in northern Uganda and he even got machines to squeeze out the sun flower oil. He knew that sunflower had a lot of nutrients for its natural oil," he explains.



Late Fr. Scalabrini (Centre).

PHOTO BY DAILY MONITOR

According to the source, Fr. John also knew that the residues of sun flower could make soap thus he encouraged Mukwano, the owner of Mukwano Group of Industries, to use the same residues of sun flower to manufacture soap. Later Mukwano also adapted the same scheme. Besides, the husks which couldn't be used as a soap residue became chicken feed so he developed a chicken project. Currently sun flower growing has taken root in Northern Uganda and its now literally an investment in many Catholic parishes in the area. It has also extended to Hoima and Kiryandogo, where Mukwano has a big farm.



Pall bearers carry the casket of Fr. Scalabrini during the burial ceremony at Bbiina.

"All this idea originated from the vision of Fr. John. This priest almost 30 decades ago had already seen Uganda as an agricultural nation, and he said it wasn't hard to practice it," he says.

Fr. John was also largely involved in a lot of philanthropy work. He was someone who would get a piece of land and use it for the common good of

everyone by either building a church, a school or a convent among other developments. His efforts have seen off good education institutions across Uganda. He founded Bishop Cipriano Kihangire Primary School in Kitintale and Bishop Cipriano Secondary School in Luzira, Kampala.

"Fr. John had a hand in many of the Catholic founded schools in Uganda but he would never boast about it. Incidentally good people when they do good things only God sees them and posts them down. This is something that we have to emulate because in some places people are even selling off the land which is for the common good," he states.

He didn't stop at education, as he also gave back to the Lord by building churches and chapels. "He single-handedly constructed St. Padre Pio Chapel in Makerere Business School University and the chapel in Nkumba University and handed them over when they were completed. Besides, he built Awach Catholic Parish in Awach sub-county and St. James Biina Parish in Mutungo, the rectories and St. Bruno Catholic Church which is next to Luzira prison among others," he says.

He also supported thousands of orphans, destitute and elderly by educating them,

providing their daily basic needs like shelter, feeding, treating whenever they fell sick and even counseling them when they encountered challenges.

"There are thousands of orphans who have studied through his foundation called Emmaus Foundation. The foundation's goal is to improve the livelihood of Ugandans by availing life-changing opportunities in the sectors of health, education, work, and religion so that they can become self-reliant. He believed education was an instrument of growth for the cultural and social development of the country thus he established Emmaus," he explains.

His foundation also provides technical education to the disadvantaged, religious education for street children, maternity services, as well as financial and medical support to prisoners and the handicapped.

Fr. John also founded health projects, which operate on charity basis, as they provide medical services to people at minimal costs.

Despite the vast sums of money that passed through his foundation, Fr. John lived modestly. His humility, generosity, kind and caring heart earned him love across the country. This is something which was witnessed during his burial ceremony.

"I don't think there is any priest who has ever died and people celebrated so many Holy Masses and give so many speeches about him. He is a fallen hero by cancer but he will always be remembered as a devoted philanthropist who devoted his life to helping the needy and serving the Lord. He is a man of honor who should have been given medals while he was still alive but even if he is dead a medal should still be given to him," he says.

Fr. John was buried on Friday October 7, at Bbiina Parish, Luzira.

Religious leaders in Ethiopia urge government to engage in discussion to bring peace



Religious leaders in Ethiopia at the Press Conference.

PHOTO BY YOHANNES MAKEDA

By Pamela Andida and Yohannes Makeda

The religious leaders in Ethiopia while responding to the ongoing conflicts in some parts of the country have asked the government to engage in discussion with stakeholders with contentious issues, and hear the distress and questions of the affected people and respond immediately.

The leaders who spoke during a joint meeting held in Addis Ababa on October 13, said that they are very much concerned with the violence that have been taking place in some areas of our country in recent times where precious lives of people have been lost, spiritual and physical injuries caused and properties destroyed.

In a statement that was released after the meeting, the religious leaders said that they have been engaged in various discussions with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and government officials to request that the concerns of the public be heard and given immediate response.

"We are deeply saddened by the lives lost recently because of the chaos that took place during 'Erecha', (a celebration where people get together and perform their prayers and thanksgiving to God) on October 2, 2016 in Bishoftu Town. we pray for the consolation of the bereaved and the people of Ethiopia," reads the statement.

The Religious leaders asked for

arrangements to be made for the compensation of people who lost their loved ones as well as those who lost properties in different parts of the country. They called upon the government and Ethiopian people to support their efforts of bringing about national understanding, reconciliation and psychological relief by establishing a peace task force composed of religious leaders, elders, academicians and business people from different parts of the country.

"Our spiritual children of different religions, we ask you to accept each other with mutual respect, forgiveness and mercy and unite for peace and growth of the country, to look at your fellow Ethiopians as brothers and sister, to repent hatred and chaos and present all your concerns peacefully."

Additionally, the Religious Leaders said that Infrastructures are the properties of our country thus they asked all citizens to protect them.

"Above all it is the responsibility of the government to calm down the conflicts and turn it to peace thus we ask the government to take necessary farsighted measures in an amicable spirit, we also ask our people to fulfill their roles and responsibilities properly."

Finally, they appealed to both local and international media, social media networks and individuals to refrain from transmitting messages that promote

hatred, conflict and violence and above all messages that lead to destruction of valuable human lives and properties.

The Ethiopian government on Sunday 9, October declared a six-month nationwide state of emergency following months of anti-government protests. It is the first time since the ruling party came to power 25 years ago that a state of emergency has been put in place in the country.



Archbishop calls on Kenyans to pray for peace ahead of 2017 general elections



Most. Rev. Peter Kairo, Archbishop of Nyeri Archdiocese at Dedan Kimathi University during the first historic anniversary in commemoration of Blessed "Nyaaatha" beatification. (INTERNET PHOTO)

By Rose Achiego

Kenyans have been urged to pray for peace and tranquillity as the Nation prepares for the next general election slated for August 2017.

In his homily during the Holy Mass to mark the National Annual Prayer Day at the Marian Shrine Subukia, Nakuru on 8th, October, 2016, Nyeri Archbishop Most Rev. Peter Kairo cautioned Kenyans against repeating the mistakes that led to post election violence in 2007/2008.

Archbishop Kairo encouraged the

faithful gathered at the Shrine to pray for fair and truthful general elections, and urged the contestants and political leaders to avoid dividing Kenyans along tribal lines during their campaigns.

He called on the Dioceses to conduct civic education ahead of the general elections to enable Kenyans to vote for the right people without being compromised, "tell other people not to sell their voters cards," he advised.

Quoting the theme of the day, "The Year of Mercy", Archbishop Kairo called on all Christians to extend acts of mercy in their

various capacities and to be instruments of peace in the nation beginning from the family. The acts of Mercy include; feeding the hungry, giving shelter to the homeless, visiting the sick and the homeless, giving alms to the poor and comforting the sorrowful. "Wherever there is a Christian, everyone should find an oasis of Mercy," he said.

The Holy Mass was officiated by Archbishop Kairo and concelebrated by Chairman of the Kenya Conference of the Catholic Bishops (KCCB) and the Bishop of Homabay Rt. Rev. Philip Anyolo, Vice Chairman of KCCB Rt. Rev. John Obala Owaa of Ngong, Nakuru Bishop Rt. Rev. Maurice Muhatia Makumba, Chair of the KCCB-Commission for Liturgy and the Bishop of Lodwar Rt. Rev. Dominic Kimengich, Nyahuru Bishop Joseph Mbatia, Kitui Bishop and the Apostolic Administrator of Machakos Diocese Rt. Rev. Anthony Muheria, Maralal Bishop Rt. Rev. Virgilio Pante and priests from various dioceses across the country.

The National Annual Prayer Day which brought together more than 20,000 faithfuls from all over the Country was organised by the Archdiocese of Nyeri in conjunction with the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops Commission for Liturgy and Commission for Pastoral and Lay Apostolate.

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Pope announces 17 new Cardinals in consistory

Vatican Radio

Pope Francis at the end of his Angelus on October 9, 2016 announced the creation of 17 new Cardinals.

A consistory will be held on the November 19, the eve of the closing of the Jubilee of Mercy. 13 of the new Cardinals will be under 80 years and will be eligible to vote in a conclave.



The Holy Father said that those chosen came from five continents including three American Archbishops and Archbishops from Mauritius and Bangladesh.

Below is the list of new Cardinals

- **Archbishop Mario Zenari, Italy**
- **Archbishop Dieudonné Nzapalainga, Central African Republic**
- **Archbishop Carlos Osoro Sierra, Spain**
- **Archbishop Sérgio da Rocha, Brazil**
- **Archbishop Blase J. Cupich, U.S.A.**
- **Archbishop Patrick D'Rozario, Bangladesh**
- **Archbishop Baltazar Enrique Porras Cardozo, Venezuela**
- **Archbishop Jozef De Kesel, Belgium**
- **Archbishop Maurice Piat, Mauritius**
- **Archbishop Kevin Joseph Farrell, U.S.A.**
- **Archbishop Carlos Aguiar Retes, Mexico**
- **Archbishop John Ribat, Papua Nuova Guinea**
- **Archbishop Mons. Joseph William Tobin U.S.A.**
- **Archbishop Anthony Soter Fernandez, Archbishop Emeritus of Kuala Lumpur Malaysia**
- **Archbishop Renato Corti, Archbishop Emeritus of Novara Italy**
- **Archbishop Sebastian Koto Khoarai, Bishop Emeritus of Mohale's Hoek Lesotho**
- **Father Ernest Simoni, presbytery of the Archdiocese of Shkodër-Pult, Scutari – Albania.**

Vatican issues new document on Christian burial and cremation

Vatican Radio

The Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on October 25 published a new instruction on the burial of the dead and on the conservation of the ashes in cases of cremation.

The instruction reiterates the long held view that the Church is not opposed to the practice of cremation, though it continues to recommend that the bodies of the deceased be buried in cemeteries or other sacred places.

However the new document insists that ashes should not be kept in private houses and that the scattering of ashes on land or at sea is not permitted.

Please see below the full English text of the new instruction from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

Instruction *Ad resurgendum cum Christo* regarding the burial of the deceased and the conservation of the ashes in the case of cremation

1. To rise with Christ, we must die with Christ: we must “be away from the body and at home with the Lord” (2 Cor 5:8). With the Instruction *Piam et Constantem* of July 5, 1963, the then Holy Office established that “all necessary measures must be taken to preserve the practice of reverently burying the faithful departed”, adding however that cremation is not “opposed per se to the Christian religion” and that no longer should the sacraments and funeral rites be denied to those who have asked that they be cremated, under the condition that this choice has not been made through “a denial of Christian

dogmas, the animosity of a secret society, or hatred of the Catholic religion and the Church”. Later this change in ecclesiastical discipline was incorporated into the Code of Canon Law (1983) and the Code of Canons of Oriental Churches (1990).

During the intervening years, the practice of cremation has notably increased in many countries, but simultaneously new ideas contrary to the Church's faith have also become widespread. Having consulted the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts and numerous Episcopal Conferences and Synods of Bishops of the Oriental Churches, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has deemed opportune the publication of a new Instruction, with the intention of underlining the doctrinal and pastoral reasons for the preference of the burial of the remains of the faithful and to set out norms pertaining to the conservation of ashes in the case of cremation.

2. The resurrection of Jesus is the culminating truth of the Christian faith, preached as an essential part of the Paschal Mystery from the very beginnings of Christianity: “For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures; that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve” (1 Cor 15:3-5).

Through his death and resurrection, Christ freed us from sin and gave us access to a new life, “so that as Christ was raised from the dead

by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (Rm 6:4). Furthermore, the risen Christ is the principle and source of our future resurrection: “Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep [...] For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor 15:20-22).

It is true that Christ will raise us up on the last day; but it is also true that, in a certain way, we have already risen with Christ. In Baptism, actually, we are immersed in the death and resurrection of Christ and sacramentally assimilated to him: “You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead” (Col 2:12). United with Christ by Baptism, we already truly participate in the life of the risen Christ (cf. Eph 2:6).

Because of Christ, Christian death has a positive meaning. The Christian vision of death receives privileged expression in the liturgy of the Church: “Indeed for your faithful, Lord, life is changed not ended, and, when this earthly dwelling turns to dust, an eternal dwelling is made ready for them in heaven”. By death the soul is separated from the body, but in the resurrection God will give incorruptible life to our body, transformed by reunion with our soul. In our own day also, the Church is called to proclaim her faith in the resurrection: “The confidence of Christians is the resurrection of the dead; believing this we live”.

3. Following the most ancient Christian tradition, the Church insistently recommends



that the bodies of the deceased be buried in cemeteries or other sacred places.

In memory of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord, the mystery that illumines the Christian meaning of death, burial is above all the most fitting way to express faith and hope in the resurrection of the body.

The Church who, as Mother, has accompanied the Christian during his earthly pilgrimage, offers to the Father, in Christ, the child of her grace, and she commits to the earth, in hope, the seed of the body that will rise in glory.

By burying the bodies of the faithful, the Church confirms her faith in the resurrection of the body, and intends to show the great dignity of the human body as an integral part of the human person whose body forms part of their identity. She cannot, therefore, condone attitudes or permit rites that involve erroneous ideas about death, such as considering death as the definitive annihilation of the person, or the moment of fusion with Mother Nature or the universe, or as a stage in the cycle of regeneration, or as the definitive liberation from the "prison" of the body.

Furthermore, burial in a cemetery or another sacred place adequately corresponds to the piety and respect owed to the bodies of the faithful departed who through Baptism have become temples of the Holy Spirit and in which "as instruments and vessels the Spirit has carried out so many good works".

Tobias, the just, was praised for the merits he acquired in the sight of God for having buried the dead, and the Church considers the burial of dead one of the corporal works of mercy.

Finally, the burial of the faithful departed in cemeteries or other sacred places encourages family members and the whole Christian community to pray for and remember the

dead, while at the same time fostering the veneration of martyrs and saints.

Through the practice of burying the dead in cemeteries, in churches or their environs, Christian tradition has upheld the relationship between the living and the dead and has opposed any tendency to minimize, or relegate to the purely private sphere, the event of death and the meaning it has for Christians.

4. In circumstances when cremation is chosen because of sanitary, economic or social considerations, this choice must never violate the explicitly-stated or the reasonably inferable wishes of the deceased faithful. The Church raises no doctrinal objections to this practice, since cremation of the deceased's body does not affect his or her soul, nor does it prevent God, in his omnipotence, from raising up the deceased body to new life. Thus cremation, in and of itself, objectively negates neither the Christian doctrine of the soul's immortality nor that of the resurrection of the body.

The Church continues to prefer the practice of burying the bodies of the deceased, because this shows a greater esteem towards the deceased. Nevertheless, cremation is not prohibited, "unless it was chosen for reasons contrary to Christian doctrine".

In the absence of motives contrary to Christian doctrine, the Church, after the celebration of the funeral rite, accompanies the choice of cremation, providing the relevant liturgical and pastoral directives, and taking particular care to avoid every form of scandal or the appearance of religious indifferentism.

5. When, for legitimate motives, cremation of the body has been chosen, the ashes of the faithful must be laid to rest in a sacred place, that is, in a cemetery or, in certain cases, in a church or an area, which has been

set aside for this purpose, and so dedicated by the competent ecclesial authority.

From the earliest times, Christians have desired that the faithful departed become the objects of the Christian community's prayers and remembrance. Their tombs have become places of prayer, remembrance and reflection. The faithful departed remain part of the Church who believes "in the communion of all the faithful of Christ, those who are pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven, all together forming one Church".

The reservation of the ashes of the departed in a sacred place ensures that they are not excluded from the prayers and remembrance of their family or the Christian community. It prevents the faithful departed from being forgotten, or their remains from being shown a lack of respect, which eventuality is possible, most especially once the immediately subsequent generation has too passed away. Also it prevents any unfitting or superstitious practices.

6. For the reasons given above, the conservation of the ashes of the departed in a domestic residence is not permitted. Only in grave and exceptional cases dependent on cultural conditions of a localized nature, may the Ordinary, in agreement with the Episcopal Conference or the Synod of Bishops of the Oriental Churches, concede permission for the conservation of the ashes of the departed in a domestic residence. Nonetheless, the ashes may not be divided among various family members and due respect must be maintained regarding the circumstances of such a conservation.

7. In order that every appearance of pantheism, naturalism or nihilism be avoided, it is not permitted to scatter the ashes of the faithful departed in the air, on land, at sea or in some other way, nor may they be preserved in mementos, pieces of jewelry or other objects. These courses of action cannot be legitimized by an appeal to the sanitary, social, or economic motives that may have occasioned the choice of cremation.

8. When the deceased notoriously has requested cremation and the scattering of their ashes for reasons contrary to the Christian faith, a Christian funeral must be denied to that person according to the norms of the law.

The Sovereign Pontiff Francis, in the Audience granted to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect on 18 March 2016, approved the present Instruction, adopted in the Ordinary Session of this Congregation on 2 March 2016, and ordered its publication.

Pope Francis visits Sweden to mark 500th anniversary of Reformation



Pope Francis arrives in Sweden PHOTO BY AFP

Vatican Radio

On Monday October 31, 2016, Pope Francis arrived in Sweden for a two-day apostolic journey where, together with the heads of the Lutheran World Federation he jointly presided at an ecumenical prayer service in Lund cathedral, followed by a public witness event in the nearby city of Malmö.

The formal occasion for the Pope's visit to Sweden was to mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The event comes as the culmination of years of theological progress, from the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification in 1999, to the publication of a shared history of the Reformation in the 2013 document 'From Conflict to Communion'.

Before travelling to the Lutheran Cathedral of Lund for the joint ecumenical prayer service on Monday afternoon, an official welcome ceremony was held at Malmö International Airport that saw state and religious authorities come together to receive the Pope.

As per protocol, the Prime Minister of the host country, Sweden's Stefan Löfven, and the Minister of Culture and Democracy meet privately with the Pope at the Airport.

Also before the ecumenical service, the Pope paid a courtesy visit to the Swedish King and Queen, Carl XVI Gustav and Silvia, at Lund's Royal Palace (the Kungshuset).

Pope urges Sweden's Catholics to be modern day saints



Pope Francis celebrates Holy Mass in Sweden

Vatican Radio

Pope Francis celebrated Holy Mass on Tuesday November 1, for Sweden's Catholic community, gathered in an open air stadium in the southern city of Malmö. The Mass, marking the Solemnity of All Saints, followed a day of ecumenical celebrations as the Pope and leaders of the Lutheran World Federation led an unprecedented joint commemoration of the Reformation.

But it was to this small Catholic flock that Pope Francis dedicated his last day in Sweden, urging them to follow in the footsteps of the saints. Despite grey skies and a sharp autumn chill in the air, thousands of people travelled from all over the country and beyond to give the Pope a warm welcome as he entered the stadium at the start of the Mass, accompanied by the Bishop of Stockholm Anders Arborelius.

In his homily, delivered in Spanish with a Swedish translator, the Pope said holiness is not seen so much in great deeds and extraordinary events, but rather in daily fidelity to the demands of our Baptism.

One characteristic of the saints, he said,

is that they are genuinely happy people – that's why they are known as blessed. He recalled in particular the 14th century Saint Bridget of Sweden, co-patron of Europe, and the 20th century Saint Mary Elisabeth Hesselblad, a Swedish nurse whom he canonised in St Peter's Square earlier this year. Both of them, he stressed, prayed and worked to create bonds of unity and fellowship between Christians, enabling us to jointly commemorate the fifth centenary of the Reformation today.

The example of the saints, Pope Francis said, can encourage us to respond to current challenges with fresh spiritual energy. He concluded with a suggested list of modern Beatitudes to inspire Christians today, including blessed are those who show closeness to the abandoned and marginalised, blessed are those who protect and care for our common home and blessed are those who pray and work for full communion between Christians. Amen.

Pope calls on Catholics and Lutherans to recognize past errors

Vatican Radio

Pope Francis has urged Catholics and Lutherans to recognize past "errors" and seize "the opportunity to mend a critical moment of our history by moving beyond the controversies and disagreement that have often prevented us from understanding one another."

The Pope was speaking during his homily at an ecumenical prayer service

in the Lutheran Cathedral of Lund shortly after his arrival in Sweden on October 31, 2016 for a 26-hour pastoral visit.

He said the division between Catholics and Lutherans was "perpetuated historically by the powerful of this world" rather than by the faithful people of God.



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