

JUBILANT PILGRIMS FILL NAMUGONGO SHRINE TO HONOUR THE UGANDA MARTYRS

By Jacinta W. Odongo, Media Officer, Uganda Episcopal Conference



BY JACINTA W. ODONGO

Bishop Zziwa (center) with the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda (standing on the extreme right) and Archbishop Lwanga (extreme left), at the Eucharistic celebration. (INSET) A section of the pilgrims.

MILLIONS of jubilant pilgrims from across the world filled Namugongo Catholic Shrine on June 3 to celebrate the 2016 Uganda Martyrs Day amid cheers, wonderful songs and dances.

The celebration was animated by the Diocese of Kiyinda-Mityana under the theme "The Truth Will Make You Free" (Jn. 8:32). It began at exactly 9.30am with a procession of Archbishops, Bishops and Priests from Uganda and other countries who received a rousing welcome from the enthusiastic pilgrims, liturgical dancers and the choir.

During the procession, the jubilant pilgrims sang hymns while waving at the bishops and priests who were smartly vested in red chasubles symbolizing Martyrdom. The Uganda Martyrs, both Catholic and Anglican, were burnt to death on the orders of Kabaka Mwanga II, the then king of Buganda between 1885 and 1887 for refusing to renounce their faith.

Twenty two Catholic Martyrs were beatified on June 6, 1920, by Pope Benedict XV, and on October 18, 1964, Blessed Pope Paul VI

canonized them as Saints. In addition to the twenty two Catholic Martyrs, there are two Catechists from Paimol in Gulu Archdiocese: Blessed Daudi Okello and Blessed Gildo Irwa who were killed in 1918. The two catechists were beatified by St. John Paul II on October 20, 2002.

In his homily, Rt. Rev Joseph Antony Zziwa, Bishop of Kiyinda-Mityana urged the pilgrims to focus on the truth as a way of witnessing to Christ just like the Martyrs did.

"Did the truth make the Martyrs free? Yes indeed, it did! After following Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and Life (Jn 14:6), they never turned back to the old evil ways. They refused to compromise the truth with anything else contrary to the truth," Bishop Zziwa said.

Among the 22 Martyrs who were canonized by Blessed Pope Paul VI, four of them came from Kiyinda-Mityana diocese. They include St. Noah Mawaggali, St. Matthias Mulumba, St. Luke Baanabakintu and St. Ambrose Kibuuka, .

Bishop Zziwa explained to the pilgrims the

CONT'D ON PAGE 2

Inside:

UEC NEWS

Jubilant pilgrims fill Namugongo Shrine to honour the Uganda Martyrs : 1-2

Pictorial: Uganda Martyrs' Day Celebrations : 3

Hundreds participate in 'Walk of Faith' ahead of Martyrs day celebration : 4

Vox Pox from the pilgrims about Uganda Martyrs day celebration : 5

'The Bible is the foundation for the Church's teaching about marriage and family,' says Archbishop Odama : 5-6

Religious leaders condemn the integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education as a curriculum : 6-7

ANTICIPATED EVENTS FOR JUNE 2016 : 7

INSPIRATION

Wise Quotes for reflection : 4

DIOCESAN NEWS

Sr. Sophia Asimwe elected Superior General of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church : 8

AMECEA NEWS

Catholic Bishops maintain their position against non-certified vaccines : 9

The Catholic Diocese of Kakamega embraces self-reliance programme : 10

VATICAN NEWS

Commemoration of St. Mary Magdalene raised to a feast : 11

Pope decries Orlando massacre and prays for victims : 12

'Learn all you can from the mistakes of others. You won't have time to make them all yourself'
- Alfred Sheinwold

THE EDITORIAL



Every year, the Uganda Martyrs day celebration at Namugongo draws millions of pilgrims from all over the world. I believe that this is one of the fruits of the seed of faith that these Martyrs sowed through their blood. What a blessing!

In 1969, 1993 and in 2015, Uganda was privileged to host Pope Paul VI, Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis respectively. Although these Popes did not visit Uganda during the Martyrs day celebration, their coming was connected to the Martyrs. What an honour!

As a country, we must be grateful to God for the gift of our Martyrs, whose remains lie in our midst. Let us continually seek their intercession but also endeavour to emulate their steadfast faith and courage in witnessing to Christ.

Let us be firm and single-minded in living our faith and standing for the truth, as Bishop Joseph Antony Zziwa of Kiyinda-Mityana Diocese challenged us during this year's Uganda Martyrs day celebration at Namugongo.

Our Martyrs, both Catholic and Anglican, were condemned to death together at Munyonyo by King Mwanga II and together they walked to Namugongo, where most of them were burnt alive. What a powerful symbol of solidarity and unity! What a challenge for us as Ugandans to work together and respect one another as citizens of one nation!

As you read this issue of *New Contact*, please pray for our country to have peace and unity. In case you need to contact us or give feedback, please call us on +256 782 746 812 or send an email to newcontact2013@gmail.com or podii2002@yahoo.com.

Let us keep in contact through *New Contact*.

Fr. Philip Odii

**Editor/Executive Secretary of
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Jubilant pilgrims fill Namugongo Shrine to honour the Uganda Martyrs

FROM PAGE 1



Pilgrims jubilate during the Bishop's procession.

DURING HIS VISIT TO UGANDA AT NAMUGONGO POPE FRANCIS TOLD US THAT FIDELITY TO GOD, HONESTY AND INTEGRITY OF LIFE AND GENUINE CONCERN FOR THE GOOD OF OTHERS BRING US THAT PEACE WHICH THE WORLD CANNOT GIVE. THAT IS DIVINE MERCY," HE SAID.

reasons that led to the death of St. Noah and St. Matthias and challenged them to follow their example and not shy away when the truth is being confronted or silenced.

He further called upon them to fight vices like injustice, immorality, corruption, paganism and violence among others. "Some people don't speak the truth because of favours, money etc. We can't be witnesses of Christ if we still practice these vices. Let us be renewed by this pilgrimage to Namugongo," he said.

The Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, H.E Michael August Blume, in his speech told the pilgrims that the 2016 Martyrs day celebration is special because it coincides with the Jubilee Year of Mercy, which Pope Francis opened in Bangui the day he left Uganda.

"The Martyrs are agents of God's mercy, for they have inspired generations of believers by their courage, fidelity to Christ, and willingness to leave all for His sake. During his visit to Uganda at Namugongo, Pope Francis told us that fidelity to God, honesty and integrity of life and genuine concern for the good of others bring us that peace which the world cannot give. That is Divine Mercy," he said.

He encouraged all the pilgrims to use this Jubilee Year of Mercy as an opportunity to cleanse their hearts and ask for God's forgiveness.

In his remarks, the Chairman of the Uganda Episcopal Conference and Archbishop of Gulu, Most Rev. John Baptist Odama urged both the young and old people, to learn a lesson from the Martyrs who were courageous witnesses of the gospel.

"The challenges we face today particularly the youth who are also the majority in our population, call for deep faith and total trust in God's will. As unemployment, drug addiction, promiscuity, corruption, dishonesty, indifference, intolerance of all forms, violence and human sacrifice among other things stare at us in the face, we cannot afford to be complacent. We must act, inspired by the Gospel, to allow Christ to conquer these challenges in our hearts and society as a whole," he stated.

The celebration was graced by the presence of the Vice President of Uganda, H.E Edward Ssekandi, the Katikkiro of Buganda Kingdom, Charles Peter Mayiga and several government ministers among other political and cultural leaders.

The Majority of the pilgrims came from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, USA, Canada, Australia, Mexico and Singapore. ■

PICTORIAL: UGANDA MARTYRS' DAY CELEBRATIONS



The bishops during the procession.



The smartly dressed Papal knights take part in the procession.



H.E. Edward Ssekandi (right) and the Katikkiro of Buganda Kingdom (left) at the celebrations.



A section of the 450 smartly dressed choir members.



Security officers patrol the man-made lake to ensure a peaceful celebration



A section of the international pilgrims.



Some of the liturgical dancers dance at the celebration.



A young boy takes the first reading.



Bishop Zziwa gives his homily.



A police officer presents a petition.



Bishop Zziwa receives offertory.



Rt. Rev Vincent Kirabo, Bishop of Hoima receives offertory from the international pilgrims



Archbishop Odama receives a box containing dvds of the documentary of Pope Francis' 2015 visit to Uganda from the VCL representatives, Sam Bagenda (centre) and Julie Underwood (left).



Pilgrims eagerly wait to draw water from the man-made lake after the celebration.



His Eminence Emmanuel Cardinal Wamala (centre), Archbishop Odama (right), and other bishops leave the sacristy after the celebration.

HUNDREDS PARTICIPATE IN THE 'WALK OF FAITH' PILGRIMAGE AHEAD OF MARTYRS DAY CELEBRATION

By Jacinta W. Odongo



LEFT: Archbishop Lwanga (right), Bishop Zziwa (center) and Hon. Mutagamba flag-off the pilgrims. **RIGHT(Top):** Pilgrims pray at the Shrine of St. Denis Ssebuggwawo. **RIGHT(Bottom):** Bishop Zziwa jubilates with pilgrims upon arrival at St. Matia Mulumba Parish after the "Walk of Faith".

OVER 200 pilgrims from across the country including the former Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, Dr. Maria Mutagamba and the State Minister for Ethics and Integrity, Simon Lokodo on Sunday May 22, 2016 joined Rt. Rev Joseph Antony Zziwa, the Bishop of Kiyinda-Mityana Diocese in the inaugural symbolic pilgrimage known as the "Walk of Faith".

The Spiritual Walk, which was organized by Kiyinda-Mityana Diocese alongside Uganda Episcopal Conference

and Uganda Tourism Board, started from Munyonyo Martyrs Shrine to St. Matia Mulumba Parish in Old Kampala. The Walk was flagged off at exactly 8.50am by Most. Rev Cyprian Kizito Lwanga, the Archbishop of Kampala, Bishop Zziwa, Hon. Mutagamba and Hon. Lokodo, after some speeches and a word of prayer.

During the walk, the enthusiastic pilgrims made three stopovers for a moment of prayers at the places of martyrdom of St. Denis Ssebuggwawo, St. Ponsiano Ngondwe and St. Joseph

Mukasa Balikuddembe as well as St. Athanasius Bazzeketa.

The spiritual journey concluded with the celebration of Holy Mass at St. Matia Mulumba Parish, presided over by Bishop Zziwa. The venue of the Mass is a place where St. Matia Mulumba who was also a Martyr, was executed. The walk will be an annual event to officially launch the pilgrimage to Namugongo Catholic Shrine by Christians from all over the World. ■

WISE QUOTES FOR REFLECTION

'Courage doesn't roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, I will try again tomorrow'
- **Mary Anne Radmacher**

'Learn all you can from the mistakes of others. You won't have time to make them all yourself'
- **Alfred Sheinwold**

Be kind to everyone you meet, because you don't know what kind of a battle they are fighting- Deliberate cruelty is unforgivable' - **Blanche**

'If you fear, you will fail. Always have courage, because it is the unstoppable force. Fear is the path to the darkside. Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering'
- **Yoda**

'Don't waste words on people who deserve your silence. Sometimes the most powerful thing you can say is nothing at all' - **Mandy Hale**

'Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion' - **Muhammad Ali**

"Open your book of life only to a few people. Because in this world very few care to understand the chapters, others are just curious to know" - **Anonymous**

'When you face difficult times, know that challenges are not sent to destroy you. They are sent to promote, increase and strengthen you' - **Anonymous**

'Sometimes, you have to get knocked down lower than you ever have been to stand back up taller than you ever were' - **Anonymous**

'You attract what you are, not what you want. If you want great, then be great' - **Anonymous**

'The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor' - **Vince Lombardi**

'The best index to a person's character is how he treats people who can't do him any good, and how he treats people who can't fight back' - **Abigail Van Buren**

VOX POX FROM THE PILGRIMS ABOUT UGANDA MARTYRS DAY CELEBRATION

Compiled By Jacinta W. Odongo

GERALD MUGAMBWA from Buyege Parish in Kampala Archdiocese



I arrived at Namugongo on June 3 at 5am with my father and this is my second time to attend this celebration. I came for the pilgrimage because I want the Martyrs to pray for me to pass my exams since I have just joined Senior One. I also want them to pray for my family so that they never lack the basic needs.

DENISE NBOBBO from Democratic Republic of Congo



I arrived at Namugongo on June 2 with other pilgrims from DRC. This is my first time to come for this pilgrimage and I am so excited. I came to thank God for the many blessings that He has bestowed upon me. I also came to witness the kind of journey that the Uganda Martyrs went through because I have heard so many testimonies from people about the miracles they have received from the intercession of the Martyrs. I would like the Martyrs to pray

for peace and unity in my country because we have been in war for so many years.

BATHELOMEO KIRYARUZI from Dar-es-Salaam Archdiocese



I have been coming for the Uganda Martyrs celebration since 2003 and, this year I was selected to lead the pilgrims called the Friends of the Uganda Martyrs who hail from

the Archdiocese of Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania. In 2015, I came to Namugongo twice, first for the actual celebration of Martyrs and second for the Pope's visit that was held in November. What inspires me to always make this pilgrimage is because I have witnessed a lot of miracles through the intercession of the Martyrs, thus, I dedicated my whole life to come for this pilgrimage until the day I will not have the energy to walk.



GABRIEL BALUWERORA from Masaka diocese

I am 75 years-old and this is my fourth time to come for this celebration. This year's

celebration was very interesting because the view at the sacristy was very clear and the choir sang well. I would like the Martyrs to pray for my business to flourish because I am a businessman.

MARIA SSEMAKULA from Kiyinda-Mityana Diocese



Maria (right) with a friend

I came here to honour the Uganda Martyrs and to support my diocese. This is a very important day for us Catholics and it would be very selfish for any Ugandan Catholic to miss this celebration. I would like the Martyrs to pray for the youths because there is a lot of moral degeneration. The Martyrs themselves were youths and through their intercession our youths can live a positive life. Also I would like them to intercede for my mother who passed away so that she gets into the heavenly kingdom. ■

'THE BIBLE IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE CHURCH'S TEACHING ABOUT MARRIAGE AND FAMILY,' SAYS ARCHBISHOP ODAMA

By Jacinta W. Odongo



The Apostolic Nuncio (center) displays to the press a booklet with the Amoris Laetitia content. On his right is Archbishop Odama and Archbishop Lwanga (left)

THE CHAIRMAN of the Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC) and the Archbishop of Gulu, Most Rev. John Baptist Odama has

said that the Bible is the foundation for the Church's teaching about marriage and the family.

"This implies that in order to meaningfully reflect and understand marriage and the family, Christians ought to always turn to the Holy Scriptures for guidance," Archbishop Odama said.

He was addressing the media at the Uganda Catholic Secretariat on Friday, June 10 during a Press Conference on the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation "Amoris Laetitia" (The Joy of Love) that

was released on April 8, 2016 by Pope Francis at the Vatican.

He said that "The Joy of Love" is a pastoral document geared towards inspiring and encouraging the Christian faithful by assisting them to understand, appreciate and live the vocation of marriage and the family in the spirit of love, peace and joy amidst their challenges. The Archbishop also noted that the Apostolic Exhortation was an outcome of the contributions of two synods on marriage and the family which the Holy Father convoked in 2014 and 2015.

Before the Synods were held, worldwide consultations were made and UEC presented the views of the faithful in Uganda in a document entitled 'Responses to the Questionnaire for the Preparatory

BY JACINTA W. ODONGO

'The Bible is the foundation for the Church's teaching about marriage and family

FROM PAGE 5

Document for the Third General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on The Pastoral Challenges to the Family in the Context of Evangelization.

Archbishop Odama also identified three key themes in "The Joy of love", which includes understanding marriage and the family in the light of the Sacred Scriptures, love as a core Christian virtue for marriage and the family and, finally pastoral care towards families.

The press conference was attended by the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, H.E.

I DO NOT RECOMMEND A RUSHED READING OF THE TEXT. THE GREATEST BENEFIT, FOR FAMILIES THEMSELVES AND FOR THOSE ENGAGED IN THE FAMILY APOSTOLATE, WILL COME IF EACH PART IS READ PATIENTLY AND CAREFULLY, OR IF ATTENTION IS PAID TO THE PARTS DEALING WITH THEIR SPECIFIC NEEDS

Michael August Blume, the Archbishop of Kampala, Most Rev. Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga, and the Bishop Chairman of the Social Communications Commission of UEC, Rt. Rev Joseph Franzelli who is also the Bishop of Lira.

The Bishop of Arua, Rt. Rev Sabino Ocan Odoki, the Secretary General of the UEC, Msgr. John Baptist Odama and the Executive Secretary of the Social Communication Department of UEC, Fr. Philip Odii were also in attendance.

In his remarks, the Apostolic Nuncio recommended that all the faithful take time to read the document keenly and reflect on the message given by the Holy Father as he was guided by the Holy Spirit while writing The Joy of Love.

"I do not recommend a rushed reading of the text. The greatest benefit, for families themselves and for those engaged in the family apostolate, will come if each part is read patiently and carefully, or if

attention is paid to the parts dealing with their specific needs," the Nuncio stated.

He said that the document has been released at the time when the Catholic Church is celebrating the Jubilee Year of Mercy thus, urged all the faithful to be merciful as the Heavenly Father is merciful.

Meanwhile, Archbishop Lwanga highlighted to the press the challenges of marriage and family in Uganda which includes domestic violence in its various forms, poverty, lack of proper parental care, guidance and education of children, diseases such as HIV/AIDS, unemployment and single parenthood among other things.

He also gave a number of recommendations to different groups such as the pastoral agents, married couples, parents, teachers, the government and general public for the good of the institution of marriage, families and personal growth. ■

RELIGIOUS LEADERS CONDEMN THE INTEGRATION OF COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION AS A CURRICULUM

By Jacinta W. Odongo



(LEFT) The Bishops with other members of UJCC pose for a group photo. (RIGHT) Fr. Arinaitwe addresses the members of UJCC during the Annual General Assembly.

THE Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) has condemned the unilateral move of introducing the so-called Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the Secondary School curriculum as it has components that undermine the teachings and core values of the church.

"UJCC Assembly noted with concern the introduction of the so-called Comprehensive Sexuality Education, which has already been introduced in some schools, including church-founded

schools, without due consultations with the foundation bodies and an approved curriculum," said the UJCC Executive Secretary, Rev. Fr. Silvester Arinaitwe Rwomukubwe.

Fr. Arinaitwe was addressing the press at Jevine Hotel in Kampala during the closing ceremony of the UJCC Annual general meeting that was held on June 2, a day prior to the 2016 Uganda Martyrs' Day celebration. The meeting was held under the theme "**Striving for Greatness**

through Servanthood" (Mathew 23.11).

Government through the Ministry of Education and Sports/National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and the United Nations Population Fund, initiated the curriculum process review in March 2012 to integrate and eventually institutionalize Comprehensive Sexuality Education for young people both in and out of schools with a view of reducing teenage pregnancies and HIV infections.

According to the above mentioned

CONT'D ON PAGE 7

Religious leaders condemn the integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education as a curriculum

FROM PAGE 6

stakeholders, the curriculum development process provides a unique opportunity and entry point for addressing current and emerging issues in adolescent sexual and reproductive health and improving the health and quality of life of young people.

The assembly was attended by Religious leaders and lay persons who are members of the Council all drawn from the Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Churches from the 17 UJCC regions of the country.

The Council Chairperson Most Rev. Stanley Ntagali who is the Archbishop of

the Church of Uganda, together with the Co-chairperson Most Rev. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga, Archbishop of Kampala, and representatives of Kampala Metropolitan were in attendance.

Meanwhile, the religious leaders also condemned the rampant culture of irresponsible consumption of alcohol, drug abuse and gambling especially among the youth, the inhumane treatment being meted out by the security forces against opposition political leaders and their supporters and, called for sensitization

of the public on the proposed Islamic banking.

The assembly further expressed concern about the minimal nature of constitutional and electoral reforms that were undertaken in the run-up to the 2016 General Elections, thus asked UJCC Secretariat to continue engaging the government, political parties and other stakeholders on the issue of comprehensive electoral reforms based on adequate consultation. ■

KEY EVENTS FOR JUNE 2016

By Jacinta W. Odongo



June 3 – MARTYRS’ DAY

Every June 3 pilgrims from across the world make pilgrimage to Namugongo to commemorate the heroic faith of the 45 Martyrs, both Catholic and Anglican, who were killed on the orders of Kabaka Mwanga II, the then King of Buganda between 1885 to 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.

June 9- HEROES’ DAY

In Uganda, Heroes’ Day is celebrated every year on June 9 in memory of those who sacrificed their lives to fight for the country’s freedom and independence in order to restore peace and security.

June 24- BIRTH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

This feast, a segment of Advent in the season of Ordinary Time, makes us aware of the wonderful inner relationship between the sacred mysteries; for we are still in the midst of one Church year and already a bridge is being erected to the coming year of grace.

Ordinarily, the Church observes the day of a saint’s death as his feast, because that day marks his entrance into heaven. To this rule there are two notable exceptions, the birthdays of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of St. John the Baptist. John the Baptist is the

patron saint of Jordan, Puerto Rico, French Canada and many other places.

June 29- SOLEMNITY OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL



The Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul is a liturgical feast in honour of their martyrdom in Rome. The feast is observed in Rome because St. Peter and St. Paul are patron saints of the eternal city. It is also a public holiday of the Canton of Ticino, Switzerland, as well as parts of the Swiss cantons of Lucerne and Graubünden. ■



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SR. SOPHIA ASIIMWE ELECTED SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE MISSIONANRY SISTERS OF MARY MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

By Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru, MSMMC – Lira



Bishop Franzelli poses for a group photo with the MSMMC Chapter Members

SISTER SOPHIA AGNES ASIIMWE has been elected as the new Superior General of the Religious Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church (MSMMC) at their recent General Chapter that was held from May 7 to 30, 2016 in the Diocese of Lira.

Sr. Sophia joined the Institute in 1975. She made her first profession in 1979, and took perpetual vows in 1984. After her profession, Sr. Sophia engaged in various missionary activities in East Africa and South Sudan.

She believes that one must lose part of oneself to become effective in the mission of Christ. "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies it remains just a grain, but if it dies, it produces much fruit (John 12:24)," Sr. Sophia also noted that she finds consolation in the unfailing presence of Jesus, who stated that, "...And behold, I am with you always until the end of the age (Mt. 28:16-20)".

In other positions, Sr. Grace Omberu was elected the Vicaress/Assistant

YOU SHOULD BECOME "MONSTRANCE" AND TAKE THE PLACE OF JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE, WHO WOULD SOON BE TAKEN OUT OF THE MONSTRANCE... LET PEOPLE SEE JESUS IN YOU AND WALK THE TALK.

Superior General while Sr. Jane Rose Dropia and Sr. Judith Adilo were chosen as the Economy General and the Councilor for Education respectively.

Sr. Jovita Tushemereirwe, who joined the Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church (MSMMC) in 1981, was also voted as the Councilor in-charge of Health.

The Superior General alongside the four Councilors form the General leadership team of the MSMMC. The General Chapter was held under the theme **"Personal invitation to Deep Rootedness in Christ for His Mission"**.

Meanwhile, Rt. Rev. Joseph Franzelli, Bishop of Lira called upon the congregation to be aware of the spirit of worldliness which is gnawing the Church

and reminded them that they would only be authentic with Christ.

"You should become 'Monstrance' and take the place of Jesus the Bread of life, who would soon be taken out of the Monstrance... Let people see Jesus in you and Walk the talk," Bishop Franzelli said to the MSMMC during the closing ceremony of the General Chapter.

The General Chapter is a religious Church event that occurs after every five to six years; depending on the choice of the religious Congregation. It provides a platform for Chapter members to sit together to evaluate the past and present state of affairs so as to forge a way forward. It is a forum where the religious discuss matters of greater importance. It is a moment of prayer and discernment to enable Chapter members to determine the direction a religious Congregation ought to take in a given period. Another aspect of the General Chapter is the election of the General Council Members to run the Congregation/Institute for the next 5-6 years. ■

CATHOLIC BISHOPS MAINTAIN THEIR POSITION AGAINST NON-CERTIFIED VACCINES

By Rose Achiego, Waumini Communications, KCCB



INTERNET PHOTOS

A child receives vitamins during a vaccination campaign against polio.

THE Health Commission of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB) has once again voiced its opposition to the continued immunization campaigns spearheaded by the Ministry of Health. The Commission maintains that there is no cause for alarm hence the campaigns are unnecessary.

In an interview with the media, The Chairman of Catholic Health Commission of Kenya Rt. Rev Paul Kariuki Njiru said that targeting women between the age of 14 and 49 years of age raises suspicion on what could be the agenda of the government in collaboration with UNICEF and WHO.

Bishop Kariuki who is the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Embu further condemned the use of force during the vaccination campaigns. He lamented that out of the nine samples of Tetanus Toxoid vaccine (TT) tested in 2014, three were found to be laced with Beta human chorionic gonadotropin (b-HCG) sub unit which has been previously used in similar programs in Philippines, Nicaragua and Mexico to vaccinate women against future

pregnancy.

"The danger is enormous, and we cannot play it down. Why vaccinate women within the child bearing age? When the generation is destroyed we will regret." He said warning that there could be a possible collusion between the government and foreign agencies to control the population of Kenya.

Bishop Kariuki emphasised that the Church is a major player in the health sector with extensive network of health facilities that include 58 hospitals, 83 health centres, 311 dispensaries and 17 medical training institutions and hence the need to protect the lives of Kenyans by ensuring that vaccines are well tested by a committee of experts from the government and stakeholders before they are administered to the public clarifying that the Church is not against the regular vaccinations administered in hospitals.

Adding his voice to these concerns, the Commission's Vice-Chairman Rt. Rev. Joseph Mbatia who is the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Nyahururu questioned the secret behind the vaccinations such

HE LAMENTED THAT OUT OF THE NINE SAMPLES OF TETANUS TOXOID VACCINE (TT) TESTED IN 2014, THREE WERE FOUND TO BE LACED WITH BETA HUMAN CHORIONIC GONADOTROPIN (B-HCG) SUB UNIT WHICH HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY USED IN SIMILAR PROGRAMS IN PHILIPPINES, NICARAGUA AND MEXICO TO VACCINATE WOMEN AGAINST FUTURE PREGNANCY.

"THE DANGER IS ENORMOUS, AND WE CANNOT PLAY IT DOWN. WHY VACCINATE WOMEN WITHIN THE CHILD BEARING AGE?"

that the government cannot reveal to the Church and other stakeholders "Why the secret, they choose their own people to give it, and after it has been given they take back the remains and no one can access them," he observed

The Bishops urged the government to facilitate the committee of experts commissioned in 2014 to test any vaccine and ascertain its safety before administering to the public, they also called upon parents to take up their responsibility of ensuring that their children are given the right vaccines. ■

THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KAKAMEGA EMBRACES SELF-RELIANCE PROGRAMME

By Fr. Maurice Erambo and Rose Achiego

THE Catholic Diocese of Kakamega has embarked on a self-reliance programme by encouraging the faithful to contribute towards the running of the Diocesan and Parish activities.

According to the Bishop of Kakamega Rt. Rev. Joseph Obanyi, the dwindling donor funding has prompted the Diocese to engage the Christians beginning from the small Christian communities to actively support the activities of the Parishes and of the Diocese through monthly monetary contributions.

Appreciating the Christian support at Don Bosco Utume Centre in Nairobi, Bishop Obanyi said the monies have come in handy in supporting the day to day operation of the pastoral office, acquiring housing property which is an income generating activity, running of Mukumu farm project where the Diocese has planted tea, coffee, sugarcane and rearing of animals.

With collection of 15 Million shillings during last year's family day, combined with the expectation of raising 30 Million this year, the Diocese of Kakamega now has a medical insurance for the priests and plans to build a plaza with offices for rental to boost the investment kitty.

Bishop Obanyi called on all the Diocese and Parishes to adopt the initiative.



Kenya's new Bishop of Kakamega, Joseph Obanyi Sagwe with Deputy President of Kenya, William Ruto (right) and Bishop Emeritus of Kakamega Rt. Rev. Philip Sulumeti (left).

"Everyone, time for donor funding is long gone, support the local church" He said.

He expressed his gratitude to God for the gift of faith that he has seen in the people of Kakamega acknowledging the faithful for their role in building the Church.

Meanwhile, on May 22, 2016, Bishop Obanyi opened St Anne's Dispensary in Eshisuru Parish to offer health care

services to the local community.

He thanked the Christians for working hard and donating generously towards the construction of the 7-Million dispensary which will contribute immensely to the healing ministry of Christ, calling on the community members to make use of the facility and medical practitioners to apply ethics as they deliver their services. ■

INTERNET PHOTO



THE JOY OF THE FAMILY

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"Omuhimba gu'Eka"

COMMEMORATION OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE **RAISED** TO A FEAST

Vatican Radio



INTERNET PHOTOS

The Holy Father greets Bishop Arthur Serratelli, Chairman of ICEL, on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the founding of ICEL in Rome, while Archbishop Arthur Roche, Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments looks on. (Right) An image of Mary Magdalene. Mary Magdalene was the first witness to the Resurrection, and is the one who announced the event to the Apostles.

ON Friday June 10, 2016 Pope Francis decided to raise the celebration of the memorial of St. Mary Magdalene to the dignity of a liturgical Feast.

In the modern Church calendar, saints may be commemorated with a memorial (optional or obligatory), feast, or solemnity. The decree was signed on 3 June 2016, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart.

In a letter announcing the change, the Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Arthur Roche, writes the decision means one "should reflect more deeply on the dignity of women, the New

Evangelization, and the greatness of the mystery of Divine Mercy."

Archbishop Roche drew attention to the fact Mary Magdalene was the first witness to the Resurrection, and is the one who announced the event to the Apostles. "Saint Mary Magdalene is an example of true and authentic evangelization; she is an evangelist who announces the joyful central message of Easter," he writes.

"The Holy Father Francis took this decision precisely in the context of the Jubilee of Mercy to signify the importance of this woman who showed a great love for Christ and was much loved by Christ,"

writes Archbishop Roche.

He also notes Saint Magdalene was referred to as the "Apostle of the Apostles" (Apostolorum Apostola) by Thomas Aquinas, since she announced to them the Resurrection, and they, in turn, announced it to the whole world.

"Therefore it is right that the liturgical celebration of this woman has the same grade of feast given to the celebration of the apostles in the General Roman Calendar, and shines a light on the special mission of this woman, who is an example and model for every woman in the Church." ■



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POPE DECRIES ORLANDO MASSACRE AND PRAYS FOR VICTIMS

(Source: www.vatican.va)



Thousands gather for a memorial rally at the Plaza at the Dr. Phillips Performing Arts Center in downtown Orlando on Monday, June 13, 2016 to honor those killed and wounded in the Pulse nightclub attack. Credit: Carolyn Cole/Los Angeles Times via Getty Images

©REUTERS



Orlando shooting protest: Mourners at a memorial for the victims of the Orlando shooting.



INTERNET PHOTOS

(VATICAN RADIO): On June 12, 2016 Pope Francis was left shaken and saddened by the 'homicidal folly and senseless hatred' that left at least 50 people dead in an attack on a nightclub in Orlando, Florida.

A statement was also released by the Holy See Press Office Director, Father Federico Lombardi SJ, on the Orlando massacre which has been described as the worst mass shooting in American history.

Below is the statement:

The terrible massacre that has taken place in Orlando, with its dreadfully high number of innocent victims, has caused in Pope Francis, and in all of us, the deepest feelings of horror and

condemnation, of pain and turmoil before this new manifestation of homicidal folly and senseless hatred. Pope Francis joins the families of the victims and all of the injured in prayer and in compassion.

Sharing in their indescribable suffering he entrusts them to the Lord so they may find comfort. We all hope that ways may be found, as soon as possible, to effectively identify and contrast the causes of such terrible and absurd violence which so deeply upsets the desire for peace of the American people and of the whole of humanity.

The attack, which took place early Sunday on June 12 in a crowded nightclub,

was perpetrated by a gunman wielding an assault-type rifle and a handgun. Authorities are reportedly investigating the attack as an act of terrorism. Officials said at least 53 other people were hospitalized, most in critical condition. A surgeon at Orlando Regional Medical Center said the death toll was likely to climb. ■

WE ALL HOPE THAT WAYS MAY BE FOUND, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, TO EFFECTIVELY IDENTIFY AND CONTRAST THE CAUSES OF SUCH TERRIBLE AND ABSURD VIOLENCE WHICH SO DEEPLY UPSETS THE DESIRE FOR PEACE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND OF THE WHOLE OF HUMANITY.

