

THE APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO UGANDA VISITS THE MUFTI OF UGANDA

(Source: Interreligious Dialogue and Ecumenism Departments of UEC, and UMSC Blog)



His Excellency Most Rev. Michael Blume, S.V.D. (right) being received by His Eminence Sheikh Shaban Ramadhan Mubaje (left).

IN an effort to promote Interreligious dialogue and collaboration between Muslims and the Catholic Church, the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, His Excellency Most Rev. Michael August Blume, S.V.D. visited the Mufti of Uganda, His Eminence Sheikh Shaban Ramadhan Mubaje. The visit took place on 24th September 2013 at the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council Headquarters in Old Kampala.

The Nuncio was accompanied by the Secretary of the Apostolic Nunciature in Uganda, Msgr. Edward Karaan, the Secretary General of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, Msgr. John Baptist Kauta, the Consul of Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Uganda, Dr. Boney M. Katatumba, and the Programmes Coordinator for Interreligious Dialogue and Ecumenism Departments of Uganda Episcopal Conference, Mr. Stephen Kiseembo. During the meeting, the Nuncio expressed the desire of Pope Francis to promote peace and interfaith dialogue. He also appreciated the Mufti for his outstanding role in promoting peace and development.

The Mufti on his part expressed gratitude to the Pope for the message he sent to the Muslims of Uganda during the celebration of Idd-Al-Fitr. He noted that Uganda Muslim Supreme Council believes in peace and promotes peace and keeps peace at all times.

The visit came a month after Pope Francis sent a message to the Muslim community

throughout the world congratulating them upon the successful completion of the Holy Month of Ramadan and wishing them a happy feast of Idd-Al-Fitr, which in Uganda was celebrated on 8th August 2013.

In his message which was released by the Vatican on 10th July 2013, the Holy Father called for mutual respect between Christians and Muslims. He stated, "Turning to mutual respect in interreligious relations, especially between Christians and Muslims, we are called to respect the religion of the other, its teachings, its symbols, its values. Particular respect is due to religious leaders and to places of worship. How painful are attacks on one or other of these!"

The Holy Father continued to point out that, "It is clear that, when we show respect for the religion of our neighbours or when we offer them our good wishes on the occasion of a religious celebration, we simply seek to share their joy, without making reference to the content of their religious convictions".

Since 1967, the Vatican has issued an annual greeting to the world's Muslims on the Feast of Idd al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan. Ordinarily the Vatican message is released by the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue. This time, however, Pope Francis chose to convey the greetings personally in this first year of his pontificate. ■

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THE EDITORIAL



New Contact, a news publication of Uganda Episcopal Conference, is now two months old.

We greatly appreciate our readers and well-wishers for the constructive feedback that we received after our first publication of September 2013. We received several emails of gratitude and advice on how **New Contact** can be improved. Our editorial team will ensure that the suggestions presented are taken into consideration for better publications.

We would also like to extend a sincere word of appreciation to the people who contributed news stories and articles for the first issue. As we strive to promote information flow and news sharing in our Church we request you to continue being our contributors for the subsequent publications. We welcome stories, reflections and commentaries on issues that promote evangelization and integral human development. You can write on matters of faith, morals, culture, health, education, business, governance, justice, peace, etc.

As indicated in the previous editorial message, **New Contact** has started as a monthly electronic publication sent via email, but with time it will be available in hard copy. You can also access **New Contact** on the website of Uganda Episcopal Conference (www.uecon.org) and on Facebook.

Keep in contact and enjoy New Contact!

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

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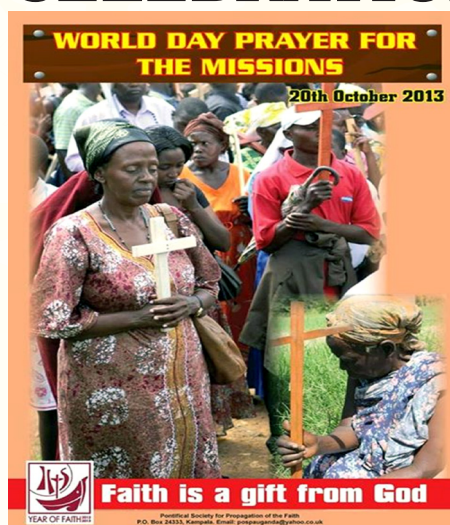
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WORLD MISSION SUNDAY CELEBRATION IN UGANDA

By Ms Angella Namugenyi and Fr. Philip Odii



ON SUNDAY, 20th October 2013, the Catholic Church in Uganda joined the rest of the Faithful around the world in celebrating World Mission Sunday. The celebration was held at the parish level in most of the 19 Catholic dioceses of Uganda.

In Gulu Ecclesiastical Province—comprising the dioceses of Arua, Gulu, Lira, and Nebbi—World Mission Sunday this year was also the 11th anniversary of the beatification of the two Catechist Martyrs Daudi Okelo and Jildo Irwa. The province celebrated the day at Paimol Wi-Polo Shrine in Kalongo Parish, Gulu Archdiocese. Bishop Sanctus Linus Wanok of Nebbi Catholic Diocese was the Principal Celebrant. The concelebrating bishops included, His Grace John Baptist Odama of Gulu Archdiocese, Rt. Rev. Joseph Franzelli of Lira Diocese, and Rt. Rev. Sabino Ocan Odoki of Arua Diocese.

The Diocese of Jinja in eastern Uganda celebrated Mission Sunday at the diocesan level. Eleven Religious Congregations of men and women were represented. In his preaching, Fr. Andrew Ikendeza, the Diocesan Pastoral Coordinator who also presided over the Mass, reminded the people that the Church is by nature missionary. He called upon each and every one of them to participate in preaching the gospel starting from the families. During the celebration, five candles were lit to represent the five continents of the world: Africa, America, Asia, Europe and Oceania. The Christians were asked to pray for all people in the world by using the Missionary Rosary.



The Missionary Rosary

The purpose of the Missionary Rosary is to provide the opportunity to pray for peace

in the world and the conversion of all people, calling to mind the five continents represented by five colours. The beads in each decade of the Missionary Rosary are of a different colour and each colour represents a different continent. The green decade represents Africa the continent of hope with its luxuriant green forests; the red decade stands for America whose first inhabitants were the Red Indians (Indios) and a lot of blood was shed during the evangelization of that continent; the yellow decade is for Asia, symbolizing the land of the rising sun and the cradle of civilization; the white decade represents Europe, where you find the Pope who is the sign of unity and is ever dressed in white as a symbol of holiness; the blue decade represents Oceania with its water immensity.

In Kabong Parish, Kotido Diocese, Mission Sunday was special because they were also commemorating 80 years of the Catholic Faith in Karamoja and marking the closing of the Year of Faith. In his homily, Fr. Samuel Lotuk, the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) Diocesan Director challenged the Christians to reflect on and appreciate the many benefits Kabong parish has received from the Pontifical Mission Societies. He invited them to strengthen their commitment towards the material and financial support to the Universal Solidarity Fund of the Church. Every sub-parish presented a special collection towards the Fund.

World Mission Sunday is celebrated by the Catholic Church on the second last Sunday of October. It is a day set aside for Catholics throughout the world to recommit themselves to the Church's missionary activity through prayer and sacrifice. Every year the Holy Father issues a message for the day. In his message for this year's World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis reflected on Faith as God's precious gift, the Year of Faith, the obstacles often encountered in the work of evangelization, the challenges of the modern era, and the call to be missionary.

In preparation for the celebration of the World Mission Sunday in Uganda, the National Office of the Pontifical Mission Societies of Uganda Episcopal Conference sent out to all the dioceses the Papal message, letters of appeal for the Universal Solidarity Fund, and posters bearing the theme, "**Faith is a gift from God**". This was the theme for the celebrations in Uganda ■

KAMPALA ARCHDIOCESE LAUNCHES PREPARATIONS TO MARK THE **GOLDEN JUBILEE** OF THE CANONISATION OF THE **UGANDA MARTYRS**

By Juliet Lukwago and Fr. Philip Odii



Photo by Juliet Lukwago

Archbishop Lwanga (centre) blowing a traditional Kiganda horn to declare the start of the activities to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Canonisation of the 22 Catholic Uganda Martyrs. Looking on is Msgr. Lawrence Ssemusu.

ON OCTOBER 18, 2013, Kampala Archdiocese launched preparations to mark 50 years since Pope Paul VI canonized the 22 Catholic Uganda Martyrs. The martyrs were declared saints at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome on October 18, 1964, which was also Mission Sunday.

Kampala Archbishop, Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga, launched the preparations when he lit a torch and then blew a traditional Kiganda horn (Kkondeere) to declare the start of the activities that are scheduled to conclude on October 18, 2014, which will be the climax of the Golden Jubilee

celebration of the Canonisation of the Uganda Martyrs. The Holy Mass for this Golden Jubilee will be held at the Namugongo Shrine and Pope Francis is expected to be the Principal Celebrant. The Holy Father has been officially invited by the Catholic Bishops of Uganda and the letter of invitation was personally delivered by His Grace Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga on 21st September 2013. According to the Archbishop, the Pope promised to look at his schedule and respond accordingly.

The torch which was lit at the launch will go round the 54 parishes that form

Kampala Archdiocese, starting with Lubaga Cathedral parish. Fr Joseph Mary Bbuye, the Parish Priest, received the torch from Archbishop Lwanga to a thunderous applause from the gathering. After one week of devotional prayer, the torch will be handed over to Nabalagala Parish, where the remains of the first missionaries were reburied in 2011.

The launch was preceded by a two-day congress held at the Sacred Heart of Mary Cathedral, Lubaga, with the theme, *"You will be my witnesses"* (Acts 1:8).

At the closing of the congress on October 18, 2013, the Vice President of the Republic of Uganda, His Excellency Edward Ssekandi delivered a message from His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. In his message the President noted that the sacrifice of the Uganda Martyrs was very significant to all Ugandans and it should inspire them to love their country, to love one another and to be committed to their vocations, duties and life values.

The President saluted the Church for its contribution to Uganda since the coming of the first missionaries. He appreciated the Church for promoting morality and for supplementing government efforts in human development programmes. "Government will continue to support the work of the Church for development because in so doing we are supporting the people of Uganda", he stated.

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ARCHDIOCESE OF GULU **COMMEMORATES THE BEATIFICATION OF THE BLESSED MARTYRS DAUDI OKELO AND JILDO IRWA**

By Alphonse Makmot Akera and Fr. Samuel Mwaka Okidi

THE CELEBRATION to mark the 11th anniversary of the beatification of the two Catechist Martyrs Daudi Okelo and Jildo Irwa took place on 20th October 2013 at Paimol Wi-Polo Shrine in Kalongo Parish, Gulu Archdiocese. Okelo and Irwa were beatified by the late Pope John Paul II on 20th October 2002 in Rome.

The Solemn Eucharistic Celebration commemorating the beatification was presided over by the Rt. Rev. Sanctus Linus Wanok, the Bishop of Nebbi Catholic Diocese. In his homily, he called upon the pilgrims to sincerely

renew their faith in the place he termed as "the fountain spring of holy water cleansed by the blood of the two Martyrs of Paimol". "We have to go home from this hill refreshed in our faith", he urged the pilgrims.

The Bishop noted that Paimol Hill is the hill of the blood of the Martyrs, the holy hill of prayers and a living sign of the determination to do the will of God as exhibited by Daudi Okelo and Jildo Irwa.

Reflecting on the theme of the day "Do not be afraid, I have conquered the world" (Jn.16:33), Bishop Wanok told

the pilgrims that it is true, we have problems all around us; in our families, villages, places of work, in our Districts, in the Government and even in our Church but Christ today assures us to be calm and firm in our faith.

"Do not be afraid I have conquered the world. Take courage, you are safe with me", the Bishop reiterated the words of Jesus. This he said was echoed in the lives of the two martyrs right from the beginning of their mission to Paimol. When Fr. Cesare Gambaretto, their Parish Priest, asked them: "You two are determined to go to Paimol. Are you

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ARCHDIOCESE OF GULU COMMEMORATES THE BEATIFICATION OF THE BLESSED MARTYRS DAUDI OKELO AND JILDO IRWA

FROM PAGE 3



Archbishop Odama (centre), Bishop Odoki (centre-left), Bishop Franzelli (centre-right), Bishop Wanok (centre-back) and priests pose for a photo after Mass

aware that there are a lot of political and social problems there?" Daudi and Jildo answered, "We are going to teach the Word of God only. If they kill us, we shall go to Heaven (Wi-Polo)".

The prelate further pointed out that the determination of Moses to reach the Promised Land as seen in the first reading of the day (Exodus 17:8-13); the encouragement given by Paul to Timothy to preach the Word of God in season and out of season (2 Tim. 3:14-4:2); and the insistence for justice done by the woman in the Gospel (Luke 18:1-8), should be taken as the story of our life from today onwards. "We must be firm, determined and committed in our faith. We must pray always to God, acknowledging that we are His children who love Him. With prayers, God will always be on our side and through him we shall overcome all our problems", he stated.

Bishop Wanok warned the people never to waver in their faith and religion as many sometimes do with political parties- today they belong to one and tomorrow they switch to another. Christ, he said, conquered the world in truth and so did Daudi and Jildo.

The Bishop added that the Missionaries have done their part by introducing to us the truth of faith. It is now the work of the diocesan priests, the religious and the catechists to continue preaching, teaching and encouraging the other faithful to pray

always and to stand by the truth in their daily lives.

The colourful celebration was attended by Bishop Joseph Franzelli of Lira, Bishop Sabino Ocan Odoki of Arua, Archbishop John Baptist Odama of Gulu (the host), forty one priests, one deacon, several religious men and women and over thirty thousand lay faithful.

About 100 pilgrims walked to the Paimol Shrine from the dioceses of Arua, Nebbi, Lira, Hoima, Kotido, Kasana-Luweero and Kampala Archdiocese. Many others walked from the parishes of the Archdiocese of Gulu (the host). Also in attendance were: Hon. Alex Onzima, the State Minister for Local Government, Justice Owiny Dollo and the following Members of Parliament: Hon. Betty Aol Ocan (Gulu), Hon. Akello Judith Franka (Agago) and Hon. Olanya Gilbert (Kilak). The Local Council V Chairpersons from the Acholi sub-Region, the Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) and many other civil leaders were also present.

In his closing remarks, Archbishop John Baptist Odama of Gulu stressed the fact that faith is a gift from God to which we must respond. Daudi Okelo and Jildo Irwa decisively responded to this gift of God with real courage. The Archbishop pointed out that when Fr. Gambaretto, the then Parish Priest of Kitgum, warned the two martyrs about the delicate mission they were

undertaking, they responded saying, "Are you not the one who taught us that if we die for Christ we go to Heaven?"

Archbishop Odama later on made the following announcements:

1. Rev. Fr. Dr. Joseph Okumu has been appointed the first Rector of the Paimol Wi-Polo Blessed Daudi Okelo and Jildo Irwa Shrine.
2. The Bishops of the Gulu Ecclesiastical Province (GANAL) have resolved to annually go on pilgrimages to the Holy Places listed below with effect from 2014:
 - a) Omach in Pakwach parish, Nebbi Catholic Diocese, on 6th March.
 - b) Iceme Parish in Oyam District, Lira Diocese, on the 1st Saturday of May.
 - c) Indriani Holy Cross Pilgrim Center – Adjumani Parish, Arua Diocese, on 14th September.
 - d) Wi-Polo Paimol in Kalongo Parish, Archdiocese of Gulu, on 20th October.
3. The animating Deanery for the 2014 Paimol Wi-Polo Martyrs celebration will be Kitgum Mission Deanery headed by the Dean, Fr. John Mark Oryem.
4. As a Province, the Bishops have resolved that with effect from this year's celebration, there will be no political speeches during Religious functions such as this one that has just been concluded. After the final blessing, people should be allowed to return home reflecting only on the Word of God received during Holy Mass ■

"WE ARE GOING TO TEACH THE WORD OF GOD ONLY. IF THEY KILL US, WE SHALL GO TO HEAVEN (WI-POLO)"

- Daudi and Jildo answered -

THE BIOGRAPHY OF THE BLESSED MARTYRS DAUDI OKELO AND JILDO IRWA

Source: www.vatican.va



Daudi Okelo (1902 ca.-1918) and Jildo Irwa (1906 ca.-1918)

THE MARTYRS Daudi Okelo 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 large Luo group whose members even today live mostly in the North of Uganda, but they are also present in Southern Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania 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.

Daudi Okelo

Daudi Okelo was born around 1902 in Ogom-Payira, a village on the road Gulu-Kitgum. The son of pagan parents, Lodi and Amona, at 14-16 years of age he attended the instruction to receive baptism. Baptized by Fr. Cesare Gambaretto on 1 June 1916, Daudi received his first holy communion on the same day and was confirmed on 15 October 1916. After completing his formation, Daudi accepted to be enrolled as a catechist.

At the beginning of 1917, Antonio, the catechist in charge of Paimol, died. Daudi went to Fr. Cesare, then superior at the mission of Kitgum, offering to take Antonio's place. Daudi's appointment came only towards the end of that year, during one of the catechists' monthly meetings. The young Jildo Irwa was to go with him as his assistant. Before setting off, the two of them went to Fr. Cesare who informed them of the difficulties of their work, like the long travelling distance—the village was about 80 km from Kitgum—and, in

particular, the frequent in-fights of the local people, instigated also by gangs of raiders and traders of slaves and gold, sporadically visiting the area. To all this Daudi is alleged to have answered: "I am not afraid to die. Jesus, too, died for us!"

So, around November-December 1917, with Fr. Cesare's blessing, Boniface the head-catechist of Kitgum, accompanied Daudi and Jildo to Paimol. Here Daudi immediately began his work by gathering children willing to take religious instruction.

At dawn he beat the drum to call his catechumens for morning prayers and, for Jildo and himself, also for the Rosary. He taught them the prayers and the catechism's questions and answers, repeated often in a sign-song like manner during the lesson, to facilitate the memorising. It was a matter of teaching the first elements of faith, the so-called Lok-odiku (the words of the morning), namely the essential parts of the catechism. To this activity Daudi added the visits to the nearby small villages from where the catechumens were coming, busy during the day in assisting their parents to look after the cattle or work in the fields.

At sunset, Daudi gave the signal for common prayer and the Rosary, always closing with a song to Our Lady. On Sunday, he held a longer prayer service, often enlivened by the presence of catechumens and catechists of the area.

Daudi of Payira is described as a young man of peaceful and shy character, diligent in his duties as a catechist and loved by all. He never got involved in tribal or political disputes, fairly frequent at that time, as submission to the British government was often followed by ill-concealed intolerance. In fact, due to an unhappy decision taken by the District Commissioner, there rose a serious tension. Raiders, Muslim elements and witchdoctors took advantage of the violent situation to get rid of the new religion brought by Daudi.

During the weekend of 18-20 October 1918, long before dawn, five people headed for the hut where Daudi and Jildo were staying with the clear intention of killing them. A village elder confronted the new comers telling them they were not allowed to kill the catechists, as they were his guests. Daudi appeared at the door of his hut and entreated the elder not to get involved. Then the intruders entered into Daudi's hut and insisted with him that he gives up teaching catechism. Realising that Daudi was not giving in to their threats, they dragged him outside, pushed him to the ground and pierced him with their spears. He was about 16-18 years old.

His body was then left unburied until a few days later when some people, tying a rope around the neck, dragged the body over a nearby empty termite hill. The mortal remains, collected in February 1926, were later placed in the mission church of Kitgum, at the foot of the altar of the Sacred Heart.

Jildo Irwa

Jildo Irwa was born around 1906 in the village of Bar-Kitoba, North-West of Kitgum, from pagan parents: Ato, his mother, and Okeny, his father who later became a Christian.

He was baptized by Fr. Cesare Gambaretto on 6 June 1916, at the age of 10-12 years; on the same day he received his first Holy Communion and was confirmed on 15 October 1916.

Father Cesare wrote about him "Jildo was much younger than Daudi. Of lively and gentle nature, like many Acholi youngsters, he was quite intelligent and occasionally acted as secretary to the vice-chief Ogal who had given hospitality in Paimol. He was of great help to Daudi in gathering the children for the instruction with his gentle way and infantile insistence. He knew also how to entertain them with innocent village games and noisy and merry meetings. He had recently received baptism, whose grace he preserved in his heart and let it transpire by his charming behaviour".

"He had spontaneously and very willingly offered to go with Daudi to teach God's word in Paimol. Here he was loved by everyone because he was always available and exemplary in his duties as assistant-catechist.

"On the morning of their martyrdom Jildo answered to Daudi who was warning him about a possible cruel death, "Why should we be afraid? We have done nothing wrong to anyone; we are here only because Fr. Cesare sent us to teach the word of God. Do not fear!"

He repeated the same words to those who were urging him to leave that place and his duty as assistant-catechist. "We have done nothing wrong", he was saying in tears "For the same reason you killed Daudi you must also kill me, because together we came here and together we have been teaching God's word". Having said this, somebody grabbed him, pushed him outside the hut and, placing him at a distance of two steps, pierced him through with a spear. Then one of them struck Jildo's head with a knife. He was about 12-14 years old ■

"I AM NOT AFRAID TO DIE. JESUS, TOO, DIED FOR US!" - DAUDI OKELO

ANNOUNCEMENT

CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL UGANDA



The International Catholic Charismatic Renewal is coming to Africa for the first time. Uganda has been chosen to host the event, which will involve an International Leaders' Conference at Speke Resort & Conference Centre, Munyonyo, Kampala

LEADERS CONFERENCE

- DATES** : 30th June to 4th July 2014
THEME : **"THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT" (ACTS 2:4)**
WHO TO ATTEND : Potential Leaders, Former Leaders, Youth Leaders and Current Leaders

REGISTRATION HAS STARTED!!!

Register!!! Register!!! Register!!!

Registration forms are available with Prayer Group Leaders, Diocesan Service Team Leaders, and at Emmaus Center Katikamu, the National Office (UCCRO) or Online at www.ccruganda.org

NB: Please note that registration fee is 270,000/= and after 31st December 2013 you will be required to top up with 13,500/= . The earlier you pay the better!!!

KAMPALA ARCHDIOCESE LAUNCHES PREPARATIONS TO MARK THE GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THE CANONISATION OF THE UGANDA MARTYRS

FROM PAGE 3

Photo by Juliet Lukwago



The Vice President, His Excellency Edward Ssekandi (right) speaking with His Grace Dr. Cyprrian Kizito Lwanga (left) at the Cathedral in Lubaga



Kalema showing the people his legs that were miraculously healed through the intercession of the martyrs

In his key note address at the closing of the first ever congress on the Uganda Martyrs, Archbishop Lwanga explained that before a person is declared a saint, the Catholic Church requires a miracle through his or her intercession. The first miracle that led to the canonization of the Uganda Martyrs was experienced by two religious sisters at Rubaga Hospital in Kampala. The two nuns, Sr. Aloyse Criblet and Sr. Richildis, had contracted the incurable Bubonic plague, but were miraculously cured after novena prayers were held for them through the intercession of the Uganda Martyrs.

The second miracle, the Archbishop said, was experienced by Mr. Levocato Kalema from Bigada Parish in Masaka Diocese, who was present at the congress and was introduced to the people. Kalema was born lame and was unable to walk, but on the sixth day of the novena prayers for his healing through the intercession of the martyrs, he rose and started to walk. There were many other miracles and favours that were received through the intercession of these martyrs.

The martyrs, Lwanga noted, have made Uganda known all over the world. "These saints are highly honored in Uganda and abroad with many people named after them. The whole Catholic Church and families regularly recite litanies for their intercession in their native languages. Their prayers have been answered so

often", he said.

Referring to the Book of Leviticus chapter 25, the Archbishop explained the origin and purpose of jubilee celebrations. When God created the universe, He rested on the seventh day. Hence, the seventh day for the Jews became the Sabbath, a day of rest and prayer. The people of Israel celebrated the seventh year as a Sabbath year dedicated to the Lord. After seven Sabbath years- seven times seven years- which is forty nine years, a trumpet/horn was sounded throughout the land to announce the Year of Jubilee, the fiftieth year. The Israelites celebrated the jubilee year by returning to their family property, forgiving debts, returning land to owners, releasing prisoners and so forth. According to the Archbishop, since Ugandans have just celebrated the Golden Jubilee of political independence and are now preparing to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the canonisation of the Uganda Martyrs, there should be reconciliation with God and neighbors, cancelling of all debts, returning of property, including land and schools to their original owners.

The Prelate appreciated government for its development work and for declaring 3rd of June a public holiday. He called on government to work with the Catholic Church in preparation for the visit of the Pope for the Jubilee celebration. He also challenged government to do more to ensure good governance and the

improvement of the education system, the agricultural sector among others. The Archbishop recommended the following for the jubilee celebration and for a better Uganda: Biblical reflection, just wage structure, reconciliation at all levels, cancelling of debts, return of property to rightful owners, honest debate about the future of the country, good global ethics, truth and freedom.

During the two-day congress, the following topics were discussed by various discussants: "Applying the Message of the Divine Mercy and the Uganda Martyrs in daily reading and life" (Fr. Athanasius Musajjakawa of Bunnamwaya Parish), "Dualism in our Christian worship" (Fr. Augustine Mpagi of Kasana-Luweero Diocese), "Inculturation and the Uganda Martyrs" (Br. Fr. Anatoli Wasswa of the Bannakaroli Brothers of Kiteredde), "The Promotion of Integral Development and Self-Reliance in the African Church" (Prof. Peter Kasenene), "The Biblical Aspect about the Uganda Martyrs" (Fr. Dr. Lazarus Luyinda, the Vice-Rector of Kinyamasika Major Seminary), "Self-Reliance" (Mr. Fabian Kasi, the Managing Director of Centenary Bank), "Women and the Uganda Martyrs" (Mrs. Florence Kwesigabo), "The Children and Youth Apostolate under the guidance of St. Kizito and St. Karoli Lwanga" (Fr. Joseph Luzindana, Kampala Archdiocese Youth Chaplain) ■

LIRA: THE HERITAGE OF BISHOP ASILI

JUST two weeks before celebrating twenty years of episcopate, on October 12, 1988, Bishop Caesar Asili, the first bishop of Lira Diocese, died. In the souvenir card prepared for the celebration he had written to his people: "Let us all move ahead to build this Diocese of ours into a family of God's people, make it a real home where love of God and fraternal charity really reigns. KEEPING THE FAITH ALIVE IN YOU AND SPREADING IT EVERYWHERE."

Twenty five years after his death, thousands of people gathered in Lira Cathedral on October 12 2013 to thank God for the gift of this good shepherd who gave his life for the Church in Lango and to reflect on his legacy. Together with the priests and laity, many members of the religious institutes founded by Bishop Asili, the Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church and the Missionaries of Jesus the Divine Master, gathered together in a Solemn Mass, followed by a joyful reception. Presiding over the Eucharist, the third bishop of Lira, Rt. Rev. Joseph Franzelli invited everybody to cherish the memory and follow the example of Bishop Asili, whose remains are buried in the Cathedral.

At his death, Lira was a young diocese with a population of 797.961 inhabitants, 343.552 Catholics in 15



Bishop Joseph Franzelli (centre) poses for a photo with priests and the Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church after the anniversary Mass for the late Bishop Asili at the Cathedral of Lira Diocese

parishes with 16 diocesan priests and 25 missionaries. Twenty five years down the road, out of two million people in Lango, about one million are Catholics, spread in 18 parishes with more than 50 diocesan priests, 15 missionaries, over 1200 chapels and catechists.

In his homily, Bishop Franzelli invited the congregation to carry on the missionary task indicated by Bishop Asili in his last message. "We have now more buildings, institutions and

structures, associations and movements. With God's grace the Church in Lira has indeed gone a long way. Yet the task ahead of us is still the same one. Is the Church in Lira Diocese more a family now than 25 years ago? Is it a home united in peace and fraternal charity? Has our faith grown stronger and deeper? Clergy, religious and laity, what are we doing to spread it everywhere?" the bishop asked ■

(Source: Lira Diocese)

THE LATE BISHOP CAESAR ASILI: A MAN OF VISION, MISSION

BISHOP Henry Ssentongo has said that the occasion of marking the 25th death anniversary of Bishop Caesar Asili is a landmark in the history of the congregations he founded, saying it should be seen as an occasion for a new beginning.

"Through our founder, Jesus the Divine Master gives us a new mandate: 'cast your nets into the deep waters' in this Year of Faith," the Bishop of Moroto Diocese urged.

Bishop Ssentongo was speaking during a two-day retreat that preceded the jubilee celebrations at the Mother House of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church (MSMMC), one of the congregations Asili founded in Lira.

The sisters attended the retreat together with members of Missionaries of Jesus the Divine Master (MIDM), another congregation he founded for priests and brothers. The Bishop said as a church we must give gratitude to God for the gift of witness of members of the two institutes which Asili founded, saying they have rendered services in different ways. But while we give thanks with joy for successes, he said we (members) must also in humility acknowledge our failures. "We especially call for God's mercies in situations where I/we lose a sense of direction in our mission. But most importantly, we must not let our failures overcome us to the extent of giving up," he said.

In striving to accomplish their mission, he said members must recognize that each person remains a unique individual and that this uniqueness is lived in community. As such, it calls for harmony for mutual up building and support to maintain unity in diversity. But he warned that there was need to create time, space and the necessary environment for each member to 'dance' to his/her own tune, which of course must be within the regulations of the wider community.

'CAST YOUR NETS INTO THE DEEP WATERS' IN THIS YEAR OF FAITH," - BISHOP OF MOROTO DIOCESE

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FROM PAGE 8



File Photo

Photo of the Late Bishop Caesar Asili interacting with children

Who was Asili?

According to Bishop Ssentongo, Asili had a very pleasant personality – “he was smart, soft spoken and always with a smile on his face, and very sociable too.” The prelate recalled that in Asili’s liturgical celebrations there was order, humility, dignity and maximum devotion.

Additionally, the Bishop said he found Asili to be a very compassionate person. A person who had feelings of empathy for those who are suffering. At the Episcopal Conference his brother bishops recognized this gift and appointed him chairman of the Health Services Commission. And not surprisingly, in his own congregation of the MSMMC sisters, health services is one of the key areas of apostolate.

However, not everything went on smoothly for Bishop Asili. According to Bishop Ssentongo, Asili was a man of

the cross. First, he said Asili faced trials in his pursuit of the priestly vocation, for which he had recourse to the Blessed Mother of God. It is said that Asili promised Mother Mary a gift if she granted him the grace to become a priest. The promised gift is the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church which he founded in 1970. The congregation has Mother Mary in the title of its name and they take Mary as the Patroness of the congregation.

Secondly, Bishop Asili had the challenge of nurturing two young congregations - MIDM and MSMMC. Being the first African founded missionary congregations in Uganda, critics believed he couldn’t sustain them. As such, he worked very hard to set them on course. This responsibility on addition to being the Ordinary of Lira Diocese, terribly strained him.

His vision

Bishop Ssentongo acknowledges that the late Bishop Caesar Asili had an ecclesial vision. He had in mind the universality of the Church where there are no nationalities, tribes, languages, race or ethnicity and this has been one of the most beautiful characteristics of the two institutes which Asili founded. Ssentongo, however, warned that these characteristics give the members a responsibility for teaching and loving unity in diversity.

Furthermore, Bishop Ssentongo said that Asili had a deep understanding of the Church as being missionary and that this realization was achieved when Pope Paul VI blessed the foundation stones of the two missionary institutes during his visit to Uganda in 1969. During that visit the Pope prophetically announced thus: “You Africans must be missionaries

to yourselves.” And this, the Bishop said was seen as powerful signs of the times and that Asili seized the opportunity.

Another indication of Asili’s vision, according to Bishop Ssentongo, was his belief in the potential of Africa. He noted that the late Bishop/Founder believed that Africa had something special to offer to God and to humanity and that this was beautifully expressed in the MSMMC sisters’ congregation anthem. In the hymn which he personally composed, parts of one of the stanzas goes as thus: “We came from North, South, East and West for you a mighty throng, to give you Africa’s richest, best, to sing you Africa’s song ...”

Bishop Ssentongo also explained that the late Bishop had a vision of service in all to all. Accordingly, he expressed that the mission of Asili’s sons and daughters could be summed up in one word as “Service”, and that service is love in action. He said that Asili urged his sons and daughters to give service where they are needed and that this vision has been eminently realized. His daughters, for instance, are now rendering services in the fields of education from nursery right up to the university level, the health sector, social services, the media and catechesis, among others.

Basing on these services that the sisters are rendering, Bishop Ssentongo noted that the Lord has confirmed Asili’s vision and we can confidently affirm that it was not a human vision but an inspiration from God.

Bishop Caesar Asili was born in 1924 in Moyo District, Northern Uganda. He was ordained a priest in 1955, and was consecrated and installed as first Bishop of Lira Diocese on 27th October 1968. He died on 12th October 1988 at the age of 64, and was succeeded by Bishop Emeritus Joseph Oyanga ■



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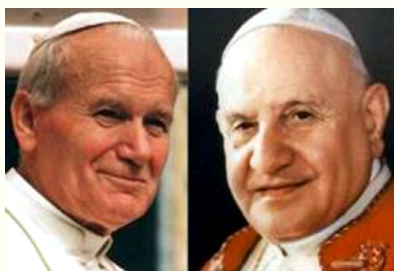








Canonization Date Announced For Blessed Popes John Paul II and John XXIII



Pope John Paul II and Pope John XXIII

(VATICAN RADIO): Pope Francis on Monday, September 9 2013, held the Public Ordinary Consistory for the forthcoming Canonization of Blessed Pope John XXIII and Blessed Pope John Paul II. During the course of the Consistory in the Vatican's Consistory Hall, the Pope decreed that his two predecessors will be raised to Sainthood on April 27, 2014, the day on which the Church celebrates the Second Sunday of Easter and Divine Mercy. ■

THE DEATH OF BISHOP RAYMOND MWANYIKA OF TANZANIA



The Late Bishop Raymond Mwanyika

ON 24TH OCTOBER 2013, Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) lost one of its bishops, Rt. Rev. Raymond Mwanyika, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Njombe. He died of a heart attack at the age of 83.

The late Bishop Mwanyika was born in 1930 at Uwemba in Tanzania, and was ordained a priest on 11th October 1959. He was appointed first indigenous Bishop of Njombe on 16th January 1971. On 25th April of the same year he was consecrated and installed Bishop of the Diocese of Njombe. He retired in the service as Bishop of Njombe on 8th June 2002.

The funeral Mass and burial of Bishop Mwanyika took place on 29th October 2013, at St. Joseph Cathedral, Njombe ■

(Source: TEC Communication office and AMECEA Communication office)

THEME FOR 2014 WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY MESSAGE

VATICAN CITY: On Monday, 30 September 2013, the Holy See released the theme chosen by the Holy Father, Pope Francis, for the 48th World Communications Day which will be celebrated on 1st June 2014. Here below is the theme and the English translation of the communiqué:

"Communication at the service of an authentic culture of encounter"

The capacity to communicate is at the heart of what it means to be human. It is in and through our communication that we are able to meet and encounter at a meaningful level other people, express who we are, what we think and believe, how we wish to live and, perhaps more importantly, to come to know those with whom we are called to live. Such communication calls for honesty, mutual respect and a commitment to learn from each other.

It requires a capacity to know how to dialogue respectfully with the truth of others. It is often what might be perceived initially as 'difference' in the other that reveals the richness of our humanity. It is the discovery of the other that enables us to learn the truth of who we are ourselves.

In our modern era, a new culture is developing advanced by technology, and communication is in a sense "amplified" and "continuous". We are called to "rediscover, through the means of social communication as well as by personal contact, the beauty that is at the heart of our existence and journey, the beauty of faith and of the beauty of the encounter with Christ." (Address of Pope Francis to participants at the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, 21 September 2013). In this context, each one of us should accept the challenge to be authentic by witnessing to values, Christian identity, cultural experiences, expressed with a new language and shared with others.

Our ability to communicate, reflected in our participation in the

creative, communicative and unifying Trinitarian Love, is a gift which allows us to grow in personal relationships, which are a blessing in our lives, and to find in dialogue a response to those divisions that create tensions within communities and between nations.

The age of globalization is making communication possible even in the most remote parts of the world, but it is also important "to use modern technologies and social networks in such a way as to reveal a presence that listens, converses and encourages." (Address of Pope Francis to participants at the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, 21 September 2013), so that nobody is excluded.

The Message for World

Communications Day 2014 will explore the potential of communication, especially in a networked and connected world, to bring people closer to each other and to co-operate in the task of building a more just world.

World Communications Day, the only worldwide celebration called for by the Second Vatican Council ("Inter Mirifica", 1963), is celebrated in most countries, on the recommendation of the bishops of the world, on the Sunday before Pentecost (June 1st in 2014).

The Holy Father's message for World Communications Day is traditionally published in conjunction with the Memorial of St. Francis de Sales, patron of writers (January 24) ■

(Source: www.pccs.va)

BUT IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT "TO USE MODERN TECHNOLOGIES AND SOCIAL NETWORKS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO REVEAL A PRESENCE THAT LISTENS, CONVERSES AND ENCOURAGES."

- POPE FRANCIS -

PROMOTING SENSITISATION AND QUALITY LEADERSHIP IN VIEW OF THE ON GOING **CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION REFORM [CURASSE]**



Fr. Dr. Lucian Arinaitwe (extreme left) with representatives of key stakeholders of Catholic-founded education institutions in Uganda, during one of the sensitisation workshops on CURASSE and current educational issues in Uganda, held at Ggaba National Major Seminary in Kampala.

THE GOVERNMENT of Uganda under its Ministry of Education and Sports, and the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) is presently carrying out a lower secondary curriculum reform code named CURASSE (Curriculum Assessment and Examination Reform). The reform which started in 2011, "aims at shifting from an old tried and trusted model of secondary education which was designed for a minority of children in order to prepare them for higher education and public service to a broader more inclusive curriculum designed to satisfy needs of all abilities. The underlying philosophy for the reform is "a holistic education for personal and national development" (cfr. NCDC MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE LOWER SECONDARY CURRICULUM REFORM PROCESS, released on 15th September 2012).

This education reform, however, cannot bear any lasting fruits if we do not adequately prepare our Education institutions, sensitise and alert all our stakeholders especially on the forwarded positions, "where we are" and "where we want our learners to be." There is a need for all stakeholders to work as a team and adopt sensitization approaches especially in uplifting the desired holistic

quality in our education institutions.

Here below are some major elements of the reform:

Objectives of Reform

The reformed curriculum aims at:

- Promoting effective learning and acquisition of skills.
- Addressing the needs of all learners and laying the foundation for improved pedagogy and assessment procedures.
- Allowing learners to realise their full potential and demonstrate their achievements.
- Addressing the social and economic needs of the country by meeting the educational needs of learners who will take jobs in the world of work, become self-employed people or pursue academic studies beyond senior 4.
- Allowing flexibility to absorb emerging fields of knowledge in a rapidly-changing world.
- Reducing content overload by specifying a realistic set of expected learning outcomes with a range of essential generic skills at the heart of the curriculum.

Why the Reform?

- The Lower Secondary Curriculum has not been changed for 30 years except adding new content, some important emerging areas have remained excluded.
- 70% of graduating primary level students now progress to Lower Secondary Schools.
- The current curriculum lacks a focus on the 21st century skills.
- The current curriculum does not adequately address the social and economic needs of the country.
- The current curriculum is outdated as it emphasizes rote learning and subject content at the expense of acquiring skills.
- There is need for an inclusive curriculum that satisfies the needs of all abilities not just the top 15% of the ability range.

Suggested Curriculum Frame Work

The new curriculum proposes eight learning areas – Creative Arts, Language, Life Education, Mathematics, Religious Education, Science, Social studies, and Technology and Enterprise. All learning areas will be compulsory at all levels, that is, S.1-S4. In the diagram below are the learning areas and the strands

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which are units/themes that outline the knowledge that will be acquired by the learners. At the centre of the learning areas, are the generic skills and values that will be acquired across the curriculum.

How the reform is being carried out?

The curriculum reform process started in 2011. Recent activities carried out were a situational analysis of the current lower secondary curriculum and a labour market survey to identify skills required by employers.

Other ongoing and planned activities include:

- Developing a framework for the Lower Secondary curriculum:— A framework for the new curriculum has been developed and is being shared with stakeholders for comments and feedback.
- Syllabus development:—The curriculum specialists together with consultants and other education stakeholders are developing syllabuses for different learning areas.
- Stakeholder consultations:— Consultations are being carried out during all activities of the reform process.
- Developing learning and teaching materials:—Based on the new curriculum, text books will be developed.
- Teacher support:—Teacher support materials on the new learning areas will be developed.
- Assessment:—National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) is working closely with Uganda National Examination Board (UNEBC) to develop an assessment model that suits the new curriculum.

As I conclude, I would like to point out that Uganda Catholic Education Department (UCED) of Uganda Episcopal Conference is presently undertaking a sensitization programme in all the 19 Catholic Dioceses of Uganda in relation to CURASSE. In carrying out this sensitization and in contributing to the education reform in Uganda, we bear in mind the overall goal of UCED, which is, "to promote the integration of faith and culture; faith and knowledge, attitudes, skills as well as Catholic ethical values in Education Institutions". Let us work together for the good of our country.

By Fr. Dr. Lucian Arinaitwe
Executive Secretary, Uganda Catholic Education Department [UCED]

PEACE ON TRIAL IN THE FACE OF THE **TERRORISTS** **ATTACK**, NOT JUST IN KENYA BUT IN THE REGION AND BEYOND



A bird's eye view of smoke rising from Westgate shopping mall

THE TERRORIST ATTACK meted on innocent Kenyans at the Westgate shopping Mall on that fateful day of 21st September 2013, that left over 60 people dead and hundreds injured, brutally ushered the country into a moment of agony and mourning. Perhaps there are good reasons why this mood was not just a confine of Kenya but indeed a great concern in the whole region. The fear is real and founded on the fact that at this rate, no country is airtight safe from these heinous attacks; they can happen anywhere anytime...and God forbid.

Lest we forget, it will be recalled that this is only reminiscent of the bomb blast that happened in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salam simultaneously on the 7th July 1998 where 257 lost their lives and 6,000 injured, whose legacy was, and still is, devastation and desperation. Down the memory lane, we further remember with sadness the attack that took place in Kampala, Uganda in July 2010 killing 74 people and injuring 70. Pretty recently, on 7th May 2013 Tanzania suffered from a similar attack in Arusha that left several people dead and some injured. Our memory can take us for a tour to places and times these attacks have been happening especially around Nairobi. Evidently, this is a worrying trend to a

people that thirst for peace and value it; to a people who value human life.

Now the dust has settled down and the bellowing smoke has vanished but not so fast for the memories; the quiet is coming in to haunt us when we recall the slow and painful death that took place in that once elegantly standing shopping mall. And we are asking questions! More questions than answers. Or maybe! What can we do to stop this ever happening again to us? How did a disaster of such magnitude sail through all the multi-security organs, systems and agencies?

May be its time we begin asking different questions. What role did I, as a person play in all this? Did somebody out of selfishness and greed allow the passage of dangerous arsenals for some bribe? Did somebody sleep on important information and clue out of general lethargy, irresponsibility or otherwise? These are tough questions but they must be asked because when we talk of corruption this is what it can come down to. Somebody needs to be asking himself or herself, is it that little bribery that I took that cost all those lives...how will I ever pay back! Did I lose an opportunity to save all those lost lives by failing to act on information that would have averted all this devastation...

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PEACE ON TRIAL IN THE FACE OF THE TERRORISTS ATTACK, NOT JUST IN KENYA BUT IN THE REGION AND BEYOND

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again, how will I ever pay? You may not have been inside the mall shooting and killing people but are you involved in the other deaths that are posted almost daily in our country through criminal activities? Yet we have joined the chorus of other Kenyans in condemning the terrorists; are you indeed not one!

We need self-governance to secure and promote true peace in our environments. There will be so many proposals and

mechanisms that will be designed towards more security and peace. While we encourage and support these processes, our take is that in order to achieve greater heights of a peaceful country and habitation, we have all to be

THIS IS ONLY REMINISCENT OF THE BOMB BLAST THAT HAPPENED IN NAIROBI AND DAR-ES-SALAM SIMULTANEOUSLY ON THE 7TH JULY 1998 WHERE 257 LOST THEIR LIVES AND 6,000 INJURED.

involved at a personal level in what is called personal responsibility which is the basis of good governance in any society.

God Bless our beloved country Kenya!

From the Desk of Justice and Peace AMECEA

By Fr. Jude WAWERU

AMECEA Justice and Peace Coordinator

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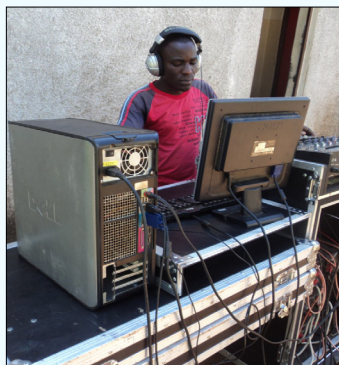


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Radio Sapientia aims at promoting radio broadcasting in order to evangelize and educate people all over Uganda through well researched programmes. In fulfilling its mission, the radio runs programmes in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church and with the following main goals:

- To promote issues of moral, religious, economic, social, political and cultural importance.
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- To promote cooperation and unity among all Ugandans.
- To generate income for the sustenance of the radio and for the promotion of the charitable activities of the Catholic Church in Uganda.

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AMECEA STRATEGIC PASTORAL PLANNING WORKSHOP

(Source: AMECEA Social Communications)



Workshop participants pose for a group photo.

ON 22ND AND 23RD October 2013, the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) held a workshop at Limuru, Kenya, to draft its Strategic Pastoral Plan for the next ten years (2014-2024). The workshop which was organized by AMECEA Secretariat was attended by delegates from the Episcopal Conferences of Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. There were two delegates from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and facilitators from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA).

In his remarks at the conclusion of the workshop, the AMECEA Secretary General, Fr. Ferdinand Lugonzo commended the role played by the participants in achieving the objectives set at the beginning of the workshop. "Our main objective of the workshop was to collect information from across the region through all of you present here so that the strategic plan reflects the face of AMECEA. All of us have done a great job," he said.

"This is a strategic plan made by AMECEA for AMECEA; there was no expert

from outside AMECEA who was involved. We have borrowed a lot and based so much from the expertise of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, and through the Vice Chancellor Msgr. Pius Rutechura and all the CUEA Team, thank you for giving back and for leading this process," he said.



Mr. Patrick Markey and Mr. Fritz Zuger from USCCB

Fr. Lugonzo thanked the steering committee which for over a period of one month had committed itself to bringing the work to completion, adding that the work of the committee is not yet over until the time when the final document will be presented to the AMECEA Plenary in Malawi next year.

Fr. Lugonzo also appreciated the partners for their financial and technical support. He thanked CRS Regional office for supporting the initiative and even giving its personnel to help realize the idea. "We could not do this alone and therefore we have partners who accompanied us and they are waiting to see what we have collected from this workshop and they are still making their contributions in terms of monetary contributions, technical advice and even the promise and commitment that they are ready to walk with us up to the implementation stage. To all the partners including those who are here with us today Mr. Patrick Markey and Fritz Zuger from USCCB, thank you for your support," he said.

The first draft of the strategic plan was expected to be ready before the end of October 2013 and it will be sent out to the respective conferences for further input. The revised draft will be tabled to the AMECEA Executive Board in March 2014 for adoption. The document will be presented to the Plenary of AMECEA for approval in July 2014 in Malawi. ■

