

Austrian pilgrims captivate Christians in Arua Diocese

By Sr. Grace Candiru, MSMMC

Sunday 12th, July 2015 witnessed a vibrant celebration of the Holy Mass at Ediofe Cathedral jointly animated by an all-Boys' Choir from Austria and St Daniel Comboni of Ediofe cathedral.

The holy mass which was led by Abbot Thomas Renner of Altenburg Monastery and co-celebrated by Bishop Sabino Ocan Odoki of Arua Diocese and several other priests attracted hundreds of Christians as the two choirs took turns in leading the hymns for the Mass.

The end of each hymn by the visiting choir was met with ululations and hand claps from the congregation. And when it came to the time of the "Our Father", the Austrian choir shocked the mammoth congregation, by intoning the hymn in the local Lögbara dialect, which they composed.

As the choir sung the hymn, many in the congregation could not contain themselves and not surprisingly, the end of the hymn was met with a thunderous hand clap and ululations from the congregation.

The Austrian team consisting of a Boys' Choir, their patron/matron and parents came as pilgrims at the invitation of Bishop Sabino. The invitation followed Bishop Sabino's visit to Altenburg Monastery where Abbot Thomas is bishop in May 2014.

During the homily Abbot Thomas explained that Austria is a country with long Christian tradition and that the monasteries are a sign of this. His monastery at Altenburg is one of the oldest monasteries established in 1144 and it is here that St Benedict



L-R: Bishop Sabino Ocan Odoki, a member of the Boys' Choir and Abbot Thomas Renner during a luncheon hosted in honour of the Austrian pilgrims at the Bishop's Residence.

and his monks lived.

To date, the monks are still involved in pastoral care of eight parishes. Some of the monks are teachers while most of them work in agriculture, forestry, tourism and the Boys' Choirs is very important to the monastery.

"Our father Saint Benedict founded our religious order and as such his rule is the basis of our life," he told Radio Pacis. He said they try to connect prayer and work because his (St. Benedict's) motto is 'Ora et labore', which means man needs both prayer and work and, both must be in a good relationship.

Meanwhile, the all Boys' Choir which began in 1961 are a service of the monasteries and they help to animate mass every second week of the month.

According to Abbot Thomas, the choir, their patron/matron and parents on annual basis, make pilgrimage to various countries and, "this has led us to your beautiful country, Uganda." "It was our relationship with your Bishop and your diocese that made us to choose your beautiful country," he said in an interview earlier on.

The Abbot who is the spiritual leader of the all Boys' Choir joined the monastery in 1993 after studying theology in Vienna, his home town. He took his religious vows in Altenburg in 1997, and two years later was ordained a priest. His Episcopal ordination as Abbot was on 17th January 2014.

Turning to the readings of the 15th

Sunday of the year, Abbot Thomas said all of us are called to be witnesses of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Even as the gospel reading of today calls us to be witness, witness is found in human love – it is not like getting a certificate at the end of studies," he said.

He said in our daily lives we all know how important being a witness is. In situations of accidents or crimes, he said a witness helps the court to come up with judgment.

He explained that Christian witnessing is not about eloquence but rather about saying what the Lord wants you to say even at the risk of your life. He said prophet Amos was not a learnt person but one who listened to God's message and proclaimed it.

"Bearing witness to God does not depend on education or status – God chooses the lowly not the eloquent or intelligent," he said. Just like Moses, he was not eloquent but he appointed Aaron as his speaker. And Jeremiah too told God he was a child and did not know how to speak but still God went ahead to use him.

"God calls you as a bishop, priest, catechist ... not to do it in your own strength but through his inspiration," he emphasised. He said God wants us

to be witnesses and that every baptised Christian is a witness.

"All of us are to witness to God's love and to understand this we only have to understand what we receive at baptism," he said. "All of us are God's children because we received God's grace at baptism," he added.

Further more, the Austrian prelate went on to explain that witnessing is about life in the spirit and to proclaim his gospel. "It is a life long ministry," he said.

He said in the Gospel Mark tells of how Jesus sent out his disciples to be witnesses – to heal the sick and drive out demons. He said Jesus' sending witnesses in pairs is meant for them to support one another in the mission especially in difficult times.

But he explained that the witnesses in the gospels were not allowed to take anything on their journey.

"It is not about personal property or intelligence but relying on God's grace," adding that they were to bear witness with their own lives. "A witness is not only to care for him or herself but for others," he said.

Bishop Sabino thanked Abbot Thomas for bringing the pilgrims to Ugan-

da in general but Arua Diocese in particular. He informed the congregation that the pilgrims would be proceeding to Indriani pilgrimage centre for the monthly pilgrimage.

The Bishop who had earlier on been co-opted as member of the choir said the Boys' Choir was an inspiration worth emulating. He said being a group like that helps the children to keep discipline, adding that life without discipline is a wasted life.

The Bishop said he was particularly proud and inspired by the matron and patron of the group for supporting them in all ways.

A parishioner who spoke on behalf of the Christians thanked the parents who accompanied their children on the pilgrimage. "Your devotion towards the upbringing of your children is highly appreciated. It is an example we can emulate that when our children join the choir or any church association, it is good for us to participate in the activities of that association," he said.

Earlier on, the Austrian pilgrims numbering over forty people made a courtesy call at Arua Diocese Media Centre on Saturday 11th, where they recorded songs and interviews. The Abbot said it was a pleasure for his team to visit the Media Centre which receives some support from Austria.

"It is a great pleasure that the "Magi" the Three Kings which is very important for us in Austria supports this media centre and especially the children's programmes in this area," he said.

Bishop Sabino later on hosted a luncheon in their honour at his residence to which departmental staffs, priests and religious communities around were invited. Also in attendance were the Chief of the Ayivu people and the Resident District Commissioner of Arua, Peter Debele, among others.

Abbot Thomas in his remarks pointed out that they had heard negative stories about Africa but that from what they had seen and experienced, it is quite different. "You have beautiful country and people," he affirmed.

Further on, the Abbot with great pleasure acknowledged that all the help that comes from Austria is needed and it is used properly. He said since meeting Bishop Sabino in Austria, the friendship has continued to grow. ■

John Dibaba has contributed to this article

Over 200 Christians confirmed in Oriajini

A total of 219 Christians in St John Paul II – Oriajini Catholic Parish have received the sacrament of confirmation in a space of less than one month.

The administration of the sacrament which ran from 14th June to 4th July 2014 took place in the parish's four zones namely Ulua, Yole, Ewadri and Oriajini. And as part of their commitment as confirmed Christians, candidates contributed over one million shillings towards the renovation of the cathedral in Ediofe.

Msgr. Primus Asega, the Vicar General of Arua Diocese who presided of the holy mass for the sacrament remained consistent in his message to the candidates and the congregation in attendance. "You are now being confirmed into a young adult Christian life; to join the army of Jesus Christ in fighting evil, to be witnesses to Christ by being morally upright and of service to the Church in various capacities," he said.

He called on the candidates to take their educational needs seriously and avoid early marriages, teenage preg-

nancies and all sorts of immorality. "If you are not educated, you will not become the future doctor, priest, nurse, sister engineer, teacher..., you would like to be," he warned.

The Vicar advised the candidates against over dependence on their parents saying they are now young adults who should work hard for self sustenance.

Msgr. Asega also noted with concern the rate at which school going age children have taken to mairungi chewing, tobacco and opium smoking, drinking alcohol and displaying public nuisance without shame. He warned the youth against drugs and substance abuse saying their generation is doomed if they do not desist from the practice.

In the confirmation ceremonies that attracted huge congregations, nursery and primary pupils used the occasion to present poems on family relationships, a pointer to the domestic violence that is fast destroying families. ■

By Andama Raphael,
Communications Secretary.

Pope Francis speaks out on the environment in *LAUDATO SI'*



Pope Francis has issued his first solo encyclical, "*Laudato Si, mi Signore*" - meaning "Praise be to you, my Lord," on Care for our common home.

The Pope's encyclical which focuses on the environment and climate change was inspired by the beautiful canticle of St Francis of Assisi and it reminds us of the care for our common home, mother earth. In that canticle St Francis whose name Pope Francis took on, likened mother earth to a sister with whom we share our common home that governs and sustains us.

The encyclical reminds us of the harm we have inflicted on our common home by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed mother earth.

"We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will," adding that the violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life.

Although there have been a number of previous statements by bishops and popes on the environment and faith, Pope Francis' encyclical is the first social encyclical in the Catholic Church to address the care for the environment and environmental justice in a direct and specific way.

The encyclical in a way compliments what the Catechism of the Catholic Church says and it lays upon us a responsibility of good stewardship over creation - to care for our

world and not 'steal' resources from future generations.

But it is important to note that *Laudato Si* is not only addressed to the Catholics alone, no. Environmental deterioration is a global problem and as such the pope is addressing every person living on this planet. "In this Encyclical, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home," the Holy Father noted.

Recalling Blessed Pope Paul VI, who in 1971 made an address to United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organisation, warned of "a tragic consequence" of unchecked human activity: "Due to an ill-considered exploitation of nature, humanity runs the risk of destroying it and becoming in turn a victim of this degradation," Pope Paul VI said at the time.

And he went on to call for a radical change in the conduct of humanity, arguing that unless scientific advances, technical abilities and economic growth are accompanied by authentic social and moral progress, they will definitively turn against man.

Meanwhile, Saint John Paul II re-echoed the same environmental concern in his first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*. In it he warned that "human beings seem to see no other meaning in their natural environment than what serves for immediate use and consumption."

On the basis of these and other warnings by popes and

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Parents, first spiritual formators of children

The national executive secretary of the Lay Apostolate Commission, Fr Stephen Candia has said parents are the first spiritual formators of their children.

“Parents have the responsibility of instructing their children in matters of faith. They are the first teachers of catechesis for their children,” he said

The priest said this during a workshop he facilitated with a team from the national Catholic Secretariat. The workshop which drew participants from the dioceses of Nebbi and Arua was attended by diocesan lay apostolate coordinators, youth chaplains, youth leaders and heads of the laity from the two dioceses. It was also attended by directors of catechetical centres and catechists.

The week-long workshop was based on the themes: “Education of the lay faithful on their vocation and mission in the Church and in the world,” and “Marriage and the Family.”

Spiritual formation of children

Taking the participants through the various topics that fell under the two themes such as spiritual formation of children and the dignity of marriage, among others, Fr Stephen explained that the core message of every catechesis is that it focuses on the person of Jesus.

He said catechesis for infants/children helps to nurture that initial gift of faith. But he was quick to explain that it is on the account of the faith of the parents that children are brought to faith. And where there are no signs of faith on the part of the parents, he said baptism can be deferred (postponed).

By taking on the spiritual formation of their children, he said parents first and foremost, do this through their life witness. “They encourage their children to follow their (parents’) good example. And according to Fr Stephen, one such example could be praying together and teaching their children how to pray –

taking the hand of the child to trace the sign of the cross on their foreheads.

Additionally, he said parents could also help direct their children to follow the catechesis for the other sacraments of initiation – namely, Confirmation and Holy Communion, as these sacraments lay the foundation for Christian life. He said through Baptism one is born a new and that with the sacrament of Confirmation we are strengthened in our faith, while in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist we receive the food of eternal life.

Further on, the priest explained that these sacraments are protected through the sponsors (*‘sadini’*) and witnesses who represent the Church. “They (witnesses and sponsors) protect the public character of the sacraments,” the Executive Lay Apostolate Secretary who hails from Arua Diocese affirmed.

Who can be a sponsor?

As to who can be a sponsor (*‘sadini’*), Fr Stephen explained that a sponsor is the

ment.

And as laid out by the Catholic Church, he said a sponsor must be appointed by the candidate, parent, caretaker/guardian or the parish priest/minister of the sacrament. And he said it is important that the sponsor must not be less than 16 years unless stipulated by the ordinary of the diocese.

Additionally, he said this person should be a Catholic who must have completed the sacraments of Christian initiation namely, Baptism, Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Also, this person must not be under canonical penalty. The Church attaches the canonical penalty of excommunication to the crime against human life and formal cooperation in an abortion constitutes a grave offense.

Thus, “a person who procures a completed abortion incurs excommunication by the very commission of the offense, and is subject to the conditions provided by Canon Law,” Catechism of the Catholic Church (2272).

As such, a person with this kind of background should not act as a sponsor.

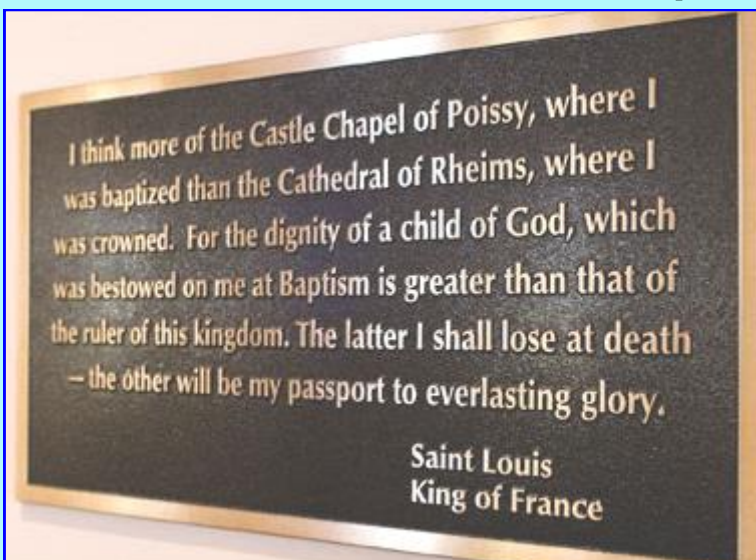
Role of the sponsor

Ideally one of the key roles of the sponsor is to present the candidate – one who is receiving any of the sacraments of initiation together with the parents/guardians for the reception of the sacrament.

Then the sponsor accompanies the candidate on his or her journey of faith before, during and after by helping the candidate to fulfil the duties inherent to the sacrament. And according to Fr Stephen, these duties could be accompanied by frequent encounters with the candidate/parents to strengthen relationships as well as help the candidate to grow in faith hope and charity.

The priest however clarified that priests and religious are not allowed to be sponsors as these category of people won’t be able to journey with the candidate full time. But he explained that there is no canonical provision which bars them from being sponsors. ■

By Sr Grace Candiru, MSMCC



The sacrament of Baptism is considered a Sacrament of Initiation. The other two Sacraments of Initiation are Eucharist and Confirmation.

male or female adult companion who plays a complimentary role to the biological parents/guardians in the physical and spiritual growth to maturity of the candidate receiving a sacrament.

He said the sponsor does not take the whole role but simply accompanies the candidate in his or her journey of faith. But most importantly, this person (sponsor) must not be a biological parent to the candidate receiving the sacra-



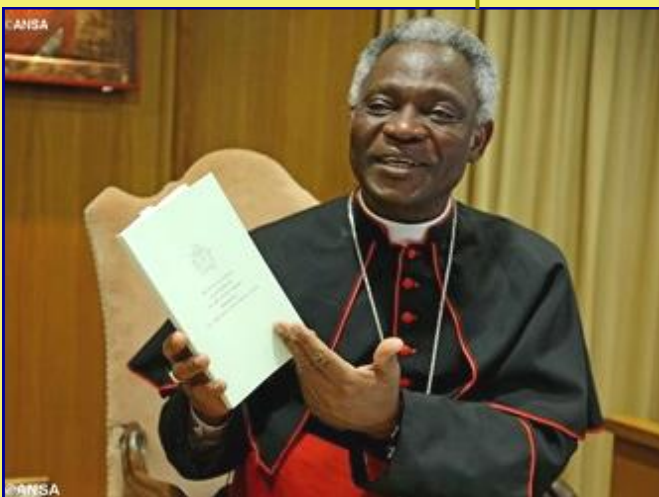
Christians from Gulu Archdiocese celebrate as they lifted trophy for this year's tree planting campaign of Gulu Ecclesiastical Province. Environmental protection is one of the key components of the Province's annual Peace Week celebration.

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 bishops on the environment, Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'* speaks openly about the devastating effects of climate change on people and the planet. He warned that climate change is real and must therefore be urgently tackled.

The Holy Father made a particular reference to a statement by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew regarding

to replace consumption with sacrifice, greed with generosity, wastefulness with a spirit of sharing, an asceticism which "entails learning to give, and not simply to give up.

"It is a way of loving, of moving gradually away from what I want to what God's world needs. It is liberation from fear, greed and compulsion," Patriarch Bartholomew is quoted as having said.



Ghanaian Cardinal Peter Turkson, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace at the launch of *Laudato Si'*

his concern about environmental damage in which he stated thus: "inasmuch as we all generate small ecological damage", we are called to acknowledge "our contribution, smaller or greater, to the disfigurement and destruction of creation."

The Patriarch is drawing our attention to ethical and spiritual roots of environmental problems, which not only require technological solutions but a change in humanity. He asks us

Aware of the factors that lead to environmental degradation, the Holy Father made a concerted appeal to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development.

He acknowledged the efforts of those who are already doing something towards environmental protection. He was particularly appreciative of those who tirelessly seek to resolve the tragic effects of environmental degradation on the lives of the poorest.

"I want to recognize, encourage and thank all those striving in countless ways to guarantee the protection of the home which we share," he said.

He however noted with concern some obstructionist attitudes which range from denial of the problem to indifference, resignation or blind confi-

dence in technological solutions.

And in reference to the statement of the Southern African bishops, he said everyone's talents and involvement in needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God's creation.

"All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation," the pope said, in the Encyclical which he said had now been added as part of the Church's teaching.

Inspired by the Pope's encyclical *Laudato Si'*, CAFOD, UK based Catholic Aid Agency is calling on the British Prime Minister, David Cameron to show leadership nationally and internationally so that agreements on tackling climate change and poverty are fair and ambitious. The agency points out that love and care for creation are an essential dimension of faith which helps Catholics to address, reflect and respond to the environmental challenge our world is facing.

In the encyclical which focuses on broader issues of human development and stewardship of God's creation, the Pope urges society to move away from the myth of perennial progress at the expense of the earth's resources.

He warned that development which fails to respect the Earth is a false economy, and calls for an open dialogue in society about how best to tackle the global issues we face.

On the question of pollution and climate change, Pope Francis warned that some forms of pollution are part of people's daily experience. He said exposure to atmospheric pollutants produces a broad spectrum of health hazard especially for the poor, thus leading to premature deaths. He singled out high levels of smoke from fuels used in cooking or heating as a major cause of deaths.

Besides this, he said there is also pollution which affects everyone such as exhaust and industrial fumes, substances which contribute to the acidification of soil and water, fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and agro toxins in general.

Due to the hundreds of millions of non-biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive wastes from homes and businesses, the Pope says the earth, our home is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.

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RADIO PACIS AND ARUA DIOCESE MEDIA CENTRE HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

1986	Uganda Government liberalizes radio airwaves; FM licenses granted to private organizations.
1989 July	First Arua Diocesan Synod calls for the establishment of an FM radio station.
1994 November	Second Arua Diocesan Synod calls for the establishment of an FM radio station.
1997	Voice of Life 100.9 FM begins broadcasting.
1998 April	Radio Paidha 87.8 FM begins broadcasting.
1999 November	Third Arua Diocesan Synod calls for the establishment of an FM radio station.
2001 November	Fr. Tonino Pasolini MCCJ appointed by bishop to be Diocesan Communications Secretary with mandate to establish an FM radio station for the diocese. Lay missionary Ms. Sherry Meyer appointed Assistant Diocesan Communications Secretary with the same mandate.
2002	
2002	Arua One 88.7 FM begins broadcasting.
2002 January	Bishop Drandua allocates diocesan land for the Media Centre and radio
2002 February	Construction of fencing around allocated land.
2002 March	Bishop Drandua names the radio "Radio Pacis" (a Latin word meaning peace).
2002	Funding sought from Catholic donor agencies abroad.
2002	Consultations with stakeholders about the goals and objectives of a diocesan radio.
2002 June	Construction begins.
2003	
2003	Funding sought from Catholic donor agencies abroad.
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2003 December	First training course for Parish Communications Secretaries.
2004	
2004 January	Two Horizont3000 development workers arrive to conduct two years' of training in radio journalism and technical aspects.
2004 March	First radio journalists recruited for training.
2004 April	Construction of essential buildings completed.
2004 May-August	Training course for the recruited radio journalists.
2004 July	Two Horizont3000 development workers arrive to conduct two years' of training in administration and technical aspects.
2004 September	UCC grants Radio Pacis the license to broadcast on 90.9 FM.
2004 October 25	First official day of broadcasting; 19 hours a day, seven days a week.
2004 November 26	Official launch of Radio Pacis.
2005	
2005 June	An independent "Listener Survey" sponsored by ILO (International Labour Organization – a UN organization) says Radio Pacis has the highest number of listeners in West Nile.
2005 September	Target Group Index in Uganda says that out of 115 radio stations Radio Pacis is in 6 th place at national level.
2005 November 7	Dr. Kizza Besigye, a presidential candidate, came to Radio Pacis for a 2-hour talk show.
2005 December	Radio Pacis increased its broadcasting to 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
2005 December 6	President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni came to Radio Pacis for a 2-hour talk show.
2006	
2006 February	Explosion destroys the battery back-up system in the power scheme that supports the radio.
2006 May	Board of Governors first meeting.
2006 October	The Candidate-Mentor program was introduced as a way to attract and train potential radio journalists.
2006 December	Radio Pacis enters BBC competition for Best New Radio Station in East Africa.
2007	
2007 February	Radio Pacis selected by BBC as Best New Radio Station in East Africa.
2007 March	Second generator installed.
2007 April	Chief News Editor, Acidri Ernest, wins scholarship to USA for journalism study tour.
2007 May	Radio Pacis selected by BBC as Best New Radio Station in all of Africa.
2007 September	UCC grants Radio Pacis the license to broadcast on 94.5 FM.
2008	
2008 January	The studio of 94.5 FM furnished and equipped. New transmitter installed.

2008 February	Radio Pacis 90.9 FM broadcasts 24/7 with anchor languages Lögbara and Kakwa plus English. Radio Pacis 94.5 FM broadcasts 24/7 with anchor languages Alur and Ma'di plus English.
2008 June	Feasibility study begins for relay station in Gulu.
2008 July	Installation of the first solar panels in the photovoltaic system to reduce costs of power generation.
2009	
2009 February	Moyo Vicariate Bureau initiated. A small studio furnished and equipped within Moyo Multipurpose Centre to assist the region.
2009 February	In a country-wide competition, the BBC World Service Trust selected six radios in Uganda for a capacity-building project in reporting local governance issues and human rights. Radio Pacis was selected as one of the six.
2009 March	Radio Pacis won a national award for creativity in children's broadcasting.
2009 July	UMDF selects three radio journalists from Radio Pacis for training in "Promoting Peace Journalism in Uganda through Radio",
2009 September	In partnership with IWPR (Institute for War and Peace Reporting) the radio embarked on a project in "justice and human rights journalism." In addition to training, the radio received a lap top computer and a field recorder.
2009 October	Station Manager, Sherry Meyer, selected by UMDF and KAS to attend Africa Media Leadership Conference in Accra, Ghana.
2009 November	Training sessions held for civic leaders, marketing agents, and communication secretaries as part of the BBC World Service Trust partnership.
2009 December	First outside broadcasting event successfully held in Ovujo, Maracha County as part of the BBC World Service Trust partnership.
2010	
2010 March	Feasibility studies for Gulu frequency continued, consultations made, funding sought and license applications were made.
2010 April	In a partnership with an East Africa NGO called PANOS the Radio Pacis embarked on a two-year "Rural Debate" project which included training, financial support and equipment.
2010 April	BBC World Service Trust gives Radio Pacis "Most Supportive Management Award." In presenting the award, the good relation between staff and management, the teamwork of all managers and excellent organization of the station was noted.
2010 April	BBC World Service Trust names Radio Pacis Journalist Adrapi Gabriel "Most Improved Reporter" and rewards him with a laptop computer.
2010 April	BBC World Service Trust delivers radio equipment worth more than €20,000.
2010 October	UCC grants Radio Pacis the license to broadcast on 101.4 FM.
2011	
2011 January	The Toy Festival was initiated for children. From several areas of the listening audience, children displayed their hand-crafted toys and interacted with radio personalities. The creativity of children was both applauded
2011 February	Radio Pacis broadcasts on three frequencies: 90.9, 94.5 and 101.4. All three frequencies broadcast 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The three frequencies are distinguished by their languages—the vernacular languages of Northern Uganda. Broadcasting from Arua, 90.9 has the anchor languages of Lögbara, Kakwa and English. Broadcasting from Arua with a studio link-up in Moyo, 94.5 has the anchor languages of Alur, Ma'di and English. Broadcasting from Gulu during prime time and relaying programming from 94.5 during other hours, 101.4 has the anchor languages of Luo and English.
2011 May	Trips to Murchison Falls National Park were organized for the staff of Arua Diocese Media Centre. The excursions included a chance to see wildlife and enjoy the beauty of God's creation. The days of recreation encouraged better relationships and team building.
2011 June	Radio Pacis sports journalist, Ogua Patrick, twice won sports knowledge contests, netting him UGX 20 million as the top prize and two all-expenses-paid trips to South Africa.
2011 July	Radio Pacis journalist, Ojok Emmanuel, won the first prize in the category of Jury's Special Award in the Radio for Peacebuilding Africa Awards 2011. Ojok received an all-expenses-paid trip to Kigali, Rwanda to receive his award. He collected €500 and a digital recorder.
2011 October	Population and Development Annual Media Awards sponsored by the Population Secretariat (POPSEC) of the Uganda Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development names Radio Pacis journalist Adrapi Gabriel the winner in the Radio-Upcountry category and gives him a laptop computer as the prize.

To be continued in the next issue.

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And all these, according to Pope Francis is caused by the “throw away culture”. He blamed the industrial system which has not developed the capacity to absorb and reuse waste and by-products.

Although *Laudato Si'* is addressed to humanity as a whole, it particularly helps Catholics to address, reflect and respond to the environmental challenges our world is facing today.

It helps us to answer questions like how do we love our neighbours in need by sharing wealth and at the same time love our earth by promoting sustainability? And how do we promote economic growth and respect the common good?

And just as it is with all Church teachings, Catholics have a particular responsibility to engage with and reflect upon the message of the encyclical and find ways of applying it to our lives.

Already, faith communities in different parts of the world are putting their faith into action by doing something in response to the Holy Father's call to action to mitigate the devastating impact of environmental damage to mother earth.

The challenge therefore is for each individual to reflect on his or her actions to see what we can do both as individuals and as communities to avert the environmental degradation caused by human actions.

Such actions could include tree planting, using the available water sparingly, switching off lights when not necessary and using energy saving ovens among others.

In the UK, a Catholic Aid Agency CAFOD reports that their supporters are responding in positive ways to the Pope Francis' plea to protect the planet. Their supporters are putting their



**A heavily polluted source of water:
How can you and I play our part in protecting the Environment, our Common Home?**

faith into action by living simply, praying for “our world” and lobbying politicians to tackle climate change. The agency also proposes to create a study guide and other helpful resource to encourage prayer and reflection on some of the themes of the encyclical.

And in the US after the Vatican's publication of the encyclical, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) came up with a discussion guide to help faith communities discuss about it.

This discussion guide is aimed at helping small groups explore and dialogue with this important document. The guide includes materials for prayer, reflection and discussion, as well as ideas to help Catholics respond to Pope Francis' message. The discussion section of the guide includes quotes and discussion questions on a variety of themes highlighted in *Laudato Si'*.

On the day the Vatican published the Encyclical (18th June 2015) Archbishop Blase Cupich of Chicago Archdiocese addressed a press conference calling the publication of the encyclical “a watershed moment for the church, for humanity and for the planet,” adding that “It is a time for the church to

be bold, to speak about major issues and to achieve a new level of relevance in people's eyes.”

In response to the Archbishop's call, Chicago residents regardless of their religious affiliation pledged to collect rainfall, conserve tap water, recycle their cans and bottles and switch off the lights when they leave a room. The people's response is seen as an unusually tangible, immediate and ecumenical response to the pope's encyclical.

Earlier on in the months leading up to the document's anticipated release, the Chicago Archdiocese pulled together a team of ecologists, scholars and theologians to help amplify the pope's message. Parishes in the Archdiocese will participate in energy audits and water conservation programs and work to curb carbon emissions.

And in Arua Diocese, the Director of Arua Diocese Media Centre, Fr Tonino Pasolini sought to avail copies of the encyclical to all the management team and the Radio staff. A copy of the same document was also given to each member of the Board of Governors of the institution.

For the radio staff, Fr Tonino created time within the weekly Friday radio meeting during which he takes the staff through the Encyclical. This is aimed at giving them a better understanding of the document and the radio staffs in return are encouraged to sensitise the public about the encyclical in their programmes.

Additionally, Fr Tonino who is also the Diocesan Communications Director also availed copies of the Encyclical to all the priests and communities of religious serving in Arua Diocese. ■



The key ideas of the Encyclical are creation, care and justice, and the failure of humanity to provide either justice or care for creation.

Construction works to resume at Okuvu Catholic Chapel

Christians of Okuvu chapel under Vurra Parish have started massive preparations to resume construction works of the new church building.

Atiku David the project chairman of the chapel revealed that the church building that was left at the roofing level was constructed in 2006 and that it has already consumed over 11 million Ugandan shillings. But since then the work came to a stand still due to lack of funds.

Atiku however explained that through mobilisation of funds from the local Christians and other well-wishers, they were able to acquire 120 iron sheets for roofing the house. He said they are now left with the punches of the roofing timbers that are expected to cost over 4 million shillings.

The Christians are also currently organising for a grand fundraising drive that will take place in early August so as to raise some funds to restart the work.

“When the work of this church building started in 2006 we were scared and left with little hope because of the financial status of the local Christians. But thank God, some devoted Christians together with people of good will offered skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour to build the church,” said Atiku.

Atiku further explained that they have been grappling with several challenges such as inadequate funds, the low number of Christians, aging of some key Christians, and failure by the youth to identify with the church, among others.

Catechist Anguyi Kilton, the chapel catechist called upon the local Christians to draw closure to God and put their faith into action by supporting such church projects generously because the church is theirs, as Christians.

He also encouraged all the Christians holding various leadership positions within the church to do their work diligently because it is God-given and that all they do should be for the purpose of giving glory to God.

The Christians are currently attending Sunday prayers and other church programmes in the former grass thatched house with dilapidated roof which inconveniences them during rainy weather.

Okuvu chapel was curved from Adunimamva chapel in 1999 and since then the Christian population has grown to two hundred and twenty. ■

By Emmanuel Ezati,
Communications Secretary.

Christians support construction of multipurpose hall in Koboko Parish



By Acema Ronald,
Asst. Comm. Secretary

dedicated Christians in the Parish.

The chairperson for Finance, Planning and Development in the Parish, Jino Dramaza says the support brings the amount of money so far raised to around 15 million shillings.

Out of this amount, 700,000/= was donated by Hon. Babadiri Margaret, the Woman member of Parliament for Koboko District, while 100,000/= was contributed by Ms. Grace Atayi, both Christians in the parish.

Mr. Dramaza explained that, with the available funds the work on this pro-

The plan to construct a multi-purpose hall in Koboko Catholic Parish has been boosted with donation of 800,000/= Ugandan shillings from ded-

ject was expected to commence in July this year once a committee to oversee the progress of the project is instituted.

He calls upon other Christians and people of good will to contribute generously towards the success of the project.

The first fundraising for the construction of this multi-purpose hall was launched in October 2014 with the view of helping people to easily access facilities especially while organizing religious and government functions like retreats, seminars and workshops among others.

President Yoweri Museveni has promised to support the project with 200 bags of cement and 200 iron sheets.

The Finance, Planning and Development committee have diversified the source of income for the project as contribution of 500/= per each Christian for buying bricks, fundraising and donations among others. ■

Tara Sub-parish renovates main church building

Renovation works have started on the main church building in Tara sub-parish. The works are part of a five year development plan that the parish pastoral council approved for implementation three years ago.

Mr. Andrew Etole the parish project chairman said the focus now includes building extension wings, provision of seating facilities, cementing the floor, plastering the outside wall and fixing new doors, among others.

“The renovation of this church building is the centre of our spiritual work because it helps to accommodate and bring the Christians together to praise God. A good number of our Christians are also providing physical labour here at the site.” Mr. Etole said. Some Christians have already started supporting the project by providing food items and gathering local materials.

Fr Jino Adroni the parish priest said part of the funds used in this project is a donation from Sisters of St. Peter



By Robert Atiku,
Communication
Secretary

Clever in Switzerland. Fr Jino asked Christians to continue supporting the project both physically and financially as a manifestation of faith.

“Despite the donor support we received for this work, our Christians need to continue supporting this project because these funds are not even sufficient to finish all that we want

to do on this church house. We know that doing good work shows our faith,” Fr. Jino said.

According to the parish development plan, the next project after renovation of the church will be construction of the presbytery (priests’ house). Last year the parish did plastering of the inside wall, fixed water tanks, connected solar system and painted the roof of the Parish church.

Tara Sub-parish has a Christian population of 23,000 Christians drawn from 20 chapels and seven zones. ■

Eulogy of Fr Ettore Pedrini, 1921 – 2015



On the left: Fr Pedrini Ettore , a Comboni Missionary who passed away in Italy early this year spent many years of his life as principal at Lodonga PTC. Next to him Fr Tonino Pasolini of Radio Pacis. Courtesy photo.

Fr. Ettore Pedrini was born in Trento on 16 October, 1921. He entered the novitiate of the Comboni Missionaries at Venegono, made his first vows in 1940 and two years later his perpetual vows. He attended his scholasticate in Verona, Rebbio and again in Verona, where he was ordained priest on 7 July, 1946. After the ordination, he spent two years in Trent as vocation promoter.

He was then assigned to Uganda and sent to London to study English. In Uganda he worked for nearly sixty years in different parishes: in the mission of Ngetta in Lira in 1950 as parish priest; then as chaplain and teacher at the Nyapea Senior Secondary School from 1951-1953, where several of his pupils became government officials.

From 1954 to 1956 he went back to England where he attended the Goldsmiths College in London, and obtained his BA University degree and the MEC (Ministry of Education Certificate) that was necessary to teach or direct an institute of higher learning in Uganda.

Back in Uganda, for a year he was a teacher at the TTC Lira and in charge of the parish. From 1958 to 1981 he was Principal of the T.T.C. of Lodonga (St. John Bosco TTC), in West Nile: "As a teacher and president of the Institute of Science of Lodonga," wrote Fr. Ettore, "I had the privilege of helping in the formation of a fine group of Christian teachers (more than 400) who still love God and practice their faith and who are like the good seed scattered in cities and remote villages, wherever there is a school. Our teachers have helped us more than anybody else in proclaiming the word of God, and I think we should try to help them, because they consider us as their friends."

Then, for 22 years, he worked at Ediofe in Arua in various commitments: as superior, treasurer as well as engaging in pastoral ministry.

He returned to Italy due to health reasons, staying mainly at Arco. Then, in February 2007, he was again assigned to Uganda. Fr. Ettore was already 87 years of age but very thrilled to return to the

parish of Ombaci, West Nile and engaged in ministry.

In 2009 he was definitely assigned to the Italian province, first in Arco and then, in care, in Milan, where he died on 21 March, 2015.

Fr. Antonio Solcia, who lived with him for more than 30 years in Lodonga and Ombaci, remembers him as "a great man and a holy missionary, a person of strong character, not afraid to defend his opinion if he thought it was right. He was a man of great intelli-

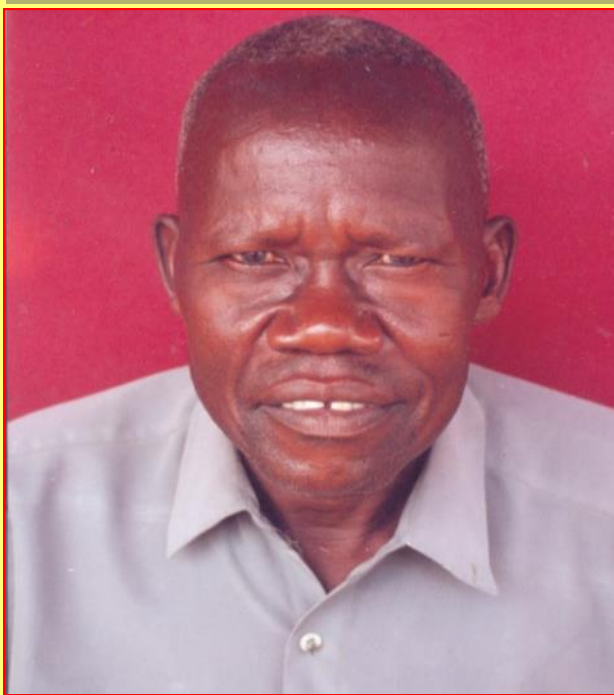
gence; he loved to read and carefully chose books. Equipped with a great memory, he self-taught various languages: English, German, French and Swahili.

He had a great love for the people that were with him; he treasured their freedom of thought and admired each person's talents. One of his hobbies, a bit out of necessity, was the mechanics. He had a well-equipped garage and kept himself up-to-date by reading even books on mechanics.

In the field of education he has been a true pioneer, a giant. All the teachers who studied under him as principal remember him with great affection and esteem."

In the funeral homily, Fr. Lino Spezia, besides emphasizing his work in teaching, to which Fr. Ettore devoted much of his life and of his missionary energies, also added: "Fr. Ettore had great confidence in the young people he met and encouraged them to combine their Christian formation with the culture and commitments they were assuming in society and in the parish." ■

Retired teacher dies in road accident



The late Mathias Alphonse Odiri

May 21, 2015 was a very sad day for the Christians of Koboko Catholic parish and the entire community following news of the sudden death of Mathias Alphonse Odiri.

Mathias met his death following a motor accident along Arua – Oraba road. He was knocked by a speeding vehicle on Wednesday evening near Koboko Public Secondary school in Koboko town Council. He was rushed to Koboko Health Centre VI in a critical condition but he passed away on Thursday morning.

Close to one thousand

mourners abandoned their private businesses and offices to pay their respects to their beloved son at Koboko Parish Centre. Mathias was a retired secondary teacher. The accident occurred as the late returned from visiting a relative in Mengo Ward in Koboko town council.

Born in 1948 in Oraba parish, Koboko district, late Mathias went to Kaya and Goya primary schools from 1956-1959 and 1960-1961 respectively. For two years he was at Blessed St Charles Lwanga Junior Secondary school before enrolling at St. Joseph's College for his "O" – Level from 1964 to 1967.

He later joined Makerere College school for his "A"-level and went on to qualify as a grade five secondary school teacher from the then National Teachers' College Kyambogo in 1973.

After qualifying as a teacher, late Mathias taught in a number of secondary schools, among them Ndejje, Madera and Arua Public Secondary schools. He then went into exile in 1981 because of the political instability that followed the overthrow of Amin's government.

While in exile he taught in Torit Technical School and in the secondary schools of Loka, Yei Day and Lutaya until 1989 when he returned from exile. In Uganda he resumed teaching at St Charles Lwanga College - Koboko and in Nyan-gilia Secondary School where he retired.

After retiring from the teaching profession, Mathias took on other responsibilities both in the church and Koboko district local government. He was the leader of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Koboko Catholic Parish. And at the district, he was associate assessor of Koboko district Education department and a member of public accounts committee of the local government, among others.

Late Mathias died aged 67 years and he is survived by a widow and nine orphans.

Meanwhile, recent reports show that road accident related deaths are on increase on Arua – Oraba road following the tarmacking of Arua – Oraba highway. Within the month of May alone, three people, among them, the late Mathias Alphonse Odiri have lost their lives in road accidents due to reckless riding of motorcycles and vehicle driving. ■

Teachers called to invest in long term projects

Catholic teachers in Koboko Parish have been encouraged to invest in long term projects like tree planting for future income generation.

The call was made by Fr Samuel Orionji, curate of Ocodri during a day of recollection for teachers in Koboko parish. And according to Fr Orionji, the income would help the teachers meet some basic needs such as paying school fees for their children, among others.

The recollection was in preparation for the Catholic teacher's day celebrations which took place on 13th June 2015. This day has been celebrated annually since 2008 and Catholic Teachers Association of Koboko Parish is the only strong association of teachers in Arua Diocese with a number of activities going on.

Based on the theme: "Teacher, the model of society," from the Gospel of Mark 10:35-45, the preacher encouraged the teachers to engage in some daily income generating activities to meet their daily needs.

The parish priest, Fr Saviour Nzia who is also patron of the Catholic teachers association said teachers have learnt a lot of theory and that time had come for them to transform the theory in to practice. He called on the teachers to engage in simple activities such as horticulture to meet their family demands.

Some teachers gave testimonies of the benefits they have received from being members of the association. Some of the benefits included paying school fees for their children, building permanent houses, setting up small scale businesses and spiritual nourishment, among others.

Meanwhile, centre coordinating tutor of Nyarilo, Mr Pascal Afedra advised teachers to go for upgrading, saying "Uganda of today is becoming competitive in terms of education." "In the near future it will only be graduates who will be considered for teaching position," Afedra warned.

The vice chairperson of Catholic Teachers Association, Buga Biajo thanked Fr Orionji for his wonderful facilitation of the recollection and he called upon the teachers to take up the lessons learnt so as to do what is best for them. ■



By Ayuga Salmon,
Communication Secretary

Cathedral Renovation update

Finally! The most important part of the Cathedral Renovation has been completed! Presently the workers are plastering the walls of the interior of the Cathedral. Windows are under construction. New doors are planned. A new floor will be constructed with tiles.

**We still need your contribution.
Let us finish the renovation of OUR HOME!**



These two photos were taken from the tower of the antennas of Radio Pacis.
Above: The old roof was removed and the bell tower under renovation (January 20, 2015).
Below: The roof is completely new and the bell tower repaired and renovated (July 31, 2015)

