

# FORT PORTAL CATHOLIC DIOCESE

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Bishop's Office  
P.O.Box 914, Fort Portal  
Uganda

**PRESS RELEASE**  
(27<sup>th</sup> April 2022)

## **UPDATE ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2022 UGANDA MARTYRS' DAY CELEBRATIONS AT NAMUGONGO ANIMATED BY FORT PORTAL CATHOLIC DIOCESE**

### **Introduction:**

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Press, all people of God-men and women of goodwill, greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Last month on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, I updated you on the early preparations being made by Fort Portal Diocese - who were selected by the Uganda Episcopal Conference to lead the animation for this year's Uganda Martyrs' Day celebrations at Namugongo Catholic Shrine.

The main purpose of the Martyrs' Day Celebrations is eminently spiritual. Several activities have been prepared and planned to help pilgrims in their journey that will climax with the June 3<sup>rd</sup> liturgical proceedings. The task demands enormous material preparations too for a successful pilgrimage because, as I mentioned in the last press conference, it is now 25 years since Fort Portal last animated this celebration (way back in 1997); several changes have taken place, including millions of pilgrims coming to the event.

### **Theme:**

For this year's celebration, we shall be guided by the theme, **BAPTIZED AND SENT TO WITNESS CHRIST WITH LOVE AND HOPE, MT. 28:19, ROM. 8:35**. This theme is reflected in the way the martyrs died; they were men of faith baptized with water, but some were not yet baptized; (they received the baptism of blood).

### **Nature of the celebration:**

We are organizing the celebration in the spirit that the economy is open and public gatherings, including prayer and worship; are permitted to operate normally. However, we shall work very closely with the Government and the Ministry of Health to observe the SOPs for the pilgrims that will be coming to Namugongo.

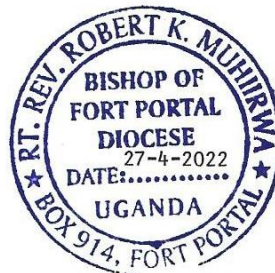
### **Special Spiritual Activities:**

A special prayer in the diocese was designed and it is always recited at the end of every Mass and in daily prayers in honour of the intercessory role of the Uganda Martyrs.

- **Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022:** The Uganda Martyrs' Novena prayers will start and end on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022. There will also be daily prayers at the Namugongo Martyrs' Shrine, Munyonyo Martyrs' Shrine and other Parishes to seek the intercession of the Uganda Martyrs for successful celebrations.
- **Walk-of-Faith:** There will be a Walk of Faith from Munyonyo Martyrs' Shrine to St. Matia Mulumba Catholic Church in Old Kampala.
- **Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022:** There will be several Vigil Masses at the Namugongo Martyrs' Shrine.
- **Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022:** This is the day of the Uganda Martyrs celebration; Mass will commence at 09:30 a.m.

#### **Update on other Preparations:**

- **Steering Committee:** The Steering Committee headed by Fr. Charles Oyo as the Chairperson and deputized by Dr. Patrick Birungi is coordinating all the activities working with the other sub-committees on Liturgy, Publicity, Finance, Security & Protocol, Catering, Transport, Construction and others. The committee is also coordinating with the Uganda Episcopal Conference to make sure there is smooth coordination.
- **Budget and Fundraising:** A detailed budget of **Ugx 1 billion** was developed and approved to help in the mobilization and collection of funds. Several appeal letters were sent to different organizations and other people of goodwill. On April 20<sup>th</sup>, I went with a delegation led by the Minister for Tourism Hon. Tom Butime to meet the President at his country home in Rwakitura to brief him about the status of the preparations. The President appreciated all efforts being made to have a successful celebration and other projects in the diocese. He made a round pledge of Ugx 1 billion to the Martyrs' Day preparations and other diocesan projects (renovation of the Cathedral) that were ongoing. Accordingly, Ugx 500 million of that contribution has been dedicated to the preparations for the 3<sup>rd</sup> June. Kindly disregard earlier reports to the contrary.
- **Fundraising Gap:** Plus the President's pledge of Ugx 500 million, we have already mobilized another Ugx. 200 million from well-wishers, so we are still short of **Ugx. 300 million.**
- **Mass in Kampala:** On Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022, I will celebrate Mass with KEJI-FODA, a group of Christians from Fort Portal Diocese living in Kampala and surrounding areas at Kitante Primary School, as we continue to mobilize for the spiritual and material preparation of the event.
- **Fundraising Dinner:** As part of the drive to realize the material preparations, a Fundraising Dinner has been organized on Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, at Protea Hotel. The Prime Minister of Uganda, Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja will be the Chief Guest. To book a table or tickets to the dinner – kindly get in touch with Mr. Joseph Mugenyi (0772473194), the Chairperson Fundraising Dinner, Ms. Evelyn Karungi (0772443353), the treasurer and Dr. Patrick Birungi (0772358076), the Steering Committee Vice-Chairperson.





- **Souvenir Magazine:** Fort Portal Diocese (Representing the Uganda Episcopal Conference) has appointed KR Media Ltd to facilitate the production, distribution and marketing of the Magazine. We are, therefore, inviting your institution/organization/firm to advertise in this Souvenir Magazine. You can get in touch with their team leaders - Alex B. Atuhaire (Magazine Editor) 0776499122 or on E-mail: alexatuhaire@gmail.com; Mercilus Katandi Opio (Head of Marketing & Sales) 0755265007/0774265007; and Steven Alinaitwe (0782836732), the Chairman of the 2022 Uganda Martyrs' Day Publicity Committee.
- **Special appeal:** We continue in a special way to appeal to you all people of goodwill, to support Fort Portal Diocese in realizing successful and fruitful celebrations. With your spiritual, financial, moral, social and all kinds of support, we shall be able to meet our Ugx 1 billion budget, which is very much needed for the success of the occasion.

The money can be deposited into our bank account with CENTENARY BANK, Fort Portal Branch, with the following account details:

**Bank:** Centenary  
**A/c Name:** Fort Portal Diocese 2022 Uganda Martyrs Celebrations  
**A/c No.:** 3203286953  
**Branch:** Fort Portal

**OR**

On Airtel Money No. **0753 503 354** and Mobile Money No. **0771 963 204**; (both lines in the name of Robert K. Muhiirwa).

**Conclusion and Appreciation:**

I sincerely thank the following categories of people for the good work so far done:

- The Uganda Episcopal Conference Team.
- The Central Organizing Committee.
- Our Christians and all people of God, organizations and individuals who have so far made contributions.
- The President of the Republic of Uganda, all other Government officials in different sectors helping with the preparations at all levels.
- Special thanks to you the media houses, for the mobilization through the publicity of this important event. Keep up the good work of spreading the Good News.

May God bless you all!

Yours in CHRIST,

Rt. Rev. Robert K. Muhiirwa  
**BISHOP OF FORT PORTAL**

