

It's a beautiful thing



NOTICE BOARD

YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

Black Boys Can is a proactive, action-oriented organisation that aims to provide black boys with educational opportunity, valuable life skills, and the self-esteem, confidence and determination to succeed.

The Windsor Fellowship runs personal development and training programmes for Black and Asian students in the UK. The Sutton Trust, though slightly different also benefits disadvantaged youth around the UK



Birthdays

Olivia Ssebuuma

Fr. Gerard M. Balinnya

Education

Congratulations to Jackie Bernadette Kibuuka (daughter of Mr. and Mrs Kibuuka) passed her **A-Level Science exams**. The Mayor of Barking and Dagenham invited her for a celebration of **Achievement Presentation on 8th December, 2008**. We wish her the very best as she pursues her university studies.

Obituaries

Paul Sempa 1909 - 23/12/08

Bob B. Kalema (see article)

All CONTACT:

ugandamartyrs@ugandamartyrs.org



Uganda Martyrs Catholic Community

UK AND THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

"YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN!"

Dear Brethren in Christ,

May I begin by expressing my deep gratitude to the UMCC Executive Committee for having put on such a great function for the Married Couples Day last month. A lot of work was put into it before, during and after the celebrations. Thank you everyone, including our guests, for your contribution and commitment. Please maintain that same spirit of cooperation, togetherness and charity.

During this month we celebrate the gift of friendship as we marked Valentine's Day last weekend. Love makes the world go crazy! Let's continue to keep falling in love with God and with each other so that the bonds of charity may grow stronger than death itself!

You will realize that charity, unity and friendship are blocked by hatred in our hearts. In the language of faith this is "**sin**". As we hear in today's readings the message is clear: sin cripples and paralyzes us! We must acknowledge the fact that there is sin all around us. We should be very careful **not** to downplay the reality of sin in our midst by giving it acceptable names such as: "an error of judgment"; "slip of the tongue"; "indiscretion"; "moment of weakness"! Calling sin by a softer name will not help us improve life.

We hear lots of stories and incidents of hatred, conflict, war, domestic violence, cases of marriage breakdown, cheating, stealing, gun and knife crime, political assassinations, smear campaigns, malice, gossip, and much more! No wonder there is **no peace** in our hearts, families, schools, churches, communities, countries and the world at large! We are all sick, paralyzed, stunted and poisoned by sin!

This is why Christ came to break the bondage of sin and division to reconnect us with the Father in love and friendship. So we need to join the psalmist and ask the Lord: "Heal my soul for I have sinned against you!" (**Psalm 40:5**). The prophet Isaiah gives us assurance that if we sort out our lives and live according

Continued on last page

In Faith We Grow

POPE BENEDICT XVI'S LENTEN MESSAGE FOR 2009

"Fasting Is a Great Help to Avoid Sin and All That Leads to It"

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

At the beginning of Lent, which constitutes an itinerary of more intense spiritual training, the Liturgy sets before us again three penitential practices that are very dear to the biblical and Christian tradition -- prayer, almsgiving, fasting -- to prepare us to better celebrate Easter and thus experience God's power. I wish to focus my reflections especially on the value and meaning of fasting. Indeed, Lent recalls the forty days of our Lord's fasting in the desert, which He undertook before entering into His public ministry.

The Sacred Scriptures and the entire Christian tradition teach that fasting is a great help to avoid sin and all that leads to it. Since all of us are weighed down by sin and its consequences, fasting is proposed to us as an instrument to restore friendship with God.

In the New Testament, Jesus brings to light the profound motive for fasting, condemning the attitude of the Pharisees, who scrupulously observed the prescriptions of the law, but whose hearts were far from God.

The practice of fasting is very present in the first Christian community (cf. Acts 13,3; 14,22; 27,21; 2 Cor 6,5). Saint Peter Chrysologus writes: "Fasting is the soul of prayer, mercy is the lifeblood of fasting."

In our own day, fasting seems to have lost something of its spiritual meaning, and has taken on, in a culture characterized by the search for material well-being, a therapeutic value for the care of one's body. Fasting certainly brings benefits to physical well-being, but for believers, it is, in the first place, a "therapy" to heal all that prevents them from conformity to the will of God.

The faithful practice of fasting contributes, moreover, to conferring unity to the whole person, body and soul, helping to avoid sin and grow in intimacy with the Lord. Denying material food, which nourishes our body, nurtures

Continued on last page.

Chairman's Message to the February 2009 Newsletter

Dear Friends,

A very warm welcome to the UMCC February 2009 Community Day. It comes as a bit of surprise that the dust has barely settled on our January 2009 celebrations – but as always, that is February for us.

For those who attended January's UMCC's get together, you will recall the Bafumbo Day was such a good celebration. Special thanks especially go to the Bafumbo (married couples') Office and indeed to all of you our brethren for your contributions and full participation in this event. We cannot emphasise enough the great influence that our families can impact on us both as individuals and collectively as a society.

The UMCC Executive has been working tirelessly in the background on three main things, but this is in addition to dealing with the routine administration of our community's affairs.

a. Working on Arch Bishop Cyprian Lwanga's anticipated visit for this years Uganda Martyrs' Day celebrations

b. Bishop Alan Hopes' visit in April this year

Working towards improving our financial position amid the current adverse financial environment.

We have also sent out an invitation to Her Excellency the Uganda High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. Please watch this space for further developments.

On the point of Arch Bishop Cyprian's visit, the UMCC Executive requests your financial support in this cause. Attached to this newsletter, is a proposed budget for your information and action. Your full support in this will enable us to give our Patron Saints – The Uganda Martyrs - a fitting homage. I will therefore endeavour to speak to you all, in view of gaining your support and advice on this worthy cause.

Some of the areas we are seeking assistance are the Liturgy, e.g. the Choir, financial support and any other input towards organising this event. The Executive will provide a detailed budget and programme . We therefore request that (if you have not already done so) you provide us with your contact details to enable the communication process.

In my capacity also as Acting Sabafumbo, it would not do me any justice if I did not mention the recent events in the media relating to two thirteen and fifteen year old teenagers that have become parents. This is something that could easily happen to any of us parents, and so should not be shrugged off as an impossibility. We need to constantly be aware of these things and educate as well as nurture our children in the values of Christianity.

Last but not least, let us all continue to work together for the betterment of our community and wider society.

May God Bless you all.

Robert Mukiibi
Chairman - UMCC



Late Robert Bemba Kalema

Robert was born 18.03.1970.

Died suddenly 1.12.2008

Buried 4.12.2008 at Kalungu - Masaka.

At time of death he was Manager of IT Infrastructure in Uganda Revenue Authority. He was a resident of Kkongge Buziga where he served as Head of Christians (Ssaabakristu) of Kkongge St. Bruno Parish. He leaves behind 3 children. Bob was son of Prince Samuel Peter Bemba at Lubowa. younger brother of Ms, Betty Nabadda, Mrs Viola Nnakayenga Hategeka, Ms. Winnie Kagere and brother of Mr. Frank Wampamba.

May his soul rest in peace.

A Prayer

Incline, O Lord, Thine ear to our prayers, in which we humbly beseech Thy mercy, that Thou wouldst place the soul of Thy servant, which Thou hast caused to depart from this world, into the region of peace and light; and unite in the fellowship of Thy Saints. Through Christ our Lord,



THE FAMILY: A GOOD FOR HUMANITY

European Catholic-Orthodox Forum - 10-14/12/2008 in Trent.

A. Family and Education (Continuation from last Newsletter)

'Sex education' merits particular attention. The aim of such teaching is directed towards forming young people in the meaning of married love. Parents must provide information proportionate to each stage of the individual development of their children. School, for example, constitute an aid for parents.

Particular influence is brought to bear on the education of children and young people by the mass media that strongly condition family relations. Young people imitate the examples communicated through the media. But the means of communication unfortunately present pornographic material. Families that teach their children well, attentive to establishing proper relationships between all family members, constitute a valuable human capital that has great importance for society in both its economic and spiritual well-being. Family life creates culture and in its beginnings development is a family event.

B. The Crisis of our Society: Challenges & Opportunity

Today we are faced with a certain ideology of culture that emerged with the sexual revolution in the last century. This has brought about a deep crisis in the vision of what it is to be human and family life. It is a major challenge to the evangelisation of the Christian Churches that are attentive to the needs of the heart of the human being and his or her calling to full life in Christ.

Among the profound changes of our society, a deep economic crisis has recently emerged. The banking, financial and economic crisis of today is one of the indicators of a major turning point in our global and European society. We are all rightly concerned.

On the other hand, we express gratitude for what has been done. Many positive developments have helped the family: recent social and economic recognition in some countries of the contribution of motherhood to society, financial and social assistance for the care of disabled and elderly, medical cover for those disadvantaged members of society.

III - Recommendations and Appeals

In recent years, Churches have become aware of the importance of supporting spiritual renewal and in particular accompanying young people as they journey towards becoming husbands and wives, fathers and mothers. Marginalised families deserve attentive care. The Church's mission is to give hope to our society that today is faced with many challenges. We need to show signs of solidarity and our positive message regarding the family;

1. There is a most urgent need to rediscover the understanding of the family and marriage.
2. We affirm that it is only in relationship to God that all human beings blossom in their full humanity. The family is not an outdated notion! Rightly rediscovered, it is the future.
3. We affirm that, since they have conferred life on their children, parents have the original, primary and inalienable right to educate them. They must be acknowledged as the generally best suited and the first and foremost educators of their children.
4. We see a great danger in the subordination of the needs of children and well-being of the family to economic interests.
5. We call upon all public institutions to ensure that policies regarding remuneration for work are consistent with establishing and maintaining a family with dignity. The issue of 'child care needs further consideration with the best interests of the child .
6. Finally, we call to mind the moral choice on which the future of the whole of humanity depends. Its essence is expressed as a central point of the Covenant God made with the humankind which is fulfilled in Christ: 'See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day is to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments... that thou may live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee... I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live' (Deut. 30:15-19).

Continued (Pope's Message)



an interior disposition to listen to Christ and be fed by His saving word. Through fasting and praying, we allow Him to come and satisfy the deepest hunger that we experience in the depths of our being: the hunger and thirst for God.

At the same time, fasting is an aid to open our eyes to the situation in which so many of our brothers and sisters live. Voluntary fasting enables us to grow in the spirit of the Good Samaritan, who bends low and goes to the help of his suffering brother (cf. Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, 15). It is precisely to keep alive this welcoming and attentive attitude towards our brothers and sisters that I encourage the parishes and every other community to intensify in Lent the custom of private and communal fasts, joined to the reading of the Word of God, prayer and almsgiving.

May every family and Christian community use well this time of Lent, therefore, in order to cast aside all that distracts the spirit and grow in whatever nourishes the soul, moving it to love of God and neighbour. I am thinking especially of a greater commitment to prayer, recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and active participation in the Eucharist, especially the Holy Sunday Mass. With this interior disposition, let us enter the penitential spirit of Lent. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, accompany and support us in the effort to free our heart from slavery to sin, making it evermore a "living tabernacle of God." With these wishes, while assuring every believer and ecclesial community of my prayer for a fruitful Lenten journey, I cordially impart to all of you my Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican,

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

Vatican City to Celebrate 80 Years



Vatican City State was inaugurated on 11 February 1929 with the signing of the Lateran Accords. Under the motto, "A small territory with a great mission," a number of distinctive celebrations will mark the 80th anniversary of the city-state's founding. The exposition -- titled "1929-2009: Eighty Years of Vatican City State" -- will be held from Feb. 11 to May 10 in the Charle-

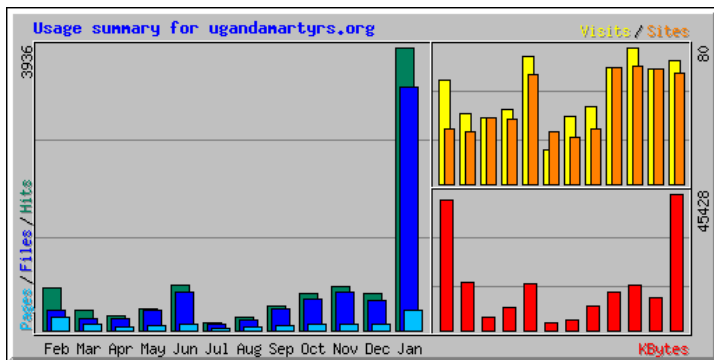
magne Wing, located at the end of the left colonnade of St. Peter's Square. At the same time, The coin below is an issue from the Vatican to celebrate the Pauline Year, which celebrates the 2000th anniversary since the apostle's birth and runs from June 29, 2008, to June 29, 2009. If in Italy you may want to visit Rome and try and get an invite for any one of the celebrations taking place in the Vatican. If anyone attends any of these functions, share the events with us by sending some photos.



Usage Statistics for ugandamartyrs.org website

Last year saw an increase of visits to the Uganda Martyrs Catholic Community website, so a great thank you to our community and other visitors. This year (2009) we got a large volume of visits in January (3936), despite the fact that the site was still under construction. We also got a enquiries via the web about the community and these were responded too, some of them from outside the United Kingdom.

Work continues on the website, and comments, suggestions and questions are welcome. For anyone interested in and willing to contribute to the work done, they are welcome. Visit the contact page and fill out the form.



FOR OUR CALENDAR AND EVENTS PLEASE CONTACT ANY MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE

Some other News



Woolworths Uganda Open

At the start of February 2009, Woolworths Uganda clarified its business was not closing down. It has no relation to the UK Woolworths Brand that collapsed recently leading to mass job losses.

Africa Gets Key World Bank Position

Robert Zoellick-President of World Bank AFRICA HAS been given a key position in the World Bank, a condition that will improve the continent's bargaining power in the 185-member-nation institution.

Yeardot

Yeardot is a television and web production for Channel 4. It began on 30 June 2008 and is following the lives of fifteen young people from across the United Kingdom as they go through a pivotal year in each of their lives. The project is taking place both online at the Yeardot website as well as on TV. The fifteen participants have set goals for themselves and they hope to achieve. However, it is not all about just appearing on TV or the Internet. One can learn team leadership, interviewing skills and much more.

Continued (Chaplain's Message)

to God's commands He will renew us and make us whole again! Our sins will not be remembered! (**Isaiah 43:18-25**).

So as we begin the Lenten season of grace on Ash Wednesday let us make an effort to look back and make a serious examination of conscience and then approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation with courage and confidence in the knowledge that our sins will be forgiven. Lent means: **Let's Eliminate Negative Traits (Thoughts, Tendencies)!** This will mark the beginning of the journey back to God since Jesus will be whispering in our ears saying "**your sins are forgiven; get up, pick up your stretcher and walk**" (**Mark 2:5, 11**). May I wish you a very fruitful Lenten observance with the Lord's blessings upon your endeavours.

Fr. Gerard M. Balinnya

UMCC Chaplain

Announcement.

Retreat/Seminar Day for Married Couples at Ealing, London W5 2DY on 28th and 29th March, 2009. Come for a Marriage Enrichment Seminar to celebrate your love together. If interested please contact Fr. Chaplain for details or email cathmacgillivray@rcdow.org.uk ; 020 7931 6064.