

RE-SHAPING OUR NATION IN JUSTICE AND CHARITY

Kampala 3rd of June 1980, Feast of the Uganda Martyrs

To All Catholics in Uganda, Believers in God,
Men and Women of good will

On the occasion of our national independence in 1962, we Catholic Bishops of Uganda wrote a pastoral letter entitled: "Shaping our National Destiny." In that letter we outlined the rights and duties of every citizen of Uganda. At that time we were in a transition period, that is, from the stage of a British Protectorate to the stage of national independence: At that time Uganda was considered mature enough to shape her own destiny. From 1962 we Ugandans took the responsibility of looking after our homeland to make it a progressive and prosperous country. We all welcomed the idea with enthusiasm; we wanted to contribute positively towards the progress of our country. We set off well and we began to collect the fruits of our independence. However, history repeats itself. Compared to other countries, we obtained independence without much difficulty. Many nations have acquired their independence at a much greater cost and the citizens of those countries, through difficulties, have also obtained national consciousness as well as other national values.

We too here in Uganda have not been exempt from this often cruel but useful and educative evolution. For we become mature through hardships and difficulties. In fact there is no glorification without undergoing the experience of the cross. (*Cfr. Lk. 24:26*)

We are now at another transitional period and it is at this second transition that we Catholic Bishops of Uganda, aware of the mission of the Church, that is, to proclaim the message of peace, to pray for peace and to educate for peace, call upon all of you Catholics, other Christian Believers in God, men and women of good will, to work together to reshape our deformed, but beloved Uganda, by promoting and practising justice and charity, that, with the grace of God, will restore real peace to the country.

CHAPTER ONE: AREAS OF REFORM

1. Sense of Justice

When you read news-papers today, you often find reported various incidents of highway robbery, of breaking into shops and houses and of killing. Many articles have been written against exorbitant prices and hoarding of goods. In spite of that, prices of goods, especially food and essential commodities, are shooting up almost every day. In administrative sectors and in essential services bribery and embezzlement have become the order of the day and part and parcel of the Ugandan system of life. This phenomenon has its roots in the historical fact, that when the rightful owners of shops and businesses were sent away from this country, they were forced to go with empty hands. Consequently many Ugandans, so to say, got their goods for free, whilst the owners did not receive compensation. This gradually generated in the minds of people the inclination towards the acquisition of goods either by

force or trickery. The uncontrolled rising cost of living and the low wages undoubtedly paved the way for bribery and embezzlement in various fields of the administration and public services.

In this period of transition, we are very pleased to hear from all corners and walks of life that people are seeking and begging for a new order of justice and peace. This indeed is the common plea and the most legitimate desire of all men of good will and of every responsible citizen of this country today. This new order of things, however, cannot be brought about unless a sense of justice is restored in the mind of people. A sense of justice means: Respect for the rights and property of other people, respect for each one's personal dignity and the acquisition of wealth through just and honest means.

In other words, we all have to struggle to eradicate idleness, the greed to become rich overnight, or to have an easy life of selfishness. It is the sense of justice that can help us to overcome the bad habits of profiteering at the expense of others, bribery and embezzlement. It is the spirit of justice, practised by the citizens, that creates confidence among the people and bring peace and order to a society.

We are all crying for reasonable prices of goods, fair services and good administration, but these will never be obtained, unless the citizens of this country accept and recognize their own mistakes. There is no meaningful conversion without a sincere contrition. Hence, as a start to eradicating the prevailing malpractices, we appeal to the Government to think seriously about the ways and means of giving just compensation to the former owners of the shops and businesses, which were taken from them. We believe that this hard and painful exercise pave the way to that sense of justice, which we all need in our country today.

2. Reformation of Conscience

We cannot re-acquire the sense of justice unless the conscience of individuals is reformed.

Whenever you read the newspapers, listen to the radio or to speeches made at rallies, you hear appeals for moral rehabilitation of the people of Uganda. But the core of this moral rehabilitation is the reform of personal conscience.

When God created man, he made him master of the created world so that he might improve it and dominate it. (*Cfr. Gen 1:28*) In order to realize this divine plan, God gave to man an intellect and a will. And these two faculties differentiate man from all other earthly creatures. For with intellect and will man is responsible for and able to control his moral actions. He uses them to judge and act according to a given situation and circumstances. Conscience is the inner voice of God in our hearts, by which we judge the right things to do and the wrong things to avoid. Human conscience is the seat of scales of values which move us to do this or that, to avoid this or that or to consider this or that as deserving priority.

In Uganda, today the scale of values seems to be lop-sided and, indeed to a certain degree upside down. For example in some cases human life seems to have less value than the acquisition of money. That is why the acquisition of two thousand shillings may seem to be enough to eliminate the life of a human being. Hence there is a need to re-educate ourselves and regain a proper and more human scale of values, good morals and restore a better moral environment in our society.

3. The Value of Human Life and Human Dignity

Fellow citizens, we must confess that our beloved Uganda, which is favoured by God with great beauty and ample means of supporting the lives of its people, has witnessed instead the most ugly brutality over the past number of years. This has deformed the consciences of many people and has made them insensitive. Cold-blooded murder, the extermination of whole families and small children, robberies and violence, have greatly influenced the public to take the law into their own hands. The public may stone or beat to death a thief, even if he has stolen only a chicken. The killing of people, which we are still experiencing, has gradually deprived us of a proper sense of the value of human life. Human life cannot be replaced or be paid for in any currency. The killing of people has deprived individuals of this most sacred right to live, has deprived the country of very valuable and useful citizens who cannot be replaced overnight and left us the problem of the care of their widows and children. The sight of corpses in the streets or on the roads has also contributed in bringing a progressive erosion of respect for human life. Consequently it seems that, while in the Uganda of today everything is very expensive, human life is cheap.

Believers and unbelievers, however, agree that all things of earth should be ordained towards man as their centre and summit. For us Christians, man is created in the image of God, set by God over all earthly creatures, so that he might rule them, and make use of them, while glorifying God. (*Cfr. Gen: 1:26; Wis. 2:23*) In fact man has dominion over all creatures (*Cfr. Ps. 8:5-8; Redemptor Hominis, art. 16*).

When God wanted to redeem man, the Son of God assumed human nature, thus raising man to a dignity beyond compare. (*Cf. Church in the Modern World, art. 24*)

In an African context, human life is something so sacred that its conception, birth and the other stages of its development are occasions for celebration. Hence eliminating or torturing a human life is in our culture one of the gravest sins man can commit.

From the beginning, God was most serious about the sacredness of human life: When Cain killed his brother Abel, God said to Cain "listen to the sound of your brother's blood, crying out to me from the ground." (*Gen. 4:10*). When King David planned the killing of Uriah in order to take his wife, God accused David of killing Uriah with a sword. And David in fact was punished. (*Cfr. 2 Sam. 12:9-10*). God had ordered his people, the Israelites, to show no mercy to the one who deliberately killed a man. God says: "You must banish the shedding of innocent blood from Israel, and then you will prosper." (*Deut. 19:13*). When Christ came, He re-affirmed the law of God. He even stated that having a grudge is already an offence to be answered before the court. (*Cfr. Mt. 5:21*) Christ, the author and master of life, did not come to destroy life but rather to save it. That is why he rebuked James and John when they wanted to use their powers to call down fire from heaven to destroy the inhospitable Samaritans, who refused to welcome Christ. (*Cfr. Lk. 9:51-55*).

We know and teach that it is only God who is the author and master of our life. Dear fellow citizens, let us always remember that every human being is precious in the eyes of God.

We Catholic Bishops, as religious leaders in this country, appeal to those who tend to use hired murderers to promote their own political or business aims, to desist at once from these abominable crimes. And, you, malefactors, refrain from your horrible practices and repent. According to His design,

God wants all men to form one family and deal with one other in a spirit of brotherhood, because all are destined to the very same end, namely God himself. (*Cfr. Church in the Modern world, art 24*)

4. Reconciliation and Charity

All along we have been experiencing and unfortunately we are still facing an unchristian phenomenon, namely, revenge. Many people have lost their lives because of it. Man without Christ is inclined to take revenge. That is why in almost all languages and cultures there are several proverbs or expressions which promote and foster revenge. The philosophy of perpetuating revenge consists in paying back the evil one has received from one's opponent, yet Christ asks for the eradication of revenge by means of reconciliation, forgiveness and works of charity. Thus we Catholic Bishops entrusted with the mission of preaching the word of God. (*Cfr. 2 Tim. 4:1-4: Const. on the Church, art. 25*) would like to remind all believers in Jesus Christ and all the people of good will that the spirit of revenge is to be replaced by one of sincere reconciliation. Reconciliation is one of the characteristics of Christianity. It is also vital in order to bring about peace in society. No doubt, it is very difficult; it may seem super-human, but we share in the divine nature and, therefore with God's help, it is not beyond our moral capacity. Christ came purposely to gather together the scattered children of God. (*Cfr. Eph. 2:11-18*) It is only Jesus Christ the Saviour, who can help us to up-root from our heart that spirit of revenge, and in its place to communicate to us a spirit of reconciliation and the moral strength to practice it. We have no other alternative, therefore, except to go to Jesus our Master and Tutor to train us in this spirit. Thus it means that we must meet Jesus in His word of love and life and listen to Him. We must meet him in the celebration of the sacraments and above all in the Eucharist; as on the cross, where He gives us the supreme example of sacrifice for and forgiveness of others. He prayed for and forgave His enemies.

Brethren, in order to preach the Gospel of forgiveness and love we must first live it ourselves. Reconciliation in the spirit of Christ is the only answer to revenge in order to bring peace to our country.

CHAPTER TWO: AN APPEAL TO AN ORGANIC AND EFFECTIVE UNITY: EXHORTATION FOR NATION BUILDING

Here in Uganda we have many ant-hills. When an ant-hill is destroyed, the working ants do not first argue over who caused the disaster or who was responsible for it, or who should do more, or who should be privileged. On the contrary, all the ants set off with determination and unity of purpose to the work of reconstruction of the ant-hill, each ant or category of ants perform their particular task, with the result that within a few days the ant-hill is rebuilt.

In a similar manner, let us forget the past and our differences as well as ego-centric interests and concentrate on the common task of re-constructing our devastated country. We must consider ourselves fortunate and be grateful to God because through sufferings and difficulties we are becoming mature. We have to a certain extent acquired a national consciousness. We are facing a challenge living at this critical and very decisive moment for our future: the challenge of building a better foundation for our country, especially for the sake of our children and grandchildren. In former times, we used to blame our masters and the regimes that followed after independence for mistakes in the administration

of our country. But now they are no longer with us. So let us accept our responsibility fully and face the reality as it is, namely let us re-shape our country.

When we talk about rehabilitation, there is always a tendency to think mostly of material reconstruction, for example: the reconstruction of damaged schools, houses and other buildings, the placing of drugs in the hospitals. This is good. But we must remember that the material needs and evils are too often the result of the spiritual evil and of the corruption of men.

Fellow citizens, we would like to remind you that man is composed of body and soul, but he is one. You cannot, therefore, liberate the whole man unless you take into account both aspects of his make-up. We are aware that our primary mission is the spiritual side of man. However, the Church considers that the material side of man and of his world is also an integral part of her mission, because Christ came to save the whole man. The interest which the Church has in the whole man reminds us of the memorable words of the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, when he addressed the Bishops of Eastern Africa in 1976. He told us "You Church leaders are the conscience of the nation." It is our duty to teach the people and inform the government of what is right and wrong, and to advise it when it is going wrong.

It is in this spirit, therefore, that we Catholic Bishops of Uganda would like to appeal to the various classes of people and institutions as well as to the government.

1. To all citizens of Uganda in general

Since independence we have experienced various changes of systems. We have suffered enough from brutality, mismanagement, international isolation, oppression, intimidation. We have been promised many things but in vain! It is high time that we become mature in our thinking and acting. It is time that we all accept responsibility for our country. A few people have devastated our country completely, but to rebuild it today we need "HARAMBEE". We must pool our efforts and resources. Let us use all our talents for the same purpose. The era of parasitism and spoon-feeding is over. Now we are in the age of working together, of using our individual talents for the common goal- reconstructing Uganda, that was once called "The Pearl of Africa." Prompted by charity or other motives, several countries and international organisations have greatly helped us by giving immediate relief. We are sincerely grateful to them. We appreciate deeply their humanitarian concern for us.

As citizens of this country, however, we Ugandans must become conscious of our own responsibility in reshaping our national destiny and the future of our country. Hence we appeal to all of you, Ugandans, to take a personal and willing part in this noble work of giving new life to our nation by using your talents, energy, time and the material means at your disposal. We should not leave this work only to the government and to institutions, but all the local people should be actively involved in this exercise of reconstructing and developing various projects.

Value and dignity of work

During the years of trial, we have experienced a decline in the value of work and education. Black-marketing has reversed the scale of values and has opened a way for dishonest means of acquiring wealth and earnings.

"The duties of the good Christian Citizen

*involve more than shunning corruption,
more than not exploiting others;
these duties include positively contributing
to the establishment of just laws and
structures that foster human values.
If the Christian finds injustice or anything
that militates against love, peace
and unity in society, he or she must ask:
"Where have I fallen short?
What have I done wrong?
What did I fail to do that
the truth of my vocation called me to do?
Did I sin by omission?
(Pope John Paul II, Nairobi, Kenya - 7/5/1980)*

*"I have learned to manage on what I have;
I know how to be poor and how to be rich....
There is nothing I cannot master with the help of the One who gives me strength."
(Saint Paul)*

*"And the multitude asked, John the Baptist,
"What then shall we do?" And he answered them, "He who has two coats, let him share with
him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."
Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?"
And he said to them, "Collect no more than is appointed you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what
shall we do?" And he said to them, "Rob no one by violence or by false accusation, and be content with
your wages." (Luke 3; 10-14) ...*

Prayer of Saint Francis

*Lord,
Make me an instrument of Your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy...*

We ask all Ugandans to think seriously about the value, the importance of the dignity of work and of education. By his work a man ordinarily provides for himself and his family; he associates with others as his brothers, and renders them service. Moreover, we believe that through the homage of work offered to God man is associated with Christ of Nazareth and is greatly ennobled by the dignity of work. (*Cfr. Church in the Modern World, art. 67*)

Our country is blessed and favoured by God with its natural resources, fertile land and good climate. We must use all our efforts to exploit these resources. This means that we must work hard with our hands

and use all our talents. Hence let us first of all fight against idleness. Let every able citizen have a job through which he/she earns a living. We know that unemployment, idleness and the cost of living have influenced many young people to become robbers, murderers, black-marketeers. We appeal therefore to all those concerned to do everything possible to provide employment and re-education especially for the younger generation so that they as well, may have a future to look forward to.

2. To all Christians and to Catholics in particular

After a hundred years of Christ's presence in this country, we Christians are expected to be the salt and the light of this country. We are supposed to be the leaven which transforms our home land, blessed with the blood of the Uganda Martyrs. We would like to appeal to you, our Catholic lay people. Please, remember the special dignity and mission entrusted to you in the Church through Baptism and Confirmation. You are the salt and the light of Uganda. Therefore it is your specific vocation and mission to express the Gospel of love, justice, honesty and reconciliation in your lives and thereby to insert it as a leaven into the reality of Uganda today. The forces which are going to re-shape our country are: the mass media, culture, education, commerce and industry, politics, health, security and work. These are precisely the areas in which you lay people are especially competent to exercise your mission to revive Uganda and the minds of the people.

3. To Christian Youth

As you may recall, you, the youth, were neither neglected nor excluded from the centenary preparations and celebrations. On the contrary, you played very well your role in mobilizing yourselves through your organizations and movements, drama, concerts, retreats and rallies. We greatly appreciate the initiative of the students of Makerere University, who organized themselves in the exercise of collecting much of the looted goods after the liberation of Kampala, to be returned to their rightful owners.

We would like to remind you that you are the Uganda of tomorrow; you seem also to be the majority of our population. We are appealing to you therefore, to take seriously the exercise of reviving the mind and the morals of the people, especially your fellow youths. At this juncture we ask the students of institutions of higher learning to take the lead. This is a golden chance you have to exercise your leadership. The practical philosophy of those who are in any way subject to others in authority is to find out their strong points and their weak points. What is certain is that normally subjects will, according to the law of least resistance, follow their leaders. When leaders are strong, those subject to them will admire their qualities, will rely on them and may even strive to imitate them.

4. To Civil Leaders

The exercise of rehabilitating our country materially, and receiving the moral values and the democratic system in the minds of the citizens is *a very* complex process, which demands from the leaders and chiefs as well as from the administrators moral integrity, effective unity and, above all the desire to have at heart the real interests of the people and the country. In other words, the private interests of the leaders and chiefs should not prevail over national interests. At this critical moment, we request you to put aside political and party differences and interests and concentrate on the ways and means of establishing national interests, unity and the greater common good. It is through moral integrity and concern for the people's actual and real needs that you will gain their confidence. Consequently it will be easy for you to lead the people and initiate and implement some development programmes. Because

after winning the confidence of the people, they will do more easily and willingly what you tell them or what you ask them to do. In order to educate the people of Uganda to the democratic process, it is very important for the readers, chiefs and administrators to pay more attention to the objective needs and wishes of the people rather than political systems or party interests.

Some of the pre-requisites for making an effective moral rehabilitation are security, peace and tranquillity. Thus we request you to do all you can to restore effective and meaningful security to the country and fair distribution of goods, without preference to certain groups. Let us always remember that, whether we stayed in Uganda or had to leave, we are now equally concerned in rebuilding the country. Favouritism produces divisions that too often are based on wealth. In fact today in Uganda, the rich are becoming richer and richer while the poor are becoming desperately poorer and poorer. Poverty, such as so many experience is often responsible for anti-social behaviour, especially among unhappy and delinquent young people. There seems to be in Uganda a chronic disease namely, an excessive desire to become rich overnight at the expense of others, using all means possible, good or bad. Unfortunately this moral epidemic has apparently affected some of the leaders, chiefs and administrators. We therefore request you to refrain from such malpractices and instead concentrate on rendering a real service to the people. Your moral integrity will greatly contribute to promote justice, as well as social and economic progress

5. To Mass Media

An effective moral rehabilitation down to the grassroots cannot be achieved without using properly and adequately, what means of communication are available. At this juncture, we are especially grateful to the magazine "Leadership", to the "St. Paul Book Centre" and to their collaborators for their initiative in publishing pamphlets for free distribution. These pamphlets and others of similar nature can do much to rehabilitate the minds and consciences of the people. We encourage the managements of all newspapers and magazines, especially those printed in the vernacular to follow this example. Besides pamphlets, articles in the newspapers and magazines there could be posters exposed publicly, that would give slogans based on themes that could help in reviving the thinking of the people. During the census preparations, plays and songs were composed in order to spread the value and the purposes of the national census. Several programmes were organised on radio and television in order to make the census a success. In a similar manner, we appeal to music composers and play writers to join us in this noble and important exercise of reshaping the thinking of Ugandans. Both music and drama can be powerful and effective means of moral rehabilitation. We also appeal to the people responsible for radio and television programmes to think seriously and to plan how they can actively participate in changing for the better the public life of our people.

6. To Parents

As you may recall, the National Eucharistic Congress was started at family level. We did this because you are the domestic Church. (*Cfr. Const. on the Church; art. 11*)

Let us be aware of the family and the necessity of keeping it free from disintegrating pressures from outside. You are the first transmitters of the living faith and of moral values to your children. Moreover you are the first and most important cell in our society. Because of this, in the campaign to revive the moral life of the people you cannot be disregarded nor can you exempt yourselves from this important task of moral rehabilitation. Dear parents, we would like to remind you that yours is the primary

obligation to give a sound moral education to your children. By education we do not mean only the intellectual side of it, but we especially refer to and insist on the moral and religious development of the children. It is therefore your duty as parents, to create a home atmosphere inspired by love and devotion to God and concern for others. Your family life is the very basis of the personal and social education of your children. It is the principal school of those social virtues which are necessary to every society. (*Cfr. Christian Education, art. 3*) By your example and advice you will be able to impart to your children the basis of good character and help to mould in them the sense of the dignity of the human person and the value of human life, self-respect and an attitude of respect and honest dealing with others. In this way you will be giving our country its most precious inheritance, that is good Christian citizens.

7. To Catechists

The Church in this country was planted, by missionaries, but with the help of the catechists. Still today, you, the catechists, are the right hand of the priests in the pastoral work. You hold an important and vital post in the pastoral work of the Church in Uganda, especially in sub-parishes. It is for this reason that we call upon you to participate actively in this exercise of moral rehabilitation. You can do it when you are celebrating the word of God with other Christians. In the religious education of the children entrusted to you, try to help them acquire a sound conscience, good character and Christian commitment.

8. To Teachers

After parents, teachers are the people most responsible for a sound education of the children. Dear Country men who are in the field of education, you have an important and challenging role to play in forming the future of Uganda. As you know very well, teaching is not a career. It is rather a vocation. You are called upon to contribute positively in building and moulding future Ugandans. The children and the youth are in your hands as clay in the hands of a potter. You cooperate more closely with parents in turning those entrusted to you into good and responsible citizens. You must nourish them with religious, moral, intellectual and social values so that they may become the bright future of Uganda. Your personal example will help you more than anything else in the completion of this task. We sympathise with you as regards your conditions and terms of service and we request the relevant authority to reconsider them, in the light of the present cost of living, and of the very responsible task entrusted to you by both government and parents. At the same time, we ask some of you to refrain from corruption, nepotism, bribery diversion of school property and, above all, to consider the pupils not as a means of earning a living but rather as the treasures of your future glory. Their sound Christian education will be the contribution you make to the rebuilding of the nation.

9. To Religious

According to the new rite for religious vows, the Religious are the flowers which adorn the Church. You are expected to make the Church, which is the sign of salvation lifted up among the nations, (*Cfr. Is. 11:12; Lit. Const. art. 2*), a reality in the world. You also participate in the mission of Christ as the light of the world and its leaven. Your life of dedication to God at the service of the people is of great importance in our society. This is easily seen and felt in hospitals and schools. Your serious Christian commitment puts you on the lamp stand where you shine for those around you in Uganda (*Cfr. Evang.*

Nuntiandi, art. 69) It is a heavy personal responsibility you undertook when you freely consecrated yourselves to the service of God and of your neighbour.

Hence we consider you as one of the most important means in the rehabilitation of Uganda. We appeal to you, therefore, to renew your dedication to God at the service of the people. Your total dedication in hospitals, schools and in other fields, as well as your exemplary life and influence, will contribute greatly to reshape Uganda.

We finally ask you to offer to God prayers and penance for peace and tranquillity as well as for the prosperity of our mother country.

10. To Priests

Dear brothers in the ministerial priesthood, you are our immediate and direct co-operators. You are the closest collaborators in the pastoral office. (*Cfr. Pope John Paul II to the Bishops, 1979*) We Bishops, Priests and Deacons are set aside and consecrated to preach the Good News of God. We are the actualisers of the message of God through the celebrations of the sacraments. We must therefore, preach the word of God to all non-Christians, that they may be converted to Christ, and to Christians in order to nourish their faith. This ministry of the word of God is exercised in various ways (*Cfr. Priestly life. art. 4*). In converting people to God, which is moral rehabilitation, we have no adequate and effective means except -the word of God and His helping grace. This is the favourable and opportune time to use the ministry of the word of God in order to renew the thinking of the people of Uganda. For you are the teachers in the faith and the agents for reviving Christian principles and morals (*Cfr. Catechesis today, art. 64*).

You, as pastors, are well aware of the mentality of the people entrusted to you, so we are only suggesting these ways for your consideration. It will be up to you therefore, together with your team of religious and influential lay people, to initiate the methods you will use in your ministry of the word of God to reconstruct the mentality of your people:

i) In order to hasten this work of moral rehabilitation, we ask you to organize talks and sermons in the parishes and sub-parishes either by groups, such as married people, youth, or according to age, etc... In towns you could organize conferences on various themes relevant to moral renewal.

ii) With the reform of the Sacred Liturgy the word of God has regained its vital importance in the life of Christians, especially in the celebrations of the Sacraments and in the use of Sacramentals. We therefore, request you to avail yourselves of the word of God in all celebrations of the Sacraments and in the use of Sacramentals with the purpose of renewing the moral conscience of the people. A short but meaningful and relevant homily in all the holy masses and in the celebrations of the other Sacraments will contribute a great deal to this exercise. (*Cfr. Catechesis Today art. 48*)

iii) Through moral rehabilitation exercise, we would like to lay a solid foundation for the future. Hence we must pay much attention to youth and to children, because they are the future of Uganda and the majority of the population. We appeal to you, therefore, to see to it, despite the many commitments you have, that you set aside sometime every week to meet the children and the youth to instruct them in the faith. In addition to this, we ask you to maintain sound co-operation with the teachers in schools, who are responsible for religious education. You could discuss with them relevant problems and

encourage them to fulfil properly their noble duty of transmitting a living faith to the children by their teaching and example.

CONCLUSION

Recourse to prayer

The past years of trials have been for many a divine call to return to God and to foster unity among believers and various communities. Many people who had abandoned their religion or who were indifferent have found their way back to God. The liberation of Uganda was yet another occasion or sign of God's Providence to us. So much so that we too should sing the Psalm 127:

*"When Yahweh brought Zion's captives home
at first it seemed like a dream;
then our mouths filled with laughters
and our lips with song."*

Undoubtedly the centenary preparations and celebrations have brought us closer to God. Consequently we are becoming more and more aware of God's active presence and interest in our daily needs, our lives and work. On the other hand, we must be aware that we are embarking on the very difficult and complicated task of moral rehabilitation. Such an exercise deals mostly with the inner life of the persons in terms of changing their views. In other words we want to transform the consciences of individuals and that of society. It is only God with His word who can penetrate the conscience of the individuals and convert them from within. Hence preachers and all others who are going to participate in this exercise are collaborators of God. Without Him we can do nothing. Thus there is a great need for prayer. There is an urgent need to meet Jesus the Saviour, like the Samaritan woman met Him. We meet Him in the word of God and in the Sacraments and Sacramentals. It is in the word of God and in the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, that Christ converts us, liberates us from sin and infuses in us the love of God, by communicating to us the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who will lead us to have a concern for others, to practise charity and to have a sense of justice and duty.

Hence we appeal to all believers to pray earnestly for real peace and tranquillity in our country. Let us pray for evil-doers and the self-centred, so that they may listen to God and repent and become good citizens. Let us pray for our leaders that they acquire more and more the spirit of Christ who came not be served but to serve; that they may put the interests of the people first and work as a team in harmony and unity.

We propose the following prayer for Moral Rehabilitation, which we ask you to say everyday imploring God to help us in this difficult task of restoring Uganda to peace and prosperity. For "If Yahweh does not build the house, in vain the masons toil." (Ps. 127)

*"O God, in you we live, move and have our
being. With your paternal love and Providence,
you created us in this beautiful country-
The Pearl of Africa.
However, due to our human weakness and disobedience
to You, we have turned it into a*

den of thieves and murderers. We have made injustice and corruption prevail over virtue. We acknowledge our mistakes and we ask pardon from you. We humbly ask you to soften our hearts to accept Your word, which is spirit and life, so that Christ may convert us from within and make us good and responsible citizens of Uganda. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen."

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of peace and the Uganda Martyrs intercede for us and for our country before God, Who is peace, love and the source of holiness. Let us confess it once again that it is Christ the Lord, the King of peace, who is the chief reformer of our consciences and it is He who will restore in us the moral values and bring real lasting peace and tranquillity to our country Uganda.

For God and our Country.

Yours most devotedly in Christ,

Emmanuel Cardinal K. Nsubuga	Archbishop of Kampala
Sisto Mazzoldi	Bishop of Moroto
Angelo Tarantino	Bishop of Arua
Adrian K. Ddungu	Bishop of Masaka
Cipriano Kihangire	Bishop of Gulu
James Odongo	Bishop of Tororo
Caesar Asili	Bishop of Lira
Joseph Willigers	Bishop of Jinja
Barnabas Hafem'Imana	Bishop of Mbarara
John B. Kakubi	Bishop of Kabale
Serapio Magambo	Bishop of Fort Portal
Edward A. Baharagate	Bishop of Hoima

*Kampala 3rd of June 1980,
Feast of the Uganda Martyrs.*