

Old girls have a fundraising at Mountains of the Moon Hotel on Saturday



The gate of Kyebambe Girls School in Fort Portal, Kabarole district



Some of the old girls who attended the fundraising at All Saints Cathedral

Kyebambe chapel praying for sh800m

By Geoffrey Mutegeki

Former students of Kyebambe Girls School in Fort Portal, Kabarole district two years ago, embarked on a drive to build a new chapel at the school. The chapel which is almost complete has cost them about sh3b. There's still need for sh800m to complete the project.

Buying pews, furniture, a public address system, finishing touches on the ceiling and paying the contractor are some of the things that need to be fixed.

Some of the furniture that needs to be bought include pews and well-wishers have been encouraged to support. Each pew goes for about sh1m. A pew is a long bench or enclosed box, used by the congregation or choir in a church or sometimes a courtroom.

One would wonder why of all things, a school would embark on building a chapel and not a dormitory or classroom.

"The chapel is important in a school set up. When a person knows God and grows with God, they will always be successful and have eternal life," the headteacher, Night Mpairwe Karungi, says.

According to retired Bishop of North Kigezi Diocese, Edward Muhima, schools need places of worship to instill morals in children.

"Through prayers and worship, which are normally done in the chapel, you get to learn self regulation. You learn about forgiveness, sharing and caring, among others. Academics alone are not enough," Muhima says.

On November 10, the old girls gathered at All Saints Cathedral, Nakasero in Kampala during a meet-and-greet event dubbed the High Tea where they collected sh30m for the chapel.

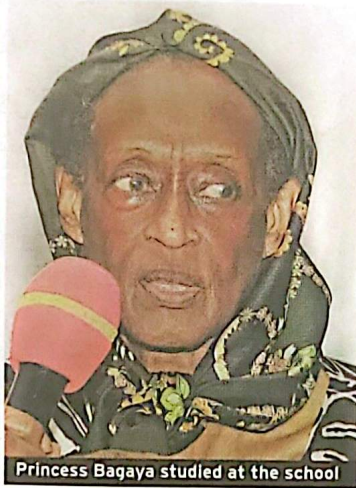
The former students are also organising a dinner at the Mountains of the Moon Hotel in Fort Portal on Saturday to raise more money. The chapel will be commissioned on Sunday.

The building will have a seating capacity of 1,500 worshippers, compared to the old one which sat 200 people. This means the entire school can be able to attend service and other activities at once.

While attending, the fundraising Muhima explained that the neglect of teaching moral values in schools is hurting students and affecting society.

Name of the school

The school is named after Omukama of Toro, Daudi Kasagama Ikingura Kyebambe IV



Princess Bagaya studied at the school

1910

Kyebambe Girls School was founded in 1910 under the Church of Uganda.

"If the country is going to progress, it must follow its motto; For God and My Country, which is supported by the National Anthem, *Oh Uganda, May God Uphold Thee*. If we do not follow it, we are in trouble," Muhima says.

"You can forget the mathematics, chemistry or physics you learnt in school, but you cannot forget the morals instilled in you. I am what I am because my school cared about morals," Richard Akugizibwe, an old boy of Nyakasura School who attended the event, says.

Barbara Kaija, the Vision Group editor-in-chief and an old student of the school, said Uganda is facing a human resource crisis in regard to the morals since many schools and families no longer interest themselves in God.

"You go to a hospital and doctors are not working. You go to school and teachers are absent. In the newsroom, some journalists are extorting money from people! There are no morals. But until we return our schools and families to revolve around God, the education we are offering the children in schools will be a waste of time," Kaija said.

She added that if schools involve godliness in their teaching, the moral crisis will be solved and people will no longer have to be teargassed or even need supervision at work.

"The greatness of Kyebambe Girls School was in the Chapel. Our lives revolved around prayers and it was our guidance during our days," Kaija added.

Jeanne Ahabwe, who was at Kyebambe from 1977 to 1983, says she could have gotten spoiled if it was not for the chapel. She believes her devotion to the Lord is the reason she is alive.

Jolly Kamishani, the president of Mothers' Union in Kampala Diocese, urged fellow old girls and well-wishers to contribute towards the completion of the chapel.

An artist's impression of the new chapel

"Margaret Tinkamanyire, the school chaplain, said: "We should always stand for our mother school that moulded us; the school that prepared us for the war and all the challenges."

Like Evangelist Billy Graham once said: "Education cannot be properly called education which neglects the most important parts of man's nature. Partial education throughout the world is far worse than none at all if we educate the mind but not the soul."

About Kyebambe

Located in Fort Portal, Kabarole district in western Uganda, Kyebambe Girls is one of the oldest secondary schools in the country, having been founded in 1910 under the Church of Uganda. The school is named after Omukama Toro, Daudi Kasagama Ikingura Kyebambe IV who invited missionaries to his kingdom in the 1900s.

It is famous for producing the first female lawyer Princess Elizabeth Bagaya and the first female graduate in east and central Africa, Dr Sarah Nyendwoha Ntiro.

Other prominent women who went through the school include Victoria Rusoke (Former Kabarole Woman MP), Sylvia Rwabwogo, Jus Judith Mbabazi (Judge Court of Higher Instants Kigali).

Others are Doreen Silver Katusiime, (undersecretary Ministry of Education), Edit Nsaba Buturo (undersecretary Ministry of Defence) and Joan Rwabwomere (Ambassador of Uganda to the United States).