

POPE LEAVES HIS VESTMENTS FOR CHURCH IN UGANDA

BY JULIET LUKWAGO

Pope Francis left his vestments for the Catholic Church after his two-day visit to Uganda last month.

According to the Archbishop of Kampala, Dr Cyprian Kizito Lwanga, Popes always leave their vestment in the diocese where they celebrated the holy Mass during their pilgrimages.

The vestments, which include the chasuble — the outermost liturgical vestment worn for the celebration of the eucharist, are now kept at Rubaga Cathedral, the seat of the Catholic Church in Uganda.

Pope Francis visited Uganda from November 27 to 29 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the canonisation of the Uganda Martyrs. He celebrated mass at Namugongo Martyrs Shrine, attended by thousands of pilgrims.

Pope Paul VI, the first Pope to visit Uganda from July 31 to August 2, 1969, also left his vestments and Crosier, which the Church is still using. They are kept at Rubaga.

Meanwhile, it has emerged that the Government bought 1,500 vestments, which were worn by the clergy during the mass led by Pope Francis in Namugongo.

Lwanga last week said the vestments were bought from Rome, but did not disclose the cost.

The chasubles, which are red in colour, were decorated with a symbol of the Uganda Martyrs chosen by Uganda Episcopal Conference during the preparation for the Pope's visit.

Red, according to the Church, symbolises both blood and fire. It is also the colour that has traditionally been associated with martyrs — those who shed blood for their faith. It is worn on the feast days of martyrs.

Archbishop Lwanga, who is the spokesperson of the Episcopal Conference, thanked President Yoweri Museveni for the chasubles.

He said the Episcopal Conference sat after the Pope's visit and decided to give some chasubles to all Catholic shrines in Uganda.



Pope Francis at Namugongo during his visit. He left the vestments (in the picture) to the Catholic church

"Since the chasubles are many, the bishops agreed to give 30 chasubles to Munyonyo Shrine. Other Uganda Martyrs Churches in all 19 Catholic dioceses will also get chasubles," Lwanga explained.

According to church history, each colour of

chasubles represents a season. The colour of the liturgical vestments changes from time to time. This is because the Church uses different colours to indicate the season or feast being celebrated.

The colours used are white (or gold), purple (or violet), green, red and rose pink.

White

White and gold are festive and joyful colours used during the Christmas and Easter seasons, and on major feast days. White symbolises the resurrection of Jesus. It is also the colour often used for funerals.

Purple

Purple (or violet) symbolises repentance and penance. Vestments of purple or violet are used during the seasons of advent and lent. Lent is the season of prayer, fasting and alms-giving. It is a quiet season of reflection.

This is the time of year when the Church waits in joyful hope to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

Green

Green is a sign of life in nature and as such it represents growth, life and hope. Green is the colour worn most often during liturgies in ordinary time. It symbolises the graces that draw people into the life of God.

Red

It is the colour that is used on passion (palm) Sunday, pentecost Sunday and for celebrations of the sacrament of confirmation. It is also the colour that has traditionally been associated with martyrs and so it is worn on the feast days of martyrs.

Rose Pink

Rose pink is an optional colour that may be used on the third Sunday of advent and the fourth Sunday of lent. The pink vestments mark a softening of the penitential tone of the season.