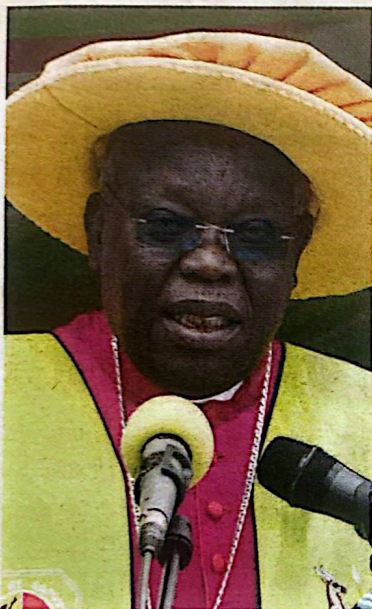


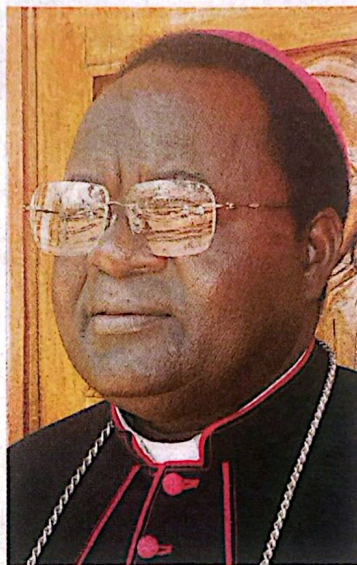
Christmas messages from clergy

This year, *New Vision* asked the clergymen from different churches to give a Christmas message to the community for publication in our Christmas edition. The following are the responses from them



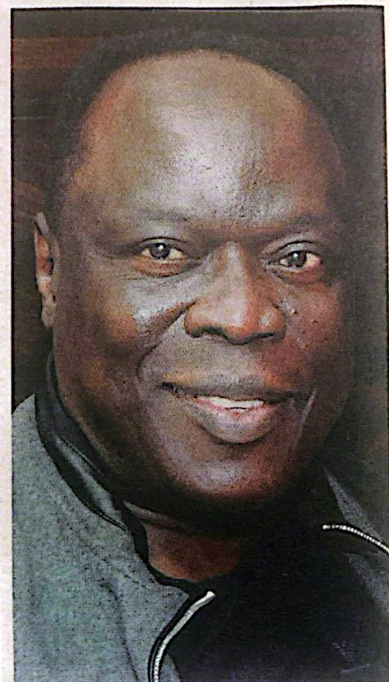
Archbishop John Baptist Odama, chairperson of the Uganda Episcopal Conference

When Jesus was born, he brought peace and love to humankind. He also restored human dignity. The peace and love that Jesus brought is highly desirable in our country. There is no reason why we should continue to quarrel and fight with each other over trivial issues, such as politics, tribe or religion. In fact, in heaven there will be no tribes. So, in everything we do, let us acknowledge that we belong to a common tribe, that is, the tribe of humanity. The tribe of humanity is what we should place above all other things. If we do so, we shall be able to overcome problems, such as tribalism, hatred, exploitation, discrimination and child sacrifice, which have rocked our country in the past years.



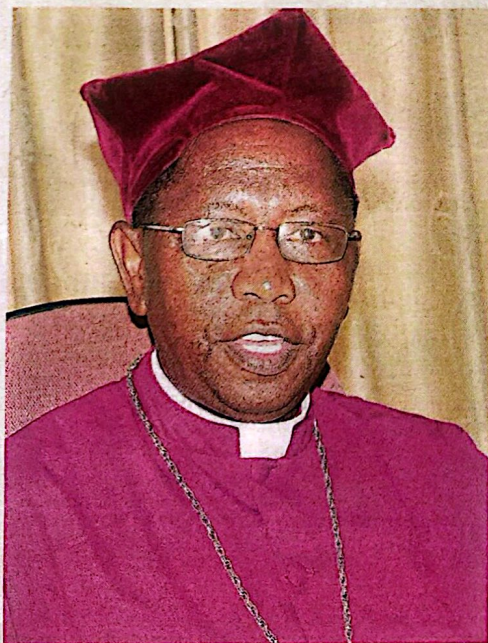
Archbishop Dr Cyprian Kizito Lwanga, Metropolitan Archbishop of Kampala Archdiocese

There has been a growing sub-culture of telling lies in our country. Many people, me inclusive, have been victims of character-assassination. As Ugandans, we need to be more committed to our national motto. Before you do anything, first ensure that it is in line with the motto of Uganda. If you steal public funds, character assassinate people, kill, grab other people's land or cheat on your spouse; are you doing that for God and our country? We also need to address challenges, such as domestic violence, murder, poverty, corruption, nepotism, tribalism, political intolerance and hatred. We need to cultivate a culture of love and tolerance. We can co-exist harmoniously, irrespective of our differences. All of us must work for peace, justice and reconciliation.



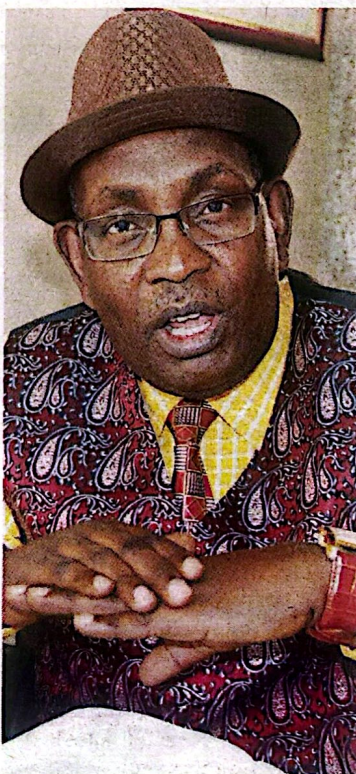
Professor Simeon Kayiwa, Namirembe Christian Fellowship

The wise men who came to see Jesus did not find him in a palace. He was also not putting on kingly robes. However, he was the King of Kings. During the New Year, I would desire to see our leaders, both religious and political, identifying themselves more with the poor. A shepherd has to smell like his sheep. Therefore, the leaders of the people must not be aloof. They should exercise humility, to be able to address the needs of the people they lead.



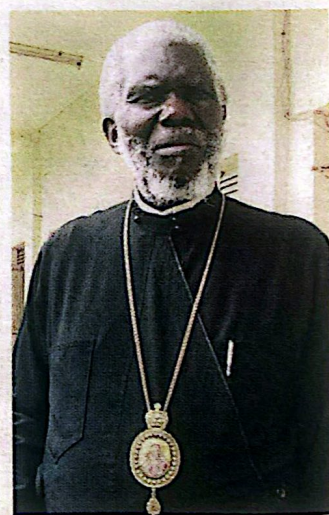
Church of Uganda Archbishop Stanley Ntagali

Our society is drifting into a state of godlessness, lawlessness and perverse disregard of human life and dignity. We must be ardent promoters of peace, reconciliation and justice. We must challenge the injustices and violence of all kinds, which are against the will of God, humanity and societal well-being. We need to pray against the current state of political anxiety, so often caused by a lack of patriotic spirit, selfish ambitions and politically charged mindsets that incite communities into anarchy, undiplomatic approaches to resolving differences and violent behaviour. Pray also for good neighbourliness, faithful stewardship of political influence at all levels and respect for each other's political convictions.



Dr Joseph Sserwadda, Apostle of the Born-Again faith

This year has revealed the glaring selfish and greedy beings we truly are, with emphasis on things that do not matter. We need to be more mindful of the needs of the poor and oppressed. When religious leaders who are expected to lead the way become venerated on earth, demanding to be worshipped, when they become liars, oppressors and exploiters of the poor, they create a humanitarian crisis. Society is again in crisis when the civil service becomes an avenue of corruption and stealing, when little children and women have no security and are in fear of being raped and abused, as has happened in Wakiso district this year. This tells us that our values are in the wrong place. As we enter the New Year, we need to address these issues as people of God and citizens of Uganda. We need to be more committed to God and our country.



Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga, Archbishop of the Orthodox Church

Jesus who has been born to us is the king of peace and righteousness. Let us, therefore, mind to be righteous and virtuous people. Let us be godly people. The birth of Jesus has brought joy into our hearts. We need to keep that joy and hope even in the face of challenges, knowing well that Jesus is Emmanuel (God with us). If we keep our trust in him, he will help us prevail over all the challenges.