

Do not tamper with Constitution – Bishop Muhiirwa

By Mathias Mazinga

The Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Portal, Dr Robert Muhiirwa Akiiki, has asked parliamentarians not to make any change in the constitution.

He argued that the 1995 Constitution of Uganda was made after wide-ranging consultations and careful consideration of the country's troubled history, which was why it needed to be respected and given a chance to prevail.

"The Constitution appears to be a small book, but it has authority. The words in it were written carefully in consideration of the wishes of the people, bearing in mind the history of our country. So, it must not be tampered with. The Constitution cannot be changed to please the wishes of one person. It should be respected and given a chance to work," Muhiirwa said.

He further asked the politicians to emulate the late Julius Nyerere, the former president of Tanzania, who, he

"The Constitution appears to be a small book, but it has authority. The words in it were written carefully." Muhiirwa

said, lived out the principles of justice, purity and also promoted the common good of his people.

"Nyerere, a servant of God whom we come here to pray for every second day of June, should be our role model. Every morning he went to church for Mass. When the

time for his retirement came, he handed over power and became a catechist. I say it in my authority as a bishop of the Catholic Church in Uganda."

Bishop Muhiirwa was delivering his homily during a Mass for the affiliate Catholic dioceses of Mbarara Ecclesiastical Province at Namugongo Catholic Martyrs Shrine on Sunday. The function was organised by Mbarara Ecclesiastical Province Association (MEPA), which brings together Catholics from the Catholic dioceses of Kabale, Kasese, Hoima, Fort Portal and Mbarara Archdiocese, who are resident in Kampala and its neighbourhood.

Preaching on the day's theme of "Servant leadership", Muhiirwa asked church and civil leaders to serve the people with absolute honesty and commitment.

"When politicians are taking up office, they pronounce their oath with a Bible in hand. Everywhere we work, in government offices, schools, hospitals and elsewhere,



Nuns dancing during the pilgrimage Mass of the affiliate Catholic dioceses of Mbarara Ecclesiastical Province at the Catholic Martyrs Shrine in Namugongo on Sunday. Photo by Mathias Mazinga

let us carry out our duties and responsibilities with commitment," he said.

Muhiirwa asked Christians to emulate the Catholic Martyrs of Uganda, in particular Matia Mulumba and Andrew Kaggwa, who relinquished their earthly honours and followed Jesus' tenets.

The Minister of Local Government, Tom Butime (who was the chief pilgrim), commended the leaders of

MEPA for their zeal to improve the living conditions of Christians in rural areas.

He assured the public that the proposed constitutional presidential age limit amendment would be handled carefully to the satisfaction of every stakeholder.

The chairperson of MEPA, Dr Peter Ngategize, asked the Government to partner with the association in its crusade of increasing household incomes

in the rural communities.

Bishops Callistus Rubaramira Amooti (Kabale), Vincent Kirabo Amooti (Hoima), Lambert Bainomugisha Adyeri (Auxiliary, Mbarara), Francis Kibira (Kasese) and Eugidio Nkaijanabwo Adyeri (Auxiliary, Kasese), also graced the function.

The pilgrimage was celebrated under the theme: "As for me and my family, we shall serve the Lord".