



PATHFINDER REV. CAN. DR. EDIDAH MARY MUJINYA

Was called by God to teach

Her name Mujinya means zeal in Runyankole, a local dialect, and this has been manifested in Dr. Edidah Mujinya's career. More than just serving God as a cleric, she is an accomplished educationist who has grown from a primary school teacher to being Ankole Western University deputy vice chancellor, writes **Zaddock Amanyisa**.

With all her present day achievements, one would imagine Dr. Edidah Mujinya, 58, has had a smooth sail through life. But you would not be more wrong. In fact, the 58-year-old's illustrious journey started on a rocky ground.

She lost her father in 1966 aged only six in Primary One at Masheruka Girls Primary school present day Masheruka Modern Primary School. Her parents, the late Yakobo and Violet Rwabwera hailed from Bugarama, Masheruka, Sheema District.

She was adopted by her step brother, Can. Yosia Rwankore who did not have enough resources but managed to support her to a level when basic teacher training was free in Uganda.

As such, after her Primary Seven in 1974, she was advised to apply to join a primary teachers college. But because Mujinya was 14 and the minimum age for joining colleges was 15, she had to repeat Primary Seven.

"This was a trying moment for me because I was a very bright and ambitious girl and my former classmates had joined secondary schools," she recounts.

No retreat

However, Mujinya was determined to pursue secondary education. So, while training as a teacher at Bishop Stuart College, Kakoba, Mbarara Town in 1976, she prepared to sit for O-Level examinations as a private candidate.

As a teacher at Kishasha Primary School in Kashari, Mbarara District, Mujinya sat for her O-Level exams at Ntare School which was a centre for private candidates in 1981.

"Grade Two female teachers were at that time selling like hot cake because they were young, educated and employed. Most men wanted to marry them but I shunned marriage at least not until I had completed Se-

nior Four and even then, I would only accept on condition that my husband would permit me to continue with my studies," Mujinya says.

That same year, she met a born again secondary school teacher, Abias Mujinya with whom she bore two children.

The call for priesthood

In 1990, Mujinya joined National Teachers College, Kakoba in Mbarara to train as a teacher of English language and religious education. She graduated with a diploma in Primary Education and joined Bweranyangi

Junior School as a teacher.

Her career as a teacher was growing and so was her religious life. She was appointed Mothers Union coordinator in charge of Buhweju, a position she served in for seven years. This was to become her inspiration for priesthood seeing as the harvest was plenty but the harvesters were few.

In 1994, Mujinya joined Bishop Tucker Theological College for a Bachelor in Divinity. She was in 1996 selected to go for a one year exchange programme with Wycliffe Hall of Oxford University.

In 1998 Mujinya was offered a scholarship for a Master in Religious Studies at Makerere University. Seeing as she was very ambitious, her lecturers recommended that she enrolls for a PhD which she did in December 2003 and completed in 2010.

She was then appointed senior lecturer and quality assurance officer at Bishop Stuart University in Mbarara and at the same time a teacher and school chaplain at Ruyonza School.

The fruits of teaching

Mujinya confesses that she did not like the teaching profession at first but seeing her fruits has made her believe teaching is a noble profession. "I have been a teacher from nursery to university," she says adding, "Being a teacher has helped me have a good family. I transfer the advice I give students at school to my own children."

On university leadership

Mujinya says top university leadership is not an easy task because it calls for a lot of sacrifice and dedication. "Everything has to be in place. For example there has to be constant internet, transport system, infrastructure, staff welfare yet you are operating on limited funds. It is challenging," she says.

Despite being 58, Mujinya feels young and dynamic and boasts of celebrating her life as a teacher by profession, and priest by calling.

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT MUJINYA

Extraordinary leader



"She was and is an extraordinary leader and educationist whose transparency is unmatched. She is open about everything and has no time for conflict."

GODWIN AHWERA, FORMER STUDENT

Equipped us

"While at university, she started vocational skills for us from which I benefited a lot. Her background of a religious leader makes her leadership skills excellent."

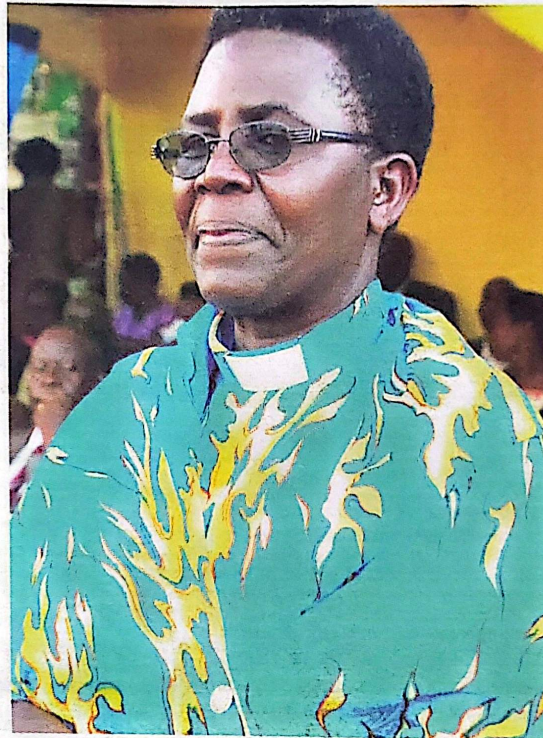
CAROLINE KEMBABAZI, BUSINESS WOMAN



Ambitious

"She is a very ambitious person who makes her people proud. She started as Grade Two teacher and now has a PhD."

DEO ATUHAIRE, RIGHTS ACTIVIST



Rev. Dr. Edidah Mujinya says teaching is a noble profession. PHOTOS BY ZADDOCK AMANYISA