INSTALLATION OF THE STATUE OF MARY IMMACULATE

NABUNNYA PILGRIMAGE CENTRE

“Installing Mother Mary in our Lives”

The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary of this year at Mapeera-Nabunnya Pilgrimage Centre was in a special way marked by the installation of the Statue of Mary Immaculate.

This Statue was blessed by His Eminence Emmanuel Cardinal Wamala on the 12th May 2017. On that day, we were commemorating the 127th death anniversary of Fr. Simeon Lourdel Mapeera. The same Statue was used at Lubaga Cathedral on the 2nd July 2017, in remembrance of the dedication of Uganda to Mary Immaculate by the Pioneer Missionaries in 1879. It was again Cardinal Wamala who lead the re-dedication prayer at the end of the Eucharist.

The Installation ceremony was presided over by Rev. Fr. Augustine Mpagi from Kasana-Luweero Diocese. Fr. Mpagi is on the team of the promoters of the Cause for the beatification of Mapeera and Amans. In his lively and inspiring homily, he told the faithful that “this installation of the Statue of the B. V. Mary symbolically means installing her in our lives, especially in the areas of our lives which are not yet evangelized, areas where we still need to be purified, areas of sin.” Comparing Mary to the “Ark of the Covenant” and its effects whenever it was brought in the camp of the Israelites, Fr. Mpagi said that for the Christians, Mary is their “Tool-Box” and therefore taking her as their Mother and Companion, means equipping themselves with all the tools needed for fighting and defeating the ‘Evil-One’, Jesus himself being the MASTER-TOOL in this BOX!

We are told by those who were present in the last hours of Mapeera before his death, that he was all the time repeating the names of “Heaven, Mary and Jesus”. Furthermore, they say that the Christians
around before and after his death were all the time praying the Rosary. The month of May in which he passed on is also the month of Mary. It is, therefore, very meaningful that the ‘Grotto of Mary’ has been the first new construction to be put at this site as we initiate the work of developing it as a pilgrimage centre.

As Mapeera did at the beginning of his ministry in this country, entrusting us (Uganda) to Mother Mary, we too, at the end of his ministry in this country, entrusted him to Her! We were represented by the Christians who surrounded him on his death-bed here at Nabunnya. We too, together with all the future pilgrims to this Grotto, entrust to Mother Mary the Cause of his beatification and that of his long-life companion, Bro. Amans.

Jjajja Mapeera