

Mapeera, Amans and Mother Kevin on their journey to Beatification

Opening Session at Lubaga Cathedral

6th November 2016 entered into the history of the Catholic Church in Uganda. On that day, the inquiry into the lives of Fr. Simeon Lourdel, best known as Pere Mapeera, and Bro. Amans Delmas, in view of their beatification was officially inaugurated in Lubaga Cathedral during the Eucharistic celebration presided by the Archbishop of Kampala, Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga. In addition to these two pioneer catholic missionaries in Uganda, the cause for the beatification of



Mother Kevin, the foundress of the “Little Sisters of Saint Francis” (*Nkokonjeru* Sisters) and the “Franciscan Missionary Sisters for Africa” was also officially opened. Present were the Papal Nuncio in Uganda and the Rt. Rev. Christopher Kakooza, bishop of Lugazi diocese, who is the petitioner for the cause of Mother Kevin.

During this celebration, Archbishop Lwanga and Bishop Kakooza, the two petitioners of the causes took the oath to abide with all the rules governing this inquiry. They also officially appointed the tribunal officials and members of the historical commissions. For Mapeera and Amans they are the following:

Postulator: Dr. Waldery Hilgeman. He is the link person between “The Sacred Congregation for the Causes of the Saints” and the Archdiocese of Kampala. He makes sure that the inquiry strictly follows the Church laws. As a rule, he must be residing in the diocese of Rome.

Vice Postulator: Fr. Nnyombi Richard, M.Afr. He is the link person between the postulator in Rome and the Archdiocese of Kampala. He coordinates the different commissions involved in the inquiry.

Tribunal

This will collect the witnesses, for or against the beatification of Mapeera and Amans. NB: Even non-Catholics are welcome to give their witnesses. The following are the people on this tribunal:

Episcopal Delegate: Rev. Fr. Joseph Sserunjogi. He represents the Archbishop who is the ‘judge’ in this tribunal.

Promoter of Justice: Rev. Fr. Kato Kasirye Andrew. He makes sure that all the information concerning the ‘Servant of God’, for or against his beatification, is communicated to those concerned.

Notary: Rev. Fr. Ambrose Bwangatto

Adjunct Notary: Rev. Fr. Paul Muwanga Gyaviira

Historical Commission

This commission will collect all the writings of Mapeera and Amans. A study will be made on these writings to make sure that they do not contradict the teachings of the Catholic Church. The following are the members on this commission:

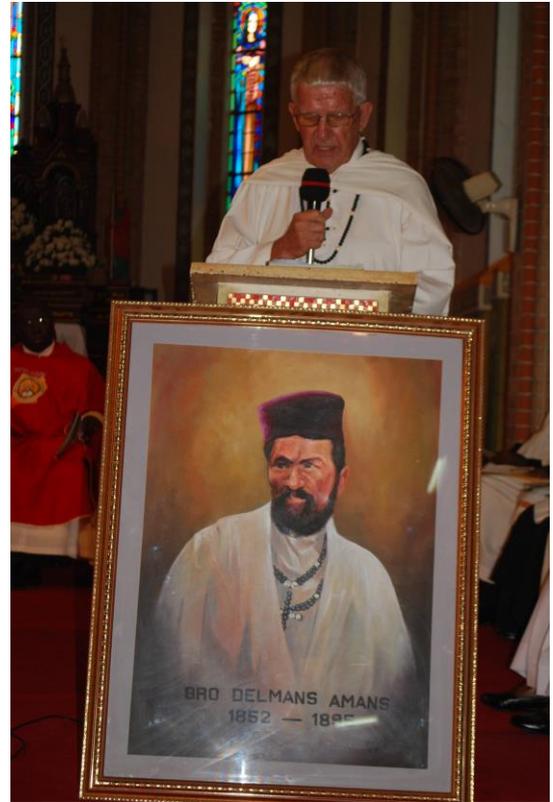
- Rev. Bro. Reginald D. Cruz (Chairperson)
- Mr. Marinus Rooijackers (Secretary)
- Rev. Fr. Benedict Ssettuuma (Member)

Finance Committee

Although the members of this committee were not among those who took the oath in the Cathedral, the Archbishop appointed them and entrusted them the work to look for the necessary funds needed during the inquiry. A bank account for each ‘Servant of God’ will have to be opened and an annual financial report made and sent to Rome. The following are the members on this committee:

Fr. Charles Lwanga Ssendendo (chairperson)
Mr. Luwemba John (Secretary)
Mr. Joseph Ssekabira (Member)

These three are members on the executive committee of Mapeera and Amans Beatification Committee (MABEC) and also members of the Association of Mapeera and Amans Beatification Promoters (MAB-PRO).



Keys points from the homily and speech of the Archbishop on that day:

- We are not ‘beatifying’ Pere Mapeera, Bro. Amans and Mother Kevin but rather officially starting the inquiry at the diocesan level which will lead us to their beatification in case they are found worthy to be so.
- Let us pray to God that through their intercessions, we receive favours and miracles. We must stick to one ‘Servant of God’ when praying for something and not pray through all of them or even adding on Mother Mary and other saints. There is an official prayer for the beatification of each one.
- In case we receive a favour or a miracle, we should report it to the parish priest or to the office in charge at Mapeera-Nabunnya Pilgrimage Centre, near Pope Paul VI Memorial Hotel (Tel.: 0392001448. Website: www.mapeeraandamans.org)
- Let us take Mapeera, Amans and Mother Kevin as our models in following Christ in our daily life.
- These three are now addressed to as “*Servant of God*”

During this Mass, there was also the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation of about two hundred children. In this Sacrament, the Holy Spirit strengthens us to be true disciples and apostles of Christ. The Archbishop told the children that they were now real “soldiers of Christ” and asked them to take Mapeera, Amans and Mother Kevin as their model in being true soldiers of Christ.



On that day, we began the Novena of St. Joseph Mukasa Balikuddembe. This martyr together with St. Andrea Kaggwa, were the first Ugandans to be baptised by Pere Mapeera on the 30th April 1882 at Nabulagala. The Archbishop invited the faithful to always invoke the Uganda Martyrs, the spiritual sons of Mapeera and Amans, so that one day what we ask for from God may become a reality.

By Jjajja Mapeera