



Easter A Christian Celebration of Love and Hope

This is the message to the Tangaza University college fraternity by the Rev. Prof. Patrick Mwanja, CSSp, the university Vice Chancellor – Designate.

In his homily during the Easter Mass, the Vice Chancellor, explained to the congregation that of all events in the Catholic Christian calendar, Easter is the most central. He clarified that Easter, which commemorates the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is characterized, above all, by the joy of glorified life and the victory over death.

Starting with the Easter Vigil which opens up Easter celebrations is the “Mother of All Vigils” and Easter Sunday is the greatest of all Sundays. “Easter”, a word that means the “East” from whence the sun rises bringing light, warmth, and hope, is a symbol for Christians, of the rising Christ, the true Light of the world. The Paschal Candle, that is used during this Vigil is the central symbol of this divine light, which is Christ.



He called Easter, a new beginning, a Christian celebration in which dying, death and new beginnings are connected. Jesus Christ, who died on the cross on Good Friday, was resurrected on the third day and thus achieved victory over death. This story forms foundation of the Christian faith, because it is the conviction that there is life after death.

From its origins through the traditions of the Church, everything about Easter is about rebirth, new beginnings and life. Easter gives us reassurance that death is not the end of the road. It gives hope that there is celebration beyond suffering, and death, and that there is abundance of life.

He described the Liturgy as a celebration that makes us who are worldly pilgrims pause and look forward, even though difficult times may lie behind us. It is the promise of a new beginning is the motivation of human life – and an anchor point in our existence.

Easter begins with the paschal triduum, he clarified. With Holy Thursday, the Church begins the three days leading to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Holy Thursday is the commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus Christ, when He instituted the sacrament of Holy Orders and by extension the sacrament of the Holy Communion before His death on the cross.

During the Mass of the Last Supper, we emulate Jesus who washed the feet of His disciples as a sign of humble service and love towards them. Good Friday on the other hand, is the day when Catholics commemorate the crucifixion and death of Jesus. By participating in extensive Stations of the Cross, and culminating with the crucifixion and death of Christ at 3 pm, Christians reflect through fasting and penance on what Jesus gave up to save humanity.

He went on to describe Holy Saturday, a time when the Church keeps watch awaiting the Resurrection of Jesus, opening with the lighting of the Paschal Candle to represent Christ, the light of the world.

Easter Sunday, is the culmination of the Easter celebrations, Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the most important feast for Catholics, Jesus Christ rises on the third day after His death on the cross. Christians rejoice on this day more than any other day over what God has done for them.

We rejoice at Easter because our faith in Christ is vindicated, truth has triumphed over falsity, justice over injustice and tragedy has turned into comedy. He expounded on this as good news because of the complete reversal and turn of events.



“The story of the suffering and death of Jesus on Good Friday is the story of triumph”. The VC added.

He took the worshipers through Christ’s journey, when He was falsely charged of crimes he did not commit, and was unjustly sentenced to a death he did not deserve. His good friend betrayed him, his trusted companions deserted him and his number one man denied him. The people he loved demanded his crucifixion and chose to have the bandit Barabbas released in his place.

Prof Mwanja points to these happenings as a story of betrayal and lies, dishonesty and meanness, unfaithfulness and wicked violence directed against an innocent and apparently helpless victim.

With a celebratory voice, the VC explained that this however comes to a head on Good Friday when Jesus is scourged, mocked, led on the death march, nailed to the cross where he dies after a few hours and hastily buried in a tomb. If that were the end of the story that would be a bad story, a tragedy. But thanks be to God it is not. The end is different.

There is one more chapter. Fr. Mwanja added, “this is the most important chapter”. “As the saying goes, they who laugh last laugh best. In this last chapter of the story of Jesus, He rises from the dead in all glory and majesty. He is vindicated. His enemies are shamed and confused. Jesus regains his eternal glory with the Father. He is the Lord who will prevail over all humankind, his enemies included.”

“For us, his embattled followers, this is good news. It is good news to know that truth is immortal. We can suppress Truth, accuse it of being a lie, condemn it, torture it, kill it, bury it in the grave but on the third day Truth will rise again.” He continued.

The VC asked the congregation to remember these characteristics of the truth and not give up on it, even when everybody seems to give up on it.

“Do not give up on Truth; do not give up on Justice. Do not give up on doing what is right. True will always be true. Just will always be just. Right will always be right even when the world around us would have it otherwise.” He added.

“This is the truth of the matter and a good lesson we learn from the resurrection event. That is why the church asks us today to rejoice and be glad.”

Fr. Mwanja pointed to Easter as therefore a story of victory, that brings hope to the disciples and to all of us. It is a victory that discredits the embarrassment and the shame of Good Friday through the joy of the resurrection. Easter becomes an event that overcomes fear and hopelessness. Jesus’ hope and total trust in God’s promise of life gives him the strength to face the cross.

This, he observed, is the great take away message! That nothing is impossible before God as long as we truly trust in Him. Even when we are going through very difficult times: through betrayal, unjust discrimination, lies, misrepresentations; even when the enemy seems to be winning the battle in our lives.

As Easter people, we know that Christ has won and so in Him, we shall also overcome. This is the experience I wish everyone of us at Tangaza. That every day becomes an Easter experience of hope and God’s love. That each day becomes a new beginning!



Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya and South Sudan visits Tangaza

The Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya and Southern Sudan, Archbishop Hubertus van Megen recently visited Tangaza University College. The two-pronged visit was, one, to meet with the college fraternity, and to also commission the Nuru Annex.



Apostolic Nuncio opens the Nuru Annex

The Archbishop paid a visit to the various institutes, where he pointed that the Pope is very interested in the youth. He further explained that Pontiff feels the role of the media and the Catholic Church are hugely underestimated. The Nuncio noted that we can reach a higher level of development by involving the youth, not just in religious activities but also by nurturing Catholic values in them.



Apostolic Nuncio at the Tangaza Studios

He expressed his appreciation for the Institute of Youth Studies for working with children with developmental delays and making interventions. The children, who come to the Centre through the church and the Institute of Youth Studies students who interact with them during their practical's, are monitored and assessment made about their delayed development.

At the IST, he was informed of the institute's focus on creating agents for change by training and building their capacity. The institute focuses on academic outreach to create a better and just society.

The Nuncio observed that human rights are Christian founded, as they are already ingrained in the human person and can therefore be grown. This can be done through the promotion of Christian values, he added.

At the Centre for Leadership and Management (CLM), the director explained the role the center plays in training for example the parish priests especially on accountability and being able to give an account of what they are doing to their congregations.

At the tail end of the visit, the Archbishop commissioned and blessed the Nuru Annex, which comprises the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Hall, classrooms offices on the upper floor. Part of the funds to put up the annex were donated by the Hungarian Embassy to Kenya here in Nairobi.



Apostolic Nuncio blessing the Nuru Annex

Tangaza Day Celebrations

Happy Birthday Tangaza: Celebrating 38 Years of Greatness!!!!

Here is the homily by the Vice Chancellor Designate, the Professor reads: Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. - John 12:3

This is the homily on Tangaza Day 2024, on her 38th birthday.

Fr. Mwanja puts into context the Gospel reading of the day to explain thus; the scene took place exactly one week before the crucifixion of Jesus. Jesus was anointed on two different occasions; the first one, at the start of his public ministry in Galilee, as recounted by St. Luke. Jesus was anointed by a repentant sinful woman in the house of a Pharisee, and in the second one, towards the end of his life, in Bethany, as reported by St. John.

The Professor explains that instead of brooding over the sufferings and death waiting for him, Jesus, along with his Apostles, enjoyed a party given for his friend, Lazarus by his family and friends. Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem to be crucified, and probably he halted in Bethany, both because Jerusalem was overcrowded, and because He wanted to spend time with his closest friends.

The VC ponders what a humble and beautiful act of love toward Jesus. This perfume was worth 300 days' wages. That's a lot of money! Interestingly, Judas objected to this act by claiming that it should have been sold and the money given to the poor. However, the Gospel states clearly that Judas was only interested in the money himself since he used to steal from the money bag.



Regardless of Judas' motives or what he would have done with the money, he asks a reasonable question. A pound of perfume worth a year's worth of work and wages. How many people could that money have helped? Hungry people. Sick people. Homeless people. To pour it all out at one time on one person does not make sense. It is neither practical nor efficient. Love never is. Mary seems to know that practicalities and efficiency are perhaps the two greatest threats to love. They will, as Judas will prove, always betray the relationship.

In the gospel, Mary fragrances the life and impending death of Jesus with "a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard." It is not just perfume, however. It is the entirety of her life, all that she is and all that she has. Nothing is held back. Mary loves while Judas calculates.

Fr. Mwanja explains Mary as the picture of extravagant, wasteful, unreasonable love.

Mary's love foreshadows and prophesies, Jesus' love. She anoints the feet of the one who will wash the feet of his disciples. She pours herself out on the one who will pour himself out on the world. Jesus' love will cost everything he has. He holds nothing in reserve.

He explains further that of even greater note is Jesus' response to Judas. Jesus rebukes Judas and tells him to leave her alone. He asks him to let her keep the perfume for the day of his burial. "You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." Jesus tells Judas.

If anyone else would have said this, it would have sounded self-centered. But it was Jesus who said it and He was perfectly selfless in His love. So, what was this all about? It was about the fact that Jesus knew what Mary needed. And in saying what He did, He revealed what each one of us needs. We need to worship Him, honor Him and make Him the center of our lives.

We need to humble ourselves before Him and serve Him. Not because He needs us to treat Him this way, but because we need to treat Him this way. Honoring Jesus in our humility and love is what we need to do for our own holiness and happiness. Jesus knew this, so He honored Mary for this act of love.

The VC explains further that the story invites us to do the same. It invites us to look to Jesus and to make Him the center of our adoration and love. It invites us to willingly pour out all our labor for Him (symbolized by the perfume worth 300 days' wages). Nothing is too costly for Jesus. Nothing is worth more than an act of our worship.

He asked the Tangaza fraternity to us reflect, upon the depth of our own adoration of our Lord. To question ourselves if we are willing to "spill" our whole livelihood upon Him? If He is worth more to us than 300 days' wages? And if He is the most central part of your life?

Mary is a role model for all of us the says the Professor – let us imitate her beautiful example. Mary expressed her love for Jesus and her gratitude to God by an extravagant action but her motive justified it. Before all the Apostles, she anointed Jesus' feet with nard, the wages of a laborer for 300 days, then wiped them with her hair. Her lovely deed shows the extravagance of love. Comparing her with Judas, Judas was mean.

The gospel invites us to be generous towards God and towards others. It is indeed in giving that we receive.

Today we also celebrate Tangaza Day.

