

## Novena for the People of St. Paul's Parish

Pray daily beginning Sunday, May 26th through Monday, June 3rd, the Feast of St. Charles Lwanga and the Ugandan Martyrs

Mary, Queen of Peace! To you we commend the men, women and children of Uganda. Through your prayers, may the Spirit of God grant lasting peace and prosperity to their nation. May the light of Christ cast out the spiritual darkness which breeds selfishness, violence, hatred for others and contempt for their rights. May all hearts be opened to the power of God's love. May those divided by ethnic or political antagonisms learn to work together in order to build a society of justice, peace and freedom for their children.

Mary, Queen of Martyrs! To you we commend the Christians of this country. May the noble example of Saints Charles Lwanga and the Ugandan Martyrs inspire them to offer their lives as a sacrifice pleasing to God. May their faith in Christ be seen in the holiness of their lives and in their charity towards their brothers and sisters. Strengthen priests and religious in fidelity and apostolic zeal, and grant that more and more young people may respond generously to God's call to serve him in the Church. By your loving intercession, may Christians be beacons of hope, letting their light shine before men, a leaven of Gospel values working for the spiritual and moral renewal of Ugandan society.

Mary, Mother of all who believe! May all Christ's followers in this country draw ever closer together in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation. May they bear ever more fraternal witness to the reconciling love of Jesus the Redeemer. Impelled by the Spirit of love, may they help spread the light of the Gospel to all the people of Uganda.

Mary, Mother of Sorrows! Look with mercy on those who suffer. Be close to the victims of violence and terror, and console those who mourn. May Jesus your Son grant comfort and peace to all the sick and dying, and may he strengthen those devoted to their physical and spiritual care.

Mary, Queen of Africa! Lead all people into the Lord's Kingdom of holiness, truth and life. You who freely said "yes" to God and became the Virgin Mother of his only Son, remain ever close to your children in Uganda. May they be reborn in hope, and may God's saving plan be fulfilled in them. Through them, may all Africa come to know and love the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

## **Believe in the power of prayer.**

Please pray the annual novena leading up to the Feast of the Ugandan Martyrs on June 3rd! This day commemorates the heroic sacrifice made by brave young men who died for the truth of Jesus Christ. Their actions planted the seeds of the Catholic faith in Uganda. Today, millions of Ugandans, as well as Catholics from neighboring countries, travel to the Uganda Martyrs Shrine on their feast day, which is a public holiday.

This year, let's pray especially for the youth in the parish. They have many critical challenges affecting their spirituality: anxiety resulting from desire to be rich, modernity, mushrooming religious sects, lack of education/skills training, and escalating parental neglect in homes and communities.

Through our twinning relationship, we have been able to help our brothers and sisters in Uganda finish their church, build and add on to SFB High School, develop projects for youth and orphans, and support the Women's Guild with their programs, including new vocational school. **WOW**. Thank you.

The most important thing we give them is **hope**. So, let's continue to lift up our hearts in prayer for them and with them. The people of St. Paul's are blessed with great faith and they, in turn, bless us with their prayers. We'll never know how many blessings are the results of those prayers. Beginning Friday, May 25th, pray the St. John Paul II prayer on the reverse side for nine days, leading up to the Feast of St. Charles Lwanga and the Uganda Martyrs on Saturday, June 3rd.

Thank you for putting God's transformative love in action through prayer!