

Kanyike's Kyengera church project gets shot in the arm

News

Wednesday, 02 May 2012 08:57
Written by OUR REPORTER

[3 Comments](#)



When Robert Kakande joined Makerere University in 1995, one of the figures he grew to love was an American-accented priest named Lawrence Kanyike – popularly known as Father Larry – the head of St Augustine's chaplaincy. So impressed was the commerce student that when he decided to get married, eight years after leaving Makerere, Father Larry seemed a natural choice for main celebrant. Father Larry is now Monsignor Kanyike, the parish priest of Kyengera Catholic parish in Wakiso district. Kakande is the Chief Executive officer of Quality Chemicals Limited.

The two met again on Sunday, at an auction luncheon to raise Shs 50m for putting the finishing touches on the new Kyengera church. Kakande, who was guest of honour, walked down the memory lane, telling the hundreds of guests what a kind-hearted and understanding chaplain he had found Kanyike to be.

"As students we knew that if you were hungry, you could walk into St Augustine and find something to eat," Kakande said. "Those who love football – Man U, Arsenal – you could go to St Augustine and watch football."

Kakande is not alone. Many people who get to know Kanyike at Makerere and elsewhere keep him as a friend, even those he may not know personally. And since he was asked to start the new Kyengera parish in 2008, his friends in various parts of the world have supported the parishioners' effort to build a church as presentable as St Augustine's chapel. Kanyike says Shs 800m has already been raised in less than three years.

As chief guest, Kakande announced a donation of Shs 5m from Quality Chemicals, and Shs 1m from his own pocket. Individuals, families, and organisations like The Observer, Akaboozi ku Bbiri, Kyengera Development Company, Walusimbi's Garage, and Summit College have also supported the building project.

Besides Fr Kanyike, prominent faces behind the fundraising drive have included Paul Kato Settimba, the vice chairman of the laity in the parish, and former Finance minister Gerald Sendawula. On Sunday, Sendawula was at his active best. One minute, he would pick a basket and walk around the tent to ask for more donations. The next, he was supporting the auctioneer, provoking a bidder into raising an offer.

"You are the younger men, how can I offer more than you?" Sendawula teased, when a she goat was dragged to the fore. It eventually fetched Shs 400,000.

Shs 33m was raised here. The last item to be auctioned was a photo-like painting of Msgr Kanyike and Emmanuel Cardinal Wamala, with an impression of the new church in the background; it fetched nearly Shs 1.2m, of which Shs 600,000 came from Kakande. Like many other people who bought items, Kakande donated the painting to Msgr Kanyike. As guests sat down to a sumptuous meal, down came the rain – usually believed to be a sign of blessings.

newseditor@observer.ug

[< Prev](#)

[Next >](#)