



The Holy See

LETTER OF PAUL VI TO CARDINAL LAUREAN RUGAMBWA, BISHOP OF BUKOBA

*To Our Beloved Son Laurean Cardinal Rugambwa
Bishop of Bukoba,*

Knowing our love for Africa, Beloved Son, you are aware that it would have been Our dear desire to be present in person at the Centenary Celebrations of Catholic Missionary Activity in East Africa. It is, however, a consolation for Us to send you this message of felicitations and good wishes, which We entrust to Our Venerable Brother Sergio Pignedoli, Titular Archbishop of Iconium and Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

We have seen with Our own eyes, during Our visit to Africa, some of the magnificent achievements realized by zealous and selfsacrificing Missionaries during the past century, and We thank God for the rich harvest of souls, for it is He Who gave the growth (cfr. *1 Cor.* 3, 6). Yet great praise and profound thanks are due to the «servants through whom you believed» and who laid the foundation «which is Jesus Christ» (ibid. 5, 11). «The missionaries came to Africa for only one reason: to share with Africans the message of peace and redemption which the Lord entrusted to His Church. For love of Him, they left their family and homeland; for love of Him, many of them gave their lives in the service of Africa» («*Africae Terrarum*», No. 24). They have passed on their mission to the Africans of today, and We are confident that their work will continue more gloriously than ever.

In holy rejoicing for a hundred years of apostolic success, and prayerfully invoking God's graces of guidance and growth for the years to come, We lovingly greet you, Beloved Son, the Hierarchy, Governments, Missionary Institutes, Clergy and Laity of East Africa, and from Our heart We impart on this happy occasion Our particular paternal Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, July 14, 1968.

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