

## Conferences in Luweero Diocese

### Bishop Eridard Nsubuga

Luweero Diocese is very appreciative of the Uganda Church Association for its generous financial contribution towards two important training programmes in 2017.

#### ***Seminars for the Readers of Luweero Diocese: March 2017***

During March one-day seminars for Readers were held in our 6 Archdeaconries. The content of each seminar included:

- The Ministry of Making and Equipping Disciples – this subject included the call to enlist, preparing for baptism, training in the faith and training for service. Lay Readers are a great help to the clergy of the Church of Uganda regarding the preparation of those to be baptised and those to be confirmed.
- Women's Empowerment – the seminar also included the subject of Women's Empowerment because churchgoers in the Church of Uganda are predominantly women. Also, the most active Church groups are those for women such as the Mothers' Union, Christian Women's Fellowship and the prayer group commonly known as 'Esther Group'.

The Readers were urged to educate some of the men in their communities who still marginalise the women due to their cultural beliefs. Encouraging women to join the active ministry of the Church as Readers and/or Clergy was also stressed. The Readers were also introduced to a newly established ministry through the Provincial Women's Department, which is being referred to as the '***Eagle Process***', based on ***Isaiah 40.31***. In a nutshell, this process enables the Church to be *salt and light* to her community, through Bible study and use of locally available resources. This Eagle process challenges the dependence and fatalism that have for a long time kept the Church, families and communities in both spiritual and physical poverty.

- Stewardship. This subject was also part of the seminar content. While it has traditionally been looked at in terms of time, talents and finances, this time considered it mainly in terms of making use of the available resources. Luweero Diocese is blessed with very big chunks of land which are yet to be utilised. The Readers were encouraged to make that land green through *agro-forestation*. Trees not only provide timber but also play a big part in protecting the environment. While the cutting down of trees in almost all areas of the Diocese is inevitable, since firewood is the only energy available for cooking, the Readers were challenged to educate their communities to ensure the planting of new trees year by year.
- The seminar schedule also provided chances for group discussion on matters of *development, family and parenting, and the goodness of annual fellowship*.

All this would not have been possible if it were not for the support that was received from the Uganda Church Association, for which we are very grateful.

### ***Luweero Diocesan Youth Conference: December 2017***

We are very appreciative of the Uganda Church Association's contribution towards the costs of our youth conference – an example of their being doers of mission in action. We are also grateful to the Head Teacher and staff of Naalinnya-Lwantale Primary School for hosting this year's conference. The Diocesan Youth department under the leadership of Rev. Captain Patrick Nsimbe and his team are also commended for working so hard to ensure the success of the conference. Many thanks too, to all those who facilitated in various ways and those who donated money and physical things. It was very kind of you all.

We were overwhelmed by the huge turn up of youth registering to participate in the conference. This required a supplementary budget to be worked out, as the original budget proved insufficient to cater for the newly registered number of participants. Thankfully, to cut the story short, the deficit was covered and all participants, over 200 of them, were catered for.

The objectives of the conference were, among other things:

- To give the youth an opportunity to fellowship with each other, enjoying an encounter with Church-related activities after their being away in schools for quite some time.
- To instil in them Christian values since Bible knowledge has unfortunately been scrapped from the education curriculum. The conference theme, based on 1 Samuel 7:3, was '*Returning to the Lord wholeheartedly pays dividends*'. The intention was to create an awareness in the young people of the fact that God hates unfaithfulness. It is common in Africa to find some churchgoers who still get involved in witchcraft, especially when faced with unending challenges: yet God promises victory to those who remain faithful to Him with all their hearts.
- To organize counselling and guiding services for the youth in light of the challenges that they face both in and out of school. They were urged to refrain from using drugs and to be very careful and sensitive when choosing friends.
- To introduce them to 'Christian Sports'; that is to say, playing as if the Lord is there as Guest of Honour. In soccer for example, a Christian player would be supposed to refrain from engaging in actions that lead to being given a yellow or red card. This would be, in some way, in line with Romans 12:2, "*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.*"

- Encouraging the youth to discover and make use of their talents to help the growth of the church, to the Glory of God. The evening talent shows during the conference stole the show.

In a nutshell the conference was a success and we give thanks to the Lord for it. It gave us the opportunity to show the young people that the church is for them and cares for them. A further youth conference will take place in December 2018.

*Bishop Eridard Nsubuga is the Bishop of Luweero Diocese.*

