



**St. Stephen Catholic Parish,
P.O Box 591, Katakwi.
Soroti Catholic Diocese.**

Tel: + 256776-751847; Email: remi22nyg@gmail.com

HISTORY OF ST. STEPHEN CATHOLIC PARISH KATAKWI

ORIGIN OF THE PARISH.

St. Stephen Catholic Parish Katakwi is a born of St. Anne, Usuk Parish which, in turn, was carved from St. Pancras Parish Toroma. Its historical roots can be traced back to 1939 as a sub-zone of Pancras Parish Toroma with very small number of Christians praying purely under trees.

This sub-zone eventually gave birth to Apuuton Primary School whose trees continued to be used as the church until when Fr. Paul Breams, operating from Usuk, together with Fr. Stephen Collins and Fr. Peter Van Heavel constructed the multipurpose hall which is our current church. It was constructed with the collaboration of the Christians themselves who mobilized hardcore, aggregates, sand and other building materials.

His Lordship the Bishop Emeritus Erasmus Wandera, the first Bishop of Soroti Diocese, interested the White Fathers, especially Fr. Stephen Collins who were by then operating at St. Anne Parish Usuk, if they could start a parish in Katakwi Town Council. Fr. Stephen Collins bought the idea with zeal and started reinforcing their (White Fathers') presence in Katakwi in view of creating a parish.

However, it is of great importance to recognize the former chairperson of Usuk Parish, the Late Papa Epel George William, who in collaboration with Fr. Stephen Collins obtained the plot of land where the current parish is found. We also honor, in a special way, Mr. Odui Zakariah who was the first catechist of the parish. He had initially been a catechist of the Sub-zone before it was created into the parish. Mr. Odui is still serving the Lord as an area catechist of Apuuton Sub-Zone.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ST. STEPHEN CATHOLIC PARISH

1. Fr Patrick Mumbi. 1998- 2002 (Zambia)

Among all the Fathers who have served this parish, Fr. Patrick Mumbi deserves great honor and recognition as the true founder and father of St. Stephen Catholic Parish. He is the one who officially inaugurated Apuuton, the out station of St. Anne Usuk, into a parish. With the

permission of his Lordship, Bishop Wandera, he moved from Usuk Parish to the premises of this parish in 1998, a concrete idea to transform it into a parish.

Even though the residence for priests was not yet constructed, Fr. Mumbi courageously decided to come and occupy the behind room of our current church. He stayed in it as he continued to pursue the construction of the residence for fathers and the structures of the technical school, which would later on turn into St. Stephen Senior Secondary School. The first head teacher of St. Stephen Senior Secondary was Mr Ongwali Patrick, who is the current Inspector of Education, Katakwi district.

In 2002 Fr. Patrick Mumbi went to England to pursue studies in Theology. In his absence, the Bishop decided to take control of the parish, and appointed Fr. Obelekek Simon Peter as Parish Priest.

2. Fr. Simon Peter Obelekek (2002- 2003) Katakwi Uganda

Fr. Simon Peter Obelekek served St. Stephen Parish for a year. Unfortunately, these were times of difficulties caused by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebellion of Kony. The situation was very precarious. By this time the White Fathers were running Acumet Parish. Due to LRA occupation of the surroundings of Acumet Parish, access to Acumet was rendered impossible. This was why Fr. Peter Van Den Heavel, on his way back from his home leave in Holland, could not go back to Acumet. He therefore came to Katakwi to join Fr. Simon Peter Obelekek, forming a community of two Priests. Fr. Apuri Moses was by then a major seminarian and was one of the members of the community.

In the year 2003 Fr. Obelekek Simon Peter got an appointment to go and open Magoro Parish. This meant he had to transfer to Magoro, leaving behind Fr. Peter Van Den Heuvel, who was later joined by Fr. Boguslaw Zero and by Fr. Robert Ubemu, a newly ordained priest by then. The team was later joined by Fr. Maheshe Jean Pierre, who would later become the Parish Priest.

3. Fr. Jean Pierre Maheshe (2004- 2009) RDC

Fr Maheshe Jean Pierre served the parish as Parish Priest for a good number of years. At a certain period, Fr. Robert Ubemu was appointed for Justice and Peace studies in Ivory Coast. Fr. Maheshe was joined by Fr. Gerard Niyongabo who initiated the construction of permanent churches in the sub-zones by promoting gradual procurement of iron sheets. Fr. Maheshe Jean Pierre was more of an intellectual. He contributed enormously to the running of St. Stephen Senior Secondary School.

4. Paul Breams (2009- 2011) Belgium

After Fr Maheshe Jean Pierre the parish was run for some time by Fr. Paul Breams as the Parish Priest. Fr. *Omidi* was his popular nickname, for he was a well-known chain smoker. He was devoted to agriculture and rearing of animals. He donated to the parish the cows that the

parish is rearing up to now. Fr. Paul Breams still remains in the mind of the Christians of St. Stephen Catholic Parish.

5. Fr. Ubemu Robert (2011- 2015) RDC

Fr. Ubemu Robert a man of justice and peace. He systematically helped many churches concerning the problems of land. He initiated the project of constructing a new Parish church, which is still ongoing. In 2015 Fr. Ubemu was appointed to handle issues of Justice and Peace in the province of East Africa.

6. Fr. Francis Kangwa. (2015 – 2017) Zambia

Fr. Francis Kangwa became the Parish Priest of St. Stephen Catholic Parish in 2015, after staying in the place for a year. He laid the foundation of the construction of the new church. He initiated the idea of fundraising for the construction of the new church. He systematically transformed the priests' residence by planting flowers and erecting statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the compound and in the church. He contributed to the enrolment of St. Stephen S. S into a government aided school.

7. Fr. Remi Nyengere Parish Priest (2017.....) Malawi.

Fr. Josephat Diuyo Assistant Parish Priest (Ghana)

Katakwi Parish is currently served by two White Fathers priests, Fr. Remi Nyengere, assisted by Fr. Josephat Diuyo.

PRIESTS BORN OF KATAKWI PARISH

1. Fr. Lawrence Akepa (Apolin Sub-Zone)
2. Fr. Obelekek Simon Peter (Angobo Sub-Zone)
3. Fr. Alex Odeke (Angobo Sub-Zone)

SEMINARIANS

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Lawrence Babu Adatu | Order of Saint Augustine O.S.A Prenoviciate |
| 2. Eumu Nicholas | Minor Seminary |
| 3. Okello Ronald | Minor Seminary |
| 4. Opio Raphael | Minor Seminary |

Since its creation the parish has known a good number of catechists. Those who have served at the center zone include: Mr. Odui Zakariah and Mr. Obelekek Simon Peter, the current Head Catechist. Chairpersons who have served the Parish include: Mr Imalingat Faustine Acukum, Mr. Ariko Anselm, Mr. Okojoi Ben and Mr. Euchot Stephen, the newly elected Chairperson.

The Parish celebrates its patron saint's day, St. Stephen the first Martyr of the Church, on 26th December.

PARISH PROJECTS

1. New Modern Church Building.

The Christians of St. Stephen Catholic Parish started the construction of a modern church in 2014. This project is ongoing. So far, we are at the level of the final ring beam with all the four galleries accomplished. At its completion the church will accommodate over 2000 people.



2. Toilet Construction

Attached to the Parish church building project is the construction of a water-borne toilet. The new toilet will be more durable, user-friendly and much more easier to maintain than the traditional pit latrines.



3. Construction of Outstation churches

In addition to these projects we are encouraging our Christians in the outstations to upgrade from grass-thatched churches to permanent iron-roofed churches. The response is very positive. All outstations are constructing their permanent churches. A few of them have already completed; but the majority are still struggling on.

4. Women's League project

These are women who are supported financially by an organization called Marion Foundation. They have cows that keep passing from one to another, after producing a calf. They have their governing constitution. They also have some micro finance program to help the women domestically. They own a plot in Katakwi Town plus a building with rooms that they rent to different tenants.

5. Y.C.A

The Young Christian Association is an association of youth that operates like the Women's league. They too have cows that are distributed to members on a revolving project system.

6. The Youth Association

We organize seminars to empower the youth in self-sustaining projects like chicken, piggery, goat and cattle rearing projects.

PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL RETURNS:

No	Sacrament	Year	Total
1	Infant Baptisms	From 2000 – 2020 April	20,412
2	First Holy Communion	From 2003 - 2019	1,619
3	Adult Baptisms	From 2000 – 2019	1,572
4	Matrimony	From 2003- 2019	920
5	Number of zones	2020	07
6	Number of outstations	2020	26
7	Number of catechists	2020	27

No	Education Institutions	Staff	Pupils/ Students
1	St Stephen Senior Secondary School	27	345
2	Abwanget Primary School	10	763
3	Akoboi Primary School	11	977
4	Dadas Primary School	9	646
5	Okwamumwar Primary School	8	654
6	Alogook Primary School	11	945
7	Apuuton Primary School	24	2217
8	Lalei Primary School	10	706
9	Ocorimongin Primary School	9	596
10	Agurigur Primary School	10	820
11	Kaikamosing Junior Primary School	3	230
12	Angorom Junior Primary School	2	100
13	Abwanget Nursery School	4	54
	Totals	138	9,053

LAY APOSTOLATE MOVEMENTS

1. Catholic Women Associations
2. Women's League
3. YCA (Youth Christian Association)
4. Xaverian's Movement
5. Charismatic Movement
6. Juda Thadeo
7. Men's Association