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Cardinal Otunga's Beatification Process

On Sunday 20th January, Nairobi Archbishop John Cardinal Njue celebrated a special Mass in Kenyatta University to promote the awareness and progress of the beatification process of Servant of God Maurice Michael Cardinal Otunga. We here reproduce the homily Cardinal Njue preached for the occasion.

01/31/2019

HOMILY BY HIS EMINENCE JOHN CARDINAL NJUE

Kenyatta University Catholic
Chaplaincy (20th January 2019)

“ JESUS DID THIS AT THE
BEGINNING OF HIS SIGNS IN CANA
IN GALILEE AND SO REVEALED HIS
GLORY AND HIS DISCIPLES BEGAN
TO BELIEVE IN HIM” (Jn 2:11)

The clergy,

Religious men and women,

The Vice Chancellor and Board of
Management Kenyatta University,

The Christians of Kenyatta University
Catholic Chaplaincy,

Leaders and students from other
Chaplaincies,

Members of the Central Committee for the Beatification and Canonisation process of the Servant of God Maurice Michael Cardinal Otunga: Tumsifu Yesu Kristu.

Today, the second Sunday in Ordinary time, the Church presents to us the first sign of Jesus Christ, the changing of water into wine during the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee. Here Jesus reveals his glory, through mediation of her Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In the first reading from the book of Prophet Isaiah 62:1- 5, there is message of hope to a people destroyed and disfigured by sin. The people of Israel became unfaithful, worshipped idols and broke the commandments. Despite their sin of ingratitude, God loved them. Thus, the analogy is given of New Jerusalem full of splendour. Though unfaithful, weak, corruptible,

betrayed, God sees their beauty and restores them to the truth.

This leads the psalmist to invite all to: Tell among all the peoples the wonders of the Lord. The Lord is good, patient, and compassionate at all times and to all. In the second reading from 1Corinthians 2:1- 11, St. Paul reminds us that we are endowed with different gifts as children of God through Grace of Holy Spirit not by merit. It is not our eloquence, our human strength or capacity to plan and teach that draws people to God. It is the power of the Holy Spirit working in us through the Word of God and sacraments. This means we are mere instruments in the vineyard of the Lord. Let us use our different gifts to build the body of Christ with pride, selfish interests or seeking vain glory.

In the Gospel according to John 2: 1-11, Jesus is presented sharing the

wedding joy with Blessed Virgin Mary her mother, couple of the day, his disciples and invited guests. After sometime Blessed Virgin Mary realizes that they have run out of wine. To avoid embarrassment and shame she quietly informs Jesus.

The discussion between Jesus and Blessed Virgin Mary is silently done without knowledge of the wedded couple, managers of the day or parents. The secret is known by the people who drew water and filled the jars, Jesus Himself and Blessed Virgin Mary. The sign is a fruit of obedience “Do whatever He tells You ..,” and Faith of Blessed Virgin Mary in Jesus her son. The lesson that Jesus meant to teach by changing water into wine is his extraordinary generosity and love towards us. At Cana, Jesus provided wine superior in quality and more abundant than the one that the couple had prepared. This showed God had been generous with

man as recorded in the Old Testament especially with the people of Israel; the Spirit had been indeed active in their midst. However, with the coming of Jesus, the Spirit is given not to just a few chosen people, as in the Old Testament, but to everyone who believes in Christ.

Today we are here recalling the person and life of the Servant of God Maurice Cardinal Otunga, someone who experienced Christ's extraordinary generosity because he accepted Christ as his Lord and God, and was deeply devoted to our Blessed Mother. Not only did he experience the joy of serving the Lord, but also the Lord made his life extraordinarily fruitful.

The Servant of God Cardinal Otunga is remembered for his passion for education and the family unit. He promoted education for the people by opening many schools for our

children. The Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), - whose first Chancellor he was, under the motto: Consecrate them in Truth, is an example. Through education, new wine is served leading to transformation of individual lives and the society.

He worked hard to safeguard and strengthen the family, the domestic Church. He was concerned that our family units be truly African and authentically Christian. He stood firm on matters concerning family life. He supported the pro-life campaign. He affirmed that, “life is sacred and should be respected. He believed true wine that is life giving, saving and directed to eradication of poverty can only be served through good families. Families are primary institutions where faith is taught and morals upheld. He stated “Use of contraceptives encourages sexual immorality, hence moral decay due

to promiscuity and other moral vices.” He told young people to “remember that the Bible teaches that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Abstain from sex. When married adhere to the natural methods of family planning.

Like changing of water into wine was a sign for the disciples, the life of the Servant of God Cardinal Otunga is a “sign” for us, a sign through which God is revealing His glory and His love.

What should our response be to such a “sign”? Just like the disciples who “believed in Christ” the Servant of God Cardinal Otunga is telling us to believe in Christ, to “do whatever he tells you”; to cherish those values that he cherished, and to imitate him in his humility and simplicity. The SOG Cardinal Otunga is inviting us today to grow in purity, to refrain from sexual immorality, to reject the

use of contraceptives and to live in dignity.

To those married, he is asking them to be faithful in marriage. He is asking all of us to love the Church and help her remain a sign and instrument of communion with God and with one another, a beacon of hope to those facing challenges in life.

Let us pray for our country, that new wine may bring us new minds freed from negative ethnicity, nepotism, corruption, greed and irresponsible utterances that make our country breed. May we become one family, one people and one country working hard to ensure plenty that is equitably shared is found within our borders.

Through intercession of SOG may God Bless the Church, our country, Our Families, our youth s and Children, and grant us grace to

joyfully spread the Good News of the Gospel.

Text courtesy of the Office of the Cardinal, Archdiocese of Nairobi.

Other articles on Cardinal Otunga.

The Servant of God, Maurice Cardinal Otunga by Archbishop Anthony Muheria

Birds of a Feather by Fr. Paul Mimbi.

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