

First Mass of St. Josemaria Escriva in Kisubi Parish (Uganda)

As devotion to St. Josemaria spreads around the East African region, more and more people are organising local Masses in his honour especially around his feast day - including the students and teachers at Pearlcrest School of Hospitality and Management in Entebbe (Uganda).

07/21/2018

We had the Mass in honor of St. Josemaria in Kisubi Parish on 30th June 2018, the first of its kind outside Kampala, the capital of Uganda. The main celebrant was Fr. Raphael, the parish priest. It was concelebrated by three other priests: Fr. Severenus Ndugwa, the priest in charge of liturgy in the diocese of Mbarara, Fr. Charles Mundia and Fr. Ivan Mukalazi. We had a deacon as well called Steven Mayanja who will be ordained in two months' time and two seminarians. It was so beautiful.

The Mass started at 10:20 am with the church full of mostly young people. Most of them were students of Kisubi Mapeera Secondary School which is located nearby. The students and teachers of Pearlcrest School of Hospitality and Management were also present as well as a number of ladies from the villages in Garuga, some of whom go to Pearlcrest for recollections. The choir was from

Nalugala, a near by village. They sung beautifully! We also had some parents of our students present.

As is the custom, the offertory was chicken, *matooke*, bread, fruits and many other things which the ladies contributed generously towards. These gifts were presented by some young people after which they got a blessing from the four priests.

Fr. Raphael preached using the history of St. Josemaria and explained to the congregation that we can be holy by doing our ordinary work. He reminded the students that their work is to study. Fr. Raphael also emphasized that God created us to continue his work of creation and we can only do this by doing our work well.

He also emphasized St. Josemaria's love for Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and encouraged us all to do the same because in it is God the

Son truly present: we can talk to Him, touch Him and tell Him all our joys, sorrows and our plans. He also mentioned that we need to leave all our work in the hands of God because He is our Father and He is willing to help us.

At the end of the Mass, we sung the *Salve Regina* and then had a chance to venerate the relic of St. Josemaria. It was quite moving because the majority went forward showing a lot of veneration either bowing or kissing it.