



# The Center for the Secret of Peace News Update

## IN THIS ISSUE

## *Forgiveness: The Secret of Peace* A Documentary Film

The documentary film *Forgiveness: The Secret of Peace* is a compilation of stories of the devastating horrors of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide and the efforts of Father Ubald Rugirangoga, a Catholic priest in Rwanda, to bring healing and reconciliation to his traumatized people.

After his miraculous healing at Lourdes, Father Ubald understood that the only way to true peace was through forgiveness. "Forgiveness is not to forget. It is to start a new life," he says. Unity and reconciliation was the way to helping those whose loved ones had been brutally murdered to begin that new life.

Father Ubald's work is changing the lives of those willing to reach out and begin the process of forgiveness. Father Achille Nzamurambaho, a priest in the Cyangugu Diocese of Rwanda, puts it this way, "Forgiveness is actually a journey... a journey one takes for the person who hurt them. It is accepting to suffer on behalf of someone else so you can come together with the one who hurt you, or the one you hurt, and then together, you are freed from the heavy burdens you carry."

Archbishop Thadde Ntuhinyurwa was Father Ubald's bishop during the genocide. He

reminds us that "Forgiveness, for a Christian, is like food from heaven which that Christian must also share by forgiving others."

In 1998, Father Ubald began the Mushaka Program to bring together the victims and their perpetrators to teach forgiveness as the secret of peace. Through classroom teaching, healing Masses, and asking for pardon, forgiving and healing can begin. More than three hundred people have graduated from the Mushaka Program and are reconciling with their perpetrators. Other Roman Catholic dioceses are asking for help to implement the program in their areas.

Building the *Center for the Secret of Peace* is a goal to provide a place for the thousands of pilgrims who come to Father's center for healing. In 2010, he purchased 77 acres overlooking peaceful Lake Kivu in his diocese of Cyangugu. The center will house an amphitheater for healing services, a perpetual adoration chapel for 600, a convent, a home for retired priests, and other facilities designed to accommodate the many visitors.

If you would like to learn more or make a donation, please go to:

[www.secretofpeace.com](http://www.secretofpeace.com)  
or [www.frubald.com](http://www.frubald.com)



### Who is Father Ubald Rugirangoga?

Read more about Father Ubald's life and mission, on [Page 2](#).



### 2017 Matching Grant Announced

For more information on how you can help us build an Adoration Chapel at the Center for the Secret of Peace, see [Page 3](#).

### Pilgrimage to Rwanda

To find out about joining a pilgrimage to The Center of the Secret of Peace, see [Page 4](#).

## Who is Father Ubald Rugirangoga?

Father Ubald Rugirangoga is a Roman Catholic priest in Rwanda in Central Africa. He works steadfastly to help people around the world understand that forgiveness is a pathway to reconciliation and the secret of peace.

On April 6, 1994, a plane carrying Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana was shot down, killing all aboard. Within an hour, the Presidential Guard, together with members of the Rwandan armed forces and Hutu militia groups began slaughtering Tutsis. This attack had been planned for months. Average citizens who were members of the Hutu tribe joined forces with the militia and went door-to-door, killing their friends, neighbors, and relatives simply because they were Tutsi.

Before the genocide, Father Ubald was a young priest in a thriving rural Catholic parish with thousands of faithful of all ages, Hutu and Tutsi alike. As the murderous rampage began, Father Ubald offered 45,000 of his parishioners and others trying to escape, sanctuary on his church grounds. After being chased from his parish by his Hutu parishioners who wanted to kill their Tutsi neighbors, Father Ubald was forced to flee to his bishop's home. Within three days, all 45,000 of his parishioners were killed.

Within just three months, approximately one million Tutsis were murdered, resulting in what is now known as the Rwandan Genocide against the Tutsi people. Among the dead were 80 members of Father Ubald's family.



Upon hearing the news of the slaughter of his parishioners and family members, Father Ubald heard in prayer the Lord tell him to escape so that he could one day return and bring healing to his people. He miraculously escaped to the Congo and then to Lourdes where he experienced the healing needed to help not only himself, but his countrymen as well.

Father Ubald has been preaching forgiveness as the secret of peace since 1995. Hundreds of thousands attend his healing services and Masses in his country. In 2006, he began the Mushaka Unity and Reconciliation Program to teach both victims and perpetrators of the genocide how to begin the journey of forgiveness and reconciliation.

As part of Father Ubald's own forgiveness of the man who killed his mother, Father paid the school tuition of the man's two children,

while he served his time in prison for his role in the genocide. Now Straton, having served his time, is working with Father Ubald to help other perpetrators ask for pardon and reconcile with the families of their victims of the genocide.

From the depths of unspeakable pain and sorrow, through intense prayer, struggle and courage, Father learned that forgiveness of the perpetrators of the genocide was the only way to healing, freedom, and peace among his devastated countrymen.

### TO FIND OUT MORE

You'll find more information on Father Ubald's mission, healing works and travel schedule on the web at: [www.frubald.com](http://www.frubald.com)

OR ON FACEBOOK  
@ubald.rugirangoga



### What Viewers are Saying About the Documentary...

*This is a very compelling story of Father Ubald, and his family and parishioners during the genocide. Father is now leading his own people and many others throughout the world to healing, through forgiveness to peace. This film is a masterpiece. I think it will win awards and really help Father Ubald!*

Bishop David Ricken, Diocese of Green Bay

*This documentary is a beautiful summary of the massive effort Father Ubald has championed in a country in which every citizen is in desperate need of reconciliation and forgiveness. Having traveled to Rwanda and witnessed his ministry firsthand, the movie portrays, by means of its outstanding cinematography and storytelling, the sad reality of a genocide about which most Americans are still unaware, while conveying the truth that pertains to all, that the forgiveness our Lord makes possible with His assistance, alone, will bring us the peace for which our hearts long.*

Father Peter Mangum Shreveport, LA

*What most astounded me about this film was the ability of these people, whose immediate families had been brutally slaughtered, to come to forgiveness and reconciliation after such devastating evil had pierced their very being. How often have we lost our tempers over the small annoyances and frustrations of living? Against how many people do we hold grudges, or withhold love because they offended us? Yet these victims, whose lives have been unbearably shattered, can find unwavering courage within their souls to forgive. Their stories show us how to begin that journey.*

Joyce Sawczuk, Jackson, WY

## 2017 Matching Grant to Help Build Adoration Chapel



One of the goals for the Center of Peace includes the building of a Perpetual Adoration Chapel with seating for 600 people. In an effort to raise funds toward this goal, a private individual donor has generously created a Matching Grant which is effective through **December 31, 2017**. Donations will be matched of up to \$100,000.

If you would like to help us meet this goal, you can make donations on line at [www.frubald.com](http://www.frubald.com) or by check payable to:

Center of Peace  
c/o Katsey Long  
P.O. Box 4992  
Jackson, WY 83001

## Who are the Missionaries of Peace?

The Missionaries of Peace of Christ the King (APAX) are an order of nuns, brothers and lay people dedicated to serving the traumatized victims of the genocide. Founded and directed by Sister Donata Uwimanimpaye in 2001, the order works to promote the spiritual, social, and technological welfare of the people, particularly in Rwanda and generally in Africa. They work to prevent conflict through mediation workshops and to restore the social links destroyed by the violence of the genocide.

In 1999, Sr. Donata earned her Master's Degree in Peace Psychology and Theology from Fribourg University in Switzerland. The following year, she received her PhD in Peace Psychology and Education also from Fribourg University. In 2010, she met with Father Ubald to discuss their common goal of building and teaching peace in Rwanda. Their close collaboration brought him to become the Spiritual Director of APAX with permission from his bishop.

As the order has developed and formalized its mission, Father Ubald and Sister Donata consider themselves co-founders of the Missionaries of Peace of Christ the King. Members of the order often travel with Father Ubald and participate in his healing and evangelization services to teach Christian listening, love, unity, pardon and reconciliation.

Their goals for the next five years include construction of a training center, a Pilgrim's house and Center for Peace Education and Spirituality in Kibeho, education and pastoral

activities, and to begin partnerships with other communities engaged in peacemaking.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more, please go to the APAX website or email: [apaxrwanda@yahoo.fr](mailto:apaxrwanda@yahoo.fr)

### Personal Testimony

*The Missionaries of Peace are the kindest people I have ever met. Being a missionary is not an easy way of life, but they all work together and have such joy in their hearts. In each of them, you can see Jesus shining through. Their love of Christ is very evident and they are proud of their love. They pray for others and worship God in their chapel first thing in the morning and in the evenings, pray before/after every meal, they go to mass daily, and spend many hours in between praying.*

*The sisters and brothers have the utmost respect and compassion for others. They care for the orphaned children, all of the students, and the members of their community. The Brothers and Sisters model and teach children how to care for one another. There are many students with special needs who have full inclusion. The children help one another push wheelchairs, administer eye drops, carrying books for others, etc. Each member of the Missionaries of Peace works together to help make their community a better place. On Saturdays and*

*Sundays, the missionaries spend time helping members of their community: bringing clothes and food to the poor, visiting the sick, and praying with everyone they come across.*

*The fellowship of the Missionaries of Peace is contagious and makes others joyful. While I was visiting, a 12-year-old student chose to be baptized as a Catholic. His family was a different faith, but the Missionaries of Peace made such an impression on him that he wanted to become a member of the church. It was his desire to become Catholic, so that when he is older he can join the Missionaries of Peace as a brother.*

*The Brothers and Sisters do not have much (teacher salaries are around \$50 a month!), but they would sell the shirt off of their back to keep you warm. Their main desire is to make sure others are happy. The Missionaries of Peace are true servants of Jesus, who I adore dearly.*

Rachel, Nashville, TN  
Volunteer with the Missionaries of Peace



# A Visit to the Center for the Secret of Peace

*On a sparkling morning last June, my family and I bumped and jostled along in a SUV as Father Ubald drove us on a dirt road toward the Center for the Secret of Peace. He laughed and said, "That is African massage"! The beautiful Rwandan people in their bright colors walked alongside, waving. We were on our way to the Healing Mass that is held on the third Sunday of each month.*

*I was pinching myself with disbelief that I was actually in Africa, and at last going to the Center for the Secret of Peace that I had heard so much about. The Center for the Secret of Peace sits on 75 acres of stunning lakeside property that overlook distant hazy blue mountains, and lush green islands that dot Lake Kivu. Large grassy terraces slope down to the water. There are pathways to pray the Rosary, including the Seven Sorrows. From a statue of Our Lady of Kibeho, near the middle of the shoreline, a substantial cement stairway leads back up the hill, via Stations of the Cross to a statue of Jesus the Divine Mercy. It's a place for pilgrimage, and an outdoor cathedral.*

*I wasn't sure what a three hour plus Mass would be like, but it passed quickly. We sat under an outdoor shelter near the temporary altar. Soon, the stone foundation for the new church will be laid there. The weather was perfect, and the music was joyful and contagious. My niece gathered children, who climbed into our laps. A teenage girl whispered a translation of the readings and homily into my ear. Then, after Communion, we were pulled out of our seats to dance! It was a celebration, and Father Ubald was at his finest: a most joyful celebrant. A toddler in a pink hoodie reached for my hands, and we jumped up and down and swung around in a circle. This is how it feels to know that Jesus is alive and active in our lives!*



*Later, after the Procession of the Holy Eucharist, during which I envision Jesus moving through the crowds, testimonies in English, French and Kinyarwanda were shared. Although we could not understand all that was spoken, it was obvious families and individuals were feeling the love and mercy of our Lord. As we left reluctantly for the drive to the airport, I thought it was the truest and most joyful celebration of the Mass that I have ever experienced.*

Ellen, Jackson, WY



## Join us on a Pilgrimage to Rwanda

You are invited to join us for a time of spiritual, personal and cultural enrichment on an eleven-day Pilgrimage to Rwanda, June 7-18, 2018.

Pilgrimage highlights include:

- Kigali to visit the Genocide Memorial and other sites
- Butare, where we will spend time with the Missionaries of Peace and other historical venues
- Cyangugu, to visit the Center for the Secret of Peace and attend a Mass with healing prayer
- Kibeho, the site of apparitions of the Blessed Mother

The pilgrimage price is \$2550.00 per person/double occupancy. (Airfare NOT included.)

To learn more about this exceptional opportunity, contact Monique Stevens at 847-707-6129 or at [frubaldchicago@hotmail.com](mailto:frubaldchicago@hotmail.com).



THE CENTER FOR THE  
**SECRET of PEACE**  
IBANGA RY' AMAHORO • RUSIZI, RWANDA

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