



THE CENTER FOR THE  
**SECRET of PEACE**  
MINISTRIES

## Message from the Executive Director

*Betsy Ackerson, Ph.D.*



And so we begin...

Lent starts today—Ash Wednesday. So often defined as a penitential season, Lent also is a season of anticipation. Together we set out on a 40-day journey of letting go and looking forward. With great hope we look forward to the new life that comes at the Easter Resurrection.

The three traditional Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving give us the opportunity to imitate Jesus' example during his 40-days of fasting in the desert and reject the world, the flesh and the devil.

**Prayer** ushers in the Kingdom of God and disables the power of the devil. When we spend time in prayer we invite the mighty power of Jesus to bring healing to the sick, freedom to captives, strength to the weak, and light to the dark places.

**Fasting** defeats the power of the flesh. By denying the body we give priority to the soul. We give up something we value and replace it with something of even greater value—the perfect love of God.

**Almsgiving** helps restore a right order of our worldly treasures as all coming from God, the giver of all good gifts. Sharing the gifts God has given us—our treasure, our time, our talent—helps us live more fully the reality that God is the source of all we have. He is our Provider, Jehovah-Jireh.

Each act of penance we offer or sacrifice we make, is a letting go of sorts that opens us to receive more of the healing love of God.

A Blessed Lent to each of you!

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## Remembering Fr. Ubald

January 7, 2023 marked the two-year anniversary of Fr. Ubald's death. The Center for the Secret of Peace hosted a Memorial Week to commemorate the life and ministry of Fr. Ubald. During the week, there were teachings and testimonies about the life and ministry of Fr. Ubald. Each day speakers focused on a different theme:

Fr. Ubald a Priest  
Fr. Ubald, a Man of Prayer  
Fr. Ubald, a Mediator  
Fr. Ubald a Missionary



*Seminar participants*



*Seminar participants*

The Memorial Week culminated in a Memorial Mass with Bishop Edouard Sinayobye of the Cyangugu Diocese presiding. Concelebrating the Mass was Emeritus Archbishop Thaddeus Ntihinyurwa, and numerous priests from across Rwanda.



*Bishop Sinayobye leads the memorial ceremonies*

"Father Ubald had a human nature but that human nature was illuminated by the light of the gospel. This made him always strive to accept people's sorrows and listen to them. Since he passed away, here in the Diocese, we often receive the testimony of many Christians here in Rwanda and elsewhere, we understand very well how Father Ubald always received the pain of people of all kinds and took time to listen to them and advise them. A priest characterised by humility and modesty.

Father Ubald showed us that example of humility so that we can reach those who suffer, with a humble heart, a heart of compassion, a heart that reminds us of the heart of Jesus Christ: a Christian, especially a priest who has compassion for people. A person who has a big heart that could contain everyone."

*-Bishop Edouard Sinayobye*

## Remembering Fr. Ubald (continued)

Following the Memorial Mass, several people gave remarks, including Fr. Ubald's brother Reverien Rugwizango, and the Center for the Secret of Peace Executive Director in Rwanda, Mireille Umwali. We hope you enjoy reading excerpts of their remarks.

### *Excerpts of remarks by Reverien Rugwizango, brother of Fr. Ubald*

"After completing his Seminary studies he told me, 'My father was killed because of hatred; and we fled the country because of hatred; I am going to return to Rwanda and serve as a priest, so that I can teach love to Rwandans.'.....

"Just before returning from exile, he called me and told me that he was going to leave the European good life and come back to Rwanda to teach kindness and love, asking for and giving forgiveness, as a way of leading to real reconciliation....

"As Christians we believe that the power of death is not above the power of God's love for us. After this life there is another life which is better. So, Father Ubald is now our spokesperson with God: The family has a spokesperson so that what he used to do for it physically and spiritually may continue. Christians and the Church which he loved, have a priest next to God, who intercedes for us so that we can keep the way of love. Those who perpetrated genocide have a spokesperson next to God who helps them to ask forgiveness from their victims. Survivors also have got a spokesperson next to God who helps them to forgive those who killed their families. Thus, may our spokesperson continue to rest in peace."

### *Excerpts of remarks by Mireille Umwali, Executive Director of the Center for the Secret of Peace in Rwanda*

"Let's together continue the good legacy left by Fr. Ubald Rugirangoga, to go on working for peace filled with compassion and mercy since they free us, as he used to say: 'Forgiveness makes you free'.

:"Let us work together. And, as our country is called 'a country of a thousand hills,' let us build another thousand hills with the Secret of Peace, so Rwandans and foreigners alike can find a place of rest.

"Let us together make it possible to expand our mission of reconciliation and the number of those who minister and are involved in the mission of restoring relationships among Rwandans, so that Rwanda can be the heart of peace.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Mt 5: 9).

## Join us this Lent

We at the Center for the Secret of Peace Ministries, invite you to join us this lent as together we usher in the Easter message of forgiveness and peace in our lives, our families, our churches, our communities.

### PRAYER

Ask for Fr. Ubald's powerful intercession. Fr. Ubald prayed for so many hundreds of thousands of people while he lived life with us. We still ask for his prayers for those in need as he lives life eternally:

### For private use

*Heavenly Father we give you thanks for your servant and priest Fr. Ubald Rugirangoga, whose life and ministry manifested the miraculous power of Your Divine Mercy. Facing unspeakable pain and sufferings, he entrusted himself to You through intense prayer and total surrender. In your infinite goodness, you sent Fr. Ubald to his beloved Rwanda and to the world as a joyful apostle of peace and reconciliation, preaching forgiveness and healing in the name of Jesus. His testimony, fueled by his love for the Eucharistic Presence and his filial devotion to the Blessed Mother, brought a multitude of souls to the Church and to a living and loving relationship with You in the Holy Spirit.*

*If it be Your will, O God, glorify Your servant Fr. Ubald and make known his holiness by granting the favor I now ask through his prayerful intercession:  
(Mention your request.)*

*Submit your testimonies of healing on our website [secretofpeace.org](http://secretofpeace.org)*

### ALMSGIVING

**Special Lenten challenge: 40 days--\$40,000 dollars.**

To enable us to spread Fr. Ubald's message of forgiveness and reconciliation as the secret to peace and healing. See next page for more information.

### FASTING

As we fast from certain food, drink, or a bad habit, we ask God to fill the void and our craving with His forgiveness, hope, and love. This way, we become ambassadors of healing and peace to ourselves, our families, friends, associates, churches, and communities.





## Please support our LENTEN CHALLENGE

### 40 DAYS—\$40,000

We need to upgrade and expand our communications and informational materials. This helps us lay the foundation for the first steps in the cause for canonization of Fr. Ubald.

"I am amazed and proud of how many Americans speak of him. I met different people including a bishop, priests, youth, families and other people from different parishes in that country who testified how he helped them by showing them God's heart who accepts them as they are and gave them direction and guidance, the light of life. He got all that from the gospel."

*-Bishop Edouard Sinayobye*

**Mail checks to:**

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**Jackson, WY 83001**



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Please direct all inquiries to Betsy Ackerson, Executive Director,  
ackerson@secretofpeace.org

## May/June 2024 RWANDA PILGRIMAGE (rescheduled from May 2023)



### Rwanda & The Center for the Secret of Peace

Join us on our inaugural pilgrimage to Rwanda, Fr. Ubald's beloved homeland, the "Land of a Thousand Hills" in the heart of Africa. On this 10-day Pilgrimage to Rwanda we will visit the Center for the Secret of Peace campus; pray at Fr. Ubald's gravesite; tour the 75-acre campus and see Fr .Ubald's private rooms. We also will visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Kibeho, the only approved Marian apparition in Africa; the Genocide Memorial in Kigali, and more.

Additional details coming soon.

