



## **Bvumbwe Parish in Malawi celebrates 25 years**

**BVUMBWE, Malawi** - On 27<sup>th</sup> October 2024, the Catholic faithful gathered in celebration of the Silver Jubilee of Uganda Martyrs Parish in Bvumbwe, Blantyre Archdiocese. The faithful witnessed the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation of more than 163 Christians. It was also the celebration of the Montfort Missionaries who have ministered this parish for the past 25 years. The Holy Mass was presided over by His Grace Archbishop Thomas Luke MSUSA, SMM of Blantyre Archdiocese.

The Eucharistic celebration started at 9am local time and the joy of the parishioners was seen in their active participation during the Mass and presentation of traditional dances immediately after. In his homily, Archbishop MSUSA thanked the past missionaries and all the bishops who greatly contributed towards the development of the faith of the parishioners that is indicated by the growth of the Catholic faithful from around 14,000 in 1999 to 30,000 as the parish celebrates Silver Jubilee. His special message to Christians was to invite all of them to know that this parish is theirs and which calls them to love, minister and protect their parish.

The celebration was an occasion to thank God for His love and great work that has been done in the parish. On behalf of the Bvumbwe Catholic faithful, Mr. John MIKOLASI, the laity chair of the parish, thanked God for what He has done for this parish by recalling the word of the Blessed Virgin Mary, "For the Almighty One has done great things for me; holy is his Name" Luke 1:49. Furthermore, he invited the Montfort Missionaries to continue serving the Christians as they have been doing through their commitment.

In his speech, Fr. Petro CHILUMPHA, SMM, the parish priest, thanked Archbishop MSUSA for administering the sacrament of Confirmation of the candidates. He also thanked the faithful for the spirit of togetherness that was experienced among them during the preparation for the Silver Jubilee celebration and called on them to continue with the same spirit.

Bvumbwe Catholic Church was designated a parish on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1999. Before this time, it was an outstation of Immaculate Conception Parish Thunga, which was under the Holy Spirit Fathers (Spiritans). Thanks to Father James FOLLEY, Spiritan and John BECKTOLD, SMM who worked together for Bvumbwe parish to be established. Since then, Montfort Missionaries have been in charge of this Parish until now.

For the past 25 years, Bvumbwe Parish has produced many priests and religious including Fr. Joseph KUDZALA, SMM. The parish has seven outstations, namely Uganda Martyrs, Bvumbwe; St. Joseph, Nyambalo; St. Mary's, Machemba; St. Cecelia, Nthikira; St. John's, Chawe, St. John's, William and St. Montfort, Nyaka. Currently, the parish has 62 small christian communities.

*Fr. Petro CHILUPHA, SMM*