



**SPEECH BY THE VERY REV. MSGR. DR. PHILIP LOKEL  
PHD – CHAPLAIN - CATHOLIC LAWYERS SOCIETY  
INTERNATIONAL AT THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH  
OF THE SOCIETY’S ACTIVITIES - APRIL 29, 2023 AT  
ST AUGUSTINE’S INSTITUTE, NSAMBYA, KAMPALA,  
UGANDA - EAST AFRICA.**

Your Excellency, Jessica Alupo, the Vice President of the Republic of Uganda and our Chief Guest,

My lord. The Hon. Justice Alfonse Chigamoy Owiny – Dollo- The Hon. The Chief Justice of Uganda,

The Rt. Hon. Amama Mbabazi Senior Counsel – Prime Minister Emeritus of the Republic of Uganda,

My Lords, The Hon Justices and Judges of the Courts of Judicature, The Hon. Members of Parliament,

My Lord, the Rt. Rev. Giuseppe Filippi MCCJ, our Patron and main celebrant,

Members of the clergy,

The Catholic Lawyers Society Board, Management, Administration and staff,

Everyone in his or her respective honour,

Ladies and gentlemen.



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My name is PHILIP LOKEL. I come from Kotido Catholic diocese in Karamoja region where I work as Vicar General.

The designation 'Vicar General' as you probably know already simply means a priest who works hand in hand with the bishop in the general administration of the diocese, someone usually charged with general duties, probably the equivalent of minister without portfolio or of general duties in government setting!

In 2020, the bishop of Kotido diocese the Rt. Rev. Giuseppe Filippi, now bishop emeritus of the same diocese appointed me 'Chaplain' of the Catholic Lawyers Society International (CLASI) with the specific responsibility of sharing the Word of God with its members, as well as attending to their spiritual needs. Ever since then I have been trying to figure out how best to do just that.

However, the onset of Covid-19 did not help things. All I could do was to occasionally share some reflection of the Word of God by posting my reflections and wishes on the society's page with telegram. This was the case especially at Easter and Christmas.



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Now that Covid-19 is no longer a great threat, I hope to do more. I will try to find time to sit with the executive of CLASI to see what is feasible in the present circumstances. But certainly, that notwithstanding, I am more than willing to share the Word of God with all the members, to contribute to their education in the faith, and to be available for spiritual direction and counselling among other things.

When Our Lord was tempted in the desert, the devil asked him to change stones into bread. The Lord answered him: ‘Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ We too often want to change stones into bread: we want to do good things for ourselves and for our society.

We want justice done but many times the challenges we face are as hard as stone! We are tempted to give up. But this text of Scripture reminds us not to give up. It exhorts us instead to nourish ourselves with the Word of God in order to derive the necessary strength to go on working. Let us therefore love the Word of God; let us treasure it in our lives. Thankfully it is readily available to us in the Bible and in our places of worship where it is proclaimed to us.



Last but not least, I want to commend the President of the Society for exemplary leadership throughout the trying time of Covid-19. Together with his executive I know he has been holding meetings and trying to reach out to all the members. In this way the members have all along been kept abreast with the activities of CLASI.

I know that he has been very instrumental in handling issues of land in Kotido diocese and for that we from Kotido are very grateful. Currently we have two cases in court and Counsel Severino is following them with keen interest. There are other plans too in the offing not just for Kotido but for Karamoja as a whole and he is at the forefront of such plans. Mr. President of CLASI we thank you for your commitment to the cause of CLASI.

Thank you all for listening to me and I wish you the very best in your endeavors!

Rev. Fr. Philip Lokel, CHAPLAIN



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