

Zambia: 'Witchfinding Bad for Development'

By Julius Phiri, 18 August 2013

Government has said it has observed that priests are still faced with the challenge of curbing witch finding in most places, especially in rural areas.

Energy Deputy Minister Charles Zulu said it was disheartening that most of the witch finders were fond of stealing domestic animals such as cows, goats, chickens and other things from people suspected to be found in the wrong.

*Mr Zulu, who is Luangeni Member of Parliament (MP), said **during the 75 years golden jubilee of Msipadzi Parish in Chipata on Saturday** that when the priests tried to educate and fight against injustice they were being insulted as well as given wrong names by people.*

"Some of these misunderstandings are still present in our midst up to now. For instance, the priests in this parish are still wrestling with witch finders (Ng'angas) who are stealing cows, goats, chickens and other things, the only true wealth of the people around," he said.

Mr Zulu said despite the challenges, the priests strived in their work of evangelisation which he said was going on well in the Catholic Church.

He was proud that parishes such as Msipadzi, was a proud church which was taking care of about 25,000 souls.

Mr Zulu said Msipadzi Parish which covered Luangeni and Chipata constituencies had become a source of development in the area.

He said structures had been built adding that the parish boasted of 11 outstations.

Mr Zulu said the Government of President Michael Sata was appreciating the works that the church was carrying out in Zambia.

The Catholic Church was a reliable partner in developmental issues.

"We can safely say that the people of this church are the people of the State.

I honour you for your unwavering provision of not only spiritual needs but also physical, social and moral needs," Mr Zulu said.

He urged the church to always remind the Government when things were not going the right way for the sake of national building.

Chipata Catholic Diocese Auxiliary Bishop Benjamin Phiri appealed to Government to be considerate in working on the crop marketing issue, the road networks and enforce security at Msipadzi Parish.

Bishop Phiri said he was happy that the parish had grown in the Christianity faith.

He challenged Christians not to involve themselves in witch finding, saying the trend was retrogressive in a Christian nation.

Paramount Chief Mpezeni of the Ngoni people who was represented by his Induna Lupoko said he was grateful to the works of the church.

Earlier, Parish Priest Father Peter Azele Banda hailed Mr Zulu and other well-wishers for the various donations to the parish.

The celebration mass was attended by Chief Chinyaku, Catholic nuns, priests, brothers and several other Christians.