

05 January 2026

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV  
Apostolic Palace  
00120 Vatican City  
VATICAN

Through:  
His Excellency Archbishop Angelo Accattino  
Apostolic Nuncio to the United Republic of Tanzania  
Apostolic Nunciature  
Msasani Peninsula  
P.O. Box 9121  
Dar es Salaam  
United Republic of Tanzania

*Received  
05/01/2025*

**FORMAL CANONICAL PETITION TO THE HOLY FATHER  
SUBMITTED THROUGH THE APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO TANZANIA**

Most Holy Father,

We, MACKDEO SHILINDE and LUCY MICHAEL, together with our fellow Catholic faithful numbering more than one hundred and twenty (120), humbly and respectfully submit this **FORMAL CANONICAL PETITION** directly to Your Holiness, in accordance with canon 212 §§2–3 of the Code of Canon Law, in full ecclesial communion with the Church, and transmitted through the Apostolic Nuncio as required by canonical order.

This petition is submitted jointly by us as principal petitioners and spokespersons, together with more than one hundred and twenty (120), Catholic faithful whose names, signatures, and parish affiliations are attached hereto as Annex I, forming an integral and inseparable part of this petition.

We are moved not by hostility, rebellion, or political interest, but by love for the Church, fidelity to Sacred Scripture, Apostolic Tradition, the Magisterium of the Church, obedience to Canon Law, and grave pastoral concern for ecclesial integrity, unity, credibility, and the dignity of the Christian faithful in Tanzania.

## **I. PETITION CONCERNING FR. CHARLES KITIMA**

Most Holy Father,

The first subject of this petition concerns Fr. Charles Kitima, Secretary General of the Tanzania Episcopal Conference.

For a prolonged period, numerous Catholic faithful have raised serious, persistent, and well-founded concerns regarding Fr. Kitima's public conduct, political statements, associations, and perceived partisan alignment with the political party CHADEMA. In the considered judgment of many faithful, this conduct causes scandal, compromises the Church's obligation to political neutrality, and risks presenting the Church as an active participant in partisan political contestation.

Sacred Scripture teaches:

"No one can serve two masters." (Matthew 6:24)

Pope Benedict XVI solemnly reaffirmed:

"The Church does not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible." (Deus Caritas Est, no. 28)

The Catholic faithful acted lawfully and peacefully by submitting their concerns to the Apostolic Nunciature, exercising their right and duty under canon 212 §§2–3, which affirms that the faithful have the right and at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their views on matters pertaining to the good of the Church.

We humbly request Your Holiness to receive, examine, and discern these concerns regarding Fr. Charles Kitima, for the sake of ecclesial credibility, unity, pastoral prudence, and the Church's prophetic witness in society.

## **II. CANONICAL COMPLAINT AGAINST ARCHBISHOP JUDE THADDEUS RUWA'ICHI**

Most Holy Father,

The second and more grave subject of this petition is a FORMAL CANONICAL COMPLAINT addressed to Your Holiness against Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Ruwa'ichi, Archbishop of Dar es Salaam.

Following the lawful submission of concerns regarding Fr. Charles Kitima, His Grace, during a public homily delivered within a liturgical celebration, used language that demeaned, mocked, ridiculed, and publicly humiliated Catholic faithful who had written to the Apostolic Nunciature.

It is widely reported and uncontested that His Grace referred to such faithful using expressions including "malofa," "wana njaa," and "wapumbavu," and further questioned their Catholic identity, portraying them as enemies or mercenaries acting against the Church.

Sacred Scripture warns:

"Whoever says to his brother, 'You fool,' shall be liable to the fire of Gehenna." (Matthew 5:22)

"Let no corrupt speech come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up." (Ephesians 4:29)

Canon Law explicitly provides:

Canon 220 – Protection of dignity and good reputation.

Canon 386 §2 – Obligation of bishops to guard against abuses in preaching.

Canon 387 – Duty of bishops to be models of charity, humility, and moderation.

Canon 392 §2 – Obligation to prevent abuses in ecclesiastical discipline.

Pope Francis teaches:

"Pastors are not judges who condemn, but fathers who accompany." (Evangelii Gaudium, no. 44)

Pope Saint John Paul II reminds the Church:

"Authority in the Church must always be exercised as service, never as domination."

The public humiliation of faithful Catholics from the pulpit has caused grave scandal, fear, division, and a chilling effect on the legitimate exercise of ecclesial rights.

### **III. APOSTOLIC TRADITION AND ECCLESIAL PRECEDENT**

From apostolic times, respectful correction has been permitted within the Church. Saint Paul openly corrected Saint Peter when the truth of the Gospel and the unity of the Church were at stake:

"I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned." (Galatians 2:11)

Saint Gregory the Great taught:

"Pastors should be the first to humble themselves, lest by pride they wound the flock."

Thus, this petition is not rebellion but an act of fidelity to apostolic tradition, ecclesial communion, and evangelical truth.

### **IV. HUMBLE PETITION TO THE HOLY FATHER**

Most Holy Father,

We, MACKDEO SHILINDE and LUCY MICHAEL, together with our fellow Catholic faithful, humbly petition that:

1. Your Holiness take cognizance of this petition in its entirety;
2. The concerns regarding Fr. Charles Kitima be examined for ecclesial neutrality, unity, and credibility;
3. The conduct of Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Ruwa'ichi be addressed in a manner that

safeguards the dignity of the faithful and restores pastoral charity;  
4. The unity, peace, and moral credibility of the Catholic Church in Tanzania be preserved.

This petition is submitted in fidelity to the Church, obedience to Canon Law, and confidence in Your Holiness as the Supreme Pastor and visible principle of unity.

Entrusting this petition to your paternal care, and commanding the Church in Tanzania to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, we remain,

Your Holiness' obedient children in Christ,



MACKDEO SHILINDE

0746 562 950



LUCY PETER

0688 636 296

(On behalf of themselves and more than fifty Catholic faithful)

#### ATTESTATION OF COLLECTIVE SUPPORT

We, MACKDEO SHILINDE and LUCY MICHAEL, solemnly attest that this petition is submitted with the express consent and support of more than One hundred and twenty (120) Catholic faithful whose names, signatures, and parish affiliations are attached as Annex I.

Place: Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania

Date:

Signatures:

