

## **EXCLUSIVE: Married Catholic priest's story - Emmanuel Milingo**

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Owen Miyanza, AfricaNews reporter in Lusaka, Zambia

**"I am enjoying marriage life," reveals excommunicated Roman Catholic Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo of southern African country of Zambia. In this exclusive with our network, Milingo has also disclosed how he sneaked from the Vatican where he was heavily guarded to join his wife in Korea.**

The Zambian-born Catholic Archbishop then at the Vatican astonished the world in 2005 at the age of 76 when he broke the celibacy law and married a Korean woman, Dr. Maria Sung linked to Reverend Moon.

Our correspondent caught up with Milingo at the House of the Unification Church whose overseer is Reverend Moon, seven kilometres from the capital's central district where he resides with his wife when in Zambia. It's a complete home set up conducive for the couple.

"I am so happy because I have found a way in which I can live a satisfying and fulfilling life," Archbishop Milingo explained in a two-hour interview.

The Archbishop says he took a long time reflecting and thinking on the celibacy law.

"I have been reading the history of the Catholic Church and see on how they came to the conclusion to impose celibacy on the priests," he says "After this I found out that there is a lot of injustice that has been committed by the Catholic Church by imposing the celibacy on the priesthood."

### **Marriage**



Indeed one would wonder why a man after seven decades will think of marrying. The Pope then - John Paul II - was at pains to let Milingo go saying he was too old to marry. This was after Archbishop Milingo was recalled to the Vatican after his marriage ceremony in the United States.

But the archbishop says marriage was more than what many people think about it. He says he came to learn that he could still serve God as an archbishop even though he was married.

“It’s define, marriage is divine... it is not just a question of sexuality as the people do that Milingo at 70 years and now at 80 what will sexuality mean to him and so on?” Archbishop Milingo observes and adds, “But it’s above that when God made that (marriage) he didn’t even mention sex. He (God) said it’s not good for man to live alone let make him a partner. He didn’t only see sex but there is a lot that he put in a woman, he has put in a man and when put together there is a fulfilment of humanity.”

Archbishop Milingo says by marrying he has learnt a lot and was slowly getting out all the prejudice he had about women. This he says is very important to his life. The Archbishop observes that priests normally look down upon the women.

“I have found out that as you live with a woman you really have to be serious about what she is thinking because she too has experience in life,” says Archbishop Milingo who has now been married for about five years. “The holes of pride have been cut away from me and now I am sure I am going to Paradise.”

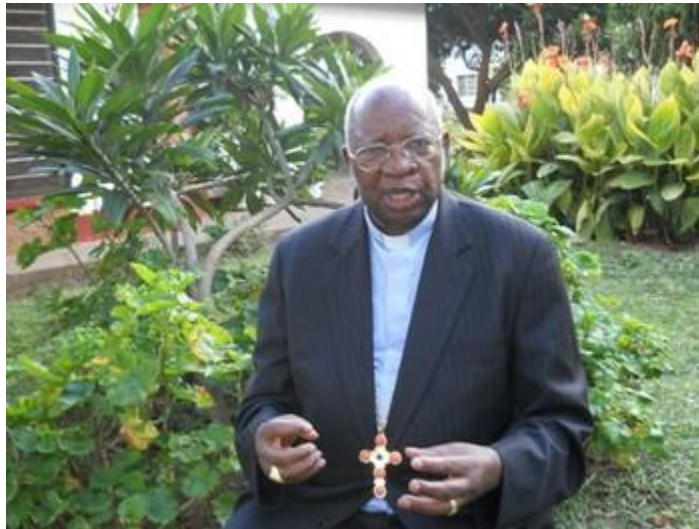
“I was recalled by the Vatican because they thought that at my age to decide to marry was almost like muddiness, something unheard of and consequently they didn’t want me to continue with marriage,” he recounts when asked why he decided to marry.

## Age

The Archbishop says he took up the matter with the late Pope John Paul II to give him dispensation as he had done with other priests. But this was all in vain as the Pope could not understand how at his age Archbishop Milingo would think of marrying.

“The Pope told me that at my age, marriage would not mean much and that I was a well vested member who had contributed much to the church,” he recounts. But Archbishop Milingo says he could still not change his position.

“I had been reading for a long time about the law of celibacy and found that there is a lot of injustice committed by the Catholic Church by imposing celibacy on the priesthood or connecting priesthood with celibacy that I myself don’t agree,” he says. “The way these priests have been treated they have been rendered useless in the society and even a shame to their own families. Some of them have been rejected by their own families. All this is the consequence of celibacy.”



Narrating his ordeal after he was recalled by the Pope at the Vatican, Milingo recalled that the incidence was a sad one. “When I arrived in Rome,” Archbishop Milingo continues, “It is a very sad story to tell because I had come with my wife. They immediately separated us. They took my wife wherever and hide her. She was hidden! And I myself was hidden in what you call Rome rural area in a rural hotel where nobody could find me. I was there watched, guarded to make sure I could not know where my wife was.”

The Archbishop narrated that after sometime in that rural hotel where he was heavily guarded he was taken back to Rome to catch a plane to Argentina for his retreat. While in Rome as he

was heading to get a plane in an elevator he saw the wife.

“I just shook hands with her and then I was taken to Argentina where I stayed for three months,” he recalls. “Why was I sent there? They were convinced that I had made a mistake, I had committed a great sin and therefore it was time for me to pay for my crime so to say.”

Archbishop Milingo says he was well received by the Church after he went back to the Vatican though he was still being guarded. “But I was guarded by gun wherever I went I had a body guard in the name of the Catholic Church to watch on me in case somewhere I meet my wife and so on. They did that for five years,” Archbishop Milingo narrated as the wife who sat nearby listened attentively.

## Tight security

The Archbishop explains that he was convinced that he could no longer fit in the society of celibacy and needed to find a way out. But then how was he to do it since he was always watched on.

“I organized myself and I did it wonderfully and it worked very beautiful not even my congregation, the sisters workers of the redeemer whom I founded knew how I went away. They never knew because I had some of my friends outside who prepared my air ticket to go to Korea and from there they came to pick me” he disclosed. “I did this when my own sisters were still washing plates after launch. They were

busy washing plates I organized myself behind, took the car and took a plane, I went to Korea.” At this point of the interview, Archbishop Milingo became joyful and he proudly stated nobody will ever know how he sneaked away amid tight security to join his wife in Korea.

“Very clever, wonderful and nobody will ever guess that I could do that and successfully,” he emphasized very happily.

He said the Catholic Church will never know the person who whisked him from the Vatican. “They will never know who. This is the person who has no prestige or what. He is a very simple soul,” narrated Archbishop Milingo.

Speaking to the wife who up to date does not believe she has Archbishop Milingo to herself, Maria a medical doctor by profession says she was so happy that after a long struggle Milingo was finally her husband.

“I am so happy and grateful to President (Levy) Mwanawasa (late) and the people of Zambia for standing with me to fight to have Milingo,” Maria, 50, who is not able to speak fluent English said. “Finally, I have my husband who stands with me even when I am not well. It feels so so good!”

Archbishop Milingo was a big figure not only in Zambia but the entire Roman Catholic Church. He made headlines across the global when he broke the celibacy law and married.

In Zambia, Milingo commanded a lot of influence and following in the 1980s through his healing miracles. He was then transferred to the Vatican for fear that he would form a break away Church in Zambia.



The Archbishop says he was happy with his new life and he claims the Catholics thought he would be depressed. Currently he has no fixed residence but he is in US, Italy but mainly in between the wife's country Korea and Zambia. Though there seem to be no big impact in the church in Zambia, Archbishop Milingo claims he has a following of over 200, 000 priests worldwide who have since married.

There has been no mass exodus from the Catholic Church to join him yet. What is clear now is that Archbishop Milingo is a happy married priest.