

REMARKS

BY

HON. PHILIP E. DAVIS QC, MP

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE

ARCHDEACON WILLIAM THOMPSON SOFTBALL FIELD

(REFURBISHED)

AT

SOUTHERN RECREATION GROUNDS

SATURDAY, 23 JULY 2022

Thank you and please be seated.

SALUTATIONS

I recognize the Minister of Works and Utilities, the Hon. Alfred Sears;

Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture, the Hon. Mario Moxey;

Parliamentary colleagues;

Senior Government Officials;

Representatives from the Thompson family;

Invited guests, good afternoon.

I thank the public works Minister and his technical team, the Sports Minister and Bahamas Striping for

their partnership and collaboration in completing this project after numerous delays and for making this official opening possible.

This softball field is indeed a public good that will serve many communities and sporting organizations well.

Having said that, we gather here to pay tribute to the life, legacy and work of a significant Bahamian son who dedicated his life to liberation and development through education, morality, religion and theology.

Further, as an avid sportsman, fan and visionary, Archdeacon William Thompson sought to influence

and inspire generations of Bahamians through youth and sports development. In contributing to youth and sports development, visionary Bahamians like Archdeacon Thompson were laying the ground work for what we today call the orange economy.

We now know that the orange economy has the potential to become a significant pillar in our national economy when managed deliberately through constructive partnerships between the government and non-governmental agencies within the sporting and cultural communities.

Archdeacon Thompson was not only a visionary, but a community leader par excellence; a youth leader; a church leader and a leader in the home. It is a natural confluence and fit for sports leaders to be

community and youth leaders so he was in his natural element as he made his contribution to nation building.

Archdeacon Thompson represented all that was good about The Bahamas and he led by example. He possessed the intellectual depth to pursue any number of financially lucrative professions, but he chose religion and worked assiduously through the institution of the Anglican Diocese and the church community to effect positive change as he used the religious platform to impact and influence national development.

We appreciate and thank him for his personal sacrifice – for placing the national and public good above his personal, economic and material interests.

These are the innate qualities of nationalists, patriots and heroes. Father Thompson is indeed one of our heroes.

Sadly ladies and gentlemen, the manner in which he departed this life was in stark contradiction to his legacy, his example, his teachings on morality and model citizenship, and his community work in one of the more at-risk inner city communities in New Providence. He was a victim of a violent crime – shot dead in an attempted robbery at his home.

One of his intents in working with our youth, I would imagine, was to offer an alternative path to our at-risk youth – a path that would lead them away from a life of crime and certain conflict with the law. As fate would have it, he was a victim of the very social

scourge he spent his entire adult life fighting against.

It is not for us to question the plan, the wisdom or the decisions of God, but to give Him thanks in all things and today we give thanks for the life of Archdeacon William Thompson.

So ladies and gentlemen, as we rededicate this softball field in honour of Archdeacon William Thompson, let this park be a **SYMBOL** of peace, love, brotherhood, sisterhood, conflict-resolution, community building, team work, self-discipline and model citizenship.

By doing so, all of us who use this facility will be paying the ultimate tribute to the life of Archdeacon Thompson, essentially allowing his spirit to live on in the hearts and minds of the thousands of Bahamians his teachings and example of Godly living touched over decades.

In speaking of the dearly departed, I have often times opined about the perceived finality of death. It is a transition – a comma if you will – in the sentence of life.

Those intangible qualities that are passed on from generation to generation during life are incorruptible and possess the proven capacity to transform lives, families, communities and yes nations – shaping, influencing and impacting generations yet unborn.

At its very essence and core, what is done for others to build up the common good and the common life could very well amount to the meaning of life – not the amount of material wealth or earthly possessions amassed during our lives.

If I were to sum up the meaning of life in one word, that word would be **SERVICE**.

It is therefore vitally important that we who remain, lift up, defend and memorialize the selfless service and the legacies of our great citizens, our heroes, heroines and those who consistently make personal sacrifices during their relatively short earthly sojourn, so that we may have a better, safer,

stronger, a more prosperous and a more secure tomorrow.

Archdeacon William Thompson was one such great citizen.

Before I close and with your kind leave, I wish to comment briefly on the issue of governance as it relates to the proper and acceptable maintenance of state owned assets.

This softball park was initially dedicated in honour of our dearly departed brother Archdeacon William Thompson for his contributions to local sports development on 13th May 1995. The Minister of

Youth Sports and Culture at that time was the Hon. Algernon Allen.

Successive governments are guilty of allowing this facility to fall into a state of disrepair which brings dishonor to the life, legacy and work of Archdeacon Thompson. Governments must do a better job generally of maintaining public infrastructure and superstructures.

There are a number of public structures named after prominent Bahamians to mark their contributions to nation building and national development.

The manner in which we maintain these public assets is a direct reflection on how we view the

contributions and the legacies of those heroes in whose names and honour these public structures are named and dedicated.

We as public officials must be ever mindful of that as we dedicate and officially open public facilities such as this softball in honour of our citizens.

My government and I commend this softball field to the surrounding communities and sporting organizations as an instrument for youth, sports and community development. Further, my government thanks the Thompson family for loaning Father Thompson to us. The national benefits are immeasurable and invaluable.

I now declare the Archdeacon William Thompson
Softball Field officially open.

Thank you.

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