



# THE PROPHETIC WITNESS

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## Christmas and New Year's Message from ARU President, *Rev. Fr. John Bosco Kamoga, C.S.S.p*

**D**ear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
As we joyfully celebrate Christmas and welcome the New Year, I take this opportunity to send you warm greetings and best wishes.

Christmas reminds us of the great gift of Emmanuel, God with us. In the humility of the manger, we are called anew to live lives of love, service, and self-giving.

This Christmas season also coincides with the conclusion of the Jubilee Year of Hope which has been a time of grace, renewal, and mercy for us all and the entire Church. As we close this special year, we give thanks for the spiritual fruits received and re-commit ourselves to lives of deeper conversion, service, and solidarity with those made poor and vulnerable. May the grace of the Jubilee continue to inspire our mission as religious men and women in Uganda. We remain pilgrims of hope on the way to Peace.

We look back on the ending year with gratitude to God for His unfailing presence amid the challenges faced by our Association, nation and the entire global community.

As our country prepares for the forthcoming elections, I invite you all to pray earnestly for a peaceful, free, and fair electoral process. Let us pray for wisdom and integrity among leaders and candidates, for calm and responsibility among citizens, and for an atmosphere of respect, dialogue, and non-violence throughout the nation. May everyone concerned be guided by justice, truth, and the common good, so that peace may prevail before, during, and after the elections.

As we step into the New Year, may we remain steadfast as pilgrims of hope, working together for peace, justice, and the dignity of every person. Let us continue to pray for our country, our leaders, and our communities, that 2026 may be marked by unity, healing, sustainable development and above all, hope.

May the light of Christ, born at Christmas, guide our path in the New Year and fill our hearts with joy, courage, and renewed commitment.



*I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Grace-filled New Year 2026*

# ARU Holds November 2025 General Assembly



Group Photo of the Superiors and representatives together with Archbishop Obbo and Fr. Georges

By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS

The Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) held its November General Assembly from 3rd to 7th November 2025 at the ARU Secretariat.

The Assembly was held under the inspiring theme which was specifically for the Religious during the Jubilee Year of Hope "Pilgrims of Hope on the Way to Peace," calling religious men and women to renewed commitment in their consecrated life and mission.

The Assembly officially opened with a solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by His

**Grace Emmanuel Obbo, AJ.** In his homily, Archbishop Obbo reminded the members of the words of the Holy Father during the Jubilee Year: "The Church needs you." He emphasized that religious men and women have already been entrusted with the mission to "wake up the world," and that the Church continues to rely on their prophetic witness today.

His Grace encouraged the religious to allow Christ to be the center and Lord of all that they do, noting that only by remaining rooted in Christ can their lives and ministries bear lasting fruit. He further called upon major superiors to exercise patience

in leadership and to promote domestic dialogue within their Institutes.

Also present at the Assembly was **Rev. Fr. Georges Kwami Kouwonou**, who oversees the affairs of the Apostolic Nunciature in Uganda. Fr. George addressed the Assembly and highlighted several important matters of interest to religious institutes. He encouraged superiors to take time to read and reflect on *Dilexit Dei*, underscoring its relevance for consecrated life today.

Fr. Georges also provided clarification on visa application procedures, reminding members that:

- Invitation letters must be

stamped by the Secretary of State,

- Applicants should attach a letter from the local superior,
- Non-Ugandan applicants must include a valid work permit, and
- Visa appointments should be made at least one month prior to the intended travel date.

In addition, he invited all members to pray for the bishops of Uganda, who are scheduled to travel to Rome for their official visit (Ad Limina) in March 2026.

During the Assembly, the superiors received an input on spirituality from Sr. Justine Nalugya, IHMR, who is also the Assistant Secretary General of ARU. They also listened to presentations from ACWECA—Strathmore University on the Sister Blended Value Project, launched in 2017, as well as on the Counselling Hub, which engaged the superiors in discussions on its sustainability.



*During the Official opening of the Assembly*



*Rev. Fr. Georges Kwami Kouwonou, addressing the Assembly*



*Strathmore University and ACWECA addressing the assembly*



*The counselling hub with a team from Uganda, Malawi and USA addressing the Assembly*

# ARU welcomes a New Treasurer General

By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS

The Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) officially welcomed its new Treasurer General, **Sr. Seraphine Ntegyereize MSMMC**, during a handover ceremony held on 21st December 2025 at ARU Secretariat.

The handover ceremony was attended by the Superiors of both the outgoing and incoming Treasurer General, as well as members of the ARU Executive, including the ARU President. Their presence highlighted the spirit of collaboration, accountability, and shared responsibility that guides the ARU's mission.

During the ceremony, the outgoing Treasurer General formally handed over the office, documents, and responsibilities to the incoming Treasurer General in accordance with ARU procedures.

In her acceptance remarks, Sr. Seraphine expressed heartfelt gratitude to her Congregation for entrusting her with this responsibility and for the support extended to her. She also thanked ARU for the well-stipulated Financial Manual, noting that it provides clear guidance for financial management and accountability within the Association.

Furthermore, she humbly requested teamwork, guidance, and cooperation from the Executive members, Superiors, and ARU management staff, emphasizing that effective financial stewardship is a shared responsibility. She reaffirmed her commitment to serve ARU with integrity, diligence, and faithfulness.

In his remarks, the ARU President, **Rev. Fr. John Bosco Kamoga, C.S.S.p**, expressed sincere appreciation to the outgoing



*In coming Treasurer General, Sr. Seraphine Ntegyereize, MSMMC*

Treasurer General **Sr. Josephine Kamau DM**, for her dedicated and faithful service to the Association.

The President further extended gratitude to both the outgoing and incoming Treasurer General's Congregations for their generous support, cooperation, and willingness to offer their members for service to ARU. He emphasized that such collaboration between ARU and the Congregations is vital for the continued growth and mission of the Association.



# Featured Person

## Sr. Specioza Kabahuma Receives an Award “Category of Social Entrepreneurship & Civil Society”

By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS

**S**r. Specioza Kabahuma DST, received an award as an outstanding Alumna in the Category of Social Entrepreneurship by the Uganda Martyrs University Alumni Association

Sr. Specioza earned a Bachelor of Ethics & Development Studies from Uganda Martyrs University in 1996, and a Master of Arts, Ethics and Development Studies in 1998, at the same University.

Below is the Citation read as she was being awarded



### Citation:

*“A Pioneer of faith driven leadership, champion and community transformation – serving humanity with purpose and grace.”*

The Uganda Martyrs University Alumni Association proudly recognizes Sr. Specioza Kabahuma, a Religious Sister of the Institute of the Daughters of St. Therese of the Child Jesus (Banyatereza sisters) Fort Portal Diocese, a pioneer

alumna of the Bachelor of Ethics and Development Studies (Hons) (1996) Uganda Martyrs University and Master of Arts, Ethics and Development Studies (1998), Uganda Martyrs University, for her remarkable contribution to faith-based leadership, social inclusion and community transformation.

As Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) and formally Assistant Secretary General of the Association of Religious in Uganda, she has provided visionary leadership to a national body uniting men and women religious in advancing the Church's Evangelical and Social Mission. Under her stewardship, ARU has strengthened governance, collaboration, and the visibility of religious life as a force for social action and development.

Sr. Specioza Kabahuma, has been

instrumental in Catholic care for Children (CCCU) leading the transition from Institutional Care to Family-Based Care and restoring dignity and hope to thousands of vulnerable children. Through initiatives such as the Sister-Led Youth Initiative, Catholic Sisters Communicators Network, Religious Health Workers Network and the Anti-Human Trafficking Catholic Network she has empowered the youth, advanced health and education outreach and championed protection for victims of human trafficking.

Her leadership in the Care for the Elderly sister's initiative and the St. Bakhita Education Programme reflect her deep compassion for those who have served faithfully and for young girls seeking second chances in education.

As National Executive Secretary of the National Catholic Commission



for Justice and Peace of the Uganda Episcopal Conference in Uganda, from 1997 to 2010, was instrumental in the establishment of vibrant diocesan Justice and Peace commissions in the 19 dioceses in the country. Her unwavering endeavor in designing and implementing Awareness programmes empowered the Christian community for meaningful participation in their own governance and decision-making processes both in church and society at large.

Her collaborative efforts with Episcopal Conferences in Africa and the world at large, the holy See and specifically the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in the Vatican and other organizations inside and outside the Church, gave another unique opening to the Uganda Episcopal conference and its general Secretariat to be conscious and concerned about issues at hand in as far as Justice and Peace a need for action.

With her dedicated research the bishops obtained important information on specific acts of injustices and violation of human rights in the country enabling them to come up with pastoral letters to guide the conscious of the people and to express Christian solidarity with those suffering injustices. She trained specific staff of the commission in Parliamentary Liaison work and established a desk which has enabled the bishops to actively contribute to policy development and policy making processes in the Parliament of Uganda.

Through her faith, integrity and service, Sr. Specioza Kabahuma exemplifies UMU's motto Virtue and Wisdom in service and stands true ambassador of ethical leadership and social transformation.

In recognition of her exceptional service to faith, education and community empowerment, the Uganda Martyrs University Alumni Association proudly confers upon Sr. Specioza Kabahuma the Outstanding Diamond Alumni Award 2025 under the Social Entrepreneurship & Civil society category.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join us in celebrating and welcoming Sister Specioza Kabahuma to the podium.

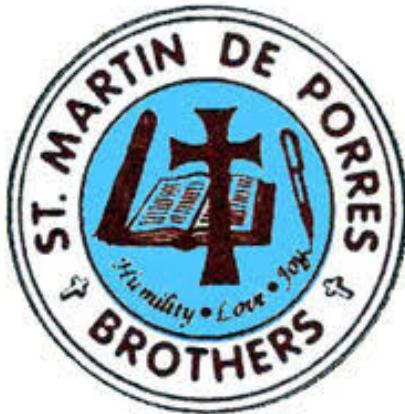
Grand Imperial Hotel, 1st November 2025



Sr. Specioza with her fellow sisters

# Featured Institute

## Embracing the Charism and Mission of the St. Martin de Porres Brothers Congregation “A Vocation to Brotherhood”



By Br. Aurelius Ssali Local superior Lweza community

Inspired by the life and legacy of Bishop Sisto Mazzoldi and their patron Martin de Porres, the congregation of St. Martin de Porres Brothers continues to be a beacon of hope and love, lifting out its mission through charity, humility, love and joy.

The mission of the St. Martin de Porres Brothers draws deeply from the life and example of their patron, St. Martin de Porres, and from the vision of their founder, Bishop Sisto Mazzoldi, a member of the Comboni Missionary Society. Through their founder and fellow Comboni missionaries, the brothers inherited the prophetic spirit and vision of St. Daniel Comboni, who boldly declared that “Africa must be saved by Africans.” Guided by this vision, the congregation joyfully contributes to the growth of a self-sufficient local Church.

A vocation to consecrated religious life is not merely a career choice; it is a divine calling. It is God’s invitation to dedicate one’s entire life to Him and His people. In places such as Lweza Parish, the brothers live out this calling through daily prayer, humble service, and joyful community life.

The St. Martin de Porres Brothers are a Catholic religious congregation serving mainly in Uganda and South Sudan, with their Mother House located in Kit, Juba (South Sudan). Their apostolic activities are diverse: they run schools and educational programs for both children and adults, provide medical care and community support, offer catechetical instruction, and respond to the needs of the most vulnerable. In Uganda, their mission extends across Nebbi Diocese, Gulu Archdiocese, and Kampala Archdiocese.

Formation and training are central

to the life of the congregation. At Lukome in Gulu, young men in formation are guided and prepared as novices and junior professed members.

A person interested in applying should demonstrate good conduct, strong moral character, good health, and the ability to pursue studies. Above all, he must have a sincere and deep desire to consecrate his entire life to God in loving service to his brothers—especially the poor, the sick, and the uneducated—following the example of St. Martin de Porres.

Any young man 25 years of age and below who feels drawn to this vocation is encouraged to apply. For more information, contact St. Martin de Porres Brothers Vocations Director

**P. O. Box 200 Gulu,  
P. O. Box 4247 Kampala.**

**P.O.Box 32 Juba Southern Sudan  
0772473880**



# USFCN Sabbatical and Formation Participants Commissioned



By Benedict Mukoni

The Uganda Spiritual Formation Centre Namugongo (USFCN), a program of Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU), was pleased to commission 33 participants at the Centre after a successful completion of their Sabbatical and Formation courses on October 17, 2025.

The Sabbatical and Formation courses are nine-month programs at the Center, running annually from January 31st. Participants include Priests, Sisters, and Brothers from various congregations within the Catholic Church.

Among those commissioned, Sabbaticula participants were 15, representing 8 congregations and 5 priests from 3 Dioceses of Kabale, Lira and Kotido. The participants came from 4 countries; Uganda, Tanzania, Cameroon and Zambia.

The commissioned formators were 18 representing 13 congregations and 4 countries; Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Cameroon.

Bishop Sanctus Lino Wanok of Lira Diocese, was the main celebrant and the Chief Guest at the commissioning ceremony. He appealed to the participants to pray and dedicate themselves to serving the poor in many sectors regarding humanity.

The Secretary General of ARU, Sr.

Jane Yatuha - OLGC, congratulated the graduates on behalf of ARU and urged the participants to take with them what they have gained from the courses and not just leave it behind.

Both programs will continue in 2026 and the details to register for the next intake are in the flyer below.



# New Hope for St. Muggaga Boys Home



After the engagement with the Leadership of Banakaloli Brothers

**By: Caroline Nansukusa. S (Mrs) (ARU-CCCU-Case Management Officer)**

Once a childcare residential facility under ARU-CCCU, St. Mugagga Boys Home has reached a long-awaited milestone—one that reflects the shared vision of ARU-CCCU and its partners to promote family-based care and reduce the institutionalization of children.

Formerly home to more than forty boys, St. Mugagga Boys Home has, over the years, steadily traced families and supported the safe reintegration of children into their biological families, kinship care, foster care, and supported independent living arrangements. Today, only two boys remain in the program. Both are under emergency care and are currently being prepared for independent living.

As part of the repurposing process, sections of the former childcare facility have now been transformed into a secondary school, an initiative aimed at extending long-term benefits to children and families within the surrounding community and beyond. This achievement marks a successful transition from

a traditional childcare institution to a community-based model of care. Sharing this joyful update, the brother in charge, Bro. Nicholas, noted:

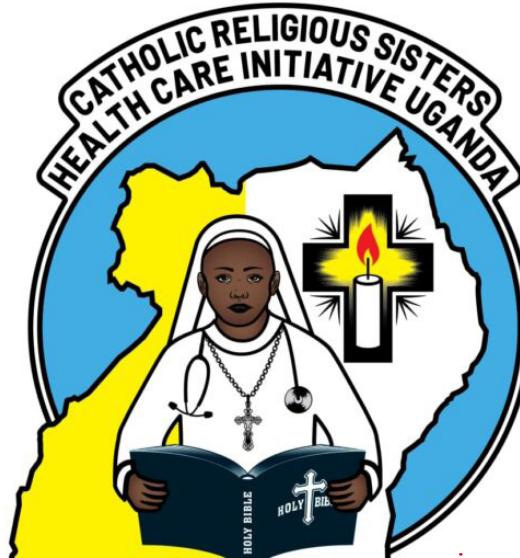
“As you are aware of our repurposing program, I am happy to inform you that all parties have come to an agreement, and we are currently working towards opening our secondary school at the St. Mugagga Boys Home premises. We have collaborated with Budini Secondary School, a school within the diocese also headed by the Banakaroli Brothers, to support us by sharing resources as we begin this journey. Starting is not an easy task, and we welcome any support as we move forward.”

For ARU-CCCU, this transition represents the fulfillment of a long-held hope: that children grow up in safe, loving family environments rather than institutional settings, while former childcare facilities are repurposed to serve communities in sustainable and meaningful ways.

Child Care Institutes still need a lot of support to transition into community-based programs, ensuring that more children are protected, supported, and given the opportunity to thrive within families and communities. ARU-CCCU remains prayerful and committed to supporting this initiative. Below are more details about the newly repurposed St. Mugagga, ready for opening come 2026.



# CRSHIU Restoring Hope and Dignity through Compassionate Service



By Sr. Maria Goretti Kabakaali, DST  
National Coordinator, CRSHIU

For the Catholic Religious Sisters Health Care Network Uganda, the ending year 2025 has been a journey of grace, courage, and renewed hope for the communities they serve.

As an initiative rooted in the Gospel call to uplift those who suffer in silence, the Network has witnessed lives restored, families strengthened, and communities encouraged to believe again in the dignity of every mother, every child, and every young person.

The birth injury repair camps remain a testimony to what compassionate and skilled care can achieve. This year, 62 women received life-changing surgical treatment in the dioceses of Kasese, Fort Portal, and Jinja.

Each woman arrived carrying a burden of pain and shame, often after years of silent suffering. Many returned home healed, standing tall, and ready to embrace life again. Their gratitude continues to echo in the hearts of those who served them. These moments served as a reminder that every woman's experience is sacred and deserves patience, compassion, and love.

In Kitgum, 102 women received cervical and breast cancer screening. Three women diagnosed with cervical cancer were supported and referred for further care, and four women with fistula were also guided to treatment. When health challenges seem overwhelming, a simple gesture of accompaniment—such as providing transport to the hospital—can make the difference between despair and hope.

In Kampala and Gulu Provinces, thousands of young people were reached through school health talks and radio programs. Their questions, fears, and eagerness to understand their bodies revealed a deep thirst for guidance and truth. Many shared their struggles with early marriages, pressure at home, and lack of

support. These encounters underscored that prevention begins with knowledge, positive role models, and safe spaces where young people can speak openly.

The catechists, Catholic Women Associations, Village Health Teams, and some community members were trained to continue sensitizing families. Their presence at the grassroots strengthens the mission and helps reach those most vulnerable, especially teenage mothers who often require more than health information. They need encouragement, economic opportunities, and reassurance that their lives still have purpose. One of the most moving moments of the year was the follow-up visit in Kasese, where eleven women who had undergone surgery returned to share their stories. Their testimonies spoke of long years of pain transformed into joy and renewed dignity.

Deep gratitude to the Hilton Foundation, whose support has made it possible to reach so many who rely on this initiative for hope and healing. While challenges remain, the Network looks to 2026 with renewed determination and hope.

# Three Years of Healing, Courage and Dignity: The Work of the RSCNI



*By Sr. Editrudis Kajuna – OLGC  
Project Coordinator, Counselling Hub*

Over the past three years, since 2023, the Religious Sister Counsellors Network Initiative (RSCNI) has grown into a strong and credible network operating across Uganda, Malawi, and Zambia, with a central Counselling Hub in Uganda and satellite hubs closer to congregations and communities.

During this period, RSCNI has journeyed with over 1,000 religious sisters and in professional psychological counselling. These include sisters in active ministry, leadership, and formation who were facing trauma, burnout, grief, anxiety, depression, vocational stress, and challenges of community living. Many have regained emotional stability, clarity, and renewed capacity for mission, leadership, and healthy relationships. More than 100,000 Lay people have been served by the network.

RSCNI is a faith-rooted, professionally grounded response to the

growing mental health and psychosocial needs of religious sisters and the communities they serve in Sub Saharan Africa. Established under the All-Africa Conference: Sister to Sister (AAC: SS), it was created to address a critical gap: the lack of accessible, confidential, and context-appropriate psychological support within religious life.

The network currently comprises of 103 trained sister counsellors. With gratitude for their contribution and service, we remember two members who passed on during this journey. May they rest in peace. Their legacy continues through the lives touched by the network.

Counselling is provided by trained religious sisters, embedded within the lived reality of religious life and guided by professional ethics, supervision, and a trauma-informed counselling approach.

Beyond individual counselling, RSCNI offers workshops, psycho-education sessions, and capacity-building programs for congrega-

tions, leaders, and communities. These workshops address themes such as mental wellness, trauma awareness, community living, emotional resilience, leadership stress, and safeguarding. For congregations and formation houses, RSCNI also provides psychological assessments for candidates in formation, supporting healthier discernment, accompaniment, and long-term vocational wellbeing.

Congregational Superiors and entire religious communities are urged to intentionally prioritize mental health by encouraging members to seek professional psychological support when needed. Early intervention prevents deeper crises and strengthens both individuals and institutes.

In a context where mental-health stigma and limited services persist, RSCNI stands as a living testimony that professional counselling, when rooted in faith, compassion, and competence, brings healing, restores dignity, and renews hope.

# CCCU Strengthens Child Safeguarding Practices with Religious Institutes



*SHS-In the session Sr. Euphrasia sharing about the ARU Policy - Sacred Heart Sister*

**By: Caroline Nansukusa - Case Management Officer (ARU-CCCU)**

Catholic Care for Children Uganda (CCCU), a program under the Association of the Religious in Uganda (ARU), continues to build a strong culture of child safety among Member Institutes implementing child programming.

From June to December 2025, ARU-CCCU team deliberately set aside time within its activity calendar to visit Religious Institutes across the country. The purpose of these visits was to deepen institutional commitment to child safeguarding and to ensure that all entities working with children adopt safe, accountable, and child-centered practices.

The engagements focused on orienting Institute Leadership Councils on the importance of having functional Child Safeguarding Policies

and Child Safeguarding Committees. Emphasis was placed on safeguarding as a shared responsibility and a global obligation for all institutions and programs working with children. In total, thirteen (13) Religious Institutes hosting Child Care Institutions and Programs under ARU-CCCU were reached through this process.

The visits were conducted at the Generalate or Mother Houses of the respective Institutes and brought together key council leaders responsible for formation, education, health, administration, and childcare services. By engaging leadership at the highest level, ARU-CCCU ensured that safeguarding principles are fully embraced



*Daughters of St. Theresa-During the engagement*

and cascaded to all facilities under each Institute's care, reflecting the ARU spirit of partnership and solidarity in its motto: "We are no longer strangers but friends."

The Leadership members were also supported with draft guidance documents such as the ARU Child Safeguarding Policy and the draft Child Safeguarding-7 standards Implementation Plan, to customize, enabling them to operationalize the Seven Child Safeguarding Standards developed by Keeping Children Safe (KCS) International-a globally recognized alliance whose standards are adopted as well by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and many faith-based and humanitarian organizations. All Institutes were guided to ensure that these standards are fully integrated into their safeguarding policies and aligned with the approved ARU Child Safeguarding Policy.

A particularly motivating highlight of the engagements was the assurance that institutions which successfully implement the Seven Standards are eligible for national and international certification as Child-Safe Entities through Keeping Children Safe. This recognition not only affirms compliance but also strengthens institutional credibility and accountability.

As ARU-CCCU looks ahead to 2026, the shared goal remains to see ARU and all its member Institutes certified as Child-Safe Entities, ensuring that every child is protected, respected, and nurtured within safe and supportive environments.



*With the Grail Ladies*



*With the Sisters of Kakamega*



*With the Sacred Heart Sisters*

# AAC: SS Empowers Sisters and Commissions them to Lead



By Benedict Mukoni

The All-Africa Conference Sister to Sister (AAC: SS), in partnership with the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU), on 21st November 2025, commissioned the first cohort of Sisters from various congregations.

This commissioning followed the successful completion of an 18-month leadership course at the ARU Secretariat. The sisters commissioned are to coordinate the AAC: SS program in different dioceses across the country.

The course is designed to empower Sisters with essential leadership and communication skills, as well as knowledge in stress management, conflict resolution, nurturing effective communication, and fostering collaboration among themselves and their brothers in service, since they operate in various missions and congregations.

The sisters covered a variety of topics, including healing childhood memories and trauma, emotional intelligence, aging gracefully, and

mental health, among others.

Fr. Dr. John Bosco Kamoga, C.S.Sp., the President of ARU, was the chief guest and the main celebrant of the Holy Mass. He encouraged the graduates to translate their acquired knowledge into action, enabling others to experience the positive impact of their achievements as they become better versions of themselves. Also present were the Secretary General of ARU, Sr. Jane Yatuha, OLGC, and the Assistant Secretary General, Sr. Justice Nalugya, IHMR.

According to the National Programs Coordinator AAC: SS Sr. Anna Grace Alum, LSMIG, was established in 2002 by women theologians and the Sisters of Mercy, who recognized the need for a program to support women religious Sisters in Africa and beyond. Currently, the program operates in six countries: Uganda, Nigeria, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Zambia,

and Malawi, with its headquarters in the USA.

One of the accomplishments of the program is the creation of the Sisters Counselors Network, also known as the Counseling Hub, where Sister Counselors provide valuable services without distinction between religious men, religious women, and lay persons.

Sr. Ann Grace invited the interested Sisters from different congregations to join the second cohort so that they can benefit from these services.



# ARU Commissions Chapter Facilitators



*By Benedict Mukoni and Immaculate Tusingwire MMS*

The Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU), commissioned Chapter Facilitators on 13 December 2025 at the ARU Secretariat after completing eight weeks of General Chapter Facilitation Training.

The commissioning marked an important milestone in strengthening chapter processes within religious congregations.

The trained facilitators were both priests and religious sisters from different congregations coming from Uganda and Kenya.

According to one of their facilitators, Sr. Margaret Uraa, MSMMC, the newly trained facilitators are well prepared and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills. Through practical sessions and simulations, they have learned how to guide chapters effectively. Even though Sr. Margaret recommended co-facilitation with experienced facilitators at the beginning,

she asserted that they are fully capable of facilitating chapters independently when given the opportunity. Thus, calling upon superior generals to give them opportunities to serve in chapters across different institutes.

Currently, ARU has about 30 trained chapter facilitators. While this is a significant achievement, Sr. Margaret also noted that there is a growing need for empowerment and wider recognition

of the role of Chapter facilitation. She urges the Superior Generals to understand the importance of chapter facilitation by allowing more members to be trained

Every congregation is required to hold a chapter, usually after five or six years. Since these chapters play a crucial role in guiding the life, governance, and future direction of religious institutes, they need good facilitation, Sr. Mar-



garet noted. Chapter facilitators serve as consultants within their own Institutes, guiding Chapter Planning Committees in preparing members well ahead of the chapter. This preparation has significantly improved chapter celebrations, reduced conflicts, and promoted unity.

The way chapters are conducted today is markedly different from the past. Previously, chapters largely followed a parliamentary method, which often led to tension and conflict. Today, the process is guided by the Spirit, fostering deeper reflection, dialogue, and unity. This shift has brought positive transformation to the life of many institutes, making chapter celebrations more meaningful and effective.

Of the 3 trainers were also Sr. Florence Kajoina, DST and Sr. Pauline Namuddu LSOSF.

Besides training others, they are willing to co-facilitate chapters with the junior facilitators since they believe that mentorship approach ensures skills are practiced, strengthened, and passed on. Training without practice risks losing valuable knowledge and potential. They noted that allowing junior facilitators to learn through practice will ensure continuity and sustainability of

quality chapter facilitation.

Chapter facilitators are not only valuable when it comes to chapter facilitation, they can also help facilitate other important meetings of the institutes to ensure smooth processes and make desired decisions.

The trainers also noted that in the past, chapters were often facilitated solely by canonists, but now they see that chapter facilitation goes beyond legal knowledge, even though it remains important.

It involves leading members back to the roots of their foundation, the charism, and the spirit of the founder. This holistic approach is what makes trained chapter facilitation transformative.

ARU remains committed to strengthening chapter facilitation for the good of religious institutes, ensuring that chapters continue to be moments of deep discernment, renewal, and faithful service to the mission of the Church.

