

The Prophetic Witness

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The Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, H.E. Archbishop Luigi Bianco (Middle) in black suite, joins Consecrated persons in a group photo after the opening Mass to grace the General Assembly at ARU Secretariat. Photo by ARU Reporter.

By Sr. Specioza Kabahuma - DST

ARU PROFILE CONT...

ARU was born with the intention of bringing together religious institutes of consecrated men and women serving in Uganda to work together for the common good. Similarly the vision of Hilton Foundation, our partner projected that; with 700,000 sisters worldwide who, in collaboration with the Church, manage over 250,000 schools, 22,000 health facilities and 42,000 social service and elder care programs. The scope of the Catholic sisterhood calls for mechanisms for sisters to share experiences, build best practices, build synergies to advocate for change, generate common data

that showcase the collective impact of sisters' ministries, and manage both the evolution of conferences and associations of women religious. (Cf. *Home page-Catholic Sisters-Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Transforming the lives of families and communities...*)

With the above, therefore, ARU has come up with a number of collaborative networks in order to develop synergies of different member Institutes through which members share experiences and best practices for growth and collective impact in the key areas of service. Sisters also share the privilege of amplified voices with carefully guided ministries as they join other actors on the global platform of development space.

The following are some of the networks said above;

1. ARU ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING NETWORK

1) ARU Anti-human Trafficking network is a project targeting the building of synergies and capacity of member Religious Institutes to plan and work together against Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in Uganda for greater impact.

2) Aims of the Network:

i. To strengthen the internal collaboration and networking of the sisters in the shared mission of the church and provide opportunities for internal learning from one another while strengthening and reinforcing shared values and commitment to ministry.

ii. To expand and strengthen external networking and collaboration of the sisters with external networks and organizations providing service delivery on key human development issues.

iii. To increase service delivery of the sisters in their respective ministries through teamwork and shared vision.

To be continued in the next issue please.

The Editorial



Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru

Well come to this this unique issue with extraordinary number of pages. This will comfortably take you to the next quarter that will usher you to the third quarter of the issue.

Thank you for being part of this ever unfolding heritage. This issue offers rich and diverse articles from informed perspectives, testimonies, novelties and background.

The affirmation of the statutes of the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) by the Holy See particularly provoked emotions of joy, excitement and satisfaction among the members of the Assembly of June 2023. His Excellency, Luigi Bianco, the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda delivered the long expected message to the august house when he said; “I have come with good news about the approval of your statutes from the Vatican!”

To belong to the mystical Body of Christ entails sustainability of wholeness, belonging, waiting and listening. We thank God that ARU is part and parcel of the Mystical Body of Christ that patiently waited for the now approved document that was submitted a while ago. The fruits of patience are sweetest.

Another important message is the decision Pope Francis and the Vatican took to relax the bureaucracy involved in dismissing a consecrated person. “The Vatican has authorized at least three (3) members of the General Council (like for the case of monastic life) to dismiss a member.”

The decision of the Council Members can render a member of the Religious Institute dismissed. It follows that, it is always good to inform the Bishop or Pope stating clearly the reasons for the dismissal.”

This ‘unexpected’ decision has also raised question like; “will the superiors not take advantage this shorter version adopted for dismissal process? Why such a drastic decision? Will our superiors employ prudence and love in handling such delicate situations?”

The probable answers are; the Holy Spirit is in control. But if the human spirit comes in, it will not stand the test of time! The decision came timely when there is practically ‘NO time to be wasted’ in sorting who should belong or not. The pastoral demand is immense. It calls for vocation animators to do thorough check so that the mission of Christ is foresighted in confronting issues at stake. The inner circles should be busy with core values of the Chief Shepherd who said “May they be one,” John 17:21.

Consecrated persons are called to pray more than ever in order to face challenges like secularism, LGBTQ+, Corruption, timidity, workerholism to mention but a few. The church today is steering through the troubles sea of the world and local societies. Each consecrated person is called to lay and use the best strategy and talents that suits best in mitigating the external challenge.

Proverb:

The more the haste,
the less speed.

A person makes more
progress if they take time to
do things CAREFULLY

ARU Statutes receives approval from the Vatican



The Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, H.E. Archbishop Luigi Bianco hands over the statutes approval from the Vatican to ARU President, Sr. Dr. Speranza Namusisi at ARU Secretariat. Photo by ARU Reporter.

By Sr. Grace Kyomugisha, OLG

This year's first General Assembly of June 06-13, 2023, attracted over 50 Major Superiors and delegates including ARU programme and administration Staffs. It hosted firsthand information from the Nuncio about Synod on Synodality, ARU Statutes and Permission granted to at least three counsellors to dismiss consecrated persons.

The event commenced with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by the opening Mass and official opening of the assembly presided over by His Excellency, Luigi Bianco, the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, followed by reports and workshops. Synod on synodality is a prolonged discernment not only by the members of the synodal Assembly, but by the whole church.

The synod is not an event but a process in which the people of God are called to walk together towards discernment with the help of the Holy Spirit that helps to understand the Lord's will for his Church.

The Nuncio added that, the path of the synod is listening and discernment. The listening began in 2021 by the local Church that is by the people of God around their pastors. It is the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops and will be in two sessions, spaced one year apart. The first part is from 4th to 29th October 2023, the second one in October 2024.

Lay people including women will participate in the Synod on Synodality Assembly. These lay people, half of them will be women. Seventy lay people will be appointed directly by Pope Francis 50% of

whom shall be women, and will enjoy voting rights at the Assembly which will consist 370 voting members and 400 participants in total.

He (The Pope) exhorts the religious not to be interested in themselves, their problems and projects but in evangelization, catechesis and mission of the church. "Be witnesses of the Church. Do not communicate yourselves but Jesus Christ."

STATUTES OF ARU:

It was all joy when the Nuncio handed over acceptance letter of ARU Statutes to the President of the Association of the Religious of Uganda (ARU). The Statutes were approved by the Holy See on 5th June 2023. The Holy See also officially recognized the name of the "Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU)" which includes Consecrated men and women.



The Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, H.E. Archbishop Luigi Bianco (R) during the General Assembly at ARU Secretariat. Photo by ARU Reporter.

The Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated life and Societies of Apostolic Life is responsible for approving their respective Statues. They ensure ordered activities for the realization of specific objectives. They are responsible for erecting the Conference of Major Superiors of Institutes of Consecrated life and Societies of Apostolic life.

The congregation for Institutes of Consecrated life and Societies of the Apostolic life were helped by the Nuncio, who guided the long process with questions and answers; for necessary information. The Consecrated Persons are called upon to endeavor to study the new Canons of the Catholic Church. "We cannot play around with religious life which is a gift from God or play with the lives of people we ought to serve. I wish everybody God's blessings in the services."

About dismissal of consecrated persons from the Institutes, in the new changes of canons, the procedure provides among others for the admonition of religious in writing or in front of two witnesses with explicit imposition of dismissal in the event of failure to repent, clearly notifying him or her of the cause of the dismissal and granting them full faculty to defend themselves.

If the proper procedure is not respected, the Pope emphasized, it could put at risk the validity of the procedure itself and consequently the protection of the rights of the dismissed person. Pope's new provisions took effect on 7th May 2023.

Those dismissed from Institutes will now have 30 days to present their appeal, and will no longer need to request

in writing the revocation or correction of the decree of its author. The previous deadline has been ten days.

Decision of the Council members can dismiss a member. Three members of the Council can now dismiss a member. It is always good to inform the Bishop or the Pope stating clearly the reasons of Dismissal.

Leadership and management of Institutes requires leaders to be good leaders in evangelical way, following the values of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



Consecrated persons attentively listen to the ARU President, Sr. Dr. Speranza Namusisi during the General Assembly at ARU Secretariat. Photo by ARU Reporters.



H.E. Luigi Bianco (R), Fr. Christopher Seroka, Secretary to the Nuncio (M) and ARU Vice President, Fr. John Bosco Kamoga (L) during the General Assembly at ARU Secretariat. Phot by ARU Reporter.



Consecrated persons attentively listen to facilitators of the General Assembly at ARU Secretariat. Photo by ARU Reporters.

LGBTQ+, an attack on the family, we need to pray-ARU President



ARU President, Sr. Dr. Speranza Namusisi making an opening remarks during the Annual General Assembly at ARU Secretariat.

Photo by ARU Reporter.

By Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru

In her welcome remarks, Mother. Speranza Namusisi, IHMR, the President of ARU appreciated His Excellency Luigi Bianco, the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, the members of Executive Committee of ARU and Members of the Conference for sparing their time for the Assembly that commenced from June 7, 2023.

The Apostolic Nuncio officially opened the Conference, guided by the theme: *Enlarging the space of the tent of Consecrated Life, living the evangelical Counsels through Charisms and Mission.* She also appreciated the fatherly words of the Apostolic Nuncio during and after the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. “We are always encouraged in our vocational journey as consecrated persons and more so as Major

Superiors who are chosen to lead others. Whenever we hear a word from Your Excellency, we feel strong knowing that the Holy Father, Pope Francis is with us in your person.”

The President also welcomed the Major Superiors saying; “I welcome you my dear Major Superiors for coming together to share different experiences which enrich us as a team and as individuals. Our being together helps us to enlarge the space in our calling as consecrated persons. We can evangelize through our individual charisms and charisms of our institutes to reach out to the people of God.”

Mother Speranza called upon the assembly to pay attention to some of the challenges facing the contemporary society, the church and humanity in general.

The family is attacked through LGBTQ and we have to pray to God for guidance in the line of action. Without the family, consecrated life is just a dream and or a myth! It is our duty as leaders of institutes endowed with different charisms to encourage our members to support families, children and youth by guiding them to take the right path. It has come and we cannot keep a deaf ear!

She also introduced the new members of the Association who joined the team since after the last meeting in November 2022. Among others were,

1. Brothers of St. Gabriel of Montfort, FSG, in Mpala Parish - Entebbe, Superior Representative is Br. Joseph Madanu.



Consecrated persons attentively listen to the presentation on the disgraceful LGBTQ+ attack on family. Photo by ARU Reporter.

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2. Missionaries of St. Charles Borromeo - Scalabrinian Fathers, CS in St. Denis Ssebugwawo Parish - Konge Lukuli - Kampala Archdiocese - Superior Representative is Fr. Walter Hernan Diaz. "We are called to share our charisms to enrich our evangelization. Our diversity in charismatic identity is our wealth in the church; this is in line with the theme of this Assembly. The Holy Father, in his apostolic exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel* no.130, states, "The Holy Spirit ... enriches the entire evangelizing Church with different charisms. These gifts are meant to renew and build up the church.



H.E. Archbishop Luigi Bianco (L), ARU President, Sr. Dr. Speranza Namusisi (M) foreground share some ideas after the opening liturgy of the General Assembly. Photo by ARU Reporter.

They are gifts of the Spirit integrated into the body of the church, drawn to the center, which is Christ and then channeled into an evangelizing impulse. A sure sign of the authenticity of a charism is its ecclesial character, its ability to be integrated harmoniously into the life of God's holy and faithful people..." Conclusively she said, "The Holy Spirit brings to fruitfulness differences between persons and communities. He alone can raise up diversity, plurality and multiplicity while at the same time bringing unity. Hence, our charisms brought together lead to the growth of the church. May God guide us in our roles as leaders not only of our Institutes but also of the people of God."

ARU GENERAL CHAPTER FACILITATORS MAKE A MILESTONE



ARU General Chapter facilitators pose for a memorial group photo outside ARU Secretariat garden. Photo by ARU Reporter.

By Sr. Mary Pauline Namuddu

GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS, Brothers and Sisters in Uganda and Africa! Greetings from ARU – General Chapter Facilitators.

We thank and congratulate ARU for a Decade Milestone achievement. There has been rapid growth in Spiritual, Social, Pastoral, Economic, Technological development of the consecrated persons.

Among the great achievements is the training of over twenty Sisters in General Chapter Facilitation skills. Who are these General Chapter Facilitators?

The Consecrated Sisters selected from about eight Institutes of Consecrated life by their Superiors and were sent to ARU for special training in new methods of Chapter Facilitation.

Some of the sisters were trained in Kenya and others in Uganda between 2009 – 2019. They have already been involved in preparing members of different Institutes in preparing them for their General Chapters, Mid-Term Chapter reviews, guiding Institutes in the process of selecting delegates and above all, facilitating General Chapters as occasions for “Celebration” in Institutes.

Before this new approach to General Chapter facilitation, some Chapters were like “Battle fields”. Some members dreaded being invited as delegates to Chapters and indeed some would give excuses not to attend because of the negative experiences in Chapters.

Finally, the Good News! Good News! The General Chapters have a new name and a new face with a “**BIG SMILE.**” General Chapters are now taken as a time of “**CELEBRATION, APPRECIATION for BLESSINGS RECEIVED, A TIME OF EXPRESSING GRATITUDE**” to the Leadership teams for services rendered. All members come together at the end of a General Chapter to celebrate as an Institute.



The team of general chapter facilitators in a group photo after their meeting at ARU Secretariat, Nsambya Kampala. Photo by ARU Reporter.

Who can be trained as a Chapter Facilitator?

A mature, confident and grounded member of an Institute of Consecrated life and one who is willing to guide other consecrated persons. A Sister who attained ‘O’, ‘A’ level certificates, and other higher education and is fluent in English. A consecrated Sister between 35 – 60 years of age and has spent at least five (5) years in perpetual vows.

WHEN AND WHERE ARE THE CANDIDATES TRAINED?

ARU has planned for a training in three phases at ARU Secretariat: **August 27- September 16, 2023, December 3-15, 2023 and Early 2024.**

There will be room for 30 participants only. This will be based on first come, first serve principles. Therefore, book early to avoid disappointments.



The President ARU, Sr. Dr. Speranza Namusisi receives a document from the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, H.E. His Grace Luigi Bianco at ARU Secretariat. Photo by ARU Reporter.



UGANDA, AMECEA TO CELEBRATE SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES @ 50



Rev. Fr. John Baptist Kaganda (right front seat), the National Pastoral Coordinator in a group photo with the incharges of Small Christian Communities in the Dioceses of Uganda.

By ARU Reporter

Small Christian Communities (SCCs) in the Association of Member Episcopal Conference in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) are celebrating Golden Jubilee (50 years). This is slated from July, 2023-July, 2024. This strategy for evangelization in AMECEA region was initiated in 1973.

Uganda's National Pastoral Coordinator, Fr. John Baptist Kaganda, in his opening remarks and keynote at the premises Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU), on April 4, 2023 said, "SCCs jubilee prayer received from AMECEA will be circulated and recited across the region for the whole period of the Jubilee Year, 2023 / 2024."

Fr. Kaganda requests that each diocese set a date and officially inaugurate the yearlong celebration of the SCCs in the month of July 2023 or otherwise.

"You are all requested to popularize the theme of the celebration throughout the dioceses, translate and recite the golden jubilee prayer in the dioceses and the need for each diocese to evaluate the impact, successes and challenges facing SCCs and send a report to the National Pastoral office to compile a national report." Fr. Kaganda emphasized.

There is need to promote campaigns for mass recruitment of members into SCCs. Home visit is recommended for promoting children, youth and men to participate in SCCs.

Fr. Kaganda noted that they will use of mass media to promote key characteristics of SCCs and strengthen training and formation of leadership of SCCs focusing on the true spirit and characteristics of SCCs.

In this Golden Jubilee celebrations, the region desires that vivid information about a true picture of the SCCs be established; their numbers; their level of participation, the number of times they meet to share the word of God; whether they are represented in the administrative structure in the Parish/Diocese.

"We desire to see the successes of the SCCs in the local Church; we need to know how Church in the neighborhood has profited from SCCs; we also need to know the concrete programs carried out by the SCCs in building the Church." *(From proposed road map of the golden jubilee celebrations).*

The AMECEA region wishes to know the challenges faced by SCCs and the dioceses to propose some activities that can be carried out at the Diocesan level to mark the 50 years of SCCs and way forward for better utilization of the SCCs as a strategy of evangelization.

Proverb:

A good conscience is a soft pillow.

You sleep well when you have nothing to be guilty about.



A cross-section of the participants of the incharges of Small Christian Communities in the Dioceses of Uganda, during their planning meeting at ARU Secretariat.

The celebration of the golden jubilee dates back in the subsequent AMECEA plenary meetings that confirmed the establishment of SCCs as a way forward for the Church in the AMECEA region to become really local. That is, self-ministering, self-propagating and self-supporting. The AMECEA Bishops affirmed!

SCCs are the fruits of the Vatican Council II that came in 1962 - 1965 and an awakening of the Church as “family of God.” However, the SCCs in the AMECEA region described using the metaphor of a trickle of water that develops into a small stream and turns into a small river that is fed by many tributaries and slowly grows into a mighty river.

The theme of the celebration is: **“Small Christian Communities: 50 years of building the Church as Family of God in the AMECEA region.”**

In the evaluation and the effectiveness of this strategy, the celebration is looking back from where they were, where they are and seek to embrace the future with confidence that through SCCs, the Christian faith will further take root in the AMECEA region. There are movements in the Church but SCCs are not; they are a Church on the move (mobile Church). They are a new way of becoming a Church.

SCCs are not a new model of being the Church because they date back to the first century in the history of the Christian Church. After the resurrection of Christ, there were no Church buildings as they are today but people met in their homes like the house of Lidia for prayer and breaking of the bread.

The inspiration of the birth of SCCs is drawn from the Biblical text like the “Acts 2:42 - 45 which

demonstrates how they remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles to the brotherhood, breaking of bread and prayer. Remarkably, there was no poor among SCCs as the whole community of believers was of one mind and heart. This is the foundation of the contemporary SCCs.

The assembly of believers from the neighborhood gather in homes, they are a Church at the grassroots, which helps them develop a sense of belonging through caring for one another



Rev. Fr. John Baptist Kaganda, the National Pastoral Coordinator, during keynote address of the planning meeting.



Some of the participants in attendance, during the SCCs planning meeting at ARU Secretariat.

PMS Minister to street children



Sr. Fernanda Critinelli, CMS (left background), The Director, Rev. Fr. Dr. Ambrose Bwangatto and Team of PMS, Kampala Archdiocese, happily share a moment with children at Comboni Day Care Centre. Courtesy Photo.

By Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru

The Pontifical Mission Societies – PMS of Kampala Archdiocese is on the streets to establish the full plight of street children in the Archdiocese. This came after a meeting, which enabled networking and collaboration between ARU under the subcommittee of Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation.

There are ongoing conversations to see how ARU's Catholic Care for Children (CCCU) can also be of help in supporting the efforts of the Dioceses of Karamoja Region. Such synergies would mitigate the plight and abuse of Karamojong children in the streets of Kampala.

The Director of PMS, Fr Ambrose Bwangatto, animates the Mission of the Church through the various Mission pillars as spelled out by His Holiness Pope Francis. Similarly, His Grace Paul Semogerere, the

Archbishop of Kampala, is empathetic about the plight of the children on the streets of Kampala and in the slums as they all belong to the pastoral jurisdiction of His Grace. "I would like to have all street children back to their homes and live with dignity as children of God. I appreciate the central city location of the jurisdiction that hosts refugees and street children. Thus, building the mission of the church, as it opens our hearts to love of neighbour."

The street activity based on the Lenten pillars of Prayer, Fasting and Alms giving commenced in March 2023. The events included the commissioning of the new PMS Team of the Archdiocese: The Director, Fr. Ambrose Bwangatto, Secretary, Ms. Juliet Bukenya of Pontifical Missions office and Mrs. Dorothy Ssonko Animator for Missionary Holy Childhood together with other members for the wellbeing of all children as they belong to the church and her mission.

The new team started their mission with an outreach, where Ms. Veronica Nalubega, and Mrs. Mugisha Florence offered to give alms in form of food items and toiletries to the street children and those in the slums of Katwe at St. Daniel Comboni Children Transit Centre.

"Children are protagonists and evangelizers to fellow children. Their call of Children helping fellow children, evangelizing fellow children by living well their pillars of loving caring and sharing should be upheld," said Fr. Ambrose. PMS is vigilant about the vibrant Missionary activity that is comprehensive and inclusive of all people in the spirit of Synodality, he added.



Children of Comboni Day Care Centre during Fr. Bwangatto's visit. Courtesy Photo.

The Pontifical Mission Societies include; the Propagation of Faith (POF) which plays a leading role in the promotion of the universal mission and reawaken the missionary spirit among all people mostly adults.

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Pontifical Mission Society of St. Peter the Apostle (SPA) which raises awareness among all people mostly the youth who are invited to take part in the formation for various vocations. And also, to pray for the vocations to priestly and religious life as well as give material or financial contributions for the cause.

While, Pontifical Mission Society of Missionary Union (PMU) promotes awareness and the spirit of unity, prayer and generous sacrifice among the priests, religious and the laity. Pontifical Mission Society of Missionary Holy Childhood (MHC) intensifies missionary animation and formation of the universal missionary spirit among children and their animators and nurtures integral human and social development by safeguarding their rights and promoting their wellbeing.

“We in the Holy Childhood office, are answering the call of Pope Francis to care for all creation and listening to the cry of the poor (*Laudato si’ goals 1&2*). In the spirit of universal brotherhood (*Fratelli Tutti*) is using comprehensive and inclusive approach to children evangelism.

The ‘animation tents’ would be widened to include of all children even those with special needs (children with disabilities). Where they ought to be loved, respected and animated fully regardless of where they are; school, parish, home, on the street, hospital, prison or child-care homes,” Fr. Ambrose observed.



Rev. Fr. Dr. Ambrose Bwangatto, Director of PMS, Kmapala Archdiocese, shares a joyful moment with street and slums children at Katwe informal settlement. Courtesy Photo.

The plight of child trafficking and street children

According to UNICEF Uganda, an estimated 15,000 children are on the streets. Many of these children come from Napak District of Karamoja, in the Catholic Diocese of Moroto. Most children are forced to migrate as a result of insecurity and harsh climatic conditions that have caused drought, poverty and food insecurity in the region. Others are lured out of Karamoja by their peers, or individuals promising better opportunities. Thus, a push factor causing vulnerability, constituting trafficking in Persons (TIP).

These children are brought to the city to provide cheap labour as maids in homes and casual workers at building sites, markets and industries and begging. The working conditions like nonpayment, no accommodation, sexual harassment lead them on the streets and some flee their homes due to physical or psychological abuse by parents and caretakers who think children should fend for the elderly.

Intervention to rehabilitate street children

In 2019, Kampala City Authority passed a law banning people from giving money or food to street children as a way to demotivate them and their sponsors from coming to the streets. City authorities said the law was aimed at curbing children’s commercial and sexual exploitation. Offenders could face up to six months imprisonment.

The high number of children on the streets has forced child support organizations to come up with strategies for interventions to help these children and restore their dignity. One of them is St. Daniel Comboni Children’s Centre near St. Denis Catholic Sub-parish Katwe of Nsambya Parish. The Centre works in collaboration with In Need Home (Child Care Centre). It’s a diocesan program of Catholic Diocese of Moroto under Women and Equal Opportunities Desk (WEOD) with Sr Fernanda Christelli, CMS, as Coordinator.

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St. Daniel Comboni Children's Centre is a Transit, where street children are rehabilitated and later reintegrated to their families and homes in Karamoja region. The Program takes care of 437 children below 12 years and 216 teenagers. They give support to 350 teenage mothers and 276 teenage fathers who are also household heads. These beneficiaries are both in Moroto and Kampala.



Fr. Ambrose Bwangatto, Director PMS, Kampala Archdiocese meets street community in kampala. Courtesy photo.

Every day the Centre receives about 120 children below 17 years for counselling and or psychosocial support, feeding, clothing and early childhood education to enhance their social and cognitive development as well as conducting behavioral change programs for the teenagers.

“We enable these children have a safe place for transition as they enjoy a flavor of their childhood. In addition, we give a more child friendly environment back home in Karamoja. We have collaborated with some Agencies like In Need a Home - Uganda, St. John Paul Peace and Justice Centre, Lay Apostolate department of Uganda Episcopal conference, Italian Episcopal Conference and Catholic Diocese of Moroto.”

Sr. Fernanda the Coordinator of the Centre noted about enabling environment for the children.

With the Parliamentarians of Uganda from Napak District, we have collaborated to address children issues. The group discussed about the plight of street children and possible interventions to rebuild the dignity of the children. An engagement with Angella Daniel the Social Worker at the centre intimated

that most beneficiaries at the center are residents of some slums in Katwe, Kisenyi, Mengo, Bulenga and Makindye.

Conclusively, PMS has teamed with St. Daniel Comboni Centre. They are determined to continue with advocacy and awareness on responsible parenting. This intervention targets communities of Karamoja region with continuous campaign against human trafficking. The team urges the Church to have intentional and strategic pastoral programs on safe guarding and promoting the rights of all children inclusively by constituting a diocesan child protection unit. They also urge the government to support construction of transit centers where children are rehabilitated, later reintegrated and reconciled with their biological communities.



Director PMS and Team, Kampala Archdiocese, among kids of informal settlement at Katwe, Kampala. Courtesy Photo.



Rev. Fr. Dr. Ambrose Bwangatto and Team among kids at Comboni Care Centre in Kampala. Courtesy Photo.

ARU-CCCU Participates in the National Nutrition Symposium



A panel of facilitators during the ARU-CCCU National nutrition symposium. Courtesy photo.

***By Caroline Nansukusa -
ARU-CCCU Case Management
Officer***

Catholic Care for Children Uganda (CCCU) Nutrition and Feeding Master Trainers, a program under the Spoon Nutrition and Feeding Project participated in the symposium with the abstract title: **Improving Nutrition and Feeding for Children with Disabilities.**

The three-day event under the overall theme: **Strengthening Systems for Improved Nutrition in Uganda** attracted participants in renown Health Specialists, Researchers, Scientists from the Ministry of Health and Line Ministries, Health and Nutrition Partners including WHO, UNICEF, WFP, Save the Children, World Vision, among others.

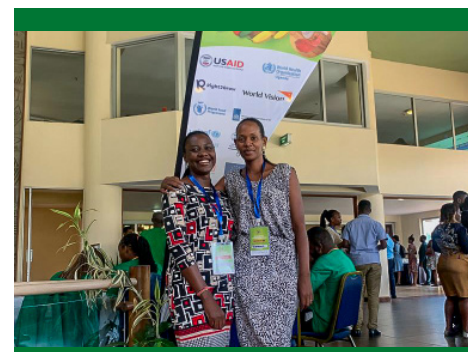
ARU's CCCU participated in the National Nutrition Symposium in February 15 - 17, 2023. The sub-theme: **Nutrition in Health and Disease** guided the training. ARU-CCCU was selected to share their story in a more prestigious category of physical presentations out of thousands of abstracts selected through rigorous criteria. Ms. Doreen Alupo, one of the Master Trainers did the presentation.

The different topics offered participants lessons on Nutrition and Feeding of typical children between 0-5 years. However, there is an obvious gap in the Nutrition and Feeding for children living with disabilities in general and more specifically disabilities that affect feeding.

Limited information and work negatively hinder Nutrition and Feeding for children with disabilities.

ARU-CCCU offers an opportunity to share their unique services and in so doing would improve the health and nutrition outcomes for children with disabilities beyond their present core program areas.

The Abstracts were given sub-themes of the main theme, seven in total, including; Maternal, Infant, Young Child and Adolescent Nutrition (MIYCAN), Nutrition in Health and Disease, Nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation, Human Resources for Nutrition, Nutrition Financing in Uganda, Supplies for Nutrition in Uganda and Multi-sectoral response to Improving Nutrition-Food Systems for accelerating human, social and economic development.



Some of the panel facilitators share a memorable moment during the National nutrition symposium.



A facilitator making a presentation during the symposium. Courtesy photo.

ARU-CCCU presentation was unique and they shared the work they do specifically among the most vulnerable yet probably the least cared for population; the children living with disabilities. They used a slogan **Counting in Every Child (CEC)**. A presentation that stirred up an often ignored but extremely important conversation of Nutrition for children living with disabilities that impact feeding.

They now believe that they set the stage for this conversation to continue in the most important places that would positively impact the lives of these children through more inclusive interventions, guidelines and policies in the nutrition spaces nationwide.

Other remarkable participants in the symposium included; Universities in Uganda, other Regional and Global Institutions; Directors of Health Institutions, NGOs and Parliamentary Alliance for Nutrition and Policymakers from various government Ministries in Uganda, Africa and Global Agencies at large.

Called to a faith that bears witness – Fr. Pontiano



Rev. Fr. Ponsiano Kaweesa, Director of Pontifical Missionary Societies Uganda presiding over the liturgy on the world day of prayer for vocations

By ARU Reporter

This year, on April 20, 2023, the 60th World Day of Prayer for vocations took another twist when the organizers chose to make Vocation Expo at St. Mbaga - Ggaba Seminary grounds. The event attracted hundreds of clerics, religious, seminarians and the lay faithful.

World Day of Prayer for vocations which was established by Saint Paul VI on April 11, 1964, during the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, this year, was guided by the theme: Your Vocation is your Mission.

Rev Fr. Pontiano Kaweesa the National Director of Pontifical Mission Society presided over the Mass.

“It looks a lot more like Pentecost on this ground today!” He exclaimed on this auspicious solemn day. “We have come from all the different corners of the world – villages and towns, and we have come to celebrate and hear more about our unique vocations in this life. Only the Holy Spirit can make us understand one another in our diversity,” said Fr. Pontiano.

The Holy Father, Pope Francis in his message to the Universal Church on this very important World Day of Prayer for Vocations dwelt so much on the theme of the day. “We thank the Lord of harvest who has called you to this life and mission. We are priests, deacons, religious men, and women and the lay faithful, Baptized and Sent,” he added.

Fr. Pontiano defined vocation as a calling in life;

that which an individual is and does in life. It must be a good thing! There is no vocation for stealing, killing, corrupting, or torturing others. A vocation is what God calls you to be and to do; God sustains you. A genuine vocation involves a sacrifice of self – self-sacrifice, a dying to oneself for the sake of what God wants you do and for the other.

According to the preacher of the day, the Lord's call is grace, complete gift, and at the same time a commitment to bring the Gospel to others. ... we are called to a faith that bears witness, one that closely connects the life of grace as experienced in the sacraments and ecclesial communion. In the vocation to the priesthood, God calls an individual man (young or old) and after a few years of formation and training, with the approval of the Church, one is ordained a priest, and a priest for life.

While the seminarians cannot reach the end goal without realizing the smaller goals: Acolyte, Reader, Candidacy, Diaconate, and a life consonant with those ministries. World Day of Prayer for Vocations seeks to assist the members of the People of God, as individuals and communities, to respond to the call and mission that the Lord entrusts to each of us in today's world amid its afflictions, hopes, challenges and achievements.

Today, Pastors /Shepherds in the vineyard of the Lord carry out the Lord's command to pray for vocations especially to the priesthood and consecrated life. Asking the Lord to send more laborers into his vineyard; for the harvest is plenty, but the laborers are few (Mt. 9:38).



Consecrated Persons in a group photo with the National Director PMS, Fr. Pontiano Kaweesa, (Centre in white chesuble) after Mass at St. Mbaga Seminary grounds. Photo by ARU Reporter.

The vocation to the consecrated life is a special calling to bind oneself to the Lord, serving Him alone within a community. Jesus, the Spouse of the Church becomes their very spouse in a symbolic way. No one can serve two masters (Mt. 6a;24). Fr. Pontiano said that, we need to listen to and serve one Master, Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

There is no vocation without mission. Being sent to witness is the greater part of the call. You do not become a priest or religious for your own sake; we have to offer others the new life that we have found; that is where happiness and self-realization of vocations are found. We cannot afford to remain silent and self-contented! St. Paul in 1 Cor. 9:16: "Woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!"

Fr. Pontiano further informed the congregation that; "this mission is not ours, it is the Lord's and the Church's mission; it is God's work; it is not carried out by us alone, but always in ecclesial communion, together with our brothers and sisters, and under the guidance of the

Church's pastors. The Holy Spirit animates it in ever new ways. It enlightens our minds, strengthens our wills, fills us with amazement and sets our hearts afire. Each one should recall their vocation story."

The participants were informed that the shared mission as Christians is to bear joyful witness at all times, through actions, words and the experience of being with Jesus and members of his community, which is the Church... After the heart of the Good Shepherd. The pastoral agent should enable others listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd.

During his homily Fr. Pontiano compared Christian vocation to the parable of the Good Samaritan, "we come to understand that the heart of our Christian vocation is to imitate Jesus Christ, who came to serve not to be served (Mk 10:45). This is in line with the variety of vocations, charisms and ministries. Life without vocation is not worth living!

Pope Francis speaks of “Vocational Symphony” – the variety of vocations... Every vocation united yet distinct, in harmony and joined together in “going forth” to radiate throughout the world the new life of the kingdom of God.” This is the tapestry of vocations in the Church.

Accordingly, vocation is the interplay between a divine choice and human freedom- what takes place between God and the human heart... Through vocation, God calls us in love and we, in gratitude, respond to him in love and personally engaged in your calling.

As a people of an ecclesial vocation, the Word of God should set our hearts on fire and our feet on the move. “The gospel icon of a vocation is drawn from the experience of two disciples on the road to Emmaus, (Lk. 24:32); “were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road while he was opening the Scriptures to us?”

Pope Francis adds that, those who are called in these two vocations and ways of life are to minister to the Church with the gaze on Jesus Christ – the Good Shepherd. Without losing focus, direction and bearing. Unfortunately, some have lost this direction and started their own churches!

Fr. Pontiano calls all to pray for vocations and work zealously to defend and support the Church in all ways.



A crosssection of Seminarians and lay people who turned up for the world day of prayer for vocations at Ggaba major seminary. Photo by ARU Reporter.

Support vocations and the institutions that train and form those that are called by the Lord, there is need for material support – real physical support, money and voluntary service.

He reminded the congregation that, on World Day of Prayers for vocations, local contributions are made and money collected towards the Universal Solidarity Fund. The Holy Father uses this fund to support vocations and their institutions in the mission territories, like Uganda and other countries considered to be the young and vibrant churches.

When the General Secretary of the Pontifical Society of St. Peter Apostle (POSPA) visited Uganda this year in February, he made a comment that we all need to pay attention to.

“POSPA is like a mother who is often forgotten or neglected by her own children. Bishops, priests, the religious, seminarians and novices benefit from the assistance provided through POSPA for their education, formation, and training. However, some of these people have gone through and they become whatever they become bishops, parish priests, religious educator etc., and forget to raise the same awareness for the benefit of others!

Married couples and families are the bedrock of vocations. Parents are encouraged to teach their young children about these special vocations which are symbiotic,

in sort of symbiosis -interdependence, interconnectedness, interpenetration! Without married couples with children, there would be no vocations to the priesthood and religious life. And without the vocations to the priesthood, we would have just a sacrament-less Church. This vocation Sunday is meant to **raise awareness for the need to pray and attract more vocations to the priesthood and the religious life.**



Consecrated persons take offertory gifts during the world day of prayer for vocations. Photo by ARU Reporter.

Prophetic Nature of Consecrated life



Sr. Mary Hilda, Sisters of Notre Dame addressing the congregation during the World Day of Prayer for vocations at St. Mbaaga, Ggaba Major Seminary. Photo by ARU Reporter.

*By Sr. Mary Hilda
Sisters of Notre Dame.*

Consecrated life is a state of life in the Catholic Church, lived by those faithful, called to follow Christ in a more exacting way. It is a special lifestyle (a special way of holiness marked by the profession of the evangelical counsels).

The characteristics of consecrated life are the seeds of poverty, chastity and obedience referred to as the evangelical counsels. Poverty means, giving everything to Christ and not possessing anything on our own but living and sharing in communion. Obedience refers to seeing and doing God's will in everything. It is all about surrendering our own will and accepting to do the will of the master who is Christ Jesus. Chastity is a loving response to God's love for us.

One of the roles of consecrated persons is the prophetic nature. Like the Biblical prophets, consecrated persons are called to condemn the sins and indifference of the people to the teachings of Christ and their holiness of life. How do we condemn sin when we are sinners ourselves? How do we lead others to Christ when we get lost sometimes?

We need to ask ourselves these questions: Can Jesus count on me as a consecrated person? Does He have full trust and joy in my life of consecration? What would heaven witness about my personal consecration to the Lord? Is what I do during the day and in the midst of others the same thing I do when I am alone? **What we do when no one is seeing us defines our identity!**

Consecrated life is lived and shared in community.

The seeds of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience grows and bears much fruit in our community living and in our service to others. Therefore, our communities should help us become better-consecrated persons. How much of myself do I give to others? It is a big challenge for us because when we follow Christ, we become one like him. What does my presence as a consecrated person bring in the church? Is the church different because of my presence as a consecrated person?

As we celebrate Vocation Sunday, we also remember our personal call. We not only celebrate our presence as consecrated persons but challenges faced as a consecrated person.

The Lord does not want a big number of consecrated persons but rather he desires individuals who are genuinely poor, chaste and obedient to his teachings. There is a fall in consecrated life today. But we should also remember that the Lord himself fell three times on his way to Calvary.



A cross-section of Sisters from different Institutes attending the the world day of prayer for vocations at St. Mbaaga, Ggaba Major Seminary. Photo by ARU Reporter.

We need constant evaluation; “does my life as a consecrated person create a positive impact in the church and to the people I serve and those that I live with?” This is the very reason why Christ has set us apart: To give sight to the blind, to feed the hungry, to shelter the homeless, to heal the wounded and broken hearted and above all to be instruments of God’s peace, love and his presence in the world by promoting justice for all.

Let us not concentrate on professionalism but be true witnesses to the Gospel of Christ by being genuine, compassionate, charitable and present consecrated persons here and now!



Consecrated Women and Men who turned up for the world day of prayer for vocations at St. Mbaaga, Ggaba major seminary. Photo by ARU Reporter.

Prayer for vocations Pope Saint Paul VI, composed this prayer when he inaugurated the World Day of Prayer for Vocations (April 11, 1964):

“O Jesus, divine Shepherd of souls, you called the apostles and made them fishers of men. Continue to draw to yourself ardent and generous souls from among the young, to make them your followers and your ministers. Give them a share in your thirst for the redemption of all...Open before them the horizons of the entire world...

By responding to your call, may they prolong your mission here on earth, build up your Mystical Body, which is the Church, and be “the salt of the earth” and the light of the world” (Mt. 5:13).

Called to Speak with the Heart



The Archbishop of Kampala Archdiocese, His Grace Paul Ssemogerere (M) in group photo with invited government guests in Rubaga Cathedral shortly after celebrating Mass to commemorate world Social Communications Day. Photo by ARU Reporter.

By ARU Reporter

The Annual World Day of Social Communications 2023 attracted a crowd of participants, who joined the members of Catholic Media Fraternity at Rubaga Cathedral. Having hosted the event this year, Kampala Archdiocese handed over the next race to Arua Diocese after receiving the Symbolic Drum that rotates among members of Catholic Media Houses.

The World Communication Day that culminated on May 14, 2023 at Rubaga Cathedral and at the Archbishop's garden hosted Social Communicators from the four (4) Ecclesiastical provinces in Uganda. His Grace Paul Ssemogerere led the Eucharistic celebrations.

The event was preceded by Communications Week (May 9-15). Ulrika Guest House hosted the participants. The week was punctuated by reports from Diocesan Media Houses, and other Catholic Media Institutions, Business meeting, Reflection on the theme and World Communications Day Message and a workshop on **“Establishing and managing a sustainable media in the digital age.”**

The scribes, the fourth-estate (communicators) were challenged to become passionate with **Digital Media** that covers anything that uses the web, such as social media, news sites, and apps. The participants were exposed to the fact that, the traditional concept of the audience as mere listeners, viewers or readers of mass media content no longer holds. The advent of the New Media (Social Media) has given the audience new and multiple roles—and the communication process is now witnessing ‘reverse communication’ (Obiaje, K. M. (2022).

“Access to the internet in the digital age has created virtual spaces where the audience now congregate. The concept of time and space is essential when defining the audience.”

This years' annual event was guided by the theme:



His Grace Paul Ssemogerere, the Clergy, Government guests and Social Communicators pose for a group memorial photo inside Rubaga Cathedral during the commemoration of world Social Communications day. Photo by ARU Reporter.

: **Speaking with the Heart, “the truth in love,”** which spurs communicators to go, see, listen, and move them towards an open and welcoming way of communicating, as engineered by His Holiness Pope Francis.

In his message for the 57th World Day of Social Communication, Pope Francis said, communicators need to listen to others with pure hearts to be able to speak following the truth in love. “Communicators should not be afraid of proclaiming the truth, even if it is at times uncomfortable because the Christian’s programme –as Benedict XVI wrote, is a heart which sees.”

“Communicating in a cordial manner which means that those who read or listen to us are led to welcome our participation in the joys, fears, hopes and suffering of the women and men of our time. Those who speak in this way love the other because they care and protect their freedom without violating.” Pope Francis said.

The Pope added that speaking with the heart is seen in the mystery that dialogues with the disciples

headed to Emmaus, after the tragedy that took place at Golgotha. The Risen Jesus speaks to them with the heart, accompanying the journey of their suffering with respect, proposing and not imposing himself and lovingly opening their minds to understand the profound meaning of what had happened.

In the Church too, Pope Francis says, there is a great need to listen and hear one another. It is the most precious and life-giving gift Christians can offer each other. **“We have a pressing need in the Church for communication that kindles hearts, that is balm on wounds and that shines light on the journey of our brothers and sisters.”** He also desires a communication, which puts the relationship with God and one’s neighbor, especially the neediest, at the centre and which knows how to light the fire of faith rather than preserve the ashes of self-referential identity. In fact a form of communication founded on humanity in listening and parrhesia (speaking openly) in speaking, which never separates truth from charity.

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Pope Francis emphasizes that today, more than ever, speaking with the heart is essential to foster a culture of peace in places where there is war; to open paths that allow for dialogue and reconciliation in places where hatred and enmity rage. It is urgent to maintain a form of communication that is not hostile in this dramatic context of global conflict people are experiencing...



His Grace Paul Ssemogerere joins the Guest of Honour Rt. Hon. Thomas Tayebwa and other clergy to cut a cake during the commemoration of World Social Communications day at Rubaga Cathedral. Photo by ARU Reporter.

Proverbs:

*A person is judged by deeds not by words;
One is judged by what he/he does not by the words*

A Monkey in silk is a monkey no less.

No matter how someone dresses, it's the same person underneath

Counsellors to promote a communal transformation



Counselors pose for a memorial photo after session. Courtesy photo from the counselors.

By Sr. Editrudis J. Kajuna, OLCG

Counsellors Network and Services Project (CNSP) initiated in 2022; has finally taken off and is operational at Uganda Spiritual Formation Centre, Namugongo (USFCN). CNSP membership is open to consecrated persons trained in Counseling and working within the scope from a Diploma level and above.

The origin of Counselling Hub is traced from All Africa Conference of Sister to Sister (AAC: SS). They give sisters who are trained in counseling profession an opportunity for collaboration in the counselling ministry, promote networking, on-going professional development and enrichment.

CNSP administration intended the project to foster personal and communal transformation. They would facilitate a healthy community development and enhance capacity for ministry outreach to others with efficiency; while responding to the current needs of the church and society in relation to mental health issues.

Counsellors Network and Services Project - CNSP is available to support members of consecrated life as well families and children. The project uses the holistic approach to enhance community transformation. CNSP helps with all the resources and support that are needed to find the right counsellor.

Counsellors Network and Service Project which operates under the management of AAC: SS, is found in six Sub-Saharan countries (Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe Cam

eroon and Nigeria) collaborates with the ARU to support the Religious in their Mission and services.

The staff of the Hub work to foster this collaboration among the counsellors and develop ways that lead to better service delivery. The sister counsellors will have opportunities for professional growth through varied platforms (conferences, chapter meetings and learnings).

Other services offered by CNSP include; counselling services to institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life and individuals. The team also gives an opportunity for conversations about different topics concerning life; (e.g., human development, life transitions, aging and ageism, mental health care etc.).

Consultation on psychosocial wellness and mental health, counselling services for families and children, seminars and courses for professional growth, depression counselling, stress management counselling, career counselling, retirement and retrenchment counselling, terminal illness therapy, family therapy, transition psychotherapy, crisis counselling and many more.



Participants in a group photo during field sessions



Participants of CNSP in a session during field sessions

CNSP gives an opportunity to institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life to consult on issues concerning human development, life transitions, age and aging, mental health, diverse encounters in religious life, psychotherapy, as well topics for formation and development of peoples especially, members of the Institute and their mission challenges. People will be helped to develop awareness, perception and satisfaction towards counselling so that they become positive about seeking counselling and encouraging others to seek it before they get into alarming mental situations.

The guiding objectives for the activities include;

1. Establishing a network of trained sisters to foster ongoing professional development and a forum for collaboration on ways to address emerging and pressing societal issues.
2. Staffing Counseling Centre (hub) to support members of religious congregations as well as families and children
3. Serve as a training site for sister counselors who can in turn create additional satellite hubs in Uganda and other African countries.

CNSP will be available and ready to offer support to the new satellite counseling centres.

The support is in terms of technical consultations, which include but not limited to planning, implementation and supervision (preliminary work plan, implementation and continuous evaluations).

CNSP has come at a time societies are experiencing many challenges that are affecting the mental wellness of many people irrespective of age, sex, status and level of education.

CNSP may not meet all the mental societal demands but believe that since it is a network with an intention of empowering religious professional counsellors, and offering psychological/emotional support to the challenged religious and families at large; the empowered and supported individuals will be the ambassadors to other challenged persons to gain mental wellness. We believe that: **“Individually we are a Drop; together we are an Ocean”**.

This project is a response to the need highlighted at the beginning of AAC: SS around 2002. From 2007; AAC: SS has been training Psychosocial Counsellors with a grant from GHR Foundation.

The sister counsellors are doing various ministries as assigned by their particular Institutes to bring positive change to the society.

Proverb:
A little fire is quickly trodden out.
If you deal with
a minor problem quickly,
it will not become a major issue

HOW ADDICTION DETERIORATES HUMAN LIVES



Formators and facilitators in a memorial photo at ARU Secretariat shortly after the successful completion of the training on addiction. Photo by ARU Reporter.

By Sr. Maria J. Nandugga, IHMR

“Addiction is all over, in our families (both biological and spiritual). Knowing realities of this subject will help handle, identify, equip and empower religious leaders, consecrated persons and formees in addressing it in the apostolate,” the Coordinator of Formators, Br. Franklin Rukundo, FIC, observed.

Common addiction elements include phones, food, drugs, skills, LGBTQ+. The consecrated persons should take the lead in addressing the challenge in the institutions and various areas of apostolate, they head Br. Franklin added.

Participants learnt that, Human beings are born unique and no one is replaceable. “Self” is the way we perceive and interpret the world. The way we perceive the world is the way we relate with it.

The way we perceive and interpret the world reflects the family backgrounds that molded and nurtured individuals. However, these families vary and each uniquely grows and nurtures individuals in a different way. They include, biological, nuclear, soul step parent, communal and homosexual families.

As human beings grow up, they tend to develop certain addictions depending on their family background, where they grew up. People knowingly or unknowingly suffer from a certain type of addictions such as; substance addiction, behavioral, food, sex, pornography, prescribed drugs among others.

Addiction develops in human beings in stages as they grow up and engage with certain habits. The first stage entails mood changes, less time for other people,

sneaking out, loss of appetite and the like. As addiction develops to a second stage, you will realize that there is increased mood changes, increased intolerance, negativity, calmness and increased loss of appetite.

A human being suffering from addiction at a third stage will have loss of self-control on substance, denial, guilt and remorse due to confrontations from others that haunt them, isolation and loss of job, dropout from school, relationship hardships are some of the typical characteristics.

Tremors, impaired judgement, obsessiveness, malnourishment, total loss of self-care, coupled with fears and vague spiritual desires will kick in at the fourth stage of addiction if the person does not reflect on their life and change to sobriety.



Participants keenly listening to the facilitators during the training on addiction. Photo by ARU Reporter.

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Members also learnt that, the brain is composed of a hormone known as Dopamine, which is responsible for movement, memory, pleasurable reward and motivation. When a person gets addicted to drugs, the **dopamine** is used up leading to dysfunctional brains and the consequent loss of control.

The most used administrations of drugs that lead to addiction are oral, injection, inhalation, subcutaneously, intravenously, with injection and inhalation topping the rest in use.

A good family is seen in the ability to solve problems, communicate well, deal with conflicts and able to adjust. However, every family has particular types of people; a hero is a problem solver, scape goat is often blamed and forgotten, mascot responsible for cracking jokes even where it's not necessary, last child who is always quiet and isolated bringing the rear with the enabler who promotes addiction in doing acts of mercy.

Once a person is an addict forever, they can only recover by staying away from drugs. However, sometimes addicts blamed yet it is genetically inherent to them. It passes from one person to another. Addictions also vary from culture to culture.

The concept of half-life in addiction explains best how drugs accumulate in the body. For example, when a person takes four bottles of beer a day, the body can only get rid of two of them a day. This indicates that a person needs two days in order to drink again. However,



Participants in a training session on addiction at ARU Secretariat, Holy Family Hall, Nsambya. Photo by ARU Reporter.

when a person keeps drinking every day, two bottles remain in the body, which keeps on accumulating until someone becomes addicted.

Sexual addiction or compulsive sexual behavior is yet another mainly caused by intensive sexual fantasies. Some people who suffer from it have a history of mental disorder, mood disorders, anxiety, and obsessive disorders, among others. Sex addiction is similar with other addictions.

Sex addiction is caused through genes, hormones, environmental influences, mental health, rejection in relationships, social isolation, social learning like watching others do it, among others. It comes in a variety of forms such as, sexual acts, prostitution, pornography, masturbation or sexual fantasy, penetrative sex, sexual mania, fetishism and necrophilia.

Sometimes people don't know that they are sex addicts but signs to indicate that one is a sex addict are obsessed sex, masturbation increase, frequent view of pornography, excessive time on sexual activities frequent engage

ment in paraphilia, failure to stop sexual behavior despite the negative consequences to one's finances, relationship, health or emotions.

Being an addict to a certain habit does not mean the end of the world; there are forms of treatment that can help one overcome this addiction. Individual therapy, group, physical, occupational and health nutrition plans are some forms of treatment to help one overcome the addiction.

The healing process of addiction has four stages – starting with pre-contemplation where a person becomes aware that they are addicted, on the second stage, which is contemplation, a person begins to weigh options while the preparation stage, one is trying to change.

However, chances are high for relapse and a person is likely to be tempted to think of again going back to former state of drunkenness or other addictions.

This calls for selfcare, awareness and support through patient understanding where necessary.

Sisters for Leadership Capacity Building



Consecrated persons graduate after successful completion of Professional Development for Congregational Leadership (PDCL) training at ARU Secretariat. Photo by ARU Reporter.

Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru, MSMMC

The Professional Development for Congregational Leaders (PDCL) – Kampala-Uganda is engaging another gear. Registration for the second cohort of trainees is ongoing. This leadership capacity building offers skills to lead with a sense of responsibility and freedom. Experienced facilitators walk with participants/mentees while sharing leadership experiences that enable reciprocal empowerment on leadership journey.

PDCL is a leadership empowerment program, an outreach programme developed under the Centre for Leadership and Management (CLM), Tangaza University College, Nairobi. The program targets Major Superiors of Women Religious Institutes (General Council, Provincial council, Regional council, Delegate council, Zonal Council).

It is a program created in Africa, for the leadership empowerment of congregations of women religious working in Africa. The pioneer group of trainees of major superiors of consecrated women under the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) completed their three modules and graduated on...

Sr. Alice Anzoyo C. Dralu, SHS, the Director of Centre for CLM Tangaza University that hosts the program narrated that, PDCL evolved from a humble beginning at the Centre for Leadership and Management. "This was meant to address the need for leadership formation to meet the contemporary needs. Sr. Loretta Brennan, the Founder, played a key role at the initial stages of this program for the benefit of the congregational leaders."

DePaul University, Chicago equally supported PDCL through Sr. Patricia Bombard, BVM. The long transition journey came through competence based-adult learning methodologies, which provides broad based learning opportunity for learning.

The program that was initiated in 2015 progressed gradually, with inputs from participants themselves, now to suit the local needs of the sisters in congregational leadership in the region. It is also transformed and keeps evolving according to the changing context of the world in which the consecrated persons serve and respond to their mission.

Sr. Alice, the current Director of the Centre for Leadership and Management joined the staff team of CLM, Tangaza University College in 2010. She is among the team of expert facilitators of the training, and heads the department that is home to PDCL outreach program in Tangaza University College.



Some of the symbols used by professional development for congregational leaders. Photo by ARU Reporter.

Sr. Loretta Brennan, CSB, the first Director of the Centre for Leadership and Management conceived the idea to found a leadership training program for major superiors. She reached out to Faith and Praxis (the programme that offers leadership capacity building for International Union of Superiors General (UISG), Rome), to train a team in Tangaza University College. And few congregational leaders responded, in view of forming the initial group who would then become trainers for the local program. The training methodology adopted three (3) modules of 5-days each, with two (2) additional modules to train the trainers.

From DePaul University, Sr. Patricia Bombard, BVM, added the Value Centred Leadership component to make the two additional modules to train the trainers.

The initial group of Associate for the required training of major superiors. Thus, the theme of Module 1 is “Developing the Leader Within”, Module 2 is “Creating a Faith-filled Congregational Culture” and Module 3 is “Leadership for Mission”. The content delivery is very sensitive to the context where the program is being delivered.

PDCL is a holistic program that focuses on the person of the superior, the congregation/institute as an organization, and the mission of the institute. This entails content materials are person oriented, organization oriented and mission oriented for superiors so that they are able to empower their own sisters in the formation of mindset.



Participants of Professional Development for Congregational Leaders attending the training at ARU Secretariat. Photo by ARU Reporter.

The Program is all about developing intrinsic leadership capacity used to influence other members, faith community and culture. There is also need to recognize that much as people come from given cultures, there is need to **make a shift to become a faith community**. Similar to the principles of interculturality, there is need to recognize that some cultural practices can be of help but others that cannot help must be dropped for the sake of communion. Cultural diversity is wealth! Christ is the uniting cultural factor; we all need to shed off something in order to give room for Christ-culture.

Some of the achievements of PDCL include a growing network of collaboration among superiors who have attended the program, sharing of insights and critical incidences. Congregations used to see each other as competitors but now they view each other as collaborators. PDCL encourages congregational leaders to attend the program as teams.

This will help them function as a team, thereby holding congregational values, charism and mission at heart in decision-making process. Sr. Alice, the Director, CLM appreciates the first Ugandan team who did well

to bring the program home, to Uganda. They include; Sr. Margaret Magoba, OLG, Coordinator, PDCL-Uganda, Sr. Rita Naki-tende, LSSF, Sr. Jane Yatuha, OLG.

Like others, PDCL also face a number of challenges. Among others, many participants attend Module 1 and drop out in successive Modules, mainly due to the very busy schedule of major superiors, hence slightly above half the starting number complete the training up to graduation. Some interested members from among the first graduates of PDCL-Kampala-Uganda will join the Train the Trainers (ToT) programme in June, 2023, being held in Nairobi. They will become Associate Trainers and eventually trainers of the PDCL program.

PDCL has grown considerably because the core team uses feedback from participants through evaluation reports in order to keep growing and shaping the program.

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This has enabled the program to grow towards addressing contextual needs and challenges in leadership today.

For graduation, participants use African dress code and ritualistic items

with symbolic meaning. A wrapper, an open pot with lighted candle, (PDCL logo), calabash, candle light... etc., to mention a few. Thus, integrating culture with faith; and being at home with faith and practice.

This is a wake-up call for all members of congregational leadership who are still far from joining this programme. Come three, come all to make the religious institutes a better place to serve the spouse and humanity!

SACRED HEART SISTERS FOR PEACE BUILDING AGENDA



Sr. Mary Atimango in a meeting with St. Paul Youth group (Former criminals) in Juba-South Sudan. Courtesy file photo.

By ARU Reporter

The young Nation of South Sudan, which has witnessed a series of socio-political instabilities, has started to register great milestones through Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) program to promote human dignity and respect for God's creation.

Sr. Mary Atimango, SHS, shared her experience; "My love for liberation of the vulnerable persons was ignited after fourteen (14) Sisters from different congrega-

tions attained a training of trainers (-ToT), animated by Pax Christy International (PCI), October 2022 in Juba on Non-violence. These Sisters went out to train different groups of people, especially those susceptible to violent tendencies such as the youth, the girl child school drop-outs, street children, boda-boda riders (hired motorcyclists), candidates in formation houses and students in schools at all levels of education."

The training also targeted other groups of people to create awareness in the non-violence methods. These groups were a target

because when they got the right way of solving their problems, they could use peer-to-peer approach, which they believe, and hope can bring peace in South Sudan.

Citing Mahatma Ghandi who said, "be the agent of the change that you want to see tomorrow," Sr. Mary and team found the task much linked with issues of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC). "Previously in Juba Archdiocese, the consecrated women were not involved in JPIC, This is the first time the consecrated women are being involved!" Sr. Mary exclaimed.

On her part, Sr Mary approached candidates in formation houses, pupils and students in both primary and secondary schools, street boys and girls including the ones who call themselves, "Nigger" who kill people using machete (pan-gas). She managed to train over 189 participants and she is still in position to meet more groups.

Sr Mary and team who serve in South Sudan target to meet 87

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pupils in primary because they are prone to accept and animate change once values are instilled in them. On the first attempt, the learners were knowledgeable about some of the iconic personalities of peaceful change agents like Nelson Mandela of South Africa and Ghandi of India, an indication that these pupils knew that peace could be attained without violence!

She also chose 68 Secondary school students, believed to be young adults because they could distinguish between good and bad. Having had a previous training in peace building, their response was warm and enthusiastic and Non-violence training was easily introduced to them.

Surprisingly, the administration of both primary and secondary schools supported the program because the learners practiced the skills learnt to stay peaceful with one another.

Sr. Mary with some mixed feelings managed to meet 16 “Nigger” boys and girls who were also skeptical about her at first but later opened up. She met them seven times as they kept increasing in number is each session. Now they are well bonded and feel free with one another.

Most of the *Niggers* confessed resorting to criminal behavior due to joblessness while another one submitted that the training was helpful and asked permission from sister to invite other friends to join the training. They now refer to their group as St. Paul Youth! They invite Sr. Mary over and again.

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“They keep calling me and surprisingly, some of them have shared this new teaching and experience with their parents. We are planning a bigger event requested by the parents themselves on Non-violence training. This is a big achievement for me.” Sr Mary said.

Sr. Mary suggests that more sisters be trained at the national level in order to train many youths on non-violence. She recommends training for target groups for income generating projects to curb idleness and equip them with life skills to avoid criminality like; violence, stealing and looting due to poverty.

In her quest to lead youth to the light of peace, Sr. Mary’s challenges include inappropriate means of transport and lack of support for youth skills in vocational training. Some of the grown-up children express interest in vocational training where they could acquire hands-on skills but sisters lack fund for such trainings.

Sr. Mary dreams that when parents of the once strayed youth receive non-violence training, it would be reflected in their homes. They would become experts in solving domestic problems amicably through negotiations, conflict management skills, reconciliation and use of all tools for peace building back home other than the infamous means of child abuse.

With a peaceful heart, they would deliver words of peace. St. Augustine rightly says, “you cannot give what you don’t have.” All people need to be reached and talked to for a positive change to prevail.



Sr. Mary on a motorcycle heading for peace building mission to the remote rural areas. Courtesy Photo.

ARU-CCCU, CRS..., Unite for Uganda's Care Reform



The National Director, ARU-CCCU, Sr. Euphrasia Masika (L), foreground and Case Management Officer, Mrs. Caroline Nansukusa in a group photo shortly after a training of trainers on Uganda's Child Care Reform. Courtesy photo.

**By: Caroline Nnansukusa. Staff;
ARU-CCCU**

Understanding that strong parenting skills play a vital role in a child's development, a specialized ToT on parenting training by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) equipped the participants with knowledge and practical skills. The session organized for ToT was hosted at Imperial Botanical Beach Hotel – Entebbe from June 18 – 24, 2023.

The need for a critical role of nurturing caregivers/ parents for a transformative parenting led to a training that made proposed trainers responsible for extending the learnings to other parents and caregivers across Uganda.

After a careful selection, the different organizations for the pilot sent in program staff who would become official trainers of parents/caregivers, from various communities.

The training covered topics such as positive discipline, communication, and creating nurturing environments. The participants left the training feeling empowered and motivated to provide a loving and supportive environment for their children.

This steady-fast journey shows a well-prepared team to embark on the practical support to children, parents/ care-givers in the selected districts for the pilot. With every meeting, workshop, and training, the team is guided on what it leads to ahead, determined to bring about lasting change in the lives of vulnerable children.

This remarkable partnership unfolded in November 2022, at Royal Suites Hotel in Kampala, bringing together CRS, Catholic Care for Children in Uganda (CCCU), Child i Foundation, Home free program, and the government in a preliminary conversation on the need for a Ugandan Theory of Change on Care Reform.

Their collective mission was to spearhead a transformative care reform initiative, aimed at addressing the needs of vulnerable children in a holistic and comprehensive manner. Hence, a plan to weave a basket of support to vulnerable children and drive the country's care reform initiative.

Thus, marking the beginning of a journey of collective, inspiring with transformative engagements was realized to be unfolding. It was in December 2022, that CRS staff informed ARU-CCCU staff for the next required engagements for the following year 2023.

The journey then called for a need to lay strategies to achieve the above shared mission. This kicked off with an initial planning meeting at the Inter-service Hotel-Nsambya from January 16-21, 2023. Representatives from CRS as the main convenor included partners like; CCCU, Child i Foundation, Home Free Program, and the government convened to lay the foundation for the partnership.

Together, ideas were brainstormed, set goals, and charted a roadmap (work-plan and budgets) for the care reform initiative in the three Districts of Mbale, Wakiso and Masaka. The meeting brimmed with enthusiasm as each participant brought their expertise and commitment to the table, igniting a sense of hope for a better future.

CRS the leading partner in this drive recognizes the importance of accountability and learning, hence, a MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning) workshop was conducted at the Silver Spring Hotel-Kampala from April 18-21, 2023 with all the pilot programs CCCU inclusive. With the experts of CRS, participants dug into the details of data collection, analysis, and reporting, ensuring that the progress of the care reform initiative could be effectively measured.

Through this workshop, the partners collaborated to establish robust mechanisms for tracking progress, evaluating impact, and ensuring effective decision-making. Through knowledge sharing and interactive discussions, comprehensive framework to guide collective efforts and drive positive change to improve the quality of care provided to vulnerable children was crafted.

The pilot was to take place in Mbale District for St. Kizito Babies Home under ARU-CCCU, next was an inception meeting held in the city of Mbale on May 2, 2023 to bring stakeholders and leaders on the same page of the partnership that is yet to kick off in their city.

This gathering brought together stakeholders from various sectors, including child protection agencies, social workers, educators, health professionals, representatives from CRS, CCCU, district and other community leaders converged to officially launch the care reform initiative in the city of Mbale.

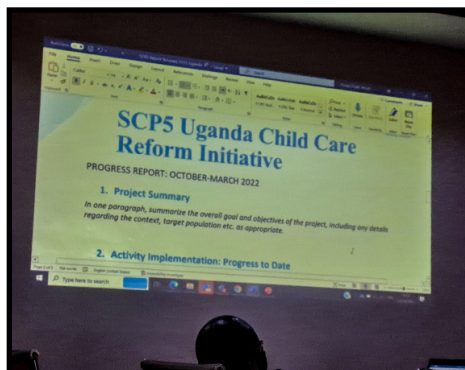
The meeting provided a platform to share ideas, strategies, and best practices for the care reform initiative. It served as a catalyst for building strong partnerships and fostering a sense of collective responsibility with CRS, ARU-CCCU, CCI-St. Kizito and the different leadership structures plus stakeholders.

By the end of this collaboration, there is hope that the synergies would have addressed the physical, emotional, educational and social needs of vulnerable children and their different placements holistically. They believe that the partnership in this mission will have yielded enough lessons to inform cascading of the project to other districts and child-care institutions all over the country.

Together, CRS, CCCU, partners and the Government of Uganda demonstrated that true transformation is possible when different stakeholders come together for a common cause for a brighter future for Uganda's vulnerable children, leaving a permanent mark on the landscape of care and protection in the country.



Training of Trainers (ToT) in progress at Imperial Botanical Beach Hotel – Entebbe. Courtesy photo.



A slide show presentation of Uganda's Child Care Reform during the ToT.



The Case Management Officer Mrs. Caroline Nansukusa at ARU-CCCU (M) shares a special memento with some trainees.

ARU-CCCU, Witness Child i Foundation closure in Tororo



Child i Foundation Staffs pose for a group with some Stakeholders during the closure event. Courtesy Photo.

By Caroline Nansukusa, ARU-CCCU Case Management Officer

Child i Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of vulnerable children, marked the end of their 7-year service in Tororo District on April 27, 2023. The institution that started from 2016 to 2023, aimed at improving the lives of vulnerable children in the area through support provision and general care.

The home highlighted positive impact in creating a better future for the vulnerable children in Tororo. Part of the achievements were the 59,000 children supported in that District, who are all safe in family environment. The event followed transiting the child beneficiaries with a package back to community from Institutional care, to either their biological parents or foster care families.

The closure event that started with a prayer attracted various stakeholders; government officials, community leaders, other childcare partners, beneficiaries of organization's programs, community leaders, foster parents and the Child i Foundation team. The event included speeches from project beneficiaries, presentations on project achievements, and a farewell ceremony led by the Commissioner for Children Affairs- Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development (MoGLSD). The closure function was a collaborative effort between Child i Foundation and the community.

As Catholic Care for Children in Uganda (CCCU) and a Child Care Institution (CCI) Staff from ARU went to witness a learning exposure visit, they learnt a lot. Part of the lessons learnt were; to continue involving several stake

holders, duty bearers such as the Commissioner, Alternative care Leaders, the Police, Probation Officers, Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) among others.

The stakeholders help in quick decision making in matters of program/ project achievements in this area. There is need to train more foster carers to support transitioning, archive all data because you will never know when it is needed. The members were called to relate work to the holy books: Bible and Quran.

CCIs need workshops with the different structures at least bi-annually, read a lot such from the national literature such as Uganda National Policy, Uganda Development plan 3, Constitution-Article 17-Duties of a citizen among others and sensitize people on the importance for the child help-line.

The Commissioner-MoGLSD, in his closing speech acknowledged the importance of Child i Foundation's work in the community and appreciated the organization's efforts to improve the lives of the vulnerable children and families in not only Tororo but also elsewhere.

He noted the challenges that the organization faced during its time in Tororo District, and highlighted some accomplishments, following the reports shared through different offices. They recognized

the contributions of the staff, volunteers, and other partners who have supported Child i Foundation over the years, and thanked them for their dedication and hard work.

The Commissioner encouraged them to continue supporting the children and families and emphasized the need for ongoing efforts to promote their welfare and well-being because sustainability is gradual. The team expressed hope for the future and confidence that the

legacy of Child i Foundation will continue to inspire positive change in the lives of those it has touched.

The guests parted in amazement towards impactful work and commitment of Child i Foundation for creating a bright future for the beneficiaries. “Never abandon Tororo but rather see it as a learning hub for successful re-integration and alternative care management in Uganda,” a member noted.

The closure of the Foundation is not an end but a new beginning, a learning opportunity and apply it to new challenges. “We look to the future with hope, ready to continue the work of creating a brighter tomorrow for the children of Tororo District. The impact of Child i Foundation will be felt for many years to come knowing that the legacy would continue to live on in the hearts and minds of those who have been touched by its service,” a participant concluded.



Child i Foundation Leader in a group photo with some Government Officials, Commissioner in the centre and the head of alternatives care on the right.

Mrs. Nansukusa (L) pose for a memorable photo with the leader of Child i Foundation.



Mrs. Caroline Nansukusa, (R) share a light moment with the leader of i child foundation in Uganda, David. Photo by CCCU.

Br. Nicholas Nuwagira, of St. Mugagga Boys Home, a participant in Child i Foundation event.

Pictorial of the Major Events



TOP - DOWN:
 Members of the Annual General Assembly for a light moment with the Apostolic Nuncio, His Excellency, Luigi Bianco. The President of ARU, Mother Speranza Namusisi receiving ARU's approved statutes. The Vice President - ARU, Fr. John Bosco Kamoga, communicating during Assembly. Facilitators of the General Chapter in session. Some of the symbols of PDCL