



# The Prophetic Witness

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## NEW ARU EXECUTIVE MEMBERS



**Fr. John Bosco Kamoga, C.S.Sp**  
President



**Sr. Seraphine Kaitesirwa , (DST)**  
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**Sr. Rita Christine Nakitende LSOSE,**  
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**Br. Charles Lagu, Franciscan**  
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**Fr. Joseph M Luyombya, OSM**  
Member



**Sr. Mary Esther Nangobi, SMK**  
Member



**Sr. Mary Lydia Apili Bwor,**  
LSMIG, Member



Immaculate Tusingwire - MMS

**W**e are happy to end the Year with the New ARU Executive Team, elected during the November ARU General Assembly and we congratulate them.

We thank all the contributors to this issue and all those who have contributed stories, articles and given their support in different ways throughout the Year. May God bless you all.

2025 is a Jubilee year. Many people even the Religious are asking, 'What is a Jubilee year?' I am sure that all of us in our respective places throughout the Jubilee year will have been fully answered. All the same, in this Issue, you will get a few highlights from the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, His Excellency Archbishop, Luigi Bianco, from the Bishop Liaison, His Grace Archbishop Emmanuel Obbo and from the Vicar for Religious, Fr. Nyombi Richard, M.Afr. But before that, here is a brief History of the Jubilee year:

*"In 1300, Pope Boniface VIII called the first Jubilee, also known as a "Holy Year," since it is a time in which God's holiness transforms us. The frequency of Holy Years has changed over time: at first, they were celebrated every 100 years; later, in 1343 Pope Clement VI reduced the gap between Jubilees to 50 years, and in 1470 Pope Paul II made it every 25 years"*

The last Jubilee year was celebrated in 2000 and we are extremely glad to see another Jubilee Year and experience all the Graces and renewal that comes with it.

Though the Jubilee will officially begin on the Eve of Christmas 24th December, the Religious will officially inaugurate the Jubilee Year on 2nd February 2025, the feast of the presentation of the Lord with a Theme, "Pilgrims of Hope, on the way to peace". This day also mark the Catholic Church's celebration of World Day for Consecrated Life.

Other exciting events of 2025 are the celebrations of 10 years of Laudato Si and the 800 Years of the Canticle of Creatures of St. Francis of Assisi. And maybe you may know other Congregations like the Medical Mission Sisters who will be celebrating 100 years in 2025. Its indeed a Jubilee Year!

So, we look forward to journeying with you through 2025, communicating the events and hopefully sharing reflections, so stay tuned!

Our Newsletter is quarterly. Feel free to contact us and send your stories and share the events of the Jubilee Year. We will be happy to feature them either in the Newsletter or on our website at <https://aruconference.org/>

You are also invited to tune in to ARU Radio Maria Uganda Program on 103.7 FM, every Saturday, 5pm E.A.T titled; THE BEATITUDES. In these radio programs, we shall have insights from the Religious Sister Counselors Network Initiative (Counselling Hub), Catholic Care for Children in Uganda (CCCU), Sister-led Elderly Care Network, Diocesan and Religious Vocational Animators (DARVA) who will be also accompanied by experts in different disciplines.

Meanwhile, enjoy this special Issue!

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New year to you all. May the Jubilee Year fill you with Hope, Grace, Peace, Renewal, Joy and Freedom of all the Children of God.*



# YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE JUBILEE YEAR: THE APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO UGANDA



ARU Members share a lighter moment with the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda, H.E Excellence Archbishop Luigi Bianco shortly after the opening Mass of the Annual General Assembly on November 5, 2024. Photo by ARU.

*By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS*

**H**is Excellency Archbishop, Luigi Bianco, the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda met with the Superiors General during the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) Annual General Assembly which took place from 4th – 8th November 2024, at the ARU Secretariat, Nsambya.

After the celebration of Mass which he presided over and co-celebrated with the Bishop Liaison, His Grace Archbishop Emmanuel Obbo, they both took time to address, listen, dialogue and answer questions that the Superiors General had.

In his address, the Nuncio focused on different topics including the recent (4th) Encyclical letter of the Holy Father, Francis **Dilexit nos** (on the human and divine love of the heart of Jesus Christ). He however put more emphasis on the Jubilee Year and invited all the Religious to participate in the celebration of the Jubilee as detailed in SPES NON CONFUNDIT, Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025. ***“This is a document Pope Francis wrote to proclaim the Jubilee year 2025 and it outlines the intentions, spirit, and hoped-for outcomes of the Jubilee.”***

The Nuncio reminded ARU Assembly that the Jubilee Year will officially begin with the celebration of Mass presided over by Pope Francis in St. Peter’s square on the Christmas Eve, December 24, 2024. Thereafter, the rite of opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica will follow.

Later, on 29th December, the feast of the Holy family; Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Holy Father will then open the Holy Door of the Archbasilica of St John Lateran, the Cathedral of Rome. It is also on this day that all Dioceses throughout

the world will have a celebration of Mass by the local Bishop to mark the opening of the Jubilee Year. These Masses will take place in the Cathedrals and Basilicas. The Nuncio highlighted that “in Uganda, we have 3 Minor Basilicas; Uganda Martyrs Namugongo, Uganda Martyrs Munyonyo and Basilica of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Lodonga in Arua Diocese.”

Besides the invitation to join the Jubilee Year Celebration, the Nuncio also invited the religious to read the Final Document of the XVI Assembly of the Synod on Synodality. This Document was compiled and created by the Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in the two sessions of October 2023 and October 2024. It was approved by Pope Francis and the Assembly on 26th October 2024. Pope Francis writes of this document;

***“The Final Document of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops gathers the fruits of a journey marked by listening to the People of God and by the discernment of Pastors” This Document is now available online in English.***

The message of His Grace Archbishop Emmanuel Obbo, was no different from the Nuncio’s. “We are invited to be witnesses and prophets of hope and instruments of peace”, the Archbishop Obbo said adding that the Jubilee Year is a year of Grace, hope and an intense year of prayer especially with regard to the way we relate and how we identify with our Charisms.

The archbishop further appealed to the members in this Jubilee Year to fully participate in the proclamation of hope, dare to change the hardened hearts of people, through love and service, have hope and encourage others to also be hopeful. He urged all the leaders gathered for the Assembly to journey together as they travel with a spiritual purpose to be closer to God, despite the challenges surrounding them.

Bishop Obbo announced that in February Next year, there would be a series of reflections for the Religious to help them experience a year of reconciliation, genuine personal encounter with Jesus, deepening the understanding of our charisms and deepening Relationships.

Besides the Jubilee Year, the Nuncio encouraged the members of the assembly to read the Final Document of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod on Synodality. This document was compiled and created by the Synod of Bishops in the two sessions of October 2023 and October 2024. Pope Francis writes of this Document;

***“The Final Document of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops gathers the fruits of the journey marked by listening to the People of God and by the discernment of Pastors”***

This Document is available in Latin but you can also access it online in English as a working Translation in the link below;  
<https://synod.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/ENG-final-document-Synod-2021-24.pdf>



**Archbishop Luigi Bianco during his address to the General Assembly**



**Archbishop Emmanuel Obbo while addressing to the General Assembly.**



# PILGRIMS OF HOPE ANNOUNCING GLAD TIDINGS



**Fr. John Bosco Kamoga, C.S.Sp.**  
**ARU President**

**D**ear brothers and sisters, greetings from our conference secretariat as we re-echo the Christmas message: Joy to the World; the Lord has come! In announcing the birth of our Saviour, the Prophet Isaiah boldly proclaims that, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; for those living in a land of deep darkness, a light has shined” (Isaiah 9:6). This message is a message of hope and reassurance; it is a message that reaffirms Jesus’ unequivocal commitment to ensuring that all men and women have life in abundance. This commitment of Christ is the very foundation of our own consecration to mission; we have been called to serve with Christ to ensure that there is an abundance of life.

Even as we celebrate the joy of Christmas, we cannot lose sight of the fact that we are in the year of jubilee, when we, the pilgrims of hope, are invited to embrace, among other things, renewal and conversion.

As religious men and women, we must rediscover our calling and align it with the Christmas message, which emphasizes bringing new hope and light into people's lives.

For the times when our lives and witnesses have run counter to that message of hope before the people we live, work and interface with, it is time to retrace our original motivations so that we can shine as brightly as the light that appeared to and led the Magi to where the child Jesus was. You and I have this primary duty and responsibility to renew ourselves in Christ, who alone can rekindle us and sharpen our witness to be that star that must now lead our world full of violence, hatred, tribalism, jealousy, disease, poverty, envy, selfishness, corruption, witchcraft, dishonesty, immorality, lies, unfaithfulness, ill will, and other such evils to Christ, the prince of peace, who reconciles us to one another and resolves our rivalries (Isaiah 11:6ff), so that we can beat our swords into ploughshares (Isaiah 2:4). Only when we, as Uganda's religious men and women, can embody this dream and hope will we continue to be relevant in today's world, despite the harsh criticism we've faced due to our collective negative witness.

But we still have hope, and we don't have to feel sorry for ourselves. Despite facing defeat, we have not succumbed to destruction. People of God still value us as earthenware vessels carrying a treasure, provided we stay true to our true selves, re-present Christ in both word and deed, and advance the kingdom of love, justice, fairness, and equality.

Our people are still so thirsty for messengers of true disinterested hope, and the scriptures remind us of this fact. Isaiah exclaimed then and still shouts out loud to us, saying, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns” (Isaiah 52:7). As a conference, we are working towards this goal by utilizing various networks and programs such as Care for Elderly, Catholic Care for Children in Uganda (CCCU), Sister Led Youth Initiative Uganda (SLYI), Bakhita Anti-Trafficking Network, Consecrated Catholic Women Health Initiative Uganda Limited (CCCHIUG), CADEP, among others, to provide positive news to those who are vulnerable in our communities.

May we all be ambassadors and ardent supporters of such programs and initiatives so that those seated in the shadow of pain, poverty, isolation, abuse, and the evils of our time can rise to new hope. We are also invited to never forfeit our duty to be prophets wherever we are, witnessing to the truth like Stephan the Martyr did, without fear or favour of anyone, be it a political or religious leader; after all, the Word, the Light, came and shone in the darkness, and darkness could not overcome it (John 1:5). Be brave and courageous!

*Merry Christmas and  
a prosperous new year*

# Jubilee Year 2025: Consecrated Men and Women, Pilgrims of Hope



**Fr. Richard Nyombi, M.Afr.**  
*Vicar for Religious*

In 1929, when the Catholic Church in Uganda was celebrating 50 Years since the arrival of the first missionaries, Msgr Henry Streicher exhorted the Clergy, Religious and Lay faithful of his Diocese with these words:

*“For the one who has been standing uprightly, let the joy of the jubilee bring more strength in him / her to be able to run even faster than before on the path of holiness; let the one who has been limping try to speed up; and for the one who has been lying down like a dead body in immorality the day of forgiveness has dawned, let him or her stand up!”*

*This reflection summarises well the essence of a Christian “Jubilee Year” or “Holy Year.*

It is a message of joy and hope. It is a message about restoration and redirecting us to the “path of holiness and wholeness” on which all human beings and especially Christian believers are called to walk on (1 Pt. 1: 15-17; Eph 1: 4, Lev. 11:44). Each one of us can recognize himself or herself in one of the three mentioned categories of believers:

those standing uprightly, those limping and those lying down like a dead body! The same applies to entities such as Families, Communities, Institutes and Nations. Each is invited to make an effort to do better and become better during this Holy Year.

## ***Rediscover the Spiritual Practice of Indulgence***

For every “Christian Jubilee”, there is always an ‘indulgence’ offered for those willing and ready to accomplish the conditions attached to it aiming at helping him / her to detest and fight against sin. Such conditions include making pilgrimages and receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion. This devotion is less familiar these days than in the past. Let us make an effort during this Holy Year to rediscover and deepen its spiritual and moral significance.

## **Rediscover the Spiritual Practice of Pilgrimage**

Also, pilgrimages to some key religious places are recommended during the Jubilee Year. Let us take time to meditate on the relevance of Pilgrim Spirituality. Let us participate in some of the proposed pilgrimages, local and foreign, depending on our possibilities. Speaking about pilgrimage, the anthropologist V. William TURNER says:

*“A pilgrimage liberates a person from the obligatory everyday constraints of status and role, also from our personal stories, our personal triumphs and defeats, and we are enabled to become ourselves again in a new model of human brotherhood. It is a journey into LIMINARITY, where we will acquire new insights about life, mission, God, others and ourselves.”*



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According to Eamon Bredin, “Liminal existence is marked by the absence of the familiar, by separation from all cosy supports and by the dissolution of all pretensions. .... It is a journey inward, a time of deeper, more disturbing thoughts, of exposure to new values, of insight into the life of things, of seeing and living by a new vision. (Eamon Bredin, “Disturbing the Peace: The way of disciples” (1992), pp. 154-155).

May our participation in some of the pilgrimages during this Holy Year help us to “acquire new insights about life, mission, God, others and ourselves.”

**Pilgrims of Hope**

The theme given to us by Pope Francis for this Jubilee Year is: “Pilgrims of Hope.” He tells us that “During the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind”. Among the enumerated people with hardships are: prisoners, sick, youth, migrants, elderly and grandparents, and the poor. (Refer to “Spes non Confundit”, nos 10-15).

By inviting us to become ‘tangible signs of hope’ for our suffering brothers and sisters, Pope Francis is challenging us not to equate ‘hope’ to ‘blind optimism’ which makes us ignore the enormity of the task ahead and does not equip us with necessary courage to fight for the destiny hoped for. A few years ago, I came across this quote from the former president of USA about ‘hope’

which I share with you in view of enriching our reflection and meditation on how to become ‘tangible signs of hope’ on our pilgrimage together with those overburdened by hardships. He said:

***“Hope is not blind optimism. It's not ignoring the enormity of the task ahead or the roadblocks that stand in our path. It's not sitting on the side-lines or shirking from a fight. Hope is that thing inside us that insists, despite all evidence to the contrary, that something better awaits us if we have the courage to reach for it, and to work for it, and to fight for it. Hope is the belief that destiny will not be written for us, but by us, by the men and women who are not content to settle for the world as it is, who have the courage to remake the world as it should be.” [Barack Obama, Presidential Election Victory Speech; 6th November 2012].***

**Jubilee Year for the Religious in Kampala Archdiocese:**

Religious, men and women, serving in Kampala Archdiocese, besides participating in the general Jubilee celebrations together with the Christians of the Archdiocese, will also celebrate amongst themselves at two levels: Vicariate and Archdiocese. Here are the dates for these gatherings:

May the One who tells us that: “I am the gate for the sheep..... Whoever comes in by me will be saved.....” (Jn 10: 7.9), open for us this gate for us to enter in! Blessed and fruitful Jubilee Year 2025. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2025!

**Jubilee Year for the Religious in Kampala Archdiocese:**

+	2nd February 2025	Launching at Namugongo
+	22nd February 2025	Mitala-Maria Vicariate at Mitala Maria Parish
+	1st March 2025	Wakiso Vicariate at Ggayaaza Parish
+	8th March 2025	Entebe Vicariate at IHMR Sisters, Mother House, Ggogonya
+	15th March 2025	Kampala Vicariate at Nsambya Parish
+	6th September 2025	Summit of the Jubilee Year for the Religious at Lubaga

# BPE Significantly Impacts Vulnerable Girl Child Education



*In the photo is, the BPE National Coordinator, Sr. Scovia Kiconco, testing some of the juice flavours made by BPE students at Bon Concilii Vocational girls' secondary school in Isingiro during her on-site visit. Photo by ARU.*

**By Benedict Mukoni**

In a bid to ensure the effectiveness and legitimacy of 100 percent retention and improved access and quality of education for girls in the targeted countries and schools, the Bakhita Partnership for Education (BPE), National Coordinator Sr. Scovia Kiconco, MMS embarked on a countrywide on-site visits to monitor and evaluate the sixteen targeted schools where the sponsored vulnerable girls are studying from. The visit took place in the months of October and November, 2024.

BPE is a program under the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) in partnership with the Jesuit Justice and Ecology Network of Africa (JENA). It is a beacon of hope for vulnerable girl children empowering them through quality basic education to break the cycle of poverty and achieve their dreams in the targeted countries and schools.

It was established in 2021 during the Covid-19 lockdown and commenced in 2022. It initially benefited 20 girls, in each school of the 16 targeted ones; form/ senior S.3 and S.4 or the last two years of high school. But due to high demand of what next after S.4, the scholarship was extended up to A' level.

Sr. Scovia's itinerary to the sixteen targeted schools included the Western, Eastern, Central and Northern Uganda where the schools are located. Three years down the road, the on-site visit reveals that the program has achieved remarkable success so far, providing a girl child with opportunities to develop leadership skills, build confidence, and become change-makers in their communities.

Some students have also been empowered with skills and are participating in income generating

projects like baking, farming, basket weaving, Peanut making food processing and value addition, tree planting, among others. Sales from these products assist these students in the provision of school basic needs and enable these students to become financially independent during holidays. An example of this empowerment was witnessed at Boni Consilii Girls' Vocational Senior Secondary School where students under BPE showcased unique skills in a beverage processing and packaging. They produce unique and various flavors of juice from Sugarcane, Pineapple, Watermelon, Passion fruit; professionally package it and sell to fellow students, staff and in retail shops. They have extended this knowledge and skills to other fellow students who are not directly benefitting from the program (BPE).

These students disclose that the profits generated from the sales help them in the provision of basic necessities at school like scholastic materials and personal needs as a girl child. These activities that bring in some incomes have helped them to focus on their studies and avoid stress like it used to be before BPE came in to their rescue. Head teachers, parents and guardians testify that the girls who were once frustrated are now back to life with vibrancy.

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Sr Scovia advised all students under BPE to work hard, be humble and disciplined if they are to become successful in future. These students promise to perform to their full ability so that they can attain higher education and become women of substance in their communities in helping others and the country at large.



Sr. Scovia while addressing the students of St. Theresa, Alanyi in Alebtong district during her on-site visit. Photo by ARU.

Despite the many benefits enjoyed by BPE students; they still face a number of challenges both in the school environment and their homes. These included: Lack of income generating avenues by parents and guardians leading to hopeless poverty; ; Domestic violence at home; Alienation by siblings and relatives who are not at school due to lack of school fees (this becomes even harder with polygamous families). Sexual abuse by relatives including biological fathers, but because the school administration have always intervened, the BPE student ends up reporting back to school even after they have conceived. Some parents look at their daughters as a source of wealth, hence Forced early marriages. At school, BPE students are sometimes bullied by fellow students and even teachers as being extremely poor

to the extent of just helping them. This frustrates students according to their testimonies. In some instances, teachers have a tendency of moonlighting (absenteeism) in the classes leading to poor performance in some subjects culminating to failure to acquire desired combinations in A' level.

While the School administrators appreciated BPE support and commended the remarkable impact created to these vulnerable girls, the need remains big and it would be a blessing to increase on a number of girls because there still more who are frustrated with school tuition fees issue yet they are promising students.

Majority of the students under BPE and school administrators recommend the support to be extended to male students who are also struggling with issues of raising tuition fees. This contributes to more stable, resilient societies that give all individuals the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

BPE is operational in five countries; Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia. Its effort is a testament to the transformative power of education and the importance of empowering vulnerable girl children to achieve their full potential.

## Pictorial Highlights of the On-site Visits



Sr. Scovia meets BPE students at Bishop Sisto Mazzoldi, Lweza. Photo by ARU.



BPE students at Bon Concilii share a memorial photo group with the Coordinator during the on-site visit. Photo by ARU.



Students of Kongole girls' secondary school under BPE showcase thier garden of greens to Sr. Scovia. Photo by ARU.



Sr. Scovia interacts with BPE students at our Lady of Guadalupe SSS in Gomba during her on-site visit. Photo by ARU.

# Sister Led Youth Initiative Registers Steady Progress in Skilling the Youth



*The principal of the institution showcase designs crafted by some of the youth under the program of the Sister Led Youth Initiative (SLYI) in tailoring. The can see and interpret deigns. Courtesy Photo.*

## **By Benedict Mukoni**

The Sister Led Youth Initiative (SLYI), has progressed significantly towards achieving its main goal of providing vocational skills for disadvantaged and vulnerable youth aged 15 - 25 to become self-sufficient, resilient and agents of positive change in family and society.

SLYI is one of the programs implemented by the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU). The initiative was driven by the Social economic plight of the youths in Uganda which was discussed by the Major Superiors in 2019.

The program that started in 2020, is now at the end of its 2nd Phase and it has trained over 1,000 youths in different enterprises over the last four years with now over 100 being self-employed.

The coordinator of this program, Sr. Caroline Bacia, LSMIG, compares the life of the beneficiaries with a garden of crops that needs care and attention through good agronomic practices to produce good yield. She is grateful to the Global Solidarity Forum (GSF) for supporting the program.

Phase III of the program will aim at perfecting the skills and knowledge of the already trained youths.

Sr. Caroline is optimistic that by aligning the program with the specific needs and conditions of the local youth and their communities, it is effectively empowering the youth and contributing to the socio-economic development of the community and the country at large. She adds that this is focused at achieving

its goal of “Youth aged 15-25 to have improved livelihoods and provide them with an opportunity to contribute positively to community social development in Uganda”.

During an on-site visit to Mother Kevin Hostel and Vocational Training Centre – Kamuli and Bake for Life College – Tororo, Mr. Jini Sebakunzi, the Program and Grant Manager, from Global Solidarity Forum (GSF) was impressed by the encounter with the beneficiaries. Seeing their energy and happiness, was a sign of transformation, the efforts of the staff in skilling the youth was not underestimated, the structures, of Bake for Life College which he termed as “a whole village” as it is complex, confirming its previous verification of its capacity and the beauty of the training institutions ARU collaborates with which existed before and not just started because of the initiative.

So far, the impact is seen as more than what was projected at the beginning of the project because the community as a key stakeholder has benefited from the skills of the youth. Sr. Caroline is grateful to the partners for their unwavering generosity in supporting the initiative and building confidence in the vulnerable youth to embrace life with courage.

# Sister Counsellors from Different Countries Gather



*One of the facilitators in session during the annual meeting of the Religious Sister Counsellors' Network Initiative. Photo by ARU.*

*By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS*

**T**he Religious Sister Counsellors' Network Initiative in its Annual Meeting held from 25th – 30th November 2024, at Bugonga Retreat Center, Entebbe, Uganda, brought together 37 sister counsellors from Malawi, Uganda and Zambia.

Religious Sister Counsellors' Network Initiative is a model Counselling Hub in Uganda established in January 2023 by All Africa Conference: Sister to Sister (AAC:SS) in collaboration with the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU). The Network is dynamic and brings together professional Sister Counsellors who provide accessible psychosocial support to Religious and families in Sub-Saharan Africa. Currently, the network has 68 sisters.

The sisters gathered under the Theme; Counselling to enhance Mental Wellness. During the meeting, the sister counsellors discussed about their professional concerns and the project in general. They also refreshed their skills with more input and discussions on Healing of Family life and Therapy, Addiction Therapy and Crisis management.

The Secretary General of the Association of Religious in Uganda, Sr. Lydia Apiri Bwor, LSMIG, and AAC: SS Senior Programs officer—Africa, Sr. Eneless Chimbali, SBVM, who had travelled from Malawi, were also present at the convention.

In her address, Sr. Eneless thanked the sisters for coming together to discuss issues that add value to their profession. She reminded them of how AAC: SS began as a response to a crisis when HIV/AIDS was at its peak

“Many people were dying at the time, and when this was happening, the religious sisters were not left out. Our siblings, nieces and nephews were suffering and we were helpless. Some sisters had to leave the convents to go and take care of their siblings. The elderly were left with parenting responsibilities”, she recalled. It was during this time that two Religious Sisters of Mercy (RSM) in the USA discussed with the sisters in Africa what could be done, giving birth to AAC: SS.

Sr. Eneless also encouraged the sisters to pay attention to the realities in their different countries and promised that each year the sisters will gather to share experiences which will help encourage best practices in counselling.



*AAC: SS Senior Programs officer—Africa, Sr. Eneless Chimbali, SBVM, during the workshop. Photo by ARU*

*Story Continued to pg 12*

Presently, the Initiative has only the Uganda counselling hub. There is a plan however to open more centres. With this plan, Sr. Eneless appealed to the sisters to be open to serve in these centres once they are opened.

The joy of the meeting was doubled by the recognition and issuing of certificates to 46 sisters who for six months trained in Psychological Assessments (different psychological tests), with the university of Kisubi - online. The sisters who completed this course were from all the three countries; Uganda, Malawi and Zambia.

The training aimed to enhance counsellors' skills in client assessment. Religious Institutes are invited to utilise the Sister Counsellors' skills as a resource in assessing their members and those who wish to join them. The certificate ceremony was officiated by the AAC: SS Senior Programs Officer-Africa.

Asked what the Initiative is most grateful for in the concluding year, the Counselling hub Project Coordinator, Sr. Editrudis Kajuna, OLG, said, "We are grateful for the steady growth in the number of sister counsellors registering with the counselling Hub and that its services were able to cover 15 Dioceses in Uganda"

One of their several plans for 2025 as highlighted by Sr. Editrudis is to open four (4) Satellite Counselling Hubs; Malawi 1, Zambia 1, and Uganda 2.

Sr. Editrudis welcomes everyone who wish to access the services offered at the hub. "Our hope is that you will use the Hub to enhance your wellness. We offer counselling services to individuals, groups, Religious Institutes, Families as well as workshops and seminars. Services are offered to foster emotional well-being and improve overall life. The counselling Hub is well equipped to respond to your unique needs with understanding and care. Reach out to us today; every Life is valued."

### Pictorial Highlights of the Conference



The Certificate awarding ceremony of the trained Sisters. Photo by ARU.



Participants pose for a memorial group photo shortly after completing the meeting at Bugongo Retreat Centre. Photo by ARU.

The Counselling Hub is located at Nsambya, Lukuli next to Rainbow International School. For more info Call: +256 789 938 990 OR +256 763 718 939, Email: [counselinghub@aacss.net](mailto:counselinghub@aacss.net)



The Counselling Hub National Coordinator, Sr. Editrudis Kajuna while addressing participants during the meeting.



One of the participants shares a light moment with Sr. Eneless Chimbali after receiving her certificate.



## ARU Administrative Staff that we Bid Farewell in 2024



Sr. Grace Kyomugisha, OLG  
Former Asst. Secretary General



Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru, MSM  
Former Communications Coordinator



Sr. Mary Esther Nangobi, SMK  
Former Administrative Secretary

## ARU New Administrative Staff 2024



Sr. Jane Yatuha, OLG  
Assistant Secretary General



Sr. Immaculate Tisingwire, MMS  
Communication Manager



Sr. Angeline Mumbi, LSOSF  
Administrative Secretary

# THE ASSOCIATION OF RELIGIOUS IN UGANDA

*wishes you a*



*Merry  
Christmas*



*And a Happy New Year* **2025**