



THE PROPHETIC WITNESS

A PUBLICATION OF ASSOCIATION OF RELIGIOUS IN UGANDA
(ARU SECRETARIAT)

Issue 24

Volume 16

July - August 2026

Editorial >>>



*Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS
ARU Communication Manager*

Welcome to another edition of the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) Newsletter, THE PROPHETIC WITNESS. Our gratitude to all the contributors to this edition, you keep our work meaningful.

At the heart of this edition is our Featured Person, Fr. Emmanuel Katongole, who was recently appointed a Consultor to the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. ARU had the opportunity to engage him in a Zoom conversation, reflecting on his new appointment.

Our Feature Congregation celebrates a remarkable milestone. The Brothers of Christian Instruction are marking 100 years of their presence and mission in Uganda. Learn more about their congregation's history and charism, their achievements especially contribution to education, formation and the building of communities.

Like all our editions, this edition also carries a Story of Hope, reminding us that hope often grows through ordinary people who give themselves generously in service to others.

We invite you to continue following ARU's radio programme, The Beatitude, which airs every Saturday at 5:00 p.m. on Radio Maria Uganda. May you encounter stories in this edition that inspire, challenge, strengthens your faith, and moments that remind you that hope is alive and mission continues.

Enjoy reading and remain connected with ARU.

The Beatitude Hour

Now Airing
Every Saturday
Live on

103.7 FM, Radio Maria Kampala

5:00PM - 6:00PM

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Featured Person

Fr. Emmanuel Katongole: New Consultor to the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS

Fr. Emmanuel Katongole, Professor in the Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, United States of America, was recently appointed Consultor to the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. With his experience in theology, peace and reconciliation, interfaith engagement, environmental care and work with young people, Fr. Katongole brings a wealth of experience to this new responsibility in the universal Church.

I had the privilege of speaking with him via Zoom about his appointment, his understanding of integral human development, his hope for young Africans, and his message to religious men and women in Uganda.

Fr. Emmanuel, congratulations again upon your appointment. When you received this news, what was your immediate reaction, and what does this appointment mean to you as a person?

When I first received the news, I was surprised, and very much humbled that I would be named as one of the Consultors, all the way from the village of Malube to the Vatican. It is an extraordinary journey. Who am I that I would receive this appointment from the Holy Father?

There was a great sense of gratitude, humility and honour. I feel both humbled and honoured at the same time. That was my immediate feeling, a sense of “wow,” even though I fully don't yet know what this calls for.

What do you think Pope Leo XIV and the Dicastery are asking of you, with your particular experience and expertise?

This is on a number of levels. I am a scholar, a theologian, teaching at the University of Notre Dame. My research is on issues of violence around the world, especially in Africa, different forms of violence: political, ethnic, religious and environmental, with a view of showing that Christianity and the Church make a dif-



Fr. Emmanuel Katongole, Consultor for the Dicastery for promoting Integral Human Development

ference within these different spheres of violence. They can represent a voice of hope, peace and reconciliation. I am also the Director of the Ansari Institute for Global Engagement with Religion, which works with people from different religions. Can religions work together to contribute to peace in the world, bringing peace, healing and reconciliation? So, I am very familiar with working with other religions and denominations and with interfaith engagement.

I am also the founder and president of Bethany Land Institute, which responds to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, in the spirit of Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*. I am trying to realise *Laudato Si'* in Africa.

I have already been working with the Dicastery, with Sr. Alessandra Smerilli, the new Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and Cardinal Fabio Baggio, the new Pro-Prefect. I have been consulting with them, and they, in turn, connect with what is going on at Bethany Land Institute.

They see that I can bring experience, expertise and insight to the work of the Dicastery. I think it is out of that that I have been called as a Consultor, and they expect that I contribute to the development of the Dicastery through that expertise.

“Integral human development” is a phrase we hear often. From your experience of Africa, what does it actually look like in the life of an ordinary person or community?

The Holy Father has different departments called Dicasteries, charged with different responsibilities. He appoints two types of people: members who work within the Dicastery and, from around the world, Consultors. Consultors advise the Dicastery in the fulfilment of its work.

I will not be living in Rome but will be called upon from time to time. I will provide expert advice to make sure that the Dicastery fulfils its mission, which is the promotion of integral human development.

The notion of Integral Human Development was articulated by Pope Paul VI in the encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, On the Development of Peoples, issued in 1967. In this encyclical, the Pope emphasized that full development cannot merely be economic; it has to be development for the whole person and for every person, economic, spiritual, cultural, material and his-

torical. Development has to be integral. The Dicastery is for the promotion of that vision.

Pope Francis coined another term, integral ecology, a more encompassing term for integral development, in that you cannot just talk about the human person without talking about the health of the earth.

Integral development looks different depending on the context in which the person is. For me, it is like the Gospel: “I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.” — John 10:10.

Given your wide experience and engagement with young people, what gives you hope when you look at today's young Africans?

I like working with young people, and they represent an incredible dimension of hope. Africa is a young continent, with about 70 per cent of the population below 25. The energy in young people and the drive are amazing.

They only lack leadership, options and opportunities. Seeing many unemployed is a frustrating. The experience Bethany Land Institute is offering me is to see that when you work with young people and give them a sense of confidence and identity of being a child of God, then give them options and leadership to channel that energy, you can see the hope.

All that young people need is to give them knowledge and opportunities. Bethany Land Institute is a microcosm of that hope on a small scale, but I can see that throughout Africa we can have these kinds of experiments, especially in rural areas.

This is where hope lies and this is what

I teach: that hope is not idealistic or optimistic. It is in simple ways, like taking agency with one's land.

Africa is a laboratory of hope, especially with young people. We need to harness that gift of young people without discouraging or dismissing them.

As you take on this new responsibility of serving the universal Church, what would you like the religious men and women of Uganda to pray for and work for alongside you?

Africa has been gifted with the rising of vocations to religious life, both men and women. This is the springtime of the Church.

We not only bring numbers; we are also bringing the energy that comes with youthfulness. A special gift that is coming out of Africa in religious life is that sense of joy, and we should not lose that. As Pope Francis reminds us, the joy of the Gospel is what we offer to the world.

The greatest gift I see in Africa is that gift of joy lived through our vocation, and for me, it gives me hope.

Our call to be religious is to cultivate deeper conviction and commitment and bring it to fruition in the world through different dimensions. This is the hope of the continent.

And this is what I ask them to pray for me in my line of work: that I may continue to exude that sense of joy and hope.

Bethany Land Institute is also working on a programme of partnership with the religious through the Association of Religious in Uganda, which offers another opportunity for collaboration in responding to the needs of our people and our common home.

ARU Commissions 95 Junior Professed Religious preparing for Perpetual Vows



A group photo after the commissioning, Photo by ARU.

By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS

The Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) commissioned 95 men and women junior professed religious at the conclusion of the 2026 Inter-Congregational Course for Junior Professed Religious preparing for the profession of perpetual vows.

The Celebration began with a tree-planting activity, symbolizing growth, rootedness and the responsibility of religious to care for God's creation. The tree planting was followed by a Eucharistic celebration of Mass presided over by Rev. Fr. John Bosco Kamoga, CSSp, ARU President.

The commissioning was also graced by Sr. Grace Nyangi, Missionary Sister of the Blessed Virgin Mary and ACWECA Coordinator for Leader-

ship and Mission as the guest of honor and Sr. Mary Justine Naluggya, IHMR, Assistant Secretary General ARU, who also representant the ARU Secretary General Sr. Jane Yatuha, OLG.

The month-long course was held at St. Mbaaga's Major Seminary, Ggaba, from 27 June to 25 July 2026 under the theme "Living Unity in Diversity in Consecrated Life in the Synodal Church,". It brought together 80 sisters from 13 institutes and 15 brothers from two institutes.

The course was not only a time for classroom learning. It was also a journey of community, encounter, prayer, recreation and cultural exchange, giving the young religious an opportunity to experience in practical ways what it means to live unity in diversity.

Throughout their stay, the participants took part in a variety of activities, including sports and a cultural day, which created opportunities for interaction beyond their respective congregations and institutes. Through games, recreation, liturgy and the sharing of different cultural expressions, the participants were able to discover one another's gifts and traditions.

The formation programme itself addressed several areas relevant to their preparation for perpetual profession. Among the courses were Canonical Norms; Deepening the Gift of Consecration: Discerning and Embracing God's Will for Mission; Mental Health and Human Maturity in Mission; and Embracing Synodality in the Mission: Formed and Sent for Mission.

The experience of the course itself offered the participants an opportunity to practice this synodal journey. Coming from 15 different institutes, they brought with them different charisms, cultures and experiences, yet shared one vocation and one mission.

Fr. Kamoga, thanked all those who supported the programme, particularly St. Mbaaga's Major Seminary for hosting the participants, as well as Church in Need and ACWECA for their support.

He challenged the participants to remain connected to the people they are called to serve, particularly those who are suffering. "Connect with people. If people are suffering and you are not concerned, then you have no business being a religious."

Fr. Kamoga reminded them that the model of religious life is Jesus Christ, who entered fully into the human condition, lived among people and gave Himself for them.

Sr. Grace in her address reminded the participants that their formation journey does not end with the completion of the course or even with perpetual profession. "Formation does not end with profession of vows; it is a lifelong pilgrimage with Christ."

She encouraged the young religious to continue allowing Christ to shape their lives as they journey in their vocations and serve God's people. Reflecting on the theme of synodality, Sr. Grace noted that the world today is increasingly divided, yet the Church proposes another way of living together.

"Our world today is increasingly divided, but the synodal Church proposes another way, which is walking together."

After being commissioned and receiving their certificates, participants returned to their respective communities with hearts full of gratitude, carrying not only the knowledge gained in the classroom, but also memories of prayer, friendship, sports, cultural exchange and shared experiences.

One of the participants, Sr. Provia Ngabirano, a Missionary Sister of Mary Mother of the Church reflected on the one month as follows;

"One of the profound lessons I received was the un-

derstanding of Canon Law as the guiding compass of the Church. I came to see it not simply as a collection of regulations but as a wise instrument that safeguards justice, protects the dignity of every member of the Church, and directs us toward what is true and right.

The course also led me into a deeper appreciation of consecrated life. I discovered anew that consecration is a loving response to God's invitation, a willing surrender of one's life to the One who first loved us. I was reminded that the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience are not burdens to carry but sacred pathways that lead us closer to Christ. Through community life, these vows become visible expressions of God's love and faithfulness.



Featurd Institute

A Century of Mission, Formation and Hope: The Brothers of Christian Instruction @100



By Bro. Vincent Barigye, FIC



On 5th September 2026, the Brothers of Christian Instruction, Ugandan Province of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, will celebrate a remarkable milestone: One Hundred years of faith, education, evangelisation and service. It is a moment to thank God for the past, celebrate the achievements of the present and look forward with renewed hope to the future. More than a celebration of the pas-

sage of time, this centenary is a story of missionaries who crossed continents, of Ugandan men who embraced the vocation of Brotherhood, of schools and institutions that have formed generations, and of countless young people whose lives have been transformed through education and Christian formation.

From the arrival of the first Canadian Brothers in 1926 to the vibrant Uganda Province of today, the story of the Brothers of Christian Instruction is a story of faith, courage, sacrifice, growth and hope.

Roots of the Congregation and the Call to Uganda

The Congregation of the Brothers

of Christian Instruction was founded in France in 1819 by Jean-Marie de la Mennais and Gabriel Deshayes. They were deeply concerned about the situation of children and young people, especially those who lacked access to education, Christian formation and guidance.

Their vision was to provide an education that would form the whole person—the mind, heart, spirit and hands. Education was understood not simply as the acquisition of knowledge but as a means of helping young people discover their dignity, develop their talents and become responsible members of society and of the Church.

The Congregation gradually expanded beyond France, including

to Canada. It was from Canada that the first Brothers were eventually sent to Uganda.

On 4 August 1926, the first group of four Canadian Brothers arrived in Uganda: Brother Charles-Jules Poitras, Brother Joachim-Leon, Brother Eugene Paquette and Brother Stanislaus Taillefer. They came as missionaries, but also as educators, builders and witnesses to the Gospel. Their arrival marked the beginning of a mission that would profoundly influence the educational, religious and social life of Uganda.

Their first major responsibility was St. Mary's College Kisubi, which had earlier been transferred from Lubaga to Kisubi. The White Fathers entrusted the College to the Brothers so that they could devote more attention to their expanding pastoral and evangelising mission. The arrival of the Brothers at Kisubi therefore represented not only a change in administration but the beginning of a new chapter in Catholic education in Uganda.

St. Mary's College Kisubi became the first great centre of the Brothers' educational mission in Uganda. At Kisubi, the Brothers developed a tradition of education that combined academic excellence, Christian values, discipline, character formation, service and spiritual growth.

Over the years, Kisubi became one of the most respected educational institutions in Uganda, forming generations of leaders who have served the Church, the country and the wider world.

From Kisubi, the mission of the Brothers gradually expanded to other parts of Uganda and beyond. Today, the Brothers have established communities and ministries in the Archdioceses of Kampala and Mbarara and the Dioceses of Masaka, Kabaale, Hoima, Kasana-Luwero, Lugazi, Nebbi and Lira, while the missionary spirit of the Province has also reached Yambio in South Sudan.

This expansion reflects the willingness of the Brothers to respond wherever the Church and society call them to serve, particularly through education, formation and evangelisation.

A Charism of Holistic Formation

The greatest contribution of the Brothers cannot be measured only by the number of schools established, buildings constructed or students educated. Their deeper contribution lies in the formation of persons.

The charism of the Brothers of Christian Instruction finds expression in a commitment to the holistic formation of young people, especially those most in need of guidance, education and hope. For the Brothers, education has never been understood as the mere transmission of information or preparation for employment. It is concerned with the development of the whole human person.

This holistic approach integrates:

- Faith and learning, recognising that intellectual formation

and spiritual growth can enrich one another;

- Spirituality and service, encouraging young people to use their gifts for the good of others;
- Academic formation and character development, preparing responsible and competent citizens;
- Community life and mission, recognising that education takes place within relationships of care, solidarity and shared responsibility;
- Human dignity and Christian values, helping young people to discover their worth as children of God and members of society.

The mission of the Brothers is beautifully captured in their enduring commitment: "To make Christ better known and better loved among the youth through Christian instruction, education and evangelisation."

This mission has remained the guiding force of the Brothers in Uganda for the last one hundred years.

The goal is therefore not simply to prepare young people for employment or professional success, but to form responsible, competent, compassionate and faith-filled men and women who can contribute positively to society.

The question at the heart of this mission is not only, "What will this young person become?" but also, "What kind of person will this young person become, and how will he or she serve others?"

Educational Achievement and Expansion

Over the past one hundred years, the Brothers of Christian Instruction have made a significant contri-

bution to education in Uganda.

The Brothers' contribution, goes beyond the establishment of schools. Their educational institutions have sought to combine academic achievement with the formation of values, discipline, responsibility, faith and service.

One of the most significant achievements in recent years has been the establishment and growth of the University of Kisubi (UniK). The University represents the natural development of the Brothers' long tradition of education and their commitment to responding to the changing needs of society.

Through higher education, the Brothers continue to promote their educational philosophy of forming not only knowledgeable professionals but also responsible leaders committed to integrity, service and social transformation.

The Brothers in Uganda have also made a significant contribution to youth development through sports, recognising that holistic education extends beyond the classroom. The revival of the Lamennais Tournament provides young people and institutions within the Mennaisian family with an opportunity to build friendship, fraternity and shared identity. Through sports, participants develop important values such as discipline, teamwork, perseverance, leadership, respect, resilience and service, reflecting the educational charism of the Brothers.

Community Life and Shared Mission

Behind the schools, programmes and institutions lies another essential dimension of the Brothers' vo-

cation: community life. The Brothers are called not only to work together but to live together as a community united by faith, fraternity and a common mission.

Their community life is itself a witness to the Gospel. In a world often marked by individualism and competition, the Brothers seek to demonstrate that people can live together, share their gifts, support one another and work for a mission greater than individual interests.

Looking to the Future with Hope

As the Brothers celebrate one hundred years in Uganda, the centenary is not only an occasion to ask, "What have we achieved?" It is also an opportunity to ask, "What is God calling us to do in the future?"

The next century will require courage, creativity and faith. The Province will need to continue strengthening the formation of young Brothers and promoting new vocations. It will need to invest in quality and relevant education while remaining especially attentive to

young people who are poor, vulnerable or in need of hope and guidance.

The Brothers will also be called to respond to emerging challenges through innovation, technology, research, leadership development, safeguarding, environmental responsibility and stronger partnerships with the Church and society.

The missionary spirit that brought the first Canadian Brothers to Uganda must also continue to inspire the Province to look beyond its present boundaries and respond generously wherever the needs of the young and the Church call.

We Remember, We Celebrate, We Believe

One hundred years after the arrival of the first Canadian Brothers, the story of the Brothers of Christian Instruction in Uganda continues.

As the Brothers of Christian Instruction, Uganda Province of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, celebrate this historic centenary, they do so with gratitude for the past and confidence in the future.



They remember the missionaries and pioneers who laid the foundations. They celebrate the faithfulness of God and the achievements of generations of Brothers and their collaborators. And they believe that the charism entrusted to the Congregation more than two centuries ago—and planted in Uganda one hundred years ago—remains deeply relevant today.

The centenary is therefore not the end of a journey, but the beginning of a new chapter.

One hundred years remembered.

One hundred years celebrated.

A future embraced with faith and hope.



ARU Joins National Cleaning Day Ahead of the Season of Creation



ARU Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General leading the cleaning activity

By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS

The Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU), together with the Laudato Si' Movement and the Nsambya Environmental Initiative, joined communities across the country in marking the second National Cleaning Day on Saturday, 29 August 2026.

The National Cleaning Day initiative follows the country's decision to dedicate the last Saturday of every month to cleaning and caring for the environment. For this is an opportunity to put into practice the call to care for our common home, echoing the message of Pope Francis in Laudato Si'. "All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvement and talents." Pope Francis, Laudato Si', §14.

For the religious who participated, cleaning the surroundings was a practical expression of a deeper responsibility, recognizing that the environment

is a shared gift and that everyone has a role to play in protecting it for present and future generations.

The timing of this year's National Cleaning Day was particularly significant. The activity took place just two days before the beginning of the 2026 Season of Creation, which runs from 1 September to 4 October.

The Season of Creation is a special period when Christians around the world come together to pray, reflect and take action for the care of creation. The National Cleaning Day provided ARU a meaningful opportunity to begin this season not only with words and prayer, but with concrete action.

By joining the cleaning exercise, ARU, the Laudato Si' Movement and the Nsambya Environmental Initiative sought to encourage a culture in which environmental responsibility becomes part of everyday life.

The message from ARU and its partners is clear: a clean environment is not merely about a clean street or compound. It is about a change of heart and a renewed sense of responsibility for the home we share.

The invitation is therefore to continue beyond one cleaning day, to make care for creation a daily commitment, a community responsibility and an integral part of our faith mission.

Story of Hope

A Journey from Talent to Excellence and Service: The story of Sr. Mary Grace Awori

By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS

From a young age, Sr. Mary Grace Awori, OSB had a deep desire to create and design. She found joy in imagining what could be made from a piece of cloth and how something ordinary could be transformed into something beautiful and useful.

During the graduation ceremony held at Ulrika Institute of Home Economics on 22 August 2026, Sr. Mary Grace, a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Grace and Compassion (OSB), was recognized as the Best Student in Fashion and Garment Design for the year 2026.

For Sr. Mary Grace, fashion and garment design is much more than a profession. It is a gift, a passion and, increasingly, a way of serving others.

Her achievement, however, did not begin in the classroom or with the award. It began much earlier, in the heart of a young girl who was fascinated by the possibility of turning a simple piece of fabric into something beautiful.

With time, Sr. Mary Grace came to understand that fashion is not simply about clothes and appearance, “I came to realize that fashion is not just about clothes; it is about dignity, creativity, and serving others with beauty. A well-made garment can restore confidence, provide a livelihood and allow someone to express their creativity. It was this understanding that encouraged me to develop my natural gift through formal training”.

For her, this was more than an interest. Looking back, she sees it as a God-given talent, a seed quietly planted in her heart and nurtured as she grew.

Her journey at Ulrika Institute of Home Economics was not without challenges. During her formal training, one of the



greatest challenges was finding a balance between her religious life and her academic responsibilities. As a Benedictine Sister, her life is shaped by prayer, community responsibilities and work. At the same time, her studies demanded concentration, practice and commitment which made it very demanding to be in class and also keep faithful to the monastic hours of prayer.

Yet Sr. Mary Grace found strength in the very vocation she was seeking to balance with her studies. Reflecting on her experience, she says:

“My inner fire for fashion, coupled with my vocation as a Benedictine Sister, Ora et Labora (Prayer and Work) gave me strength. I learnt to see my sewing machine as an altar where I also pray through work.”

For her, the sewing machine became more than a tool. It became an instrument through which prayer and work came together.

The Benedictine principle of Ora et Labora, became a practical reality in her daily life. Her studies were not separate from her vocation; rather, they became another way of living out her calling.

Sr. Mary Grace hopes to use the skills she has acquired to empower others, particularly young people and women who may be looking for practical skills through which they can become self-reliant.

“I want to share the skills I have acquired with the youth, women, and anyone who has the passion to learn, especially within my community. I want to help others to be

self-reliant through fashion and garment design. I believe that if God has gifted you, you must use it to uplift others.”

Sr. Mary Grace expresses deep gratitude to her Congregation, the Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Grace and Compassion, for believing in her talent and supporting her studies.

She also acknowledges the administration and tutors of Ulrika Institute of Home Economics, whose guidance and formation helped shape her skills and prepare her for the next stage of her journey.

As she looks to the future, Sr. Mary Grace carries with her not only an award, but a mission to create, to teach, to empower and to use the gift God placed in her heart to uplift others.



Sr. Mary Grace Awori working on her machine

Social Entrepreneurship & SMEs Conference and Expo: A Shared Journey of Faith in Action



Photo from last year's Conference and Expo

By Matilda Biira- Uganda Program Manager- Strathmore Global Institute

On 6 October 2026, the Annual Uganda Social Entrepreneurship & Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Conference and Expo, organized by Strathmore Global Institute Uganda, will convene at Mestil Hotel & Residences in Kampala.

The Conference under the theme, “Sustaining Impact in Social Enterprises - Building Resilience through Innovation, Financing Models and Market Readiness,” will bring together religious sisters, social entrepreneurs, investors, partners and supporters to exchange practical ideas, showcase enterprises and build the relationships needed for ventures to thrive beyond their founding stage. The conference will also offer a

space where faith meets enterprise: where mission-driven leaders can explore innovation, financing models, market readiness and practical collaboration. It will also shine a light on the religious sisters and communities whose ingenuity is proving that social enterprise can be both financially viable and deeply rooted in service.

Through the Sisters’ Blended Value Project (SBVP), Strathmore University Business School is privileged to work alongside the Association of Consecrated Women in Eastern and Central Africa (ACWECA), its Uganda member association, the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU), and religious congregations across the region. With the generous support of the Conrad N. Hil-

ton Foundation, this partnership is helping sisters strengthen their enterprises so that social ministries can become more resilient, sustainable and responsive to the communities they serve.

The following day, 7 October 2026, will mark another significant milestone: the graduation of sisters who have completed this journey of formation and enterprise development. Guided by the theme, “Faith in Action - Women Religious Leading Sustainable & Scalable Social Enterprises,” the celebration will honour women religious who are translating compassion into practical solutions, turning local challenges into opportunity, and leading enterprises that create dignity, livelihoods and hope.

Those who are interested in attending this conference and expo are welcome to register either as participants, delegates or as exhibitors at a fee. Joining as an exhibitor will give you an opportunity to meet potential investors and clients and explore new opportunities for growth and collaboration. See more details and requirements in the flyer below. To register, use this link; <https://sbs.strathmore.edu/2026-annual-uganda-social-entrepreneurship-and-sme-conference-and-expo-general-public/>. Find more information in the flyer provided.

Religious sisters and brothers can register for free using this link;
<https://sbs.strathmore.edu/2026-annual-uganda-social-entrepreneurship-and-sme-conference-and-expo-sisters-only/#tab-5df8079a4ccea934a63>

Slots are limited, register and secure your slot before they run out.

SAVE THE DATE

Dear Sisters,
You're cordially invited to the

Sisters' Blended Value Project (SBVP)

Annual Uganda Social Entrepreneurship & SMEs Conference & Expo

Theme:
Sustaining Impact in Social Enterprises - Building Resilience through Innovation, Financing Models and Market Readiness

Date: **6 October 2026**

Cost per Sister: **Free** (Limited Slots)

Venue: **Mestil Hotel & Residences, Kampala, Uganda**

Contact:
Matilda Biira on mbiira@strathmore.edu/ sbvpcommunication@strathmore.edu | or call +256 753 396 967 (WhatsApp)

Scan here to register

Link: tiny.cc/ugconf26-so

Transforming Social Ministries into Sustainable Social Enterprises

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Uganda Social Entrepreneurship & SMEs Conference & Expo

Theme:
Sustaining Impact in Social Enterprises - Building Resilience through Innovation, Financing Models and Market Readiness

Date: **6 October 2026**

Cost per Delegate: **UGX 150,000** | Exhibitor Fee: **UGX 500,000**

Venue: **Mestil Hotel & Residences, Kampala, Uganda**

Contact:
Matilda Biira on mbiira@strathmore.edu/ sbvpcommunication@strathmore.edu | or call +256 753 396 967 (WhatsApp)

Scan here to register

Link: tiny.cc/ugconf26

Transforming Social Ministries into Sustainable Social Enterprises

These two days reflect the power of partnership and the determination of women religious to serve their communities in new and sustainable ways. Strathmore University Business School is honored to walk this journey with ACWECA, ARU, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and the sisters whose leadership continues to transform lives.

Together, we are nurturing enterprises that do more than generate income: they create hope, dignity and lasting impact.

A modest ministry can begin with a simple response to need: a sister noticing a family without income, a group of women seeking opportunity, or a community longing for dignity. With accompaniment, skills and courage, that response can grow into an enterprise that creates livelihoods, strengthens families and restores hope. This is the story that will be celebrated in Kampala this October.



ARU Hosts the PAX Christi International Peacebuilding Programme Final Evaluation



Group photo of the Evaluation participants

By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS

The Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) Secretariat hosted the final evaluation of the PAX Christi International Peacebuilding Programme 2023–2026, bringing together partners and delegates from across the region to reflect on the programme's achievements, lessons learned, challenges and the way forward.

The final evaluation took place on 12 August 2026, with participants from PAX Christi International, including the Co-President, Sr. Dr. Wamuyu, as well as representatives from Uganda, Kenya and Sudan, where the programme was implemented. Participants from DR Congo were unable to travel due to restrictions related to the Ebola situation. In Uganda, the programme was implemented in Gulu, Nebbi, Lira

and Arua, reaching religious women, young people, women and men through various peacebuilding activities. In DRC, it was implemented by in Bunia, Mahagi-Nyoka and Wamba, in South-Sudan; Juba, Wau, Tombura-Yambio and Rumbek and in Kenya, the programme was implemented in Ngong, Nakuru, Kericho & Kisumu

Empowering Sisters as Peacebuilders

One of the key approaches of the programme was the Training of Trainers (TOT), which served as the first step in building local capacity for peacebuilding. Catholic Sisters from different locations were equipped with knowledge, skills and practical tools in peacebuilding, active nonviolence, trauma healing, conflict management, Nonviolent

communication, Transformational Leadership, among other areas. After completing the TOT training, the sisters, with the support of PAX Christi International, became multipliers of the knowledge and skills they had acquired. They went on to conduct further trainings for other religious women, young people, as well as women and men in their respective communities, schools, and parishes.

The involvement of the sisters demonstrated the important contribution that religious women can make to peacebuilding. Through their presence in communities, pastoral ministry and engagement with vulnerable groups, they are uniquely positioned to promote dialogue, mediation, reconciliation, nonviolence and peaceful coexistence.

Reflecting on Achievements and Lessons Learned

The evaluation provided an opportunity for participants to present reports and share experiences from the different areas where the programme had been implemented. The presentations highlighted the activities undertaken, the people reached, the changes observed, challenges and the lessons learned throughout the three-year programme

The Africa Regional Coordinator, Mr. Anastase Dieudonné Serukabuza, presented the consolidated findings of the programme evaluation, including the results, outcomes, impact and key lessons emerging from the implementation period. This 3-year programme was executed in 15 dioceses, reached 43,245 peoples in total including 2,852 Religious Sisters from 53 congregations.

His presentation provided an opportunity for participants to reflect critically on what worked well, the challenges encountered and the areas requiring further attention.

The discussions also highlighted the importance of strengthening local capacities and networks so that peacebuilding initiatives can become increasingly rooted within communities.

The participants also put forward a number of recommendations based on each country's context and local experiences on the ground, which PCI may consider in its future programme.

The experience affirmed the value of working with religious leaders, women religious, young people and

other community actors as agents of peace.

In her address, Sr. Dr. Wamuyu applauded the Sisters who had implemented the programme for their commitment to carrying the burdens of people who are suffering. She encouraged them to cultivate a spirit of gratitude and to remain hopeful, even in the face of challenges.

Looking Ahead: A New Programme for 2026–2029

The evaluation was not only an opportunity to look back but also to look ahead. The Regional Coordinator presented the new PAX Christi International Peacebuilding Programme for 2026–2029.

The new programme will extend peacebuilding efforts to Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Congo and South-Sudan, building on the experiences, achievements and lessons of the 2023–2026 programme.

The continuation of the programme is an encouraging sign that the commitment to peacebuilding in the region remains strong. It also provides an opportunity to consolidate the networks and capacities developed during the first phase while responding to emerging challenges in the region.



Experiencing the Faith and Culture of Uganda

Beyond the formal evaluation sessions, the participants were given an opportunity to experience some of Uganda's rich religious and cultural heritage.

The delegates visited the Munyonyo Martyrs Shrine, an important Catholic pilgrimage site and place of spiritual significance. The visit provided time for prayer, reflection and appreciation of Uganda's Christian heritage, particularly the witness of the Uganda Martyrs.

The participants also visited Buglange Cultural Heritage, where they had an opportunity to experience Ugandan culture and learn more about the heritage of the Buganda Kingdom. The cultural experience was greatly enjoyed by the visitors and provided a memorable opportunity for intercultural exchange.

A particular highlight was a brief encounter with the Katikkiro (Prime Minister) of Buganda, during which the participants shared a joyful moment and further appreciated Uganda's rich cultural heritage.

The commitment remains clear: peacebuilding is not a one-time activity, but a continuing mission that requires commitment, courage, collaboration, dialogue and hope.



Karamoja Hunger Crisis: Response and Advocacy for Lasting Solutions



The Diocese of Moroto receiving the second consignment of food

By Kunihira Flavia Publicity officer caritas uganda

In June 2026, the Catholic Bishop of Kotido Diocese, Rt. Rev. Dominic, Eibu, MCCJ, appealed for solidarity and assistance with food and other essential supplies for families affected by the hunger crisis in Karamoja.

The response has brought together dioceses, parishes, institutions and individuals from across the country. Through parish collections, in-kind donations and financial contributions. The Catholic Church continues to demonstrate solidarity with communities affected by hunger.

Current Situation

Karamoja continues to face a severe food security and livelihood crisis, with an estimated 473,000 people affected and approximate-

ly 41,000 experiencing emergency levels of food insecurity. Prolonged drought, erratic and failed rains, poor harvests, and depleted household food reserves have left many families struggling to meet their basic needs.

Children remain among the hardest hit, with more than 122,000 children under five requiring urgent treatment for acute malnutrition. As household food stocks decline, many vulnerable families are increasingly resorting to negative coping mechanisms, including skipping meals, reducing food consumption, and selling firewood to meet their immediate needs.

A Growing Wave of Solidarity
Caritas Kampala Archdiocese has

continued to mobilise food items through its parish collections, while Caritas Kasese has launched the second phase of its diocesan food collection. In the Northern Region, Caritas Nebbi has mobilised UGX 3.1 million towards its target of UGX 5 million, while dioceses under the Gulu Ecclesiastical Province continue to mobilise grain and other resources for a joint consignment to Karamoja.

Caritas Arua has also continued its parish-based campaign, mobilising both cash and in-kind contributions. Meanwhile, Caritas Soroti is exploring opportunities to support longer-term recovery through the mobilisation of seeds for farmers, with ten bags of millet already pledged.

Food Support Reaches Karamoja
The collective efforts of the Church have already translated into direct support for vulnerable communities in Karamoja.

A second food consignment, jointly mobilised through Kampala Archdiocese and Caritas Kampala, Kasa-na-Luwero Diocese and Caritas Uganda, was delivered to Moroto and received by Caritas Moroto. The consignment included 1,820 kg of rice, 7,790 kg of maize flour, 654 kg of beans and 109 kg of cowpeas, alongside other essential food items including cooking oil, salt and sugar.

In a separate intervention, Caritas Uganda flagged off a truck carrying 5 tonnes of maize flour and 3 tonnes of beans to support families affected by hunger in Kotido.

Part of the food assistance received in Moroto was provided to Matany Hospital to support the growing number of hunger-related admissions. The remaining support has been distributed to vulnerable households and used to complement ongoing humanitarian interventions targeting communities that have not been reached by other forms of assistance.

Caritas Moroto continues to work closely with the District Disaster Management Committee and other humanitarian partners to help ensure that assistance reaches those most in need.

In Kotido, Caritas continues to work with communities, parishes and district structures in responding to the crisis. Communities are also be-

ginning to look beyond immediate relief, with an increasing demand for fast-maturing vegetable seeds as they prepare for the upcoming rains.

From Emergency Relief to Lasting Solutions

While emergency food assistance remains critical in saving lives, the recurring food and livelihood crises in Karamoja require sustained action to address their underlying causes. The growing interest in agricultural inputs and livelihood recovery demonstrates the importance of complementing emergency assistance with interventions that enable communities to rebuild and strengthen their resilience.

Caritas Uganda recognises that a lasting solution to the Karamoja crisis must go beyond responding to hunger when it occurs. There is a need for sustained investment in climate-resilient agriculture, water access and management, livelihood diversification, nutrition, environmental restoration and social protection for vulnerable households.

The organisation will continue to advocate, alongside its diocesan network and other stakeholders, for stronger and more coordinated action to address the structural challenges that leave communities vulnerable to recurring drought, food insecurity and livelihood shocks. This includes advocating for greater investment in sustainable development interventions and ensuring that the priorities and experiences of Karamoja communities inform policies, programmes and development planning.

Community voices must remain at the centre of these efforts. The people most affected by the crisis understand the challenges they face and should play a meaningful role in shaping solutions that affect their livelihoods and future.

Through sustained advocacy, strategic partnerships and community-led solutions, Caritas Uganda seeks not only to respond to today's hunger crisis but also to help build a more resilient Karamoja—one where families are better equipped to withstand future shocks, sustain their livelihoods and live with dignity.

As the response continues, Caritas Uganda and its diocesan network will strengthen mobilisation, coordination, and the timely delivery of assistance, while linking emergency relief to longer-term recovery and resilience-building efforts.

However, the needs remain significant, and the appeal continues. Let us continue to share our food with Karamoja.



Personal Reflection: The Little We Give, the Difference We Make



Fr. Placide together with the friends of Milhil visiting the communities in Karamoja

By Fr. Placide Elia, MHM

Fr. Placide Elia, Mill Hill Missionary
Are we born with generous hearts, or do we learn to give as we journey through life?

Perhaps generosity is a seed planted by God in every human heart, a seed that needs to be nurtured, watered and given the opportunity to grow.

A few days ago, I found myself reflecting on this question during a visit to communities in Karamoja, together with the Friends of Mill Hill. We had travelled to parish-

es where our Mill Hill missionary brothers are serving, carrying with us some food and other small contributions for the communities who are currently battling a severe food crisis.

The experience was deeply touching. What we carried did not seem like much. Yet, as we met the people and witnessed something of their daily reality, I began to see our little contribution differently. What seemed small in our hands could mean a great deal to some-

one who has very little and communicate something much deeper. The experience stayed with me long after we left. It made me think about the many things we possess and often take for granted. Sometimes we throw away food because we have more than we need. We put aside clothes and other useful items because they are no longer important to us. We may even pass by someone in need without asking ourselves whether there is something, however small, we

could share.

And then another question came to mind: Why are we sometimes afraid to give?

Are we afraid that helping the poor will somehow take away our own opportunities? Do we fear that if we give something away, we will have less for ourselves? Or have we simply forgotten how to share?

As Christians, we are constantly taught to feed the hungry, clothe those in need, welcome the stranger, and shelter the homeless. Jesus Himself tells us;

“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” — Matthew 25:40

But we must honestly ask ourselves: Do we really live these words?

Giving does not necessarily mean giving money. Sometimes generosity begins with what is already within our hands. We can give food, clothes, time, attention, encouragement, and love. We can visit the sick, listen to someone who is lonely, support a struggling family, or share what we no longer need.

The poor are not our competitors. Their need is not a threat to what we have. Rather, their presence invites us to rediscover our humanity and, for us as Christians, to recognize Christ in the person standing before us.

Before throwing something away, perhaps we can pause and ask: Could this still be useful to someone? Before saying, “I have nothing to give,” perhaps we can ask: What little thing do I have that could bring joy or relief to another person?

The visit to Karamoja reminded me that generosity is not measured only by the size of our gift and that I do not need to be rich to make a difference. I only need a heart willing to love

What is little in our hands can become a great blessing in someone else's life. And perhaps that is where the seed of generosity begins; not with having more, but with learning to share what we already have.

As St Paul reminds us:

“God loves a cheerful giver.”

— 2 Corinthians 9:7

May our hearts remain open, our hands ready to share, and our eyes attentive to those who have less. And may we never underestimate what a blessing the small in our hands can be in the life of someone else.

The Vocation Animators from different Congregations meeting at ARU Secretariat for a three days workshop



St. Bakhita Anti-Human Trafficking Network Commemorates the World Day against Trafficking in Persons



Some participants during the Commemoration Day

By Benedict Mukoni

St. Bakhita Anti-Human Trafficking Network Uganda, on 30 July 2026, organized and commemorated the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, at our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd grounds in Kampala under the theme "Protecting Dignity Together Against Human Trafficking".

The event brought together women considered most vulnerable to traffickers including single mothers, widows, and women living in informal settlements to equip them with knowledge that could save lives. The network's key partners like JohnPaul II Justice and Peace Center and the Justice Coalition of Religious were also present.

Sr. Semerita Mbambu - CSC, Director of St Bakhita Anti-human Trafficking Network Uganda, explained that they chose to mark the day with women, because they are among the most vulnerable to human trafficking. "By creating awareness, we empower them to recognize the dangers before they become victims", Sr. Semerita added.

What made the day especially powerful was not only the awareness sessions but also the voices of survivors themselves. Women who had endured trafficking, including exploitation after travelling to Saudi Arabia for work, shared deeply

personal testimonies of deception, abuse and eventual restoration. Their stories were painful reminders of the realities many Ugandans continue to face, but they were also living proof that healing is possible.

For many in attendance, hearing directly from survivors transformed statistics into human experiences. It replaced fear with understanding and silence with determination.

The St. Bakhita Anti-Human Trafficking Network has spent nearly four years walking alongside survivors, while its direct rehabili-

tation journey with many women has continued over the past year. During this period, the network has reached and supported more than 300 survivors of human trafficking, offering counselling, accompaniment and pathways toward rebuilding their lives. The impact of this work is becoming increasingly evident.

According to Sr. Semerita, more than 85 percent of the survivors they have accompanied have shown significant improvement in their mental well-being following counselling and continued psychosocial support. Most survivors served are women aged 19 to 40 years, although men are also increasingly being identified and supported. Yet the work is far from over.

While the organization has assisted hundreds of survivors in Kampala, many victims remain hidden, trapped by fear, stigma or ongoing exploitation. The Network acknowledges that numerous survivors have yet to come forward, underscoring the urgent need for continued community awareness, survivor-centred services and stronger partnerships to prevent trafficking before it begins.

The World Day commemoration therefore became more than an annual event; it became a call to action. Participants prayed for those still trapped in trafficking situations while celebrating those who have regained their dignity. Interactive learning sessions, survivor testimonies and community dialogue

reminded everyone present that ending human trafficking requires collective responsibility.

As the event that ended with the Holy Sacrifice of Mass presided over by Fr Okwairwoth Angelo concluded, one message remained unmistakably clear: Restoring dignity begins with awareness, compassion and the courage to stand with survivors.

For the women gathered that day, knowledge became protection. For survivors, sharing their stories became an act of healing. And for the St. Bakhita Anti-Human Trafficking Network Uganda, every restored life is evidence that even after unimaginable exploitation, hope can rise again.



AAC:SS Equips Sisters for Transformative Leadership



By Immaculate Tusingwire, MMS

The All-Africa Conference Sister to Sister (AAC:SS) Uganda Leadership Programme, was held from 23rd to 29th August 2026, bringing together religious sisters for an intensive week of reflection, learning, healing, personal growth and leadership formation.

The goal of (AAC:SS) leadership training is to form leaders who can build communities that are spiritually grounded, psychologically sound and ready for mission. At the heart of the training is the understanding that effective leadership begins with the person of the leader.

The 28 Sisters who attended this 2nd cohort of the 2nd phase explored five key areas: personality profiles, gifts and liabilities; taking stock of one's life; getting out of the victim role; aging gracefully; and the challenges and opportunities of consecrated life.

These themes were deliberately chosen to help sisters lead from self-awareness rather than insecurity, examined lives rather than chaos, responsibility rather than blame, wisdom across generations rather than youthful energy alone, and a deep understanding of consecrated life rather than administration alone.

According to Sr. Anna Grace Alum, AAC: SS Programme's Coordinator, the programme seeks to form servant leaders who lead from self-awareness, responsibility and a deep understanding of their consecrated vocation.

Several participants shared that the training helped them recognize how past experiences and traumas can influence their behaviour and relationships. Through this awareness, they began journeys of healing, forgiveness, self-acceptance and greater tolerance. Other sisters also learned to approach disagreements differently, recognizing that

having different opinions does not make someone an enemy. Respectful dialogue, careful assessment and openness to others' perspectives have helped them discover unity amid diversity.

The impact of this training among those who had the training already in the 1st phase is evident as echoed in the sharing of Sr. Consolée Tuhirirwe. She reflected on the importance of developing a healthy sense of self-worth and learning to recognize both her strengths and weaknesses.

“Following the training, I evaluated myself, identified my strengths and areas where I need to grow, and started the process of building a positive sense of self-worth.”

This transformation also changed the way she related to the people she works with. She began to appreciate her employees more deeply, recognizing that both the leader and those she leads have value and an important contribution to make. The result has been a more participatory approach to leadership in her school. “It is no longer ‘Sister's school,’ but rather ‘our school.’”

One of the fruits of the programme has been the development of strong working relationships among sisters from different congregations across Uganda. The participants' experiences demonstrate that when women religious come together to learn, reflect and share openly, they discover that their differences can become a strength.

The programme therefore contributes not only to better individual

leaders but also to a stronger network of women religious who can support one another in responding to the challenges facing consecrated life and mission today.

Looking ahead, AAC:SS hopes to continue the leadership programme with another cohort and expand the training to the Diocesan level, so that more religious women can benefit.

As these sisters return to their communities after the training, they carry with them not only new leadership tools, but also a deeper awareness of themselves, greater appreciation for others and a renewed commitment to serve.

