



THE MONTHLY GRIND

Official Newsletter of the Association of Sisterhoods in Kenya

Pope's prayer intention for April: 'For fundamental human rights'

"Defending fundamental human rights demands courage and determination.

I'm referring to actively combatting poverty, inequality, the lack of work, land and housing, and the denial of social and labor rights.

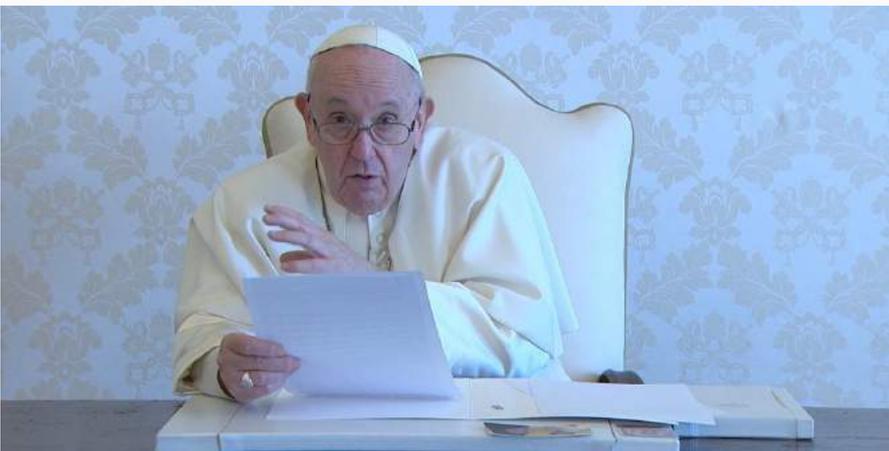
Often, in practice, fundamental human rights are not equal for all.

There are first-, second-, and third-class people, and those who are disposable.

No. They must be equal for all.

In some places, defending people's dignity can mean going to prison, even without a trial. Or it might mean slander. Every human being has the right to develop fully, and this fundamental right cannot be denied by any country.

Let us pray for those who risk their lives while fighting for fundamental rights under dictatorships, authoritarian regimes and even in democracies in crisis, that they may see their sacrifice and their work bear abundant fruit."



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2021

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AOSK-Tumaini Centre Offers

BY VICTOR EMOJA-AOSK-COMMUNICATIONS

Tumaini Center was started in the year 1972 with an aim of catering for the needs of women at different levels of the society. Since then, the department has been working effortlessly to ensure that it is meeting its Goal and objectives. The department has committed to offer a number of services to individuals which entails, Accomodation, Meeting and Workshop facilities, Daily computer courses, Wireless internet services in all rooms and Tv and Video Machines together with speakers for Audio-visual services.



Accomodation available accompanied with Bed and Breakfast

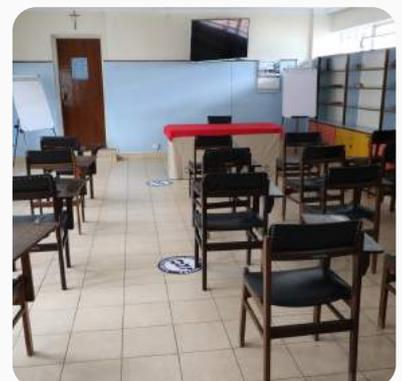


Chapel available for Prayers



Cyber Cafe for computer training

Accomodation Rooms for Guests



Board room for meetings

- Accomodation
- Meetings&Workshops
- Computer Courses
- Wireless internet services
- TV and Video Machines
- Chapel for Prayers



AOSK-Sisters-Led Youth Empowerment Initiative (AOSK-SLYI)

AOSK-SLYI project funded by the Hilton foundation envisions the provision of quality services to disadvantaged and vulnerable youth aged between 15 and 25 years. Sisters in vocational and technical training institutions, who train youth in entrepreneurship in addition to the various technical courses, spearhead this. After completion, they offer the youth seed money to start up small businesses for self-sustainability courtesy of AOSK-SLYI. AOSK-SLYI currently implements the project through 19 vocational and technical training institutions spread across 11 dioceses in Kenya. The sisters go beyond their institutions to offer psychosocial support to youth from at least two neighboring parishes, who otherwise are confronted by teenage pregnancy, drugs and substance abuse, relationship issues, sexuality issues and stress that lead to depression among other psychosocial issues; which are often ignored by the society.

By 28th April, 2021, a total of 2,340 youth had been offered psychosocial support through workshops (111.4% of the target 2,100 youth). Moreover, there were 1,160 youth training on entrepreneurship across the 19 vocational and technical training institutions in addition to various technical courses including hairdressing and beauty therapy, catering and hospitality, dressmaking, shoe making, carpentry and masonry among others (96.7% of the target 1,200 youth). An addition of 40 youth have been identified by the AOSK-SLYI office, and will be supported to join various vocational and technical training institutions across the country in May 2021.

Implementation of both youth entrepreneurship training and psychosocial support forums was interfered by the ban on social gatherings from late March, 2021, especially in Nairobi due to increasing cases of COVID-19 infections. However, two youth forums on advocacy and networking were implemented in Eldoret (Ancilla Vocational Training Centre and St. Brendan Technical Training Institute) and Mombasa (Ancilla Vocational Training College), both attracting a cumulative of 360 youth. Sexuality, drugs and substance abuse and self awareness were addressed by the facilitators in the two forums. Based on the feedback from the youth, it was evident that what was done was not in vain. The youth promised to embrace the lessons learnt. We anticipate reaching out to more youth in May 2021 in Nairobi and Kisumu, subject to the progression of COVID-19 infection rate.



A youth forum on advocacy and networking at Ancilla Vocational Training Centre in Eldoret.



Youth During a presentation at Ancilla Vocational Training college in Mombasa

AOSK SECRETARIAT

The Data Center

On 23rd of March 2021, Superiors came together to talk and share ideas on the Implementation of a new project named CERRA Africa. CERRA Africa is a collaboration project between the Association of sisterhoods of Kenya, the Catholic University of Eastern Africa and Tangaza University College. CERRA-Africa has been made possible through the partnership with, and funding by the Hilton Foundation, a champion of Catholic Sisters globally.

The three associates came together so as to start a data center where they could store data for the life of sisters and their ministries as well as apostolates. Shedding more light on this project, The director of the project Sr. Candida Mukundi, ASN, highlighted that the project is meant to create a platform where authentic stories for religious sisters will be told indepthly, she also added that through this project, a collective impact of the work of sisters in the society will be displayed to the public and lastly, through the data center religious people will also be assessed on how well they are doing and what should be improved on in their general lives.



Superiors During the Data Centre Forum at Dimesse Sisters, Karen

Speaking to AOSK Communication Desk, Reverend Father Stephen Mbugua Who is the vice chancellor for the catholic university of eastern Africa highlighted that this data center will be of high essence to congregations and religious students as it will help them conduct researches that are in-depth and credible.



Rev. Fr. Stephen Mbugua Vice Chancellor CUEA with Sr. Pasilisa Namikoye, LSOSF, AOSK Executive Secretary during the ongoing data center forum at Dimesse Sisters



Superiors attentive during a data centre forum at Dimesse Sisters, Karen

CATHOLIC CARE FOR CHILDREN IN KENYA

AOSK-CCCK

NEED OF COLLABORATION AND NETWORKING FOR CARE REFORMS

The old adage was not wrong to say, “Unity is strength” “This elaborates well the stand and motto of the Association that states” “United we stand as a sign of God’s presence”. These words have been an engine for AOSK-CCCK program in making sure care reforms for children are actualized through the collaboration with many stakeholders. This has seen AOSK-CCCK strive to actualize in its small ways to contribute towards the attainment of the SDG number 17 that emphasizes on the need for partnership.



Figure 1Sr. Florence Muia, ASN with opinion makers on care reforms at Upendo village Naivasha

AOSK-CCCK being a vanguard in promoting holistic family and community based care, are reaching out to many stakeholders in ensuring that CCCK is strengthened and has the capacity to implement care reforms for the children. The CCI administrators are playing a key role in ensuring that these conversations take places by bringing together influential personalities from within the targeted communities where CCIs are located. The collaboration is meant to strengthen the networking towards supporting vulnerable families to raise their children and to gate keep the influx of children to CCIs from the families who can still be supported from their families.

This is because, the vulnerable children who don’t deserve to be in the care institutions end up there, and they miss out on parental care, lack of identity, loose out their own culture to institutional culture that causes some gaps in the development of the children .

Sr. Florence Muia an Assumption Sr. of Nairobi is one of the CCI administrators running a family based care Programme called Upendo village in Naivasha . With the support from AOSK-CCCK, she was able to bring together a group of leaders included a member of the local assembly, area chief, catechists, the pastors, children officers among others.

The meeting aim was to enable a conversation among these community leaders on how to work together to support needy families in the community to prevent separation of vulnerable children from their families and communities.

From their meeting, they agreed to create a tracing agency for families of children in CCl to help in reintegrating those children in Institutions in their locality. They want to strengthen the collaboration between the government agencies to support those people dealing with needy children so that they can be supported from the government bursaries as a way of family support. The group intends to create whatsApp group where they can continue to share knowledge on childcare reforms and other matters relating to children care. What if you and I can start in our own small ways to encourage and support needy families to raise up their children? Remember one of the children rights is “a right to a family and a right to have an identity”. The AOSK-CCCK Program is funded by GHR.

Centre For Justice and Peace (AOSK-JPC)

AOSK-JPC AT 30

COVID-19 pandemic is having far-reaching impacts on people around the world, the effects have been particularly pronounced for certain segments of the population, such as for women and girls. The socio-economic impact of the crisis has increased tensions within households, with reports of physical violence against women and child abuse. Kenya is not left out, with the great impact felt due to loss of livelihoods. COVID-19 has produced a lot of uncertainty, persistent worries on safety and the normal functioning of communities are threatened.

The third wave in Kenya led to partial lockdown of five counties Nairobi, Kiambu, Kajiado, Machakos and Nakuru to curb the spread of the virus. These measures have had negative impacts on many livelihoods especially those living in informal urban settlement.

To cushion some of the families, AOSK through the Justice and Peace program provided food vouchers worth one thousand to a group of 187 women living in Kibera so as to help them cope up with the hard times of Covid-19.

The AOSK-Justice and peace commission was established on 29th of april the year 1991. It is one of the programs affiliated to the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (AOSK) which was started in the year 1962 with the vision of empowering prophetic women religious living gospel values. AOSK-JPC main target was to address issues of injustice especially those realating to women and the growing marginalization of the poor. What triggered this was that it seemed unfair for sisters to remain ignorant to socio-economic and cultural problems when human rights were being violated. During AOSK-JPC existence, the program has achieved a number of things amongst them being empowerment of sisiters, women peacemakers and human rights teachers on issues such as Child rights protection, Gender-Based Violence, Human Trafficking, Civic Education, Devolution, Peacebuilding skills, conflict resolution, leadership and environmental care.

Besides that, the program has also trained Women peacemakers, as champions of justice and peace across the country. Despite the program flourishing greatly, there has also been a number of challenges, the major one being lack of funds to support the work of sisters, another challenge is that with the Covid-19, the number of cases of women and child abuse being reported to AOSK-JPC is more overwhelming to be handled by the program, lastly as much as AOSK-JPC Wants to reach out to more women to join the leadership positions, the affirmative action has remain a major obstacle because of the cultural mindset of our patriarchal society. As AOSK-JPC marks its 30th anniversary, the program is still looking forward to continue impacting the society positively. AOSK-JPC program is funded by Trocaire, Agiamondo together with Misereor.

AOSK-SCORE ECD

COVID 19 community strengthening activities

During the month of April, the country has reported increased numbers of Covid 19 infection and deaths. The nine congregations and those who benefitted from the Covid 19 training have been reaching out to the households and the community sensitizing the public on the need to take precautions during this time of the pandemic by observing preventive measures such as: proper wearing of masks, frequent washing of hands, keeping social distance, health eating and avoid gatherings among others. The Daughters of the Good Shepherd managed to reach 300 caregivers, 600 Catholic women association members, 100 Catholic men association members and 400 youths.



Mrs. Sarah Mutinda from Githurai creating awareness to the Catholic women association (CWA) and Catholic men association (CMA) on Covid 19

Seven radio sessions were carried out during the month, six at Radio Waumini and one at Radio Maria in Murang'a Diocese. The key messages were on Parenting and Covid 19, trading and Covid 19, public transport and Covid 19, youth and Covid 19, Child trafficking and Covid 19. The messages were delivered by the AOSK-SCORE ECD staff, Sisters of Emmanuel, Sisters lead Youth initiative project coordinator, Justice and Peace Human rights project officer and the National ECD Network Coordinator. The topics were engaging and listeners were able to comment and ask questions. The radio sessions will continue in the coming month of May and will be aired on Radio Waumini 88.3 every Tuesday and Thursday at 1.00 pm.



The AOSK-SCORE ECD project manager and the AOSK-SLYI project Coordinator sharing during a radio session at Radio Waumini.

ECD Messaging at The Health Facilities

During antenatal and postnatal visits, sisters have been reaching out to caregivers with health talks and ECD messages on water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) nutrition and positive parenting. Expectant mothers are also encouraged to deliver in the health facilities.

At Kiirua Hospital in Meru, sisters have come up with a Mother baby pack as a gift for all the mothers who receive maternity services. The Mother and baby Pack has contributed greatly to the increased numbers of Deliveries in the hospital thus creating an avenue to educate the Mothers before being discharged on positive nurturing methods geared toward holistic child development.



A sister helping a mother after delivery on how to position a child during breast feeding at St. Theresa Mission hospital Kiirua in Meru

Exchange Visits

During the month, the Franciscan missionaries of St. Joseph and the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph carried out an exchange learning visit in Rang'ala Siaya County which was aimed at helping the master trainers, the community health volunteers and the lead mothers to share their experiences and learn from each other and to improve their services to families and the community.



Score ECD teams sharing during the exchange visit at Simenya in Rang'ala Siaya County

AOSK Staff Training on Monitoring and Evaluation

After attending a training on monitoring and evaluation, the AOSK-SCORE ECD project coordinator and the Sisters led Youth initiative Project Coordinator conducted a training for all the Project managers and coordinators at Tumaini Centre. This was a good opportunity for the staff to learn from each other and to apply practical examples. The knowledge and skills acquired will help the staff to perform better. AOSK-SCORE ECD in Partnership with CRS are Funded by the Hilton foundation.



AOSK staff during the Monitoring and Evaluation training forum at Tumaini Centre

Formation Testimonies

By Sr Rena Kawishe, CPS

Formation participant 2020-2021

Chemchemi ya Uzima is a training institute where men and women religious receive a wholistic formation, who in turn assist in forming young men and women in their respective religious communities. The institute have the best trainers gifted spiritually and academically. “Come as you are” In deed as the slogan says I came; nine months has elapsed formed and transformed. It requires one’s readiness and openness to allow Holy Spirit transform and attain wholistic growth. The skills I have received through workshops, counseling, spiritual direction and growth groups have enhanced the process of transformation and formation to the person I am today. Am extremely happy and ready to carry out the responsibility that will be entrusted to me.

Having gone through this enriching course, I now understand how important it is to train formators. It’s not so much to go and train others but I should be the first beneficiary of the course. Therefore, I encourage religious men and women be aggressive and experience the transforming power of God through able trainers

Pope Francis stated that, “The renewal of faith and the future of vocations are possible only if we have well-formed and trained religious priests and nuns. It is a work that requires the courage of letting ourselves be formed by our Lord, to transform our heart and our life”, when a formator is trained, it becomes easy for her/him to journey with the formees, and let God shape them just as a potter with a clay.

Formators are trained on the dynamics of human and spiritual development, how to attune to the promptings of the Spirit and in turn help the formees to trust, open up to and respond to their call despite the struggles, doubts and many questions questing for the answers. In Evangelii Gaudium, Pope Francis insisted that, “a formator has to be equipped by learning or training that can be organized by means of courses, seminars/workshops, inputs etc”.

In the synod of bishops, was re-affirmed that a priority and urgent task of the major superiors is to realize that, it is very important not only to choose the right formators but also to prepare and training them, and help them toward a constant development of their professional capability in such a way that they may better fulfil the formation responsibility entrusted to them. Above all, those responsible for the mission must know how to teach discernment, docility and obedience, reading the signs of the times and people’s needs, teaching their charges to respond to those needs with solicitude and courage, in full ecclesial communion.

I conclude by saying that, “We are all called to be transformed, but also to be agents of transformation for other”. Therefore, Rise, Pick Up Your Mat and Walk.

AOSK CHEMCHEMI YA UZIMA INSTITUTE

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END

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