

AOSK MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



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OCTOBER 2021**

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Pope's November prayer intention: For those who suffer from depression

by Victor Emoja-AOSK Communnications

The November edition of The Pope Video was created in conjunction with the Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers, which offers spiritual support for people suffering various forms of mental illness.

According to a press release accompanying the video, around 1 in 10 people worldwide lives with a mental health disorder, amounting to 792 million people or 11 percent of the population. Depression and anxiety account for around 3 and 4 percent, respectively, of those illnesses. Pope Francis' call for us to pray and assist those who suffer from depression.

AOSK 2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

From 16th to 19th of November the year 2021, Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya held its annual general meeting. The meeting was conducted at Dimesse Sisters center in Karen. The forum was attended by over hundred superiors from different congregations. The theme for the AGM was "Transformative Prophetic role for women Religious during the Covid Pandemic". During the forum, Superiors discussed the Milestones that have been made by the organization during the year 2021. Also the plans for the association for the year 2022 were discussed indepthly. Despite the Challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic, the organization recorded a massive growth in terms of project implementation. We are looking forward for the year 2022 with a greater Zeal and determination.



Superiors during the AOSK Annual General Meeting at Dimesse Sisters, Karen.



AOSK-Staff Introduction during the AGM 2021



Sr. Pasilisa Namikoye LSOSF During her Introduction speech at the AOSK AGM 2021



The superior of the year prize was awarded to Sr. Mary Njoki, ASE.



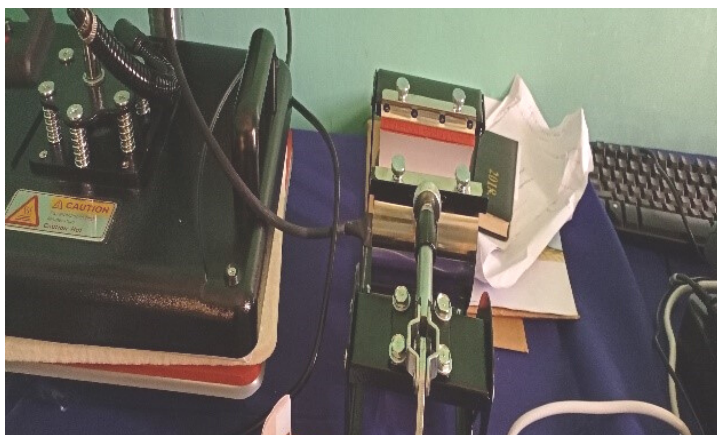
Sisters during a Photo session at the end of the AOSK AGM.

Sister Led Youth Empowerment Initiative (AOSK-SLYI)

The AOSK-Sisters Led Youth Empowerment Initiative is one amongst many projects at the the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya funded by the Conrad Hilton Foundation. This project aims at empowering the youth in the society to gain technical skills from sisters led technical training institutions. This helps in increasing self-employment hence bridging the gap of unemployment in our society.

From 23rd to 26th of November the Year 2021. AOSK-SLYI program conducted site-visits to the Institutions and youth businesses in Siaya and Mumias. The main purpose of these visits was to evaluate the impact of this project to the target beneficiaries and also to identify the gaps that should be worked on during the next phase of the project. The institutions that were visited entailed, St Jude technical college Mumias, St Oda vocational training Centre for the physically challenged and St Anthony technical institute of technology and 6 youth group businesses.

From the visits it was clear that the institutions benefited greatly from the AOSK-SLYI initiative by purchasing various training equipment and materials and also employed some staff easing and enabling the teaching at the institutions. It was also evident that the enrollment of students in the institutes has increased greatly as many of them were attracted in gaining hands on skills that would help them sustain their lives



A cup making equipment used by St Jude technical college to produce cups as an income generating initiative for the institute

Youth Businesses.

Various youth had expressed their wish to have businesses based on the courses they trained in the technical training institutions and due to this, AOSK-SLYI through Hilton foundation supported these youth in their business ideas. The businesses have been running for some time now and that is why AOSK-SLYI saw it wise to visit the youth businesses so as to evaluate their progress achievements challenges and plans of sustainability. From the visits the hard work that the youth have in their daily businesses endeavors was witnessed, they have thrived in their various business ventures and through the business they are able to keep themselves busy with constructive work, use and nurture the skills they got through their various technical institutions, comfortably provide food on their tables and sustain their daily needs.



St Anthony youth attending to their customer at their salon,

AOSK-SCORE ECD

MALE CHAMPIONS TRAINING

AOSK SCORE ECD project continues to create awareness by championing on the importance of the first 1,000 days of a child's life. The emphasis on nurturing care by all caregivers moved the project to take a notch higher in advocating for male involvement to build healthier and more prosperous futures for children. During the month of November, 2021, the sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary mother of Christ in Githurai Kiambu County organized for a training for male champions which emphasized on the role men (fathers) in relation to the five components of the nurturing i.e. good health, adequate nutrition, safety and security, responsive caregiving and opportunities for early learning. In addition, the spiritual aspect was also incorporated to ensure well rounded children for optimal development. A total of 32 men were reached during the training and they will act as peer champions in sharing knowledge on the need for male partners to take a proactive role in advocating for male involvement in nurturing care within their communities. A good foundation in the early years makes a difference through adulthood and even gives the next generation a better start.



Sr. Lilian Njuguna (master trainer IHM) taking male champions through a session (Photo by Sr. Joyce)

IN MEMORY OF SR. VIRGINIA MAINGI, FMSJ

Elsewhere, November was yet another sad month to the SCORE-ECD fraternity. This is due to the sudden death of Sister Virginia Maingi (Franciscan Missionaries of St. Joseph). Sr. Virginia died on 10/11/2021 at the age of thirty one years.

The late will be remembered as a jovial sister with a beautiful smile. She was appointed to Kisumu to work in the SCORE ECD project as a master trainer in March this year. Her time within the project could be termed as short, however sister touched and shared life to the fullest with the people she was sent to serve who were basically caregivers, children and other people she come across in her ministry. As we thank God for the person of Sr. Virginia to the SCORE ECD project and the church at large, we extend our gratitude to the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of St. Joseph for the gift of sister to the project and for allowing her to share life and love with us. The late Sr. Virginia was laid to rest on 17/11/2021. May she rest in eternal peace.



Photo of the Late Sr. Virginia Maingi, FMSJ.

Catholic Care for Children in Kenya (AOSK-CCCK)

Protecting children without adequate family care is a challenge faced by families, communities, and governments in every country all over the world. Millions of children are separated from their families and living in residential care even though most have at least one living parent or relative willing to care for them with the right support; countless others are at risk of being without adequate family care. AOSK-CCCK increasingly understands and advocate that protecting children must be a top priority, and that failure to do so impact all sectors of a society. AOSK-CCCK program office organized a seven day field work support supervision in Kakamega and Bungoma AUs to assess the implementation of AOSK-CCCK goal of promoting holistic family and community based care. The support supervision was conducted as from 7th November to 13th November of the year 2021.

Five CCIs were visited for support supervision to assess the best practices, their use of the database, child protection and legal framework for the CCIs, and on how they are utilizing the knowledge and skills they acquired through webinars workshop trainings from AOSK-CCCK on Case Management, Child Protection and legal framework and the sensitization forums they have been carrying out with community members on positive parenting, and child safeguarding in enhancing re-integration process of children from CCIs to families.

During the Support supervision to the five CCIs the AOSK-CCCK team took the opportunity to walk through the various institutions on the need for them to implement care reforms that are geared towards deinstitutionalization and reintegration of children into families and communities. The need for care reforms was espoused to administrators and social workers in the five CCIs by sharing with them that research shows that the majority of children in residential care are not placed there because they are without a caregiver, but rather because their families are facing a range of challenges to their capacity to provide for and care for them. These challenges often result from poverty, lack of access to social services, discrimination, and social exclusion, and may also result from personal crises and emergencies affecting the household, including interpersonal and societal violence.

At the end of the support supervision it was unanimously agreed by all the CCIs that they would strengthen their family care systems to prevent unnecessary separation of children from their families and developing alternative family-based care options for children in need of protection and care. The AOSK-CCCK project is proudly sponsored by the GHR foundation.



***Sharing Session during Support supervision at St. Joseph Rehabilitation Centre Luanda
on 11th November 2021***

Justice & Peace Commission

AOSK-JPC

Project Amani started the month of November with a First Aid Training with Red Cross Kenya. The 15 participants from Tumaini Centre and Chemichemi learned about the essentials of first aid in order to be able to prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. In 8 hours, they covered both the theoretical principles of first aid, emergency scene management and identifying life threats as well as practical skills like recovery position, bandaging different types of wounds and CPR. The participants were very satisfied with the training and we are looking forward to continuing improving our first aid skills in 2022. The Amani project is Funded by AGIAMONDO.



Participants during the first aid training session at Tumaini Center

In the month of November AOSK Justice and Peace held the Annual general meeting for Nairobi Metropolitan (Nairobi, Kericho, Nakuru, Kitui, Machakos and Ngong). The meeting took place on November 7, 2021 at Dimesse sisters, Karen. In attendance were the Human Rights teachers, Women Peacemakers and Sisters. The objective of the meeting was to foster the capacity and facilitate the target groups in their interventions at the grassroots to effectively champion human rights advocacy and lobbying. During the meeting the participants got an input on Leadership, entrepreneurship and civic education. Issues that arose were that most of the members do not actively participate in election process and were called upon to take the lead as human rights defenders.

Participants were also challenged on entrepreneur skills and many of them especially teachers embraced it as a source of income for themselves and to pass on the knowledge to the learners as well. Reports from different AUs were presented and teachers who had completed the Human Rights training were awarded certificates and new teachers were enrolled and encouraged to be trained so that they can make a positive impact in their schools and communities.



Participants during the AGM for the Nairobi Metropolitan, Courtesy of AOSK-JPC

Sensitization Forums on Affirmative Action.

Kenya's 2010 constitution provides a gender quota, requiring not more than two-thirds of elective public bodies shall not be of the same gender. Ten years since the promulgation of the Kenya constitution the government still has not adopted legislation to fully implement this constitutional requirement. The 2013 and 2017 elections never saw the progress necessary for women to gain the constitutionally-mandated 33 percent representation in elective office.

In this regard AOSK Justice and Peace organized sensitization forums on Affirmative Actions which were held in six AU's including Ngong, Isiolo, Maralal, Bungoma, Kitui and Mombasa. The forums aimed at giving the grassroots communities the skill set to enact laws in order to realize the 2/4rd gender rule in elective positions provided in Article 177 of the Kenyan Constitution.

Sensitization Forums on Political parties to support Women in political processes.

Kenyan women still face serious challenges as politicians, voters and candidates. During campaigns they face persistent violence through physical assaults, threats and coercion (including sexual harassment, sexual extortion, and economic threats), both in person and online. As we approach the 2022 elections there is an opportunity to enact meaningful change to affirm women's participation and leadership in Kenyan electoral politics. Communities will play a critical role in ensuring that women participate in this political processes without fear or intimidation.

Justice and Peace organized five forums in Nairobi, Kericho, Kisumu, Machakos and Kisii to connect grassroots communities with state and non-state actors to enhance the capacity of women to participate and engage in politics, leadership and governance.



Participants during an implementation forum on support for women in political processes at Christ the King Riruta, Nairobi AU

Implementation Forums on Civic Education

Civic education is a continuous systematic provision of information and learning experiences to all citizens for their effective participation in democratic life. The citizens actively participate in governance affairs of the society on the basis of enhanced knowledge, understanding and ownership. Civic education ensures that all citizens learn about their rights and responsibilities and facilitates effective public participation.

AOSK Justice and Peace organized seven implementation forums in Nakuru, Nyeri, Nyahururu, Eldoret, Homabay, Marsabit and Malindi to equip the grassroots communities with knowledge on civic education. The forums aimed at empowering the intermediate beneficiaries with knowledge and know-how on matters of the constitution, devolution and political participation.



Participants during Civic Education forum in Yamumbi Parish, Eldoret AU

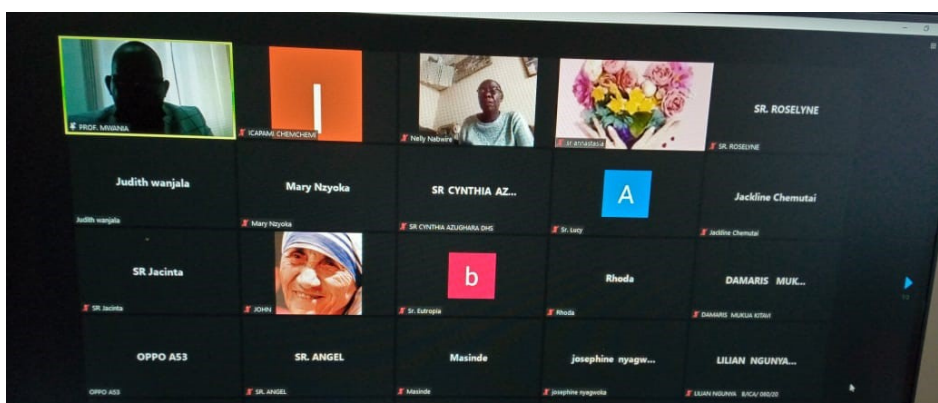
AOSK-CHEMCHEMI YA UZIMA INSTITUTE

Institute of Catechetical and Pastoral Ministry (ICAPAMI)

23/11/2021 was a unique day for AOSK ICAPAMI whereby the department held an online seminar for all Pastoral Agents. The topic of the seminar was: Changing trends in Catechetical and Pastoral Ministry amidst Covid: Challenges and Opportunities. The main speaker, was Rev. Professor Patrick Mwanja, CSSP who is a lecturer from Tangaza University College and apart-time Lecturer at ICAPAMI.

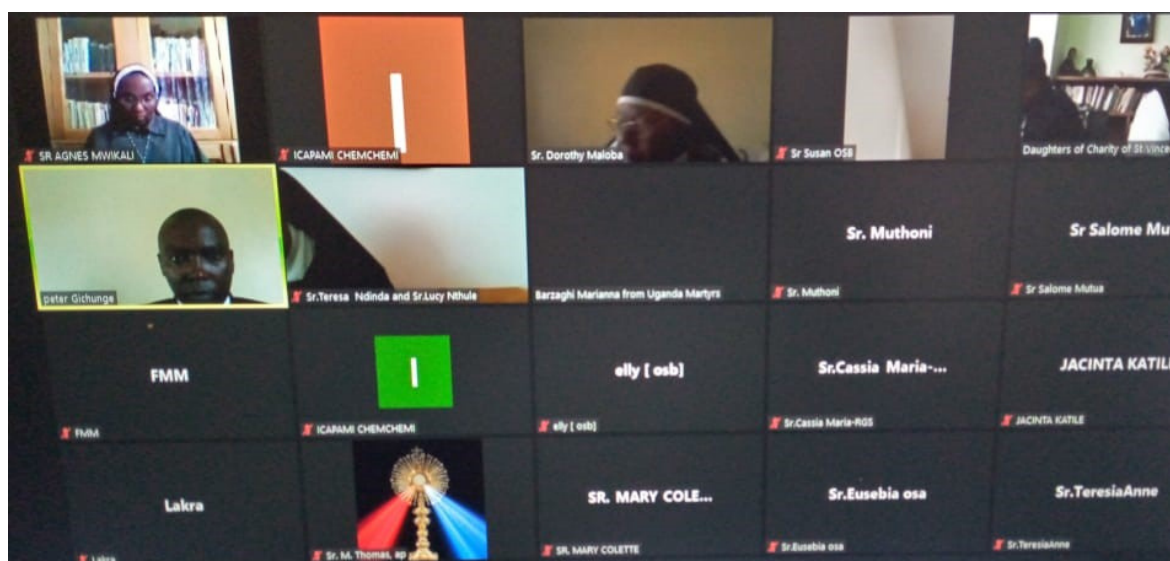
The seminar was attended by more than 75 participants drawn from different parts of the world, most of them were pastoral agents. Below is the synthesis of Professor Mwanja's talk: "Since the wake of the 19th century, theology has embraced contextuality so that every theology if it is to make sense, it has to be in context: cultural, religious, political, geographical etc. Christian revelation and the Word of God will only impact on people if it speaks to them in their real situation and life realities. It is in this context that Vatican II in its magna carta document about the relationship between the Church and the world "Gaudium et Spes" speaks about reading the "signs of the time". The proclamation of the Gospel will be relevant if Pastoral and missionary agents are privy to what people are going through.

Corona Pandemic with its devastating effects has become an undeniable "sign of our time" that we as pastoral agents have to bear in mind if we are to be relevant in our ministry today".



Participants of the pastoral agents' online seminar held on 23/11/2021

On 26/11/2021 AOSK ICAPAMI module certificate students completed their course which took ten weeks. The 43 participants started their journey on 15/09/2021. Fifteen of these participants, are nuns from different monasteries in Kenya. This was the third group since this online program started last year September, 2020. So far this program has benefited over 100 participants. It is tailored to give theological foundation to the participants.



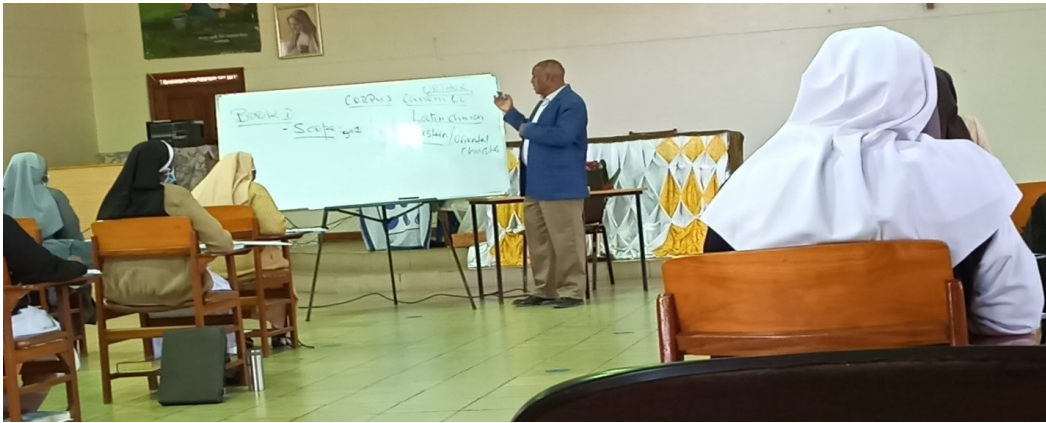
ICAPAMI Module certificate students in an online class

AOSK FORMATION

Knowledge is power as asserted by the great philosopher-Plato.

The knowledge gained by sisters who are involved in the Training of Trainers and formation directors' program has testified to the above saying. The experiences gained by these ToTs and Formation directors which they shared through the questionnaires send to them were very encouraging. These questionnaires sought to assess how the content of the training they are receiving is empowering them to grow as persons and for future ministry.

One of the questions sought to assess how the content of training they are receiving from their respective institutions is helping them in growth and personal transformation for effectiveness in their future ministry. Participants appreciated the new knowledge received from their training and considered the content as helpful. One of the ToTs participants expressed, *‘Since am trained to grow in my faith and in intimacy with God, this experience will help me to be effective in my ministry of teaching the faith, so that I may touch the lives of many... I feel being prepared for helping my fellow community members and those entrusted to our care.*



Formation directors lecture in progress at Chemchemi multipurpose hall

In sharing her experiences, one of the formators under training stated: *'I have acquired skills, I have worked on myself, on my childhood experiences until today. ... My prayer life has been deepened with different practices of prayer and how to center my life in prayer. Other important things that have helped me are the spiritual direction, counselling and growth groups that have helped me to acquire new skills which i was not familiar with. ...All this have improved my listening skills and I am confident that after the program am ready to serve with integrity. Another participant expressed; 'I have received lectures in self-awareness, emotional maturity, spiritual guidance, etc to understand myself as a person, so that I can be able to accommodate others, and I am challenged to be a mentor even to others and especially to the young women, who are discerning to enter religious life.*



ToTs and formation Directors in a workshop on 13th November 2021 at Tumaini center grounds

In their response to a question that sought to evaluate the relevancy and effectiveness of the workshop, the participants unanimously expressed how relevant it was for them as students. This group was empowered on Setting of goals, choosing the change I want as a person, dreaming big, fulfilling my dreams, good study habits and self-management strategies

Participants noted that many times, sisters fail in life because they don't know how to formulate realistic goals in life. One of them expressed, *'the workshop was relevant because we fail in life due to lack of self-awareness. ...I came out of the workshop with knowledge on how to make realistic goals in everything that I do'*. Another sister expressed how inputs on self-management and discovering her study habits has influenced her approach to studies. She says, *"It was relevant because I have set the goal to achieve unlike before, my study habits have been improved and I know how to manage myself. ...This skill will help me to handle the candidates am going to have in the formation because I will have worked on myself and therefore it will be easier to handle them."*

The sisters appreciated the empowerment, opportunities for growth and integration. They feel rejuvenated to take up their studies seriously as well as personal responsibilities. The program is felt to have been contributing towards provision of rigorous professional development programs for women religious and nurturing the vitality of religious vocations

Sr Lucia Mutuku DSH
HoD Formation department

AOSK-CHEMCHEMI ADMINISTRATION

During the Month of November, The AOSK governing council led by the Executive Secretary Sr. Pasilisa Namikoye, LSOSF made a special visit to Chemchemi ya Uzima Institute. During the visit the council was very exited about the 90 self-contained rooms that are now available for students. also the governing council appreciated the boardroom where they will be coming for their meetings as well as the gym.all in all they council members appreciated the progress of the institution and gave the institution their blessings to continue with the good work.



The AOSK-Governing Council during their Visit at Chemchemi ya Uzima Institute.

Remembering our departed members.

Traditionally the month of November is set aside as a month to pray for our departed brothers and sisters. The AOSK support staff and few staff member used this opportunity to pray with the children of the late member of staff Mary Nyaboke. The two sons **sons** appreciated the visit very much and after prayer they were treated with some food items. The staff used the opportunity to encourage the boys to be focused as an honour to their late mother.



The AOSK-Chemchemi Staff during their Visit at the home of the late staff Mary Nyaboke.

AOSK UNITS

From 11th to 14th of November 2021, AOSK Units held its Annual general Meeting. The AGM was conducted at Dimesse Sisters Centre. During this AGM 24 Units were well represented. During the meeting there were facilitators to empower the AOSK Units leaders on skills for their mission.

One of the facilitator Mr. Cyprian Nyamwamu took the sisters through Peace, Governance and Civic Education in preparation for the forthcoming elections. Cyprian shared that the political status in a Country affects the whole region like what is happening in Ethiopia, or Afghanistan to affect the ICJ. Peaceful election in a Country will always promote peace around their territory and beyond. On social economic context, he highlighted some of the challenges like poor economic performance with unemployment as catalyst of bribery and violence. Drought, disasters and increased vulnerability as sources of conflict within communities.

At the last day of the AGM it was evident that the Units has helped the sisters to feel to belong and that is the cause for improved ownership among the members at the grass roots. It is our hope come next year we shall have the opportunity to bring them together again for more encounters.



AOSK Unit leaders during their AGM at Dimesse Sisters Centre in Karen.

COVID-19 RELATED STIGMATIZATION AND STRESS

Something for us to know!!!!

The AOSK UNITS had a great sharing on Stigmatization and Stress Related to COVID-19. Through the Integrative Spiritual Counselling, Sr. Clemencia Paul was privileged to share some information with the AUS. The following are the highlights of the shared information:

WHAT IS STIGMA? It is discrimination against an individual or group based on perceived social characteristics that serve to distinguish them from other members of society for example HIV, Coronavirus etc. Stigma can be based on doing things differently from the norm e.g. being an addict, belonging to the different religion etc.

Due to lack of proper knowledge of COVID-19, stigma comes out in the form of: a need to blame someone, fears about disease and death, gossip that spreads rumors and myths, Personal effects like the room, mixing clothes, touching personal books etc.

The major question to ask oneself is, what type of stigma do I experience and even inflict on others? Here are the types and you may find it vital to reflect on them? **SOCIAL STIGMA OR PUBLIC STIGMA:** negative stereotypes and prejudices, resulting in discrimination, **SELF-STIGMA:** -internalizes public stigma, **LABEL AVOIDANCE STIGMA** and **STIGMA BY ASSOCIATION**

Become aware of the effects of COVID-19 and seek the help needed related to stress and stigmatization: Remember it is important to address stigmatization in order to reduce the stress related to COVID-19. The Words you use matter, your communication about the facts of COVID, and doing your part in the prevention of COVID-19 is very vital.

Shared by Sr. Clemencia Paul.

AOSK INSURANCE

During the AOSK Annual general meeting for superiors, The AOSK insurance department was privileged to meet the Superiors. In few minutes, the department represented its agency with quality information that superiors needed to know. During this presentation, all questions that superiors needed to understand about the AOSK Insurance agency were promptly addressed. At the end of the presentation, better percentage of superiors had a clear overview of what the AOSK Insurance agency is all about.

The department is currently working on ensuring that it is getting more customers so as to continue on its Mission of providing quality services to its clients. As we welcome our new clients, we encourage our existing clients to continue insuring with us. We are positively looking forward for a better turn-up from congregations come 2022. AOSK Insurance will continue serving you to its best by offering quality advisory on **matters Insurance.**



AOSK Insurance team during their presentation at the AGM for superiors at Dimesse Sisters in Karen.

END

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

AOSK is grateful for your continued support of our mission. Together we are making a difference!



AGIAMONDO

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