

NEWSLETTER

The Monthly Newsletter for the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya

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Pope's May prayer intention: For ecclesial movements and groups

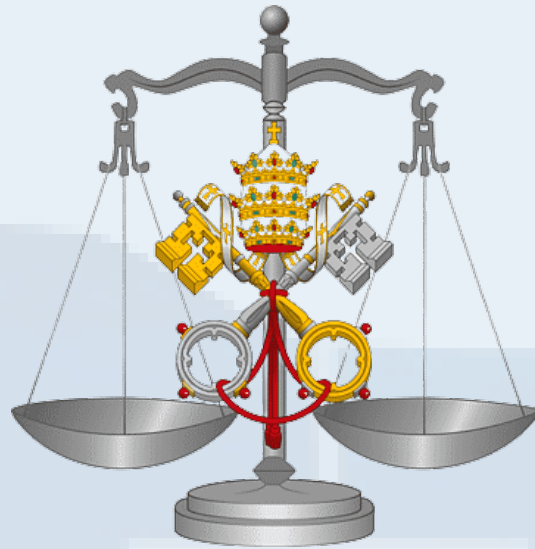
Dialogue at the Service of Mission



In his video message for May 2023 that was published by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, Pope Francis said, "These movements renew the Church with their capacity for dialogue at the service of her evangelizing mission." He noted, too, that each group has its own unique charism, which allows them to demonstrate both the beauty and the novelty of the Gospel proclamation. Each charism is different, he explained, thanks to the creativity that marks the various groups and movements. Although they seem to be speaking different languages, by understanding themselves, they are able to make themselves understood. At the same time, the Pope warned them to avoid the temptation of turning in on themselves, by inviting them to continue to work "at the service of the Bishops and the parishes."

THE CANONICAL ISSUES

Universal Law and Particular Law in the Consecrated Life.



Canonical Issues

Universal law is the law of the entire Latin Church. Its source is from the Church's supreme authority, that is, the Supreme Pontiff and College of Bishops. It binds all Latin Catholics everywhere unless a local or personal exemption exists. Particular law, on the other hand, is the law for a specific place or group of people. The dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium* n. 43 states: "Guided by the Holy Spirit, Church authority has been at pains to give a right interpretation of the counsels, to regulate their practice, and also to set up stable forms of living embodying them." Therefore, the link between the authority of the Church and the consecrated life is a determining factor for understanding the development of the canonical law regulating consecrated life. The 1983 Code shows great respect for the charismatic inspiration of each institute and positively encourages individuality. This law allows a significant measure of autonomy to each. "A true autonomy of life, especially of governance, is recognized for each institute. This autonomy means that, each institute has its own discipline in the Church and can preserve whole and en-

tire the patrimony described in can. 578." (can. 586). Therefore, institutes of consecrated life must be free to draw up their constitutions. Consequently, many matters that used to be decided by the common law of the Church are now left to be settled by the proper law of individual institutes. The current legislation allows institutes to express their charism freely in their fundamental code. However, the elements of spirit, nature, purpose, and character constitute the patrimony of the institutes. They have some precise canonical meanings, and one must incorporate their definitions in the institute's texts. The proper law of a religious institute comprises the fundamental code or the constitution, which contains the constitutive law of the institute and the other norms collected in the statutes or directory of the institute. The Code of Canon Law governs both of these collections. The Code of Canon Law confides many matters concerning consecrated life to the proper law of individual institutes. In this case, an institute should carefully attend to the canonical provisions given in the code when composing or reviewing its proper law.

THE LEGAL ISSUES

How Law is made in Kenya

One of the key functions of Parliament is to make laws in the exercise of its legislative authority as provided for in Article 94 of the Constitution. The National Assembly is mandated to make laws and exercises its legislative power through Bills passed by the House and assented to by the President into law.

Whereas a legislative proposal can be said to be an idea for a Bill, a Bill is a proposed law for an Act of Parliament that has been published for introduction in the National Assembly. A legislative proposal or a Bill generally seeks to either introduce new legislation or amend or repeal an existing law. Upon publication, a Bill follows the following process,

First Reading where the Bill is introduced in the House for the first time by way of reading the Title of the Bill by the Clerk. No debate or vote arises at this stage. Upon being read the first time, the Bill stands committed to the relevant Departmental Committee for consideration. The Committee facilitates public participation on the Bill through appropriate mechanisms, thereafter the Committee takes into consideration the views and recommendations of the public while considering the Bill and preparing its report to the House. The **second reading** comes immediately after the first reading, this is the debate stage, wherein the House, seated in plenary debates the merits and any demerits of the Bill. The debate follows the moving of the Bill by the sponsor and its seconding by any Member. A Bill originating in the National Assembly but which is not seconded is withdrawn. At the end of the debate, the Speaker allows the proposer to respond to any issues raised by the House and then puts the question, that is, causes the House to vote, to determine whether the Bill moves to the next stage.

After the second reading, the **Committee Stage** follows, this is a phase where the entire membership of the House is seated in the form of a Committee to consider a Bill on a clause-by-clause basis. At this stage, the House resolves itself into a Committee, which is comprised of the whole membership of the Assembly. The Committee is presided over by the Deputy Speaker or any member. The Committee of the whole House approves the clauses and any schedules of the Bill with or without amendments. At the conclusion, the Committee, through the Chairperson, immediately submits a report to the House seeking its approval.

From the Committee stage, what follows is the **Report Stage**. The report is made to the House which, following a procedural Motion, votes on it. At this stage, any Member may with reasons, also move the House to resolve itself into a Committee again to reconsider any specified clauses of the Bill.

From the report stage comes the **Third Reading**, this is the final stage of the passage of a Bill through the House. No further substantive amendments are taken up at this stage, though drafting amendments and re-numbering of clauses may be accepted. Generally, there is very little debate during the third reading, and a final vote is taken.

The final stage is the **President's Assent**, once a Bill has been passed by the House, the Speaker presents it to the President for assent. The President may, within fourteen days assent to the Bill; or refer the Bill back to the House with a memorandum outlining his reservations.



President William Ruto signing the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (Amendment) Bill into law 2023.

THE AOSK JPIC

Women of Faith Leadership Fellowship

Through the support of Hilton and Bill and Melinda Gates, a fellowship program was developed to bring together ten Catholic sisters from Africa and offer them an opportunity to build skills to propel their work within their communities, and form partnerships with other fellows. The fellowship was designed to provide a stimulating and supportive climate to explore pressing issues confronting community leaders today. The fellowship targets Catholic Sisters who are demonstrable advocates for women and girls' empowerment and seeks to catalyze their work in this area. While the program is focused on the sisters' learning and development, the Sisters who engage with the cohort are to develop a better understanding and appreciation of the work the sisters do in their local communities. As a cohort, participants are to advance their leadership skills through a variety of interactions with leading policymakers and scholars. These will include professional exchange-

es on their areas of activity (for example health and education), as well as frontier issues around financing, partnerships, fundraising, advancing equity, storytelling, strategic communications, and networking. Using these exchanges and enhanced skills, each individual participant is to undertake a capstone project addressing a personal or organizational leadership goal. On Saturday 13 May 2023, the Fellowship team and the world union of catholic women (WUCWO) met with the Holy Father in a Private Audience in Rome, primarily to receive a missionary mandate from the Holy Father on the synodal journey of the Church. The Holy Father thanked all the women who are part of WUCWO and spoke of the importance of women for peace in the world, in particular he said *“And if we want to know what humanity is without woman, what man is without woman, we have it in the first page of the Bible: loneliness. A man without a woman is alone. Humanity without a woman is alone.*

A culture without women is lonely. Where there is no woman, there is loneliness, arid loneliness that breeds sadness and all manner of harm to humanity. Where there is no woman, there is loneliness.”

The President General of WUCWO, Maria Lia Zervino, declared during her address to the Holy Father: “Today is a historic day for the women of WUCWO and we would like to sing the Magnificat with Mary. Magnificat, for the gift of the Holy Spirit given to us by His pontificate, in which women are exhorted to be apostles like Mary Magdalene and whose rights and dignity she zealously safeguarded.” Nowadays there is an urgent need to find peace in the world, a peace that begins, above all, within the heart, an ailing heart, lacerated by the division of hatred and rancor. In addition to peace, the anthropological identity of women is also in danger as they are used as tools, as the subject of political disputes and cultural ideologies that ignore the beauty with which they were cre-

ated. There is a need for greater appreciation of their capacity for relationship and giving, and for men to better understand the richness of the reciprocity they receive from women, in order to recover those anthropological elements that characterize human identity and, with it, that of women and their role in the family and society, where they never cease to be vital.



President General of WUCWO, Maria Lia Zervino greeting the Pope after giving her speech.

AOSK Sisters Led Youth Empowerment Initiative

Business Enterprises

Being a business owner can be extremely rewarding. Having the courage to take a risk and start a venture is part of every young person’s dream especially those who would like to be independent and be able to provide for themselves and others rather than depending on formal employment. Business ownership leads to Independence, Improved lifestyle, financial rewards, learning opportunities, and creativity together with personal satisfaction. You don’t build a business, you

build people, and then people build the business. the association of sisterhoods of Kenya does not just contribute to SDG target 4.4 which aims to substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment and decent jobs and entrepreneurship but practically give young people the chance to not just dream but the opportunity to own their own business, to improve their livelihood and contribute to the econ-

omy of Kenya. This is why the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya through SLYI has supported 64 small business enterprises for 114 youth in 2023 located in 18 dioceses of Kenya, these businesses vary from Hair salons and barber shops, fashion and design shops, restaurants, electrical shops, plumbing shops, furniture shops, and cyber cafes. The association believes that through these businesses the youth are able to fish for their livelihood.

AOSK-SLYI Sports

Sports refers to any form of physical activity or games often competitive and organized that aims to maintain or improve physical ability and skills while providing enjoyment to participants. Research shows that sports can improve people's ability to plan, organize, get along with others, and regulate emotions. In addition, it also helps with language, math, and social skills, and even helps in coping with stress. Sports allow a "tie" or "draw", in which there is no single winner, it is a time for people to not only compete but also network, cooperate, practice patience, and teamwork, boost their Creativity, Reduces Stress, Make Friends, and Build Resilience. The Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya through the Sister-led youth empowerment initiative recognizes the benefits of sports. Because of this, joint sports activities for the youth were organized during the month of May 2023, and thousands of youth participated in these sports activities. At the end of the day these youth were awarded certificates of participation and they expressed their gratitude for being given a platform to practice, network, boost their creativity and build new friends.



AOSK - SLYI youth during the sports activity

AOSK Catholic Care for Children in Kenya.

Catholic Care for Children Regional convening

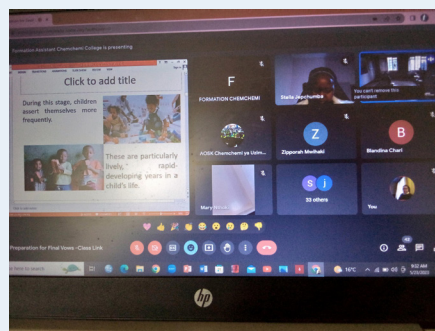
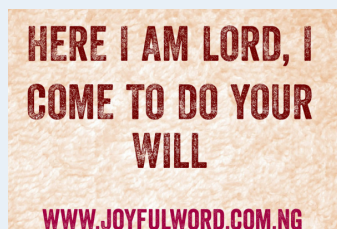
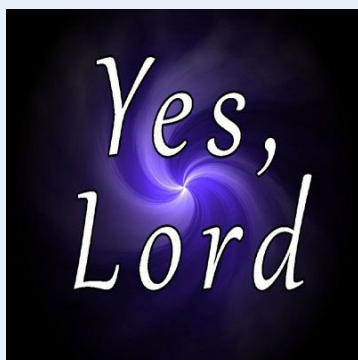
After months of preparation for the Catholic Care for Children regional convening, it happened to be a success of its kind. The convening was attended by various stakeholders ranging from Four national associations of religious in Eastern Africa which included Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, and Zambia, the Catholic Care for Children in Sri Lanka and government officials from different countries were also present, Lastly, the UISG International, the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA), the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Kenyan Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB) without forgetting the GHR foundation were also present at the CCC Convening.

Different topics were discussed during the convening. The topics included; emerging legal issues, the Catholic Church and safeguarding, the charism of care in Kenya, advancing national care reforms Agenda, caring for children, safeguarding children in our care, and mapping our safeguarding landscape just to mention a few. The regional Portrait was also launched during the convening. At the end, participants expressed their sincere feeling about supporting and advocating care reforms, family strengthening, and safeguarding Sr. Delvin Mukhwana, DHM, Catholic Care for Children in Kenya (CCCK) Program manager encouraged participants to fly high the CCC flag as they maximize available resources to advocate for better child care. *“We are not stopping here; we need to continue playing our role to ensure that there is ongoing relevance of the Catholic church in organized care efforts in our own small or big ways because there are many opportunities that we can tap on,”* *“The catholic church has given us an opportunity for service and a structure of leadership”* Archbishop Martin Kivuva put it rightly. Let us, therefore, witness the risen Christ in our different endeavors as we reintegrate and support children in their biological families or family-like environment.



Participants Pausing for a group photo during the CCC convening 2023

AOSK ChemChemi ya Uzima Formation Department



Animated by God's vivifying grace and presence, the Chemchemi ya Uzima College stands out at the forefront of discerning the formative horizon of these young women and men religious preparing for their final commitment to the Lord who unconditionally has called them to serve him in this unique way of life in the Catholic Church, consecrating their lives to God as a way of seeking holiness. The preparation has been taking place both onsite and online as from 15th May to 30th June 2023. The young religious come from rich and diverse cultural backgrounds and religious congregations both in Africa and Asia. Final vows mark the peak for their availability and mission in the Universal Church. When a man or woman decides to accept Christ's invitation to leave everything and follow Him in a more radical way, they make vows to live like Jesus in poverty, chastity, and obedience. They participate in a ceremony where they make this commitment, much like a married couple exchanging their vows on their wedding day. They promise Christ that they will live the rest of their lives dedicated exclusively to Him. The vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience help these religious men and women to be free from earthly attachments and distractions. Moreover, they help them to live simply, to be more open with God, and to depend more on Him. We immensely thank God for these precious gifts to the Church!

Religious Against Human Trafficking

In the month of May, various Congregational Activities took place in different regions of Kenya to address the pervasive issue of human trafficking. These activities aimed to raise awareness, educate communities, and forge partnerships to combat this heinous crime. Over 500 participants attended training sessions organized by the Brothers of St. Joseph in Lamuria and Mweiga Parish, where concerns were raised about the government's response to human trafficking and the need for inter-religious collaboration. The Medical Missionaries of Mary conducted initiatives in western Kenya and Nairobi, sensitizing approximately 1,209 individuals and conducting workshops

in educational institutions and healthcare facilities. The RAHT Kenya team also played a significant role in raising awareness by sensitizing people in Makupa, Mtwapa, Bombululu, and Maweni. The month of May saw the establishment of a partnership between RAHT and the Center for Domestic Training and Development, which will provide comprehensive care and support to survivors of human trafficking. Additionally, survivors received training on entrepreneurship, equipping them with the skills to establish their own businesses and contribute to sustainable development. Overall, the month of May witnessed a significant number of activities and partnerships aimed

at combating human trafficking in Kenya. These activities reached a large number of people through training sessions, sensitization programs, and radio presentations. The participants displayed a deep understanding of the issue and expressed concerns about the government's response, the need for inter-religious collaboration, and the integration of human trafficking awareness into school programs. The establishment of the partnership between RAHT and the Center for Domestic Training and Development marked a crucial step towards providing comprehensive care and rehabilitation for survivors. Furthermore, survivors themselves received training on entrepreneurship, empowering them to create sustainable livelihoods and contribute to poverty reduction. The collective efforts of various organizations and stakeholders reflect a strong commitment to addressing human trafficking and fostering safer environments for all.



Program Manager RAHT Sr. Jackline Mwikali, IBVM Signing an MOU

AOSK Insurance Agency

Finance Bill 2023 Demystified on Insurance

The Finance Bill 2023 is proposing the introduction of a non-existent sub-section to section 17 of the Value Added Tax (VAT) Act. The sub-section will allow owners of taxable supplies compensated for the loss of goods to be charged a 16 percent VAT. If the proposal is adopted insurance customers will be required to pay 16 percent on the money paid out to them by insurers as compensation after a loss has been incurred; a move which has sparked a heated debate between insurance firms and tax experts. The Finance Bill reads, "Where a bona fide owner of taxable supplies, who has deducted input tax under subsection (1), is compensated for the loss of the taxable supplies, the compensation shall be treated as a taxable supply." A 16 percent VAT would mean a customer receiving compensation of Sh 2 million would have to part with Sh 320,000 as tax, a move likely to affect the insurance industry in the country where market penetration is considered to be below four percent. If passed, this will be a replica of markets such as South Africa, where insurance compensation is regarded as a supply of goods and, thus, subject to VAT.

AOSK SCORE ECD

Franciscan sisters of St. Anna Empowering communities in Siaya County through Savings and internal lending Communities (SILC)

SCORE ECD project has continued to positively impact the lives of the children they serve, through helping caregivers embrace Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC). SILC is a holistic, savings-led microfinance approach that provides a safe place for poor households to save and borrow helping caregivers to increase their income. SILC's goal is to help caregivers better manage their existing resources by teaching them basic financial management skills. The SCORE ECD SILC groups are The SILC groups certified as Private Service Providers (PSP), who are fully trained on how to help communities in forming and running SILC groups. The PSPs help interested community members to form and manage savings groups. In return, AOSK SCORE ECD pay the PSPs a reasonable fee for their services. Franciscan sisters of St. Anna, through SCORE ECD, have established 12 SILC groups in Siaya County within the villages of Rambugu, Rambira, and Ndege that are helping the less fortunate project participants to create highly sustainable, accessible, transparent, flexible, and self-managed Savings and Internal Lending Communities platform with Sister Mary Jane and sister Irene Inviolata (FSSA) being the SCORE ECD SILC champions. Sisters Mary Jane SCORE ECD sister master trainer was happy to share; *“now, our caregivers through these established SILC groups can access funds without incurring unwarranted debt or interest charges. Moreover, the SILC groups are helping our caregivers to protect their inadequate resources by shifting their money from poorly protected informal allocations (e.g., under the mattress) as well as providing them with a positive return on their savings.”*

Institute of Psycho-spiritual Counselling

My Experience as a student at Chemchemi ya Uzima College (2021-2023)

I am Sr. Martha A. Joddy, a Franciscan Sister of St. Anna (FSSA). I joined Chemchemi ya Uzima College in August 2021 to study Integrative Spiritual Counselling. As I arrived at Chemchemi, I received a warm welcome from all the Staff and settled into a beautiful self-contained room on the ground floor since I am physically challenged. During my stay at the institute, all my needs were catered for in a special way by all those who were available.

I had to be very determined at my age to stay awake and participate in the classes some of which lasted

for 3 hours! The lecturers were very kind, understanding and efficient. Using a laptop for the first time for research and some lessons was a real challenge.

Practicum was a challenge but through our kind and understanding Director, an arrangement was made so that my clients were allowed to come to Chemchemi for their sessions and this enabled me to have the sessions in my comfort zone! I am forever grateful for this!

These are the subjects which stood out for me and really touched my life and changed my attitude

towards myself and life as a whole: spiritual direction, addiction, research methods and transactional analysis. The spirituality in Chemchemi really stands out for me as demonstrated in daily Eucharistic celebration with unique homilies, monthly recollections with Eucharistic adoration and confessions made life in Chemchemi very helpful to me and I thank God for this very much.

As a teacher, I had been doing some counselling but my coming to Chemchemi ya Uzima College has enabled me to have my personal counselling sessions where I have discovered many of my unfinished griefs and other personal flaws! I have been helped so

much that I am now ready to be a wounded healer! This course has equipped me with counselling skills and techniques that are very helpful to me even now in my practicum! I have learnt to listen attentively to my clients with unconditional positive regard which makes my clients to open up and we get into a relationship of trust very easily in our sessions.

I thank God for Chemchemi ya Uzima College for being a home away from home for me in my condition. Physical condition is not a limitation to studies for a student who is psychologically and spiritually sound.

Health Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (HASK)

Hypertension

Hypertension also known as the silent killer is one of the non-communicable diseases that is increasing rapidly and it's the risk number one for heart disease and death worldwide. Being hypertensive means that the pressure against the blood vessel walls in one's body is constantly too high. The Blood pressure is measured by a machine known as a sphygmomanometer, this machine has two read-

ings where the top number, or systolic represents the pressure inside the artery when the heart contracts and pumps blood through the body, and the bottom number or the diastolic refers to the pressure inside the artery when the heart is at rest and is filling with blood. The blood pressure can be hypo [low] or hyper [high] and we also have stages as shown below.

Blood Pressure Ranges

Blood Pressure Category	SBP mmHg		DBP mmHg
Hypotension	< 90	or	< 60
Normal Blood Pressure	90 - 119	or	60 - 79
Prehypertension	120 - 139	or	80 - 89
High Blood Pressure Stage 1	140 - 159	or	90 - 99
High Blood Pressure Stage 2	160 - 179	or	100 - 109
Hypertensive Crisis	180 or higher	or	110 or higher

According to WHO an estimated 46% of adults with hypertension are unaware that they have the condition. Hence need to make more awareness and massive screening.

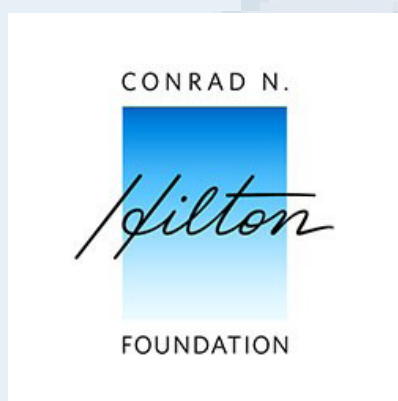
Hypertension is caused by a number of factors which entail, unhealthy diets which involve excessive salt intake, a diet high in saturated fats, low intake of fruits and vegetables, physical inactivity, consumption of tobacco and alcohol, being overweight or obese, and a family history of hypertension. Some of the symptoms of someone with high blood pressure include headaches, blurred vision, chest

pain, dizziness, difficulty in breathing, confusion, nausea, vomiting, and nosebleeds.

Hypertension can be controlled by observing a number of healthy health habits such as losing weight, having regular exercise, eating a healthy diet, reducing salt in your diet, limiting alcohol, quitting smoking, reducing stress, and regular monitoring of the blood pressure amongst many other practices.

N/B “the Best way to keep your blood pressure down is to know what makes it go up” by Meister Johansen.

A Big Thank you to our Partners for Partnering with Us.



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