

# NEWSLETTER

The Monthly Newsletter for the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya.

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## Pope's May Prayer Intention: For the formation of men and women religious



This May, Pope Francis invited Christians to offer their prayers for “the formation of men and women religious, and seminarians”.

In his video announcing his Prayer intention for the month of May 2024, Pope Francis recalled that every vocation is a “diamond in the rough” that needs to be polished, worked and shaped on every side.

The Holy Father notes that “a good priest, sister, or nun, must above all else be a man, a woman who is formed, shaped by the Lord’s grace”. These are people who are aware of their limitations and who are willing to “lead a life of prayer, of dedicated witness to the Gospel”.

In his message entrusted to the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network, the Pope reminds Christians that beginning in the seminary or novitiate, their preparation must develop integrally in direct contact with the lives of other people. This, he added, “is essential”.

It is important to note that formation does not end at a specific moment, such as ordination, but rather continues throughout life, integrating the person intellectually, humanly, effectively, and spiritually.

# CIRDE (COMMISSION FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE & ECUMENISM) OF THE KENYA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS (KCCB)

## About CIRDE

**T**he Commission for Interreligious Dialogue & Ecumenism (CIRDE) is a commission by the Kenyan Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB). The national offices of CIRDE are located in Nairobi at Waumini House at the heart of the KCCB General Secretariat. CIRDE's engagement reaches all over Kenya, with its Diocesan CIRDE offices, to bring mutual understanding, peace, and collaboration among leaders and followers of various faiths and religions. Furthermore, CIRDE is engaging with Episcopal Conferences and individual Bishops across the AMECEA region.

CIRDE aims to promote and restore mutual understanding, unity, peace and reconciliation, respect, and collaboration among different religions to ensure peaceful co-existence and harmony among other religious groups. The Commission is also made to collaborate and work closely with other Christian Churches in Kenya to promote, restore, and implement Christian Unity at both the National level and grassroots levels.

The immediate and potent purpose of interreligious dialogue is compounded by the common concern and encouragement of the values of peace, humanity, and compassion. The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), convoked by Saint Pope John XXIII (1958-1963), sought a profound transformation of the entire Church. The fundamental vision of the Church in Vatican II has been termed both a "communion ecclesiology" and a "missionary ecclesiology." Saint Paul VI (1963-1978), who succeeded John XXIII and continued the Council, noted that this vision of a renewed Church would be achieved as the Church entered into dialogue on four levels:

1. Dialogue within the Catholic Church itself,
2. Dialogue with other Christians (Ecumenism),
3. Dialogue with people of other living faiths (Interreligious Dialogue), and
4. Dialogue with the world and all humanity.

It is enlightening to imagine these "four dialogues" as a series of four interconnected circles. However, to engage constructively in promoting authentic dialogue, there are ten guidelines one might call a "Dialogue Decalogue." according to the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) highlighted as follows:

**Rule 1:** The primary purpose of dialogue is to learn - that is, to change and grow in our perception and understanding of reality, to build relationships, and then to act to promote harmony and mutual respect.

**Rule 2:** Interreligious dialogue must be a two-sided project - within (intra) and between (inter) religious communities. There must be dialogue with coreligionists - with fellow Catholics, as well as with followers of other faith traditions.

**Rule 3:** Each participant must come to the dialogue with complete honesty and sincerity. Conversely, each participant must assume complete honesty and sincerity in the other partner. In brief, if there is no trust, then no dialogue occurs.



**Rule 4:** In interreligious dialogue, we must not compare our ideals with our partner's practice, but, rather we compare our ideals with our partner's ideals and our practice with our partner's practice.

**Rule 5:** All participants must define themselves. Only the Muslim, for example, can define from the inside what it means to be a Muslim. We seek to appreciate the other's "self-understanding."

**Rule 6:** Each partner should not only listen to the other partner with openness and sympathy but also attempt to agree with the dialogue partner as far as possible, while still maintaining integrity in one's religious tradition. Dialogue does not require a "compromise" in one's faith.

**Rule 7:** Dialogue takes place only between equals. Therefore, for example, if the Christian views Hinduism as inferior, or if the Hindu views Christianity as inferior, there will be no dialogue.

**Rule 8:** Dialogue takes place only based on mutual trust. Thus, it is not wise to begin with difficult problems or differences in faith. Seek first to establish trust; then, gradually, the thornier matters can be addressed.

**Rule 9:** Each participant eventually must attempt to experience the partner's religious framework "from within." John Dunne here speaks of "passing over" into another's religious experience and then coming back enlightened, broadened, and deepened.

**Rule 10:** Seek God's guidance to bless your efforts to promote interfaith understanding and harmony.

It must be understood that Interreligious or Interfaith Dialogue (as well as Ecumenism) is a difficult undertaking; it has its frustrations as well as its rewards. It is, in fact, a "faith journey," requiring patience and commitment. However, it is not optional, because, as John Paul II has noted, it is an integral part of the Church's evangelizing mission. We are most grateful to have the Church's guidance and encouragement to assist us in this challenging endeavor. We frequently and fervently pray *Veni, Creator Spiritus. Come, Holy Spirit!*

The Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue (DID) promotes and supervises relations with members and groups of non-Christian religions, competence for which belongs to the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity.

## **"Statement from the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue, April 11, 2024" [Comunicato del Dicastero per il Dialogo Interreligioso, 11.04.2024]**

At the initiative of the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue, we, the coordinators of the Bishops' Commissions for Interreligious Dialogue, along with pastoral workers involved in this field across the African continent, gathered for a Consultative Workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, from 9-10 April 2024, to discuss the theme: "Christianity in Dialogue with Islam and African Traditional Religion (ATR): Challenges and Opportunities." We gathered to support one another in our role of coordinating the Bishops' Commissions for Interreligious Dialogue and to send a message to the people of Africa that religions can play a greater role in building a culture of peace, reconciliation, and fraternity. We believe that we can do this through education and engagement in interreligious dialogue.

In the course of our discussions, we explored ways and means to implement the words of Pope Francis: "At a time when various forms of fundamentalist intolerance are damaging relationships between individuals, groups and peoples, let us be committed to living and teaching the value of respect for others, a love capable

of welcoming differences, and the priority of the dignity of every human being over his or her ideas, opinions, practices and even sins” (Fratelli Tutti, 191; cf. *Africae Munus*, 94).

We recognize the diversity of the African continent. Our religious, social, and cultural values emphasize relationships, hospitality, solidarity, conviviality, and the inclusion of all religious ideas and worldviews (cf. *Africae Munus*, 92; *Ecclesia in Africa*, 42-43). This innate religious disposition of the African people can serve as a common ground for building a culture of peace with all men and women. We further recognize that “Intolerance and lack of respect for indigenous popular cultures is a form of violence grounded in a cold and judgmental way of viewing them. No authentic, profound, and enduring change is possible unless it starts from the different cultures, particularly those of the poor... The different religions, based on their respect for each human person as a creature called to be a child of God, contribute significantly to building fraternity and defending justice in society” (Fratelli Tutti, 220, 271).

We are concerned over the increasing polarization, tensions, conflicts and religious radicalization in certain African countries, particularly in West, Central and East Africa, that can be attributed to various factors, including socio-economic and political ones. This situation worsens when some individuals and groups instrumentalize religion. These elements weaken “the human family’s innate vocation to fraternity” (Fratelli Tutti, 26) and undermine conviviality among diverse social and religious groups. They also hinder the efforts of the Church in Africa and of other religious communities to promote constructive interreligious dialogue.

We are conscious of the mission entrusted to us by the Lord Jesus Christ through the Church (cf. Mt 28:1-20) as the “seed and beginning” of the Kingdom (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 5) as we put into practice the Church’s magisterial teachings, especially the Declaration *Nostra Aetate* (1965), the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations *Ecclesia in Africa* (1995) and *Africae Munus* (2011) and the Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* (2020). The Church regards the moral and religious values of the African traditions with great respect. For us, interreligious dialogue is an effective means to root out ignorance about other religious traditions, promote mutual respect, and preserve the values that foster religious and cultural diversity and the dignity of every human being. We are convinced that “Interreligious dialogue is fundamental to the Church, which is called to collaborate in God’s plan with her methods of presence, respect, and love towards all persons” (cf. *Dialogue and Mission*, 2). Interreligious dialogue and the proclamation of the Gospel, though not on the same level and not mutually exclusive, are authentic elements of the Church’s evangelizing mission. To fulfill this mission, every Christian is called to participate in these two activities (cf. *Dialogue and Mission*, 77, 82; *Ecclesia in Africa*, 65-67). “For us, the wellspring of human dignity and fraternity is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. From it, there arises, ‘for Christian thought and for the action of the Church, the primacy given to relationship, to the encounter with the sacred mystery of the other, to universal communion with the entire human family, as a vocation of all’” (Fratelli Tutti, 277). The goal of evangelization in Africa is “to build up the Church as the Family of God” (*Ecclesia in Africa*, 85), where we acknowledge and accept each other as sisters and brothers, and faithfully and lovingly witnesses to the Risen Lord Jesus while reaching out to the people of other faiths and all people

of goodwill (cf. Lk 2:14; Laudato si', 3, 62).

We declare that the African continent can only achieve an integral and sustainable development if it can foster a culture of peace and fraternity founded on the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, respect, and solidarity. A culture that, through dialogue, diplomacy, and negotiation, respects human rights and dignity and rejects violence. In this regard, religious leaders have a great responsibility to foster harmony and educate their respective followers to live as brothers and sisters. To this end, the creation of an Episcopal Commission for Interreligious Dialogue should be encouraged in each African country to promote various expressions of interreligious dialogue. We, therefore, commit ourselves: First, to continue discussing the characteristics of the African cultural environment and African identity that enable constructive interreligious dialogue guided by the light of the Gospel and the Church's magisterial teachings. Second, to emphasize the importance of interreligious dialogue in a pluralistic environment by promoting education that is open to synergies and to the new challenges of our time and that rejects the isolationist attitudes that generate intrareligious and interreligious tensions and conflicts. Third, to involve political de-

cision-makers, religious leaders, NGOs, women, and young people in innovative interfaith strategies that promote dialogue at local, national, and continental levels. Fourth, to explore various opportunities that can enhance diverse forms of interreligious dialogue. We express our gratitude to the Holy See's Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue for organizing this important event. We also thank the Apostolic Nunciature in Kenya and the Commission for Interreligious Dialogue and Ecumenism of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops for their cooperation.



*Participants of the consultative workshop (coordinators of the bishops commissions for interreligious dialogue as well as pastoral agents from across the african continent.*

**Written by: Sr. Catherine Mutuku, OSB**

## **AOSK CATHOLIC CARE FOR CHILDREN IN KENYA (AOSK-CCCK)**

### **Local Heroes: AOSK-CCCK Staff Take Center Stage in Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Adults**

**T**he Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya Catholic Care for Children (AOSK-CCCK) is leading by example in its unwavering commitment to protecting vulnerable individuals. On April 18th, 2024, CCCK took a significant step toward strengthening this commitment by hosting a dynamic one-day training forum.

This wasn't your typical classroom setting. Led by the

esteemed legal expert, Mr. Edwin Wabuge, Advocate of the High Court, the forum fostered an environment of engaged learning. A diverse group of 21 AOSK staff members, including religious sisters, laymen, and laywomen, actively participated in discussions and real-world case studies. This interactive approach ensured a thorough understanding of the organization's recently revised Minors and Vulnerable Adults Pro-

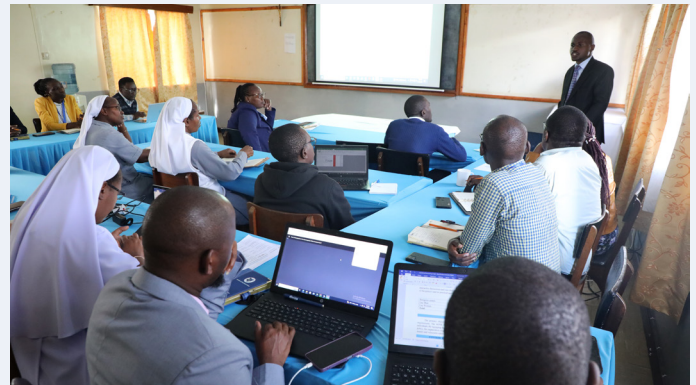


tection and Safeguarding Policy (2024).

The AOSK-CCCK recognizes that staff members are on the front line of defense when it comes to safeguarding vulnerable individuals. The training wasn't just about fulfilling a procedural requirement; it was about empowering these dedicated heroes. By equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills outlined in the revised policy, the organization is transforming its staff into effective advocates for the well-being of those under their care.

The impact of this training extends far beyond the walls of the forum room. Imagine dropping a pebble into a still pond, creating ripples that reach the farthest shores. Staff members equipped to identify and report potential risks create a similar ripple effect of stron-

ger safeguarding practices throughout the AOSK. This translates into a more secure environment for everyone.



***AOSK Staff being trained on safeguarding of minors and the vulnerable adults back in April 2024  
by Mr. Edwin Wabuge***

**Written by: Mr. Joseph Ngata**

## **AOSK SCORE-ECD**

**ECD space within health, technical and vocational education together with training institutions that receive pregnant women, mothers, caregivers and young children (0-5).**

**T**he early years of a child's life are crucial for their development. What is an ECD space? An ECD Space refers to a designated area where caregivers, mothers, pregnant women, and young children (0-5) can engage in play to enhance the holistic growth and development of children. ECD spaces can take many forms such as play corners, building corners, learning spaces, observation areas, or resting areas on benches where children can cuddle with their caregivers.

***Here are some general guidelines that can be followed to ensure a safe indoor play environment in an ECD space:***

- The area should be free of holes and pits
- All equipment and materials should be in good condition and free of sharp or dangerous objects
- There should be enough space for different games, mother-child interaction, child rest areas, and corners.
- Toys and manipulatives should be made of locally available materials that can be replicated by caregivers at home or can be bought if necessary.
- All toys and manipulatives should be safe and age-appropriate for children under three.
- There should be enough equipment for the number of children, such as play materials for enhancing cognitive/language/physical motor/social-emotional skills (e.g. stacking blocks, stuffed animals, balls, shakers, buckets, and shovels).

- All toys and equipment should be washed and cleaned with soap and water after use.
- There should be storage available for keeping the toys and equipment after use.
- Large enough mats should be available to allow children to play and interact comfortably.
- The ECD Space should allow children and caregivers easy access to drinking water, handwashing facilities, and toilets.
- There should be areas for quieter activities such as 'reading' picture books/prints.
- Shelves for play equipment and materials should be easily accessible for caregivers and children to pick different toys and manipulatives from.



*Sr. Faith Mumo (FMSJ) displaying ECD playing materials made from local material in a ECD space at Kuoyo health center in Kisumu*



*ECD volunteers displaying ECD materials made from local material in a ECD space at Kuoyo Health Center in Kisumu*

Written by: Mrs. Christine Monare

## AOSK JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION (AOSK-JPIC)

The Sisters in Nairobi Unit had the opportunity to be trained on safeguarding at Chemchemi ya Uzima College which is a crucial issue since in recent decades, most societies have woken up to the widespread scale of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults. Calls for justice for victims and both punishment and rehabilitation for offenders have become more vocal as public opinion has become more sensitized to the anguish and suffering of those who have been abused. In seeking to respond to the scandal of abuse and to appreciate the deep wounds caused by it in the lives of victims and survivors, we must learn how best to accompany them on their journeys toward healing. We must find ways to walk with them, listen to them, learn from

them, and continue to support them. This should be the hallmark of the safeguarding culture everywhere. Keeping children and adults safe from abuse and neglect cannot be done by one person or one agency. At the heart of any safeguarding process is the child or adult who may be suffering abuse therefore, Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding majorly aims at Preventing neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, financial exploitation, human trafficking, radicalization, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, cyberbullying, and other harms. We need to ensure timely interventions with appropriate protections based on assessments of risks and needs, provide advocacy and support services that represent the individual's

rights and interests, uphold concepts of dignity, respect, autonomy, and consent when possible, and identify and address factors leading to recurring systemic abuse or neglect.

As Christians we are called through baptism, to see and to honor the image of God in each human being, to recognize and to cherish the innate dignity and worth of each person who is created by a loving God. We are called to protect and defend others from violence, exploitation, abuse, and corruption. We should all understand, therefore, that what we are called to protect all, especially children and vulnerable adults, is safe within our communities and beyond. The work of the Church in protecting and cherishing children and vulnerable adults is not something carried out independently of Christ, nor is it merely inspired by the example of Christ. Rather, it is the risen Christ himself, through the power of the Holy Spirit, who protects and cherishes everyone through the work of the Church. Jesus welcomed children, embraced them, and blessed them. It is the same Jesus who protects and cherishes the vulnerable through the mission of the Church. The safeguarding work of the Church is primarily the work of Jesus the Lord who loves those who are vulnerable and cherishes them.



*Sisters while training on safeguarding at Chemchemi ya Uzima College*

Written by: Sr. Hedwig Muse, LSMIG

## AOSK-JPIC Gender

**A**OSK JPIC in collaboration with Africa Faith Justice and Peace Network (AFJN) had a convening at the Daughter of St. Joseph in Karen from 7th to 11th April with the Sisters from all the counties in Kenya deliberating on the issue of Gender Based Violence and the Retrogressive culture that include early marriage and Female Genital Mutilation among others. According to the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS), over 40 percent of women have experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner during their lives. Additionally, around one in four girls get married early, and about one in five undergo female genital mutilation (FGM) in the country.

Statistics by The Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW-Kenya) revealed that over 3,762 cases of Gender-Based Violence were reported in 2022. Out of those cases, 2,985 cases of GBV were by women while 777 cases were by men. These statistics were provided at the launch of a campaign dubbed 'Activate Nairobi' at the University of Nairobi to mark the start of the global sixteen days of activism against gender violence in November 2023.



Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are essential to eradicate poverty and build a global society based on sustainable development, social justice, and human rights. The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) estimated productivity losses to be Ksh 25 billion for serious injuries, Ksh 8 billion for minor injuries, etc (46.5b) which is approximately 1.1 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Productivity losses are a burden on GDP and are likely to slow down the attainment of universal healthcare.

The team identified the worrying GBV numbers across the country with women and girls disproportionately

disadvantaged, increasing Technology and online-aided GBV cases that are impacting younger members of the society as well as Climate change and GBV concerns, especially in arid and semi-arid regions of the country. From the research conducted it was identified that current concerns include rape and defilement of school Girls and sodomy targeting boys in schools- leading to a big number of pregnancies, and school dropouts. Together we can end all forms of violence against humanity and especially women and children, be an ambassador against Gender-based violence.



*Catholic Sisters led by the AOSK Executive Secretary Sr. Pasilisa Namikoye, LSOSF, Ph.D. during their visit to the office of gender to advocate against issues of gender based violence*

Written by: Sr. Bernadette Nzioka, DSH

## HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF SISTERHOODS OF KENYA

### Unlocking the Gates to Resilience: Navigating Burnout in the Modern Age

In the relentless hustle of our modern lives, burnout lurks like a shadow, waiting to engulf the unsuspecting. What starts as a faint sense of weariness can escalate into a full-blown crisis of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion. Understanding burnout is not merely about recognizing the symptoms; it's about embracing a proactive approach to safeguarding our well-being.

## What is Burnout?

Burnout isn't just fatigue or stress; it's an intricate web of emotional, physical, and mental depletion woven by prolonged exposure to stressors. It creeps in stealthily, disguised as detachment, cynicism, and a diminishing sense of efficacy. Picture a four-stage journey: from the honeymoon phase of enthusiasm to the onset of stress, traversing through chronic stress, and culminating in the desolate landscape of burnout.



*A picture illustration of various degrees of burnouts*

## Impacts of Burnout on health

The fallout of burnout transcends the confines of the workplace, infiltrating every facet of our existence. Chronic stress becomes a wrecking ball, demolishing our immune system's defenses, and leaving us vulnerable to illnesses. It doesn't stop there; it collaborates with burnout to orchestrate cardiovascular problems, mental health disorders, and a myriad of other ailments.

## Causes of Burnout

Understanding the enemy requires dissecting its roots. Burnout thrives on a cocktail of factors: overwhelming workloads, a sense of powerlessness, inadequate support systems, and the incessant blur between work and personal life. It's a vicious cycle, feeding on stress and perpetuating its reign of exhaustion.

## Remedies for Burnout

But fear not, for the battle against burnout is not futile. There are weapons in our arsenal, strategies to fortify our resilience and shield ourselves from its onslaught. Setting boundaries becomes our first line of defense, followed closely by the practice of mindfulness to anchor ourselves in moments of chaos. Seeking solace in social support, delegating tasks, prioritizing self-care, and knowing when to seek professional help form the backbone of our resistance.

## The way forward

In the labyrinth of modernity, where time is a fleeting commodity and stress is a ubiquitous companion, navigating the treacherous terrain of burnout requires vigilance and self-awareness. Let us heed the call to arms, armed with knowledge and fortified with resilience, as we march forward, reclaiming our right to a balanced and fulfilling existence.

Written by: Sr. Jerusha Ncabani, CLFS

## AOSK SISTERS LED YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE

### SLYI Trainer of Trainers

AOSK recognizes the ability that young people possess as agents of change and the valuable potential they hold that should be nurtured. Youth empowerment is key to unlocking their potential and AOSK-SLYI is committed to empowering the youth in different aspects to bring about this change. Youth empowerment not only helps the youth to take charge of their lives but it's a significant force for sustainable development. One aspect of empowerment that the AOSK-SLYI seeks to enhance is psychological empowerment. Psychological empowerment enhances individuals' consciousness and creates awareness of how individuals can address problems that harm their quality of life.

On April 4- 8, 2024 the AOSK Sisters Led Youth Empowerment Initiative organized a three-day trainer of trainer's workshop for 79 youth leaders. The leaders came from different parishes of the 50 technical and vocational institutions that are working in partnership with AOSK-SLYI. The objective of the training was to offer psychosocial support to the young leaders covering three major topics affecting young people in the society i.e. Drugs and Substance abuse, Mental

Health and Human Trafficking.

The training sought to strengthen peer-to-peer mentorship among the youth through psychosocial support offering them protective factors that will enable them to identify risky behaviors. Stress, exposure to adversity, pressure to conform with peers, and exploration of identity are some of the factors that contribute to poor mental well-being among the youth. Mental health problems in young people often trigger other health and risky behaviors like increased use of drugs and substance abuse hence risky sexual behaviors that lead to early and unwanted pregnancies. Mental well-being is key to sustainable human development and therefore it's essential to offer psychosocial support to young people to protect their psychosocial well-being.

Having successfully trained for three days, the training culminated with an Eucharistic celebration in honor of commissioning the youth champions, where each champion received a t-shirt, identification badge, and certificate of participation. The youth champions are expected to offer psychosocial empowerment to other youth within their parishes.



*Pictures of AOSK-SLYI youth champions being trained and commissioned back in April 2024*

Written by :Mrs. Caroline Wamiti



## AOSK CHEMCHEMI YA UZIMA COLLEGE

### FORMATION DEPARTMENT

#### Transforming Grace

A retreat can be an opportunity to get away from the stress and anxiety of daily life and spend time praying, reflecting, and deepening one's relationship with God. It can also be a time for renewal, as when Jesus took the disciples away to spend quality time with them, just Him and them together. But a retreat may also be a following of Jesus into the desert, when He was led there by the Spirit away from all distractions, focusing on discernment of His Father's will (Matthew 4:1 & Luke 4:1).

Our August intake group of Formators concluded their Nine Months Formation of Formators Training here at Chemchemi ya Uzima College with a grace-filled retreat from 19th to 27th May with the theme: Spiritual Strategies for Transformative Personal Encounter with God [John 3:16], guided by Rev. Fr. Peter Sheva.

A priest (Formator) participant in this retreat shares, *"It was truly a Spirit-filled retreat, one in which whoever participated actively in it had a transformative encounter with the Lord. The facilitator Fr. Sheva is truly a man filled with the Holy Spirit and he encourages sincere dedication to the Lord. He says that he is truly blessed by the retreat, and has been fueled with the power of the Holy Spirit to carry out the task he will be doing after Chemchemi. This retreat was truly a wonderful way of finishing the Formation Program in Chemchemi. The topics of each day were unique and there was a logical flow. We were all made to long to pray with great faith, hope, and love. Hearing from God was greatly encouraged and is possible"*. The priest wishes formation God's blessings richly for arranging such a wonderful facilitator of their retreat.

Another participant, a religious sister, and formator shared her experience during the retreat; *"Impact of this retreat in my spiritual journey. The integration of these spiritual strategies has profoundly impacted my life, fostering a deeper sense of connection, purpose, and fulfillment."*

*"Through relaxation, surrender, acceptance, forgiveness, contemplation, reception of the Holy Spirit, intercession, and awareness of God's presence, I have experienced transformative encounters with God that have shaped my identity, values, and relationship. These encounters have empowered me to live with greater faith, love, and compassion, embracing life's journey with courage, grace, and gratitude. I believe that my own life will be a testimony to the transformative power of these spiritual strategies, as they have guided me on a path of spiritual growth, Amen!"*

The January intake group of Formators continued with their regular schedule of lectures and activities such as social afternoon and cultural day.



*A picture taken during a retreat conference at Chemchemi ya Uzima college.*

**Written by: Sr. Catherine Mutuku, OSB**



## INTEGRATIVE SPIRITUAL COUNSELLING

April had a variety of activities that pointed to the end of the January- May semester. Apart from concluding the lectures, the second years for the first time were officially commissioned to go out and light the World. This was an initiative of the Director who observed that students always finish their course and leave unceremoniously. Supported by the HoDs and other Staff, the students were officially given a candle, blessed, and sent out to serve. It was a colorful occasion; Glory to God. We thank the Director of Chemchemi Institute for her inside and the support of other members of staff.



*Chemchemi Director, ISC HOD together with ISC students during commissioning*

In the same vein, Chemchemi conducted the Institute's cultural day in which ISC students actively took part. It was coupled with a social afternoon and all was joy and happiness. Everybody was on the high peak of enjoyment and bidding farewell to friends. All cultures of Africa and beyond were represented. The tables were decorated with all kinds of food that Africa offers.

Going back to the departmental activities, the Integrative Spiritual Counseling department has moved steadily towards the close of the semester, they are now facing their end-of-semester examinations just like other students. This signifies that the Grace of God has been sufficient for us throughout the semester. We did not register anything peculiar in the course of the semester. We thank God who is always on our side and the institute's Director who has always been supportive; we don't take anything for granted.

During April, the students winded up their lectures

on the twelfth and started preparing for the examinations. Second-year students started their examinations on the sixteenth since they were to join the retreat on the nineteenth. Having only two units during the semester, they did their examinations for two days. They were to join the retreat because it is a requirement-Unit 401, "Healing of the family tree, and Divine Exchange". All in all, everything was successfully and we thank God for a successfull semester.



*ISC Second year students writting their examinations.*

**Written by: Sr. Sophia Wanyama, LSMIG**

## SABBATICAL PROGRAM

Everything that has a beginning has an ending, as quoted by Jack Kornfield. The 43rd St. Anselm's sabbatical group is in the last month of their being at Chemchemi ya Uzima for their personal growth and self-renewal. The four months has gone so fast as majority keep saying that the time is too short; at least six months or nine months would be better. This has been a plea since time immemorial. Hopefully one day it will come to fulfillment. The lessons and all other program activities went on very well as was planned. During the last class on Tool Kit, the members engaged in sharing. Each reflected and shared with the other their take away/ take home/ message for the last four months. The team is now set to go back to their various congregations and diocese to embark on their various apostolates. We pray that

they receive God's guidance as they embark on their apostolates now that they are well renewed.



*The 43rd St. anselms sabbatical group pauses for a last group photo at Chemchemi ya Uzima College*

Written by. Sr. Victorine Nyawade, FSSA

## A GREAT THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT!!!



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