

# NEWSLETTER

## The Monthly Newsletter for the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya

### What is inside this Issue:

- > Pope's Prayer Intentions for October 2025
- > Chemchemi @25 Inauguration Mass
- > Health Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya
- > Catholic Care for Children in Kenya
- > AOSK Safeguarding Office
- > AOSK Units
- > Chemchemi ya Uzima College.
  - > ICAPAMI
  - > Formation
  - > ISC
  - > Sabbatical

### Pope's Prayer Intentions for October 2025.

#### 'Collaboration among religions'



Pope Leo XIV's monthly prayer intention for October is for "*collaboration between different religious traditions.*"

The Pope invited the Church to pray for this intention in this month's Pope Video, which is entrusted to the entire Catholic Church through the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network.

### Solemnities in October 2025

**Our Lady of the Rosary (October 7):** The entire month is dedicated to this devotion, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. During this time, Christians are reminded that through Mary, Queen of Peace, we are drawn closer to her Son. The late Pope Francis often reminded the Church of the Rosary's power to heal hearts and transform history.

**October 2nd:** The Feast of the Guardian Angels is a day to give thanks to God for the guardian angels assigned to each person.

And among other Feasts and memorials, to mention a few, are **St. Luke (October 18)** and **St. John Paul II (October 22)**.

**October 31st:** All Hallows' Eve (Halloween) marks the transition to November, which emphasizes the Communion of Saints, including the Church Suffering (Poor Souls) and the second coming of Christ

## CHEMCHEMI YA UZIMA COLLEGE INAUGURATES JUBILEE YEAR

**C**hemchemi ya Uzima College officially launched its Jubilee Year commemorating 25 years of existence on September 26th. The year of celebration was inaugurated with a formal Holy Mass held in the college's main hall.

The day's events began with a tree planting exercise on the main grounds, symbolizing growth and renewal. Participants included the AOSK Executive Secretary, the Chemchemi ya Uzima College Director, and the officiating priest. Following the planting, the official Jubilee Banner was unveiled, leading into the main event: the Holy Mass.

During his homily, the priest reflected on the college's significant achievements since its opening in 2001. He offered profound congratulations to the sisters, highlighting their tireless efforts in developing the institution. He emphasized that Chemchemi ya Uzima College has become a powerful place of transformation, citing its diverse course offerings in Formation, ICAPAMI, Sabbatical, Spiritual Counselling, and the newly introduced TVET courses which provide essential hands-on skills. The priest concluded by urging the sisters to maintain their excellent work throughout the 25th-anniversary celebration.

Sr. Pasilisa Namikoye, LSOSF, the AOSK Executive Secretary, delivered the keynote address, expressing deep gratitude to the former AOSK leadership for their foundational strength that ensured the college's growth. She underscored that Chemchemi's current success is a result of the vision and able leadership of those who came before. Sr. Pasilisa specifically thanked Sr. Luciana Wanyahoro for her exceptional leadership, which saw the institution evolve from an institute to a college. She then cast a bold vision, stating her dream is to see Chemchemi ya Uzima College grow from a college to a university college.



*From the left: A picture showing Sr. Pasilisa Namikoye, LSOSF, Ph.D. and Sr. Luciana Wanyahoro, VDM during a tree planting exercise at Chemchemi ya Uzima College. On the right is a picture taken during the college's inauguration mass at 25.*

In a subsequent interview, Chemchemi Director Sr. Luciana Wanyahoro, VDM, thanked AOSK for its unwavering support as a “good mother” to the college. She also extended her appreciation to the Congregational Superiors for their continuous support in enrolling sisters for various courses. Sr. Luciana encouraged continued enrollment and confirmed that plans for constructing a dedicated sabbatical block at Matasia, Ngong, are firm, with construction officially scheduled to begin in January 2026. She concluded by thanking all AOSK staff for their collective efforts in the college’s daily

advancement.

The Jubilee Year, spanning September 2025 to September 2026, will be dedicated to celebrating past achievements while simultaneously restrategizing and forging a path forward for a more impactful future. The year-long celebration will reach its climax with a grand finale towards the end of September 2026.

We extend our sincere thanks to all stakeholders who have ensured the steadfast growth of Chemchemi ya Uzima College and continue to urge the Superiors to send more sisters to benefit from its programs.

*By Mr. Victor Emoja*

## HASK PROVIDES FREE MEDICAL SERVICES AT ST. MARY’S, HEALTH CARE FACILITY IN MTWAPA

**O**n September 27, 2025, the Health Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (HASK) successfully held a free medical outreach camp at St. Mary’s Health Facility in Mtwapa, Kilifi County. The initiative was designed to offer essential, no-cost medical services to local community members.

The camp provided comprehensive services, focusing primarily on the screening of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including cancer, diabetes, and hypertension, among others.

The medical camp officially began with an opening prayer led by the area parish priest. This was followed by an important mental health talk presented by HASK Director, Sr. Jerusha Ncabani, CLFS.

During her address, Sr. Jerusha emphasized the critical importance of regular individual check-ups for NCDs. She cautioned that these diseases are often “silent killers” and can be fatal when diagnosis is delayed, stressing that early diagnosis allows for effective management.

The outreach attracted high attendance, with over 97 community members benefiting from the services. An evaluation report showed a notable disparity: more women attended the camp than men, clearly indicating that men remain highly hesitant to seek timely medical attention. Sr. Jerusha concluded with a heartfelt plea to all men to prioritize their health above all else.

Interviews conducted by the AOSK communication department revealed profound gratitude from the beneficiaries. Many attendees expressed that they could not afford the comprehensive range of services provided, making the free medical camp a significant blessing. They urged HASK to conduct more such forums in the area so that an even greater number of people could benefit.

HASK extends its sincere appreciation to the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation for its invaluable support, which enabled the execution of this vital outreach program.





**Left: Sr. Jerusha Ncabani, CLFS HASK Director, delivers a mental health talk to attendees of the free medical camp. Right: A clinical officer provides care to a patient at the St. Mary's health care facility in Mtwapa.**

**By Mr. Victor Emoja**

## TRANSFORMING CHILD CARE: ADMINISTRATORS GEAR UP FOR THE FUTURE OF REFORMS

The landscape of child welfare in Kenya is undergoing a profound transformation, shifting from large institutions to nurturing, family-like community care. To champion this critical change, the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (AOSK), in partnership with the Catholic Care for children in kenya (CCCK), organized a high-impact, three-day workshop dedicated to equipping administrators for this monumental task.

Held from September 5th to 9th at the Dimesse Retreat Centre in Karen, the intensive training brought together 75 administrators from various Child Care Institutions (CCIs) across the nation. The goal was clear: to empower these leaders with the essential knowledge and skills needed to effectively manage the transition process while maintaining the highest possible standards of care and protection.

The training focused on three core areas vital to the success of the care reforms: Care Reforms Transition, Child Safeguarding and Protection, and Resource Mobilization.

The workshop kicked off with an in-depth session on the national transition framework. Mr. Stanley Hari from The National Council for Children Services (NCCS) led the discussion, focusing exclusively on the National Guidelines for Transitioning Child Care (2023). This session provided administrators with a clear roadmap for moving children from institutionalized settings into family and community-based care, ensuring a seamless and positive change for every child.

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults remains paramount throughout any reform process. Day two was dedicated to this crucial topic, with an expert session on Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Adults. Facilitated by Ms. Beatrice Mumbi from Mumbi Gikonyo & Co. Advocates, administrators gained crucial legal and ethical knowledge to strengthen their protection protocols and create environments of safety and trust.

The final day focused on practical strategies for securing the future of the CCIs through Resource

Mobilization and the creation of Income Generating Activities (IGAs). This session provided innovative ideas and practical tools for repurposing the physical assets of CCIs, ensuring that they can continue to serve their communities and support the new model of care.

The workshop's success marks a significant step forward, ensuring that CCI administrators are not just passively responding to reform, but are becoming proactive agents of change in building a brighter, family-focused future for the children of Kenya.



*Mr. Stanley Hari leading a training workshop for CCI administrators on care reforms in September 2025.*

*By Mr. Joseph Wichenje*

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S FUTURE

The recent child rights activity held in Kilifi under the support of AOSK JPIC underscores a critical national conversation: the protection and promotion of children's rights in Kenya. With schools serving as both centres of learning and safe spaces for development, integrating child rights and protection education within the school system is not only timely but urgent.

Kenya is currently grappling with a number of child-related crises. Rising cases of child neglect, sexual abuse, teenage pregnancies, child labor, and school dropouts have threatened the wellbeing and future of many children. Counties like Kilifi, which continues to record high rates of child marriages and teenage pregnancies, remind us that child rights are not abstract principles but daily struggles. Activities such as the Kilifi training represent tangible steps toward addressing these realities.

It is important to draw the distinction between child rights and child protection. Child rights refer to the inherent



entitlements guaranteed to every child under law and policy, such as the right to education, health, safety, and dignity. Child protection, on the other hand, refers to the measures, structures, and interventions put in place to prevent and respond to harm, abuse, and exploitation of children. In practice, rights give children a legal foundation, while protection ensures that those rights are actively safeguarded.

Kenya has a robust legal framework supporting both child rights and protection. The Constitution of Kenya, 2010, under Article 53, guarantees every child the right to free and compulsory basic education, parental care, shelter, and protection from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, and all forms of violence. The Children Act, 2022 consolidates and strengthens provisions for safeguarding children, establishing clear county-level and national structures for child protection. The Basic Education Act enforces access to education, while the Sexual Offences Act provides legal recourse for children subjected to sexual exploitation. Together, these laws form a dual approach that guarantees rights while embedding protection mechanisms.

However, the gap between law and practice remains significant. Communities often lack awareness of these laws, and children may not know where to report abuse or how to seek help. This is why integrating child rights and child protection into school programs is vital. A well-informed child is more likely to recognize abuse, while sensitized teachers, caregivers, and community leaders are more likely to prevent, identify, and report violations.

Furthermore, Kenya's commitment to international conventions such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African

Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) requires the country to ensure both recognition of rights and systems of protection. Initiatives like the Kilifi activity translate these commitments into local action.

The Kilifi initiative demonstrates that safeguarding is not just about rescuing children after harm has occurred, but about creating environments that prevent harm in the first place. By investing in community-based child rights and protection education, Kenya can address the root causes of violations and ensure children grow in dignity, safety, and security.

Ultimately, safeguarding children is both a legal obligation and a moral duty. If scaled nationally, grassroots interventions like those in Kilifi could be a turning point in protecting Kenya's most vulnerable citizens, our children, while ensuring their rights are respected, fulfilled, and protected.



*School children attending the forum on protection and promotion of children rights in Kenya courtesy of AOSK JPIC*

*By Sr. Lydia Malala, SMK*

## CARING FOR OURSELVES TO CARE FOR OTHERS: STRESS AND BURNOUT MANAGEMENT IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

In today's demanding world, stress and burnout affect people across all walks of life. For religious sisters and clergy, the reality is no different. The call to serve God's people through pastoral care, education, health, social work, and community leadership is noble and rewarding, yet it also comes with significant challenges. Recognizing and addressing stress and burnout is not a sign of weakness it is an act of stewardship of the gift of vocation.

Stress is a natural response to the many demands placed upon us. It may arise when expectations exceed our ability to cope whether from community obligations, pastoral duties, or personal struggles. When stress is prolonged and unmanaged, it can grow into burnout: a state of physical, emotional, and even spiritual exhaustion. Unlike ordinary fatigue, burnout leaves one feeling drained, disheartened, and disconnected from both mission and prayer life. Added to this is the silent burden of being seen as spiritual role models, which may cause guilt when one feels spiritually dry or emotionally tired.

### *Recognizing the Signs*

It is important to notice early warning signs. These may include irritability, difficulty focusing in prayer, loss of motivation in apostolic work, or withdrawal from community life. Physical symptoms such as fatigue, headaches, or sleep disturbances may also appear. Paying attention to these signals allows us to respond before burnout takes a deeper toll. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Matthew 11:28-29

### *Pathways to Renewal*

Managing stress and preventing burnout calls for both personal commitment and communal support. On a personal level, sisters and clergy are encouraged to embrace holistic self-care: regular rest, nourishing meals, physical exercises, and intentional times of prayer. Retreats and recollections are not luxuries but essential opportunities to draw strength from God.

Time management and boundary-setting also help. This may mean saying "no" to certain commitments, delegating tasks, or intentionally setting aside days for rest and renewal. The Church as an institution can further support clergy and sisters through wellness programs, professional counseling, and opportunities for sabbatical or ongoing formation.

### *Building Resilience in Vocation*

At the heart of resilience for religious is faith. Returning to prayer, grounding ourselves in the Word of God, and seeking spiritual direction all provide nourishment for the journey. Engaging in simple joys reading, gardening, art, or music can refresh the mind and restore balance.

Caring for one's health is not contrary to vocation it is part of it. By tending to our own well-being, we are better equipped to serve others with joy, energy, and compassion. Stress and burnout need not overshadow the beauty of religious life; with awareness, support, and God's grace, sisters and clergy can continue their mission with renewed strength and hope.

May we always remember that in caring for ourselves, we allow Christ to renew us for service in His vineyard.



*By Sr. Juliana Ndunge, LSOSF*

## AOSK CHEMCHEMI YA UZIMA COLLEGE

### ICAPAMI

#### *Nairobi Metropolitan Region Catechists Celebrate Annual Mass*

**T**he annual Nairobi Metropolitan Catechists Mass took place in September 2025, bringing together catechists from the five dioceses within the region. The celebration was held at St. Joseph the Worker Cathedral in Ngong and drew thousands of participants for an inspiring affirmation of faith, service, and mission.

The 2025 celebration was anchored on the compelling theme: *“Called to Teach and Sent to Inspire Hope.”*

The Holy Mass featured powerful messages delivered by the Metropolitan bishops, who unanimously underscored the essential role of the catechists in the Church.

**Bishop Simon Kamomoe** delivered the homily, focusing on the multifaceted mission of catechists: to teach, model, mentor, and inspire. He emphasized the transformative power of God's Word and highlighted the critical importance of the Sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and Penance, in the spiritual life of a catechist.

**Archbishop Philip Anyolo** referred to catechists

as “hope-givers,” urging them to proclaim the truth with clarity and to serve the faithful with unwavering dedication.

**Bishop Wallace Ng’ang’a** spoke to the universal nature of the catechist’s calling. He encouraged them to remain joyful and spiritually grounded while navigating modern-day challenges, such as increasing secularism and the distractions of technology.

The Mass was a vibrant celebration of unity, mission, and hope. Through the solemn liturgy and the profound messages from the bishops, catechists were powerfully reminded of their indispensable role in both the Church and society: to educate, evangelize, and inspire hope in a rapidly changing world.

Following the Mass, ICAPAMI Students utilized the opportunity to network with the catechists and distributed college brochures, furthering engagement between the educational institution and grassroots evangelists.





*Some ICAPAMI students distributing brochures*

## **FORMATION**

### ***Formation Department Focuses on Renewal and Professional Development***

**T**he Formation Department recently organized an eight-day retreat for the January intake group of 21 formators, marking the conclusion of their training program.

#### ***Retreat for Formators: Shepherds After God's Own Heart***

The retreat was centered on the biblical theme: “*I will give you shepherds after my own heart*” (Jer. 3: 15). This experience served as a privileged moment of spiritual renewal and reflection, enabling participants to deepen their awareness of their noble and sacred role.

The formators were powerfully reminded that they are entrusted with the mission of shepherding those in formation, called to accompany them with compassion, wisdom, and fidelity to Christ. The structured program fostered a prayerful environment through guided reflections, silence, and liturgy, allowing them to listen anew to the voice of the Good Shepherd.

It was a vital time for formators to embrace the joy and responsibility of being models of authentic discipleship, drawing strength from the Lord who calls and sustains their ministry. The retreat culminated in a renewed sense of purpose, ensuring they are prepared to serve with dedication, humility, and competence.

#### ***Ongoing Short Courses for Capacity Building***

As part of the department's ongoing capacity-building efforts, several short courses are currently being offered to enhance the skills and competencies of members in key areas of ministry, formation, and administration. These courses are designed to meet current needs with pastoral sensitivity, professional excellence, and practical relevance.

Current courses include:

- Chapter Facilitation
- Religious Vocation Promotion Training
- Basic Spiritual Guidance Training
- Basic Computer Technology
- Basic English Course:

A total of 93 students are currently enrolled across these various programs, demonstrating a strong institutional commitment to ongoing formation and professional development within the congregation.

Both the specialized retreat and the ongoing professional courses clearly demonstrate the department's commitment to the holistic development of its personnel. By intentionally nurturing their spiritual lives and enhancing their professional skills, the department ensures that those entrusted with guiding others are well-prepared and equipped to fulfill their mission as true shepherds.

*By: Sr. Florence Nyamai, OSU*

### *INTEGRATIVE SPIRITUAL COUNSELLING*

**W**e register another progress as we enter into the deep waters of the August-December semester 2025. We thank the Lord who is always on our side. We are grateful to report that the students have now settled into their daily lectures and activities of the new academic year 2025/2026. We began well, and we are advancing successfully with the Grace of God. The first-year students are coping well with their studies, as the second year, continue with their normal.

As we continue, we urge our people to read the signs of the times. The challenges are steadily increasing as the political, social, and economic arena heats up in our country. Counsellors are now inevitable; we have to be prepared to be able to hold the bull by the horns. The children and the youth we are raising today are our future religious men and women who should be making a strong army in the Lord's battlefield against the enemy. At this moment, they are experiencing untold sufferings that most of them are getting lost in the ocean of trauma, grief, stress, and poverty. Based on this, we need counselors and skilled personnel to counteract the evil taking place in our society and start a healing process from the grassroots.

What the general population of the entire world is experiencing needs to be handled by skilled people, and on the frontline are women and men religious. When we reflect on what is taking place, we have all the reasons to seek the skill of listening, empathy, and good morals that should be the light for the subjugated. We have a duty to do all we can within our limits to save the people of God within our reach. An appeal still stands at our doors to take up the holistic counseling training to be relevant in society.

At Chemchemi ya Uzima College, we are holding on and training the counsellors, At this time, our students

are already getting the skills as they undertake the Growth Facilitation Practice (GFP). This prepares them to face what they are going to meet when they get into the field. All careers need to have counselling skills, given the fact that they are dealing with wounded people at different levels in life.



*One to one counseling practice; directed by sr. Victorine nyawade, FSSA*

*By: Sr. Sophia Wanyama, LSMIG*

## **SABBATICAL**

*“Put out into deep water and let down your nets for a catch” (lk 5:4)*

“None of us is a finished project. There is always something that we need to renew ourselves about”. The participants expressed their desire to be renewed, build relationships with God and others, be re-energized and be filled with zeal. Their feet are entering into the deep water, whereby they are happy reading their own books. The participants have expressed a lot of joy for the growth group and one-on-one that is on-going. The participants have acknowledged that the lectures taught are “deeply insightful and they are helping them go deeper into themselves.”

The participants are able to get time to sit down on their own, reflect and meditate. Creating time each day to reflect and meditate helps build a deeper relationship with God. They are very happy and they have fully bonded and they are their brother/ Sister’s keeper. Some participants expressed “This is what I needed”. They have had an opportunity of two workshops on Human sexuality and Enneagram. They were very happy as they were able to discover themselves and expressed that it is long time they did Enneagram especially in formation house.

The sabbatical participants were officially welcome to Chemchemi college with mass and entertainment and they felt very happy and fully accepted to Chemchemi. The participants have expressed that they have experienced mutual enrichment and growth.

The sabbatical program is Transformative opportunity which provides a sacred space to step away from the everyday responsibilities of ministry, reconnect with their deeper calling, and gain a fresh perspective. Chemchemi setting provides a welcoming, safe, and comfortable environment conducive to healing and well-being of body, mind, and spirit.

The participants are happy and there is a good experience of unity in diversity in the liturgy and communal



prayers. There is beauty in praying together. The participants have four small Christian communities, they enjoy praying together, share a lot of creativity, and varieties of prayers. They express their joy of being in Chemchemi because the place is conducive, which enables them to reconnect with God.

The joy of our participants celebrating birthdays together anticipating the dates some within the month of September. It was a good experience and full of fun. The wonderful reality of what religious family means. Interestingly some have never celebrated their birthdays in such a joyful style. A member said. "This is a wonderful group"

We feel encouraged by the participants' commitment of their personal growth and development as they embark on their personal journey. They have time for their personal reflection and they are happy as

they continue reading their own book. Their spirit of community building is evident as they have bonded well. A very gifted group, learning and growing together like the disciples of Christ.



*Sabbatical participants planting beans at Matasia new site for Sabbatical*

*By: Sr. Leocardia Kemunto, FSJ*

**A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS FOR BELIEVING IN US !!!!!**



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