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Strengthening Family Faith & Spirituality



Holy Family Minor
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Welcome to the 11th edition of The Basilican,

A publication that marks the culmination of the year and is brimming with articles designed for everyone. We hope you find inspiration and more in the multitude of messages and shares contained within these pages.

A decade has passed since the inaugural edition of The Basilican in 2013, and the current team remains committed to navigating the path laid out while embracing the responsibility to uphold the legacy of the previous team. The editorial team extends gratitude for the continued support received over the years through the inspiring stories shared by our readers.

This edition coincides with a time when the church witnesses a surge in the use of social media during Holy Mass. While the church has previously urged people to be mindful of their actions and words on these platforms, a growing concern arises with the increasing number of worshippers using social media during the sacred ceremony. We are reminded that Holy Mass is the sole worthy gift we can offer God, as it involves presenting to Him His own Son. Reflecting on

His Holiness' teachings about social media and Ms. Naomi's article, "Mass Explained," underscores the significance of the Mass offering.

Rev. Fr. Michael Ndichu addresses a pressing matter concerning the impact of the LGBTQ+ ideology on the fabric of Christian marriage. He asserts that this ideology undermines the foundations of marriage and cultural values, posing a threat to the core beliefs of our nation. In this edition, Rev. Fr. Ndichu navigates this sensitive topic, offering insights to reset our perspective through God's lens and understand the intended purpose of human beings as prescribed by God.

As the Christmas season approaches, we invite you to make this edition a must-read for the holidays and beyond. The editorial team wishes you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year in 2024. May God bless you all.

You can actively engage with The Basilican by reading or contributing to a column. We value and respect your opinions, so feel free to share your feedback with us at thebasilican@holyfamilybasilica.info.

BY: JUDITH GONDI
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL, SECRETARY
For Editorial Team

Keeping Faith Alive:

Pope Francis' Message on Phones in Mass



Pope Francis greeting pilgrims at Vatican City, September 29, 2018.

Photo used with permission courtesy of Aswin Vaswani, unsplash.com.

“The Mass is not a show. When the priest says ‘lift up your hearts,’ he does not say ‘lift up your cell phones to take pictures.’”

In today's tech-driven world, the role of mobile phones in the sacred setting of the Mass has ignited a passionate debate among the faithful. While some argue that capturing moments through

photos and videos is a way to preserve cherished memories, Pope Francis, the spiritual leader of the Catholic Church, has emerged as a steadfast advocate for reverence and attention during Mass.

The Mobile Phone Revolution in Kenya

85.88% of the world's population owns a smartphone in 2023 according to Statista. In Kenya, mobile phone ownership has skyrocketed from 86% in 2014 to a staggering 94% in 2023, highlighting the growing role of mobile devices

in the country. The latest survey by Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) reveals that mobile phones are even more common in households than beds, with 94% of Kenyan households possessing these devices, compared to 93% with beds.

This mobile revolution has been propelled by the pioneering M-Pesa service, which has transformed financial transactions, making them accessible and convenient. Additionally, widespread mobile internet connectivity has opened doors to

information, education, and opportunities across various sectors, including education, healthcare, and commerce.

The Importance of Being Fully Attentive in Participation During Mass

Pope Francis has not minced words when addressing this modern predicament, emphasizing the significance of being fully present during the Holy Mass. In a touching 2017 address to the faithful at Saint Peter’s Square in Rome, he remarked, “The Mass is not a show. When the priest says ‘lift up your hearts,’ he does not say ‘lift up your cell phones to take pictures.’”

Pope Francis called using phones during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass “a very ugly thing”, **Adding:** “It makes me very sad when I celebrate Mass here in the piazza or in the basilica and I see so many cell phones held up.” Free yourself from the addiction to mobile phones” he warned, pointing out that they are good and useful tools, but must be used in the right way and right place

“The Eucharist serves as a remarkable means by which Jesus Christ truly manifests Himself in the lives of people,” expressed the pope.

Participating in the Mass equates to a profound reenactment of the Lord’s passion and redemptive sacrifice. Pope Francis underscored this, stating, “On the altar, He is present, extending Himself for the redemption of the world.”

He further emphasized, “The Lord remains by our side, ever-present during the Mass.”

However, he lamented, “Many times, we become distracted, engaging in idle conversation and losing focus as the priest conducts the Eucharistic celebration.”

Pope Francis draws attention to a disheartening reality: the distractions that often accompany the Mass. When we attend Mass, the Lord is there, and our focus should be unwavering. Instead of distractions, we should be immersed in the awe and reverence that the Eucharist deserves.

Pope Francis’s heartfelt plea finds resonance with many Catholics around the world. A 2019 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in the United States revealed that 83% of American Catholics agree with the Holy Father, deeming it inappropriate to use mobile phones during Mass. This sentiment is shared by many Christians at our Holy Family Minor Basilica Parish.

The Profound Significance of the Holy Mass

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, we may have lost sight of the fundamentals of the Mass and the sacraments. Pope Francis calls us to rediscover these basics. Just as St. Thomas touched Christ’s body and wounds to recognize Him, the Holy Mass allows us to “see and touch” Christ’s presence in our lives. It provides us with

the means to deepen our faith and experience Christ’s love firsthand.

“Mass is a gift from God, and we should receive it with gratitude and reverence.”

The Pope’s call for reverence during the Holy Mass aligns with the teachings of Catholic saints, who throughout history have emphasized the importance of being fully attentive during this sacred ritual. Saint Teresa of Avila, a revered figure in the Church, affirmed, “Mass is the greatest act of love that we can offer to God.” Saint John Chrysostom echoed this sentiment, describing Mass as “a school where we learn to love God and our neighbor.”

Saint Thomas Aquinas further emphasized the significance of Mass, characterizing it as “a sacrifice that unites us to Christ and to each other.” Saint Francis of Assisi, known for his humility and devotion, viewed Mass as a precious time to “listen to God’s word and be transformed by His love.” The words of Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta reinforced this notion,



Pope Francis during a mass at St. Joseph Kangemi November 27, 2015

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as she reminded us that “Mass is a gift from God, and we should receive it with gratitude and reverence.”

The Holy Mass itself holds a pivotal place in the Catholic faith, serving as the wellspring of spiritual life. The Catechism of the Catholic Church 1324-1327, states that, The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. It is here that Catholics partake in the profound mystery of the Eucharist, receiving the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. Beyond this sacramental aspect, Mass is a communal gathering where believers come together to worship, pray, and renew their faith as one body in Christ.

The revered Saint Augustine once proclaimed, “The Mass is the greatest thing on earth, next to the love of God.” These words resonate deeply within the hearts of Catholics, reinforcing the notion that the Mass is a sacred gift from

God. Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta, a modern-day saint, further echoed this sentiment, underlining that Mass should be received “with gratitude and reverence.”

Lift Your Heart Not Your Phone

The call to put away mobile phones during Mass is a plea for Catholics to embrace the profound significance of this sacred gathering. When the faithful are fully attentive and participative in Mass, they open themselves to the love of God in a unique way. In this sacred setting, they are transformed and renewed in their faith, drawing closer to Christ’s teachings and embodying His love in their lives.

In essence, Pope Francis’s impassioned plea and the wisdom of Catholic saints underscore a timeless truth – that the Holy Mass is a precious gift, a moment of profound reverence, and

an opportunity for spiritual growth. To fully embrace this gift, Catholics are encouraged to put down their phones, lift up their hearts, and engage in the sacred beauty of the Mass with undivided attention for the cellphones can be a distraction in relationships with one another and with God.

In a world filled with distractions, the Pope’s message encourages us to rekindle our appreciation for the profound significance of the Eucharist. It serves as a reminder to approach Mass with reverence and unwavering focus, recognizing the transformative potential of this divine encounter. Through a deeper understanding of the Eucharist and a recommitment to our faith, we can embark on a journey of spiritual renewal and a more profound relationship with Christ.

A Call to Reflection

The Eucharist, this sacred sacrament, is more than just

a ritual or a tradition. It is an invitation to commune with Christ himself fully present, and this unites us as one body in Christ. It is a moment when we lift our hearts in praise and offer thanks for the immeasurable grace bestowed upon us. Yet do we approach this moment with the reverence it deserves? Do we heed Pope Francis' call to silence our mobile phones during Mass?

In our busy lives, it's all too easy to rush through the motions, to take the Eucharist for granted. But if we pause and reflect, we may come to understand that it is through this act of receiving the Eucharist that we are bound together, transcending time and place to become part of something greater than ourselves.

As we approach the altar, let us remember that this is not a mere tradition; it is a sacred encounter that shapes us into a single, unified body in Christ (John 17:21-24). Let us embrace the importance of reverence, praise, and thanksgiving, recognizing the profound transformation that occurs when we partake in the Eucharist. Through the intercession of Mary Mother of God, May we approach this moment with humility and gratitude, for it is here that we become one with Christ and one another, bound by a love that knows no bounds.

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**Compiled by Peter Mwangi,
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**A MESSAGE FROM MOST REV. PHILIP A. ANYOLO,
METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP OF NAIROBI**

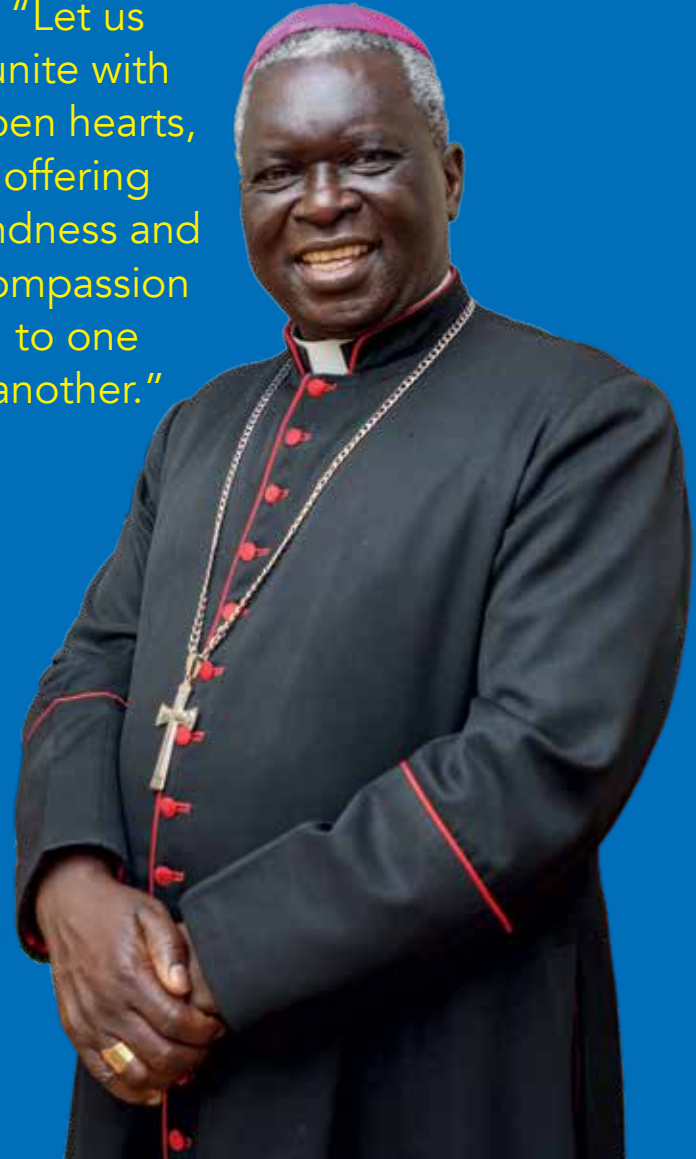
Dearest beloved Christians family of the Holy Family Minor Basilica, It is with a heart full of gratitude and joy that I join you today on the auspicious occasion of our Parish Family Day. This gathering is not just an event but also a testament to our unity, faith, and the boundless love of God that has brought us this far. We have come together as a united family, not just in name but in spirit, to celebrate our parish's faith life, and for that, I thank God.

Over the past year, our parish has witnessed significant developments and transitions. One of the most pivotal moments was the church election that took place to choose new pastoral leadership. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the outgoing pastoral team for their dedication and visionary leadership over the last four years. Your tireless efforts have guided our parish, and we are grateful for your service.

I also want to express my gratitude to the newly appointed pastoral team for embracing the responsibility of leading our parish to new heights of faith and development. Your willingness to serve is admirable, and I have no doubt that, under your leadership, our parish will continue to thrive.

However, it is essential to remember that the strength of our parish lies not only in

**"Let us
unite with
open hearts,
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the leadership but also in the unwavering dedication of each and every one of you. Your love, support, and commitment to the Holy Family Minor Basilica have not gone unnoticed. Your actions speak volumes, and they are a testament to the vibrant faith community we have built together.

I urge each member of our parish to take their love and

involvement to the next level by actively participating in various parish activities. As a united family, we can achieve great things when we work together towards a common goal.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the dedicated team of priests, led by Rev. Fr. Dr. Simon Peter Kamomoe, the administrator of our

parish. These priests have been instrumental in providing us with spiritual nourishment, especially through the administration of sacraments. The Eucharist and confession are integral to our faith journey, and I want to thank them for their availability in ensuring we receive these sacraments regularly.

This year's theme,

"Strengthening Family Faith and Spirituality," is a call to action for all of us. It is a reminder of the importance of nurturing our faith within the family unit. Here, I propose some activities that can help us achieve this goal:

- ❖ **Reading the Bible as a Family:** Make it a practice to read the Bible together as a family. Encourage young people to engage with Scripture regularly, fostering a deep connection with God's word.
- ❖ **Praying Together:** Prayer is a powerful tool for strengthening faith. Come together as a family to pray, and encourage young members to develop their personal prayer lives.
- ❖ **Serving People in Need:** Engage in service activities as a family, supporting initiatives that help those less fortunate. Encourage the involvement of our youth in these endeavours.
- ❖ **Eating Together:** Sharing meals as a family is not

only a bonding experience but also an opportunity to express gratitude for God's blessings.

- ❖ **Family Conversations About Faith:** Create an open environment where family members can discuss their faith, religious questions, and doubts. This fosters understanding and growth.
- ❖ **Celebrating Church Year Seasons at Home:** Embrace the liturgical calendar by celebrating holidays and church seasons at home. This keeps us connected to the broader Church community.
- ❖ **Providing Moral Instruction:** As parents and guardians, impart moral guidance to the younger generation, helping them navigate life's challenges with a strong moral compass.
- ❖ **Being Involved in a Faith Community:** Active participation in a faith community is crucial. Attend Sunday worship as a family, reinforcing the importance of communal worship.

Lastly, I want to remind you all that our Parish Family Day is not just a celebration but a call to action. It is a reminder that our faith is a living, dynamic entity that thrives when nurtured within the family. Let us commit ourselves to strengthening our family faith and spirituality through these

suggested activities. Together, as a united family of God, we can continue to grow in faith, love, and service.

Gathering in the spirit of love and unity, I am deeply grateful for the blessings of the Christmas season, a time to reflect on the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the profound love and hope He bestows upon us.

May this year's Christmas serve as a reminder of the significance of faith, family, and community. Let us unite with open hearts, offering kindness and compassion to one another. In our togetherness, may we discover strength and renewal.

As we look forward to the year 2024, let us anticipate a year filled with blessings and opportunities. May the New Year bring good health, peace, and abundant joy. Together, let us embrace the challenges and triumphs that await, knowing that with faith, we can conquer all obstacles.

I extend to you all my wishes for a Merry Christmas and a year of blessings and productivity in 2024.

May God bless each one of you, and may the Holy Family Minor Basilica always be a beacon of faith and love in our community.

Yours in Christ Service,

Most Rev. Philip A. Anyolo

Metropolitan Archbishop of Nairobi

Essence of being a Basilica Family



Dear Christians, as we come to the close of the year we fervently thank God for all His Divine love and providence. I appreciate our esteemed Christians, Church leaders and all our Shepherds for your hearty cooperation in all the Church's salvific activities especially the liturgical and Sacramental life. Like St. Paul exalting Christians of Thessalonica, we thank God that you receive the word of God so heartily that you have been influenced by the Spirit of God and your lives have

been largely transformed-1 Thessalonians 1-5.

Christmas marks the apex of God's love for mankind and human family. Christmas only makes sense to people who acknowledge God and His Divine interventions in human history. Since salvation takes a journey of conversion; God's people being reclaimed by God to his original plan of righteousness cf. *Titus 2:11-14*. Let us all engage in a fervent moment of soul searching and reflection during Advent to rediscover

our inner call to be true sons and daughters of God as He intended in His original plan of creation where everything He created was good. Cf. *Genesis 1:31*.

Holy Family Basilica is meant to be a model of our Christian families. It signifies the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. In our faith, family life is a lifelong vocation of communion between God and man/woman and is geared towards the good of the couple and nurturing life and faith; that the family

grows to be "filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to lead a life worthy of the Christian calling, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in knowledge of God." (Colossians 1:9-10). The essence of a family is nurturing, mentoring, and inspiring members of the family. In a family, members should cultivate a culture of praying together, working together, enjoying meals together, playing together, and supporting each.

“ I implore each one of you to practice the Christian values and be agents of evangelizing the good news of the Kingdom of God. ”

I beseech you to remain steadfast in prayer and strengthen family bonds. Our families are the socializing agents in the light of Christian teachings. Our families form and shape our attitudes, aspirations, and visions. A holistic family, as exemplified in the Basilica family offers members a wide range of

benefits. As a church we cultivate a culture of prayer and spiritual formation, helping our Christians to know purpose of life, personal growth and developing positive relationships. Promoting family life helps us, as Christians to enjoy a sense of acceptance, responsibility connectedness, empowerment, diversity, and homeness. This happens through encouraging each other, loving and caring for one another, helping each other in prayer and other spiritual obligations, and also discouraging maladaptive behavior in the family.

A family is the divine plan of God for humanity and that is why as Basilica, we are guided our motto; "we are one Family of God" and the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is our model. As a Family of Christians, I implore each one of you to practice the Christian values and be agents of evangelizing the good news of the Kingdom of God. Sacraments are the center of our life here in Basilica. As a family, let us all experience Christ, whom we are celebrating during Christmas through Sacraments.

Let's free our hearts out of the sinfulness and worldly evil allurements. Let us not be persuaded by the devil to engage in activities for personal pleasure. Instead, let's deeply reflect on our sincere love for God and our fellow brothers and sisters in our families and the entire human family. I encourage

you to continue opening your minds and hearts to invoke God's blessings upon your lives and the entire human family, especially now we are just about to mark the apex of God's love for Mankind with the celebration of the incarnation of our Savior.

Our call is to be good and Holy, to love God and appreciate the beauty of nature as created by God out of His Love. Christmas is for all people who respond to God's love and it is celebration of God's love for all His people through Christ who was incarnate in human nature. Note carefully that charity is essence of our Christian lives as God is the source of love and all goodness. Let's always abound in God's love by sharing God's love and goodness with everyone especially with our suffering/ needy brothers and sisters. Let us continue supporting our Church in different ways, as you have always done in the past.

While others engage in worldly celebrations that revolve around the desire of the flesh as Christians, all of our celebrations are largely informed by the Spirit of God who animates our lives and makes them fruitful in God's Kingdom.

Holy Christmas and Blessed New Year

Ad Majorem Dei Glorium

The writer is a priest and the Administrator of Holy Family Minor Basilica



MASS EXPLAINED

By Naomi Ndirangu

What is a Catholic Mass

As Catholics, we know that the Holy Mass is the center of our faith and the source of divine life. Mass is the central act of worship in the life of a Catholic. It is the highest form of prayer. Going to Mass is about spending time with God, but also receiving his graces (inner strength to live the Christian life). At Mass or the Lord's Supper, the People of God are called together, with a Priest presiding and acting in the person of Christ, to celebrate the memorial of the Lord or Eucharistic Sacrifice. In an outstanding way, there applies to such

a local gathering of the holy Church, the promise of Christ: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst" (Mt 18:20). For in the celebration of Mass, in which the Sacrifice of the Cross is perpetuated, Christ is really present in the very assembly gathered in his name, in the person of the minister, in his word, and indeed substantially and uninterruptedly under the Eucharistic species. The name 'Mass' comes from the final blessing said by the priest in Latin 'Ite missa es' meaning, "to send out" as Jesus Christ sent his disciples out to the world to take his teaching to them. Hence, the Church teaches us to participate in the Holy Mass regularly on

Sundays and on Holydays of obligation and on weekdays, whenever possible. If we understand the value of the Mass, we would certainly participate in it actively and regularly. I feel that a simple explanation on each part of the Mass may help you to recognize the value of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. With this consideration, I am going to explain every part of the Mass in the forthcoming bulletin, hoping that you would read and profit by it.

The Holy Mass is, first of all, a holy celebration, because it is Christ who acts in the person of a priest. Jesus Christ offers himself for us, as he offered on the Cross. Hence, we say that Mass is the same sacrifice of Jesus

Christ, offered on the altar in an unbloodied manner. Just like Jesus offered his body and blood on the Cross, he offers for us on the altar. The difference is that Jesus offered himself visibly on the Cross but on our altar, He offers himself invisibly and in an unbloodied manner, hidden under the appearance of bread and wine.

A Catholic, who says that he/she loves Christ, would not fail to love the Mass. To love the Mass does not mean just being present and nothing more; it means to be present with faith and devotion and to take part actively in the Mass realizing that it is the Sacrifice of the Cross being renewed on the altar. Participation in the Mass involves our faith. Without faith, all that one would see on the altar is just bread and wine; just gestures, symbols and nothing more. It is only through faith, we acknowledge that at the consecration of the bread and wine, they are changed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. If one would come for Mass without faith, the person would easily feel bored or get distracted. Without faith, one would fail to understand what Christ's death on the Cross would mean for us. Hence, Faith is the most required disposition when we come to participate in the Mass.

The Mass has four basic parts or 'rites'. The beginning is called the

'Introductory Rite'. At the beginning, the priest processes in, accompanied by altar servers. Often the congregation (all those who are there) sing a hymn. Once the priest reaches the sanctuary (the part of the Church where the altar is), he kisses the altar and then proceeds to the lectern and begins Mass by making the sign of the cross; 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.'

"Eucharistic
prayer everyone
kneels as to
worship Jesus
Christ who
becomes
present under
the appearance
of bread and
wine when the
priest says the
'consecration'."

This short prayer means that everyone is reminded that they are baptised into the One God in three persons, and so puts themselves into his protection. Then the congregation are given a few moments to reflect upon the things they have done or not done which hurt other people, or disobeyed God, and are invited to repent, or say sorry to God. This is because not being sorry for sins (when we have hurt

other people or disobeyed God,) can be a barrier to receiving the graces God wants to give us.

The second part of Mass is called the 'Liturgy of the Word.' Liturgy is an ancient word, which came from the ancient Greeks meaning 'official work'. Mass is part of the official prayer of the Church. In the liturgy of the Word, everyone listens to readings from the Bible; first reading is normally from the Old Testament which is completed by what Jesus Christ did, e.g. the story of the Israelites being fed on manna in the desert (Exodus chapter 16), is completed when Jesus Christ said 'I am the bread of life' (John chapter 6). Then a psalm is read or sung on the same theme. The second reading is usually a letter from St Paul and then everyone stands to listen to a reading from the Gospel, the story of Jesus. This reading will show how the Old Testament is completed by Jesus. After the readings everyone sits and listens to the homily, or sermon preached by the priest. To complete this part of the Mass, on Sundays, everyone recites the Creed, which is the statement of faith in God. Following this is the prayers of the faithful section where each parish has its own set of 'intercessions' that is, a set of prayers for local issues and people.

The third part of the Mass is called the Liturgy of the Eucharist. 'Eucharist' means



to give thanks. This part begins by the 'offertory' when we offer ourselves to God. This is symbolised by taking up the bread and wine, which will become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and the collection. During the Eucharistic prayer everyone kneels as to worship Jesus Christ who becomes present under the appearance of bread and wine when the priest says the 'consecration'. The institution narrative and Consecration, through which, by means of the words and actions of Christ, that Sacrifice is effected which Christ himself instituted during the Last Supper. Here, he offered his Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine, gave them to the Apostles to eat and drink, and left with them the command to perpetuate this same mystery. The change is not 'done' by the priest, but by Christ, and whilst visibly, nothing appears to have changed, the change is one of substance, of what it is. Those who are able to receive 'Holy Communion' then proceed and receive,

either in one kind (just the host, the Body) or in two kinds (from the cup as well). Those unable to receive Holy Communion, either because they are not Catholics, or because as Catholics they have disobeyed a serious law of the Church and have not been reconciled to the Church, are invited for spiritual communion.

The final part of Mass, the concluding rite. When it is necessary, announcements may be made. The celebrant then blesses the people assembled. Sometimes, the blessing is very simple. On special days, the blessing may be more extensive. In every case, the blessing always concludes "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." It is in the triune God and in the sign of the cross that we find our blessing. After the blessing, the deacon dismisses the people. In fact, the dismissal gives the liturgy its name. The word "Mass" comes from the Latin word, "Missa." At one time, the people were dismissed with the words "Ite, missa

est," meaning "Go, you are sent". The Mass is ended. Go in the peace of Christ, to love and serve the Lord' the congregation replies, 'Thanks be to God.' The word "Missa" comes from the word "missio," the root of the English word "mission." The liturgy does not simply come to an end. Those assembled are sent forth to bring the fruits of the Eucharist to the world.

When attending Mass it is proper to observe the following **Mass Etiquette; Dos and Don'ts;**

Do Fast: Canon 919 of the "Code of Canon Law" states, "One who is to receive the Most Holy Eucharist is to abstain from any food or drink, for at least the period of one hour before Holy Communion."

Do come early, recollect yourself: Please try to be on time for Mass! Sometimes things can't be helped, without doubt -- cars break down, babies need changing, alarm clocks fail to go off -- but chronic lateness for the Mass is rude and disruptive. When you enter the Church, cross yourself with Holy Water and thank God for the grace given to you at Baptism. Keep sacred silence in the church. Avoid unnecessary conversation and keep necessary conversation to a very low whisper.

Do Genuflect: When we enter and leave Church, genuflect toward the

Tabernacle (usually indicated by some light beside it). Christ is present for our sake. By allowing our right knee to hit the floor, we acknowledge He is our Lord and God. If someone is physically unable to genuflect, then a bow is sufficient. During Mass, if you pass in front of the altar or tabernacle, bow reverently.

Do not eat: Do not chew gum or bring food or drinks into the church. The only exceptions are discreetly breastfeeding or giving a bottle to an infant (or, of course, rare medical). Do not chew gum in church. It breaks your fast, it is distracting, and it is considered impolite in a formal setting.

Do dress properly: Dressing for Mass is simply a matter of showing proper respect, not only for God, but also for others around you. Never let circumstances out of your control make you feel embarrassed or keep you away from the Sacraments, but one should always wear clothes that are modest, and, if possible, all things being equal, clean and the nicest clothes one has. Men take your hats off. It is impolite for a man to wear a hat into a church. Just as we take off hats for the Pledge of Allegiance, we do so in church too, as a sign of respect.

No Phones: No cell phones; texting, chatting, calls, etc. The only justifiable case is for emergencies.

Whatever it be, be discreet while attending to it. It is usually better to quietly leave the Church to attend to the emergency than text or receive calls inside the church.

Do actively participate: Some find it hard to follow all the routines over and over again; to stand, sit, speak when needed etc. However, active participation means exactly this. In order to be really part of a praying community, we must join the Body of Christ in its movements. We are supposed to try as much as possible to join in all the appropriate gestures while at Mass for our participation to be perfect. Do join in the songs and prayers of the community. If you think your singing will distract others, or if you do not quite know the hymn or prayers, a soft tone is fine.

Do receive Communion properly: It is customary to show some reverence before, during and after communion. Before receiving, one must recollect, pray and prepare themselves. While receiving the Holy Eucharist, it is advised to bow or kneel (depending on what is customary in your area). After receiving, kneel and pray to Jesus, do not be in a hurry, he might also have a word or two for you; pray and keep still for a while. Consume the Host immediately. If you do not, a Eucharistic Minister may ask you to. This is to protect the Sacrament. When

the Eucharistic Minister presents the Host and says "The Body of Christ" or "The Blood of Christ", the proper response is "Amen!" This indicates that you know and believe that what you are about to receive is Jesus Himself. Please make sure you have a firm hold on the Chalice (without grabbing it) when receiving it from the Eucharistic Minister.

Do not be in a hurry: Do not leave the Church before the Presider; the Mass ends officially when the priest leaves the Church. Even then, it is usually advised you sit/kneel in silent prayer of thanksgiving or simply gaze at Jesus in the Tabernacle, smile at him and just be joyful. After which you should leave quietly in order not to distract others.

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Do I Have a **Vocation?**



**By Deacon James Mwaura
Muniu**

One of the prevailing concerns among many youths today is the question of whether they possess a

vocation and, if so, how one discerns this divine calling. A vocation, in essence, is a product of fertile soil nurtured by mutual love that blossoms into mutual service, within the framework of a genuine ecclesial life. No vocation is self-generated or exists in isolation; rather, it emanates from the heart of God and flourishes within the fertile ground of faithful individuals, nurtured by fraternal love. As Jesus stated, "By this, all men will know that you are my disciples if you have a love for one another" (John 13:35) (Cf. also Pope Francis - 51st World Day of Prayer for Vocations, January 16th, 2014).

The fundamental distinction between a vocation and a career lies in the fact that a career primarily serves as a means of livelihood to support oneself and one's family, often encompassing a sequence of jobs. For instance, an individual may attend university and graduate as an engineer. In contrast, a vocation is not so

much a profession but rather a reflection of one's identity, a calling from God.

The term "vocation" derives from the Latin word "vocare," signifying "to call." This divine call finds its roots in Scripture: "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

For Christians, a vocation is not solely a summons to perform certain tasks; it is a beckoning to become a particular kind of person, guided by God's grace. When Jesus called his initial disciples by the shores of Galilee, it was not merely to enlist their help in his earthly work but to transform their lives through his companionship and love. Hence, it constitutes a fundamental human response, urging us towards holiness—a call to become saints. Saints are not solely remarkable figures confined to history books; they are

ordinary Christians who have wholeheartedly lived their faith, dedicating themselves to loving God and their neighbours without reserve.

Our vocation revolves around God's call for us to love Him and our fellow beings. The Church employs four primary 'categories' of vocation to aid in discerning God's plan: marriage, single life, priesthood, and religious life. In each of these distinct paths, God summons us to respond freely and generously to His call.

Marriage Life: In marriage, the union is designed to foster mutual growth and spiritual elevation. Through the sacrament of marriage, spouses pledge enduring love to one another. Husbands and wives share a bond of selflessness, love, and devotion, actively nurturing each other's human and Christian development. They endeavour to build a family, and a nurturing home, and serve as the primary instructors of Christian faith and values to their children. Married individuals may also contribute to the Church in various capacities.

Religious Life: This vocation calls individuals to join a community dedicated to advancing the Kingdom of God. Whether they are sisters, brothers, monks, or nuns, they all strive in unique ways to serve God through prayer and service. Consecrated life represents a distinctive Christian lifestyle marked by the public commitment or promise to uphold the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience, thus embodying the Kingdom of God. The Church recognizes numerous

religious institutes, commonly referred to as religious orders, congregations, or societies. A religious man may be a monk, friar, or brother, and he may or may not be ordained as a priest. A religious woman may choose to lead a cloistered life as a nun or an active life as a sister.

Priesthood: All Christians are called to lead a 'priestly' life, offering their entire existence in prayer and service to God in unity with the offering of Jesus, the High Priest. This constitutes our 'baptismal' priesthood. The 'ministerial' priest, on the other hand, partakes in the priesthood of Christ uniquely through the sacrament of ordination. A priest is commissioned to serve God's people within a religious community or diocese (archdiocese). This ministerial priesthood is a privileged participation in God's work. Priests are tasked with teaching the Word, administering the sacraments, and shepherding their congregations. As Pope John Paul II emphasized, "Without priests, the Church would not be able to live that fundamental obedience which is at the very heart of her existence and her mission" (Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 1).

Single Life: The single life offers an opportunity for both men and women to pursue their vocation. It allows them to dedicate their time to serving God, free from the familial obligations that marriage brings. This freedom enables them to draw closer to God, express their love for Him, and serve others. Singles are unburdened by familial commitments, rendering them

more available to support the Catholic Church, assist the less fortunate, and care for themselves and others. By embracing this freedom from community and family obligations, they have the potential to enrich their personal lives while contributing to the betterment of humanity. Singles may choose paths such as becoming nuns, social workers, or educators, utilizing their qualities of patience, forgiveness, love, and respect to fulfil their divine calling.

Conclusion

Each vocation represents a commitment to love distinctively, fostering deeper connections with others—whether through marriage, service, or prayer. Each vocation challenges us to deepen our faith and draw nearer to Christ. Embracing any vocation, if undertaken with generosity, involves periods of profound happiness and joy. We should not assume that one vocation is easier than another; genuine love always demands great sacrifice but ultimately brings great rewards. Opting for a lifetime of celibacy, as in the case of priests and consecrated individuals, may seem like a more radical choice as it distances individuals from the natural joys of family life. However, living an authentic Christian marriage in today's world, while upholding Christian values within the family, necessitates tremendous courage and commitment.

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Sexuality & Identity

LGBTQ+ AS A DISTORTION OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE



By Rev. Fr. Michael Ndichu

"Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves..." (Psalm 100:3)

Christians today are experiencing significant changes in their religious landscape. The current prevailing ideology fails to acknowledge or value the inherent divine beauty in the design of human life by God. Many now dispute that God created humanity for His glory and that His benevolent

intentions encompass our unique and biologically defined roles as male and female. There is a growing tendency to perceive human identity in relation to gender as a reflection of individual preferences. This shift has diverted humanity from the path towards lasting happiness based on God's perfect design. Instead, it has introduced short-sighted alternatives that ultimately result in the destruction of human life and a disregard for God's intentions.

The Church's teaching on the wondrous gift of sexuality is founded on the natural law principles shared by men and women. The Second Vatican Council did not hesitate to accept the understanding of natural law as expounded by St. Thomas Aquinas. This includes the fact that God created the universe with a wise and loving plan. Insofar as it is what God has determined and willed to bring about in creating, God's plan is the eternal law. Natural law is a component of the eternal law through the creation of intelligent, autonomous, and cooperative human beings who can freely carry out God's plan. Natural law is a "participation in the eternal law by the rational creature." Natural law "is also an expression of the will of God" despite being independent of any divine revelation. Only when one considers the Church's teaching on sexuality as "a teaching founded on the natural law, illuminated and enriched by divine revelation," can one fully appreciate its beauty.

The Book of Genesis teaches that God created the human person in His own image and likeness and created the human person as male and female. "Human beings, therefore, are nothing less than the work of God Himself; and in the complementarity of the sexes, they are called to reflect the inner unity of the Creator." This most ancient revelation manifests the mystery that the human person, having been created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), is given the ability, through his or her sexuality, to

cooperate with God in creation by being fruitful and filling the earth. It is part of God's plan that sexuality as a gift constitutes the human person in a manner that is life-giving. The ultimate fruit of sexuality is the creation of human life through acts proper to a man and woman in marriage. With the creation of man and women in His own image and likeness, God crowns and brings to perfection the work of His hands. He calls them to a special sharing in His love and His power as creator and Father through their free and responsible cooperation in transmitting the gift of life. Revelation has illuminated the natural law in regard to the meaning of sexuality and the natural complementarity between man and woman which is fulfilled in marriage.

The Biblical Perspective on LGBTQ+

In the Bible, sexual promiscuity is regarded as deviating from God's prescribed path, as expressed by the prophet Micah: "You have already been told what is right and what Yahweh wants of you. Only this, to do what is right, to love loyalty and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). Through His Word, God intends for people to find wholeness and joy, as they were originally created. Sexual transgressions are regarded as a departure from the intended purpose of human beings as prescribed by God. **Fornication** for instance diminishes the dignity of the other person by objectifying them, thus failing to acknowledge their inherent value as beings created in

the image of God. **Adultery** undermines the sacredness of marital fidelity, which is intended to uphold and safeguard the sanctity of sexual expression within the institution of marriage. **Incest** is an act that involves seeking a connection with an individual who is too closely related, thereby lacking the necessary differentiation required for a legitimate relationship. **Bestiality** involves seeking a connection with an image that is significantly dissimilar to oneself. **Homosexuality** is perceived as a state of confusion, as it entails seeking emotional and physical connection with an individual who shares a similar gender identity. The lack of sufficient distinctiveness in this "other" prevents the realisation of the union that humanity was specifically designed for.

The Old Testament explicitly prohibits several forms of sexual misconduct, including same-sex relationships. Leviticus 18:22 explicitly prohibits same-sex sexual relations, stating that it is considered detestable. The biblical account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19:4-11 is commonly understood as a divine response to the severe moral depravity of the inhabitants. In the biblical account, when two angels arrived at Lot's residence in Sodom, they were confronted by a hostile mob that demanded the release of the strangers so that they could engage in intimate relations with them (Genesis 19:5). Some proponents of homosexuality argue that the men of Sodom



were simply interested in getting to know the strangers and verifying their identities. Lot's response to the crowd's demand contradicts this interpretation. Lot pleaded, "I beg you, my brothers, do not do such a wicked thing. Listen, I have two daughters who have not known any man. I am ready to send them out to you, to treat them as it pleases you" (Genesis 19:7-8). In this context, the verb "know" clearly signifies "to have intercourse with." Thus, the sin of the people of Sodom, as further reflected in the New Testament (Matthew 10:15; 2 Peter 2:6-9; Romans 1:24-28; 1 Timothy 1:10; 1 Corinthians 6:9), involved grave sexual immorality and unnatural sexual acts.

The Bible does not endorse any form of same-sex romantic relationship. The inherent design of human relationships is intended to function exclusively between men and women. Therefore, same-sex sexual relationships are viewed as an intrinsic evil and a distortion of God's plan. St. Paul, in his letter to the Romans,

states: *That is why God has abandoned them to degrading passions; why their women have turned from natural intercourse to unnatural practices, and why their men have given up natural intercourse to be consumed with passion for each other, men doing shameless things with men and receiving in themselves the appropriate penalty for their perversion (Romans 1:26-27).* Here, St. Paul unequivocally condemns homosexuality as sinful, referring to it as one of the most disgraceful pagan vices. St. Thomas Aquinas, a natural law theorist, argues that any sexual activity occurring outside the context of heterosexual marriage is morally unacceptable as it contravenes the principles of natural law. Homosexuality is considered to be contrary to natural law and in conflict with rationality. Furthermore, same-sex sexual encounters do not have the potential to result in procreation, thus rendering them morally objectionable. They deviate from the natural sexual pattern for the purpose of enhancing the species'

well-being. These behaviours are commonly referred to as "unnatural vices."

While Christian love is meant to be extended to all individuals, including those in the LGBTQ+ community, it is important to note that true love seeks to align with God's will. LGBTQ+ is an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and more. LGBTQ+ relationships are not considered consistent with God's will, and therefore, pursuing them is not viewed as a loving course of action. A great deal of pressure is being exerted by many sectors of society to accept LGBTQ+ conditions as though they were not disordered and to condone sexual perversions as an accepted alternative to marriage. Such pressure is brought to the Church and depicts the Church's teaching as erroneous, lacking understanding and even arbitrary. While the Church is subject to such unfounded criticism, it is the Church, which is striving to protect the true

dignity of a person as well as the good of society in general. Through the articulation of her teaching, founded on the natural law illuminated by revelation, the Church exercises true pastoral care for all persons by proclaiming the truth in love.

Today LGBTQ+ is paradoxically eating deep into the fabric and foundation of Christian marriage, thus destroying the objective and purpose of marriage and the behavior is irrational within the world to which it claims to belong. LGBTQ+ activists contend that people have the right to express their sexuality, personal identity and dignity in society. Therefore LGBTQ+ people should not be forced to compromise their identity and dignity. Denying them the right to be open about their identity is an attack on their self-image and dignity. It should be appropriate to object to such an argument of LGBTQ+ activities. It is ethically wrong to concede to such views, which are not based on "reason" but on Sentiments in favour of LGBTQ+.

Christian Marriage as Gift from God

The distinguishing feature that sets Christian Marriage apart from same-sex relationships lies in the concept of self-affirmation. In the context of heterosexual marriages, an individual reaches out to a distinctly different sexual counterpart, with the intention or tacit acknowledgement of the beauty, excellence, or worth of their partner. While

sexual intercourse is typically prompted by a strong desire for self-gratification, it is only when conducted within the framework of a God-intended, lifelong, and monogamous union that a genuine sexual merger or union occurs, rather than merely an extension of one's own sexual identity.

The essence of marriage resides in the volition of individuals and the mutual consent between a man and a woman to establish a lifelong partnership. Marriage is a facet of human activity, encompassing its inherent potentialities and responsibilities, which stem from the divine design of the Creator. Christian Marriage is a human endeavour as a man and a woman come together driven by love, companionship, and the hope of procreating and nurturing their offspring. Those who have engaged in this process, for better or worse, understand the profound impact that this union, procreation, and nurturing have on the fundamental well-being of humanity.

According to the Code of Canon Law, marriage is defined as the matrimonial covenant through which a man and a woman establish a lifelong commitment, intrinsically oriented toward the welfare of the spouses and the procreation and upbringing of children. This sacred covenant has been elevated to the status of a Sacrament between two baptized individuals by Christ the Lord (Cf Canon 1055§ 1). This canonical definition delineates the essential

characteristics of the institution of marriage.

In line with this perspective, the Church teaches that same-sex unions are considered intrinsically evil and characterized as seriously disordered sexual acts. Regardless of the motive behind these actions, intentionally engaging in sexual activities outside the context of conventional sexual relations fundamentally contradicts the purpose of the sexual faculty. Such actions do not align with the moral order governing human behaviour, and as a result, Christian marriage is compromised when Priests, Pastors, and other religious leaders endorse the LGBTQ+ culture.

From the viewpoint of the Body of Christ, the issue of LGBTQ+ individuals becomes significant. In an era marked by increasing sexual promiscuity, the crisis of LGBTQ+ acceptance is exacerbated by the institution of gay and lesbian blessing rites, which incorrectly equate same-sex unions with Christian marriage. In the New Testament, sacramental marriage is viewed as a manifestation of Christ's grace. Every sacrament represents a salvific event and a sign of divine grace. Christian marriage is seen as an outward sign of God's grace and a mutual gift of selves in return. It is, in essence, a grace-filled interaction through which couples express both their acceptance of God's precious gift and their gift of themselves in return. Christian marriage

thrives in an environment of harmony and growth between male and female, who are created in the image and likeness of God.

The Church categorizes same-sex unions as disordered, unnatural, and inherently evil. There are no moral or pastoral justifications for these practices, even if they are perceived as innate and unchangeable. These acts and practices undermine the fundamental principles of human sexuality and hinder the possibility of genuine love. This is because these unions have objectives that deviate from the inherent purpose of authentic marriage.

The Church firmly maintains that God created humans in His image, specifically as male and female, as stated in Genesis 1:26-27. Likewise, the Church acknowledges the inherent value of the human body, as mentioned in Genesis 1:31 and John 1:14. Additionally, we are reminded of the duty to honour and glorify God through the use of our physical bodies, as emphasized in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. As a God of order and design, God opposes the confusion of gender, as outlined in 1 Corinthians 11:14-15. While situations involving such confusion can be distressing and complex, individuals should be supported in living in accordance with their biological sex.

The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB) has expressed firm opposition to the recent ruling by Kenya's highest court concerning LGBTQ+ rights.

The Bishops are advocating for constitutional reforms to safeguard cultural and religious values. The bishops believe that the ruling was based on a mistaken interpretation of the constitutional right to freedom of association. Archbishop Muhatia argued that the ruling resulted from a misinterpretation of the clauses related to freedom of association in Article 36(1). Nonetheless, he contends that this ruling carries significant implications for the sanctity of marriage and family, which are core values protected by our Constitution. The bishops also called for a revision of the Republic of Kenya's constitution to uphold moral principles.

The Catholic Church, guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ and its Christian Tradition, holds a responsibility to uphold and educate on Christian values in relation to human sexuality. As a Universal Sacrament of salvation, the church maintains an inclusive attitude towards all people, but it does not endorse what it deems as perverted practices. LGBTQ+ individuals are seen as contrary to family values and, therefore, not considered protective of family rights. According to the church, these individuals require pastoral and societal rehabilitation where societal values are instilled and reintegrated into mainstream sexual attitudes. The church aims to actively support LGBTQ+ individuals in their journey towards becoming mature individuals in the eyes of God who renounce behaviours deemed disordered.

The LGBTQ+ situation is viewed as requiring emotional and rational adaptation, along with significant behavioural transformation and a symbolic departure from previous norms. The church emphasizes the need for genuine dialogue with individuals who identify as LGBTQ+. The dialogue should be firm, continuous, caring, humble, and loving, delving into the deeper needs and aspirations of individuals without leaving room for justifications.

At the Holy Family Minor Basilica Parish Counselling and emotional support are central to our pastoral care approach. The parish offers confidential counselling sessions to help individuals navigate the unique challenges they may face, whether related to self-acceptance, family dynamics, or the broader community. Our trained counsellors and pastoral staff are dedicated to providing a listening ear, offering guidance, and fostering a sense of belonging. LGBTQ+ individuals are encouraged to explore such assistance. Moreover, we offer catechesis and Bible study programs specifically designed to help such individuals discern the plan of God in their lives. These programs explore the rich teachings of the Catholic faith and encourage participants to embrace their identity as beloved children of God created in His own image and likeness and to uphold it in their lives.

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BUILDING A CHRIST-CENTERED ONLINE PRESENCE



By Vincent Otieno

From the beginning to the end, the Scriptures emphasize God's sovereign ownership over all that lies beneath the boundless expanse of the Heavens. As the Psalmist proclaims, 'The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein' (Psalms 24:1). God, in His boundless generosity, has endowed His creation with an abundance of wealth, and entrusted Christians with the sacred duty of being faithful stewards of these divine gifts.

In the parable of the shrewd manager (Luke 16:1-13), Jesus imparts a profound lesson: we are called to emulate the steward's far-sighted wisdom, looking ahead to the long term future and making judicious use of the time and talents we possess in the present. Jesus doesn't advocate an isolation from worldly wealth; rather, He encourages us to employ it strategically - to employ it for the purpose of forging genuine connections with others. In doing so, when our earthly riches eventually go, we will find ourselves

graciously received into the eternal dwellings.

Social media is a divine blessing, a rich instrument that has profoundly reshaped today's culture. It excels in expediting communication, forging global connections, and granting unfettered access to a wealth of knowledge. The internet and social media, when used correctly by Christians, become tools through which they can exemplify responsible stewardship of God's gifts. These digital realms, if approached with reverence and wisdom, can serve as conduits for the teachings and grace of Christ, thereby extending their sacred influence into the digital age.

There are instances when the unrighteous use of social media among Christians has brought harm than good. This article deep dives into the fatal traps of the unrighteous use of social media; traps for Christians to keep in mind and avoid. The Apostle Paul reminds us that we should not adjust to the culture around us that we fit into it without even thinking, for it might drag us down to its level of immaturity. 'Do not be conformed to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect' (Romans 12: 1-2).

The initial trap associated with social media is **its potential to divert our focus from spending precious time with God in prayer**. In today's world, Christians often find themselves, whether knowingly or unknowingly, drawn towards social media platforms even as they participate in the Holy Mass.

“Everything
done in secrecy
will be revealed
and brought into
the light”

1 Corinthians 7:35 extends an earnest invitation for us to direct our undistracted attention to the Lord.

Participating in Mass is a sacred act of worship that invites us to cultivate an unwavering devotion. Within this sacred space, we encounter an opportunity for spiritual growth, reflection, and communion with God. Yet, engaging in online distractions during Mass risks undermining these integral aspects of our spiritual journey.

Furthermore, being fully present and attentive during Mass is not just a personal endeavor but a testament to the respect we extend to our fellow worshippers. Such presence nurtures a collective atmosphere of reverence and strengthens the sense of community, underscoring the significance of shared spiritual

experiences.

The second is **the trap of secrecy**. Social media provides an ideal environment for secret activities. Within this secret realm, individuals may secretly nurture illicit relationships, which in turn can lead to the shattering of marriages and homes. Moreover, it can serve as an avenue for easy access to sexually immoral content especially for minors. The cloak of anonymity, employed to conceal one's true identity, can be misused to propagate hatred and malice.

Yet, we must not forget the teachings of Christ: 'Everything done in secrecy will be revealed and brought into the light' (Matthew 10:26). The trap of secrecy, when unchecked, has the potential to steer individuals away from the core values and principles of the Christian Faith, causing them to disregard the timeless teachings of the Bible."

Last, but not least is **the trap of coveting**—focusing on the pursuits of others rather than discerning the work of God in our own lives, where true satisfaction, joy, and fulfillment in Jesus can be found. Social media frequently showcases glimpses of people's lives, purportedly their finest moments and possessions. In this world of carefully presented images, it is all too easy for Christians to feel a sense of insufficiency as they measure their own lives against the online representations of others. Consequently, they may find themselves coveting the lifestyles, material

possessions, or relationships of their virtual peers.

It is crucial to remember that coveting is a sin, as established in Exodus 20:17. By turning away from the false impressions of social media and redirecting our focus towards God's work in our lives, we can cultivate contentment and a deeper appreciation for the unique path He has laid before us.

In conclusion, the way Christians engage with social media should bear a distinctiveness that sets them apart from those who do not follow Christ. They ought to view social media as a powerful instrument for discipleship and a means to manifest a living example of what it truly means to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Let us fervently pray for righteousness in our interactions with and understanding of social media, that through our actions, we may draw more individuals into the fold of Christ. When Christ resides at the center of our online presence, His influence should naturally radiate through every facet of our lives.

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Realization of the principals of the

Catholic Social Doctrine.

By. Simon Muiruri

The Catholic Justice and Peace Department (CJPD) is one of the departments that makes up the Commission of Integral and Promotion of Human development and is an executive arm of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB). The roots of this can be traced back in 1891 when Leo XIII wrote Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. Some people call it on the condition of workers while others refer it on the new things. This was a response to the dehumanizing conditions and treatments of workers in industries.

Based on the above, our department has two broad mandates of promoting justice and peace in the light of the Gospel and the social Teachings of the Church. Secondly to deepen the Social teachings of the church and make it known and applied by individuals and communities in the spirit of the true gospel. By the virtue of the above, CJPD has undertaken various activities in enhancing the teachings of the church. In this regard, the most relevant is seminars, workshops, print and electronic media shows which are in line with Article 10 of Kenyan constitution and this is National values and principles of governance.

In fulfillment of our mandate, we have implored clergy, religious, laity and people of good will to ensure realization of the catholic Social teachings and by doing so Kenyan church fulfils its pending universal church's obligation. This mostly and what this article will focus on is transformative civic education and the principle of participation.

Without prejudice, Kenya's history is replete with poor governance, abrogation of the rule of law and systemic injustices that has been attributed to the absence of transformative civic education. Through civic education and principle of participation, CJPD sought to



infuse Peoples participation as part of engaging with CJPD Members, religious and clergy and thus codified all together.

We define catholic Social Teaching as a body of teachings founded on Scripture and the ongoing reflection of the Church focused on how we as people of God ought to live together in a loving community. It is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. It brings out the fact that the Church has the right and duty to deal authoritatively with social, political and economic issues and problems that affect human beings. The Church's involvement in social matters is a consequence of her nature and mission as the shepherd and steward of souls in their journey to salvation. The social

teaching of the church is not a single document but different resourceful documents such as encyclicals, papal and episcopal letters etc. For many years spirituality was inward looking and did not look at the world as whole and this was by celebration of sacraments, liturgy and religious observances. Christians were not very concerned with social and political problems that are related to justice, peace and creation. With industrialization in the 19th Century concerns of poverty, forced labor and other issues of social injustices were seen.

The following are some the principles of catholic Social teachings: Dignity of Human person, Rights and responsibilities, Preferential Option of the Poor, participation, economic Justice, solidarity, subsidiary,

stewardships, common good and promotion of peace.

These principles are not exhaustive as they are bare minimum. Christians have not rightly noted, and applied them. The implication here is there is more work that CJPD needs to sensitize Christians on the same. The compendium of the social doctrine of the church set out to plant the seeds of these principles but left it open to Justice and Peace, religious, Priests while applying or implementing a policy whereas all have a duty to adhere to.

PARTICIPATION AS A PRINCIPLE OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHINGS:

The **principle of Participation** recognizes that everyone has a part to play in our communities.

Everyone Has a Part to Play

Promoting participation - means recognizing that we each have something unique and important to contribute to society. We are called on to be active members of our local and global communities.

As human beings we live in community with others, growing together. We are called to be active members of our local, national and global communities to improve the well-being of all people.

We have a responsibility to be inclusive in our churches, our workplaces, our neighborhoods and our decision-making processes. As communities we can

work creatively to provide opportunities for all people to participate. Participation is a duty to be fulfilled consciously by all, with responsibility and with a view to the common good...it becomes absolutely necessary to encourage participation above all of the most disadvantaged...'

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church (#189)

'...the Gospel tells us constantly to run the risk of a face-to-face encounter with others, with their physical presence which challenges us, with their pain and their pleas, with their joy which infects us in our close and continuous interaction. True faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others. The Son of God, by becoming flesh, summoned us to the revolution of tenderness.'

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, #88, 2013

'Each of us has a part to play, a gift to share, a service to offer, for building up the Body of Christ in love.'

Pope Francis, June 19, 2013

'Participation' is the voluntary and generous engagement of a person in social interchange. It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person.'

Catechism of the Catholic Church (paragraph 1913).

Smith in his impact Assessment and Sustainable Resource Management defined public Participation as one that encompasses a group of procedures designed to consult, involve and inform the public to allow those affected by a decision to have an input into that decision. There are other organizations like World Banks which have defined participation as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and the resources which affect them.

The above depict participation as relating closely to the administrative principles of consultation which demand public bodies consult parties to be affected by a decision to rule before making their final determination. In our engagements with CJPD Members we inform them that participation may take various forms and this is in the realm of social, political processes; administrative, judicial. This also involve elections, referenda, public hearings, inquiries, parliamentary representation of citizenry, public opinion surveys, citizen advisory committee, and focus group discussions among others.

Election:

2022 General Election was 7th since inception of multi-party democracy and third under the 2010 constitution. As a matter of fact this is the basic form of participation because it is through

this process that Kenyan directly influence policy and governance as elected officials or choose the representative who will articulate their views in, their relevant decision making bodies in Kenya. The representatives bodies in the political, executive and legislature.

Elections also facilitate th recruitment of representatives in economic, trade, labor and social welfare associations such as Saving and Credit Co-operatives Societies (SACCOS), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Merry – go- rounds, trade union, church groups as well as related friendly or incorporated associations. Without any prejudice elections address socio and political interest the direct and indirect participation.

In nut shell, CJPD will continue with its mandate of sensitizing, creating awareness and consciencetize individuals, groups and communities on the social Mission of the church. Of late we have noted public dissatisfaction and protests and they result in adverse ramification. It is wrong to ignore social ills that are happing in our society and we have a duty as a church to develop curriculum based in signs of times and well as social concern and help our people to live as brothers and sisters.

The writer is CJPD archdiocese of Nairobi coordinator

Calendar 2024

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
1 M The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God	1 T St Benedict Daswa	1 F St David	1 M Easter Monday	1 W St Joseph the Worker	1 S St Justin, Martyr
2 T Sts Basil the Great and Gregory	2 F Presentation of the Lord (F) L.H.P.	2 S St Simeon Stylites	2 T Easter Tuesday	2 T St Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor	2 CORPUS CHRISTI SUNDAY (S)
3 W The Most Holy Name of Jesus	3 S Sts Blaise, Bishop and Martyr, St. Ansgar, Bishop	3 3 rd SUNDAY OF LENT	3 W Easter Wednesday	3 F Sts Philip and James, Apostles (F)	3 M The Ugandan Martyrs (F) L.H.P.
4 T St Angela of Foligno	4 F St Casimir	4 F St Casimir	4 T Easter Thursday	4 S Sts Ada and Antonia	4 T St Clothilda (I)
5 F St Lawrence	5 S St Virgilio	5 S St Virgilio	5 F Easter Friday	5 6 th SUNDAY OF EASTER	5 W St Boniface, Bishop and Martyr (I)
6 S St Andrew Corsini	6 W St Agatha, Virgin and Martyr	6 W St Colette Boylet	5 S Easter Saturday	6 M St Dominic Savio	6 T The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church
7 THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD	7 T Sts Paul MM and Companions, Martyrs	7 T Sts Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs	7 2 nd SUNDAY OF EASTER (Divine Mercy)	8 W St Victor the Black	7 F Sacred Heart of Jesus
8 M Beata of the Lord	8 W St Richard	8 F St John of God, Religious	8 M St Waller	9 T Ascension of the Lord	8 S Immaculate Heart of B.V.M.
9 T St Adrian of Canterbury	8 T St Josephine Bakhita, Virgin	9 S St Frances of Rome, Religious	9 T Bl Thomas of Toledino	10 F St John of Avila	9 10 th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
10 W St Gregory of Nyassa	9 F St Apollonia	10 4 th SUNDAY OF LENT	10 W St Magdalene of Canossa	11 S St Ignatius of Loyola	10 M St Maurinus
11 T St Hygenius	10 S St Scholastica, Virgin	11 M St Constanine	11 T St Stanislaus	12 7 th SUNDAY OF EASTER	11 T St Barnabas, Apostle
12 F St Arcadius	11 6 th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	12 T St Innocent I	12 F St Zeno of Verona, Bishop	13 M Our Lady of Fatima	12 W St Onofrius
13 S St Hilary, Bishop and Doctor	12 M St Innocent	13 W St Roderick	13 S St Martin I, Pope and Martyr	14 T St Mathias, Apostle (F) L.H.P.	13 T St Anthony of Padua, Priest and Doctor
14 2 nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	13 T St Jordan	14 T St Malilda	14 3 rd SUNDAY OF EASTER	15 W St Isidore the Farmer	14 F St Eliseo
15 M St Paul the Hermit	14 W Ash Wednesday	15 F St Zacharia	15 M Blessed Caesar de Bus	16 T St Libadius	15 S St Orsibus
16 T St Marcel	15 T St Faustine	16 S St Eusebia	16 T St Bernarda Soubirous	17 F St Pascal Babylon	16 11 th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
17 W St Anthony Abbot	16 F Bl Joseph Allamano	17 5 th SUNDAY OF LENT	17 W St Zeno of Verona, Bishop	18 S St John I Pope and Martyr	17 M St Helena
18 T St Pricca	17 S Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order, Religious	18 M St Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop and Doctor of the Church	18 T St Martin I, Pope and Martyr	19 PENTECOST SUNDAY (S)	18 T St Gregory Barbarigo
19 F St Pontian	18 1 st SUNDAY OF LENT	19 T St Joseph Spouse of the B.V.M. (S)	19 F St Lambertus	20 M Our Lady Mother of the Church and Companions, Martyrs(III)	19 W St Romuald, Abbot
20 S Bl Cyprian Michael Tansi, Priest	19 M St Marcellus	20 W St Claudia	20 S St Marcellinus, Bishop	22 W St Rita of Cascia, Religious	20 T Our Lady of Consolata
21 3 rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	20 T St Jacinta and Francisco Marto	21 T St Nicolas	21 4 th SUNDAY OF EASTER	23 T St Desiderius	21 F St Abysus Gonzaga, Religious
22 M St Vincent, Deacon and Martyr	21 W St Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor	22 F St Lea	22 M St Leonida	24 F The Blessed Virgin Mary, Help of Christians	22 S St John Fisher, Bishop and Thomas More, Martyrs
23 T St Emerentiana	22 T The Chair of St Peter, Apostle and Doctor	23 S St Lea	23 T St George, Martyr	25 S Sts Bebe the Venerable, Priest and Doctor, Gregory VII, Pope and Magdalene de Pazzi, Virgin	23 12 th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
24 W St Francis de Sales Bishop and Doctor	23 F St Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr	24 PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD	24 W St Francis, Priest and Martyr	26 THE MOST HOLY TRINITY (S)	24 M The Nativity of St John the Baptist (S)
25 T Conversion of St Paul (F)	24 S St Sergius	25 M Holy Monday	25 T St Mark, Evangelist (F)	27 M St Augustine of Canterbury Bishop	25 T St William of Montevergine (IV)
26 F Sts Timothy and Titus, Bishops	25 2 nd SUNDAY OF LENT	26 T Holy Tuesday	26 F St Cletus	28 T Sts Emilius and Ignatius	26 W St Josemaria Escriva
27 S St Angela Merici, Virgin	26 M St Alexander of Alexandria	27 W Holy Wednesday	27 S St Zita	29 W St Paul VI, Pope	27 T St Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop and Doctor
28 4 th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	27 T St Gregory of Narek, Abbot and Doctor	28 T Holy Thursday	28 5 th SUNDAY OF EASTER	30 T St Joan of Arc	28 F St Irenaeus, Bishop and Martyr
29 M Sts Pius and Maurinus	28 T St Gregory of Narek, Abbot and Doctor	29 F Good Friday	29 M St Catherine of Siena	31 F Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, (F)	29 S Sts Peter and Paul, Apostles (S)
30 T St Martha	28 W St Oswald	30 S Holy Saturday	30 T Our Lady, Mother of Africa (F)		30 13 th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
31 W St John Bosco Priest	29 T St Eve	31 EASTER SUNDAY			

Easter Time

Ordinary Time

Paschal Triduum

Lent

Christmas Time

Ordinary Time

JULY

Ordinary Time

- 1 M Bl Anthony Rosmini
- 2 T St Martinian
- 3 W St Thomas, Apostle (F) L.H.P.
- 4 T St Elizabeth of Portugal
- 5 F St Anthony Zaccaria, Priest
- 6 S St Maria Goretti, Virgin and Martyr
- 7 16th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 8 M St Aquila and Prisca
- 9 T St Augustine Zhao Rong, Priest and Companions, Martyrs
- 10 W St Veronica
- 11 T St Benedict, Abbot
- 12 F St Fortunatus
- 13 S St Henry
- 14 18th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 15 M St Bonaventure, Bishop and Doctor
- 16 T Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- 17 W St Marcelina
- 18 T St Frederick
- 19 F St Macrina
- 20 S St Apollinaris, Bishop and Martyr
- 21 18th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 22 M St Mary Magdalen L.H.P.
- 23 T St Bridget of Sweden, religious
- 24 W St Sharbel Makhluf, Priest
- 25 T St James, Apostle (F)
- 26 F Ss Joachim and Anne, Parents of the B.V.M.
- 27 S St Natalia
- 28 17th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 29 M Ss Martha, Mary and Lazarus L.H.P.
- 30 T Ss Justin, Jacobus, Bishop and Peter Chrysologus, Bishop and Doctor
- 31 W St Ignatius of Loyola, Priest

AUGUST

Ordinary Time

- 1 T St Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop and Doctor
- 2 F Ss Eusebius of Vercelli, Bishop and Peter Julian Eymard, Priest
- 3 S St Lydia
- 4 18th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 5 M Dedication of Basilica of St Mary Major
- 6 T The Transfiguration of the Lord (F)
- 7 W Ss Sixtus II, Pope and Companions Cajetan, Priest
- 8 T St Dominic, Priest
- 9 F St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Virgin and Martyr
- 10 S St Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr (F) L.H.P.
- 11 19th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 12 M Blessed Isidore Bakarija, Martyr
- 13 T Ss Pontian, Pope and Hippolytus, Priest, Martyrs
- 14 W St Maximilian Kolbe, Priest and Martyr
- 15 T Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary (S)
- 16 F St Stephen of Hungary
- 17 S St Hyacinth
- 18 20th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 19 M St John Eudes, Priest
- 20 T St Bernard, Abbot and Doctor
- 21 W St Pius X, Pope
- 22 T The Queenship of B.V.M.
- 23 F St Rose of Lima, Virgin
- 24 S St Bartholomew, Apostle (F) L.H.P.
- 25 21st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 26 M St Alexander
- 27 T St Monica
- 28 W St Augustine, Bishop and Doctor
- 29 T The Passion of St John the Baptist
- 30 F St Felice
- 31 S St Aristobé

SEPTEMBER

Ordinary Time

- 1 22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 2 M St Elpidius
- 3 T St Gregory the Great, Pope and Doctor
- 4 W St Rosalia
- 5 T St Teresa of Calcutta
- 6 F St Zachariah
- 7 S St Regina
- 8 23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 9 M St Peter Claver, Priest
- 10 T St Nicholas of Tolentino
- 11 W Ss Protus and Giacinto
- 12 T The Most Holy Name of Mary
- 13 F St John Chrysostom, Bishop and Doctor
- 14 S The Exaltation of the Cross (F) L.H.P.
- 15 24th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 16 M Ss Cornelius Pope and Cyprian, Bishop Martyrs
- 17 T St Hildegard of Bingen, Virgin and Doctor
- 18 W St Joseph Cupertino
- 19 T St Januarius, Bishop and Martyr
- 20 F Ss Andrew Kim Taegón and Companions, Martyrs
- 21 S St Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist (F) L.H.P.
- 22 25th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 23 M St Plus of Pietrascina, Priest
- 24 T St Paschius
- 25 W St Aurelia
- 26 T Ss Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs
- 27 F St Vincent de Paul, Priest
- 28 S Ss Veronias, Martyr, Lawrence Ruiz and Companions, Martyrs
- 29 26th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 30 M St Jerome Priest and Doctor

OCTOBER

Ordinary Time

- 1 T St Theresa of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor
- 2 W The Holy Guardian Angels L.H.P.
- 3 T St Candidus
- 4 F St Francis of Assisi, Religious
- 5 S St Faustina Kowalska
- 6 27th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 7 M Our Lady of the Rosary
- 8 T Ss Felix, Sergius and Hugo
- 9 W Ss Denis, Bishop and Companions, Martyrs and John Leonard, Priest
- 10 T St Daniel Comboni, Bishop
- 11 F St John XXIII, Pope
- 12 S St Wilfred
- 13 28th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 14 M St Callistus I, Pope an Martyr
- 15 T St Teresa of Avila, Vrgn
- 16 W Ss Hedwig, Religious and Margaret Mary Alacoque, Virgin
- 17 T St Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop and Martyr
- 18 F St Luke, Evangelist
- 19 S Ss John de Brebeuf, Isaac Jogues, Priests and Companions and Paul of the Cross, Priest
- 20 29th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 21 M St Ursula
- 22 T St John Paul II, Pope
- 23 W St John of Capistrano, Priest
- 24 T St Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop
- 25 F St Crispino
- 26 S St Evaristus
- 27 30th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 28 M Ss Simon and Jude, Apostles (F) L.H.P.
- 29 T St Hermelinde
- 30 W St Gerald
- 31 T Bl Irene Stefani (Nyaaitha)

NOVEMBER

Ordinary Time

- 1 F All Saints (S) L.H.P.
- 2 S All Souls Day L.H.P.
- 3 31st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 4 M St Charles Borromeo, Bishop
- 5 T Ss Elizabeth and Zechariah
- 6 W All Saints of Africa
- 7 T St Ernest
- 8 F Saints of Wales
- 9 S The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica (F) L.H.P.
- 10 32nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 11 M St Martin of Tours Bishop
- 12 T St Josephat, Bishop and Martyr
- 13 W Ss Arcadius and Companions
- 14 T St Serapion
- 15 F St Albert the great, Bishop and Doctor
- 16 S Ss Margaret of Scotland and Gertrude, Virgin
- 17 33rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
- 18 M The Dedication of Basilica of Ss Peter and Paul Apostles
- 19 T St Abdia
- 20 W St Edmund
- 21 T Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 22 F St Cecilia, Virgin and Martyr
- 23 S Ss Clement I, Pope and Martyr and Columban, Abbot
- 24 OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE
- 25 M St Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin and Martyr
- 26 T Bl James Alberione
- 27 W St Virgil
- 28 T St Valerian
- 29 F St Catherine of Egypt
- 30 S St Andrew, Apostle (F)

DECEMBER

Advent

- 1 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT
- 2 M St Bibiana
- 3 T St Francis Xavier, Priest
- 4 W St John Damascene, Priest and Doctor
- 5 T St Dalmatius, Bishop
- 6 F St Nicholas, Bishop
- 7 S St Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor
- 8 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT
- 9 M Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M.
- 10 T B.V. Mary of Loreto
- 11 W St Damasus I, Pope
- 12 T Our Lady of Guadalupe
- 13 F St Lucy Virgin and Martyr
- 14 S St John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor
- 15 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT
- 16 M St Adelaide
- 17 T St Lazarus
- 18 W St Irmina
- 19 T St Anastasius
- 20 F St Dominic and Bl Subtilion
- 21 S St Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor
- 22 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT
- 23 M St John of Kanty, Priest
- 24 T St Adela
- 25 W The Nativity of the Lord (S) L.H.P.
- 26 T St Stephen, The First Martyr (F)
- 27 F St John, Apostle and Evangelist (F)
- 28 S The Holy Innocents, Martyrs (F)
- 29 THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH
- 30 M St Eugene
- 31 T St Sylvester I Pope

Christmas Time



JOURNEY TOGETHER AS A RECONCILED FAMILY

A Call To Unity And Peace In Kenya

By Peter Mwangi

An Insightful Message by Bishop Alfred Rotich During the National Prayer Day

On October 7, 2023, thousands of Catholic faithful gathered at the Subukia National Shrine for the National Prayer Day. The Mass animated by the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Nairobi, was led by Archbishop Philip Anyolo and concelebrated by numerous Archbishops and Bishops.

The theme for this year's National Prayer Day was "Journeying together as a reconciled Family." In his homily, Bishop Rotich of Kericho Diocese delivered a powerful message, calling on Christians to prioritize unity and shun tribalism, emphasizing the importance of a united country before, during, and after elections.

Bishop Rotich also reminded Christians of their role in building a just and equitable society. He urged them to be compassionate and caring towards the poor and marginalized, and to work for peace and justice in their communities.

The National Prayer Day is an annual event that brings together Catholics from all over Kenya to pray for peace, unity, and reconciliation. It is a time for Christians to come together and renew their commitment to their faith and to their country.

Subukia A Place of Refuge For All People

The history of the Subukia Marian Shrine in Kenya dates back to 1980. In that year, Pope John Paul II tasked the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops to come up with a national prayer site. After a lengthy discernment process,

the bishops chose a 200-acre piece of land in Subukia, Nakuru County.

The shrine was officially opened in 1984 by Cardinal Maurice Otunga. Since then, it has become a popular pilgrimage destination for people of all faiths from all over Kenya and the world. It has become a place of peace, prayer, and healing for people of all faiths.

The shrine is home to several features, including a church, a grotto of Our Lady of Subukia, a Way of the Cross, and a spring of miraculous water. Pilgrims come to the shrine to pray, to receive spiritual guidance, and to experience the healing power of the spring water.

The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB) organises national prayers every year. The next prayer day will be celebrated on 5th October 2024.

A Call to Reconciliation

Bishop Rotich began his address by recalling the historical context of reconciliation in Kenya. He highlighted the enduring effects of colonialism, which sowed the seeds of tribal discord. The colonial divide-and-rule strategy left a deep mark on the nation, and these divisions persist to this day. Bishop Rotich called on Kenyans to acknowledge this history and move forward by learning from past injustices, rather than perpetuating them.

The introduction of multiparty politics also presented a challenge to reconciliation. Bishop Rotich explained how, although it aimed at democratization, it often aligned itself with tribal affiliations, exacerbating divisions. The politics of exclusion further heightened resentment among various groups, contributing to Kenya's ongoing struggle for reconciliation.

Corruption, a pervasive issue in Kenya, was another major obstacle to unity and reconciliation. Bishop Rotich emphasized that the erosion of moral values and the culture of corruption are deeply intertwined. This culture has eroded public trust in government institutions and services and driven some individuals to engage in corrupt practices. The result is a moral crisis that threatens to undermine genuine reconciliation and unity.

Rekindling a National Identity

Bishop Rotich underscored the importance of embracing Kenya's rich tribal diversity as a

source of strength rather than division. He encouraged the celebration of this diversity as a way to build a cohesive national identity. In doing so, Kenya could begin to heal its wounds and mend the divisions that have persisted for too long.

To address these challenges and move toward reconciliation, Bishop Rotich offered three concrete proposals:

Proposal 1: A Credible Team of Elders

Bishop Rotich proposed forming a credible team of respected elders from diverse backgrounds across the country. These elders would address grassroots conflicts, cross-border tensions, and issues like cattle rustling, using their wisdom and experience to foster reconciliation.

Proposal 2: Reconciliation Committees

He suggested forming reconciliation committees at the local level, beginning within Christian communities. These committees, coordinated by the local diocese, would identify divisive issues and work to resolve them. They would share their findings and approaches with a national reconciliation committee, helping to create a common reconciliation framework.

Proposal 3: Guided by Values and Principles

Bishop Rotich emphasized that the reconciliation process should be guided by values and principles such as truth-telling, humility, empathy, and active listening. He stressed the importance of acknowledging historical injustices and

embracing the truth to free Kenya from its past divisions.

Looking into The Future with Hope

In his address during the National Prayer Day, Bishop Alfred Rotich provided a roadmap for Kenya's journey toward reconciliation and unity. He spoke of the need to address historical grievances, the challenges of tribalism, political divisions, and corruption. He emphasized the role of reconciliation as a crucial element in healing the nation's wounds and fostering unity among its diverse population.

As Kenya moves forward, the words of Bishop Rotich serve as a beacon of hope and a call to action. The path to reconciliation is not an individual journey but a collective one, and it requires the commitment of every Kenyan. The road ahead may be challenging, but it is through unity, understanding, and reconciliation that Kenya can truly become a reconciled family, bound together by the values of truth, humility, and empathy. Through the intercession of the Holy Mother of God, may our Lord Jesus Christ grant us the grace of a lasting harmony and peace in Kenya.

National Prayer Day (2023, October, 7). Subukia National Shrine. Retrieved from

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdlkRR9cLEo&pp=ygUb_bmF0aW9uYWwgchHJheWVylGRheSBzdWJ1a2lh

The writer is the Vice Secretary, Saint Simon Peter SCC, HFMB



The God of Providence in Adversity and Bad Times

By Bernard Linus Owuor

Every time I walk to the Basilica and look at The Rectory (The Priest's House), I feel very inspired and encouraged. Does it have the same effect on you?

We live in times when phrases like "Tumerambwa" and "kubali matokeo maisha iendelee" are too common, not only in the secular world but also among believers. Many people are expressing frustration that life is hard and economic times are unbearable. The cost of living is too high, with prices of basic commodities, including foodstuff and fuel, beyond reach. As a result of these challenges, it has been confirmed that mental illness is on the rise, drug abuse is rapidly increasing, and many young men are postponing marriage due to fear of

additional responsibilities, just to mention a few cases.

These are common conversations in almost all public gatherings, depicting a very dark and hopeless future. Consequently, after passively participating in one such conversation, we engaged in a discussion with some Christians about this kind of life and the place of God in it. The question then was whether God is aware, and if so, what is He doing to alleviate the sufferings of His people, given His all-powerful nature and ownership of silver and gold.

It was amazing to note that people firmly rooted in faith and participating fully in the Eucharistic celebration could share such divergent views. On one hand was a group convicted that indeed the suffering is too much, and God has abandoned His people

because of their enhanced sinful nature. This group perceived their challenges as a punishment from God for disobedience and for drifting away from His plans. On the contrary, the opposing team believed that this was a season of preparation for a future great plan that God has for His people and that it will come to pass, giving way to better days. The great part was that both still kept their trust in God.

As I went home that day, my attention was drawn to a biblical passage where the Israelites encountered a similar situation and, in fact, concluded that God had abandoned them and no longer cared for them. **Isaiah 49:14-16-14 But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me." 15 Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of**

her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you. 16 See, upon the palms of my hands, I have written your name; your walls are ever before me.

This passage is preceded by a prophetic message of a better future for the Israelites who were at that point in time in exile, wondering why God would make such promises to a people in captivity. A people in pain and suffering, like Kenyans depict their own back home.

It can be concluded that these issues are pointing to one major thing: a faith that is under serious test to affirm the depth of our disposition and trust in God. What is the status of your faith, beloved of God?

These situations notwithstanding, it is equally factual to state that many are the great things and works God has done in our midst and lives. The mere fact that we are alive today and the Covid-19 pandemic is behind us is one such outstanding example. None of those alive today paid for it, and neither is it so because they are better in faith than those who passed on then. Equally, the Rectory standing tall at the ground of Holy Family Minor Basilica is a permanent reminder of God's providence in times of adversity.

The Rectory, as we know it, was built in the midst of tougher times and with Covid-19 pandemic disruptions, which resulted in most parishioners losing their livelihoods and

sources of income. It is, therefore, hard to explain how the church pulled through with such a mega project in those times without God's input. Divine intervention was clearly visible and in play. It, therefore, symbolizes God at work in hard and bad times.

It can, therefore, be authoritatively said that every Christian and parishioner looking deeply at their lives can surely affirm one major thing that God has done in their lives despite the many challenges. As a parish, we can celebrate the rebirth of the church as a manifestation of God's faithfulness. The active participation by the various groups within the church in the Subukia National Prayer day in October this year and the reawakening of the Small Christian communities post Covid-19 can be cited as clear examples of the hope that God can still change the current situation. The fact that the church has the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confessions) every day and growth in the sacrament of Holy Matrimony, the Holy order of ordination, Baptism, and Confirmation reminds us that the church remains alive. These were sacred activities that could not be imagined during the Covid-19 pandemic period, which saw a lockdown on churches and numerous restrictions. Do you remember those days, beloved of God?

While by our very nature as human beings, we tend to question happenings in our lives beyond our comprehension,

it doesn't negate the fact that God is faithful and remains our sole source of life and fountain of our providence. This is affirmed by the biblical passage in **Job 42:1-5, commonly referred to as the conclusion of the matter. 1"Then Job answered the Lord and said, 2 I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be hindered. 3 I have dealt with great things that I do not understand. Things too wonderful for me, which I cannot know. 5 I had heard of you by word of mouth, but now my eyes have seen you.**

The above passage comes towards the end of Job's suffering and was, in fact, his celebration as he bore witness to God's intervention in his long but painful suffering. Job's words herein are, therefore, an encouragement to the masses who are losing hope and faith fast because of the challenges mentioned at the beginning of this write-up. Just like Job faced many challenges in his life, the end was a confirmation that His redeemer indeed lives. Job testified in person of what God had done in His life and the many blessings He received to the point of confessing that his eyes had indeed seen the Lord's doing. These words are comforting and provide a ray of hope for the beautiful future that awaits us. Our situation will surely and certainly change. So keep the faith; hope is around the corner.

Just like the Liturgical year of the church, which has different seasons beginning with



Pictures of Cynthia Okanga with her husband Daniel Otieno and Preciding Priest and other priests on 18th November 2023

Advent, Christmas, Ordinary times, Lenten Season, Easter season, and the Ordinary times, so is our lives. There is a season for everything: a season for joy and merriness, sadness and mourning, preparation, a season for testing, and many more. One thing is for sure: they all come to pass. As believers, we should remain optimistic in life, knowing very well that there is no Good Friday without an Easter Sunday; the resurrection is around the corner. Better days lie ahead, and we should endeavor to encounter them.

As we come to the end of the year, we are encouraged by one great event that can be cited to encourage the many young men and women who have lost hope in ever marrying or getting married. One Cynthia Kanga Oloo is a middle-aged parishioner and a member of The Catholic Women Association (CWA), The Lector

Society, and St. Augustine Small Christian Community. She has been praying for a suitor for many years, and not many ever believed that she would find one at her age. It is common knowledge, and society holds that once one, especially a lady, gets to a certain age, then marriage doors get shut.

Contrary to this position, Cynthia Kanga Oloo did find a suitor and wedded the love of her life on Saturday, 18th November 2023, in a colorful celebration. In fact, the weather remained clear and lovely despite the wedding having been held in very rainy and unpredictable weather. Those in attendance from the CWA, the Lector Society, St. Augustine, and other parishioners attested to the fact that God had come through for her and can also for anyone who believes in Him.

Dear Parishioner, it is indeed true that I do not know

your situation and a fact that I may not understand your circumstances, but can authoritatively say this: nothing is too hard for God. Nothing is indeed impossible with Him, and this includes yours.

As you come to the Basilica every so often and look at the Rectory (The Priest's House as you call it) and recall the account of how and when it was built, ask yourself if your situation is bigger than it. Then pose to answer this question which I conclude with.....

Jeremiah 32:26 Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah. 27 I am the Lord, the God of all mankind, is anything too hard for me?

May God inspire you to respond like the prophet Jeremiah, as per **Jeremiah 32:17, "Ah sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.**

May God hear and awaken a new season in you and meet all of you, beloved parishioners, at your very points of need. *'Jipeni moyo Bwana yuko nanyi and remember that pain may last a night, but joy comes in the morning, and behold your morning is nay.*

Good morning, friend!

The writer is the Moderator of Basilica Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), Moderator of Central Deanery Pastoral Council (CDPC), and moderator of Magnificat Basilica Choir.

YOUTH BOARD

TRANSITION IS A CRUCIAL ASPECT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



Transition is a crucial aspect of human development. It allows the youth to grow and assume responsibilities in line with their age sets/age group. While transitioning from one group to another may be easy for some youth, others find it challenging. It is for this reason, the Archdiocese of Nairobi guides the Youth Ministry and the Clergy on how to prepare candidates for transitioning. As per the guidelines, the Archdiocese recommends three seminars prior to the commissioning ceremony. During these seminars, the youths are engaged in open forums on transition while receiving orientation for the advanced group. The Youths are encouraged to share their fears and concerns during the sessions. The animators and Clergy also meet members of the different Youth groups and offer talks on ways to accommodate the new members.

At Holy Family Minor Basilica, The Youth Board organizes and coordinates the transition process and commissioning of Youth guided by the Archdiocesan commissioning rites. This takes place every year on the Epiphany Sunday and after the comprehensive transition seminars.

We acknowledge the outstanding work done by the previous board in ensuring the transitional framework is fully implemented at Holy Family Minor Basilica. To ensure continuity and seamless transition, the current Youth Board for the 2023-2026 cycle borrows heavily from the previous board in terms of organizational structure and operations. This year, we are planning similar activities as stated above. In addition, we intend to make the celebrations colourful and later on host a luncheon where graduating members will be welcomed to the advanced group and given an opportunity to choose a mentor. Periodic follow ups will

be done to ensure members settle in and perform in the respective groups.

The Parish Administrator challenged the board to grow the numbers of the youth at all levels, even as it seeks to ensure the existing ones are actively engaged and attended to. The Youth Board does this through the four pillars of Formation which are Spiritual growth, social and community development, financial growth and sustainability and talent and career development. Under the guiding verse Matthew 19:14 "Let the Children Come to me" and the leadership of the Youth Chaplain Rev. Fr. Simon Mwangi, The Youth Board is currently working and executing programmes which will ensure it effectively delivers its mandate. More details on these activities will be made available to Christians from time to time through the Church's official communications channels.

The writer is the Youth Board Moderator

Pontifical Missionary Childhood



My name is **Tamara Irungu**, I am 8 years old. In PMC we are taught about our Catholic faith how to pray and recite the Rosary, recently we started learning how to play music instruments like trumpet and others. PMC. has helped me grow spiritually knowing God and God's word. I have been to various places like Resurrection Garden and Consolata Shrine with other children. In PMC we help other needy children like orphans through charity work, do several activities like drama, Mass animation, recollection and many more. Parents PMC is a good place for all children of ages 0-14 years.

Tamara is in Grade 2 at Our Lady of Good Counsel School, Athi River.

My name is **Charlene Clara Odima**, I am **12 years old**. PMC has really helped me to know God and grow more in faith. In P.M.C we help the needy as one of the precepts of the church.



Every year the Central Deanery provides a Charity tin to raise money for the poor. The money collected is used to support children from poor background. We also participate in charity work such as visiting children's homes; donating clothes and feeding the poor. During our PMC meetings, we learn how to spread the word of God. We also take part in events such as bible Trivia. **I love and enjoy being a PMC member**

Charlene is in Grade 7 at St. Teresah Preparatory school in Kiambu.

My name is **Amani Nelima Mwangi**. I am **8 years old** and a **PMC** member. We do a lot of activities like dancing, reading, band practice and taking part in Bible trivia. Band practice normally takes place on Saturday from ten in the morning to one in the afternoon. At band practice, I enjoy playing the trumpet. We also go engage in Bible trivia on Saturdays or during



holidays. I enjoy saying memory verses, dancing and playing with other children from other parishes.

On Sundays, we go to Sunday school where we usually attend Mass. Sometimes we go to the main church for mass and after Mass we go for classes. During Mass, I enjoy dancing, taking part in the readings, especially responsorial psalm and prayers of the faithful. I really enjoy being in PMC.

Amani is in Grade 2 at Catholic Parochial School

TEN GOLDEN RULES FOR MISSIONARY CHILDREN

My name is **Ryan Mburu**. I am **9 years old**. As PMC we have ten golden rules that are guiding us as children of God, and how to live with others by showing them love and help them especially those who are needy.

1. A missionary child knows Jesus, loves what Jesus tells him and he or she is not ashamed to speak about Jesus



9. A missionary child looks for every way to do works of charity for others. For example visiting the sick, orphans and helping the needy on the streets.
10. We should always think well of others.

Ryan is in Grade 5 at Holy Family Parochial school

2. A missionary child recognizes and sees every human person as brother or sister. Let's love one another as God loved us.
3. As a missionary children ,we should always pray for all the children in the world for God to bless them and them to know our mother Mary.
4. As children of God we should always use magic words to request anything and be thankful when you receive.
5. As a PMC child always be happy when you give someone something and whenever you receive a gift be grateful always.
6. As missionary children our motto is children helping children so we should be happy in our apostolate.
7. A missionary child knows that human life is precious and sacred and should be respected. Let us all respect one another and love all.
8. A missionary child knows how to make sacrifices even if it is hard. Like helping other children who don't have.

TEN COMMANDMENTS

My name is **Leo Alega Audi. I am 9 years old.** I am going to share with you how the 10 commandments benefit the children.



God gave Moses the Ten Commandments so that we observe and keep holy. As PMC children we are supposed to obey the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments have benefit in our life as PMC children.

1. We are able to know we have only one God no other gods.
2. We as PMC children should not misuse the name of the Lord.
3. We should always keep the commandments of our Lord.

4. We should obey our parents and respect them.
5. PMC children should not steal from their friends.

And above all as PMC children, let us love one another as God loves us.

Leo is in Grade 4 at St John Eudes waridi School

The Amazing World of Pontifical Missionary Childhood

Hey, everyone! My name is **Nathan Alutseshe I am 11 years old.** Today I'm going to tell you all about something super cool called Pontifical Missionary Childhood (PMC)!? It's this super cool group that was started way back in 1843 by a French Bishop named Charles De Forbin-Janson. That's over 175 years ago!



The PMC is all about kids helping other kids. Their motto is "children helping children," and I'm here to tell you a little bit about its history and the fun activities we do.

PMC was started for children to help the less fortunate and to grow spiritually. It's all about following in the footsteps of Jesus, who said, "Let the little children come to me. Do not chase them away, for such

are for the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16). So, we're like little disciples of Jesus!

One of the best things about PMC is that we're not just kids who meet up and talk about being good Christians. We do stuff! We help those in need. It makes us really happy when we can put smiles on other people's faces.

We have other events too. We have charity events where we raise money for people who are less fortunate. We also have special times where we pray together, and we even meet up with other PMC kids in our Diocese. It's amazing how kids can make a big difference in the world. I'm so glad I joined PMC when I was really young.

You know, I used to find praying the rosary a bit hard, but after joining PMC, it became much easier. We also learn other prayers like Hail Mary, Glory Be, and The Lord's Prayer. Learning all these prayers makes me feel closer to God.

Another fun thing we do is celebrating birthdays. At the end of each month, we gather to celebrate the birthdays of all the kids born that month. It's a fantastic way to get to know each other better and build friendships. It's like having a huge birthday bash with all your friends!

Every Sunday, we have a special PMC mass, where all the PMC kids and other children come together to worship God. The priest

who leads the mass is always interesting and engaging, and it's a great way to connect with our faith. It's like a big family get-together with lots of singing and good feelings!

PMC is like a big, welcoming family. We accept all children, and it's an amazing place to meet new friends. We learn to be good Christians and make a difference in our community. It's a super cool group, and I'm proud to be a part of it. So, if you ever get a chance to join PMC, don't miss it. You won't regret it!

Nathan is in Grade 5 at Hospital Hill School

My name is **Luigi Gabris Leon I'm 8yrs old.** I am a missionary child who belongs to the PMC. At PMC we have our teachers who teach us many things like how to love Jesus Christ, how to pray, how to participate in church, how to help other needy children.



I'm happy I now know how to pray the rosary, to be generous, to share with my friends and to always say the truth.

I know how to say the prayers of the faithful in church, I

can sing during mass and participate in liturgical dance. I can also play some church instruments, I can read the bible. My teachers also teach us how to be true missionaries. I am happy to be a PMC member.

Luigi is in Grade 2 at Mount Larvena School

LEARNING CORNER

HELP SOMEONE LEARN BOOKS OF THE BIBLE!

By David Ngula Musee

"I went to Genesis hotels through Exodus road. On the way, I saw Leviticus recording the Numbers of people at Deuteronomy, while Joshua was waiting at the Beautiful gate for Judges to see Ruth calling loudly "Samuel, Samuel".



At a stage, the first and second Kings of Chronicles were coming to visit Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther for the misfortune of Job their brother. They started singing Psalms and teaching children Proverbs concerning Ecclesiastes and Songs of Solomon. This coincided with the period that Isaiah was engaged in

Pontifical Missionary Childhood

Jeremiah's Lamentations together with Ezekiel and Daniel their friend. By that time Amos and Obadiah were not around. Three days later, Hosea, Joel and Jonah traveled in the same ship with Micah and Nahum to Jerusalem. Habakkuk then visited Zephaniah who introduced him to Haggai a friend of Zechariah whose cousin is Malachi. Immediately after the tradition, Mathew, Mark, Luke and John got involved in Acts of the Romans who were behaving like the 1st Corinthians group because the 2nd Corinthians group were always at loggerheads with the Galatians in Ephesians. At that time too, they realized that the Philippians were close to the Colossians, suggested the first Thessalonians visit and that on their second Thessalonians visit they should first of all see the first and second of Timothy brothers who had gone to the house of Titus to teach Philemon his younger brother how to read and write in Hebrew. On hearing this, James asked Peter twice to explain to him how the three Johns have disclosed to Jude the Revelations of this journey. **David is a PMC member. He is 13 years old in Grade 7 at Kidfarmaco Primary & Junior Secondary...**



"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Mt 19:14)

By Rev. Sr. Christabel

INTRODUCTION

Pontifical Missionary Childhood (PMC) is an international Catholic organization that works to promote the spiritual and material well-being of children around the world. It was founded in 1843 by Bishop Charles De Forbin Janson and is now part of the Pontifical Mission Societies, which is a network of Catholic organizations that work to spread the Gospel and promote the spiritual and material well-being of people in need.

PMC works to provide spiritual and material assistance to children in need, especially those living in poverty. It does this through a variety of programs, such as providing food, clothing, and medical care to children in need, as well as providing educational opportunities and spiritual formation. PMC also works to promote the rights of children and to protect them from exploitation and abuse.

In today's rapidly changing world instilling values of empathy,

compassion and global citizenship in children is of utmost importance. One initiative that promotes these values is the Pontifical Missionary Childhood (PMC) Program. This program provides a unique opportunity for children to become actively involved in helping others through prayer, sacrifice and financial support. Crucial to the success of this program is the active involvement of parents who play a vital role in nurturing their children's missionary spirit. In this article we will explore the benefits of Pontifical Missionary Childhood and the role of parents in cultivating it.

THE BENEFITS OF PONTIFICAL MISSIONARY CHILDHOOD

1. Development of Empathy and Compassion:

By participating in the Pontifical Missionary Childhood Program children are exposed to global issues such as poverty hunger and injustice. Learning about these challenges from a young age helps develop empathy and compassion towards those who are less fortunate. Through prayers and

sacrifices children gain a deeper understanding of the needs of others and are encouraged to take action to alleviate their suffering.

2. Cultivation of a Global Perspective:

As children engage in the PMC Program they are connected with children from different parts of the world. This interaction exposes them to diverse cultures languages and social realities. By learning about the lives and struggles of other children they develop a broader outlook and learn to appreciate the richness of diverse human experiences. This global perspective nurtures tolerance understanding and a sense of solidarity in children.

3. Fostering a Sense of Responsibility and Stewardship:

Through the PMC Program children are entrusted with the responsibility of making a difference in the lives of others. This sense of responsibility encourages them to become proactive in contributing to their communities both locally and globally. Children learn the significance of stewardship - taking care of the earth, its resources and all living beings. This understanding instills a sense of duty towards the people and the planet they inherit motivating them to make sustainable choices.

4. Strengthening Faith and Spiritual Growth:

The PMC Program offers children an opportunity to deepen their faith and develop a personal relationship with God. Engaging in prayers, reflections and acts of service children nurture their spiritual growth. By actively participating in the program they

discover the joy that comes from sharing their blessings and living their faith through actions. Parents in collaboration with the program play a crucial role in guiding their children's spiritual development.

5. Enhancing Personal Growth and Life Skills:

The PMC Program encourages children to become problem solvers and agents of positive change. Through involvement in fundraising activities and awareness campaigns children develop important life skills such as leadership teamwork communication and organization. These skills empower them to become socially responsible individuals who can contribute meaningfully to society.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents play an indispensable role in nurturing their children's participation in the Pontifical Missionary Childhood Program. Here are some ways parents can actively support their children:

1. Encourage and Facilitate Participation:

Parents should encourage their children to actively engage in the PMC Program ensuring they understand its purpose and impact. This involves providing them with resources information and opportunities to explore different aspects of the program.

2. Foster Dialogue and Reflection:

Parents can initiate conversations with their children about global issues and the importance of helping others. Regular dialogues and reflections help children develop critical thinking skills while deepening their understanding of their role as missionaries. It is essential to

create a safe space for children to share their thoughts doubts and experiences.

3. Lead by Example:

Parents are powerful role models. By demonstrating compassion generosity and an active commitment to service they inspire their children to do the same. Engaging in acts of service together as a family strengthens the bond and reinforces the values promoted by the PMC Program.

4. Create Opportunities for Service:

Parents can facilitate opportunities for their children to actively contribute to their communities both locally and globally. This can involve volunteering together supporting charitable causes or organizing fundraising events. Such experiences allow children to experience the joy and fulfillment that comes from selflessly helping others.

CONCLUSION:

The Pontifical Missionary Childhood Program offers numerous benefits for children allowing them to develop empathy a global perspective a sense of responsibility and spiritual growth. Parents play a central role in nurturing their children's participation in this program by providing support fostering reflection leading by example and creating opportunities for service. Through their collaborative efforts parents and children can embody the values of love compassion and solidarity making a positive impact on their world.

The writer is the Youth Coordinator and a member of HFMB Community, Felician Sisters

MISSIONARY YOUTH MOVEMENT



Welcome to MYM Corner

The Missionary Youth Movement (MYM) is one of the youth sub-groups in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. MYM consists of secondary/high school teenagers from the age of 13/14 years to 18 years. The Basilica MYM group is actively involved in the parish, deanery, and Archdiocese. Our group has 52 active and commissioned members. The group has seen great growth thanks to the immense support we receive from the Basilica Youth Board and parish at large.

BASILICA MYM ACTIVITIES

MYM activities from the Archdiocese level downwards, take place during school holidays (April, August, and November/December school holidays). This is because majority of the high school teenagers are in boarding schools.

At Basilica, some of our MYM activities include:

Liturgy Participation:

The teenagers animate mass at the parish as per

the parish schedule. They also participate in deanery and Archdiocese liturgy celebrations. In April 2023, Basilica MYM joined other MYM from different parishes at the Archdiocese MYM Mass which was celebrated by Archbishop Philip Anyolo at St. Mary's Msongari grounds.

Active and consistent formation:

Our teenagers go through consistent formation during the school holidays and monthly for those in day schools. The formation covers the different aspects of human development and is tackled by MYM animators, the clergy, and other facilitators. The parish also ensures that the clergy and mental health professionals are available for mental health support when teenagers need them.

Annual retreat/camp:

Basilica MYM teens go for camp/retreat every year. This is a major spiritual and social activity for them. It also allows the facilitators to have ample time with the teens since they are mainly in school.

The camp/retreat includes activities such as Eucharistic adoration, holy mass, formation sessions, outdoor excursions, games and more. This year, the MYM will have their camp/retreat at the Don Bosco Youth Educational Services Center (DBYES) for one week in November.

Bible clubs:

Our parish MYM teens have bible clubs which bear saints' names. The bible clubs/groups run like book clubs where the teens read, discuss, and review different books and stories in the bible. This helps them to learn the word of God and grow a reading and teamwork culture.

Other activities:

MYM are also involved in charity work, sports, hiking, dance, and other performing arts activities. In December this year, our teens will join MYM teens from other parishes in the MYM Christmas festival where they will present a Christmas carols orchestra.

The writer is the MYM Moderator



MYM Reflections

1. Shannah Nkirote Koome's Reflection on MYM

I am Shannah Nkirote, a proud member of MYM at the Holy Family Basilica. MYM, which stands for the Missionary Youth Movement, holds a special place in my heart as a sanctuary of inclusion and love. It fosters an environment where we, as teenagers, not only love and care for each other but also enhance our service to God.

Our activities range from serving mass and engaging in team-building events to camps, sports, and thought-provoking Bible Club discussions. Talks and debates on various topics, led by our main facilitator Bernice, contribute to our continuous learning and growth.

Personally, MYM has played a crucial role in boosting my confidence and assertiveness. It has equipped me with the skills to interact with others and build healthy relationships. The talks and formation sessions have been enlightening, enriching my life.

In essence, MYM has become a catalyst for my personal development, strengthening my relationship with God and molding me into a better person.

Written by Shannah Nkirote Koome, 2023 Class 8 Candidate from Thika Road Christian School.

2. Athalia Shekainah Wairimu's Testimonial on MYM

I'm Shekainah Wairimu, an outgoing member of MYM, and being part of this movement has been transformative for me. MYM is a haven of positivity, brimming with good people and top-tier energy, a clear and peaceful space for spiritual growth. It's a comfortable environment where judgment is nonexistent, and mutual support prevails.

On a personal level, MYM has altered me mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, helping me establish life boundaries and purpose. I find joy in the non-judgmental atmosphere that encourages everyone to support each other. My heartfelt thanks go to all the facilitators, especially Bernice, for their dedication. I extend my gratitude to every

member for their unwavering support and care, making MYM a second home for me.

Written by Athalia Shekainah Wairimu, a Form 4 student at Loreto Convent Valley Road.

3. Amani Mashirima's Reflection on MYM

MYM, an acronym for Missionary Youth Movement, plays a vital role in helping teenagers serve God and grow in faith. In this welcoming community, we not only engage in inspiring activities but also partake in mentoring experiences, including retreats, team building, archdiocese functions, and more. An exemplary instance is the 2023 retreat held in November, where we not only had fun but also learned from our failures and strengths, contributing to personal growth.

For me, MYM is a second home that has provided mentorship and imparted valuable life skills applicable both at school and at home. Personally, MYM has been instrumental in boosting my courage to speak and present in front of people, thanks to

the support of Bernice, whom I consider my second mother.

In conclusion, I urge teenagers to join the Basilica MYM team, where ideas are shared, and a sense of belonging is cultivated. It's a second home with a family to call our own.

**Authored by Amani Mashirima,
Form 2 at St. Catherine High
School.**

4. Basilica MYM 2023 Retreat – Teen Impact Camp at Don Bosco Youth Educational Services (DBYES) Karen

The following teens were tasked with sharing their experiences regarding the spiritual aspects of the Retreat, as well as their personal and social development.

1. Michael Githinji

The MYM teen camp in 2023, held in November under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Simon Mwangi and Rev. Sr. Christabel, supported by Bernice Grace Njoki, Esther Nyambura, and Jeremy Odhiambo, was a transformative experience.

Achieving spiritual growth for every youth is undoubtedly challenging. However, the Basilica youth board's organization of the 2023 teens retreat at DBYES made this journey both easier and more enjoyable.

The retreat featured insightful talks from various personalities, including our able Sister and Seminarian. Key topics, such as the sacrament of penance and the relationship with God, were discussed. Each teen took note of essential points that could positively impact their lives, reinforcing the understanding that, despite their sinful state, they are God's children.

Following the talks, the youth engaged in Prayer and Meditation sessions, providing a quiet and ample time to communicate with their Maker. Bible study group discussions focused on familiarizing participants with Biblical role models, such as Saint Joseph. Early morning Bible meditation sessions, marked by silence, allowed space for God to intervene and speak to each of His beloved children. To top it all up we had Holy Mass every day and everyone participated actively.

Lastly the teens received the sacrament of penance by going for confession and for counselling on challenges relating to their lives and this was a life fulfilling moment for every teen.

In conclusion, the Don Bosco experience was profoundly impactful spiritually, and now every teen stands a step ahead in their spiritual life. We feel honored and delighted to have had such a meaningful experience.

**Authored by Michael Githinji,
a Form 3 student at Nanyuki
School.**

2. Mark Ndirangu

During the 2023 teens retreat, we attended sessions led by various facilitators and professionals who significantly bolstered our confidence in facing the challenges that teenagers encounter. On a personal note, I've learned to perceive problems as intriguing puzzles with multiple solutions.

Our dedicated animator, Bernice, conducted a session on goal setting and planning. This insightful discussion equipped us with the skills and qualities necessary to set and achieve our goals.

Additionally, we participated in social activities, including debates and various games guided by our instructors. These activities significantly enhanced our social interactions and boosted our confidence.

In conclusion, our time at Don Bosco Youth Educational Services (DBYES) has been truly enriching, and we eagerly look forward to future visits.

**Authored by Mark Ndirangu,
a Form 3 student at Nanyuki
School.**

3. Elton Kamitha

This year's annual teens camp and retreat were truly remarkable as they provided us with an opportunity to deepen our relationship with God. We had our chaplain, animators, coordinator, and a team of facilitators who guided us in different ways. Initially, I lacked confidence in delivering speeches to my fellow MYM friends, but now I can captivate them with engaging and persuasive speeches.

Certainly, we accomplished several goals, including enhancing our financial literacy through saving money and effective goal planning.

The retreat offered a diverse range of activities, including board games like chess, monopoly, scrabble, cards, and more, outdoor games such as football, basketball, swimming, and various bonding games.

As I conclude my reflections, the prospect of future activities together fills us with enthusiasm and anticipation.

**Written by Elton Kamitha, a
Form 2 Student at Anestar
School.**



YOUTH SERVING CHRIST

Welcome to YSC.

By Daniel Gondi

In this article, you will learn more about our youth group and gain an overview of what YSC represents.

Youth Serving Christ (YSC) is a youth group in the Catholic church and in our Parish as well; Holy Family Minor Basilica, consisting of members aged between 18 and 26 years. This age bracket includes individuals who have graduated from the Missionary Youth Movement (MYM), those attending Universities or Colleges, individuals on attachments or internships, and those in the early stages of their careers.

The group currently has approximately 80 members,

and its Executive Committee comprises the Chaplain, Sister, Patron, Matron, and YSC officials. Within YSC, a subcommittee, led by YSC leaders, oversees various aspects, including Liturgy, Talent, Social activities, and Financial matters.

YSC actively participates in a range of activities, including:

1. Mass animation
2. Retreats
3. Bible study sessions
4. Formations
5. Sports
6. Charity events
7. Way of the Cross enactments
8. Social activities

We hold general meetings at least twice a month, where

we engage in activities such as; Praying the Holy Rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet, Sharing and Discussing Bible passages, and Planning for upcoming events like Mass Animations, who will do the readings among others.

On Sundays, we come together for Sports activities in the afternoon, where we often play with the Catholic Men Association (CMA) Commonly referred to as "wazee".

Additionally, we offer Modern Dance classes and practices on Sundays from 12:00noon to 1:30 PM, which are currently in the preliminary stages of development.\

Major activities for this year 2023 include:

- ✓ The commissioning of group members at the beginning of the year.
- ✓ Participation in the National Youth Mass in Nyeri.
- ✓ Election of new leaders to serve on the YSC council.
- ✓ The Way of the Cross performance on Good Friday.
- ✓ A Retreat at Tabor Hills in Nyahururu, including daily Mass, evening Rosary Prayers, Adoration, Seminars, and a visit to Thompson Falls.
- ✓ Sports events at both the Deanery and Zonal levels, where we achieved Second place in Football at the Deanery level and top position in Basketball at the Deanery level but finished Second in the Zonal level.
- ✓ Bible trivia and formation sessions conducted by Seminarian Mwanje.

- ✓ Exchange programs with St. Francis Xavier and Holy Trinity Kileleshwa parishes.
- ✓ Music and Drama Festival participation, we took the Second position in the Deanery level for the Set Piece and First place in the Deanery, Zonal, and Archdiocese levels for the Traditional Dance. We are preparing for the National level competition in the Kisumu Metropolitan, Kakamega Diocese.

The writer is the Vice Moderator for YSC, a student studying Information & Technology at JKUAT currently in attachment.

Charity event at Thogoto Home for The Aged

By Aristidi Yona Shayo

In 2023, among the various activities that engaged our youth group, charity stood out as a meaningful endeavor. We had the privilege of putting our love into action through a visit to Thogoto Home for The Aged in Kiambu. To be

honest, it was a euphoric experience that reminded us of the transient nature of our youth. As one elder wisely advised us, we should make the most of our time while the sun still shines. With enthusiasm, we arrived at the home, ready to assist in any way we could. We helped the elderly residents by providing meals, cleaning their living space, washing dishes, and even folding their clothes. The highlight of the event was the interaction with the elderly residents, as we engaged in meaningful conversations, learning from their wisdom, which holds particular relevance to our current stage of youth. Many of them shared their life experiences, and one individual recounted his journey from being a branch manager at a Barclays bank branch in the 1970s, a position he obtained with the help of Jomo Kenyatta. Unfortunately, due to struggles with alcoholism and immoral behavior, he lost his job and family, eventually finding himself at the home for the aged. Despite having



once been successful, this gentleman urged us to take responsibility for our lives.

This charity event not only brought mutual benefits, with us gaining wisdom

and the elderly gaining our companionship, but also left a lasting impact on us.



SPORTS

Aside from our charitable activities, the youth group engages in activities that allow us to utilize our youthful energy to the fullest, all while following the path of true freedom, which is guided by our faith in God. One such activity is sports. This year's Archdiocese of Nairobi (AND) sports competitions took place at St. Austin's Msongari, and it was a joyous occasion. After a day filled with spirited competition, we returned home tired but satisfied, having actively participated in various sports.

We fielded teams in football, both male and female, basketball, both male and female, volleyball, both male and female, as well as chess, darts, and checkers. Our football team achieved the position of second runners-up in the denary, while our

volleyball girls' team took the lead. In basketball, the male team secured the top spot, while the female team was the first runners-up. Only our male and female basketball teams and the female volleyball team proceeded to the zonal competition. Our male basketball team emerged as second runners-up but did not advance to the archdiocese level. The Youth Serving Christ (YSC) places great emphasis on engaging our members in sporting activities with the primary goal of finding Christ in everything we do. Additionally, we aim to nurture talents and positively channel our energy through sports. Every Sunday, we organize football games at St. Austin's grounds at 2:00 PM, and occasionally, we practice basketball at the parochial school court. We ensure that every month, we schedule a game with parishes within our denary and beyond. Through

our sports activities, the YSC has not only cultivated talents but also enriched the spiritual and faith journey of its members.

MAY CHRIST CONTINUE TO INSPIRE MORE YOUNG INDIVIDUALS TO DRAW CLOSER TO HIM THROUGH GROUPS LIKE THE YOUTH SERVING CHRIST.

The writer is an Altar Server and a member of YSC, currently pursuing CPA studies at KCA University.

Retreat at Tabor Hill

By Bakhita Karobia

As a youth being consistent in one's faith by practicing it and living your life in line with Christ's teachings is one of the toughest tasks there is, even if it doesn't seem like one. The

Youth Serving Christ engage in a lot of activities that boosts our social lifestyle, physical and spiritual. For example The Retreat; The YSC group had a 3-day retreat at Tabor Hill, Nyahuruu that covered 4 aspects; religious activities, physical activities, recreational activities and personal growth seminars.

Religious activities

We had daily morning mass during the stay. We recited the holy rosary in the evenings and had adoration. We were lucky to have our chaplains Fr. Simon Mwangi, Sr. Christabel and Deacon James to take us through the meaning and importance of adoration, Bible orientation and discussions based on a Bible trivia that was done in the past..

Physical and recreational activities

The group engaged in team building activities and at the end of the day we had football and volleyball matches. This time set aside, was the best time to unwind. After dinner, we had a movie night, games night that ensured all the youth were involved and could socialize at their free will, as well as be competitive in the games that were available such as board games. This forum brought togetherness and made sure that no individual was left behind.

On the last day we took a short trip to Thompson Falls took loads of photos, and even got to take a hike as we admired the view, some were even daring enough to get to the waterfall. This was a very amusing activity and it came as a surprise thanks to our Chaplains.

Personal Growth Seminars.

We were privileged to have a Speaker Patrick Nyaga who is a Scholar in Neuroscience and an Author to take as through very important topics that were take homes to many, including myself. To mention but a few we covered; Mental Health, Financial Management, How to deal with peer pressure, Spirituality and how to become better in a variety of courses, the importance of networking and self discipline. We got access to his books and had some to take with us. Personally, this was my favourite part of the retreat given to me by the church having an opportunity to take a break from daily activities and getting some perspective on how to go about life. To make it even better going back home with a point of reference.



This Retreat was a great opportunity given to the YSC by the church and we are lucky to be part of a group that gives us a sense of direction as new adults. Being a part of the Youth groups in Holy Family Basilica has instilled values in me that I know, youth my age are missing out on. I will surely carry them along with me; as by God's grace I had to give up my role as the Secretary of the YSC group to pursue my undergraduate studies abroad.

The writer is a first year student currently pursuing Bachelor of Health Sciences program in Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia.

Celebrating Culture And Faith During The Festivals

By Dennis Wafula

Introduction:

In the bustling heart of Central Deanery, the Holy Family Basilica Youth Serving Christ

(YSC) group is a testament to the power of faith, unity, and cultural appreciation. We are excited to share with you our remarkable journey as we actively participated in the Cultural Festivals hosted at the illustrious Don Bosco Church in Upperhill. These festivals brought together young people from various Parishes in the Central Deanery, igniting our passion for art, music, dance, modeling, and much more. Our spiritual journey always began with a heartwarming Mass, a humble plea for God's blessings to guide our cultural exploration.

The Blessings of Holy Mass:

Before we embarked on our cultural adventures, we gathered for Holy Mass at Don Bosco Church. This sacred prelude was our way of seeking God's blessings and guidance for the vibrant journey ahead. We understood the importance of spiritual grounding in our

cultural activities, and this Mass served as a reminder of our shared faith and purpose.

Dance: Expressing Culture Through Movement

Dance is a universal language of expression, transcending boundaries and connecting us all. At Don Bosco Church, we eagerly participated in cultural dance performances, where we had the privilege to learn and showcase both modern and traditional dances representing the rich diversity of cultures within the Central Deanery. Through the joy of dance, we celebrated the vibrant tapestry of our community.

Artistry Unleashed: Capturing Culture on Canvas

Art has the remarkable ability to capture the essence of a culture. During our time at Don Bosco Church, we enthusiastically joined art exhibitions. Here, we created





art pieces that conveyed our deep appreciation for the myriad cultural traditions within our community. Through our artwork, we paid tribute to the diverse heritage that defines our Central Deanery.

The Harmony of Music: Celebrating Melodic Diversity

Music, with its universal appeal, has the power to touch our hearts and souls. At Don Bosco Church, we immersed ourselves in musical events that showcased the immense diversity of musical traditions within our Central Deanery. From melodious hymns to lively folk songs, we embarked on a harmonious journey celebrating the rich musical landscape surrounding us.

The Runway of Culture: Modeling Tradition

Modeling became an exciting avenue for us to celebrate culture. We proudly

participated in fashion shows and modeling contests that featured traditional clothing and attire from various regions and Sharon Nakuya and Ike Muthomi represented us well. These showcases allowed us to strut our stuff on the runway while paying homage to the cultural diversity that defines our community.

A Journey of Discovery and Unity:

Our participation in these cultural festivals represented more than just activities. It symbolized a journey of discovery and unity. Through art, music, dance, modeling, and various expressions of culture, we gained a profound appreciation for the rich tapestry of traditions within the Central Deanery. Our involvement was a testament to our commitment to embracing diversity, strengthening our bonds as a faith-driven community, and fostering understanding.

Conclusion:

As I reflect on our incredible journey at Don Bosco Church in Upperhill, I am reminded of the transformative power of culture, faith, and unity in enriching the lives of our youth. The Holy Family Basilica YSC group continues to inspire us all with our dedication to celebrating diversity, seeking God’s blessings, and fostering understanding through art, music, dance, modeling, and more. Our journey is a testament to the beauty of faith and the strength of a community united in cultural celebration. We are grateful for the experiences, friendships, and memories we have gained through our participation, and we eagerly anticipate the cultural adventures that await us in the future.

The writer is the Vice Secretary for YSC and a Second year student studying Film and Video Production (Directing, Camera and Sound) at the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication



YOUNG CATHOLIC ADULTS

How the Young Catholic Adults (YCA) has facilitated the transition to CWA in 2023

Members join YCA either individually or as a group during transition from YSC thus creating strong ties within them. The success of any group is growth of its members in all spheres of life and in magnitude. Over the last few years, we have not had members exit unless when moving to other parishes. However, in the last two years we have had a mass exit to the CMA but none to CWA. In 2023, we witnessed a huge change in our group dynamics where at the beginning of the year, members expressed their interest in joining the CWA.

It was a joyous moment to witness over ten members get commissioned to CWA on 22nd October 2023 beautifully adorned in the CWA uniform. Such discipline and commitment have been cultivated in the YCA group.

We sought member experience from the various ladies who recently transitioned and below is their feedback:

MY EXPERIENCE AS A MEMBER OF YCA

"YCA, being a transitional group from the YSC to adulthood is a very important group in the church. The fact that many young people feel too young to join CWA/CMA earlier in their life, while they feel that they have outgrown the youth group, YCA came in handy.

Having joined YCA as a young mother, I felt the warmth of the group since there were also many other young parents in the group. Our meetings sometimes felt like a kindergarten, but they were enjoyable, since we could feel the growth in the group and the vibrance our young ones brought in our midst.

I have grown spiritually in the group through the activities we organised such as Bible

study/ catechism sessions that were conducted by our priests, deacons and Seminarian. We got to know how to well study the bible, learn more about our faith and also grow and participate in the sacraments. Other than Bible study we had recollections and retreats that enable us to deepen our faith, Adoration, Benediction and Confession, fondly known as ABC that aids us to get closer to Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

Socially, YCA has helped me to be more charitable as we engaged in charity activities, visited each other's homes as welfare and stood by one another in good times and difficult ones.

*Having developed through YCA, I felt the urge to grow even more as a Catholic woman by transiting to CWA, despite being youthful. I encourage young people to consider joining YCA and grow in more faith" **Rahab Mathenge***

"Having been a member of the Young Catholic Adult's

group was an experience every young Christian ought to go through. I got to experience God in ways I had never before. This was largely facilitated by retreats and recollections organised for the group. Leaving the city behind and retreat to a sacred environment just to experience God. This really shaped up my Christian life as I got to adopt good prayer habits after struggling for some time. Especially during the lenten period, those were divine moments and I would always long for the Easter tridum as I was now fully aware of the events to come and actually anticipate them. Charity events also changed my whole perspective on sharing; giving until it hurts. The social events made the whole experience lively, networking and creating good rapport with other Young Catholic Adults and share our experiences.

I would say this wholesome experience really shaped up my Christian life and had me looking forward to the next level: Catholic Women

Association. I recently got commissioned into the group and that was a very edifying moment for me. Looking back, almost all the activities from the previous group really helped during the transition, only that here there's more intensity. Hoping to keep the fire of faith burning ever, so help me God" **Margaret Ndegwa**

"YCA is a crucial group in the church especially for young people who can't fit in YSC (restricted by age) and feel too young to join CWA/CMA.

For the years i was a member; the group gave me a sense of belonging both socially and spiritually As part of growth, i felt the need to transition to CWA" **Jane Mwangi**

"I served as the chairperson of the youth group for four years. Our main challenges included transitioning MYMs to the youth and retaining older members. Father Bernard, our then chaplain, divided the group into YSC and YCA. YSC catered to the younger youth below 26 years, making it more

appealing to MYMs, likely in college. Consequently, we successfully retained the older youth in YCA, addressing their motivations. Both youth groups thrived, growing stronger and more engaged.

As the YSC membership aged, a new challenge emerged: transitioning into CMA and CWA. Speaking on behalf of the men, we initially felt like the men in CMA were akin to our fathers, and we didn't feel a sense of belonging. To address this, we established a mentorship forum with patrons and former chaplains like Paul Kasimu, Fred Kariuki, Fr. Paul, Fr. Dominic, and Fr. Bernard. This forum became the breeding ground for the decision to transition to CMA. Now a member of CMA, living with my former youth colleagues, I don't feel out of place; I feel right at home." **Victor Muchiri**

**Compiled by Ann Ndirangu
secretary for YCA, HFMB**



CATHOLIC WOMEN ASSOCIATION

CWA - CATHOLIC WOMEN ASSOCIATION.....

Moments of fellowship between mothers and their early teen daughters of ages 12-17 as they bonded and shared transformative nuggets of wisdom.

Celebrating St. Maria Goretti Feast

Maria was born on October 16, 1890, in Corinaldo, in the Province of Ancona, then in the Kingdom of Italy. She was born to a poor Italian family and at the age of 11 was attacked by her teenage neighbor.



St. Maria Goretti



The teenson your marks, get set, goooooo.....

The Little Saint of Great Mercy

Maria Goretti is best known for her commitment to purity and the courageous defense of her faith at the young age of eleven that made her willing to undergo death rather than participate in a sin against God.

The tough life of the Goretti family was shattered in summer 1902, when Alessandro Serenelli, the son of a neighbor and coworker of Maria's mother, began making advances on 11-year-old Maria. Her continued refusal led Alessandro to become very violent.

In July 1902, after another rejection, Alessandro pulled Maria into a bedroom and attempted to rape her. Refusing again, Maria cried out "No! It is a sin! God does not want it!" Angered anew, Alessandro stabbed Maria 14 times before he fled, leaving her for her family to find.



Mothers and teens gearing for action

What was Saint Maria known for?

St. Maria Goretti is known for her commitment to purity and the courageous defence of her faith at the young age of eleven that made



Father-In-Charge / CWA Chaplain, Fr. Rev. Dr. Simon Peter Kamomoe advising the teens to focus on Jesus

her willing to undergo death rather than participate in a sin against God. She is also remarkable for the forgiveness she willingly granted her attacker as she lay on her deathbed.



Teens in action

What is an interesting fact about Maria Goretti?

St. Maria Goretti is one of the youngest canonized saints in the Church. She died tragically on July 6, 1902, at the age of 11. *Maria is also known as The Little Saint of Great Mercy.*

What are the lessons from the life of St. Maria Goretti?

- Purity is worth fighting over. Maria was willing to sacrifice her life to keep her virtue. She recognized the sacredness of this special gift as God's will. In our modern world there seems to be a bigger fight to take away purity (in all forms) rather than keep or preserve it, especially in our children.



Mothers putting their best foot forward



Mothers cheering the teens

Why do we pray for Saint Maria Goretti?

Saint Maria Goretti is known for her intercession for mercy, forgiveness, love, purity and chastity. She is our patron saint of the youth and rape victims. Though her time on earth was brief, her compelling story serves as a vivid example of faith and the power of forgiveness.



It is all fun.....

What miracles did St. Maria Goretti do?

Six years after her death, as she appeared to her attacker in his jail cell, Maria handed him 14 white lilies — a supernatural expression of forgiveness and love that led not only to Alessandro's contrition but also to his conversion.



Compiled by **The CWA Executive:**
 Moderator - Florence Wambua, Vice Moderator - Margaret Njoroge,
 Treasurer - Norah Owako, Secretary - Jane Karimi, Vice Secretary - Jane Kimotho



THE HOLY FAMILY MINOR BASILICA CATHOLIC MEN ASSOCIATION: A BEACON OF FAITH, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY



CMA is a non-profit, non-political organization that brings together baptized and devout male Catholics to take an active role in the process of evangelization in the home, the small Christian communities (SCCs), the church, and the country in general. The CMA at Holy Family Basilica embodies the spirit of brotherhood, service, and unwavering dedication to the Catholic faith.

The CMA has four main goals:

1. To enrich society by living Gospel values in the family, church, and community.
2. To promote the family institution through companionship (spouse), fatherhood (children), and active participation in the church for the evangelization and sanctification of humanity.
3. To evangelize and educate men on their Catholic faith and responsibilities.

4. To promote social justice and development through various projects, such as education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation.

A Pillar of Support

The HFMB CMA, has emerged as a cornerstone of the Holy Family Minor Basilica community. With its unwavering commitment to fostering spiritual growth, promoting family values, and upholding social responsibility, the HFMB CMA has touched the lives of many men, empowering them to become active participants in the church's mission of evangelization and sanctification.

Guided by Gospel Values

At the core of the HFMB CMA's endeavors lies a deep-seated commitment to living Gospel values in every aspect of life. Members are encouraged to exemplify these values in their families, their workplaces, and their interactions with the wider

community. By embodying compassion, integrity, and a spirit of service, the HFMB CMA men strive to create a more just and harmonious society.

Nurturing Faith and Family

The HFMB CMA recognizes the profound importance of faith and family in the lives of its members. Through regular prayer meetings, retreats, and sacramental formation, the association provides a supportive environment where men can deepen their understanding

of the Catholic faith and strengthen their spiritual bonds. Additionally, the HFMB CMA actively promotes family life, emphasizing the importance of fatherhood, companionship, and mutual support within the family unit.

Engaged in Community Service

The HFMB CMA's commitment extends beyond the walls of the Holy Family Minor Basilica. Recognizing the needs of the broader community, the association actively engages in various service projects, ranging from education and healthcare initiatives to poverty alleviation programs. Through these endeavors, the HFMB CMA demonstrates its unwavering commitment to social justice and the betterment of society.

A Force for Positive Change

The Holy Family Minor Basilica Catholic Men Association has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on the lives of many

men, and families. Through its unwavering dedication to faith, family, and service, the HFMB CMA continues to be a beacon of hope and inspiration, empowering men at Holy Family Basilica to become catalysts for positive change in the world.

The CMA Year 2023 in Review

In 2023 CMA has grown from strength to strength, mobilizing men to take on various projects for the benefit of the wider congregation at the Holy Family Basilica Parish.

Liturgical / Spiritual Activities

On 19th March this year, CMA actively participated in the annual celebration of St Joseph, the model and patron saint of CMA, at St Joseph Technical Institute in Kamulu, a project of the CMA Archdiocese of Nairobi. This event provided an opportunity for members to come together and celebrate their faith.

The CMA also played a leading role in animating mass once every quarter. This involved preparing and delivering the readings, as well as leading the congregation in prayer and song. HFMB CMA also participated in Mass animation at Subukia National Prayer Day on October 7 2023.

In an effort to expand its membership, the CMA conducted a recruitment drive during the months of September 2023. This campaign was successful in attracting new members who are eager to contribute to the CMA's mission.

Social /Charity Activities

The CMA held a goat eating competition with the Mary Shrine of Help don Bosco. This event was a fun and festive way to raise funds for charity.

The CMA also participated in the Archdiocese of Nairobi CMA office-organized music festivals. These festivals showcased the talents of CMA members from across the archdiocese.

In a spirit of giving, the CMA conducted a charity visit to a charity home in Langata. During this visit, members donated food, clothing, and other supplies to the home's residents.

The CMA also played a role in a wedding ceremony, providing assistance with the planning and execution of the event.

Social Development Activities

The CMA is committed to helping its members achieve financial stability. To this end, the association offers a microfinance program that provides loans to members at low interest rates.

The CMA also has a pet project called the Beacon Boy Program (BBP). The BBP is a mentorship program that pairs young boys with adult male role models. The program aims to help boys develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life.

CMA's Parish-Specific Pet Project - Beacon Boy Program (BBP)

The Beacon Boy Program (BBP), an Archdiocese of Nairobi initiative, focuses on addressing the challenges faced by the boy child. Aimed at providing holistic mentorship for boys aged 9 to 18, the BBP runs concurrently with other church programs, including the PMC (Pontifical Missionary Children) and MYM (Missionary Youth Movement).

While the BBP program in our parish has been dormant, recent church lay elections have

injected new life into it. With the induction of the new CMA executive, the BBP is expected to experience increased activity, enhancing the profile of the boy child in our parish. A major recruitment drive is a key objective in our current strategic plan, and with divine guidance, the BBP is poised for significant growth.

Join the CMA

The CMA at Holy Family Minor Basilica is a vibrant and active organization that is making a positive impact on the lives of its members and the wider community. The association's commitment to faith, family, and community is evident in its wide range of activities.

The CMA welcomes all baptized and devout male Christians aged 18 and above to join its ranks and contribute to its noble mission. By becoming a member, men can embark on a journey of spiritual growth, forge meaningful connections with fellow believers, and make a tangible difference in the lives of others.

Together, the Holy Family Minor Basilica Catholic Men Association stands as a testament to the transformative power of faith, family, and community, inspiring generations to come. Through the intercession of Saint Joseph, the Patron Saint of CMA, may the Lord grant the CMA members all spiritual blessings for the benefit of all families and the whole society.

**Compiled by Joseph Otinda,
Secretary for Catholic Men
Association, HFMB**



SMALL ACTS OF LOVE:

A Visit to Good Shepherd Children's Home

By Kennedy Isiaho

In the heart of Nairobi, we, the St. Simon Peter Small Christian Community, gathered with a shared belief, echoing Mother Teresa's words: "We can do small things, but with great love." Filled with purpose and hope, our journey unfolded in a way that touched our hearts and souls beyond imagination.

Our day began with a solemn prayer outside the Holy Family Minor Basilica, led by our chaplain, Father Joseph Mugane. United in spirit and open-hearted, we embarked on a charity expedition to the Good Shepherd Children's Home in Ruai, a sanctuary cared for by The Missionaries of the Poor. This remarkable home finds its roots in the inspiration of St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta and has grown from humble beginnings in 2007 to a place of profound impact.

The residents of this home are a testament to the power of love and compassion. Here, boys aged 6 to 27 years old have found shelter and care despite the challenges life has thrown their way. These challenges range from autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, deafness, blindness, muteness, to those

who once walked the streets as homeless children.

Upon arrival, the Jumuiya was warmly welcomed by Brother Sandip, who provided a glimpse into the history and daily life of the home. The group was then assigned various tasks, all with a single purpose: to make a difference in the lives of these children. Some members took on the responsibility of feeding the children, others engaged in cleaning activities, and others prepared meals with love and dedication. These tasks were not just chores; they were opportunities for the group to connect, to discover the joy in simplicity, and to make a lasting impact.

Throughout the day, we encountered countless small moments that left deep impressions in our hearts. Our interactions with the children unveiled their inner strength and tenacity. As we went about our tasks, we learnt lessons in patience, teamwork, and the profound beauty of supporting one another's strengths and weaknesses.

With our tasks complete, we gathered for a humble tea time. Over cups of tea and mandazis lovingly prepared by our own hands, we reflected on

the day's experiences. It was a time to share, to comprehend, and to cherish the impact of our visit. We discovered that in giving, we find happiness, and in happiness, we encounter contentment.

In his closing words, Brother Sandip extended a warm invitation to all. He encouraged each of us to return to the Good Shepherd Children's Home, perhaps with family or friends, and continue spreading love and compassion. He reminded us that true happiness is born from giving, and contentment naturally follows.

As St. Simon Peter, we extend this invitation to all christians. Consider planning a visit to the Good Shepherd Children's Home, where the steadfastness and resilience of these remarkable children will touch your heart, uplift your spirit, and forever change your perspective on the power of small acts of love. In the spirit of Mother Teresa's wisdom, let us remember that we are capable of doing small things, but with great love.

The writer is the secretary for St. Simon Peter SCC, HFMB



ST PERPETUA AND FELICITY *Small Christian Community*

Brief History

At the heart of Holy Family Minor Basilica community Nairobi Kenya, the St Perpetua and Felicity Small Christian Group stands as a beacon of faith, fellowship, and spiritual growth. This tight-knit gathering of believers named after the courageous martyrs St Perpetua and Felicity, who stood firm in their faith in times of persecution was formed in July 2022 by catechumens who became Christians upon reception and initiation to church sacraments on 08/04/2023 Easter Vigil.

Mission: To foster a vibrant community rooted in faith, prayer and word of God.

Vision: Envision a community where individuals are inspired to live the faith they profess in their daily lives



Objective:

- 1) To enhance and foster closer relationship by the members of the group.
- 2) Create an environment for shared prayer and reflection on word of God practically in our daily lives to enhance spiritual growth.
- 3) Engage in charitable works

Membership is open to parishioner of Holy Family Minor Basilica. To join you will be required to fill out a membership form

Benefits of joining the group include:

1. Spiritual nourishment with the support of group chaplain,
2. We extend assistance to members in the event of death and sickness of self, spouse, children and immediate parents

3. In the case where a member is involved in a serious accident or sickness, a meeting shall be called in which the members shall agree to the amount of assistance to be extended in such circumstances.

Proverbs 24:3-4 *By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; By Knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*

For more information on how to join St. Perpetua and Felicity Small Christian Community, visit the Parish office at Cardinal Otunga annex

Compiled by Bensom Kimiti, secretary for St. Perpetua and Felicity SCC, HFMB



ST. RITA SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

September 27, 2020 marked the birth of a new SCC at the Holy Family Minor Basilica. A group of individuals were welcomed into the catholic faith having received the sacrament of Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation and choosing St. Rita as their patron Saint hence becoming St. Rita SCC.

St. Rita SCC was founded on 3 pillars; main pillar being own patron Saint, St. Rita who is one of the most influential saints in catholic church with a history well known across Christian faith. The death of her husband and her sons marked her turning point and she decided to join Augustinian nuns of Saint Mary Magdalene monastery. Same way we as St. Rita had our own challenges that kept us away from God and when our turning point came we imitated our Patron Saint.

Our second and third pillars were Fr. Boniface Mburu and Fr. Simon Peter Kamomoe who were our catechists.

They were instrumental for our initial sacramental life and they left an enduring mark to live by the example set for us by St. Rita. Fr. Simon Peter Kamomoe is our current chaplain and we are really blessed to have him walk with us in this journey of faith.

St. Rita SCC targets all Christians, men and women, young and old, or any faithful who may wish to join the SCC, we meet on every first and last Sunday of every month at 11.00 AM – Cardinal Otunga Annex. Currently we have 33 members.

Benefits of joining the group:

1. Come to a better understanding on your baptismal call.
2. Deepening of relationships with God and other Christians.
3. Challenged to grow spiritually as an individual.
4. Mutual support – as a community members support one another in and through the events of life.

Vision: To help people find God, grow their faith, discover their purpose and making the difference.

Mission: To know our faith, to live by truth and love, to serve the needs of others; to teach by example and there by strengthen and inspire the SCC

Our objectives are to provide a perfect platform for Christians to share God's word, to support and grow each other to be upstanding beings socially and to breed good family values whilst growing our spiritual value.

Group activities: Recollection and prayers, Charity work, Bible reading and reflections & Sports and team building.

For more information on how to join St. Rita Small Christian Community, visit the Parish office at Cardinal Otunga Annex.

Compiled by Benadetta Wambura, Secretary and Samuel Wanjala vice secretary St. Rita SCC.



ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

This group was officially formed in April 2018; it was an instantaneous transformation from the catechesis class of 2017 to what we are presently. As a community, we aim to bring together families and individuals towards an intimate interpersonal relationship grounded in faith. We also focus on creating a community whose functions are faith, hope, and charity.

Under the guidance of our chaplain Rev. Fr. Joseph Mugane, we worship God, grow in faith, and try to live in accordance with His will. As a family we seek to build a community that demonstrates the love of God as shown to us in his son, Jesus Christ; whilst respecting everyone's journey of faith.

Our patron saint is St. Michael the Archangel. The inspiration behind this was: He is the guardian of the church; the spiritual warrior in the battle between good & evil, who is always defending us against the wickedness & snares of the devil.

➤ Mission

Strive to spread the word of God, strengthen our faith, win souls for Christ, and inspire spiritual growth in our society.

➤ Vision

Each member to have a special encounter with God, through his word, so as to become spiritually mature.

➤ Objectives

To encourage and help one another to know God, love God & serve God as a community & witness to His resurrection

BENEFITS & ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP

- » Mass animation as guided by the Parish Pastoral Council.
- » We grow in faith through the spiritual guidance of our chaplain, recollections, retreats & other group activities.
- » We operate as a family thereby giving a sense of belonging as well as spiritual, social & economic growth.

» We take part in acts of mercy by giving back to the community through charity work.

» We encourage the social & physical well-being of our members by engaging in activities such as team building.

MEMBERSHIP

Our current membership stands at 44 members.

Any parishioner of Holy Family Minor Basilica aged 18 years and above is eligible to join our small christian community.

Anyone with interest in joining St. Michael S.C.C, can visit the parish office at Cardinal Otunga Annex, 1st floor between Monday – Friday, anytime between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.

We normally meet twice a month on Sundays from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. within the parish.

Compiled by Beatrix Onyango, Secretary for St. Michael the Archangel, HFMB



The Basilica Choir immediately after Thanksgiving Mass by Rev. Fr. David Kinyanjui, who is currently based at St. Mulumba Catholic Church - Thika

WE ARE TRULY STRONGER AND BETTER WHEN WE STAND UNITED.

Unity On purpose has ultimately yielded unity of purpose in diversity. The noble initiative by our choir chaplain to consolidate the leadership of our three autonomous choirs into the choir summit in the year 2019 under the stewardship of our parish choir moderator, was truly God sent.

By way of constant and deliberate planning, the parish was not only able to revamp our senior Basilica choir ie The Christ Centered Basilica choir (CCBC), but was also able to launch and integrate a brand new choir namely The Basilica Magnificat choir (BMC) as well as successfully transition

the youth choir into a fully autonomous choir, St Gregory the great Basilica choir (under the choir summit).

Further, under the auspices of the choir summit, the Basilican choir has fostered new friendships and brotherly love among our choir members. The choir members have participated jointly as the Basilican choir, in retreats, team building as well as Charity events.

Some notable achievements of the choir summit initiative include; Joint choir singing during liturgy, joint entry to the Climak choir festivals as well as joint welfare initiatives.

This has not only broken the spirit of rivalry between our members but has also revamped the Basilican choir. The steady rise of the profile of our choirs at the Climak festivals at both the diamond and gold class respectively is a clear indication of the fruits of this noble initiative. This has ultimately yielded to a more vibrant liturgy by way of better singing by our choirs. The future is truly bright for the Basilican choir as well as The Holy Family Minor Basilica parish.

Compiled by George Wachira, Organizing Secretary for Choir Summit, HFMB



My Personal Encounter with Severina

By Robert Njiru

Many are the times when we visit a place for enjoyment, adventure, or meditation, to name just a few reasons. When I left my village for urban life, I had no idea where I was going, what I was going to do, or whom I would meet. Therefore, I was not an exception among many young, middle-aged citizens who visit urban areas in search of employment.

When I arrived in this vibrant city, I found myself in a

similar situation. However, my situation was slightly different because I had secured a job as a kiosk attendant. Fortunately, I had landed in the safe hands of a kind Kenyan citizen who guided me around the city. She was one of my regular customers, particularly for breakfast. Soon enough, we became friends, and she invited me to join her at her place of worship. Being a devout Catholic, I accepted the invitation, as I also longed to worship in a larger church.

Where is she?

This brings me to the question that many Christians and friends are asking me: Where is she? Do you, as the reader, know whom we are talking about? We are referring to Severina, a lady well known to many Christians for her notable character. She was known for her unwavering commitment to maintaining a peaceful atmosphere during worship at the Basilica. People either loved or hated her for her strong and unshakable principles. She wouldn't

tolerate the noise and commotion, especially when the Mass was in progress. Many young adults, members of PMC, Intermediate youth, or new *Jumuiyas*, sometimes found it challenging to usher under her guidance due to her strict instructions. Her absence in the church is sorely missed, but she left behind a legacy of trained ushers who persevered through her tough orientation.

Unfortunately, Severina developed a condition that initially went unnoticed. At times, she would give unclear or confusing instructions to those of us under her guidance. She even gave away money and later asked for transportation fare back home. This raised concerns among the Christians who knew her. After a diagnosis, doctors advised her to avoid public places, as she was prone to forgetfulness. However, she has maintained her faith to this day, continuing to pray and receive the Holy Communion. Her service to GOD IS NOT IN VAIN and remains steadfast where as her Christian virtues remain deeply rooted in her, despite her condition.

One remarkable thing about Severina is that she can still pray the Rosary and make the sign of the cross, among other Christian teachings within the Catholic faith. From my regular visits, I've observed that she maintains her cheerful demeanor and is articulate in both *English* and *Kikuyu dialect*. She still has memories of her service in the

church, which spanned most of her life.

Through her, I learned a great deal about life and how to conduct myself in the presence of my seniors, in hotels, or when encountering diplomats and other individuals of high caliber in society.

Here are some of the areas she was particular about when in the church, either as a Christian or when overseeing animating groups:

1. Dress and Self-esteem:

Dress is the outward appearance or covering of a living thing, especially the way something is presented. Adornment refers to decorative items or materials added to something to enhance its beauty or attractiveness.

Who Determines Our Dress?

The world, parents, teachers, and elders all play a role in influencing how a Christian should dress.

How Should a Christian Dress?

Dressing and adornment reflect one's character. Severina often corrected those who dressed indecently, providing brief counseling sessions and, with a smile, offering a *leso* (a piece of cloth) to cover themselves. For men, she suggested shifting to a less disruptive seating position. Biblical references such as **1 Timothy 2:9-10** and **Ezekiel 33:18** guided her teachings.

What Our Dress Says About Us:

Our clothing communicates something about us to others. Biblical references like "Attire of a harlot" (**Proverbs 7:10**) were some of the areas where Severina emphasized the importance of modesty.

2. Ushering Guidelines by Severina:

Severina insisted on the following when it came to ushering:

- i. No careless body positioning and movements.
- ii. Dresses should not be too short, revealing the thighs, or too low off the shoulders to reveal the chest, back, or muscles, or sheer enough for others to see through.

Severina's philosophy on dressing was simple but profound. She often asked, "If Jesus comes, will you usher Him or meet Him the way you are dressed, or otherwise?"

The writer is an Usher and the Vice Moderator of the Jesus, Mary & Joseph SCC, HFMB

Reflection on From Here to There With the Word of God



**By Rev. Fr Joseph Njoroge
wa Ngugi**

From here to there is journey of becoming more and otherwise. While it is a journey of becoming it is inclusive of time and space the milieu in which we live as historical beings in cosmos. Consequently it is not fictitious journey. It involves conversations and interactions with cosmos, the world we live in its past and now. We who claim are the centre of it all are part of it as flesh to the soul or vice-versa unless we attempt to in vain escape to spiritual fantasy temporarily before we forced by the truth of our being (verb) of who we really are as ash Wednesday does.

Leo Does, Author of Transforming Humanity and the World; The Jewish Impact on Modernity, face with Hamas attack at Kibbutz last Saturday (7/10/2023), has recourse to Torah to describe the situation thus, 'Now the

earth was astonishingly empty, darkness was on the face of the deep.'(Bereshit/Genesis 1:1.). such was the situation created by 'terrorists' which Kenya is not foreign to in such places as Garissa University, Westgate attack, American embassy, not to mention many others like colonialism, effects of corruption, dictatorial leadership, big man syndromes, draughts, famine, pandemics and many more. Such situations are termed in Hebrew as *tohu wa bohu* which Biblia Takatifu. Tabora Tanzania translates, "Nayo nchi ilikuwa ukiwa, tena utupu, na giza ilikuwa juu ya ilindi via maji. Leo see in words of Torah, let there be light as the first step of coming out of *tohu wa bohu*, and includes the not only Israelis but the whole world woke up to the truth of evil that must be defeated. Thus the Torah's vision of the separation between light and darkness, waters above and waters

below was a moral vision that distinguishes good and evil and embraces itself to defeating the evil and the evil One. Only does the earth sprout with blessed ecosystem-- sprout of vegetation, increase of animals and peoples ... and the world becomes sustainable and wholesome.

Understanding where we are as *tohu wa bohu*, or the *tohu wa bohu* of where we are is imperative in this journey of becoming. Secondly we must discern the means in this journey of becoming. Adam and Eve did not recognize the bliss they were in of being creatures and God being their God in that garden. They plunged themselves to *tohu wa bohu* by refusing to be creatures and attempted, with the deception of the devil alias Satan to be equal with God, something John the baptism knew so well when he said, "let him increase and I decrease." John the baptism became truthful and real true to his being (noun) he became (being-verb) a herald of the one who was and is greater than him. Such is the sin of the world of refusing the truth as Cain did and killed his brother, the sons of God looked with inordinate desire at the daughters of women and were plunged in waters without separation, or those who built towers of Babel to make a name to themselves to rival Yahwe's Elohim name and found themselves into *ukiwa, utupu na giza* of inability to communicate, dialogue or have conversation with one another and yet call themselves humans.

We are not in better position compared to those primeval rivalries with God in the garden of Eden, or follow Cain the patron of jealousy, or Lamech the first recorded polygamist in the Bible, or sons of God following Samson mix with Delilah and lose their heads and eyes, or like Noah take too much and lose their sanity or use others to make a name. In all these what is happening. We make God our rival as the psalmist say, 'sin speaks to the sinner there is no fear of God in his heart.' With that a sinner becomes his or her own god and that is catastrophic. In such a person morals are suspended, conscience is suppressed with the result one becomes formless void. Formless void is a world without the word of God alias wisdom

It is there that our journey of becoming starts guided by the word of God. A journey of becoming a being(noun) being (verb) created by God's word which consists of ordering existing chaos, alias formless void, giving it form and beauty to good. Structure of God's action is, command (let it be) and execution (it became/it is. Note well, the command is accompanied by priestly theme of separation (cosmic in nature), implying formless is lack of separation. Such a separation implies need of light from God rather than from celestial bodies. Separation: light from darkness, water of heaven/ and of earth, morning and evening, water and dry land (Genesis 1:1-20. Only after the evil of chaos cosmic and moral can life and fruitful ecosystem can

emerge as God's blessing. Life is not automatic when conditions are ripe as some scientists would like to believe, or form fertility gods as they mate with goddesses, be it Baal or Asherah as the ancients believed and some 'waganga' insinuate. Life originates from Creator God.

Listening to the word of God in that section of Torah Genesis 1:1-24, and letting it recreate us in our journey of becoming from here (utupu, upwekwena giza) takes us there where we become image and likeness of God, male and female alike. At that level we can, led by the Word, separate evil from good, light from darkness, waters below and waters above... and can differentiate the "I" and thou and I-Thou relationship and implication thereof in all spheres of life. The third book of Torah, the Leviticus whose writer is of the same light as the writer of Genesis 1 uses 'separation' and observation of boundaries as essential way of holiness before neighbour and God who calls us to be holy for He is Holy. Some examples might enlighten as in this journey from here to there. When one or a people choose a golden calf work of human hands for God, or a stone, or a beast that eats grass and give it divine reverence one enters into the sphere where the word of God/wisdom is banished and from "here" goes there where *tohu wa bohu* awaits and unless he/she/they converts will go to the habitat of moles. The same with marriage, when i-thou is not maintained there will be unending rivalry

of who is greater, who calls the shots; or marrying a person of same gender or a kin; a husband treating other women as he does with his wife or vice-versa . . . in all these sense of separation is lost and boundaries are lost and the journey from here to there comes to a halt, one becomes restless and nations fight when boundaries are not clear and then we come a situation of *tohu wa bohu* as in the times of colonialism, terrorism, dictatorship, broken relations, bribery All end in corruption-decay *utupu, upwekwe na giza*.

The climax of our journey from here to there is the Sabbath. Sabbath, imbued in creation as we read God completed the work he had been going and rested on the seventh day. "God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because he rested from all the work he had done in creation" (Gen 2:2-3). St Augustine gives us a hint of the teleos of our journey when he wrote, our hearts are restless unless we have our rest in God. Those who become hard of heart and assume they do not need the word of God in their journey from here to there, Psalm 95 gives a warning, they shall never enter into God's rest. Sabbath is holy, and should be a our today the teleos of our journey of becoming, a day of holiness as Hebrews 3:12-19 pleads.

The writer is a lecturer at St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary and Chaplain for St. Jerome Bible Class, HFMB



By **Lucinda Nyaboke Aiko & Bernadetta Mehozi Nyakure**

JOKES

The priest's homily was long and one of the parishioners fell asleep and began to snore.

The priest, angry, is addressing a woman who was at his side.

-Excuse me, daughter, would you wake up the man you have next to you?

"Ah, no, father, do not put me in your troubles," she said.

-You have made him sleep; you wake him up.

Chemistry teacher: Did you know protons have mass?

Student: I didn't even know protons were Catholic.

How do we know that atoms are Catholic?

Because they have mass.

Why is maths so hard in a catholic school?

Students aren't allowed to sin.

QUOTES

Love God, serve God; everything is in that. Totally love Him, who gave Himself totally for your love. – **St. Clare of Assisi**

I can't do big things. But I want all I do, even the smallest thing, to be for the greater glory of God. – **St. Dominic Savio**

"Think well. Speak well. Do well. These three things, through the mercy of God, will make a man go to Heaven." – **St. Camillus de Lellis**

"No one should follow what he considers to be good for himself, but rather what seems good for another. Let them put Christ before all else; and may he lead us all to everlasting life." – **St. Benedict**

"It is with the smallest brushes that the artist paints the most exquisitely beautiful pictures." – **St. André Bessette**

"It is better to be a child of God than king of the whole world." – **St. Aloysius Gonzaga**

When we were children we used to think that when we were grown up we would no longer be vulnerable .but to grow is to accept vulnerability – **Madeleine L'Engle**

The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek –**Joseph Campbell's**

Ignorance of scriptures is ignorance of the word of God –**St Jerome**

Daring is not saying I'm willing to risk failure - **Roosevelt**

TRIVIA

1. How Many Sundays are there in Ordinary Time.?

- A. 23
- B. 34
- C. 20
- D. 50

2. What is the Title used to address a Cardinal?

- A. Your Lordship
- B. His Holiness
- C. Your Eminence
- D. Monsignor

3. The place where priests are trained is called?

- A. Bible School
 - B. University
 - C. Seminary
 - D. Cathedral
4. When a Pope dies or retires, the place used to elect a New Pope is called?
- A. Conclave
 - B. Collegiate
 - C. Prayer meeting
 - D. None
5. The real name of Pope Francis is
- A. Peter Hons
 - B. Jorge Mario Bergoglio
 - C. Francis Bergoglio
 - D. None.
6. Pope Francis is thePope.
- A. 233rd
 - B. 256th
 - C. 366th
 - D. 266th
7. The number of days between Easter and Pentecost is
- A. 40
 - B. 70
 - C. 50
 - D. 10
8. The Conclude the introductory rite
- A. Collect
 - B. Gloria
 - C. Angus Dei
 - D. Kyrie
9. The giving of communion by dipping the consecrated host into the consecrated wine is called
- A. Intinction

- B. Institution
 - C. Commingling
 - D. Instinction
10. The Colour is worn on the Feast of Pentecost
- A. Green
 - B. White
 - C. Red
 - D. Violet
11. Which of the following clergymen qualify to be a Pope
- A. Priest
 - B. Bishop
 - C. Monsignor
 - D. Cardinal
12. A person who leads the Prayer of the Faithful is called
- A. Lector
 - B. Bidder
 - C. Clapper
 - D. Prayer leader
13. The metal container used to hold the oils is called
- A. Stock
 - B. Stoup
 - C. Pyx
 - D. Sepulcrum
14. How many times does a Priest make genuflection during Mass?
- A. 2
 - B. 4
 - C. plenty
 - D. 3
15. How many liturgical seasons do we have?
- A. 4
 - B. 5
 - C. 3

- D. 7
16. Which is day in the Catholic Church that we do not celebrate Mass?
- A. When a Pope die
 - B. Good Friday
 - C. When the priest go for leave
 - D. None
17. The Symbol of a Priest is....
- A. Cassock
 - B. Alb
 - C. Stole
 - D. Cincture

ANSWERS

- 1. B
- 2. C
- 3. C
- 4. A
- 5. B
- 6. D
- 7. C
- 8. A
- 9. A
- 10. C
- 11. D
- 12. A
- 13. A
- 14. A
- 15. B
- 16. B
- 17. C

Now you know

Lucinda is the Secretary to Lectors Society & PMC Animator, HFMB & Bernadetta is the secretary to St. Paul Youth Evangelizers, HFMB

OUR LADY MOTHER OF AFRICA - FELICIAN SISTERS AT HOLY FAMILY BASILICA

All through the Heart of Mary in honour of the Most Blessed Sacrament



CHARISM

Blessed Mary Angela's charism is deeply rooted in the Gospel message of love and service. Our Mother foundress Blessed Mary Angela recognized that we are all called by God to serve one another, and this was the foundation of her community of Felician Sisters. Her unconditional love for God and her willingness to

surrender to His will allowed her to fully embrace her calling and inspire others to do the same back in the year 1855 in Poland.

One of the key aspects of the Felician Sisters' charism is their commitment to serving in marginalized areas. They understand that these communities are often the most in need of love and compassion, and they strive to bring the light of God's love to

these people. However, they also recognize that the needs of the Church extend beyond just marginalized areas. This is why they are willing to go wherever the Church requests them to serve.

Total availability is another important aspect of the Felician Sisters' charism. Blessed Mary Angela believed that we should always be open and ready to serve God and others, no matter the time or place. This means being willing to forego our comfort zones and embrace new challenges in service to the Church and those in need.

Finally, the Felician Sisters' charism is grounded in their deep concern for the salvation of all people. They understand that our ultimate goal as Christians is to help others come to know and love God, and they strive to embody this mission in all aspects of their work. This includes not only serving the physical needs of others, but also bringing the message of God's love and salvation to those they encounter.

In conclusion, Blessed Mary Angela's charism of love, surrender, and service continues to inspire the Felician Sisters to this day. Their dedication to imitating



her example has allowed them to make a profound impact in both marginalized and non-marginalized areas, serving the needs of the Church and all people. May we all be inspired by her charisma to follow God's will and spread His love to those around us.

**Our Lady Of Perpetual Help
New Convent And The
Apostolates At Holy Family
Basilica**

The Felician Sisters officially opened a new community at Holy Family Basilica in January, 2023 under the patronage of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. This community, consisting of six sisters, is a wonderful example of the Felician

Sisters' charism and their dedication to serving God and others.

Located at Holy Family Basilica, this new community continues to serve in various apostolates within the parish. The sisters are actively involved in pastoral work which includes; serving in the parish office, taking care of the sacristy and the Main Church, Catechesis to the young children, working in the youth ministry which includes; pontifical missionary children, missionary youth movement, young catholic adults and youth serving Christ.

In addition to their work in the parish, the other sisters are also serving in important institutions such as the Archdiocesan Curia as secretaries in the Archdiocesan offices and an extension to the Judiciary offices. They strive to bring a sense of warmth and compassion to the community especially to those they meet daily as they embody the love of God and concern for the salvation of all people, just as Blessed Mary Angela our foundress did. This showcases the Felician Sisters' commitment to being available wherever there is a need, and their willingness

to adapt to different environments in order to serve God and others.

The Felician Sisters' charism is rooted in their love for God and their surrender to His Divine Will. This is evident in the way they serve with compassion and selflessness, following in the footsteps of their foundress Blessed Mary Angela. Through their work in the new community at Holy Family Basilica, the sisters continue to spread the message of God's love and hope to all those they encounter.

In conclusion, the new community of the Felician Sisters under the patronage of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is an example of their Charism and Mission. Their dedication to serving in various apostolates and institutions serves as a reminder of the importance of love and service in living out the Gospel message.

We are grateful to the Lord, the Archbishop of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Nairobi-His Grace Philip Anyolo, and the Administrator of Holy Family Basilica Cathedral-Rev. Fr. Simon Peter Kamomoe the clergy for the continuous support of our convent and apostolates at Holy Family Minor Basilica.

DEO GRATIAS

Compiled by Rev. Sr. Mary Aulisia, member of the OLMA Community, HFMB



A good education is a foundation
for a better future.

~ Elizabeth Warren

HOLY FAMILY BASILICA PAROCHIAL SCHOOL

THE 2023 RELEASE



The School Is Embedded On The General Role Of Instilling Ethical And Academic Values In The Pupils In Readiness To Establishing A Highly Competitive Christian Learner Who Will Not Only Give The Best In Life But Also Be An Icon To Many .

MISSION STATEMENT:

To offer education that enhances spiritual, intellectual and character formation of the pupils through mutual co-operation among pupils, parents, teachers and benefactors.

VISION STATEMENT:

To be a model school that cultivates love for lifelong learning, spiritual growth and exemplary moral values.

SCHOOL MOTTO:

Strive for spiritual and academic excellence.

CORE VALUES:

Love, excellence, integrity, teamwork, hardwork, respect, commitment



The school is established and founded on Christian values which are our daily moving and operating gear. Being built within the Holy Family Minor Basilica premises, the school changed its name from Catholic Parochial to Holy Family Basilica Parochial and enjoys a variety of privileges ranging from the weekly Eucharistic celebrations and spiritual guidance from our ever-available clergy personnel led by our director Rev. Fr. Dr. Peter Kamomoe. We also conduct catechesis classes which ensure that before learners transit to high school, they have received all the sacraments giving them a firm foundation in faith.

Under the leadership of Sr. Joyce, the school has been able to partner with various schools around Nairobi and beyond not only in academic fields but also in the world of co-curricular activities.

The school has for long enjoyed and taken pride in various achievements and awards both in the world

of music and sports. In the past years, the school has participated in music and drama festivals up to the national level.

Being administered by a team of expert facilitators/teachers, the school has been able to marvel in various clubs and associations/movements as clearly highlighted in the captions below.

The school has one of the most coveted pupils' choir that has recorded its own art in studio and is still aiming higher.

The pupils have always enjoyed the frequent educational tours and travels all-round the country. Promotion of internal tourism is in the hearts and souls of these young ones.

As part of patriotism to our country, the school enrolls pupils from as low as grade 1 in the school's leading and competitive scouts' movement and participating in voting in the school council.

When you land in the school environment, you will be

amazed beyond words on the excellent works of the pupils and teachers in the bid to put CBC in practice. Some of the activities include: Agriculture, Home science and Science projects

Indeed, we are a 2-6-6-3 conversant and practicing institution.

LULU ZA MAISHA

Katika maisha ukitazama kila kitu utatamani kila kitu. Mengine yafumbie macho ili uweze kuishi ushiishe. Vyote ving'aavyo si dhahabu.

Tukumbuke kuwa tabia na ustaarabu humfanya mtu kuwa mtu. Asiye na haya mawili husemwa ni mtu-kutu.

Lolote ufanyalo, lifanye kwa wakati unaofaa. Usichelewe wala usiahirishe. Enda na wakati na usisahau kuwa umaridadi wa Ijumaa hufanywa Alhamisi

MY SIGNIFICANT MENTOR

1) My teacher, our teachers, It is because of you, that I stand and praise



The great things you have done
To sharpen our minds for future
TEACHER, what a significant
MENTOR, You are!

2) Many don't recognize you,
but I say, you must be praised

You make presidents,
doctors, engineers, pilots and
accountants, name them all

TEACHER, what a significant
MENTOR, You are!

3) Waking up very early, not
because you are rich, but
because of your call, you
overcome the challenges
irregardless of abuse, from
people and environment

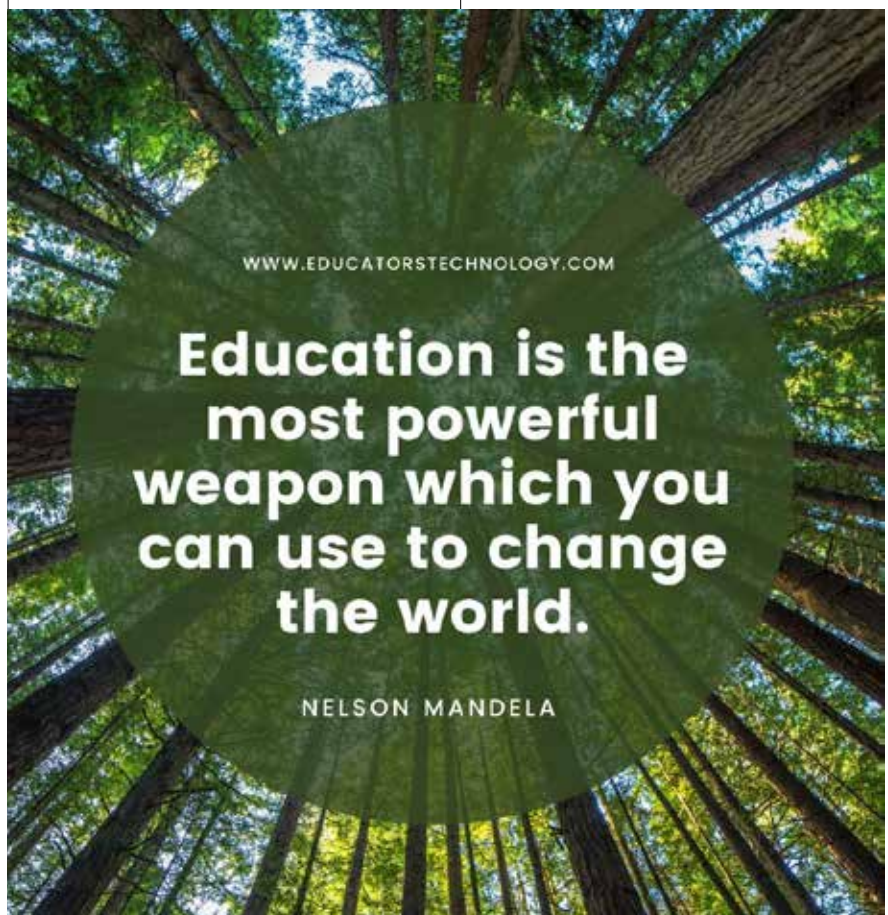
TEACHER, what a significant
MENTOR, You are!!!!

**DRIVING FORCE IN THE
TEACHING CAREER.**

- Teach your children that safe adults don't ask children to keep secrets.
- In a world where you can be anything, be kind.

- Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.
- There are miracles and glory in every child. Our glory lies in empowering them to flourish their glory.

- Teaching is more than imparting knowledge. It is inspiring change. Learning is more than absorbing facts; it is acquiring understanding.
- Everyone who remembers his own education remembers teachers, not



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most powerful
weapon which you
can use to change
the world.**

NELSON MANDELA



methods and techniques. The teacher is the heart of the education system.

- A great teacher takes a hand, opens a mind and touches a heart.
- Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

THE LATEST ACHIEVEMENTS

The dream of Holy Family Basilica Parochial School (H.F.B.P.S) of running a Junior Secondary School (JSS) has finally materialized. The pioneer grade is soon transiting to grade 8 paving way to the candidates who sat the Kenya Primary School Education Assessment (KPSEA) this year. What a great joy it is for these learners.

The unique uniform and seriousness in class makes them look like young adults leaving a lot to be admired.

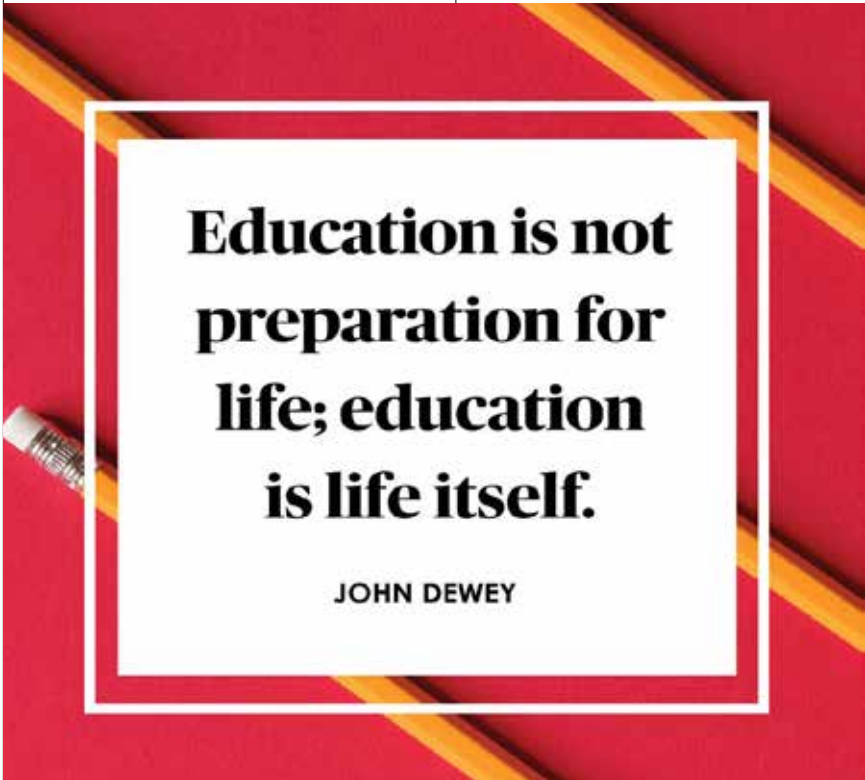
The JSS learners adventure in new learning areas where we have well equipped and spacious Computer, Science lab Home Science labs.

Why deny your child the chance to enjoy all the delicacies in JSS?????????????????

H.F.B.P.SCHOOL ANTHEM

1. All) Holy Family Basilica Parochial School x2
Girls) Unite stakeholders, our readiness to the service
All) We strive for spiritual and academic excellence
- 2) All) Our vision and the mission for holistic growth) x2
Girls) Directors and the

- teachers, our parents and the pupils
- All) We strive for spiritual and, academic excellence
- 3) All) Our Father who art in Heaven grant us knowledge) x2
Girls) Commitment and the respect, love integrity and the teamwork
- All) We strive for spiritual and, academic excellence x3
All) Holy Family Basilica Parochial school x2



AGAPE FAMILY BREAD & YOUTH SHOP

Agape Family Bread

Not Just Bread.... It's a Tasty Bread



- ❖ Rock Bun
- ❖ Coconut Buns
- ❖ Brown Bread
- ❖ Fancy Bread
- ❖ Cupcakes

Agape Family Bread Bakery is a project initiated by Holy Family Basilica Parochial School, aimed at generating additional funds to finance various school activities in support of quality education.

The bakery provides a diverse range of products, including Brown Bread, White Bread, Fancy Bread, Coconut Bun, Fancy Buns, Rock Buns, and more, all crafted with family health in mind. Your

purchase of these delicious baked goods directly contributes to supporting the school. Therefore, by choosing Agape Family Bread, you not only enjoy tasty treats but also play a role in enhancing education.

Welcome to Agape!

Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered. – Proverbs 11:25

Youth Shop

For all Sacramentals and Prayer Books



- ❖ Rosary
- ❖ Crosses
- ❖ Prayer Books
- ❖ Photos
- ❖ Rock Bun
- ❖ Coconut Buns
- ❖ Brown Bread
- ❖ Fancy Bread
- ❖ Cupcakes

The Youth shop is a project initiated by Holy Family Minor Basilica Youth Board, aimed at generating additional funds to finance various youth activities. The shop provides a

diverse range of sacramentals and prayer books. Your purchase of these items directly contributes to supporting the youth activities at HFMB.



**We the Clergy of The Holy Family Minor Basilica Wish you a
joyous Advent, Christmas season and a Happy 2024**