The first General Congress of the States of Perfection, held in Rome at the beginning of December in the Holy Year 1950 invited Religious Institutes and Secular Institutes, Male and Female, from each nation to join in Federations, Conferences or Councils of Major Superiors. This kind of organization very soon extended to almost every nation (Can. 708). These conferences of Major Superiors have their own statutes approved by the Holy See, by which they are erected (can. 709).

In response to the invitation of the Holy See to join in Federations, Conferences or Councils of Major Superiors and after consultations with the Major Superiors and the Bishops in Uganda that time in the 1950s to 1960s, Associaatio Religiosarum Ugandae (ARU), which in English translates to “The Association of the Religious Women in Uganda,” was started by the Major Superiors of Religious Women Institutes in 1968, under the leadership of Mother Bernardine of the Institute of the Little Sisters of St. Francis, (LSOSF). The Association was approved by the Holy See in July 1972. The first officially appointed Secretary General was Mother Bernardine, LSOSF. She served from 1968 to 1985. After this, the late Mother Cecilia Nibyobyonka, OLGC, took the mantle from 1985-1998.

At about the same time, in 1968, the Religious Men Institutes also established their own Association which they called “Conference of Major Superiors of Religious Institutes in Uganda” COMSRIU. Later on, in 1995, the Men Religious in Uganda, whose national association had been called as indicated above, joined the Women Religious and all agreed to maintain one umbrella name that is entitled as ARU. So till recent, both Women and Men Consecrated Persons in Uganda have been enshrined under one statutory title ARU.

In a letter addressed to the former Chairperson, dated Vatican City June 18, 2019, the Cardinal Prefect, Joao Braz Cardinal de Aviz, ...
decreed that the name of the Association must change from ARU to “Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life”. (Letter from the Vatican to Fr. Joseph Kyeyune, AJ, Chairperson of ARU, on the title to be used, Vatican City June 18, 2019). Upon receipt of this directive, the ARU Executive contextualized this dictum into national all-embracing title. Hence from now onwards, ARU is “Conference of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda,” (CICLSALU). The Canonization of the new body was called Assembly of Major Superiors of Religious Institutes in Uganda (AMSRIU). (We should also bear in mind that the name AMSRIU, will, given the directive from Rome, change from R—Religious- to Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life). However, the Women Religious still wanted to maintain certain autonomy in dealing with issues peculiar to them, since they also belonged to another Women’s Association: The Association of Consecrated Women in Eastern and Central Africa. For this reason, the Consecrated Women maintained the “ARU” initials for themselves. Hence the two bodies ARU/AMSRIU are alongside each other. In 2013 the AMSRIU body decided to maintain the name “Association of the Religious in Uganda” (ARU) to mean the whole body of all the Religious in Uganda, since it was perceived that the members at the grassroots had been eclipsed. Then in 2014 the Holy Father approved the decision to let “AMSRIU” refer to the body of the Assembly of Major Superiors of Religious Institutes in Uganda. Note that it is no longer the “Association” but “Assembly.” The Assembly is the policy making body and provides leadership to all the Religious (Consecrated Persons) in Uganda. ARU functions at the level of the ARU Branches in their respective Catholic Dioceses. Nevertheless, ARU still also refers to Religious Women only in connection to ACWECA. ARU / CICLSALU is currently composed of approximately 8,500 Consecrated Men and Women. AMSRIU has a Registration of 112 Institutes of Consecrated Life across all Dioceses in Uganda. To become member of AMSRIU, an Institute must register itself at the Headquarters of CICLSALU Secretariat and make the required annual subscriptions. VISION STATEMENT: “A Prophetic Body of Consecrated Men and Women Inspired by Gospel Values for Our Own Transformation and that of Society.” MISSION STATEMENT: “To Collaborate, Support and Empower Each Institute to Live Its Unique Charisms, Within the Mission of the Church Today.” CORE VALUES: Unity, Commitment, Humility, Honesty, Sharing The MOTTO of ARU: ARU’s / CICLSALU Motto is “No longer strangers but friends” (Jn. 15:15). In 1986 ARU Secretariat was established at its current location at Nsambya, a suburb of Kampala Capital City, a place that was granted by the late Emmanuel Cardinal Nsubuga. In 1995, the merger between Religious Men and Women was achieved with the aim of bringing about an integrated body of Consecrated Catholic Women and Men in Uganda. With a common voice and vision of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ to all people and a platform for addressing issues of common concern. We must note however, that this name ARU has also undergone a lot of changes in recent past. As a result of the merger, - 1. To help Institutes in carrying out their roles and functions and furthering the attainment of the aim of each Institute, while respecting their autonomy, nature and proper spirit. 2. To provide a forum for Major Superiors to share the needs of the Institutes and discern the means to respond to those needs. 3. To help Institutes build relationships that lead to complementing each other, sharing meagre resources, and avoiding competition and duplication as they respond to God’s call enshrined in their different Charisms and Mission Statements. 4. To foster a suitable and close collaboration of Institutes of men and women among themselves and with ecclesiastical authorities. 5. To assist Major Superiors and Institutes in their relations with civil authorities. Compiled by Sr. Lydia Apili Bwor, LSMIG NB: To be continued in the next issue—2
ADMINISTRATIVE HIERARCHY OF THE CONFERENCE OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE IN UGANDA, (CICLSALU)

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“No longer strangers but friends” (Jn. 15:15).
ARU /CICLSALU Responds to COVID 19

By Sr. Specioza Kabahuma DST

In the event that COVID 19 has dictated thus, leading to an institutional lockdown, many people continue to say: “prayer, creativity, home working and similar interventions are not locked down!” In the same vein, the Conference of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda (CICLSALU / ARU), continues to reach out to the needy despite this lockdown event.

As the lockdown isolation pressure was building up, Sr. Annamaria Nankusu, RSCJ, the President of CICLSALU circulated a statement to all member Institutes expressing solidarity and sharing information on the pandemic and advising members to keep vigilant. The statement also emphasized strict observation of the Government directives through the Ministry of Health.

Meanwhile, CICLSALU, facilitated the staff members to confinement in their respective homes for their safety and that of their families. This was in line with decongestion and social distance directed by the Ministry of Health. Besides, indoor work, extended Adoration and daily prayers being observed, in the event of this lockdown, are bearing forth needed life interventions that can harness life in our communities and in the neighbourhood.

CICLSALU / ARU Secretariat community divided the 112 registered Institutes of Consecrated Persons and Societies of Apostolic Life by seven days. Every day, the Community prays for 16 member-Institutes. This became more interesting when the Institutes back home join in the prayer to back up the Staff member who leads the prayer of the day. The Institutes being prayed for also accompany the one taking prayer of the day.

Among others, there is a process of identifying numbers of homes for aged and sick consecrated persons. This is being done ahead of the plans to provide some essential protective materials and equipment to protect the caregivers and those they serve in the home and or the community. This work in progress includes: Provision of Thermometers at the main gates to test all entrants, thermometers and protective gears as may be required in the homes and big communities to ensure some on-going testing and vigilance are adhered to.

A survey is being carried out in Children’s and Babies’ homes managed by the Consecrated Persons; as well as Formation houses and Mother houses that are accommodating more than 10 members. This survey would help to assess how prepared the members are in addressing challenges posed by COVID-19. This will help CICLSALU to identify gaps and address them where possible. This was done so as to plan for some logistics to support the available and existing efforts to prevent the pandemic.

Another intervention from the Secretariat is reaching out to stranded patients together with caregivers who were caught up in the lockdown in hospitals. The Conference synergized with mainly Hospital Chaplaincies of particularly Nsambya and Rubaga to give support by offering essential commodities and to facilitate the distribution of ARVs to the HIV/AIDs patients.

Thanks to Sr. Lydia Apili Bwor, who has laboured to compile a profile of ARU. This will bring all the members of the Network to a common footing. This same level brings all aboard, no one remains ignorant about home; the home of all the Consecrated Women and Men in Uganda. Ignorance of ARU is ignorance about your home!

Please, make a practical endeavor to visit the Secretariat of the Association of the Consecrated persons in Uganda. This is a Centre for you the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life both Native Institutes and Foreign Missionaries serving in Uganda.

No longer Strangers but Friends!

Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru
Editor/ Communications Coordinator, ARU Secretariat
ARU Appreciates Fr. Joseph and all outgoing Members

By Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru  MSMMC

The Conference of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda (CICLSA / ARU), Secretariat entered a somber mood from mid-May to November 2019, when some of the administrative members came to the close of their term of service. “Time to part company is a very painful moment but when it arrives, we must be brave and let go,” one member remarked.

The new President of the Conference of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda (CICLSALU), Sr. Annamaria Nankusu, RSCJ; who has replaced the former Chairperson; Fr. Joseph Kyeyune, AJ, was the Chief Guest at the thanks-giving and farewell function. Sr. Annamaria thanked Fr. Joseph for the whole hearted service he rendered while at ARU / CICLSALU.

Fr. Joseph who served in this office from 2011-2019 captured many positive attributes from members of staff with whom they shared a loving service. Among others, it was observed that he was a team builder and player, he made countless sacrifices at workplace, he was also intelligent, scholarly, balanced and enriched ARU / CICLSALU with his spiritual gifts and skills. The President went ahead to thank his parents for such a selfless gift!

This memorable thanksgiving event in honour of Fr. Joseph was held at Munyonyo Serena Hotel on November 21, 2019. It was witnessed by representatives of the Executive Committee, Administrative and Support Staff members of ARU /CICLSALU Secretariat. The Executive and Administrative team members were also appreciated for their tireless work and service rendered towards the progress and development of CICLSALU.

Similarly, the team could not help but recall the remarkable services rendered by Sr. Margaret Kubanze, LSOSF, the out-gone Secretary General, whose term of service ended mid-2019. ARU /CICLSALU Network will live to remember her for systems she put in place for smooth-running of the Secretariat. Together with her was Sr. Stella Rose Acen, DM, the out-gone Administrative Secretary, whose term of office expired in August 2019. She diligently served from 10th December 2013.

Sr. Annamaria thanked ARU / CICLSALU Community for the collaborative service while in the office. “I beg for pardon over shortcomings that inevitably crossed my way. I thank you for bearing with me all through. I have enjoyed your support and words of encouragement,” he said.

“I want to register a big THANK YOU to the Administration; particularly for protecting the patrimony of ARU / CICLSALU.

I thank Mr. Jackson Lukwago, commonly referred to as Salongo, one of the drivers and longest serving staff at ARU / CICLSALU. I would say, this function is not a farewell party but a thanks-giving ceremony, appreciating everyone, for the brotherly and sisterly love and care, as well as for the gift I have received,” he further reiterated.

He promised a continual support in the apostolate and especially to Sr. Annamaria, who is new in this office (CICLSALU).
Uganda Hosts ASEC Staff Training and Celebrates 20th Anniversary

Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru MSMMC

Little did African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) remember that it had clocked 20! It was until during the Staff Training when the Conference of the Institutes of Consecrated Persons and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda (CICLSALU) the host, organized anniversary celebrations on January 10, 2020 at CICLSALU Secretariat.

“We thank the founders of ASEC and you the participants for blessing us with your presence! ASEC has done great things by educating our sisters in various aspects to meet the needs of the world. Thank you Directors and Coordinators especially those in Uganda for a job well done. As Africans, let us use the opportunity offered. Avoid being selfish by thinking in terms of tribes and institutions of origin, so that we can bring unity in diversity and remain prophetic voices,” Sr. Annamaria Nankusu, RSCJ, the President of CICLSALU remarked.

While Sr. Lydia Apili Bwor, LSMIG, the Secretary General, CICLSALU in a welcome remark thanked ASEC for choosing Uganda for their training. She promised prayers for ASEC to grow from strength to strength. And she CONGRATULATED ASEC for clocking 20 years. She invited ASEC team for a dinner at the end of their training (which turned to be a huge celebration animated by Misizi entertainment group).

Sr. Lydia also recalled how they experienced ‘tough-love’ as pioneers of ASEC. Joined by Sr. Germina Keneema, Programme Director of Uganda and Sr. Leonard Andrew Tumwesigye, LSMMC; they sang a song to memorize the good time they had together during ASEC training many years ago.

ASEC Staff Training that took place at Mestil Hotel, Kampala attracted 18 participants from 10 African countries: Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho and with its Executive Director Sr. Cecilia Draru, LSMIG, from the USA. The participants were basically ASEC, Country Directors and Coordinators.

The eight-day training (Jan. 5-12th), was guided by the theme: Strengthening Capacity for efficient Management of ASEC Offices in Africa. Among others, the team made country reports, they were also inducted into various disciplines like Leadership Styles and Competence, Effective Communication, Professional Code of Conduct and Ethics, Finance, Time and Resource Management.

Sr. Cecilia, the Executive Director, thanked CICLSALU team under the leadership of Sr. Annamaria Nankusu the President: “Thank you for being prophetic voices, for praying, loving, for righteousness and neighbourliness. The Conference of Sisters is helping to share the beauty of dynamic charisms, mission and spirituality. Hilton Foundation is a result of sisters’ good ministry especially of the Loreto Sisters.

Yet the beneficiaries of Hilton Foundation are worldwide! There is need for diversity in our ministry not competition but collaboration,” Sr. Cecilia remarked.

Besides, the Executive Director was also happy with what she referred to as “nice shock of ASEC Anniversary”. She appreciated ARU for being a home for all sisters. And added that there is need to give knowledge and skills for the growing Church in Africa. “Sisters are the social face of the Catholic Church. ASEC is ready to train vibrant consecrated women who are ardent in ministry. Sisters often do work for which they are underqualified. Hence, ASEC is set out to provide expertise through capacity building programmes,” she added.

Given a phenomenon where the African Catholic Consecrated Women have been moving uphill, trying day by day to overcome myriads of obstacles; like poverty, hunger, disease, let alone war, violence and effects of global warming; ASEC came in handy and offered rescue through educational programmes.

The collaborative strength powered and pioneered by the African Sisters with USA partners bridged many gaps in Africa. Institute of the Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (SIHM)- Mary Wood University, Society of Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ)- Rosemont College, Sisters of St. Joseph –Philadelphia- Chestnut Hill College,
Uganda Hosts ASEC

Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia-Neuman University are but Charter Members who collaborated with Partners like Conrad Hilton Foundation and other Associate Members in supporting ASEC programmes. The history of ASEC dates back to 1995 when a growing solidarity among consecrated women in Africa and the United States sparked a commitment to work together to address the issue of educational access. As a result of needs assessment and careful analysis, ASEC was inaugurated in 1999 by Leaders of the four afore-mentioned Institutes of Consecrated Women in the USA. The programme zeroed on to the Catholic Consecrated Women in Africa, because of their ability and disposition to use education to solve some of the big development challenges the continent faces today. Among others; poor healthcare services, hunger and access to clean water, voices to people who are persecuted and silenced, care for the young who are losing sense of direction, the old and the forgotten and mentor others, create jobs in the face of unemployment, strengthen institutes and unite communities in discord.
Catholic Care for Children in Uganda makes Transitional Progress

By Joseph S, Caroline N and Sr. Jane N IHMR

Catholic Care for Children in Uganda (CCCU) programme offered a smooth transition training for its members recently. The training was meant to enhance the participants to develop Community Based Care Programs as opposed to institutionalized care and expand fundraising avenues to meet transition costs and the new programming.

CCCU is an initiative of the Conference of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda former ARU, together with her partners from Gerald Henrietta Rauenhorst (GHR Foundation). They seek to strengthen Religious Institutes in the expression of their charisms, with consecrated persons becoming champions of child care reform and improving outcomes for children living outside of family care i.e. Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVCs).

With this background, CCCU programme is now embracing its second phase. The team organized a one-month (Feb 9 - March 13, 2020) capacity building training. It was facilitated by Lecturers from Uganda Management Institute (UMI). “ARU-CCCU Team opted to contract UMI because it is one of the Institutes with capacity to offer the modules needed,” the spokesperson noted. “The intended outcomes of the training are to enable the administrators of child care units to: write fundable project proposals, mobilize resources to facilitate new programming for community based initiatives, monitor and evaluate results/impacts, manage and account for project finances, plan strategically for the transition of Child Care Institutions (CCIs) and equip CCI administrators with knowledge to manage the people’s side of change; in order to achieve the required outcome(s),” the spokesperson added.

The workshop attracted 52 participants basically Consecrated Persons and Institutes of Apostolic Life of ARU membership. They comprised of Child Care Home Administrators, Social Workers and Religious Institute Treasurier Generals. CCCU team appreciated ARU and Partners’ support and extended their sincere thanks to the Superior Generals of Partner Religious Institutes, Management of ARU, GHR Foundation, Uganda Management Institute, and Staffs of partner Child Care Institutions for enabling them to achieve their goal of empowering CCIs. Randomly, the following responses were captured from the participants: “With current knowledge and skills, I will mobilize resources through networking,” Sr. Bonny Atuhairwe OLGC, “I will train families in parenting styles and food security,” Sr. Mary H. Anyakuru DMJMQA, “We will successfully transit from institution to family based care by engaging parents and relatives in resource mobilization,” Sr. Leocardia T. and Elizabeth N. MSMMC.

Other sisters from IHMR added that; “We have learned how to write project proposals, contribute towards set goals, we can develop strategic plans and take care of dos and don’ts of a project proposal.” Dr. Stanislaus Kasiyo Mulindwa who represented the Director General of UMI in the concluding function, challenged the participants to practice what they learnt: “Make change at the place of work, make it visible,” he urged. He also assured the house about the quality education at UMI: “International Standards Organization (ISO) rates UMI second in Africa to meet the international standards.”

Sr. Lydia Apili Bwor LSMIG, the Secretary General ARU cautioned the participants to have a good entry strategy: “Align your proposals to the Sustainable Development Goals, failing to plan is planning to fail. More knowledge ought to make a person simple, humble and down to earth. This is expected of you as you become experts in child care,” she emphasized. Meanwhile, Sr. Annamaria Nankusu RSCJ, the President of the Conference of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda;
...Catholic Care for Children in Uganda

thanked all those whose efforts yielded much fruits in the workshop. “Thank you UMI for uplifting our standards and it is our desire to maintain this collaboration. And you participants take the challenge and make a difference where ever you go.” She adjourned the workshop with a concluding prayer.

Consecrated Persons witness in the Refugee Camps (series…1)

Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru, MSMMC

Bidibidi, one of the world’s largest Refugee Settlement Camp, that covers 250 square kilometers with many other settlements in Uganda leaves a lot to be desired. Consecrated persons and particularly the Catholic Religious Sisters who are involved in the Pastoral work are, but a drop in the sea! Such pastoral services services are considered as an outreach to the New to the New Poverties and Social Rejects: street children, refugees and victims of Trafficking in Persons (TIP). The Conference of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda (CICLSALU) brings out what it takes to make the suffering face of Jesus to shine out. A visit to Bidibidi Refugee Settlement Camp, found in the eastern half of Yumbe District, stretching southward from the South Sudan boarder and spilling over into Moyo District, along the western bank of the Kochi River, gives the actual picture of the ground work.

At Bidibidi camp, one can practically witness what Jesus said: “…the harvest is great but the labourers are few…Mt. 9:35-38. The Missionary Sisters - Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS) together with Divine Word Missionaries (SVD) serve the needy among the South Sudanese Refugees. Sr. Dorothea Poli, SSpS, who is in charge of the Missionary Society begun this missionary service in 2017. Their community is involved in direct pastoral work:

“We teach refugees how to pray, make rosaries, especially the missionary rosary.

We train the youth animators to guide the children. So far, we have trained 150 animators from 30 chapels.

Fr. Andrew is making arrangement to train more catechists,” said Sr. Dorothea. In her narration, Sister added that their field of apostolate includes: Education, social work, health services and pastoral work. This team has been serving as missionaries in the Diocese of Yei in the South Sudan until 2016, when the demise of Sr. Veronica Rackova SSpS RIP who served as medical Doctor occurred. She was shot dead in Yei in the process of assisting a mother who was due for delivery in a referral hospital.

The Sisters were then withdrawn to the regional house in Ethiopia. The pastoral agents reflect joy in their faces but with many challenges underneath: “We have cultural challenges and differences but we use English as a medium of communication.

We encourage the different tribes to live in harmony but it is not easy. We are faced with inadequate teaching materials, long distance from the settlement camps, some flocks are joining other faiths and sects, we also journey with cases of suicide attempts, “child headed” family members (where children assume parents’ responsibility of heading of a home) due to the persistent South Sudanese wars that left behind a trail of orphans. There is scarcity of water and food especially during drought and difficulty in getting wood fuel (firewood),” Sr. Poli concluded.

On this particular day, the pastoral team were invited to attend inter-Chapel Competition. A catechist shared his experience; “We are growing holistically and also thankful to the Chapel Council Members who have organized this Inter-Chapel Competition and Parents’ Day. We just invited Father Andrew and the Sisters to officiate the day.

Sr. Dorothea Poli distributing uniforms to the liturgical dancers
Witness in the Refugees Camp

We have so far witnessed 9 weddings, 700 confirmations in 2019 in the four zones. From 2016 to date, the pastoral agents administered 3000 baptisms,” he narrated. Another participant added; “Today we are displaying skills in how our children are progressing through competition in Bible Quiz, Drama and Cultural performance.” The Sisters and Fr. Andrew Dzida, SVD, prepared awards for the winners but decided that all the groups would receive gifts for motivation. Besides such functions, the Sisters also follow up the animators, facilitate seminars, carry out the activities all over Bidibidi Camp. However, they would also challenge the refugees to develop and take initiatives.

During Mass on the competition Day, there suddenly occurred a sharp drop in church choir voice projection, which was equally met with diminished response and participation from the congregation! Sr. Dorothea confirmed that hunger was torturing the worshipers… And immediately Fr. Andrew Dzida, SVD the main celebrant observed, “Sorry I know you are hungry, many of you came a long way without breakfast, soon you will have something to eat.” After Mass, Sisters Francesca and Dorothea gave them some sweets to chew, shortly after which they had lunch together.

Despite these challenges many of the refugees remain hopeful and positive; “We are happy today to meet friends from other chapels. I learnt a lesson about the love of Christ for children. Jesus Christ has shown us the way to behave. Today being the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, Jesus challenges Soul who became Paul after his conversion; so it calls me to live nonviolent life,” Joyce Night Nyume shared her experience.

The community of the Sisters comprises of six Sisters from six countries namely: Philippines, Indonesia, Poland, India, China and Nigeria.

They move in teams of two groups as they engage in pastoral service among the refugees. Missionary programmes include: Ready Feet: this invites children and youth in the process of growth and maturity to start practicing what they are assimilating through the catechetical and formative process of the mission. Growing Seed: This enhances them in growth and becoming instruments as Missionary Seeds. Burning Heart: helps children who are contemplating realities of the world from their experiences of faith and own these realities. The pastoral agents also encourage children to help fellow children among others.
Consecrated Persons in Uganda colorfully celebrate their Day

ARU Staff Writer

February 2, the Feast of Presentation of the Lord has become the World Day of Prayer for the Consecrated Persons. Universally, the Consecrated Persons celebrate it in the way that suits them. In Uganda, the networks of ARU / CICLSALU equally observed it. There are groups that anticipated it, due to pastoral reasons. Yet some others opted to start with recollection and personal prayer. Mass was celebrated as the highest essence of consecrated life and that was followed by lunch and light moments. The Networks of the Consecrated Persons in Uganda shared experiences of the day as follows: In the Archdiocese of Kampala, Consecrated Persons assembled at Rubaga Cathedral. Archbishop Luigi Bianco, the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda presided over the liturgical celebrations.

“This is also the feast of light and day when the infant Jesus encountered people in Jerusalem; which is a true sign of the presence of God,” the Nuncio remarked. The Prelate also reminded the participants about what Pope Francis said five years ago on the same venue; Rubaga Cathedral. “Pope urged the Consecrated Persons to be faithful witnesses and be humble. They were called to remember, rejoice and renew!” Monsignor Charles Kasibante, on behalf of His Grace Cyprian Kizito Lwanga, the Archbishop of Kampala Archdiocese, thanked the Consecrated Persons for turning up in large numbers. He also thanked them for the good services they render through various apostolates in the Archdiocese of Kampala. He informed the participants about an appointment; Archbishop Cyprian fixed to meet all Consecrated Persons serving in the Archdiocese of Kampala on the 20th of Feb.2020. “The meeting will be about joint reflection and starting afresh from Christ,” the Monsignor concluded.

While Fr. Richard Nnyombi, M.Afr, the Episcopal Vicar for the religious in Kampala Archdiocese reminded and informed the Consecrated Persons that Missionaries of Africa (the White Fathers) have initiated weekly devotion to the Holy Martyrs of Uganda. “This week is dedicated to St. Mbagga Tuzinde, who is the Patron for the Novices and Seminarians.” He urged the Consecrated Persons to emulate him along with those in the formation.

Sr. Lydia Apili Bwor, the Secretary General of the Conference of the Institutes of Consecrated life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda (CICLSALU), reminded the Consecrated Persons and members of Apostolic Life, about The New Wine in New Wineskins. (A document published by the Dycastery for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life). “We are reminded of our identity, called to be radical in observing the charisms for effective mission of Christ. We need to be courageous, strong, vigilant and attentive to the signs of the times so as to attend to the New Poor; the street children, refugees and victims of human trafficking. Let us ‘go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the peripheries’ in need of the light of the Gospel!” (Introduction, New Wine in New Wineskins, by Joao Braz Cardinal de Aviz and Archbishop Jose Rodriguez Carballo, 2017).

Sr. Annontiata Atwine, DMJ, Chairperson of ARU/ CICLSALU, Kabale Branch, reports:
The members of ARU/ CICLSALU, Kabale Branch arrived at the Pastoral Center at Rushoroza Hill on January 30, 2020. It all started with a prayer, followed by self-introductions, then remarks from ARU/ CICLSALU Chairperson and the Diocesan Vicar for Consecrated
...Consecrated Persons’ Day

Persons; Rev. Fr. Abel Beinomugisha, AJ. This was followed by reports from different Districts. ARU/ CICLSALU Kabale Branch is divided into six districts: Kabale, Rukiga, Rubanda, Kisoro, Rukungiri and Kanungu. Each District has its full leadership that plans and guides the members. The arrival day ended with a social evening, where members shared different cultures through dance and poems.

On January 31, the participants had a workshop on “NEW WINE IN NEW WINE SKINS: THE CONSECRATED LIFE AND ITS ONGOING CHALLENGES SINCE VATICAN II”. The workshop was facilitated by Sr. Mary Mukanyengezi, the Commissioner of the Daughters of Our Lady of Fatima. She presented the sub-topics from different angles; asking questions at individual level, sending members in group discussions, and coming back to share in the plenary. Time for personal reflection was also given. This was followed by the Sacrament of reconciliation and that day was concluded with the celebration of the Eucharist.

On February 1, members elected new ARU/CICLSALU Executive Team. They immediately commenced their service when the Executive Leadership Team discussed the new work plan for the next two years. The climax of the celebration was on February 2nd. It started at 11.00 a.m.

The Bishop listed lay apostolate movements in the Church and expects the content to be known to each and every Consecrated Person; “You are well versed with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Formation and Retreats. Many people are victims of Human Trafficking, Poverty, Domestic Violence, HIV/AIDS, Alcoholism, Polygamy, Abortion and Human Sacrifice because of ignorance of God and the Bible,” the Ordinary urged.

After the recollection, the participants elected ARU/ CICLSALU Fort Portal Branch Executive Committee. The outcome was as follows: Coordinator: Sr. Immaculate Natukunda, OLGC, 0755200035, Assistant Coordinator: Bro. Francis Irumba, BSJW 0771405183, Secretary: Sr. Margaret Kabanywezi, DST, Assistant Secretary: Bro. Ambrose Sunday, BSJW, Treasurer: Sr. Celestine Merab Burasa, DST, Members: Fr. Fidelis Safari Mushu, a Camillian - with a gathering for the blessing of the candles by Fr. Abel, the main celebrant. The members processed to the main hall for Mass. The new Leadership Team was sworn in during the Holy Eucharistic Celebration. The ceremony ended with lunch.

Sr. Leonidas Komugisha, DMJ, Chairperson of ARU/ CICLSALU, Mbarara Archdiocese Branch, reports:

ARU/CICLSALU- Mbarara Archdiocese Branch appreciates His Grace Paul K. Bakyenga, the Archbishop (Emeritus) of Mbarara Archdiocese; who granted their desire of a befitting celebration. The Archbishop invited His Excellency Luigi Bianco, the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda to celebrate this day with Consecrated Persons in the Archdiocese of Mbarara. The presence of the Nuncio and the Archbishops: His Grace Paul K. Bakyenga and His Grace (elect) Lambert Bainomugisha in attendance made it an extraordinarily graceful celebration!

The Nuncio, who presided over the event shared a reflection based on Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel), an Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis. His Excellency was very simple and practical in his sharing. The members were urged further to read, study, reflect on it and practice it so as to deepen their growth and renewal in consecrated life. The Eucharistic celebration marked the peak of the day. The day is normally celebrated on February 2nd, but as grace would have it, the Consecrated Persons chose to celebrate it on the 8th of February, 2020.

About 256 Consecrated Persons turned up that day for the event. At the end of it all, each and everyone felt encouraged, appreciated and sent to evangelize. The team is indebted to the Vicar for the Consecrated Persons, Rev. Fr. Paschale Betunga, the clergy and especially to the Parish Priest of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Nyamitanga Cathedral Church, the lay faithful who always associate themselves with the Consecrated Persons and render continued support.

Sr. Margaret Kabanywezi, DST, Secretary of ARU/ CICLSALU Fort Portal Branch, Reports: The Consecrated Persons in Fort Portal postponed the Day of the Consecrated Persons. On March 14, 2020, ARU/CICLSALU Fort Portal Branch had a day of recollection, where 90 members in attendance.

Rt. Rev. Robert K. Muhiirwa Akiiki, the Bishop of Fort Portal Diocese animated the recollection that day. The Bishop used the theme: BAPTIZED AND SENT TO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS. His Lordship encouraged the Consecrated Persons to help the Lay Apostolate movement members to know God the Father, Jesus Christ the Saviour and the work of the Holy Spirit.
Consecrated Persons’ Day

Priest, Sr. Sylvia Nabitaka, SCSC, Sr. Kyara Delfine, ESM. The day was well concluded with prayer and blessing of the Bishop.

Sr. Encarnita Camara Liebana, CMS, Treasurer of ARU/ CICLSALU Lira Diocese Branch, Reports:

Greetings from Lira Diocese. The team of Lira Branch had planned and postponed the celebration of the Day of the Consecrated Persons from February to March, 2020. This was so because Rt. Rev. Sanctus Lino Wanok, the Bishop of Lira Diocese; had scheduled to meet all the Consecrated Persons serving in Lira Diocese. The prearranged day and venue was disrupted by the infamous lockdown caused by COVID 19 Pandemic.

The team remains hopeful that, they will do so in the near future, when the lockdown is lifted. The team is also pleased to share some updates: Some members of the Executive Committee got transferred. The team looks forward to building a new committee as soon as possible. The branch made a joint brochure for vocation animation. The five Institutes of Consecrated Persons in Lira agreed to make a common brochure that makes vocation animation easy and less competitive.

Conclusively, Fr. Victor OgenMungu, OFMCap, Coordinator ARU / CICLSALU - Arua Diocese Branch, Reports:

Yearly, the Consecrated Persons serving in Arua Diocese have observed the Day of the Consecrated Persons. In order to make this day very special, the members normally assemble a day before, for the purpose of sparing a day of recollection. This was the case even this year. As February 2, 2020, happened to fall on a Sunday, the members decided to anticipate the day on February 1, 2020. This was to help the Consecrated men who are priests and are charged with the care of parishes and chaplaincies to be available in their places of service on Sunday.

Therefore, in Arua Diocese the celebrations began on January 31, 2020 (Friday) with a one-day recollection preached by Monsignor Abraham Ocen, AJ, who is also the Vicar for the Consecrated Persons in Arua Diocese. On February 1, the climax of celebration began with the sacrifice of the Holy Mass led by the same Monsignor Abraham who this time was a representative of Bishop Sabino Odoki of Arua Diocese, who had gone out of the country on official duty.

About 70 Consecrated Persons working in Arua Diocese were in attendance. After the celebration, the members had a General Meeting. In the meeting, members reached a consensus on issues pertaining to the network of Consecrated Persons in Arua Diocese. Among others, they fixed the venue for next year’s celebration to be in Moyo Vicariate and Moyo Parish. The previous events were in vicariates of Ediofe and Lodonga.

The team extends sincere gratitude to the Parish Priest, St. Joseph’s Parish-Maracha, the Little Sisters of Mary Immaculate of Gulu-Maracha Community, for the hospitality they accorded to the Consecrated Persons when they needed it most. Special thanks also to the executives ARU/ CICLSALU - Arua Branch for all the efforts put in place to ensure that the day was colorful. An appreciation to all those members who contributed financially and in kind. Sincere thanks and not forgetting those who managed to attend in person and those who prayed for the success of the day.

Meanwhile, via the twitter account of Pope Francis, His Holiness wrote on the Day of Consecrated Life that, “Today we celebrate the #World Day for Consecrated Life. Let us pray for consecrated men and women who dedicate themselves to God and to their brothers and sisters through daily service: may they be ever faithful witnesses of Christ’s love.”

WE OURSELVES FEEL THAT WHAT WE ARE DOING IS JUST A DROP IN THE OCEAN.
BUT THE OCEAN WOULD BE LESS BECAUSE OF THAT MISSING DROP! Mother Theresa
A Recap from the last Annual General Assembly

ARU Staff Writer


The Nuncio also made reference to the message of Pope Francis to the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) in their meeting in Rome in May 2019: “The Pope appreciates the work of Consecrated men and women around the world very much. He thanked the Religious for serving the poor and disadvantaged at the periphery. He calls the religious to be like fire to warm up the faith of the people.”

In his homily Archbishop Emmanuel used the theme of the Extraordinary Missionary Month, October 2019: Baptized and Sent - The Church of Christ on Mission in the World. “By Baptismal consecration, we are sent on mission wherever we are, to evangelize Gods people and we ought to fulfill it.” He further urged the participants to emulate the missionaries who took risks and served without fear and some died as martyrs, others died of diseases and natural death. He congratulated the Missionaries of Africa for the 150 years of Evangelization especially in Africa, where the fruits of their dedication is being reaped. “The history of the Church in Uganda is largely the history of the consecrated persons because of their dedicated service,” the prelate concluded.

In a Keynote Address Fr. Joseph Kyeyune AJ, the out-gone Chairperson, informed the members that the assembly was being held when ARU was celebrating the document New Wine in New Wineskins (NW INW S). He invited everyone to experience the newness of the Gospel and newness in consecrated life. He urged each institute to go home with something to guide their self-evaluation and to enhance more renewal.

He reminded the assembly that the youth were potential victims and survivors of a nasty trade; and victims of human trafficking, sexual abuse, organ removal and the like, seen as new poverties in the New Wine in New Wineskins. The consecrated persons are called upon to respond to these new social rejects. Fr. Joseph also reminded the participants about the theme of November 2019 AGM: “Self-examination and renewal in the light of the New Wine in New Wineskins which is rooted in the document for purposes of helping the consecrated persons to re-think and re-write their charisms and go back to the roots of their foundations.” He also made a summary presentation of the New Wine in New Wine Skins. He informed the participants that the booklet includes some reflections developed during the year of Consecrated Life. The document calls all consecrated persons to go out of their comfort zones in order to reach out to the ‘Peripheries’. These guidelines are meant to assess if the New Wineskins fits to contain the New Wine which the Spirit continues to give to the Church by upholding the Gospel values.

Fr. Joseph also informed the assembly that he was no longer the Regional Superior and had been assigned for parish work. Constitutionally, the Vice Chairperson automatically takes over from the out-going member to complete the remaining period of the term of service. Therefore, Sr. Annamaria Nankusu became the New Chairperson (President). Assisted by Fr. Martin Ochola SSS, Fr. Robert Owiko Leku, MIDM takes over the place of Fr. Martin Ochola on the Executive committee.
...Annual General Assembly

Sr. Lydia Apili Bwor the Secretary General presented the action matrix from the previous minutes and the participants were called to respond according to the mandates. Among others, Human Trafficking interventions were welcomed by the Superiors and they encouraged one another to participate in the various Diocesan ARU Branches.

The meeting also learnt that besides Talitha Kum, Santa Martha Group was initiated by the Holy See to combat human trafficking. It is being rolled out to African countries. ARU participated in the workshop that took place in Nairobi in October 2019.

In this meeting, the members were informed that Mother Cecilia Nibyobyona had retired from the programme at Namugongo due to some health challenges and had requested to be replaced. Unfortunately, she passed on two months later! RIP.

Dr. Ronald Kasyaba from Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau (UCMB) addressed the assembly on screening and early detection of Non-Communicable Diseases including Cancer. The Concept Paper came out of a close observation of UCMB on the Health of the consecrated persons in addressing Cancer. He informed the Superiors that; about a half of all Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) including Cancers are amenable to early detection and potential cure with effective treatment (WHO 2007). The Non-Communicable diseases are those that cannot be spread from person to person. E.g. Cancer, Heart disease, Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, Stroke, Cirrhosis (liver disease), Chronic Respiratory diseases, Road Traffic Accidents and the like.

Dr. Ronald at the end of his presentation gave a concise question series to assist in shaping the thought process in the structure and development of ARU or respective Religious Institutional Routine NCD Screening Programme.

Meanwhile, Fr. Richard Nyombi M.Af addressed the assembly about the celebrations of 150 years of the Missionaries of Africa since they were founded in Algeria. It was scheduled for December, 2019 with the theme: “With Christ, Ever Faithful to Africa” He invited all the participants to the celebrations and rejoice with them.

The floor was given to the various heads of programs to present their reports. This included Sr. Rita Nabukalu SMR, the Director of Uganda Spiritual Formation Centre Namugongo (USFCN) and her team. They presented a report about the Centre, Sr. Mary Pauline Namudu LSOSF, the Coordinator for the Formation Ministry for Religious in Uganda (FoMRU) also presented a report.

Investment club made a presentation on poor saving culture, Sr. Germina Keneema MSMMC and Sr. Irene Lucy Onyai LSMIG made report for African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC). Sr. Celestine Lindrio MSMMC, the Assistant National Coordinator for All Africa Conference: Sister to Sister (AACSS) as well as Transformative Education and Faith (TEF). Thereafter, Bro. Christopher Mukwire FIC, the chairperson of Diocesan and Religious Vocation Animators (DARVA) presented a report.

The meeting identified some suitable topics for the Capacity Building for Major Superiors in Uganda for 2020. The topics included but not limited to: Psycho- Spiritual Counseling, Leadership Skills, Servant leadership, Team Building, Family Ministry, Resource Management, Human Resource Management, Succession Plan, preparing for transition from leadership: Post- leadership coping strategies, Mentorship and delegation, Stress Management, Conflict Management and Resolution and Strategic Planning.
ARU team made a presentation: “Pastoral Strategy to Strengthen the Youth Apostolate” it was later presented to the Episcopal Conference of Uganda to seek guidance on how to go about with its implementation. Sr. Hellen Jola SHS, the Treasurer General presented Financial report with an objective of appraisal of the previous year and plan for the fiscal year 2020. Catholic Care for Children –Uganda (CCCU) also presented a report to the assembly.

In another development, Fr. Anthony Kibira MCCJ, Director of Leadership Magazine made a presentation on Secularism and Consecrated Life today. He challenged the consecrated persons about their appropriate place: (Jn.17: 1-19); “Jesus’ Priestly Prayer which reminds us of our identity, keeping in mind what it means when Jesus our Master prays for us: We are in the world but not for the world,” Fr. Anthony emphasized.

The Assembly was also reminded about ACWECA Plenary; twenty-five (25) Superior Generals would participate in ACWECA Plenary in Nairobi which was scheduled from 22nd - 29th August 2020.

ARU Congratulates the Family of the Missionaries of Africa

Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru MSMMC

The Conference of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Uganda; had an opportunity to CONGRATULATE the Missionaries of Africa (M.Afr) and the Missionaries of our Lady of Africa (MSOLA) at the ARU Secretariat. This was done ahead of the celebrations of the 150 years of their foundation and service at Namugongo, Uganda Martyrs Shrine.

For close to a week, the family of the Missionaries of Africa: Priests, Brothers and Sisters converged in Uganda from different parts of the world to celebrate 150 years of service. ARU was pleased to host them and join in the jubilation. Ugandans were pleased to say: “Welcome to the Pearl of Africa and the land of Martyrs!” The family of the Missionaries of Africa were pleased and grateful for the hospitality they were accorded by a team of consecrated persons from Uganda. A group of about 40 members of the Missionaries of Africa were led by Fr. Stanley Lubungo the Superior General of the Missionaries of Africa and Sr. Carmen Sammut, the Superior General of the Missionary Sisters of our Lady of Africa.

On arrival, the Missionaries of Africa who heralded evangelization in Uganda were pleased to track their missionary paths. They went to Nabulagala where the first missionaries celebrated Holy Mass in Uganda, they went Bwanda in Masaka where they found the first African Religious Institute South of the Sahara; the Daughters of Mary (Banabikira). Their pilgrimage was crowned on December 8, 2019, at Namugongo Uganda Martyr’s Shrine.

It marked the climax of the celebration and achievements of these great missionaries who evangelized the Martyrs of Uganda who opted to die for their faith. The celebration was guided by the theme: With Christ, Ever Faithful to Africa. Fr. Robert Owiko Leku MIDM, the Moderator General of the Missionaries of Jesus the Divine Master, a member of ARU Executive Committee, on behalf of ARU expressed gratitude to the family of the Missionaries of Africa for choosing Uganda to celebrate the 150 years of their foundation. “We Congratulate you upon the 150 years! Long live!” he added. Thereafter the family of the Missionaries of Africa were offered special and symbolic gifts by ARU team. Together the representatives cut the Jubilee Cake amidst songs of jubilation. The light moment was crowned with lunch at ARU Secretariat.

“We thank you for the collaborative service at ARU as brothers and sisters. Our pilgrimage has inspired us because the mission we started in Uganda has continued to grow tremendously! We thank you for the smiles. We are moved and touched to the core by the growth of the mastered seed sown by Fr. Laurdel and Bro. Amans. Now you have many Religious and Priests in Uganda; what a wonder! They left amazing legacy. Our challenge is what legacy shall we leave behind?” Fr. Francis Bans remarked.
TALITHA KUM ASSEMBLY: Consolidated responses and action points

ARU Staff Writer

In September 2019, Talitha Kum had its first International General Assembly in Rome to build synergies to end Trafficking in Persons (TIP). Pope Francis appreciated what sisters are doing and noted in his address: Some Institutes may say; “We have too many internal problems to solve, tell them that the Pope said "internal" problems are resolved by going out on the road, so that fresh air can enter. It is necessary to promote cooperation and commitment on the part of various ecclesial institutions and organizations through the continental and national networks. This is also a model of how to work together. It is an example for the whole Church, and also for us: men, priests and bishops. You are giving a great example – keep at it!”

Uganda was represented by Sr. Lydia Apili Bwor, Secretary General ARU and Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru Communications Coordinator (ARU). “Talitha Kum” derives its name from Mk 5:41 where Jesus said “Talitha Kum” in Aramaic which means; Little girl I tell you get up! The global network of sisters is giving hope to the victims and survivors of human trafficking with Jesus. Talitha Kum was born in the late 1990s when consecrated persons realized the importance and value of joining forces and resources in the development of an integrated network. As history repeats itself, the Female Religious were engaged for centuries in activities against slavery and trafficking in persons. In 1998 the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), addressed by Sr. Leah Ackerman MSOLA, accepted the invitation to greater collaborative efforts against TIP and formed a study group on the topic within the Commission for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC). This group produced training materials which led to greater awareness within congregations of women religious for more joint efforts against trafficking.

With motivation from Pope Francis, the Assembly is determined to achieve the following goals: To end Human Trafficking and its root causes; (patriarchy, commodification of people, racism, forced migration). The members and their networks stand for care and defense of the dignity of life threatened in any way with well-laid strategies, this universal team wants to end modern slavery and bring survivors to freedom and fullness of life.

Talitha Kum members comprise of: International network of religious and lay people, including survivors. It is constantly being built by its member networks and experiences. They are umbrella networks. They are becoming ecumenical and interreligious as well in the collaboration. The Networks have a collective voice on specific issues and share strategy of implementation. Not forgetting the Catholic/Religious/Spiritual network (called by God) to share the Gospel values, Catholic Social Teaching and their role as prophets of hope. They form an important voice in the Church and in the world, doing the work Pope Francis has called them to do.

It was decided that each network include in their name or tagline “Talitha Kum” (TK) and incorporate “member of TK” logo into publicity for local network.

The strategic plan for 2020-2025 includes: Strengthening collaboration links between the networks through regular communication. Some ideas for collaborative communication includes: Internal database of TK networks, sharing newsletters/updates, present on TK website, listserv, in-person gatherings, make sure information gets to the frontline members (not just coordinators).

External networks include the use of Social media (follow one another), link to TK on each of our websites too, improve communication outside with churches,

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...TAlitha Kum Assembly

congregations, civil organizations and the like, clarify public branding- connect to TK; need media policies to protect survivors; have press conference or local media when returning to home community.

Other suggestions included: Creation of virtual and physical spaces of contemplative dialogue between the different networks. Maybe create Gmail group account or listserv. Update the network events through online platforms of Talitha Kum and other established networks. It was suggested that TK should create and send three news bulletins per year. Various networks are encouraged to share their network newsletters with one another. TK webpage is to have a link to all of the networks that are part of it. Promote the work of the networks more through TK, maybe by email to the networks. Publish information from network’s own website.

Given the situation of current challenges, the members need to be upgraded through trainings and workshops this would call for activities like; Leadership formation, the current reality of human trafficking, migration (and trafficking routes), legislation, accompaniment of survivors, and perspectives on gender and human rights, Social media (for us and also know how traffickers use it) and communication skills. There is need to scale up the platform for Advocacy, and working with governments (on reports like TIP and other abuses). Be trackers of root causes like; patriarchy and power dynamics in relationships, gender based violence, sexual assault, and others.

It is necessary to find ways and knowledge about funding, project management and administration. Working with survivors, especially those of different faiths is good but there is need to have basics on Introduction to Talitha Kum and Human Trafficking (HT or TIP), training for men or clergy. Try to work with other men to reduce the demand side and challenge the traffickers and rehabilitate them as well. Training of trainers and Coordinators need to have Theological/Gospel foundation for human trafficking ministry.

It was agreed that there is need for Visibility of Trafficking. Hence, joint actions and campaigns (on special days, display posters, make public prayers). Add up to increase news sources and media (Social media, TV, Newspapers, Radio, Music and the like), Collaboration (Papal visits, schools, government events or reports and prayer groups).

The members were also reminded to take note of special days and urged to use the platform for advocacy and educational campaigns the dates are:

**Feb 8 – World day of prayer for victims and survivors of Trafficking**

**July 30 – World day against Trafficking in Persons**

**Sept 23 – International day against sexual exploitation of women**

**Dec 18 – International day of the migrants**

Afro-Asians pose for a photo in Talitha Kum Africa Exhibition corner, during the General Assembly in Rome
...TAliToa Kum Assembly

Areas of Intervention include; education and prevention through Schools, churches, tourist areas, sports areas, health centres. Particularly targeting young people (on holiday, looking for work and internships). Large international sporting events, focus on demand side with prevention as well, share good practices like in France with required information to those arrested, encourage congregational participation in areas of origin, where human trafficking is happening. There is need for more education on cyber trafficking and online sexual exploitation.

Services for Survivors include; immediate rescue and attention, safe houses for healing and transition. Increase collaboration with survivors and train them in public speaking. Share best practices with one another. Reach out to migrant and refugee camps as well as internally displaced camps for mitigation. Advocacy involves among others; implementation of laws that already exist, advocate for new laws based on UN protocols. Participate in rallies and marches in defense of human rights. Seek to act from within and through the United Nations. Pay attention to how climate change is impacting human trafficking. Connect with ambassadors on international support and lobbying. Challenge corruption, educate on successful campaigns and strategies against corruption. Report and denounce those responsible for trafficking.

Note that, some Church leaders are involved directly or indirectly in Human Trafficking. Members in the assembly are urged to find check points and address the issues of HT and other forms of abuses accordingly. The participants also sought to clarify the role of UISG and Talitha Kum in reporting, challenging these abuses, and protecting the victims.

The participants were tasked to target supply chain and TIP businesses in that, one idea is to focus on one area of labour trafficking where “investors” and domestic maids are exploited for little or no pay. Such situations can be studied for one year and carry out a coordinated campaign in the industry to clean up supply chain for instance, export palm oil, fish, coffee, clothing industries.

All the networks of Talitha Kum were called to collaborate. They can participate in joint conferences, workshops and other events to create alliances. Work together with other faith groups and civil organizations. Strengthen communication and ask for support from Major Superiors and Bishop’s Conferences.

Individuals and groups are called to cause the growth of network: Target countries where there is no network yet, have regional gatherings (E/SE Asia, Africa and the like. Ask Congregational leaders to appoint for longer terms those working on HT. Talitha Kum International (TKI) was charged with responsibility to oversee funding for smaller countries and networks.
Mother Cecilia Nibyobyonka, OLGC, An Icon of Consecrated life laid to rest

Sr. Adeodata Ahimbisibwe DMJ

Mother Cecilia who breathed her last on December 19th, was laid to rest on 21st December, 2019. She was an icon for the consecrated persons Uganda. Mother Cecilia was an all-round: a sister, mother, friend, teacher, counselor and a mentor. The Sisters in Uganda will bear witness to this because she also served as Secretary General at the Secretariat of the Association of the Religious in Uganda (ARU) from 1985-1998. Mother Cecilia was 83 years old when she took her turn of eternal rest. Mother Romina Nyemera OLGC, eulogized Mother Cecilia saying; “Thank you Mother Cecilia! Many sisters supported Mother Cecilia during her administration tenure. Hence, she remained a friend to the old and young with good communication skills. She was an icon of consecrated life in the Institute, Mbarara Archdiocese, Uganda and the Church as at large.

She encouraged people to take risks: “...either you risk or you will not reach your destination,” she would say. She was a role model of faith and good counselor who did not conceal her gifts in the name of comfort. She integrated psychology with spirituality and shared the fruits with the religious women whom she urged to become “women of substance!” She obeyed under all circumstances and lived Ignatian spirituality. Sr. Cecilia got her last motivations from the tomb of St. Peter. She was inspired to recite the Apostles’ Creed and built a momentum and determination to do what she did in honour of God and for building the Church.”

Sr. Adeodata Ahimbisibwe DMJ, one of the close companions of late Sr. Cecilia had this to say; “Mother Cecilia Nibyobyonka; the renowned formator, she fought the good fight and has retired in the Lord whom she loved and served. Once you meet her, you would always remember her. She was very reserved and very soft spoken, hardworking and prayerful. She was very well informed as she loved reading. Yes, Sr. Cecilia loved to see consecrated persons become abler and she did it. If you felt challenged by her, it was because she wanted the best out of you. I benefitted from these gifts just for a little while as I assisted her to run Transformative Leadership Education and Faith Development (TLEFD), the programme she had designed. While this was happening, I did not understand that I was being invited to develop my hidden abilities, but on looking back, I have a glimpse of what it all meant. Thank you “Jaja!” (Grandma).

Who was this Mother Cecilia? A Consecrated woman who loved all the consecrated and consecrated life as a whole. Better still, Sr. Cecilia was a science teacher, a religious and a formator of the consecrated persons. At prayer you would think she was from a contemplative order but as a teacher and facilitator of religious programmes you would think she was an adherent of academia. Yes, she performed the duo roles perfectly.

Did she form the sisters of her Institute only? No. I imagine if you are a contemporary religious in Uganda in her time you would have met her at one of the national formation courses. Her field of love for religious extended to the whole of Africa, I dare say to the whole world. This is because her links extended to Europe and America in search for what would benefit the consecrated persons she held dear to her heart. ...One time she left me to mind the sisters who were on a programme, to link up with the relation she had with the sisters in America and Sweden; who worked very closely with her in her mission to serve the African sisters. She is a founder of religious formation programmes: With a firm conviction Sr. Cecilia ventured into enabling the sisters to get skills in counselling so that they may increase on their compassionate spirit.
...Mother Cecilia

as they reach out to those the Church refers to as social rejects: victims of HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, gender based violence, street children and the like. Thus, the birth of the training of counsellors at the University of Kisubi. The pioneers will remember how they were to do a certificate then it was not good enough for the task that awaited them. Eventually the programme rolled out consistently to a Diploma, Degree and Masters! While teaching at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), Sr. Cecilia was one of the founding members of Uganda Counsellors Association (UCA) and served as its first Vice President (VP).

It seemed to have been her charism to found and design training programmes for empowering consecrated persons. Nonetheless she would get attached to none. As soon as one set of formation programme would get on its feet, she would move on to start another. The counselling programme started after she had gotten the ongoing formation programs settled at Namugongo Spiritual Formation Centre. The last foundation was the Transformative Education and Faith (TEF) which was known as premier Transformative Leadership Education and Faith Development (TLEFD). The idea of this programme was conceived and developed with the late Bro. Francis Blouse FIC, who had retired from being Principal of the University of Kisubi.

Her deepest desire was to develop TEF into a theological university, run by ARU, to train consecrated persons and get them more informed and highly qualified in the matters of our Christian faith. She nursed this dream with the support of some religious including late Mother Ann Nasimiyu Wasike LSOSF RIP. She was a theologian, but unfortunately died suddenly before she could take her role in this venture after her service as a Superior General. Sr. Cecilia has gone to the father after settling TEF at Uganda Martyrs University (UMU).

There are many other things she did that have not been captured. The journey to liberate consecrated women still goes on. If you believe in such a mission to liberate women religious with knowledge, receive the mantle and carry on from where Sr. Cecilia has left. Yes, she will continue to mentor and guide whoever takes up the mantle from her heavenly aboard."

Sr. Cecilia was given a befitting send-off in all ways. The funeral mass was preceded by a ritual performed by the Sisters of Our Lady of Good Counsel (OLGC): Having gathered around the casket, the sisters honorably eulogized their Mother Cecilia whom they chose not to mourn but to celebrate her legacy.

Isaiah 55: 12; Yes, in Joy You shall go forth, in Peace shall be brought Home