



**JESUIT'S
EASTERN AFRICA**



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Shukran

Shukran:
Swahili/Arabic
for Gratitude



Dear Friends,

Receive special Easter greetings and blessings from the Jesuits of Eastern Africa Province.

On February 6, 2019, Fr. Arturo Sosa, SJ, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, promulgated the Universal Apostolic Preferences. These preferences are the result of sixteen months of deliberations and are aimed at finding '... the best way to collaborate in the Lord's mission...' Over the next 10 years, the Society of Jesus will pay special attention to these new working areas which include: Discernment and the "Spiritual Exercises"; Walking with the excluded, Caring for our common home and Journeying with the youth. As a Province, we are committed to fulfilling the mission of the Society of Jesus in Eastern Africa through discernment and apostolic planning. Consequently, as we continue to evaluate and update our Province Apostolic Plan, 2017-2021, we shall incorporate these new apostolic preferences in our work. Even now, Goal 2 of our apostolic plan aims to integrate the priorities of the Universal Society and of the Assistency of Africa and Madagascar.

In an effort to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our offices, the Province rolled out a capacity building training on Accounting Skills and Project Cycle Management. The training mainly targeted bursars and accounting officers working in the various apostolates in the Province. The first phase of the training targeted apostolates in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The second phase will be implemented in South Sudan and Ethiopia respectively. The training is aimed at improving skills and increasing awareness of the norms and requirements of the Province when it comes to reporting and finance management. It is our hope that those who are trained will in turn share the knowledge with those in the field so that we can improve effectiveness across the Province.

In other news, we have successfully completed the interview process and selection for the new candidates joining the novitiate in May 2019. We wish them all the best as they prepare to start their formation process. Our Novices will be taking their first vows on May 24, 2019 at Gonzaga Gonza Novitiate in Arusha. Moreover, on March 2, 2019, twenty-two men were ordained to the Diaconate at the Hekima Jesuit School of Theology in Nairobi, Kenya. Among them were three AOR Jesuits. The 22 men were ordained by Rt. Rev. Virgilio Pante, IMC, Bishop of Maralal Diocese in Kenya. Let us continue praying for them as they begin their ministry as deacons. Over the next few months, we shall start the preparation for ordinations to the priesthood which will be held in July and August of this year. One Jesuit will be ordained in Arusha, Tanzania, four others will be ordained at Kangemi in Nairobi, Kenya, and one will be ordained in Masaka, Uganda. Let us keep these Jesuits in our prayers as they prepare to take up God's ministry as Priests.

Lastly, as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ, let us remember our brothers and sisters in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe who have been affected by Cyclone Idai (1.7 million people). Approximately 800 people have lost their lives after the storm left hundreds of people displaced and caused destruction of property. We call out to all who can offer their support to get in touch with the Jesuit Province of Zimbabwe - Mozambique. Similarly, let us remember to offer support and prayers for our brothers and sisters who have been affected by the ongoing drought in the Northern parts of Kenya.

We thank you for your invaluable support, prayers and well wishes. May the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ grant blessings of prosperity to you and your loved ones.

Happy Easter!

Fr. Joseph Oduor Afulo, SJ
Provincial



1. A retreatant at the Mwangaza Jesuit Centre in Karen, Nairobi 2. Fr. Keneth Ogot, SJ, teaches children at the JRS camp in Maban, South Sudan
3. Jesuits at Ocer Campion Jesuit College accompanying students 4. Br. Vincent Soreng, SJ, prepares seedlings for planting at St. Peter Claver High School in Dodoma, Tanzania

Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus 2019 - 2029

The Universal Apostolic Preferences are an instrument for deepening the style of life-mission indicated by GC 36 when it invites us to spiritual and apostolic renewal, incorporating discernment, collaboration with others, and networking into our daily lives. For more than fifteen years, the universal apostolic preferences of the Society of Jesus have been dedicated to Africa and China, the responsibility of the whole Society for the interprovincial works in Rome, the consistency of our intellectual apostolate, and service to refugees and migrants. Over the past sixteen months, the Society has been involved in a process for the next universal apostolic preferences that will be implemented over the next 10 years (2019-2029). The process involved Jesuits at various levels resulting in four universal apostolic preferences which were promulgated by Fr. General on February 17th 2019. These preferences are:

- To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment;
- To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice;
- To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future;
- To collaborate in the care of our Common Home.

These universal preferences, as indicated by Fr. General, are the result of a desire to find the best way to collaborate in the Lord's mission. Pope Francis, in his letter, affirmed that the proposed preferences "are in agreement with the current priorities of the Church as expressed through the ordinary magisterium of the Pope, the Synods, and the Episcopal Conferences, especially since *Evangelii gaudium*." The Holy Father insisted that "the first preference is crucial because it presupposes as a basic condition the Jesuit's relationship with the Lord in a personal and communal life of prayer and discernment." And he added: "Without this prayerful attitude the other preferences will not bear fruit."

The preferences seek to embody concretely the mission received as the Lord's response to the cry of a wounded world; the cry of the most vulnerable, who have been displaced and marginalized; the empty rhetoric that divides and dismantles our cultures; the growing chasm between rich and poor; the cry of the young in search of hope and meaning; the cry of the earth and its peoples, who have been degraded to the point of having their very existence put at risk. The preferences seek to respond to a world in which entire generations have never heard about Jesus and his Gospel.

a) To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment

Secular society today profoundly challenges the Church in its task of proclaiming the Gospel. As believers we feel an urgent need to overcome both new secularisms and the nostalgia for cultural expressions of the past. **We resolve to collaborate with the Church in experiencing secular society as a sign of the times that affords us the opportunity to renew our presence in the heart of human history. We resolve to gain a deeper experience of the Spiritual Exercises and to offer them in as many ways as possible, providing many people, especially the young, the opportunity to make use of them to begin or to advance in following Christ. We also resolve to promote discernment as a regular habit for those who choose to follow Christ.** As a commitment to fulfilling this preference, AOR continues to offer Spiritual Exercises and discernment to both religious and laity in its Spirituality Centres, Mwangaza in Nairobi, Kenya and Galilee in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia (AOR AP 2017-2021, Goals 4, 5 & 6).

Christian Life Community in Kenya: A journey of Grace

The journey of Christian Life Community (CLC) in Kenya has been a story of grace upon grace since its inception in the last quarter of 1989. You cannot talk of CLC Kenya without talking of the Jesuits of Eastern Africa who have generously accompanied CLC from 1989, weaned us in the school of the Spiritual Exercises and matured together in the field of mission. The image depicting this journey is one of two servants of equal rank working in synergy towards one goal. The journey brings out a story of success; starting from the use of private Jesuit offices, to occupying a part of the Jesuit curia then moving to an established secretariat. Both CLC and Jesuits have been propelled by a rich Ignatian tradition of being contemplatives in action giving preferential option to the least in the Kingdom.

I would like to share some of the fruits of this collaboration. The relationship with the Jesuits has been very cordial; recognizing each other's role in the Church. The Jesuits have helped CLC in connecting with the hierarchy of the Church while CLC has provided an experience of living Ignatian Spirituality in a lay context. Since the inception of CLC in Kenya, the Ecclesiastical Assistant has always been a Jesuit. By sharing the gift of the Spiritual Exercises and discernment many have embraced Ignatian Spirituality as CLC members or Jesuits, both of who desire to follow Christ more closely and working with Him in expanding the Kingdom of God.

In the year 2000 CLC and the Jesuits together with other members of the Ignatian family started Zaidi Centre for Ignatian Spirituality. The mission through its apostolic advancement has served many people in prisons, schools and parishes. More prayer and communal discernment needs to be done to see how we can share the jewels we have received.

A long process of discernment was carried out by CLC after 2000 and decided to work with the youth. In 2003, CLC with the support of the Jesuits opened St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School to give Jesuit education to poor but bright orphans from Kibera slums affected and infected by HIV/AIDS. The Jesuits have always provided CLC with a fund raiser to present. The Chaplain to the school has also been a Jesuit. Other Jesuits have served the school as teachers, mentors, Catechists and board members.

Hekima College has been a blessing to CLC. Scholastics have helped CLC members by giving the full Spiritual Exercises, guiding groups, directing retreats and animating formations. CLC members have been invited to share with Jesuits in formation their experiences of the Spiritual Exercises as lay people.

In the spirit of Magis, I would like to invite the two organizations to challenge themselves and do corporate discernment in an effort to explore the opportunities available for them in sharing the gift of the Spiritual Exercises and discernment. CLC could benefit more in terms of visibility in the church through the Jesuits. The Jesuits on the other hand could expand further their apostolates by collaborating with CLC, taking the mission where religious persons cannot reach.

Let the example of St. Ignatius of Loyola (as lay and afterwards as priest) inspire us to realize the enormity and urgency of the mission before us and lovingly go forth and serve. For we are not the authors of the mission but its mere servants!



CLC members visit Jesuits at Hekima



Fr. Terry, SJ baptizes students

By **Bernard Kithusi**, Executive Secretary - Christian Life Community

About the Jesuits

The Society of Jesus was founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola in 1540 and is today the largest religious order of men in the Catholic Church. We serve in 127 nations on six continents and are organized into administrative regions called Provinces.

The Eastern Africa Province consists of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan. Though the province was established in 1986, the earliest missions date back to the times of St. Ignatius in 1557 in Ethiopia.

Our works in Eastern Africa include:

- **Education** - through our educational institutions we form well rounded and competent persons committed to a faith that does justice. We train 'men and women for others.'
- **Retreats** - for more than 470 years, Jesuit spirituality has led countless women and men to a greater intimacy with Jesus Christ and to a dedication to serve those most in need. We maintain retreat houses in Kenya, Sudan and Ethiopia. In addition, we run mobile retreats in all countries of our province.
- **Parish ministry** - we run 6 vibrant parishes with a variety of pastoral, formation and service programmes. All our parishes give emphasis to 'community' and have dynamic Small Christian Communities.
- **Social Justice and Communication** - we aim to transform unjust structures and offer hope to the marginalized in society. We reach out especially to refugees, those affected or infected with HIV/AIDS, poverty and violence.

Visit www.easternafricajesuits.org for more information on our work

I feel at home as a brother

My journey to become a Jesuit brother started in 1988 when, together with some few companions, I travelled to Lusaka, Zambia, for my novitiate formation. Before I joined the Society of Jesus, I was in the minor seminary. My plan, at the time, was to become a diocesan priest. At the minor seminary, I encountered some Jesuits: Fr. Emmanuel Banfi, an Italian Jesuit, and Scholastic Camilius Nzumbi who later left the Society. These are the ones who motivated me to join the Society of Jesus. Before joining the novitiate, I spent two years in Mwanza as a candidate.



After the novitiate, I went to Harare, Zimbabwe, for Juniorate. At that time, the number of brothers joining the Society in our Province was small and since I was the only one in my group, I had to wait for two more years for two other brothers who were to start the same program. While waiting for other brothers to join me for Juniorate, I worked with Br. Delber on construction works in Lusaka Zambia. After this program, I was missioned to St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Kangemi, Nairobi, for two years where I was involved in the Catechetical team and worked with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in the parish outreach program. My experience at St. Joseph the worker parish was mixed up, at times I felt terrified with fear and the poverty and life styles of people but, yet I felt safe in the hands of experienced Jesuits living there and working there including Fr. John Guiney, Bishop Rodrigo Mejia, SJ, then professor at Hekima College and Tony Sequeira, SJ.

From there, I went to Nyegezi Social Centre (now St. Augustine University) in Mwanza where I studied logistics. Thereafter, I went to Dar es Salaam where we were setting up Loyola High School. I worked with Fr. Louis Plamondon, SJ (who was in charge of the project) mainly assisting him in logistics; it was a challenging work. I enjoyed working with the team that was setting up the school including Fr. Victor Odhiambo, SJ (recently deceased), Alex Ochumbo, Frs. Simon Drasiga and Buberwa Karongo (then scholastics) and two American Jesuits (Frs. Dick Twohig and Cherry Richard). I feel very proud of the work that we did there.

After 4 years in Dar es Salaam, I went to Nebraska for Tertianship. When I came back I was missioned back to St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Kangemi. Working in Kangemi made me feel at home. I have seen many children grow up and I'm proud of that. I was again engaged in pastoral ministry, and running training centre and printing press.

From there, I was sent to Shinyanga in Tanzania, where there had been plans to start a school, but the project never took off. I was later missioned to Dar es Salaam to the school of Social Work for post-graduate studies. I had hoped to work with JRS after my studies but instead was missioned to Hekima College where I spent 5 years working as a minister and other administrative work.

After Hekima, I was sent to Mwanza where I worked for 2 years teaching Religion to secondary and Primary School students, before going to Khartoum, South Sudan where I worked with JRS as the operations officer. After a year in Khartoum, I was missioned to Radio Kwizera in Ngara, Tanzania, where I currently work as Financial Controller. The Radio covers the whole of the Lake Region and has a very wide audience coverage beyond Tanzania. Although the work we do in Ngara is very valuable, there is more that can be done especially in the areas of social justice. By partnering with other Jesuit apostolates to meet the needs of the people in Tanzania, we can help more needy people.

VOCATION TO BROTHERHOOD:

I became a Jesuit brother because the Jesuit brothers who I had met earlier

motivated me. I was really encouraged by their simplicity and lifestyle. I have worked for many years in different capacities and I feel at home as a brother. Even though there have been some challenges, I managed to work through them. I love seeing young Jesuits coming to help in the work we are doing. In the future, I hope to see more young people joining as brothers. More could be done to increase vocations to brotherhood and through frequent sharing, this can be achieved. The number of Jesuit brothers has grown over the years, which is a blessing. A brother can do many things, including teaching and administration work. All in all, I would like to see more people joining brotherhood, because as brothers, we are here to share in the work of the Kingdom of God.

In my free time, I watch a lot of movies and take walks. I love my silence. I would advise anyone considering a vocation to religious life to ensure that they get a good education. With this, they can make better choices more easily.

MOTIVATION:

I am encouraged all the time when I think of our Mother Mary; when the angel came to her she entrusted everything to God saying, 'May it be done to me according to your word.' This is the biggest prayer for me. There's a lot of uncertainty in life, but God is always in control. He knows where He is leading us. So one has to trust in God and hand everything over to God.

By Brother Deuseddit Byebalilo, SJ

A new season begins!

As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples..."
Mark 16:5-7



Every year when the period of lent begins, I always look forward to the Paschal Triduum (Easter Triduum). I am particularly fascinated about the Easter Vigil mass on Saturday night. The lighting of the fire, the candles, the liturgy of the word, the bells ring and finally we can sing Gloria and Halleluia! A new season begins.

The Vigil mass usually begins in the darkness, the fire is lit and later the Paschal Candle is lit. Despite this, the darkness is still felt, and the mood is sombre, but once the bells are ringing and the lights go on, the church is filled with joy and celebration.

I am filled with joy and hope as it is a reminder of God's love for humanity and that he wants the best for His people. God wants us to experience eternal happiness by bringing us closer and closer to Him. Jesus Christ was born to die for our sins, His death would have been in vain if He were not to rise and prove that He was truly the son of God. And so, God has power over all including sin, evil and death itself.

The celebration of Easter reminds us of our salvation. Jesus Christ's rising from the dead broke the barriers of sin and the fear of death. The resurrection of Christ also

proves to us that there is life after death and that we are destined for eternal life. During Easter, we are invited to share in the joy of Easter and to live a life filled with hope and peace for that is what Christ brings to us. May we also share this joy with others, especially those who are yet to experience the great love of God through Christ.

May this Easter season bring forth renewed hope, love, joy, peace and lots of blessings to all.

By Paula Minayo Kidakwa, JCAM Programs Officer

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b) To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice

The necessary condition for becoming companions "on the way" in the style of Jesus is, out of closeness with the poor. The path we seek to follow with the poor is one that promotes social justice and the change of economic, political, and social structures that generate injustice. Through our collaboration with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), AOR continues to care for migrants, displaced persons, refugees, and victims of wars and human trafficking. We continue to contribute to the much needed positive change in South Sudan through our works in Rumbek, Cueibet, Wau and collaboration with JRS in Maban. Through the Jesuit Hakamani Centre, we want to contribute to strengthening political democracy by imparting good civic formation, especially among those at the

base of the social pyramid (AOR AP 2017-2021, Goals 3, 5 & 6). We commit ourselves to help eliminate abuses inside and outside the Church, through the adoption of clear policies for the prevention of abuse, the ongoing formation of those who are committed to mission, and serious efforts to identify the social origins of abuse.

c) To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future

The 2018 Synod recognized young people and their situation as a crucial place from which the Church seeks to perceive and discern the movement of the Holy Spirit through this moment of human history. The apostolic works of the Society of Jesus can make an important contribution to creating and maintaining spaces that are open to young people in society and the Church. AOR, through its Parishes,

campus ministry and youth programs provides spaces open to youthful creativity, spaces that foster an encounter with God and deepen the Christian faith of the young (AOR AP 2017-2021, Goals 1, 3, 5 & 6).

d) To collaborate in the care of our Common Home

The damage done to the earth is also damage done to the most vulnerable. We resolve to collaborate with others in the construction of alternative models of life that are based on respect for creation and on a sustainable development capable of producing goods that, when justly distributed, ensure a decent life for all human beings on our planet. AOR is committed to changing the way we interact with the environment around us through the implementation of environmentally sensitive programs including recycling and tree planting (AOR AP 2017-2021, Goals 3, 5 & 6).

To Subscribe to our newsletter, send your email/feedback to shukran.aor@gmail.com

Contacts:



JESUITS
EASTERN AFRICA

Kenya:

Jesuit Development Office
Loyola House
P.O. Box 21399, 00505,
Ngong' Road, Nairobi
(+254 20) 2444 78/1/3/5/6
Info.aor@gmail.com
www.easternafricajesuits.org

Tanzania:

Jesuit Development Office
P.O. Box 1140,
Dar-es Salaam
(+255) 22 244 3600
Info.aor@gmail.com
www.easternafricajesuits.org

Uganda:

Jesuit Development Office
Xavier House
P.O. Box 7310,
Kampala, Uganda
(+256) 414 510 340
Info.aor@gmail.com
www.easternafricajesuits.org

Ethiopia:

Jesuit Development Office
Xavier House
P.O. Box 30105,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
(+251)11 123 6650
Info.aor@gmail.com
www.easternafricajesuits.org

Republic of Sudan:

Jesuit Development Office
Ignatius Spiritual Centre
P.O. Box 1629,
Khartoum, Republic of Sudan
(+249)85 341855
Info.aor@gmail.com
www.easternafricajesuits.org

South Sudan:

Jesuit Development Office
St. Peter Claver, Jesuit Community
C/o Bethany House
P.O. Box 211023, 00505, Nairobi, Kenya
(+249)944 286 719
Info.aor@gmail.com
www.easternafricajesuits.org

Follow us on Facebook @ Eastern Africa Jesuits and Twitter @AORjesuits