

From the Roof of Africa



Sisters of Notre Dame
Holy Spirit Delegation – Tanzania/Kenya
Newsletter ***Volume 6 #1***

Year of the FamilyYear of the Notre Dame Family

What a great joy to welcome 15 new members to our International Novitiate Community. These young women come from Uganda, Mozambique, Kenya and Tanzania.



April 5, 2014 - Entrance to Postulancy

Our whole community has been busy with preparations for many upcoming celebrations which all began on March 6th with the arrival of the Formators: Sister Mary Colette from Uganda and her six Candidates for Postulancy, Sister Mary Irene from Mozambique with her three Candidates for Postulancy, and Sister Mary Prerna from Kenya with her six Candidates for Postulancy. Joining them was Sister Mary Shobha, our Director of the Temporary Professed and the two Formators in Tanzania, Sisters Mary Roshini and Annete.

This is usually the time when we have our annual Formators' meeting and this year our presenter for the first morning was Fr. Edmund Mallya, SJ who gave an insightful and practical approach to our Formation ministry. We then continued our meetings for the next two days.



Our next celebration took place on April 27th with the entrance into the Novitiate for 11 of our 2nd year Postulants. The special prayer service prepared by their Formator, Sister Mary Annete centered on the theme, "I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."



Our celebration of First Profession was on May 10, 2014. This was the first time we had the First Profession in Njiro of the Novices from all three countries: Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. What joy was echoing through our novitiate community as these seven novices pronounced their First Vows. Their novice director, Sister Mary Roshini prepared them to live fully their theme: *Lord may I be a song of praise to you*. May God continue to bless each of them and also all our vocation efforts. After First Profession we will be 38 in our International Formation Community. We have much to be grateful for and ask our good, loving and provident God to continue helping Notre Dame to be alive and vibrant as we move into the future.



Our main celebrant for First Profession was Fr. Peddy, SVD. Others present for our celebration of First Profession were our Provincial Superior from India, Sister Mary Beena, SND; Sister is also making her annual Visitation of our Holy Spirit Delegation and we are happy to have Sister with us. Sister Mary Beena received the vows of our newly professed sisters from the Holy Spirit Delegation and Sister Mary Colette, representing Sister Marla, the Provincial Superior of Covington, Kentucky, received the vows of the newly professed sisters from the Mission in Uganda.

Some of the family members and friends of the community and of the newly professed were in attendance making it a wonderful witness of the life of vowed commitment in the Church and in our Congregation.

By Sister Mary Annete, SND

Inauguration in Kiomboi

January 18, 2014 was a beautiful day for the blessing of our Aloysia Home and our Notre Dame School. Originally conceived, it would be a home for orphaned children whose parents died from HIV/AIDS and a home for girls living in difficult situations. The plans for this home have been a long time in planning, beginning during the time when Sister Mary Sujita was Superior General and could become a reality through the generous gift of donors. Since then, others have seen the value of such



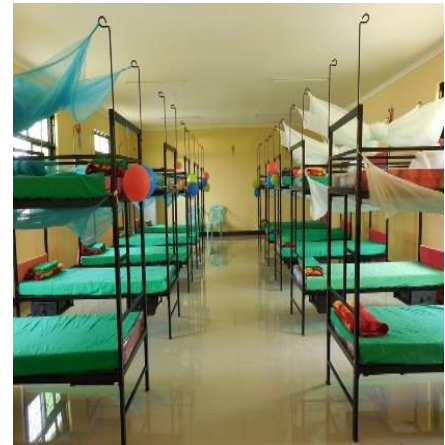


a Home and have made donations to build cottages. We surely want to thank our donors and welcome and encourage others to continue to support us in our ongoing efforts in meeting the expenses of our new Aloysia Home for these children. Our present Superior General, Sister Mary Kristin shared in her March 21, 2014 letter regarding the projects of securing a convent, building a school and now the Aloysia Home knowing that we will need to continue to expand.

Sister Mary Mukti has done much research into the setup and proper management of such a Home and will be following all the guidelines for this in our country of Tanzania. She has been untiring in her efforts to see that all is in place for the opening and has been supported by many in our Delegation and the Sisters already living there at our convent.

Our Aloysia Home will consist of two cottages. Our children will be able to attend our nursery/primary school that was begun in July of 2012 giving them an opportunity to be educated on site. A dorm mother will eventually be living, one in each cottage, to help with the children along with other caretakers. Presently, we welcomed our first 13 children as you can see from the picture. They have already put on their school uniforms and presented themselves beautifully at the official blessing with a song of tribute to Sister Maria Aloysia, our beloved Foundress.

God has been so good to us in making this dream a reality and we can only pray that this continuation of our dear Foundress' dream, continue to grow and flourish as we too, trust in our good and loving God, for as our Foundress said, "The dear good God has always taken care and will certainly continue to do so." *By Sister Mary Annete, SND*



Their new dorm was a welcomed site to and brought them much joy.

We welcomed our first 13 children to our Aloysia Home.

Simanjiro's New Look

Our Notre Dame Osotwa School is really taking shape. Beginning as a nursery school the enrollment has now increased to 88 with the addition of Class 1 and 2. Our volunteers from Germany have been so generous in coming each year to help build another part of the school and additional facilities

Sister Maria Almuth from Germany has come several times over the years and has been a real inspiration and source of joy and encouragement to all the volunteers. You can see the one large classroom in the original building with all the volunteers and the children in the school. We cannot express enough how grateful we are for the gift of our Dialog Projekt and for all the young men and women who give themselves so generously to making our school in Simanjiro what it is today.



How happy we were to celebrate our first Women's Day in Simanjiro. The Member of Parliament present representing Simanjiro was Mr. Christopher Ole Sendeka. He spoke so highly of the school and all the Sisters of Notre Dame were doing to educate their children. Although the gathering also became a means of fund raising, it did not take away from the great gift our women are to society and particularly to the Maasai community. Sisters Mary Mukti gave a speech and Sister Mary Rashmi presented a report of all that has been happening in the school and other activities. Sister Mary Roshini accompanied Sister Mary Mukti to the celebration as there were also some meetings that needed to be conducted following the celebration. The children performed well as they welcomed all the guests and the leader of the women's groups spoke with conviction and determination. It is a long journey for our Maasai women to come forth in leadership, but with the untiring effort of our dear Sisters Mary Rashmi, Magdalene Mbula and Susan, much has been accomplished. Thanks for all your efforts and we continue looking forward to other articles about our foundation in Simanjiro.



NOTRE DAME SCHOOL AND CONVENT IN SYOKIMAU, KENYA

Notre Dame, Syokimau has been rather quiet after our candidates went to Arusha for their Postulancy. All of us are busy doing all that we can to take care of the house as well as the school. The school has been going on rather well after we out-sourced the transport system, but when it



rains, we still have to answer many questions of our parents. One week we really had a beautiful sight of co-operation from our teachers, workers and students. After many requests from Sister Mary Sawmya, the road from Notre Dame School to Mount Sinai was graded. Right after that we had heavy rains, and so you can imagine the condition of the road with black cotton soil topped up on it. The vehicles could not proceed to the school. So the children had to walk through the slush. The teachers and workers waited outside the school to make the children sit on the parapet. Then the shoes were removed and washed by the teachers and workers so that the children could go to their classes. It really was such a wonderful sight. Once the rains stopped, we were smiling again and now everything is on time. Our compound looks beautiful with all the greeneries. It was a garden of Eden with all kinds of fruits in abundance. We had a feast of fruits and we shared them with our neighbouring Mt. Sinai Convent and School, our workers, teachers and all of us. Everyone enjoyed the gift of God in abundance.

On 28th March our two new aspirants Hellen and Mary arrived and on 29th March our two Candidates Catherine and Sabina came home from their Teacher Training College for holidays; now our community has grown. All of you are welcome to enjoy the serene, yet lively atmosphere of our community and walk in the cool of the evening in our beautiful Garden of Eden. Come and enjoy!
By Sister Mary Sawmya, SND

Shinyanga: Educating a Girl, Educates the Whole Society

We thank the Almighty God for entrusting us with 256 boarders in our Shinyanga Mission. Hoping to see God's goodness portrayed in those under our care, we accompany them in different ways in their faith formation, their character formation and by organizing seminars.

On 29th March 2014, all the girls from Don Bosco Secondary School gathered in our Notre Dame Hall for a seminar. There were about 350 girls from Pre-form to Form VI. All the girls from Didia, Bugisi and the hostel arrived at 9:00 with much joy and eagerness to attend the seminar. It started with prayer followed by welcoming and an introduction by Sister Mary Pascalia.

Two great influential women whose children are at our Notre Dame Hostel conducted this seminar for the girls. The opening talk was explaining the theme as stated in the title: "*Educating a Girl, Educates the Whole Society.*" Those two women, Mr. Kabwebwe and Mrs. Maliwa pointed out some things which affect the education of a girl and one of the main points was early friendships. All of our girls participated whole-heartedly and enjoyed the seminar which came to its conclusion at 3:15 with a word of appreciation.

Thanks to Sister Mary Pascalia for organizing the seminar and special thanks to Sister Mary Celine for providing a good lunch for all the girls which they enjoyed before returning to their respective residences. *By Sister Mary Gladness, SND*

An Award from the Ministry of Education

The team known as SINOVEL from Dar-es-Salaam, Ministry of Education which works in collaboration with the World Bank, conducted an examination last year in March for the Form III students in the regions of Kahama, Tabora and Shinyanga. This team selects four schools and conducts exams in three subjects: Kiswahili, English and Mathematics for an hour of exam for each subject. It is done to evaluate the performance of the Form III students and to encourage them by giving prizes. Some money is given to the schools to buy books for the students and teachers are given awards as well. When the results were announced, we received the news that Don Bosco Didia, Shinyanga got 1st position in English and 2nd position in Kiswahili. Sister Mary Celine, being the English teacher of Form III was awarded with a Samsung Mobile phone and a certificate and this was given on 31st March



during the morning assembly. The Kiswahili teacher, Mr. Lucas Kaswa also received a mobile phone as a prize. I thank God for his abundant blessings on the students and the mission.

By Sister Mary Celine, SND

Notre Dame Primary, Njiro

It is amazing to see how growth takes place in human development. It happened in our Notre Dame Primary School in Njiro when we received new Montessori One pupils. During their first month in school, some of them were attached to their parents. Once they are brought to school in the morning they will start crying saying they need their parents. One cute boy called Evans was most affected. When he sees Sisters, he will cry saying, "I need my Baba (father)". Then to console him I will take him to staffroom for sometime then he will be okay. One day, he was really crying and he told me "Sister Irene, today I want to study with you in our classroom and we sit together."

I had to take him to his classroom and pretended that we are together for sometime then I left. Towards the closing of our school, the interesting thing was that he got used to the school and says, "I am ready to study so no more crying." *By Sister Mary Irene, SND*

Zinduka: Education through Women's Groups and Women Groups for Community Education and Change

The 70 women from Zinduka Women's Centre were specially privileged to attend the health seminar conducted by Anita and the team from ViNA (Village Network Africa) on various topics on Community Health and Family Planning. All those who had received the training had kept water and soap on the premises of their houses to wash hand after defecation. They now keep their vessels, compound and house etc. clean. It was not a practice before they received the training. They also boil drinking water and they keep it covered in a clean container. They know the importance of latrines and safe drinking water and washing of vegetables and fruits to prevent some of the communicable diseases.



We researched to know the improvement the Community Health Trainees have done.



The women also practiced teaching the women's groups.

Within this short time the women's groups have prepared a skit on hygiene and presented it to about 250 women members on the occasion of the International Women's Day on March 22, 2014 here at our Zinduka Center. This shows how much interest they took to learn about health and their eagerness to educate others. They will continue to share this knowledge with others as they have been instructed.



The Women are receiving teaching materials during the community health training Graduation



Health Programme Presentation on Women's Day

Session on Family Planning



The young couples were given more knowledge on family planning.

Students Learning on STI

The Notre Dame students received a seminar on HIV/ AIDS. Though they knew about HIV/AIDS, they were not aware of other STI (sexually transmitted infections) which are very harmful to them. For most of them it was an eye opener and they learned a lot about STI. The presentation was excellent for they could see the signs and symptoms of STI.





Women are hopeful to be the women of social change especially with their new knowledge on health and hygiene. The new group already started practicing hygiene especially by keeping soap and water to wash their hands, keeping boiled water and covering it. They also keep away flies by making a cover for their pit latrine and simple ways of chasing mosquitoes and other practices like teaching the children how to wash hands before and after meals, after visiting the toilet, as well as to clean the vegetables and fruits before cutting and using them. They appreciated the teaching and ViNA for what they have gained. They look forward for more health knowledge and wanted to practice it in their own personal lives, families and society. We wish them the best with the support of ViNA.

The Women's Day celebration was very captivating. The chief guest was Rev. Sister Agreda. The women were challenged by her words of wisdom as she urged the women to become more responsible in their role of being agents of social change in their families, communities and societies, now that they have been emancipated.



The women presented various issues of Health, economy and social programmes which they have had training about. All were very grateful for everything. More than two hundred women were present. This event for the first time took place at Notre Dame Secondary Hall. Thank you dear Sisters for your timely support and for encouraging us in many various ways

By Sisters Mary Satya and Kellen, SND

Delegation Centre – A New Look

With the increased number of formees, it became necessary to do some renovating of the former St. Julie School building that existed before we built the present school. After quite a bit of planning, organizing, and doing some restructuring, our extension of the Delegation Centre Community is open and in use. Four of the sisters now reside in the Notre Dame House and our Local Superior, Sister Mary Lalita will be happy to welcome you. This has given the Delegation Centre/Formation House more space for visitors and also for the formees. Some additional toilets and bathing areas have been added to the back of the Formation House that gives the 45 novices and postulants more space for their basic needs. What used to be the "prayer room" is also a new dormitory and in use. So now when you come to stay for a night or two, you will find a place in the Delegation Centre/Formation House and then can walk over to the Notre Dame House for prayer and your meals. It is serving our needs for the present and we want you to "feel at home with us" in this new arrangement. We thank all the sisters who did a tremendous amount of planning, organizing and purchasing to make this a reality: Sisters Mary Mukti, Lalita, Pramila, Roshini, Neelima, Phyllis and Irene.





Fr. Ferdinand came to bless the extension of our Delegation Centre/Formation House and celebrate Eucharist with us. We thank especially Sister Mary Lalita for having everything ready in the community and thanks to all the community members who helped: Sisters Mary Neelima, Phyllis and Irene

Notre Dame -Mt. Sinai Community

The Growth of our Faith

The long awaited day finally dawned. Which day are we talking about? The Confirmation Day. It was on March 2, 2014 and St. Veronica Catechumens and all the Mt. Sinai catechism students who were prepared received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Sister Mary Elizabeth and Deacon Raju Nelliserry, CMI prepared the students in the catechism classes for about two years. His Lordship Bishop Martin Kivuva of Machakos Diocese officiated at the Mass which was held at St. Veronica's new church that is under construction. The church was decorated so well and it accommodated about 5,000 people. About 180 catechumens including Mt. Sinai students received the Sacrament of Confirmation. They all were dressed in white that made them look like angels. The Bishop congratulated all the Christians for their deep faith and for the growth of their parish and for the effort to complete the church construction. After the Mass, the harambee was held for the contributions of the construction in order to raise the church from its foundation. Bishop Martin, being the guest, all the Christians contributed generously and whole-heartedly because they are longing to have the church completed as soon as possible so that they may be able to grow as parish and practice all the spiritual exercises of the Church. It is the first time to have Confirmation since they became a parish and we congratulate all who received the Sacrament.

Let us all arise and celebrate. It is Jubilee!

It is a great joy to give thanks to the Lord for his marvelous deeds and love. The family of Mt. Sinai; that is, Fathers, Sisters, teachers, non-teaching staff and pupils joined the C.M.I. Priests, Frs. Joy and John Karukuffy, to celebrate the Golden and Silver Jubilee of their First Profession. All of us were happy to be part of the celebrations in thanksgiving for all that the priests had done in those years of their priesthood. Sisters Mary Shobha, Elizabeth and Emma prepared the children for singing and dancing. We had a very solemn Mass that was prepared so well by all the pupils who led the singing, prayers, and liturgical dances. It was really beautiful. After the Mass, the pupils sang and danced a jubilee song that made everyone feel as if they were in ecstasy. After the celebration, we all had a nice meal that all enjoyed.

Friendly Match

Mt. Sinai School has a very good compound that makes everyone enjoy playing. Sisters, teachers and pupils all like games after class hours. We also like to invite friends from other schools to come and play with us. The school had champions who can play so well. It was very exciting when Mt. Sinai School invited Tassia Catholic School for the friendly match. The pupils played different games like football, netball, volley ball and basketball. Although it was a friendly match, the Mt. Sinai pupils were the best players. After the pupils played, the teachers also got on the basketball court and played which was really fun. Later on, the day was crowned with a tug of war that everyone enjoyed. There were 50 students and 25 teachers who came to participate in the events. The day ended with lunch for all. To crown the day and to speed up the departure, there was a heavy downpour immediately after the tug of war. All the guest students and teachers rushed to their waiting buses and took off before the road could become impassable after the rains. We thank God for this wonderful experience of friendship.

By the Sisters of the Mt. Sinai Community – Sisters Mary Shobha, Elizabeth and Emma, SND



Notre Dame Secondary School, Njiro - Blessing of our New Boarding Facility

Our new boarding facility at Notre Dame Secondary School in Njiro was blessed on December 9, 2013. Cutting the ribbon at the ceremony was Sister Mary Mukti, our Holy Spirit Delegation Superior.



Sister Mary Mukti cuts the ribbon to the main entrance to the School Hall and boarding facility



The guests look at the beautiful façade of the new boarding facility.

There was much joy and excitement when the girls arrived in January of 2014 to find that their new facility was ready for occupancy. Needless to say, everyone enjoyed watching these young women explore their new surroundings and begin to set up their dorms.

So sit, relax, enjoy yourself and read every word about us!

As we bring our Newsletter to a close, we thank all those who helped to make this Newsletter a reality. Your contributions surely make the reading interesting, inspiring and challenging. It is so good to see how we have grown over the years in our many ministries and in our life as Holy Spirit Delegation.

From the Newsletter Committee: Sisters Mary Annete, Shaija and Shobha, SND



Thank you Sister Mary Beena for being with us and enjoy some of the wonderful scenery of Africa. We enjoyed your time with us and already look forward to your next visit.