



DIOCESE OF JINJA

YOUTH APOSTOLATE OFFICE

Rubaga Student's Centre, Plot 53 Kiira Road

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Background

Most of the priests took the initiative to do youth apostolate in their parishes and schools; however in 1966 a centre was created for the youths. In March 1974 it was decided that this centre opens up to older youths. Rev. Fr. Picavet, from Holland started conducting weekend seminars for students within and around Jinja at this social centre. In 1977 Rev. Fr. Wynand Huys (a Mill Hill Missionary from Holland) was appointed as youth chaplain.

When the social centre was transformed into Uganda Martyrs Minor Seminary, it was deemed necessary to shift the social centre to kiira Road Plot 53 where it is now, known as **RUBAGA STUDENTS' CENTRE**. Fr. Picavet continued to work with the youths while Fr. Wynand was the youth chaplain. Rev. Fr. Kees Groenewoud (RIP) (a Mill Hill Missionary) was appointed Diocesan youth chaplain in 1983 and took up residence at **Rubaga students' centre**. Fr. Kees (RIP) started working with and among the rural youthss mobilizing, organizing and giving them seminars and trainings on leadership, agriculture and development courses across the Diocese, but also continued with the weekend seminars for the youths in schools, something we are still carrying out as an office/ centre. To date we have a forty year old student's centre with a large number of active youth. And I want say that for over forty years now the centre has received material, spiritual and financial support from M&O Working group from Netherlands.

The centre now is under the leadership of Fr Ben Wakabi who is serving as the director of the centre and the Diocesan youth chaplain, with the help of a manager of the centre Emmanuel Kawanguzi who also serves as the Diocesan Youth Coordinator. We also have other people who help at the centre in one way or the other.

Objectives

- To net work and coordinate the youth apostolate.
- To promote economic awareness among the youths on how to use the available resources efficiently.
- To create awareness and strengthen the capacity of the youths in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS.
- To promote Christian and cultural values among the youths.
- To promote gender-equality awareness and participation in the youth apostolate.
- To create and promote awareness in the prevention of drug and substance Abuse among the youths.
- To organise the youth in order to actively participate in church related activities.
- To mobilize resources to sustain the youth apostolate.
- To empower the youths to exploit their potential.

Among the programmes we have been able to realize so far in the centre and around the Diocese of Jinja are the following;

- We have conducted weekend seminars/ workshops.
- We carried development courses on income generating activities.
- We have held Diocesan Youth Day celebrations.
- We had a successful Students' Day celebration.
- Youth conferences
- Holiday programmes for the students
- Monitoring and touring of youth project.
- Games and sports.

Youth Ministry in the lockdown.

Following the breakout of the Covid 19 pandemic , the situation has not been the same. We had to adopt to the new normal. The youth ministry became very challenging. The approach to the ministry had to change. We have used more of the local radio stations, social media platforms to carry out the Apostolate. Schools and institutions were closed, churches closed, big gatherings stopped. Hence, our schools outreach ministry also had to be suspended for awhile.

The annual Diocesan Youth camp and Diocesan Catholic students day celebrations did not take place due to Covid 19.

Fr Kees memorial day was called off due to the much restrictions brought about by the pandemic.

However, from October the Government of Uganda partially lifted the lockdown on schools and places of worship. The cases of Covid has continued to go down. And like it has been for many people around the world, this pandemic has constrained us here beyond measure.

Many of our planned programs could not take off due to the lack of funds to run these programs. However, we managed to carry out a few manageable activities at the centre and around the Diocese as seen below.

A summary of activities from 1st July to 31st December 2020

No	Date	Activity	Venue
1	11th/7/2020	Youth executive	RSC
2	25th/7/2020	Diocesan pastoral youth council	RSC
3	8th/8/2020	Uganda Martyrs youth choir	RSC
4	22nd/8/2020	Iganga visit	Iganga
5	28th/8/2020	Deanary youth council	Kamuli
6	19th/9/2020	Nakyaka Visit	Kamuli
7	7th/10/2020	St John Bosco SS	Kamuli
8	8th/10/2020	Brighton Junior Sch	Kampala
9	16th/10/2020	Inter-religious Dialogue	Jinja Nile Resort
10	21st/10/2020	Buyala Primary School	Jinja Cathedral
11	22nd-24th October/2020	St Bernard Many SS	Kyotera

12	7th/11/2020	Family Tree prayers	RSC
13	18th/11/2020	Janet P/S	Buwaiswa

14	19th/11/2020	Mother Kevin SS	Walukuba
15	9th/12/2020	National youth Conference (Online)	Nsambya
16	27th/12/2020	Uganda Martyrs youth Choir	RSC
17	30th- 31st/2020	End of year youth prayers	RSC

Some of the achievements.

Am glad to inform you that we completed our outdoor toilet. it has 2 rooms and four urinal pots for the side of gents and 3 on the side of ladies.

We carried out a number facelift on the main building through painting and also we did some minor renovations.

Furthermore, we greatly improved on the gardens so as to be able to attract guests to hire the gardens as in away to bring in some income to the centre.

We have given out practical life skills to the young people like making of bags, masks, table mats, shoe making and tailoring.

More indoor games have been supported like chess, Luddo, and table tennis.

I still offer Counseling and confessions to the youths every Tuesday from 9:00am to 6:00pm and so far it has attracted more young.

A friend of the Rubaga Students Centre from Kampala donated four automatic sewing machines to the youth ministry.

Pending/ Challenges

The behind Fr Kees memorial guest wing structure has not yet commenced.

We still have to get new bed sheets and blankets for the centre.

Due to the increasing power tariffs in the country, we still have plans of installing solar system to cut down on the cost of power.

We plan to buy at least two more plastic water tanks to harvest the rain water on the main building and a medium tank of about five thousand litres tank to collect the water on the outside new toilet. this will further to cut down on the water expenses.

Vote of gratitude.

We are greatly indebted to M&O Working group for the continued care, prayers love, support and for standing with us during this trying moment of pandemic. Life would have been different without your generosity. I am very grateful to Peter Simons who has always been our link withe big family of M&O.

We are equally thankful to the youth leaders and chaplains, school animators.

We very grateful to all we have supported us in so many ways.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Benedict Wakabi', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Fr Benedict Wakabi
Diocesan Youth Chaplain