

# "A TIME TO BOND AMIDST COVID-19"

## MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL YOUTH OFFICE OF UGANDA EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE



During this time of uncertainty caused by COVID-19, when life as we know it has been turned upside down, it's vital that we have a good grip of the situation and focus on common family and societal values such as: love, honesty, patience, generosity, participating in prayer (family prayer), being respectful and courteous in your interactions; standing up for those who can't support themselves, promoting teamwork, etc. I am sure all these values can be applied both in the nuclear and extended families to help solidify bonds among family members and the neighbourhood.

This time also gives us an opportunity to strengthen interpersonal relationships within the household. The family members get to know each other better at a behavioural and emotional level. Work outside home (employment) which used to take the greater part of the parents is now limited; hence a better chance to bond as a family.

Beside, this period also gives children and youth the opportunity to discover/learn their parents better, share their emotional, spiritual and social needs, which help the parents to know and understand their children with the values they have acquired from home and those that they bring from outside the home environment. Positive family values help the children and youth make good choices because these values have a set of beliefs to help guide them in future.

As noted in our first message on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020, we urged all young people to become change agents, promote hygiene and fight misinformation surrounding the pandemic. Aware of the increase in the numbers of new cases of COVID-19 in Uganda, below are some simple guidelines you should continue to practice on how to protect yourself, your family and others from the corona virus:

### 1. **Avoid close contact with others by:**

- ✓ Staying at home as much as possible (visit friends and loved ones by electronic devices such as video calls instead of visiting them in person).
- ✓ Practicing social and physical distancing (stay at least 6 feet – 2 meters away from others in public places).
- ✓ For those who have started to work (in the essential sectors), if not too busy ask your employer the possibility of working from home in the meantime.
- ✓ Avoid people who appear to be sick.
- ✓ Go shopping during off-peak times (Do not frequent shops and market places. Go when it's necessary. You can always use other means like "Boda boda". Call them to help you).

- ✓ Wear face masks all the time if you can when in public where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

## **2. Practice good hygiene wherever you are:**

The corona virus can survive for hours or even days on some surfaces and with that in mind, continue to wash your hands with soap and water (frequently and thoroughly) for at least 20 seconds, especially:

- ✓ After being in public places and touching door handles, table faces, chairs, shopping carts, elevator buttons, etc.
- ✓ After using the bathroom
- ✓ Before preparing food
- ✓ If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- ✓ Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands as directed by the Ministry of Health.
- ✓ If you cough or sneeze, do so in the bend of your elbow. If you use a tissue, throw it away immediately or used a handkerchief wash and iron as emphasized by the President of Uganda during his updates.

## **3. If you feel sick, follow these simple guidelines:**

- ✓ Stay home, unless you are experiencing a medical emergency such as severe shortness of breath or a very high fever.
- ✓ Call the toll free line (919 0800100066| 0800203033 and others) given by the Ministry of Health or your doctor/urgent care facility and explain your symptoms over the phone before moving out of the house.
- ✓ If you leave your home to get medical care, wear a mask if you have respiratory symptoms.

## **Take note of the following information from the Johns Hopkins Health System/Hospital by Lisa Lockerd Maragakis, (Associate Professor of Medicine) on use of face masks:**

- a) The virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity for example via speaking, coughing, or sneezing even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms.
- b) Some people are making masks out of cotton or linen or bandanas. There are several patterns available for use in non-patient care settings. Cloth masks should be washed daily and ironed.
- c) Thicker, more densely woven cotton fabrics are best, such as quilting cotton or cotton sheets. So long as it doesn't allow droplets to pass through while ensuring you can still breathe properly with your mask in place.
- d) While masks may seem like a good idea, remember that social and physical distancing, frequent and thorough hand washing are still the very best ways to avoid getting COVID-19.

### **Note:**

- ✓ Follow all the directives of the Government of Uganda and the detailed guidelines given by the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization on COVID-19.

- ✓ Read the guidelines given to the public by Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC) which is available in all Catholic Media Houses and platforms, including the official UEC website.

### **ACTION POINTS FOR THE YOUTH:**

- ✓ Provide support for the vulnerable people through messages of solidarity and prayers (individual and family prayers), especially during this month of May (the month of the Rosary) where the Holy Father Pope Francis is asking the faithful to intensify our love and devotion to Blessed Virgin Mary by “contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother”.
- ✓ Share God’s love and compassion with the suffering poor by contributing both in cash and in-kind (donating food, soap, sanitizers, etc...) through your youth offices, which donations will be presented to the Bishop Ordinary to support the affected communities, including Parishes, babies homes and other vulnerable communities.
- ✓ Focus on yourself. Find time to understand yourself better – your emotions, aspirations and the kind of vocation you would like to consider in life by meditating and reflecting on the Word of God; and having time to listen to the silent voice of God.
- ✓ Attend online celebrations of the Eucharist and other forms of prayer /devotions.
- ✓ Those volunteering/working in the radio stations, use the available Catholic Radios (the program designed for the ‘Youth Hour’) to sensitize your fellow youth and the general public on the impact of COVID-19 on our usual/routine chores and how to remain optimistic amidst corona virus pandemic.
- ✓ Remain very relevant in spite of the challenges. In the words of Pope Francis during the closing Mass of WYD-2019 in Panama; “We are on a journey”, “keep living the faith and sharing it” and do not forget, that “you are not the ‘tomorrow’, you are not the ‘meantime’, you are not the ‘future’, but **“You are the Now of God”**”.
- ✓ To reduce boredom and stress, read something that is very interesting, participate in domestic work (e.g. cleaning the house, compound, your bedroom, physical exercise (do it at home), storytelling, etc).
- ✓ Create media platforms/social networks to share messages of encouragement and prevention of COVID-19. Always use reliable sources to get information on COVID-19 e.g. Ministry of Health and World Health Organization sites.
- ✓ You can develop a new hobby, e.g. find ways to express your thoughts and feelings by writing in a diary, designing clips of some of the activities you undertake in the family, dig and plant flowers, trees and other food crops. For our rural youth, continue with your usual agriculture which is the backbone of Uganda's economy and the main source of livelihood and employment.
- ✓ Fight stigma and discrimination against individuals, families and communities affected by COVID-19 and those put under quarantine.
- ✓ Please show love, mercy and forgiveness to each other. Support individuals and families without discrimination.
- ✓ Prevent domestic violence within families and Small Christian Communities through social media by sharing messages of love, hope, unity, forgiveness, etc.
- ✓ Design a timetable to guide you in the different activities.
- ✓ Keep SAFE and HEALTHY by staying at home. Follow the advice of your parents/elders.

## **Gratitude:**

To the Government of Uganda for all the efforts put in place to protect the people of Uganda from COVID-19; to Uganda Episcopal Conference and the Bishops Ordinary for guiding the faithful and supporting the Youth; the Provincial Youth Chaplaincy Coordinators for the harmonization, encouragement and support to the Youth Ministry; Diocesan Youth Chaplains and Coordinators for continued ministering and accompanying the young people; the National and Diocesan Youth Leaders for the team spirit; the lay leaders for parenting and the young people for cooperating.

**For God and My Country**

***By Zako Joyce  
National Youth Coordinator  
Uganda Episcopal Conference  
May, 2020***

## **Other messages for the Young People from the Youth Chaplaincy Team**

### **A MESSAGE TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE DURING COVID19 NEW LIFESTYLE!**

Across the world, the impact of corona virus is being experienced in the communities, families, politics, elections, jobs and more. Individually you too are experiencing this impact at various levels.

Many of us are feeling the impact of the corona virus pandemic on our lives from the lack of adequate response by many governments all over the world to economic hardships.

We thank our President, the Minister of Health and her Team for their struggle in containing the spread of the virus in Uganda. I also take this opportunity to appreciate the National Youth Office of Uganda Episcopal Conference for updating the young people of Uganda on how to protect themselves and their loved ones during this difficult trying moments of COVID-19. Follow the guidelines (stay home, maintain social distance, wash hands often, cover your mouth and nose if you have flu and while coughing or sneezing, call help lines in cases of emergency) and Let's always keep the frontline Team in our prayers.

While we hassle with the challenges posed to lifestyle by the pandemic it's sad to note that many radical organizations are taking this as an opportunity to promote their radical anti-life and anti- family agenda.

There is a lot of information from various sources which seem very candid yet detrimental to your life and family. Let's remind ourselves of the following-;

1. Your body is the Temple of the Holy-spirit, keep it clean so that even after corona virus you are still in good books with God.
2. Abstinence is still a virtue, keep your virginity and stay safe from increased risk of early pregnancy, dropping out of school, abortion, HIV, Hepatitis B and many other Sexually Transmitted Infections that can be

harmful to your life. Let's take charge of our bodies during the Quarantine so we all emerge victorious post covid19.

3. Using contraceptives do not protect you HIV or other STDs. Besides to the teenage girls, your body (especially the reproductive system) is at the peak of growth and maturation, using synthetic hormones in the form of contraceptives will interfere with this natural body development. Take time to understand and appreciate these normal body changes.
4. Condoms are not 100% even with correct use, their effectiveness depends on proper technique and must be used all the time which reduces your safely by providing you with false hope.
5. Talk to your parents about issues that seem confusing to you and always remember no one can surly love you more than your parents, listen to them, pray with them, play with them, laugh and make home a humorous environment even during this lockdown. Let's leave the rest to God

I wish you God's Love and Protection

Stay Home, stay safe!

**Concerned Parent, Pro-Life and Pro-family Activist  
Kampala Archdiocese**



Pastoring each other during this.  
pandemic of coronavirus

Shalom!

Young people of the apostolate, as Catholics and Christians, we need to pastor each other for spiritual

nourishment in this period covid-19 pandemic. I encourage you to be vigilant, active, sound in mind, upright as we go through this tough moment that has put the world in a state of turmoil. Keep the word of God as your daily source of encouragement especially the pastoral epistles of Timothy and Titus which teach us cheerfully the directions of pastoring to each other and the church at large.

Let's keep praying as we follow the guidelines put before us by our leaders to overcome the pandemic.

Stay home, stay safe.

MS. NDARU VICKY



# United in Faith

## Together Against COVID-19



Fellow young people,

Our world today is being threatened by a deadly virus, with evidence to what it is doing to other places, we must believe that it is real.

I urge you to:

1. Continue practicing the guidelines set up by our Civil leaders
2. Keep the faith handed down to us by the Holy Catholic Church,

That is;

- a. Loving God,
- b. Loving your neighbor as you love yourself and
- c. Sharing the hope that there's a better tomorrow ahead of us.

God bless you, Stay safe,  
The Church needs you

ODAMA ERICSON  
Youth Leader



### CORONAVIRUS AWARENESS FROM THE ARUA DIOCESE YOUTH APOSTOLATE IN DIASPORA

Dear young people of God, Greetings to you All in Jesus Name.

In this period of Covid-19 Pandemic disease Lockdown, I know many are facing different challenges, I would like to Encourage All of you that God is love, He will never abandon his Children and Nothing can Separate us from God, not Disease, not Demons, not even hunger or Nothing in the creation!, **"So Don't be Afraid. whatever is now covered will be uncovered, and every secret will be made known" (Mt 10:26).**

Basing on Assurance of the scripture above, God is with us and he will help us to Overcome this Disease. Let's Confess our sins, Ask for God's forgiveness upon our lives and Pray for God to heal the world. more so, Let's abide and follow the health Guidelines given by W.H.O , and the Government towards preventing the spread of Corona Virus,

Stay safe and,  
God bless you.

*Ayikobua Johnbosco, Youth leader Arua Diocese youth Apostolate in Diaspora.*

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Dear fellow youths, let's be cautious and vigilant as we notice and detect the signs and symptoms of coronavirus which include sore throat, dry cough, fever, loss of appetite, flu among others. Always remember that



early detection leads to early intervention there by saving our lives and those of others. Together we can save lives of others while having hope and trust in the God Almighty; *JEREMIAH 33:6; Here I am bringing up for her a recuperation and health; and I will heal them and reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth.*

*Drijaru Allen Solance. Arua diocese youth apostolate in diaspora (member)*

Stay home and stay safe