

## **THE YOUTH OF UGANDA CELEBRATED THE FIRST WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY AMIDST COVID-19 LOCKDOWN**

As the National Youth Office of Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC) continues to promote and implement the campaign of Pope Francis ***"The Elderly are our Grandparents"***, we are again blessed with another important global event in the Pastoral Care for the Elderly; ***"The World Day for the Grandparents and the Elderly"*** officiated by His Holiness, Pope Francis on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and celebrated throughout the world.

Guided by the theme ***"I am with you always"*** (Mt 28:20), the young people of Uganda joined the rest of the world in commemorating this great day in the lives of their grandparents and the elderly. In collaboration with the Diocesan Youth Offices, a National Charity Week in support of the Elderly and Grandparents was organized from 19<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The young people from the 19 Catholic Dioceses; Youth Movements and Associations were encouraged to offer psychosocial support, prayer and carry other forms of charity within their families and the Small Christian Communities (SCC).

Coordinated by the National Youth Office, Diocesan Youth Chaplains and Coordinators mobilized the youth to carry out the following activities: Reconciliation among the elderly, celebration of the Eucharist in families and SCC, anointing of the elderly, counseling, celebration of Feast/Birthdays of the elderly; awareness creation through the Catholic Radios about the event and support towards the older persons, distribution of food items and other basic household items such as soap, salt, toilet papers, wipes, Jerricans, beds, mattresses, bed sheets, clothes, basins, plates, cups, firewood among others. Some dioceses spent time cleaning the houses, constructing toilets, renovating and smearing grass thatched houses; digging and plating vegetables, finding out about the life situations of the elderly such as spiritual, economic and moral and reported critical situations to the relevant local authorities. These activities were steered by the theme ***"I am with you always, to the end of the age"*** (Mathew 28:20) as elaborated in the Message of Pope Francis to mark this day.

Due to the lockdown, most activities were carried out within the families and the Small Christian Communities. The climax of the National Charity Week was marked by the National virtual Eucharistic celebration on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 presided over by Rt. Rev. Paul Ssemogerere the Bishop Chairman of Lay Apostolate Commission of Uganda Episcopal Conference and the Ordinary of Kasana-Luweero Diocese. He noted that "it is elders and grandparents who define the present by transmitting to the young generations what they received in turn". He called upon the young people to honour the elderly and grandparents and said ***"Elders and grandparents are living encyclopedias of wisdom and guardians of vast treasures of human and spiritual experiences"***.

In his message, Emmanuel Cardinal Wamala invited the youth to remain close to the elderly. "Dear young people, I urge you to do this with great love and generosity. Older

people can give you much more than you can imagine. The Book of Sirach offers this advice he said” (Cf. Sirach 8:9).

The Virtual Eucharistic celebrations were also carried out through social platforms at Diocesan and Parish levels presided over by Bishop Ordinaries and the Clergy since Uganda is under lockdown due to the second wave of corona virus pandemic.

We are grateful to the Bishops of Uganda and all Dioceses for this gesture of love towards the grandparents and the elderly; the Youth Chaplains, Coordinators and Leaders for mobilizing the youth and supporting the older persons within the families and Small Christian Communities; to Life Ascending Uganda for the collaboration during the National Charity Week and the climax celebration of the First World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly.

We urge the young people of Uganda to continue with the acts of charity towards the elderly who are source of wisdom and faith to the young generation.

**By the National Youth Coordinator  
Uganda Episcopal Conference**

Below are some of the photographs taken during the National Charity Week organized by the National Youth Office of Uganda Episcopal Conference (UEC):

**a) Amourting and blessing of the elderly in the Small Christian Communities**





## b) Sacrament of Reconciliation



## c) Celebration of the Eucharist within the Small Christian Communities (SCC)





#### d) Home Visits by the Youth and the Animators





**e) Cleaning the compound and digging rubbish pits for the elderly**





**f) Helping the elderly in the garden**



**g) Digging and constructing pit latrines**

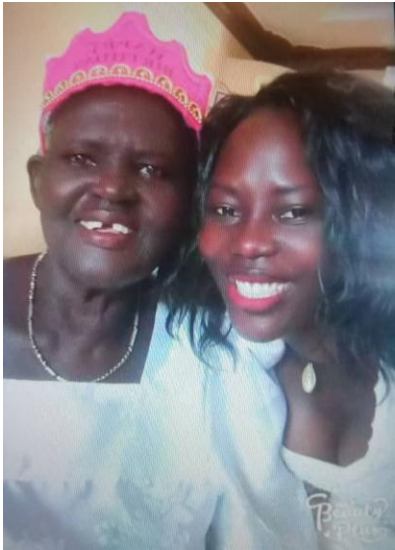




**h) Promoting hygiene and fighting corona virus (implementing the SOP)**



**i) Celebration of Birthdays**





**j) Gifts to the Elderly**





**k) Virtual National Celebration of the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2021 amidst corona virus lockdown. This was presided over by Rt. Rev. Paul Ssemogerere Chairman Lay Apostolate Commission of UEC and Bishop of Kasana-Luweero Diocese**





**I) Diocesan celebrations on 25<sup>th</sup> July (in some Dioceses) amidst lockdown**

