

## **AJANews 88 - January 2010**

This AJANews special tells about the **World AIDS Day (WAD)** activities undertaken by AJAN Jesuits and feedback to the JESAM's WAD message. To read the WAD message of JESAM as well as those of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) and Pope Benedict XVI, please go to [www.jesuitaids.net/go.aspx?ID=4&B2=50&P0=137&TL=1](http://www.jesuitaids.net/go.aspx?ID=4&B2=50&P0=137&TL=1)

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### **JESAM MESSAGE**

*We should allow ourselves to be challenged by the appeal to deeper pastoral accompaniment of many of our brothers and sisters marked by the pandemic, especially when other "propaganda" debases human dignity in the name of false prevention. We are called to creativity and greater depth. The service of the Kingdom always looks to the future, borne by that plan of Love which has been there since the very beginning.*

So the Jesuit Regional Superior of Rwanda-Burundi, Fr Augustin Karekezi SJ, reflected on the WAD message delivered by the Moderator of the Jesuit Superiors of Africa and Madagascar (JESAM), Fr Fratern Masawe SJ.

The English, French and Portuguese versions of Fr Masawe's message, *Learning to face AIDS as a family*, received worldwide coverage on Catholic websites, and excerpts were translated into Spanish too ([www.jesuitaids.net/esp](http://www.jesuitaids.net/esp)). Vatican Radio, *Zenit*, *Fides*, the US Catholic News Service (CNS), *La Croix* (France) and *Vida Nueva* (Spain) were among those reporting JESAM's message. The publications of Jesuit Provinces and social justice centres featured the message in places as diverse as Australia, Burundi, China, Kenya, Malta, Rwanda, the USA and Zimbabwe. The national Catholic radio stations of Côte d'Ivoire and Burundi (where the message was translated into Kirundi by *Service Yezu Mwiza*) broadcast the message. Spain, Brazil and Syria were reached through diocesan or other websites. In South Africa, the JESAM message was spread by the Christian AIDS Resource and Information Service.

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### **MEDIA INITIATIVES**

#### *Vatican Radio interviews*

Vatican Radio interviewed AJAN Coordinator Fr Michael Czerny SJ in Italian and, in French, Frs Jacqueline Azetsop SJ and Paterne Mombé SJ, Director of the *Centre Espérance Loyola* (CEL) in Togo.

All underlined the comprehensive approach offered by AJAN. *Our approach is multi-dimensional*, Fr Jacquelineau told Xavier Sartres of Vatican Radio. *It takes into account the environment where affected persons live, their spiritual and other needs; it is a holistic, complete approach.*

Fr Michael echoed in his interview with Fabio Colagrande: *It seems to me that our approach is the one underlined at the II Synod of Bishops for Africa - in a word, the holistic approach. We take seriously all aspects of the human person, including relationships - personal, with family, community, culture and society - and our approach is to accompany people, youth, adults, couples, orphans in all these dimensions.* (For more excerpts of this interview, please see *AJANews* 87 - December 2009)

As Director of the CEL, Fr Paterne talked about income-generating activities, about psychosocial and spiritual accompaniment and about supporting children from AIDS-affected families. *We come to the aid of affected children; for example, we support their education by covering school fees. We try to give them everything they need for their growth - education, nutrition - so that they may be like their peers.* Besides these concrete examples of the holistic approach, he outlined a new project of the CEL, started in 2009: to train people infected by HIV and affected by AIDS so that they can start an income-generating activity like producing goods like clothes or soap and selling them.

#### *Articles*

Augustine Ekeno SJ, a Kenyan regent at AJAN House, explained the holistic approach in an article that appeared in the Hakimani e-newsletter entitled *World AIDS Day 2009: Learning from families affected and infected*. Recent UNAIDS statistics report a 17% reduction in new infections over the past eight years, with the most progress seen in Sub-Saharan Africa. Ekeno maintains that the pandemic remains a huge threat for this continent, home to 22.4 million people with HIV. Challenging readers to evaluate their own response to the pandemic, Ekeno lists the following as essential components of a comprehensive approach: ethics of compassion; solidarity; integral development and justice; critical education; a paradigm shift in matters concerning sexuality.

Another excellent article of Ekeno's, entitled *HIV/AIDS and women: Mama Huruma's story*, was published in *Thinking Faith*, the online journal of the British Jesuits. Starting out from the story of a HIV-positive woman from Tanzania, Ekeno argues that the Church, the State and indeed all humanity have a duty to listen to Mama Huruma and others like her and to support them. He considers different perspectives, among them human rights; Christian responsibility; the potential of women with HIV to become agents of change. Urging the Church to identify with the powerless and to reach out to the most affected, Ekeno writes: *When we hear of someone hurting, we must take it seriously. Mama Huruma is asking for some relief from her suffering - we are challenged to listen and respond. There is no doubt that if we remove ourselves from the experiences of those affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, we will not understand the suffering and the devastation caused by the pandemic.*

To read *HIV/AIDS and women: Mama Huruma's story*, please go to [www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/20091201\\_1.htm](http://www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/20091201_1.htm)

To read *World AIDS Day 2009: Learning from families affected and infected*, please visit [www.jesuitaids.net](http://www.jesuitaids.net)

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## **WAD activities by AJAN ministries**

### **BURUNDI: SERVICE YEZU MWIZA**

*Fr Désiré Yamuremye SJ writes:* Burundi joined with the rest of the world to mark WAD 2009. Service Yezu Mwiza (SYM) translated the JESAM message into Kirundi and distributed it. The theme in Burundi was: *Homme, femme ensemble pour réussir la prévention du VIH de la mère à l'enfant* (Man and woman together to assure the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV - PMTCT). In Burundi, AIDS has become a significant cause of child mortality, and so preventing mother-to-child transmission is a great challenge. Today, the number of women on PMTCT protocols is no more than 1500. The objective for this year and the coming one is to mobilise the Burundian population, especially men, to make them aware that PMTCT is the concern of both parents and not just the mother's. Skits to elaborate the theme were performed in the rural districts of Bujumbura and the group of SYM beneficiaries won the first prize of \$25.

In conclusion, this objective (making PMTCT a matter for both parents) pre-supposes that the couple go together for a pre-natal check-up and voluntary counselling and testing (VCT); will the cultural relationship between husband and wife allow this goal to be reached?

Fr Désiré Yamuremye SJ [yades55@yahoo.com](mailto:yades55@yahoo.com)

### **CHAD: COIN DES AMIS**

*Lindjo Joseph Alpha SJ writes:* At the *Coin des Amis* (Friends' Place) of the *Centre Culturel* (Educational Centre) of Kyabé, WAD activities kicked off on 24 November with competitions, musical evenings and a film screening. Members of nine school clubs from villages around Kyabé - Baltoubaye, Kotongoro, Guilako, Guilagondore, Boli, Roro, Oulboye, Donio Mission - as well as from Kyabé itself, turned up for the activities on 1 December. The morning was devoted to assessment, planning and reports of the clubs' activities - most have organised awareness campaigns and discussions in their schools. In the afternoon, there were competitions of singing and poetry and, in the evening, the chief doctor of Kyabé District, Dr Narina Joseph, animated a discussion about sexually transmitted diseases. On 2 December, we marched through Kyabé, singing our slogan: *Je choisis la vie, je dis non à l'irresponsabilité sexuelle* (I choose life, I say no to sexual irresponsibility). People gathered to watch the march - a first-time-ever in Kyabé - which led to the *Centre Culturel*, where speeches were followed by football, more competitions, prize-giving and a concert animated by the music group of the centre. Lindjo Joseph Alpha SJ [directeurcck@live.com](mailto:directeurcck@live.com)

### **DRC: COLLÈGE BONSONI**

To mark WAD, some 800 students attended an awareness session held on 2 December at *Collège Bonsomi* (Bonsomi High School). The activity was in the hands of regents Ismaël Matambura SJ and Jean-Noel Lemfuka SJ; the latter talked about the event of WAD itself while Ismaël gave a presentation about the basics of AIDS, 25 years on. Their presentations were followed by a film, *Promesse d'Amour* (Promise of Love), which dramatizes the problems faced by youth in daily life.

Ismaël Matambura SJ [mathaisma@yahoo.fr](mailto:mathaisma@yahoo.fr)

### **KENYA: UZIMA DAY**

*Uzima programme for people infected and affected by HIV-AIDS is part of the*

*Development Programme of St Joseph the Worker Parish in Kangemi. Anthony R. Hulula, programme administrator, writes about a special activity:*

A time for the community to come together to fight a common enemy which knows no tribal boundaries: Uzima Day is an event organised in Kangemi just before WAD to involve everyone in creating awareness on HIV/AIDS, fighting stigma and encouraging peace and inclusion. This year, the Uzima committee chose the theme: *Jijue uishi poa, kwa amani* (Know your status and live in peace). The event started from the Kangemi shopping centre with a march, complete with band and banners, to draw people to the venue. The day's activities included talks; entertainment; blood donations; inter-faith prayers for peace; and lunch. The talks were about AIDS and family life, AIDS and alcoholism, discordant couples and people with disabilities. The numbers that overwhelmed the event surprised us. We had planned for some 700 - the number who came last year - but at least double turned up: children, youth, adults, the elderly. We counted 1594 people at the gate but more joined later. Other Christian Churches around Kangemi were represented on the organising committee and they gave a lot of impetus by creating awareness among their members.

Michael Kyalo SJ, parish priest, [kyalomi@yahoo.com](mailto:kyalomi@yahoo.com)

#### **KENYA: BELONGING TO AJAN**

*Alex Wainaina SJ wrote on 1 December:* As we mark WAD today and the memorial of Blessed Clementine Anuarite, I feel as always a member of AJAN and part of a team dedicated to combating the vagaries of the HIV/AIDS scourge and mitigating its impact. I pray that the efforts of all our co-workers, collaborators and partners may be blessed and bear more fruit. I hope to continue supporting the efforts of AJAN morally, psychologically and whenever I can, physically. You are all in my prayers, and so are all our benefactors and beneficiaries.

Alexander Wainaina SJ [amwainaina@yahoo.com](mailto:amwainaina@yahoo.com)

#### **NIGERIA: ST JOSEPH'S PARISH**

*Fr Robert Dundon SJ writes:* In St Joseph's Parish in Benin City, we marked World AIDS Day with the *Way of the Cross* with my friend by Thierry Manirambona SJ (*AJANews* 78 - April 2009). Together with Isidore-Splendour Chukwu, I led 60 parishioners in the *Way of the Cross* in the Infant Jesus Chapel before the evening Mass. The film of Philly Lutaya, *Born in Africa*, was scheduled for after Mass, but had to be postponed because of a power outage.

Fr Robert Dundon SJ [dundonrw@yahoo.com](mailto:dundonrw@yahoo.com)

#### **TOGO: CENTRE ESPÉRANCE LOYOLA**

For the *Centre Espérance Loyola* (CEL), WAD is an opportunity to reach out to school-going youth, to people living with HIV and to the public in Agoè-Nyivé, on the outskirts of Lomé. On 29 November, Fr Bernard Hounnougbo SJ presided over a Eucharistic celebration, concelebrated by Fr Paterne Mombé SJ, with the *Association Louis de Gonzague* (ALG). The association is a CEL support group that gathers people living with HIV for a monthly meeting. The Eucharist was followed by an outing to a beach near Lomé. Activities included the sharing of experiences and ideas on how to educate children. We also organised a charity-sale in the two main parishes of Agoè-Nyivé and Saint Ignatius community after Sunday masses, to sell washing-up liquid, bleaching water and dyed clothes produced by the ALG members.

Another key intervention to mark WAD was a campaign offering free VCT. This normally costs more or less two Euro and many can't afford it. With the free service, from 23

November to 11 December, 1,533 persons came forward. Comparing rates to last year's campaign, which reached 1,188 persons, we saw that HIV prevalence in the area decreased from 3.2% to 3.1% (last year's prevalence matched the official national rate).

More than 7,500 youth were reached in a video-forum organised in 30 secondary schools in Agoè-Nyivé. Other activities for the schools: an inter-schools football competition, coupled with awareness activities, in four schools; an artistic production and quiz on HIV/AIDS in another four; a walk/run during which the participants talked to passers-by and distributed brochures. Divided into three groups with different departure points, the 2500 participants (pupils and teachers) with scarves printed for the occasion, headed to the CEL stadium for the closing ceremony.

Fr Paterne Mombé SJ [paternet1@gmail.com](mailto:paternet1@gmail.com)

*Witness from **Spain**, Jean-Luc Enyegue SJ wrote on 1 December:* I'd like to join in your prayers on this day special to us. Yesterday we had community Mass during which we presented to the Lord, in the prayers for thanksgiving, the great works of consolation and hope that you offer, some more directly involved than others, but all in a union of hearts and spirit that illuminates the horizon of many people infected by HIV and victimised by AIDS. I thought especially about Lomé, about the people with HIV, the orphans and other victims alongside whom I was able to walk, about Paterne Mombé and his co-workers. For two years, I had the opportunity to share their hopes but also their frustration when, more than once, they accompanied people, whom they had grown close to, to their final resting place.

Jean Luc Enyegue SJ [enyegue@jesuits.net](mailto:enyegue@jesuits.net)

### **ZAMBIA: LECTURES & A MURAL**

*Fr Michael J. Kelly SJ writes:* From 2006 to 2008, I had been in Dublin for World AIDS Day, to give or participate in the three-year lecture series that the Irish Government had established in my name. Towards the end of November, I was officially informed that the Irish government now wished to institutionalize this event as the annual *Father Michael Kelly Lecture for World AIDS Day*. Because of late notification and prior commitments in Zambia, I could not attend the lecture, given by Dr Seth Berkley, President of the International AIDS Initiative; but with the help of Loyola Productions, I sent a short video piece for screening at the beginning.

On 1 December, I spoke to a very perceptive and inquiring German Development Cooperation group on HIV and women. Later that day on Addis Ababa Drive in Lusaka, a mural was unveiled incorporating my adaptation of Martin Luther King's "dream" speech: *I have a dream that one day our world will turn into reality its belief that women and men are fully equal to one another in every respect*. Later in the week, I had a 90-minute slot with Radio Christian Voice's chat-back show on preventing HIV, followed almost immediately by a presentation to the National Partners Platform on coordinating civil society advocacy in the context of HIV and AIDS in Zambia.

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