

Inter-Religious Council of Uganda

 Religions for Peace

## MODEL SERMONS



### Community Mobilisation Around Ending Teenage Pregnancy

Fr. Hanns-Parish Priest Tapac, Moroto Catholic Diocese

The book we are reading, the bible, is a book of relationships; the relationship between God and us and a relationship between ourselves. What I have observed not only here but all over Uganda is that we have more young girls who become pregnant when they should not be.

We grow in stages and God has given us time to mature in body, in knowledge and in our emotions, in our well-being. Now, when you my dear girls become pregnant at an early age, what will happen? Look at yourselves bodily speaking. Is your body mature to be able to give birth under normal circumstances? Are you ready mentally to take care of something precious of a young born child? Are you emotionally mature to take care of such a beautiful new life? And let's be honest to ourselves and say "**I am actually not mature for that**". So if we come to that understanding of knowledge through our awareness, what could this pre-mature relationships lead to?

When I go to our nurses in our health centres, it can sometimes be very bad with sometimes a need to cut the opening of the birth canal wide enough. It is painful. Another example is what we call fistula, again because the body is not ready to be able to give birth under normal circumstances. And the pain and the shame you have to undergo is unimagable, certainly not for us men because we don't know.

Thirdly, look at you breasts! Can you feed a child? Do you know what it means to feed a child? Women know. For men, we can only think about it but we have not experienced it. That is why I would say that it would be better a woman to talk about it. But we also need to work as a team in the context of this issue because today we speak about networking. We need to build networks as a community of the church. We need more conversations amongst ourselves and we need to find ways to come together to let you my dear young girls talk about the problems you face as a young adolescent girl in our communities in Tapac.

Then I want to come to our fathers and mothers who are here in the Church. Now, are you teaching your children values, behaviours and morals? Be honest to yourselves and say "No I don't". Let's go back to what it means to be a Father and Mother. I see boys and girls running around in our parish on their own the whole day with parents sometimes not even knowing. Do you know where your children are? Do you know what they are doing? So I believe it's so important that we as parents take time to talk to our children. Let our children talk. Ask them also where they are going. Then we will not be surprised when we hear rumours that your daughter was in this bar! Why? Because we don't communicate with one another in a way we should. So my dear parents, I believe this network, this relationship also has to be rooted in the family where the girl is not afraid to share with the mother than the father about how she

thinks what is happening in her body also to speak about that she has now her first periods. These are important things which the girls need to share with the one they can trust.

My dear Catechists whom I value very much! They are the backbone of every Parish. You have the children that you prepare for nine months for baptism and confirmation. Twice a week, you have a meeting with these small but also older girls. But my dear Catechists, do not be afraid to speak especially our women Catechists as you have a big role to play to help our dear girls in that regard if there is a lack of it on the side of our parents. And again we will talk more about it when we have our meetings together as Catechists. I encourage you to talk to me of what problems you meet when you meet these young girls in your communities.

I want to conclude by saying that what I started off with the book of relationships, now we all have to play our roles to help our young girls in this changing world if we are to end teenage pregnancy. And we should forget that in all this, it's a process. We have to pray to receive the Holy Spirit, coordinate and work together as men and women and youth. I encourage you to help me, to help us as Priests and to help ourselves so that we can really do something together.



## **Responsible Pro-creation - Power to control**

**Pr Wayaya Samson B, Executive Secretary, Care taker  
Bishop - SDA, Eastern Uganda Field**

Praise God dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today we are going to share our reflection for the day from the book of Genesis 1:26 -28. God has given us a gift to procreate, but he cautions us to be responsible men and women as well as responsible children and

youth.

Remember that before we do anything in life let us always calculate the cost of that activity as we are challenged by Christ in Luke 14:28. Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down to calculate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and he is not able to finish it every one who sees it will ridicule him. Let us plan well for our lives because we are responsible for all the choices we make unto God, like Adam and Eva, remember in every minute, hour and day we are accountable.

In the book of 1 Peter 4:5 it is said that, but they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. In Romans 14:12" it states that, so then each of us shall give account of himself to God. To our dear sisters and daughters let us emulate the woman in Proverbs 31:10- 31. Let us produce responsibly friends

God has called us to produce souls for Him spiritually as stated in book of Mathew 28:19-20 where it is written that go and make discipleship of all nations, baptising them in , the Name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you and surely I am with you always, to the very end of age. Let us nurture them for heaven to be responsible and physically. Produce those you will nurture to Heaven. In the book of Jeremiah 13:20, God says lift up your eyes and see those who are coming from the north. Where is the flock that was entrusted to you, the sheep of which you boasted?. His flock and sheep are the children God has given us physically and spiritually, be responsible beloved brothers and sisters. Amen



## Keeping the Faith: End Teenage Pregnancy

### Fr Patrick Watui - Kween District - UEC

Dear people of God, today we celebrate good shepherds Sunday, the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter which mother church gives every year to celebrate vocations - hence, it is also called Vocations Sunday.

We celebrate Christ who gave his life for us by dying on the cross. He knows us all and we know him (John 10: 27-30) my sheep listen to my voice, I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, no one can snatch them out of my hands.

Our first reading will be from the book of Exodus 30: 18, Make a bronze basin, with its bronze stands for washing, Place it between the tent of meeting and altar, and put water in it (is a Commandment). Good Shepard hood does not only stop at Jesus alone, but come down to the instruments of faith in the different positions of leadership in the church as his body - the Pope, Bishops, parents and Priests, all these are supposed to guide us as good Shepard's to the different vocations, the priesthood, religious sisters and brothers, marriages (Holy Matrimony) and other.

Today am going to talk about a terrible scenario which is jeopardising promotion of many girls' especially teenage girls to the different vocations. You are all aware that teenage pregnancy is on the rise and this is a sign that we are not playing our role as shepherds. Imagine in Uganda in every 1 out of 4 girls between the ages of 15 – 17 gets pregnant per year. These girls do not only miss education, they are traumatised as people talk about them and even dodge going to church on Sundays. As if that is not enough, what about the torture from forced labor pains during child birth?

If we continue as parents to keep silent about this scenarios, know that you will answers before God one day. Let us take the responsibility of mentoring our girls and leading them to Jesus and once they make it to the vocation, mentioned earlier they will have escaped the monster.

To the young girls I beg that you accept what the parents tell you, what they mention to you are not their own word but inspiration from what God tell them to tell you. In Exodus 3:1& 8 relays the Ten Commandments. The 4th commandment asks each one of us to respect our father and mother, the 6th commandments prohibits adultery a major source of teenage pregnancy.

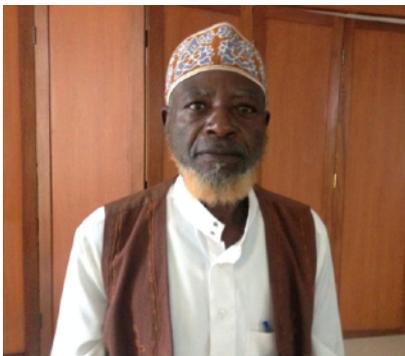
In our second reading, St Paul letter to the Ephesians 6:1-4, the verse talk about obedience, and it goes children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. Honour your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise. I therefore invite you all to obey your parents. If you truly love God, then let us follow his commandments.

To you young girls I know that you truly love God and he is calling you to work for what he has prepared for you, to serve in the different vocations in the church. Follow his commandments and you will surely attain them.

For my brothers who go for young girls remember that Jesus say who ever leads one of his little one to sin is more better off if a million stones are tied around his neck and be thrown over a cliff as reflected in the book of Mathew 6:6, For you will not fall a victim of such curses, desist from fornication and adultery. Remember you have your own vocation also.

In our third reading from the book of St John 10: 27 – 30, my sheep listen to my voice, I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, no one can snatch them out of my hands. Know you're Shepard. I would like to conclude by reminding our mothers and sisters in Christ, to play the role of a Good Shepard by guiding our young girls to good pastures in the little vine yard and to the different vocation they can play in church. This is a good gesture at practicing our faith as we end teenage pregnancy. Kindly take 1Thessalonian 4: 4-5 as a homage package for mediation, here ends the mass, Go in Peace, God bless you.

## Ending Gender Based Violence



**Shk Hussein Kafuko , Deputy District Khadi - Tororo UMSC**

Praise to the Almighty Allah who created us and placed us on earth. He created us into nations and tribes that we may know one another and not that we despise one another. His mercy and blessings be upon our teacher and Prophet (Peace be upon Him) .

That aside fellow believers I remind you that Allah wants us to respect him and follow His teaching. The sermon today is about, ‘‘ Ending Gender Based Violence, Allah says in the Quran 5:1 ‘‘ Fulfil your obligations by providing for your families. Be like chickens who take care of his chicks by feeding and covering them with wings to

ensure they are safe and warm.

I ask you fellow believers, do you know where your children spend their time, who do they stay with!

**Hadith:-** The Prophet (Peace be upon Him) says, ‘‘ you are all herdsmen and we shall be asked about our flock. A man will be asked about his family, so before we are asked about our responsibilities, we have to check ourselves now.

In the Quran 30:21, ‘‘ they talk about treat each other with love and mercy (kindness to women) since His signs in that he created for you wives from among yourselves .

In the Quran 4:34 it further talk about, Men are protectors and maintainers of women because Allah has made one of them to excel the other and because they spend (to support them) from their means. In the same book, Quran 4:35 ‘‘and if you fear a breach between the two, appoint an arbitrator from her family and an arbitrator from your family if you want reconciliation.

**Hadith:-** The Prophet has told us that ... he whose faith is complete is one who is good in manners We must change our behaviours and be good to our families. In the Holy book Quran says 13:11, Allah does not change the condition of people until they change what is within themselves.

In Quran 4:3, ‘‘ And if you fear that you should not be able to deal justly with the orphan-girls, then marry (other) women of your choice , two or three or four , but if you fear that you should not be able to deal justly (with them) then only one or (the salves) that your right hands will posses . The verse gives us permission to marry many, but with conditions of ensuring we give then equal rights in terms of providing them with basic needs. It is not a command as some people have misunderstood this verse. It says ‘‘ If you cannot maintain equality among them, marry one. When believers who choose the option of

polygamy and abandon their first families, the Quran says it is not right. Do not commit adultery because all these will cause violence in our families.



**Rev Fr Damiano Guiseppe -Bishop Moroto Catholic Diocese**

“There are still a big number of young people not going to school. But the change is so rapid and we hope that by encouraging these young people to go to school, we might get them involved in behaviour change interventions since we are able to integrate issues of young people in schools. We believe that awareness programs such as education are tools that will have long lasting effects”



“What can we do as the Church? This is what is under discussion. The Church could go out. It has been very clear that the culture here is very strong. So if we do not find ways of trying to sensitive our people, for example to send children to school so that these challenges can be dealt with”

**Thomas Awes - Catechist, Namalu Parish, Moroto Catholic diocese**

“Implementation of the law in Uganda is very poor”. There is great fear by Police to intervene into these issues for example teenage pregnancy. These people don’t feel the law is important. They are never arrested. But I cant speak loud because I am a foreigner”



**Fr. Hanns Pfeifer - Parish Priest Tapac, Moroto Catholic Diocese (Tapac Parista Missionary of Africa)**



“God gave us the responsibility to produce children but we have gone astray” Statement in regard to responsible procreation and planning of families.

**Sr Nabankema Bernadette, Moroto Catholic Diocese**



“It’s not about producing children but are we ready to ably take care of them? Romans 14-12, the scripture says, “Even so, you as leaders, each of us shall give an account. Remember, we shall give an account to God. Mathew: God desires you and me to produce spiritual children. Let us produce and live responsibly. We have the power to control our choices because we shall give an account to him, ” (Mathew 28)

**Pr. Wayaya Samson-Executive Secretary/Caretaker Bishop SDA Eastern Uganda Field.**

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“ We must speak for the voiceless. We must work as a team. Let the Catholics, Muslims, SDA and others attack from the other side as I attack from this side”

**Ven. Rev. Joshua Iroofa, Archdeacon Bukedi Diocese**

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**For More Information, Please Contact:**

Inter- Religious Council of Uganda

P. O. Box 7502 Kampala

Tel: +256-414-342877

**Email:** [secretarygeneral@ircu.or.ug](mailto:secretarygeneral@ircu.or.ug)

**Web:** [www.ircu.or.ug](http://www.ircu.or.ug)

**Twitter:** @irc\_uganda, **Facebook:** Inter-Religious Council of Uganda