

REPORT OF

CONSOLATA LAY MISSIONARIES (CLM /CLMC)

KENYA-UGANDA REGION.

ROME, JANUARY 2011,

Introduction:

The Consolata Lay missionaries /Lay Missionary couples (CLM/CLMC) are a fruit of over 100years of Consolata Missionaries presence in Kenya, and 25years in Uganda.

The Lay Missionaries in Kenya-Uganda Region express their desire and commitment to follow and share the charism/spirituality of Blessed Joseph Allamano inside and with in Consolata Missionary Family, in the following forms;

1. Consolata Lay missionaries (CLM)
2. Consolata Lay missionary Couples (CLMC)
3. Consolata friends association (CFA) and Consolata Social Club (CSC)

A. Consolata Lay Missionaries in the African context:

CLM has to be perceived and nurtured in relation to African social, cultural and economic set-up. The African continent is characterized with challenges such as;

- Poverty,
- Job insecurity and ineffective labour Laws
- Diseases e.g HIV/AIDS, Malaria and others that could even be preventable, but are still counted as killer diseases.
- Political instability and issues regarding gender imbalances, illiteracy etc.
- Dualism in African environment; where witchcraft and traditional beliefs come along with Christian faith and values.

African society is still to an extent, neat together as families,clans and tribes, where brotherhood, extended family system, a feeling of belonging and dependance are still very prominent. These values, once kept and directed to Christianity, can become very instrumental in the evangelizing mission of the church.

B. The scope and meaning of Missionary work:

In our African communities there are many people-non Christians, who have not heard of the good news of Christ's love and consolation. The Missionary activity, is not limited to going out of one's country or community to proclaim the good news of salvation but, also means to announce and witness to the the good news starting where one lives and works. It implies to go out to the needy, the marginalized poor, the afflicted, the unaccompanied youth (destitutes, street children), the orphans and the widows or the vulnerable children, persons affected or infected by HIV/AIDS.

Infact, mission, in this African context , should start from an individual who has encountered the charism and spirituality of the church and then, to reach families and human groups in the wider society.

C. Consolata Lay Missionary in Kenya-Uganda Region.

A Consolata Lay Missionary in Kenya –Uganda region is challenged to understand, assume and appreciate the environment in which she/he lives. This is to value the tradition and local cultural back ground.

African tradition is based on solidarity and brotherhood as opposed to individualism and egoism. In this case, freedom in the real sense of the word, can be defined as an action for the common good. A CLM has therefore, to be nurtured on the basis of love, consolation, communion, unity and solidarity with the poor and the marginalised.

D. History of Consolata Lay Missionaries (CLM and CLMC): in the Region

Consolata Lay Missionaries / Lay Missionary couples (CLM/CLMC) started as an encounter of an individual couple or a group of young people, with Consolata Missionaries. The people who made such an encounter, became fascinated with the charism and spirituality of Blessed Joseph Allamano, that was lived by the Missionaries they encountered, and hence , the starting of the fire of a Missionary desire.

D.1 Consolata Lay Missionaries (CLM)

In Uganda CLM was started by Fr. Chrispin Okelo in the year 2007 when he was still the Vocations Director at the Consolata Youth Centre-Kiwanga. This group has a membership of about 15 people.

Called by the official invitation of the Regional Superior, Fr. Franco Cellana, and moved by the presentation of Rev. Fr. Tobias de Oliveira, Fr. Paulino Mondo and Fr. Anthony Oure, during the first CLM forum that took place in Sagana-Kenya, in March 2010, the young people present, formed themselves into a CLM group of 22 members led by Kennedy Odhiambo as chair person and Irine Njeri as secretary.

From there the group meets together periodically, for formation in the charism and spirituality of Blessed Joseph Allamano.

CLM members carry out some activities like;

- Conducting youth seminars on behavior change
- Some recollections intended for their spiritual growth
- Mini-fund raising to get funds to cater for youth seminars

Some achievements:

- They have formulated a constitution for the group
 - Met twice with the General Councillor-Father Matthew Ouma to organize and prepare retreats and seminars during the year.

Future plans:

- To mobilize and sensitize more people to join CLM
- To reorganize the group better in spiritual and Missionary activities/formation
- CLM is in advanced stage of drafting a Constitution (STATUTE)
- To seek for funds to run the activities of CLM.

D.2 CONSOLATA LAY MISSIONARY COUPLES (CLMC).

History/Background:

Consolata Lay Missionary Couples is a movement of catholic married couples whose commitment and desire is to belong to the charism and follow the spirituality of Blessed Joseph Allamano, and to actively share in the evangelizing mission of the church.

The humble beginning of CLMC goes way back in 2006, born of a friendship and the encounter between one couple- Julius and Carolyn Masiga with several Consolata missionary Priests, particularly; Rev. Father Vedastus Kwajaba, Stephen Korambo, Chrispin Okello and Charles Gachingiri. The encounter with the above named consolata Missionaries generated a deep enthusiasm and fascination in Julius-Carolyn Masiga for the charism and spirituality of Blessed Joseph Allamano, and hence the desire to share the new found beauty with other couples in the community where they live and work.

The first official statement of acceptance: CLMC was officially accepted in the Consolata missionary family (of Kenya-Uganda Region) on 16th January 2010 with a verbal declaration by Rev. Father Franco Cellana, the Regional Superior of Consolata missionaries for Kenya-Uganda region.

It happened on the occasion of the first event of CLMC family feast Day, which took place at the Consolata Youth Centre-Kiwanga in Uganda on 16th January 2010.

CLMC is embraced by the Kenya-Uganda Region:

On 6th March 2010, during the first Regional CLM Forum held at Sagana-Kenya, 8 couples representing their counter parts in Kenya, joined with the 6 couples which represented CLMC- Uganda and resolved to form into a Regional catholic movement called Consolata Lay Missionary Couples (CLMC).

Mr. and Mrs Julius-Carolyn Masiga, who are the founder couple of CLMC, were elected as the lead/ or president couple for Kenya-Uganda Region and Mr., and Mrs. Francis-Francesca Muriithi were elected to lead couples in Kenya- central Region. At present CLMC has a membership of 24 couples in Uganda, and 10 couples in Kenya which is a total of 34 couples in the region (68 members).

A Vision:

CLMC envisages catholic couples sharing in the spirituality of Blessed Joseph Allamano as basic instruments of integral development, intense missionary zeal and impetus, promoting communion and solidarity in a way that favors their true witness to the relevance of the catholic faith and mission, in answering to today's human challenges and desires.

B Mission:

To promote and deepen the awareness among catholic married couples on the centrality of their matrimonial vocation and the family in the growth of the church. CLMC want to empower catholic couples with knowledge, skills and attitudes that enhance spiritual growth, Missionary zeal and impetus, and the promotion of family values of; love and consolation, charity, communion, peace, justice, truth and reconciliation, the family being perceived as the prime or basic cell of the church and human society and, the first place of catechism, evangelization, child/youth education and growth.

Specific focus of CLMC:

- To proclaim the good news of Christ's love and consolation to all peoples , starting from individual families in the communities where CLMC live and to the ends of the world.
- To empower catholic couples/or family institution- the family being the basic cell of the church and human society, with knowledge and skills that enhance their capacity to proclaim the good news and carry out, with courage and enthusiasm, their universal role of child education, defending human life and dignity and, making the catholic faith relevant to the challenges faced by today's *global village*-world.

- To promote conflict resolutions and stability among families, human solidarity and peaceful co-existence in all aspects of human endeavors.
- To foster human development in all spheres; social, economic, cultural, spiritual, scientific etc.
- To avail themselves as catholic couples, for missionary work every where it is needed and as it may be deemed necessary by the consolata missionaries' Superiors, and in accordance with the possibilities, and capacities (academic qualification, expertise or skills, experiences and health conditions) of the interested couple.
- To promote whollistic human development by engaging in charitable acts to support the maginalized poor (orphans, widows and the very poor in society), visiting and giving help to the sick, defending the voiceless and the oppressed.
- To find ways and means of supporting activities of CLMC and the Consolata Missionaries Institute (IMC), like; helping seminarians and those in houses of formation by way of facilitating their animation, encouraging them on their journey and, looking for their financial or material support.
- To propose and spread CLMC movement to other couples in the East African region and all over the world.
- To give guidance and empowerment to the youth through workshops and seminors intended for their moral, spiritual, intelectual and health growth, and employment.

C The main activities of CLMC:

The Consolata Lay Missionary Couples perceive themselves as people on a journey, as companions to one another and, this journey implies a friendship and communion, love and consolation, sharing of joys and even sorrows, supporting and encouraging one another in the family spirit.

To achieve what is described above, CLMC members do the following;

- i. Regular adult catechesis and animation, at least once a month. They meet at Our Lady Consolata youth centre- Kiwanga, helped by the vocations Director
- ii. Every member is encouraged to receive the sacrament of rencilliation at least twice a month.

- iii. Engaging in charitable acts like visiting the sick, helping the very poor, mutual help and support in times of need.
 - School fees payment for children of poor families
 - Look for financial support to small enterprises initiated by needy members.
 - Offer solidarity and support in sad moments.
- iv. CLMC members follow closely the animations activities for youth and, in every holiday the CLMC founder couple participate in the animation of the youth. Other CLMC members have also taken interest in the formation of the same youth.
- v. CLMC members are involved in various leadership positions in their respective parishes and small christian communities.
- vi. Members organize with Fr. Charles Gachingiri for the Eucharistic celebrations in their individual families as way of stressing the centrality of the holy eucharist in their life.

D FUTURE PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

- i. CLMC has a draft constitution (STATUTES) in place and the process is under way to make it into a legal document.
- ii. To carry out training sessions that are geared to wards behavioural change, Christian leadership skills, moral and spiritual formation.
- iii. To seek and look for financial support towards the implementation of CLMC programs and the activities that lead to socio economic empowerment of the member couples and their communities.
- iv. To initiate a computer/internet service and library centre as means for educating, particularly the youth, on the positive use of information and the media.
- v. To empower couples with knowledge in the catholic teachings, train them in life skills that can enable them make informed decision regarding life and parenting, and to have capacity for job creation, and hence, their improved livelihood security.

Conclusion:

We foresee the future of the two groups; Consolata Lay Missionaries and Consolata lay Missionary Couples with in the Consolata Missionary Society as part of that family.

We also foresee that strengthening the coordination and the formation of each of the two groups, resulting in a strong body of lay Missionaries who share and follow the charism and spirituality of Blessed Joseph Allamano.

Through the testimonies of these CLM and CLMC members and their families, many more people will come to know, love and pray through the intercession of Blessed Joseph Allamano and Our Lady Consolata, making him popular and thus increasing the chances for a miracle leading to his canonization.

May Our Lady Consolata and Blessed Joseph Allamano accompany us in our Missionary Journey and commitment for the Glory of God.

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