

The Importance of Lay Involvement in the Missionary Outreach of SCCs in Eastern Africa

Alphonse C. L. Omolo (PhD)

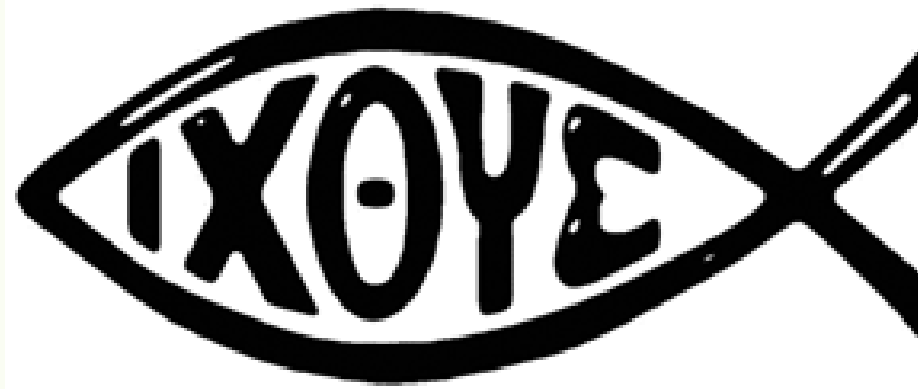
alphonce.omolo@lensthru.com

Member, Eastern Africa SCCs Training Team

Content

1. The Missionary Spirit & Outreach of the FISH Youth Group.
2. SCCs Light Up Neighbourhoods in Kisumu.
3. St. Isidore of Seville Intl. Online Skype SCC.

The Missionary Spirit & Outreach of the FISH Youth Group



The Kisumu Town Youth Fish Group

The FISH Youth Group

The “FISH”

- founded in 1985 by Fr. Anthony Chantry MHM, Sr. Mary Hellen Howard SND and 25 youth with the support of Archbishop Z. Okoth.
- the sign used by early Christians to conceal their identity in order to avoid persecution by the Roman Empire after the death of Jesus Christ.
- Greek for fish is IXOYZ = ICHTHUS:
 - I = Jesus
 - X = Christ
 - O = God's
 - Y = Son
 - Z = Saviour

Goals of the FISH Youth Group

- Promote spirituality and build the Kingdom of God among the youth.
- Improve the social, spiritual, educational and economic status of the youth within Kisumu.
- Mitigate the consequences of HIV/AIDS and support the infected and the affected.

Aims of the FISH Youth Group

1. Know each other as brothers & sisters of Christ.
2. Listen to the WORD OF GOD & find out how to apply it in our daily lives.
3. Pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God.
4. Do agreed ACTION to serve the local community.
5. Arrange social & educational activities for the youth, i.e. sports, drama, music, seminars, cultural exchange.

Impacts

1. Religious calling from the FISH: Six priests and 10 sisters working in Kenya and abroad.
2. Spiritual, social and educational exchanges nationally & internationally.
3. Youth gained respect & got elected in leadership positions in adult's SCCs.
4. Diverse successes in different professions - PhDs.
5. Today there are over 600 active FISH members.
6. FISH Alumni - mentoring, training, funding FISH.

Challenges

- Minimal support from some parishes & leaders.
- Mobility of the youth due to changing learning institutions & relocating to take up employment.
- Having a stable ‘youth chaplain’ & spiritual accompaniment from the Archdiocese.
- Financial resources (FISH activities, leaders training, review of meeting handbooks etc.)
- Spreading & sustaining membership & groups beyond Kisumu town area.

“SCCs Light Up Neighbourhoods in Kisumu”



**The Kisumu Urban Apostolate
Programmes (KUAP-Pandipieri)**

The Neighborhood Apostolate

- 1977, Fr. Hans Burgman MHM and community members gathered to share the Word of God.
- start of neighborhood Bible apostolate - deaconia.
- large migration of rural communities into peri-urban areas of Kisumu.
- the challenge of population growth & expanded social problems - drug abuse, health & HIV/AIDS, sanitation, environmental, alcoholism, cultural etc.
- finding pastoral solutions; the neighborhood response.

Popularizing Neighborhood Work

**Gospel
Values to
Life**

Connecting Bible to life; solidarity & being counsellors in spiritual, physical, mental life; own power to change life; what must we do?; transformation; KUAP-Pandipieri 1979;

**A Caring
People**

Being salt & light to self; Bible a key pillar; ministries to community (*health, AIDS, youth, alcohol, elderly, home based care; disabled & emotionally depressed*); communal living - *KUAP Team*; 25 social dev. projects started.

**When SCCs
Gathers**

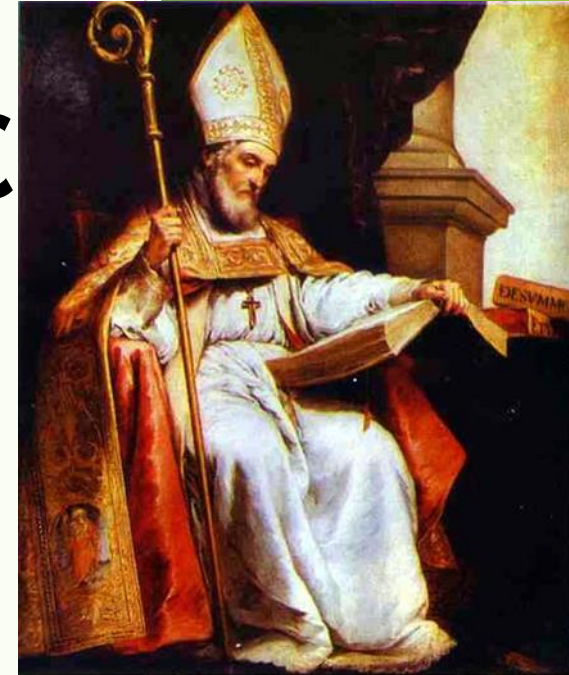
Community support network & volunteerism; prayers; visitations, SCCs leaders meetings & trainings; house blessings; baptisms (child & adult); weddings; funerals; house blessings.

Faith but no Good Deeds is Useless!

- SCCs, with no action = unresponsive/dormant.
- SCCs, shaped by contextual life upon which it acts.
- SCCs, platform to reflect on actions & act on reflections.
- SCCs, a thinking, feeling and active church.
- SCCs, empowers laity to be church to one another.
- SCCs, provide the chance to find God in the neighborhood & people's hearts.
- SCCs, platform for neighborhood transformation through the Word of God.

St. Isidore of Seville International

Online Skype SCC



Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, S. Isidoro, 1655, Cattedrale, Siviglia

**Evangelizing the World -
*Breakthrough - Social Media***

“Spreading the Gospel” John Paul II

St. John Paul II (Jan 25, 2002 - the Feast of Saint Francis de Sales):

“The fact that through the internet people multiplies their contacts in ways hitherto unthinkable opens up wonderful possibilities for spreading the Gospel.”

“Powerful Internet” Benedict XVI

Pope Benedict XVI (Jan 25, 2010 - (message for the 44th World Day of Social Communications):

“Using the powerful new communications tools of the internet”, he said, “the Church can help the men and women of our digital age to sense the Lord's presence, to grow in expectation and hope, and to draw near to the Word of God.”

“With Fresh Energy” Francis II

Pope Francis II (24th Jan 2014 - Memorial of Saint Francis de Sales):

“The revolution taking place in communications media and in information technologies represents a great and thrilling challenge; may we respond to that challenge with fresh energy and imagination as we seek to share with others the beauty of God.”

St. Isidore of Seville Intl. SCC

Founded: Wednesday, 17 October, 2012: 5 p.m.

Announcement on the Global SCCs Facebook page:

“We are doing a test run for our new Online SCC that uses Group Video through Skype on Wednesday, 17 October, 2012: 5 p.m. East African time, 4 p.m. German time, 10 a.m. New York, USA Time”.

“Welcome! We will be reflecting on the Gospel of Sunday, 21st October, 2012 (the 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B: St. Mark 10:35-45). Everyone needs audio and video capability through Skype on their laptops or Smart Phones.”

Members of St. Isidore of Seville

Jenny, Belza



Simon

North America

**Central &
South America**

Europe

Africa

Asia

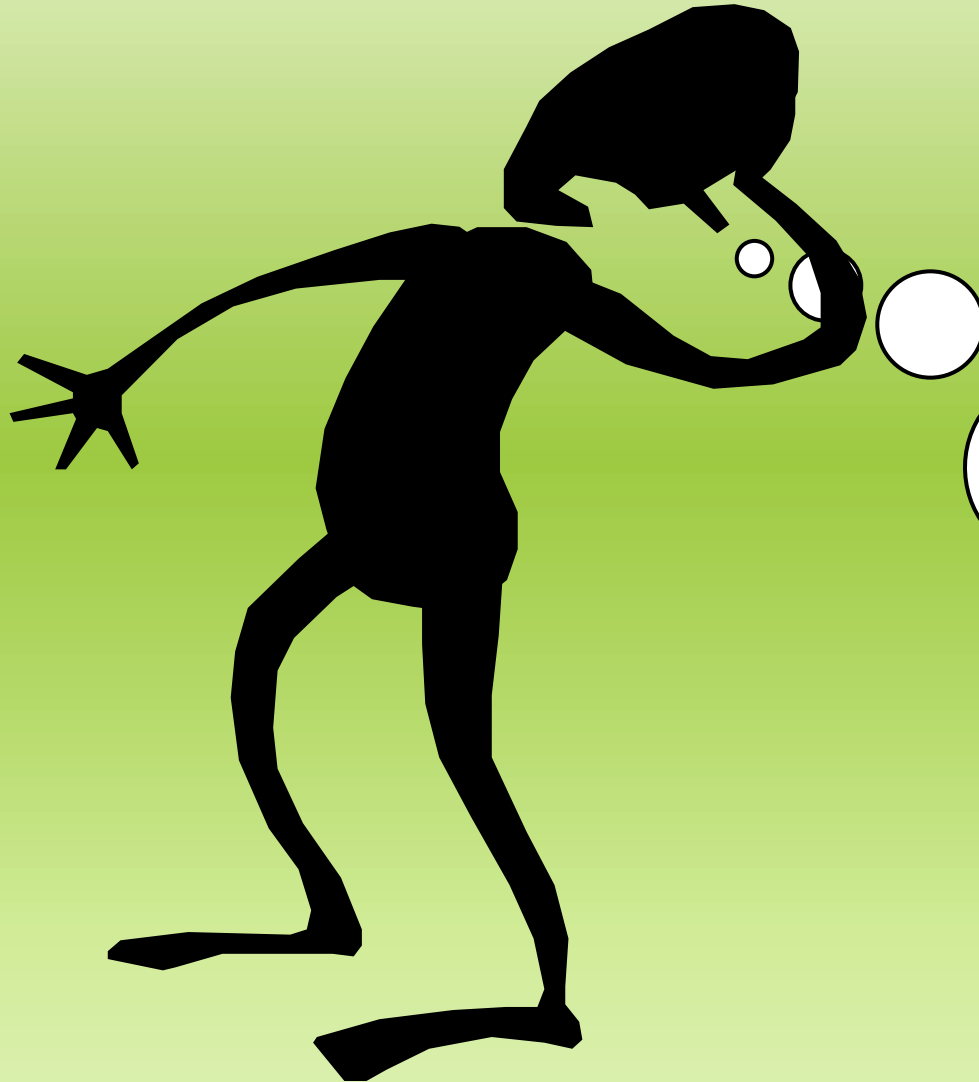
Australia

*Joe, Charles,
Pamela, Alphonse,
Rita, John, Alloys,
Paul*

“The Church exists to evangelize”, St. John Paul II, in *Redemptoris Missio*

The importance of evangelization as the church’s primary mission,..... “*the essential job of the faithful*”.

Small Christian Communities Hooray!!!



***Jumuiya
Ndogo Ndogo
Oyee!!***

Thank You