

CASE STUDY OF YOUNG ADULT SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES (YASCCs) AT ST. MICHAEL'S CHAPLAINCY, MOI UNIVERSITY, ELDORET, KENYA

BY,

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Introduction.

Moi University is located in Kesses Sub-County, Uasin Gishu county, Eldoret, Kenya. Besides the entrance to the university's main gate on your right, sits a beautiful chaplaincy named "St. Michael's". This chaplaincy helps to nurture among others; the spiritual and moral needs of the university students, staff, and parishioners from the neighborhood who are mostly catholic faithful.

The current chaplain of the Chaplaincy is Father Richard Kimeli, a diocesan priest from the Diocese of Eldoret.

THE SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES.

The students' Young Adult Small Christian Communities are 11 in number and are formed based on the dioceses where the students come from and they are as listed below:

ELDODISA.

This is a Small Christian Community of students who come from the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret.

MEISMA.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from Meru, Isiolo, and

Maralal Dioceses.

HOKIDSA.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from Homabay and

Kisumu Archdioceses combined.

NYENYA.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from Nyeri and Nyahururu

Dioceses.

ARCHNAI-NGONG.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from the diocese of Ngong' and Archdiocese of Nairobi.

KISII.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from Kisii Diocese.

EMBU.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from Embu Diocese.

MURANG'A.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from Murang'a Diocese.

NAKSLODWAR.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from Nakuru and Lodwar Dioceses.

MAKIDSA.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from Machakos and Kitui Dioceses combined.

MOMAGATA.

This is a Small Christian Community of students from Mombasa, Malindi, Garissa and Tanzania dioceses.

GATHERINGS.

All the Young Adults Small Christian Communities gather on Sunday in their designated rooms between 2 pm and 6 pm except Eldoret Young Adult Small Christian Community which meets on Tuesdays between 5 pm and 8 pm because, during the weekend, most of their members go home to visit with their families.

COMMON ACTIVITIES DONE IN THE YASCCS

When the YASCCs meet, the facilitator of that gathering starts with prayers followed by introductions and sharing experiences of the past week since they last met. After this, they read the Gospel of the coming Sunday about three times and ask every member to state a verse within the reading that touched them without explaining. Later on, members reflect on the verse/Gospel by relating it to their lives and what's happening in the world.

Followed with this is the revealing of the prayer partner that one committed to pray for during the week and then finish with a contribution of twenty Kenyan Shillings that goes towards the welfare fund to assist the very needy students who come from very poor families.

After the final prayer, all the YASCC members do an impromptu follow-up to the rooms of their members who never turned up for the meeting to inquire and show their concern to the member.

Having given the wider and general activities of the Small Christian Communities in the chaplaincy, allow me to narrow down to my small Christian community where I participated as a member for 4 years while taking my undergraduate degree.

YASCCs engage in different activities for example charity work and visiting the elderly people in the community. A good example is St. Perpetua Kisii YASCC.

ST. PERPETUA KISII YASCC. ‘A HOME AWAY FROM HOME’

This is a community of young adults from the Kisii Diocese. Their membership ranges between 50-65 members. The big membership is a challenge because an ideal Small Christian Community should have a membership of not more than 20 people. This is one of the challenges facing St. Perpetua, but plans are underway to have breakout rooms during the sharing of the gospel.

Being from the same ethnic group “Abagusii” they do prayers and discussions in their language. In the event they have visitors from other language-speaking groups, they use the official language (English/Kiswahili).

They do organize charitable activities for every semester in the neighborhood where they visit the elderly, the sick, and the prisoners. They assist in cleaning their compounds and washing their bedding without forgetting prayer as one of the activities during the charity day.

They also have exchange programs with other Young Adults Small Christian Communities within their chaplaincy and they even extend the invitation to other Universities like the University of Eldoret and Masinde Muliro University.

During holidays, they organize a two weeks pastoral camp in any of the local parishes that could welcome them to offer guidance to the young people, visit the sick and join Christians in the Small Christian Communities for prayers and faith engagement. The students have been able to do pastoral work in the following parishes:

1. St. Mary’s Tabaka parish.
2. St. Ann Ogembo parish.
3. Queen of Apostles Bishop Mugendi and, Kisii Town Parish.

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The YASCCs have a good mentorship program where fourth-year students introduce and provide leadership training to first and second-year students. They do this by ensuring that the first and second-year students are given leadership roles so as to learn from the fourth years. This eliminated the gap between the outgoing and incoming leadership when. The fourth years graduate hence the continuity of good leadership in YASCCs at Moi University.

St. Perpetua are under the patronage of Father Richard Nyangoto from Kisii diocese.



A section of St. Perpetua YASCC, enjoying a meal after a charitable event where they cleared the bush for one of the elderly people in the community.



Members visiting and eating with an elderly person in the community.

