

COVID-19



UNIT : RWANDA/UGANDA

LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA-CRISIS

The whole world is shaken by the spreading of corona virus. Here in Uganda we began to feel it directly on 21.03.2020 when the lock down was introduced for whole country. Most people were in difficulty because daily earners had no way of earning their living. Movements were restricted and people had to remain in one place. Those who happen to be away from home had no possibility of return. Some young people were caught up by lockdown while in Kampala and the only option was to walk from there to Kabale. (407km)

Here in the novitiate at Kitumba, Kabale Diocese, Uganda, life continues yet adjustments were needed. Nine novices had to state in writing that they opt to stay in the community during this time of pandemic and take responsibility for any consequences that they may have to

face. Families were contacted and agreements were made. After the first feelings of fear we were able to develop courage and live by faith in the One who rose from the dead. He revitalized our daily lives. We developed a community rhythm which consisted of prayer and work, study and entertainment. We tried to keep our body mind and spirit healthy.

We turned to the earth and worked so that we can have our food and also something to share with the needy. External lock down could not lockdown our hearts. We remain connected with people. They kept coming to our gate. Some left notes with their addresses, requesting for food. Some mothers came with the little money they had to see if they can buy some food for the family. We shared with them as much as possible; the products of our garden like

vegetables, green Bananas (matoke) sweet potatoes and maize flour. While doing all these, health measures introduced by the government are followed very strictly. All wear masks, keep social distance, wash hands and we keep the visits very short just sufficient for the delivering of food. Contact with outsiders is done only by sisters. We were able to expand this sharing with money received from the unit for this purpose.

Added to the difficulties caused by the corona pandemic there are also natural calamities. The torrential rains of April and May caused floods and land slips. People lost lives, property and agriculture. Those in swampy areas are the ones most affected and the sisters have made short visits to listen to them and offer spiritual help.

This time of universal crisis is helping us to deepen our trust in God the Creator of

the universe, to take responsibility for ourselves and the environment, to take care of our garden and every creature. We feel called to readjust our relationship with mother earth. In this, the post-synod



encyclical "Querida Amazonia" of Pope Francis guides and enlightens us. The novices had a deep and contextualized reflection on this document. It gave everyone a sense of belonging to our mother earth and to the Institute, and to accept our responsibility of creating a "new society" as our dear Founder dreamed.



We are aware of what is happening in the world where the humanity is going through enormous suffering. We are united with the whole world by praying for those who have died due to covid-19 virus and their dear ones who are grieving. We appreciate and pray for health workers and security forces who risk their own lives in order to save the

lives of our brothers and sisters. Let us continue to follow the measures given by our country leaders carefully and faithfully so that we do not contribute in any way to the spreading of this deadly virus.

**Novitiate Community of Kitumba,
UNIT of Rwanda/Uganda**

