

Mukuru Promotion Centre

MAY NEWSLETTER

VOL 10 ISSUE NO. 5 2025

JOURNEYING 40 YEARS WITH THE MUKURU COMMUNITY

MPC DIRECTOR

Dear Partners, Supporters, Family and Friends,

As we approached our 40th anniversary celebrations on May 21, 2025, we had hoped to unveil a fully renovated Mukuru Primary School. Sadly, this wasn't possible. The work has been delayed, largely due to the absence of a capable and dedicated person to supervise the project. One of the most urgent issues we are facing is the replacement of rusted and leaking gutters. These are now damaging the floors and the bridge that connects both sides of the school—a vital passage for the children. This is not just a repair job anymore; it's a necessity for safety and functionality. We're incredibly thankful to Brian O'Shea from the Three Musketeers, who stepped in with excellent advice on how to resolve this issue and what kind of new gutters we need. His support has been invaluable.

The school also desperately needs a fresh coat of paint. While some areas have been refreshed, much of the school remains in poor condition. Repainting would breathe life into the classrooms and hallways and help us create a more welcoming, inspiring space for learning. If you feel moved to help with this effort, we would be deeply grateful.

Even as we faced these challenges, the team worked tirelessly to prepare for our 40th anniversary celebration. From arranging food and media to coordinating with guests, it has been a team effort. To our Board Members we can't thank you enough for taking on extra responsibilities and giving so generously of your time.

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On May 9, we had the joy of welcoming Mark Cave from Pro Victimis. He was encouraged to see the progress we have made, especially the strong, secure wall that Pro Victimis funded, still standing strong, still protecting our children. We also showed him areas in need of attention, including the gutters Brian recommended and our partially painted spaces. We spoke with Mark about the growing problem of soil erosion near Songa Mbele. As land from our side was moved to the other side of the river so more mabati shanties could be built and rented out, which changed the river's path, increasing the risk of damage to our facilities. Mark kindly offered to raise this issue with Pro Victimis and advocate for help in restoring the original course and protecting the riverbanks.

This month also brought new faces and important transitions. We've been busy interviewing candidates for several essential roles: a new Geography and Math teacher for the secondary school, a Coordinator for the Rehabilitation Centre and a Paediatrician for our Clinic. At the same time, Luciah, our dedicated Education Coordinator, has continued her visits to our four primary schools, ensuring we're staying close to the children's daily educational journeys.

One of the most heartbreaking challenges we continue to face is caring for teenage mothers and their babies. Not long ago, there were two organisations in our area offering support but they've since stopped. Today, many of these young girls, aged just 13 to 19, are left without help. Some are forced to leave home. Others face rejection by their own families. We've even lost young lives both mothers and babies because they had nowhere safe to go. We are doing everything we can, but we don't have a dedicated facility for them. The few shelters that exist are far away, and after three months, the babies are often sent back to us. We then try to negotiate with the girl's mother or grandmother to welcome them home but many times, they refuse. It's hard to find a foster home when the girl's own mother is still present but unwilling. These situations are incredibly painful, yet in the midst of it all, your support has been a light. To those of you who have quietly stood by these young mothers, thank you. You are helping give them a future, and in some cases, giving their babies life itself.

We did it. We marked 40 years of service to Mukuru. It was a beautiful and emotional moment to reflect on how far we've come. From our humble beginnings in the slums to the impact we now see every day in the children, the schools, and the families we serve, this journey has been nothing short of a miracle. Our deepest thanks to the Sisters of Mercy, the Missionaries of Africa, our Board Members and Staff and the amazing pupils and families we walk alongside. A very special thanks to Father Manuel Gordejuela, who travelled from Madrid to celebrate with us. Together, we remembered the early days the struggles, the moments we thought we couldn't go on, and the strength that carried us through.

Even with the celebrations, our daily work never stopped and the rhythm of life continued. Our team showed up every single day with compassion, purpose, and love. Some of you have been part of this journey since the very beginning. Others have joined along the way. Wherever you came in, we are so glad of your support. Your belief in us, your prayers, your donations, your visits, your kind words, they matter more than you know. You've helped build a legacy of hope in Mukuru, one child, one classroom, and one family at a time. From all of us here, and from the children whose lives you've touched: Thank you. May God bless and reward you richly.

Asanteni Sana, for creating the **possibilities for change**.

Sr Mary Killeen
Director

Archival Corner

“Leo Katika Historia – Today in History”



Double tragedy in May 2024, Nairobi, Kenya

According to the 2019 Census conducted by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, there are approximately 2.5 million slum dwellers in Nairobi, Kenya, which represents 60% of the city's population, occupying just 6% of the land. Nairobi County covers an area of approximately 696 km², equivalent to 171,986 acres, of which about 30,000 acres are occupied by Nairobi National Park. This means that around 2.5 million slum dwellers in Nairobi occupy an area of 10,000 acres of land, equivalent to approximately 40 km², which is roughly a third of Nairobi National Park's 117 km². These statistics highlight the significant challenges faced by the slum dwellers in Nairobi.

The Red Cross reported that between March 2024 and May 2025, the number of fatalities due to floods reached around 294 people. By this time, the Cabinet Secretary for Interior had ordered the demolition of all structures within 30 metres of the Nairobi River, including its tributaries. Even before some families could bury their loved ones lost to the floods, approximately 4,000 houses were demolished, with the most affected residents living in Mukuru Slums. This situation intensified the demand for humanitarian assistance.

Thanks to our donors and partners, we were able to support thousands of displaced individuals, many of whom are either direct beneficiaries or have children in our schools. Your support has been integral to our efforts, and we want to emphasize the significant impact you have made. Through your efforts, we have helped them start anew and continue to support their journey towards self-reliance and a dignified life, addressing their social, educational, and economic challenges.



Demolition 2024

MPC's 40th Anniversary Mass

MPC Celebrates 40 Years of Impact and Community

On May 21, 2025, MPC proudly celebrated its 40th anniversary with a heartfelt event attended by over 400 invited guests. It was a joy to see so many individuals who have been part of MPC's journey from its early days to the present coming together in a spirit of unity and gratitude, a testament to the strong bonds that unite us all.

Among the attendees were the original pupils, parents, now proud grandparents, along with members of their extended families. MPC alumni, who once benefited from the institution's programs, returned as successful professionals, with many now supporting the next generation of learners. Former employees, board members, loyal partners, friends, long-time supporters, and representatives from various embassies also graced the celebration with their presence. This diverse gathering underscored the profound and far-reaching impact MPC has made over the decades. It was more than just an anniversary; it was a true community celebration and a testament to MPC's enduring legacy.

A Day of Faith, Talent, and Togetherness

The celebrations began with a beautiful Mass presided over by MPC's co-founder, Fr. Manuel Gordejuela Eslava, who travelled from Spain along with other Missionaries of Africa. The Sisters of Mercy, a significant part of our community, also attended in large numbers, adding to the spiritual richness of the day. The Mass and the vibrant entertainment that followed were broadcast live on the Capuchin TV YouTube Channel, attracting over 250 live viewers and nearly 2,000 additional views since then. This inclusive approach allowed those unable to attend in person to participate in the celebration, ensuring that everyone in our community felt valued and respected.

Every department within MPC, from the schools to the staff, came together to contribute to the event. Their collective efforts were evident in the liturgy, with representatives participating in readings, the offertory procession, singing, and dancing. The primary school students charmed the audience with their skits and performances while the vocational students prepared and served a delightful lunch that marked the end of the festivities. This unity and collaboration among the MPC community made the celebration a true reflection of our shared values. We owe a special recognition to the organizing committee, led by Dinah Mwendwa, whose dedication and meticulous planning ensured that the celebration was both memorable and seamless.

A Celebration That Reached the World

Many who were unable to attend sent their heartfelt congratulations via email, with messages filled with warm wishes and gratitude from across the globe. To further share the joy, a **'Sherehe' (celebration) picture book**, filled with vibrant images was emailed to our partners, families, friends, and supporters, capturing the spirit and happiness of the day through vivid photographs.

As we reflect on this milestone, we give thanks for 40 years of unwavering dedication, remarkable transformation, and a shared purpose that has inspired us all. We look ahead with hope and determination for the years to come, knowing that our past achievements will guide us in the future.



Mukuru Promotion Centre Administration Staff



St Bakhita Liturgical Dancers



Beatrice Nayema St Elizabeth JSS



Monica Wavinya, Derrick Oundo and Gladwell Mukami from Sancta Maria JSS



St Bakhita Primary Pupils



Songa Mbele Children



Rehabilitation Centre Boys



Priests' Blessing

Social and Health Services

Activities In May

The theme for May at the Department was centred on the vital concepts of support and resilience amid challenging economic circumstances. MPC is committed to uplift vulnerable populations, including students and community clients. Through a comprehensive array of services, we are dedicated to providing necessary clothing assistance, financial aid, medical support, food distribution, and invaluable educational resources. Our focus on nutritional support has yielded significant benefits for hundreds of individuals, including 110 malnourished babies and children, as well as over 200 struggling adults. The Amaranth program plays a crucial role by offering nourishing porridge and essential supplements designed to strengthen the immune system.

Throughout May, we successfully delivered needs-based assistance to 89 clients. Among these were 10 individuals who received business start-up kits, empowering them to strive for financial independence and secure their livelihoods. We also provided vital aid to victims of recent fires, supporting over 800 students through various forms of assistance, including uniforms that facilitate their education. Our dedicated social workers conducted 27 hospital visits to offer comfort and assistance to those in need. The Child Protection Office diligently documented alleged cases of abuse, resulting in 17 necessary follow-ups to ensure the safety and well-being of affected individuals.

As the cost-of-living crisis deepens, we have witnessed an alarming surge in requests for food and rent assistance. Compared to the previous month, appeals for food support have more than doubled, with rent assistance requests—particularly from single-parent households—skyrocketing. This distressing trend has led to a notable increase in evictions, and many small businesses are grappling with hardship or even closing their doors. The economic strain is also casting a shadow over education, with rising rates of student absenteeism. Follow-up investigations have revealed a troubling mix of issues, including illness, neglect, and instances where children are driven to street begging as their families endure severe financial distress.



St Bakhita students receive maize and clothes.



Ex-convict receives food support

In response to these escalating challenges, we welcomed 21 new students into our fold and conducted 96 home visits to assess the individual needs of families within our community. Our life skills and mentorship sessions tackle critical issues, including child protection, entrepreneurship, reproductive health, and substance abuse prevention, particularly in response to the 45 documented behavioural incidents observed in educational settings. These proactive measures are designed to foster a safer and more supportive environment for all.



Vocational Training Centre Mentorship Session

Mental health concerns within households have surged, with increased reports of depression sometimes culminating in heartbreaking instances of child abuse. In light of this, the Child Protection Office is set to launch a sensitization campaign aimed at raising community awareness and reinforcing safeguarding mechanisms. Concurrently, the Social Office is actively exploring partnerships with NGOs to develop sustainable strategies that reduce dependency while promoting financial resilience among those we serve.

Despite the pressing challenges, our immediate relief efforts remain steadfast. Food stores have been diligently restocked with fortified dry goods, ensuring that individuals in need have stable access to nutritious options. The St. Catherine's Social Office has continued its compassionate monthly feeding program, providing vital support for sick children, pregnant women, and new mothers navigating the postpartum period. Our school sponsorship program has seen an increase in participation, with 22 home visits conducted to verify beneficiaries and maintain accountability within our efforts.



Amaranth Program beneficiaries St Catherine's Social Office

The Social Office has launched an ambitious 20-session intervention designed to equip students with essential life skills. Collaborating with volunteer counsellors from Coptic Hospital, Hope Worldwide, and the JKIA Probation Station's Crime Prevention Unit, these sessions address crucial topics such as child protection, healthy relationships, substance abuse prevention, and emotional regulation. Our dedicated team of six volunteer counsellors facilitated 87 individual and group counselling sessions, positively impacting students, teachers, and community members. Ongoing staff counselling sessions are being held across various institutions, guided by the expertise of Agatha Mutua.



Children from St. Bakhita Primary School at a mentorship session

Additionally, we have distributed 1,170 sanitary towels to female students, supporting their menstrual hygiene and dignity. Three teenage pregnancies were reported, with social workers providing ongoing support to aid reintegration after delivery. The ongoing economic hardships continue to escalate requests for food and rent assistance, further straining household mental health. Nevertheless, our educational initiatives remain robust, bolstered by staff training in safeguarding and prevention strategies. The unwavering support of our generous donors plays a critical role in sustaining our programs, enabling us to implement impactful interventions that foster stability, dignity, and long-term resilience.



Business Start-Up beneficiary

As we reflect on the myriad challenges faced in May, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our donors for their generosity and solidarity. Your invaluable support enables us to respond compassionately and work towards sustainable solutions that uplift and strengthen our communities.

Mary Immaculate Clinic

Activities In May

The stories of healing, hope, and restored dignity unfold every day in our consultation rooms, waiting areas, and the lives we touch. In May, the Clinic treated 2,931 patients, including 1,627 paediatric cases, which comprised 62% female and 38% male patients. The laboratory was very active, performing 1,708 tests, with 872 of those for children.

Additionally, 238 mothers visited the antenatal care clinic, with 20 mothers receiving wellness follow-up through postnatal care. We administered 159 immunisations and conducted a total of 116 ultrasounds, which included 89 for antenatal mothers, 13 for outpatient cases, and 14 for paediatric patients. Ultrasounds help track fetal growth, detect risks early, and guide timely medical decisions. This service has been a valuable addition to the Clinic, allowing for faster and more accurate diagnoses. Previously, we referred patients to external facilities, where they faced high fees and long wait times. Now, we can make critical decisions quickly, improving both turnaround time and patient outcomes—all thanks to the generous support of the Pablo Horstmann Foundation.

For two months now, we have faced a supply shortage of Polio and BCG vaccines, which are essential for preventing paralysis and tuberculosis in infants. Restocking is expected to occur by the end of June as we continue to prioritise and advocate for timely immunisations.

MIC's social office continues to support our most vulnerable patients. This includes providing nutritional support to 10 pregnant women and distributing sanitary towels and diapers to help mothers prepare for safe deliveries. Moreover, we conducted three follow-up visits for paediatric patients admitted to Kenyatta and other healthcare facilities.



We also referred a street boy who sustained injuries from an attack to the Mary Immaculate Rehabilitation Centre. He is now recovering well under proper care. This holistic care model would not be possible without continued support.

Nurse Joseph stitching the Street Boy

The staff continue to receive further professional development and capacity building through the CME program training by Dr. Alba. Our commitment to continuous learning ensures that we provide better care for our patients. In May, staff participated in a series of Continuing Medical Education (CME) sessions that equipped them with hands-on and theoretical knowledge in emergency care and child neurology. Sessions and topics:

- Medical Equipment Use and maintenance in observation and emergency room
 - Practical training on Nebulizers, Oxygen concentrators,
 - Patient monitors, Suction machines, EKG, and medication pumps.

- Neurological Conditions in Paediatrics
 - Seizures & Epilepsy – Theoretical & Simulation
 - Cerebral Palsy (CP) – Early diagnosis & management
 - Case Studies on CP, seizures, and intracranial hypertension
 - Emergency Simulation: Intracranial Hypertension & Brain Hernia
 - Neurodevelopmental Red Flags

These training sessions have enhanced the capacity and confidence of our team in managing complex paediatric emergencies, leading to improved quality of care. Currently, our paediatric team meets every Friday to evaluate five children from Songa Mbele na Masomo. Therefore, the training on Neurological Conditions is crucial for equipping our staff with the essential knowledge they need.

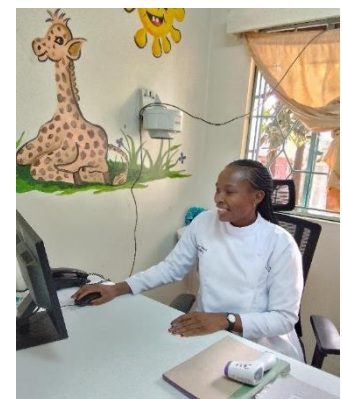


Dr Alba's CME session

Due to the growing number of patients, our workload is continually increasing. In response, we are currently renovating the clinic to create more space. The adult services will be moved to a new area, which will help reduce congestion and improve patient flow. Additionally, in May, we welcomed a new paediatric clinician, an essential step in providing consistent care.



Renovations at MIC



Lucy Mukasia new paediatrician

The Clinic is pleased to welcome a new laboratory technician who will help improve patient turnaround times during busy periods. We are also profoundly grateful to the Rotary Club for their generous donation of essential medicines this month following a recent medical camp. This support has helped replenish our pharmacy shelves and alleviate the financial burden on our patients.

To all our donors and well-wishers, thank you. Together, we are making a difference and changing lives. Every mother who leaves with a healthy pregnancy, every child who recovers from illness, and every patient and family who receives a second chance are all testaments to the impact of your support. Your generosity brings hope where despair once prevailed.

Primary Schools

Activities In May

As schools opened for Term Two, a concerning trend began to emerge with the pupils, as they adjusted to classes after the school holidays. Many pupils were displaying diverse behavioural changes, such as increased anxiety, anger, and impatience. These changes not only affected the pupils' focus and interest in learning but also disrupted the overall learning environment. Teachers worked tirelessly to manage these issues and ensure effective learning. The month of May was packed with various activities, including KNEC practicals, games, and preparations for school field activities, as well as monitoring visits by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and donors. Other activities included MPC 40 celebrations, a MoE audit of schools, Parents Association (PA) meetings, and the Vetting of the BOM names submitted to the MoE. Despite these challenges, school enrolments continue to rise as the Government closes down private slum schools that do not meet the required standards set by MoE. The 4 MPC primary schools now have a total enrolment of 6,824, with 2,662 being junior secondary. MPC primary schools have 146 teachers to cater for the pupils with an average ratio of 1:47.

Recognising the importance of equipping teachers with relevant knowledge and skills, the Government organised a three-day training session for science teachers in the Junior Secondary section. The training was designed to guide Grade 9 students on their career pathways at the Senior school level and to provide techniques for subject selection as the Grade 9s consider their subjects for secondary school. In addition to this, teachers received ongoing training on child protection and safeguarding for all staff across the four schools, demonstrating a commitment to staff development and ensuring a safe learning environment. In May, the Government announced that it would hire an additional 24,000 teachers nationwide to address the current teacher shortage in schools. Each school has received one Junior Secondary teacher and none in the primary school. Unfortunately, 3 MPC primary teachers have been transferred to other schools within the city. None of these teachers have been replaced. The challenges at the MPC schools persist, with reduced government funding, high teacher-to-pupil ratios, and significant infrastructure repairs, including those for gutters, walls, painting, and tiling.

The Kenya Primary Education Equity in Learning (KPEEL) Program is a collaborative initiative between the Kenyan Government and the World Bank aimed at enhancing the quality and equity of primary education in the country. The program's objectives include reducing regional disparities in learning outcomes, improving retention rates for girls, and strengthening systems to deliver equitable education outcomes. St. Elizabeth Primary School is one of the beneficiaries of this program, having received funding from the Ministry of Education (MoE) for the construction of four Grade 9 classrooms. Recently, World Bank officials visited St. Elizabeth Primary for benchmarking purposes and designated the school as a resource centre for all Nairobi-based schools. This designation means that any school in Nairobi seeking to learn technical subjects will turn to St. Elizabeth for resources.



Sancta Maria JSS visits JKIA (airport) Engineering Department.



St Catherine JSS Agriculture and Music



Construction is currently underway at the primary schools across different campuses. The building of the Grade 9 classrooms at Sancta Maria is still in progress. This project, which includes four new classrooms, will help alleviate congestion at the school, as some classes had to be merged to accommodate the Grade 9 students. The County Government of Nairobi has funded this initiative. Additionally, the Nairobi County Development Fund (NCDF) has financed the construction of 14 toilets at the same school.



Toilets block and grade 9 classrooms construction at Sancta Maria



Last month, the perimeter fence at St. Catherine's Primary School was demolished to make way for an improved walkway for pedestrians. The construction of a new chain-link fence will enhance security for students and staff by protecting them from external threats and preventing unauthorised access, thereby creating a safer learning environment. This project is expected to be completed by mid-June. For a long time, the lack of a strong perimeter wall has posed a security risk for St. Catherine's. Fortunately, a group of donors has supported the initiative to secure the school for the children.



St. Catherine Perimeter wall construction

The Member of the County Assembly for Landmawe Ward organized an eye medical camp for children at Sancta Maria Primary School. As a result of this camp, the Lions Eye Hospital received 12 referrals. Additionally, the Rotary Club of Milimani hosted a free medical camp for children at St. Catherine's Primary School. These medical camps have the potential to identify diseases at an early stage. Representatives from both schools also participated in the annual Mater Misericordiae Hospital Heart Run for Children.



St Elizabeth's pupils at the Mater Heart Run. Eye Clinic at Sancta Maria and Medical camp at St Catherine.

The 4 primary schools continue to provide spiritual nourishment to the pupils and staff through monthly Mass. Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish catechists, who play a crucial role, also assist with after-school lessons, providing invaluable support to our community.

The most significant event in May was the 40th-anniversary celebration of MPC. Not all 6,824 students could attend, so each school had representatives who participated in the liturgical celebration as well as the entertainment after the Mass. Headteachers, School BOM, pupils, and Alumni actively participated in traditional dances, poems, and sacred songs in appreciation of the MPC's achievements for forty years. The celebration was a testament to the strong bond and shared values that unite our school community.



St Catherine and St Bakhita JSS students entertain guests during MPC @40 celebrations



Fr Manuel and Sr Mary plant a mango tree at St Bakhita to mark the anniversary

St Michael's Secondary School

Activities In May

St Michael's Secondary School students 449 of them from Form 2 to Form 4 returned to commence Term Two. Term Two commenced with a whole College Mass presided by Fr Paulinhos from Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish who challenge the students become more mindful on the gift of humility.



Father Paulinhos animating school Mass

An 'Incentive Program' was introduced by college patron Bob Paterson. Form 4 students often need to improve their marks by just 10% or 20% to secure a university placement. To provide additional motivation, students who improve by two grades will receive a cash incentive of 5,000 KHS (approximately €30). The program was launched in May, and students' efforts and determination will lead to measurable academic progress. Four Form 4 students have already been awarded for their improvements. The challenge now is for others in the Form 4 class to emulate their efforts.



Bob awards Form 4 students for outstanding academic achievements

Students attended the Chemistry Symposium at Ndururuno Secondary School in May. The symposium was a resounding success, bringing together enthusiastic individuals who share a passion for science from across the school. The event featured a range of engaging activities, including presentations, live experiments, and interactive sessions. All student participants received certificates, with Priscilla Ayieko, a Form 4 student, standing out as the top performer from St. Michael's with an impressive score of 64%. The symposium emphasized the importance of scientific collaboration and innovation among the students.



School principal awarding certificates to students for excellent performance in chemistry symposium

To encourage improved academic performance, St. Michael's hosted a Principal's Breakfast to celebrate and recognise the exceptional achievements of 12 Form 4 students in their fortnightly mathematics quick tests. This event was part of the school's initiative to promote ongoing dedication to core subjects, particularly mathematics and sciences. Attendees included the school principal, deputy principal, senior teacher, dean of studies, and the mathematics teacher. The student champions expressed their commitment to involve their peers through teaching and discussions. In response, the school administration promised to organise more sessions like this to recognise and reward the efforts of all students.



Principal's Breakfast

In May, students participated in various sporting events, with soccer being the most popular game. The Boys' Team had mixed results. They drew against Star of Hope School and faced a tougher match against Aquinas School, suffering a 7-0 defeat. Their next game was more evenly matched, ending in a 0-0 draw against Bright Star School. In contrast, the Girls' Team performed exceptionally well, winning all their matches. St. Michael's defeated Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School with a score of 2-0. They also achieved a dominant 4-0 victory against Star of Hope and followed that with another 4-0 win against Nairobi South.

The Netball Team had a mixed performance as well, achieving a 50% win rate. They defeated Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School 12-1 but were later defeated by Huruma Girls Highschool with a score of 10-4.



Boys' Soccer Team



Girls' Soccer Team

On May 21, 2025, MPC proudly celebrated its 40th anniversary, highlighting its mission to empower underprivileged communities through education, vocational training, and holistic development programs. The event was a momentous occasion that brought together stakeholders, partners, alumni, and donors, all of whom reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to MPC's mission and its transformative social impact.

The celebration featured several distinguished guests, including Ms Evelyn Maris, the Deputy Head of Mission at the Irish Embassy in Kenya, who delivered a touching speech. Also in attendance were Sr Mary Killeen, the Director of MPC, longstanding donors, development partners, dignitaries and alumni of MPC, including Davis Sagini, a former student of St. Michael's and now a successful civil engineer, and Fr. Manuel Gordejuela, who animated the Mass.



David Sagini



Members of St Michael's choir



Ms Maris

The Mater Misericordiae Hospital Heart Run is an annual event organized to raise funds for children with heart conditions who need surgery. This year's event took place at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC). Representatives from St. Michael's participated in the event. Students listened to stories from recipients, which reinforced the values of empathy and community service that are central to the school's mission. Upon completion of the 10 km run students receive their certificates.

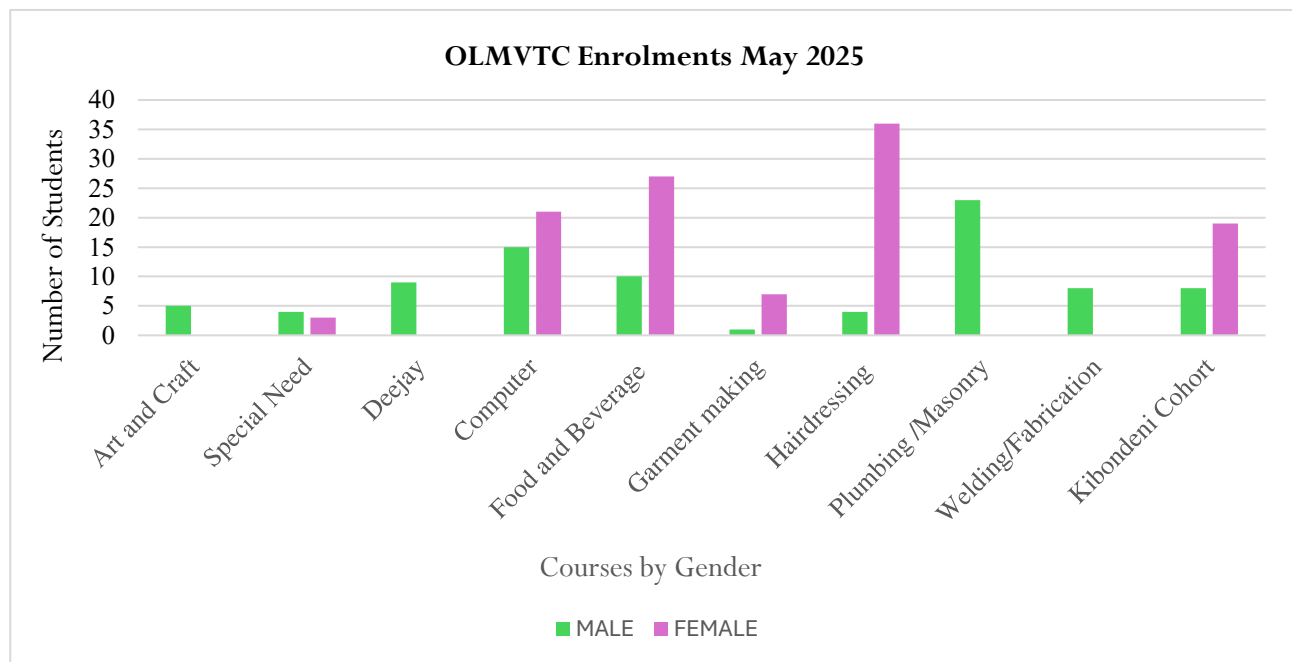


St Michael's Students

Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre

Activities In May

Students returned enthusiastically for Term Two, ready to learn and maintain a positive attitude toward both theoretical and practical sessions. The energy and commitment demonstrated during the first few weeks of the term are commendable and hold promise for continued progress. Continuous assessments were conducted in the first two weeks. The OLMVTC enrolment currently stands at 200, while the second cohort at Kibondeni comprises 27 students, including 8 male students and 19 female students.



The Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre is rapidly building a strong reputation within the community for its commitment to quality education and skills training. Currently, the Centre holds accreditation to deliver Grade III NITA courses, which serve as an essential foundation for aspiring professionals. Recognising the significant demand for more advanced training options, the Centre has taken the initiative to apply for registration to offer higher-level courses, including Grade II and Grade I, as well as the prestigious Master Craftsperson (MCP) III programs. This proactive approach not only enhances the Centre's curriculum but also empowers students to elevate their skills and improve their career prospects in various trades.

There was a delay for the NITA examination students in 2023. Their certificates were supposed to be issued; however, due to the NITA system upgrade during the release of certificates, all institutions were affected and OLMVTC's 150 students had to wait longer to receive them. By the end of May, 3 students were still waiting for their certificates.



Plumbing students



Art students



Computer Students



Catering Students presenting

Songa Mbele na Masomo Children's Centre

Activities In May

Through the provision of general healthcare, food and nutrition support, education, therapy, and emotional and spiritual care, we have helped restore the self-esteem, dignity, life prospects, and hope of children and their caregivers. This initiative has directly contributed to enhancing the interpersonal and functional abilities of 105 vulnerable children, along with their parents or guardians and our staff. The Centre has established a new unit for children to improve their practical skills and facilitate better social interaction.

The children continue to receive education tailored to their individual levels and abilities, along with therapeutic sessions in occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and speech therapy to help them manage their disabilities more effectively. There is substantial evidence indicating that the more attention and treatment the children receive, the better their outcomes and the higher the rate of milestones they achieve. There were 70 children at the Centre who participated in the 244 physiotherapy and 23 children received 102 occupational therapy sessions, 19 children attended the 119 speech therapy sessions and during the month.

In May, there was a notable improvement in occupational therapy in Sweden. He can now match pictures, and Ashley has shown increased concentration, enabling her to complete three activities simultaneously. The most improved child in occupational therapy is Trevor from Unit 1. Trevor is autistic and initially faced challenges such as hyperactivity, lack of attention span, poor concentration, difficulty with eye-hand coordination, inability to follow instructions, and trouble recognising colours. After ongoing therapeutic intervention, his hyperactivity has decreased, and his attention span has notably improved. He can now concentrate for at least 45 minutes, has developed hand-eye coordination, can partially follow simple instructions, and can recognise colours and match pictures.



Trevor Were

The three remarkable individuals making strides in physiotherapy are Esther, Owen, and Mark. Esther Awino, residing in Unit 2, has achieved a significant milestone by walking after spending six weeks in full-leg plaster casts. Her determination and resilience shine through as she takes each step, reclaiming her mobility.

Owen, from the Daycare Unit, has also made impressive progress. He can now stand with back support, a crucial advancement in his recovery process. This newfound ability not only boosts his confidence but also opens up opportunities for greater interaction and engagement with his surroundings. Mark Muchina, who is in Unit 1, is experiencing a remarkable transformation. He is now capable of standing independently, showing an inspiring level of strength and balance. Furthermore, he has gained the ability to feed himself, reflecting his growing independence and self-sufficiency in daily activities. Each of these individuals is on a journey of recovery, showcasing their determination and the positive impact of physiotherapy.



Esther Awino



Owen Ongeru



Mark Muchina

Adrian, a student in Unit 1, is demonstrating remarkable progress. With the aid of a posterior walker, he is navigating his environment with increasing confidence. He has successfully regained a sense of independence. As he continues to improve, our focus will shift to refining his posture, specifically working to correct his bilateral internal rotation, which will enhance his overall mobility and flexibility. On a positive note, Dennis, another student from Unit 1, has made significant strides in his ability to walk independently around the centre using an anterior walker. Our current goal for Dennis is to enhance his balance, enabling him to transition to walking without any assistance or aids in the near future. In addition to individual progress, our therapy team has successfully acquired a variety of assistive devices, including specialized handles and communication boards, for use in the classrooms. These resources are designed to support children who face challenges with fine motor skills and speech, enabling them to engage fully in classroom activities and participate alongside their peers.



Adrian Mumo



Dennis Kimsop

During May, staff participated in several training sessions to enhance their skills and knowledge. One notable training focused on 'Disability Inclusion'. Facilitated by Light Up for the World, it aimed to raise awareness about the impact of disabilities. Another day was dedicated to staff capacity development and networking, allowing team members to access, share resources, and exchange information, especially at the local level. Other staff members received training in various areas, including psychosocial support, early childhood development, childcare, and parenting. Additionally, a session on child rights and law was conducted by knowledgeable experts from the Association of Sisterhood Kenya (AOSK), providing valuable insights and expertise to the participants.

Songa Mbele, in collaboration with Mary Immaculate Clinic, has established a schedule for free medical check-ups every Friday. The Clinic will assess five children from Songa Mbele, providing them with medical check-ups, prescriptions, and referrals as needed.

The Centre had the pleasure of welcoming Mark Cave, a donor from the Provictimis Foundation in Switzerland. During his visit, he engaged warmly with the children, taking the time to learn about their experiences and progress. As he wandered through the vibrant classrooms and play areas, he conducted a thorough monitoring visit, observing the various activities and interactions taking place. Mark was genuinely delighted to see the remarkable achievements of the children and the overall growth of the Centre, leaving with a sense of pride and hope for their future.

The Centre received 8 wheelchairs from Rotary Club Nairobi and we assisted the Mary Immaculate Clinic with 4 of the 8 wheelchairs donated.



Wheelchair donation

The Centre's social worker was able to follow up on several children at St. Catherine's, Ndumberi Polytechnic, Limuru Cheshire, St. Bakhita, and St. Michael's Kambui, and all the children were doing well.

Unfortunately, one child sponsored by the Centre, Stephen Agwambo, passed away. He has since been laid to rest. The Centre visited his family to offer condolences. It provided a small token before they left for his rural home for the burial. Stephen attended Waithaka Special School.



Sr Winnie and teacher Ruth at Stephen Agwambo's home with Stephen's mother.



Mary Immaculate Rehabilitation Centre

Activities In May

The Centre has been a safe haven for boys rescued from various streets in Nairobi. This month has been filled with numerous activities aimed at supporting the best interests of the boys. All the boys have been encouraged to move away from drugs and substance abuse, which they were exposed to while living on the streets. They feel loved and are continuously reassured that they have a brighter future if they embrace the transformation process. It has been encouraging to see that many of them are willing to embark on this journey, and the staff are committed to helping the boys reach their full potential.

At the beginning of May, the Centre was caring for 55 boys. During the month, three new boys were admitted, and two who had previously dropped out of the program returned, giving them another chance to change and improve their lives, thus increasing the current population to 60. The Centre also actively follows up on 36 boys who have exited the program but remain under sponsorship supported by family and friends of Team Paula.

All the boys at the Centre have been placed in classes according to their abilities. Social workers have been diligently monitoring to ensure that all the boys at the Centre and those sponsored through the rehabilitation program attend school regularly. They have held meetings with teachers to evaluate each



Carpentry class in progress

child's individual progress. Those facing learning challenges are receiving additional support at the Centre from part-time teachers, with assistance from house parents as well. Additionally, we have ensured that the library is well-equipped with the necessary books to enhance learning and research for all the boys.

In May, the Rehabilitation Centre organised various forums for the boys to express their feelings and share their challenges. The heart of these initiatives was the dedicated work of our counselling officers, who offered both individualised and group counselling sessions. These sessions were instrumental in helping the boys build self-confidence, develop strategies to overcome trauma and post-traumatic stress disorders, and improve decision-making.



The boys were encouraged to discuss the underlying issues they have been facing, and they received support in finding effective ways to address these challenges. Additionally, the visits from students from different universities had a profound impact on the boys. Their words of encouragement and motivation reassured the boys that anything is possible as long as they remain focused.

Mentorship program from University students

Many of the boys have continued to develop an interest in playing musical instruments. Their training with Collins, their instructor, funded by Team Paula, has been ongoing, and they have become proficient in playing various instruments. Some of the sponsored boys from St. Teresa's Primary Boarding School were selected by the school to compete at the national level, and they performed exceptionally well, showcasing their talent and dedication. The music program at the Centre is funded by Galway Co. Council Third World Fund and the National Concert Hall and Orchestra, Ireland.



Furthermore, the boys were invited to a music event at the National Theatre, organised by Breana Stillman, Australian Opera singer, where they had the opportunity to watch professional musicians perform. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience and learned a great deal from it.

Boys playing musical instruments



Our boys have continued to shine in football. In May, they participated in various matches against teams such as the Mater Hospital College team and St. Catherine School, along with other local teams. The boys won all the matches, showcasing the diverse football skills they learned from Team Chrissie and Coach Dan during the football camp. Additionally, we have established a mentorship program in which the older boys' mentor the younger ones, helping them become experts in the sport as well.

On a more spiritual note, catechism classes have resumed, and the progress has been significant. The boys are learning more about various religions, faith relationships, and spiritual formation through their catechism teacher. The classes have been very interactive, allowing the boys to ask questions and seek clarification when they don't understand something. Additionally, daily evening prayers are conducted before the boys go to sleep, and they are required to attend Mass at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish Church each Sunday, where they can learn more about the parish community.



Catechism class

The boys' creative talents are nurtured through the art classes. They did an excellent job creating bracelets labelled "MPC @40" for the celebrations. Additionally, they successfully sold these bracelets along with some canvases from their art gallery. The class has not only nurtured their creative talents but also fostered diverse skills and creativity among the boys, which is truly impressive and worthy of appreciation. A big thank you to Team Paula for their support behind this program at the Centre.



Boys painting and drawing during Art class



Rabbits Feeding

All the boys at the Centre have been actively involved in the garden this month. The goal is to equip them with agricultural skills that they can use after the program. We have successfully planted tomatoes in the greenhouses, which are currently in full bloom and will be ripe in a few weeks. The boys are excited about the prospect of harvesting tomatoes from the garden. Additionally, they have tilled the land in preparation for planting vegetables.

The project is progressing well, with the boys taking the initiative to ensure the chickens and rabbits are adequately fed. Some boys have been assigned to clean the animal houses, while others are responsible for feeding them and collecting eggs. This has instilled a sense of responsibility in the boys and has helped them develop skills that will benefit them in the future. The animal houses are now secure from intruders, and we have successfully addressed the issue of theft.



Greenhouse tomatoes and capsicum



Donations from well wishers

We are fortunate to receive a steady stream of generous donations in kind from our dedicated partners and kind-hearted supporters. These contributions play a vital role in enabling us to operate the centre effectively and provide essential services. We are deeply grateful for the unwavering support we receive from our community, which enables us to continue our mission and make a positive impact.

Every year, Mater Misericordiae Hospital organizes a Heart Run to raise funds for underprivileged children, making a significant impact on their lives as their parents could not afford the fees. The event was started in 1995 by Sr Magdalen Rafferty and over the years, the Heart Run has generated millions of shillings, enabling the hospital to perform a range of simple cardiac procedures to complex heart transplants for children across the country.

It has screened over 155,000 children, performed 2,295 heart surgeries and conducted 3,389 cardiac interventions. Initially, held only in Nairobi, the run has grown to be held in 10 different counties.

The Mater Hospital has its own cardiac specialists and welcomes overseas specialists during the year who donate their expertise's. The Rehabilitation Centre boys participated in the run. The experience helped the boys understand that other children are struggling with medical issues. They were also excited about the opportunity to interact with students from different schools. It was a great social gathering.

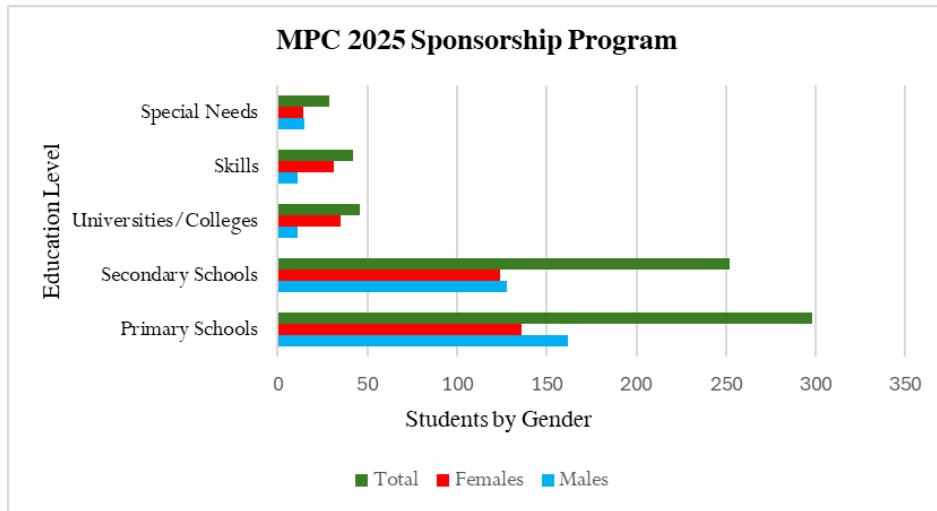


Boys ready for Mater Misericordiae Hospital Heart Run "Touching A Child's Heart".

Sponsorship Office

Activities In May

In May, the Sponsorship Office focused on two main activities: preparing Term One progress updates for over 660 students to share with their sponsors and processing fees to ensure students could return to school after the break.



The preparation of Term One progress updates, a significant task, involved downloading and compiling report forms for each student. These reports outlined the students' performance and general progress during the term. Once completed, these reports, along with personalised appreciation letters, were emailed to the respective donors to keep them informed and to express gratitude for their ongoing support. All reports were also uploaded to the MPC Sponsorship Database to maintain an organised and accessible record for future reference. The primary task was to facilitate payment of school fees for Term Two. This ongoing activity, which we approached proactively, required close coordination with school administrations to ensure timely disbursement and confirmation of payments. By staying ahead of potential disruptions, we minimised any impact on our students' education, allowing them to remain focused on their studies.

A particularly inspiring moment in May was the visit from Bob Paterson, an MPC board member and patron of St. Michael's Secondary School. He took the time to engage with Form 4 students ahead of their upcoming national examinations. During his visit, he shared his personal experiences and delivered a motivational talk, encouraging students to remain disciplined, work hard, and give their best effort as they prepare for this critical phase in their academic journey. His words of wisdom and personal experiences resonated deeply with the students, leaving them motivated and reassured of the support they have from MPC and its partners. Such interactions reinforce the strong bond between our sponsors and beneficiaries, reminding students that their success is a shared priority.




Bob Paterson talks to St. Michael's Form Four students


Announcements

Activities Outside the Department

While the various departments of MPC provide an overview of the month's events, the Head Office works behind the scenes to facilitate many activities that support and align with departmental objectives and targets.


Amid all these activities, there are also other events and developments to note. Below are some additional updates.

 In January the Scratch film crew came to MPC to do a documentary on the “Last Irish Missionaries”. We received notice that the compelling documentary will be aired on RTE One, Ireland across two weeks. **Episode 1 on 14th July at 9.35pm and episode 2 on 21st July 9.35pm.** One of the missionaries is Sr Mary Killeen, current MPC Director.

 The planning for the 40th Anniversary Celebration. The Board members stand beside one of the 8 banners that were created for the event.



Peter, Charles, Sr Mary, Frank, Sr Felistas, Bob, Sr Esther Erus, Wycliffe, Dinah and Kaburu

 MPC Co-founder, Fr Manuel Gordejuela Eslava paid a long-awaited visit to the Head Office, his first in many years. During his visit, he had the opportunity to note the progress on the MPC Departments and appreciate the improvements made over time.



Sr Mary Killeen and Fr Manuel Gordejuela

40 Fr Manuel was also able to reunite with the very first teacher employed by MPC at Mukuru Primary, (Sancta Maria) Ignatius Echesa. This heartfelt reunion was a touching moment, filled with nostalgia and reflection on how far the organization has come since its early days. It served as a powerful reminder of the lasting impact of those who laid the foundation for MPC's mission and growth.



Fr Manuel with the first teacher of Mukuru, Ignatius Echesa

40 To ensure that individuals who couldn't attend in person could still participate in the celebration, Capuchin TV live-streamed the event on various social media platforms. This allowed guests in the diaspora to join virtually, resulting in over 1,900 views.

40 The South African Women's Association (SAWA) in Kenya, visited MPC to explore opportunities for future collaboration. Both parties expressed interest in working together to further MPC's mission.

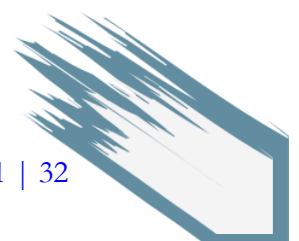


Representatives from SAWA and MPC management

40 University of Nairobi's Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases (UNITID) is undertaking a project titled 'Enabling Girls in Artificial Intelligence and Growing Expertise' (ENGAGE) and paid a courtesy visit to MPC as part of a research project they are conducting on non-governmental organizations working with vulnerable teenagers. The project focuses on training young women from disadvantage backgrounds on Data Science and Artificial Intelligence for Public Health.



Veronica Mwende, Patrick Muhindi with Mary Kanana



Mukuru Promotion Centre

Empowerment Step by Step

Ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

40 Years Anniversary

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