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# *Arrupe Insider*

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## Safeguarding the Vulnerable – Our Contribution

Sometime ago, I stepped into the sitting room in a Jesuit community and found a companion before the TV set, watching a movie (or so it seemed). I joined him. After an exchange of pleasantries and a series of questions about the plot of the movie, a brief moment of silence hovered around the room as I gained concentration in the movie until he interrupted with a question: “When someone responds to an advice by saying ‘don’t worry’, what does he or she mean?” I answered rather spontaneously: “It means that he or she is in control of the situation of concern”. On enquiring about his reason for the out-of-the-blue question, he narrated to me the ugly event whose remembrance was keeping him in thoughts. His sister, during her mid-teen years was exposed to settings of high moral decadence and appeared to care less about its influence on her. The family sat her down and prevised her to be on her guard against an unwanted pregnancy among other risks she faced through such exposure. Her response was the short expression: “Don’t worry... all will be fine”. Not so long afterwards, she took in. ...

While narrating these unpleasant experiences, I could see the confusion in the eyes of this companion of mine just as much as I was able to sense his shared feelings of anger and resignation to God’s will. But I was not sure if he was angry at his family for not doing enough to support their girl child; or at his sister for not heeding to the family’s advice; or at the young lad who though responsible for the pregnancy, took no action of responsibility. While the mélange of sympathy and empathy stirred in me, the thought that my companion was only a sibling to the victim of an unwanted pregnancy and eventually an unripe motherhood sprang up. Then these questions followed: If my companion and I feel very anguished about the whole situation, how much more agonizing is the plight of the ‘unexperienced mother’? Concerning the meaning I read to her response, does she actually have the capacity to be in control of the situation at that moment in her life? Where do I stand in all of these?

I am deeply convinced that my feelings and ponderings are but a microcosmic representation of the elements that prompted Arrupe Jesuit University (AJU) to usher in the second semester of the 2018/2019 academic session and to begin the new calendar year – 2019 in a very unique way. On the 3rd and 4th of January 2019, AJU organized and hosted a workshop on “Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection” whose attendance was mandatory for all members of the university and freely open (as well as highly encouraged) to all guests, friends, collaborators and well-wishers. The objective of the workshop was to raise awareness on the escalating level of abuses suffered by the vulnerable within and beyond our immediate society, the harms such abuses cause to the victims, and how best the vulnerable in our locality can be kept safe and far from these abuses.

But that is not all! In line with the Jesuit spirit of the ‘*magis*’ which represents a character of our institution, AJU



has decided to join the global network of other Jesuit institutions, religious bodies and social organizations occupied with the welfare of the society's vulnerable in ensuring that the cry for safety of every child and vulnerable adult is heard and heeded to. It is for this reason and particularly, in special solidarity with the victims and survivors of abuse, that this month's edition of our newsletter has been narrowed down to the entire events of the workshop.

The contents and layout of this edition have been so structured that it gives some details of every event and presentations that constituted the workshop program as well as a sense of the feelings, aura, reactions and responses that arose from those events and presentations. This has been done strategically to fit the two categories of audience who may read this edition of our newsletter. The first category is those who, for reasons beyond their control, were not in attendance at the workshop; and the second category includes those who were present at the workshop.

For those in the first category, this edition has been designed to put them into the spirit of the workshop in such a way that after going through its pages, they would have gained a picture of the entire event similar to those of the actual participants. And for the second category, this edition possibly offers perspectives and insights which one may not have been able to grasp during the sessions of the workshop. Either way, the pages that follow serve to enrich one's knowledge and augment one's consciousness of the theme of discussion.

Raising awareness is (part of) our contribution to actualizing the goal of ensuring the safety of the vulnerable in our society and our world at large. The workshop and this month's edition have been our means of contribution. But we must not forget that the reason for raising this awareness is to stir up in each individual further resolution towards actualizing the intended goal. Thus, as you scroll down the pages of this edition, ponder on the same question which lingered in my mind as I reflected on the plight of the little 'inexperience mother': "Where do I stand in all of these?"

**Ekesiobi Christian, SJ**

# Arrupe Jesuit University

## CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION

### Vice Chancellor's Opening Remarks



This workshop is the first of many and on-going workshops and similar engagements. It is a universal engagement for the entire university – staff (permanent and part-time) as well as students. It has six roots.

Africa is the cradle of humanity, all things human and humane ought to find a root in Africa. Children are the foundation of our human activity – all our policies must place children at the center, and our treatment of children and the vulnerable is a good measure of how human we are

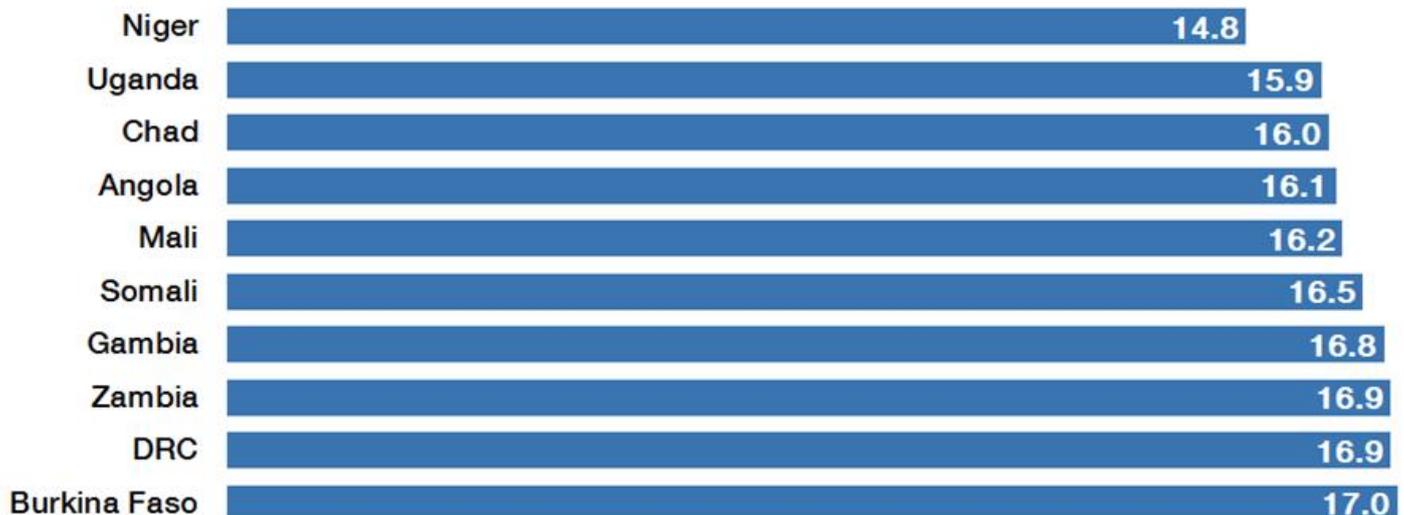
Africa has the youngest population in the world. We need to be the

leaders in the creation of child-friendly policies (see slides below).

## The 10 youngest populations are all in Africa



Median age, 2015



Source: United Nations

The Superior General of the Society of Jesus, in accordance with the 36<sup>th</sup> General Congregation, has rallied the entire Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, and specifically Jesuit Universities and Tertiary Institutions, to “perhaps most complex mandate” “has been handed to us by General Congregation 36 by inviting us to promote a culture of safeguarding vulnerable people”. He explained that this involves a widespread enough cultural change to create a healthy safe environment for each and every human being. Fostering this change means touching the unfair structures of today's societies, with all the risks this entails. A safeguarding culture is particularly embodied in its respect for human rights.

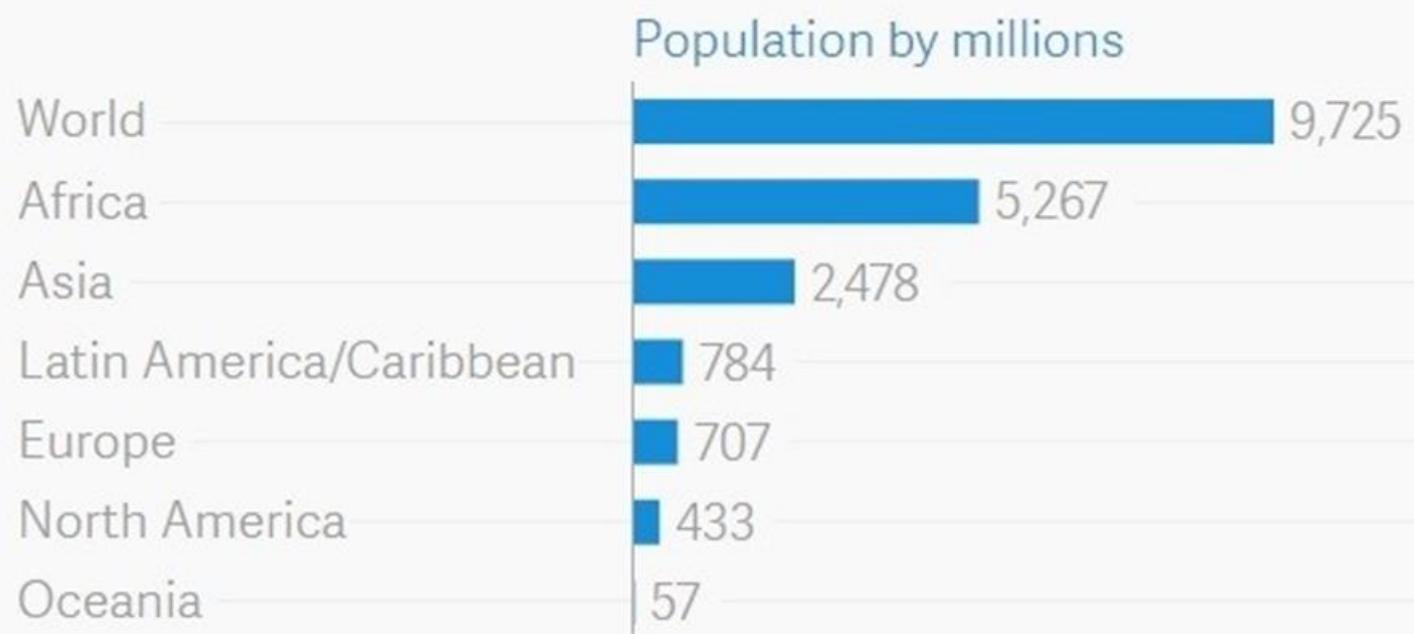
The Church in her most recent history, has not been a safe place for the child and for the vulnerable adult. We need to repent and to show our willingness to redress, by putting in place policies, structures, behaviors and attitudes that make the Church the safe place it is divinely called to be.

AJU is putting in place a far-reaching outreach program, and our target population are in the main children and vulnerable adults. We are thus mandated to prepare well for all foreseeable eventualities. We need to train ourselves for the now and the hereafter when we shall be in active ministry or continued service in other places.

AJU would like to be a pace-setter – we hope that what we are doing will not be unique to us, but will spread out to all tertiary institutions and all sectors of public life.

And so, what we are doing binds us all individually and collectively. We are raising the level of awareness and the amount of knowledge. Hereafter, as a University (both individually and collectively) we shall be expected to behave informed by the knowledge we have acquired and built together. The very exercise of listening to one another and of sharing honestly is a formative exercise. We are grateful to God and to the organisers – Sr Annah Mandeya, Mrs. Dadirai Chikwekwete, Uchechukwu Oguike, and their networks.

## Africa will have the second largest population by 2050



△ T L △ S | Data: UN World Population Prospects

**Kizito Kiyimba, SJ, Vice-Chancellor of AJU**

# On Child Abuse: Tears Not Cried

Words not said  
Tears not cried  
Screams not heard  
Echoed in silence  
Visions unrevealed  
Pleas unanswered  
Dreams unrealized  
Written in the dark

My children, children of our mothers  
Violated in their own homes  
Victims of their own father's lust  
Scarred by unhealed wounds  
Tears of violence, physical and verbal  
Devastated and abused

My children, children of God  
Victims of poverty, prey of society's selfish-  
ness  
Children with their original fire quenched  
Their seed denied rain and sun  
Joy and liberty absent in their lives  
Lonely, in a nightmare I cried  
For God's justice and restoration  
"Who will let the light of God  
Shine in the darkness  
That conceals these deeds?"



**By: Orcastro Júnior, SJ**



## Inspiring Testimonies.

During the workshop on “Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults”, we were opportune to learn of, and learn from the horrifying reality of child abuse from the testimonies of three survivors who willingly shared their harrowing experiences before the house. These three were Chido, Natasha and Primrose. Their stories go as follows:

*Natasha’s story:* Natasha is a teen aged 18 years who was abused at a very tender age. Her mother died when she was an infant and her father married another woman. Few years later, her father passed away and she remained under the care of her stepmother. Natasha’s stepmother started abusing her physically as early as at the age of six. Later on, the stepmother forced her into an early marriage at the age of eight. Although Natasha refused at first, she later gave in to the pressure because of the continuous physical abuses she received at home from her stepmother. At that same age, she got pregnant and dropped out of school. Two months later, had an abortion. Natasha is now staying with her grandmother. Her grandmother can only afford to give her food. She is still facing some difficulties and she wishes to go back to school just like other girls and boys of her age.

*Primrose’s story:* Primrose is a lady aged twenty-three whose parents also passed away when she was young. After the death of her parents, she started staying with her uncle. The situation at home was not very good because Primroses’ uncle was poor, and he could not provide her with basic necessities such as sanitary wear. Primrose met



a man who professed his love for her and promised to provide cater for her needs. One fateful day, when she was coming from school, Primrose's 'boyfriend' invited her to his place since it was raining. On that day, Primrose was raped, and she got pregnant. When her uncle realised that she was pregnant, he chased away from home. She went to her boyfriend's family to seek for shelter and refuge, but they refused to accept her in their home. Due to these difficulties, Primrose started to live in streets and she had to spend her nights under a bridge.

Later on, she met a lady who advised her to get into sex work. Poverty and helplessness compelled her into accepting such an advice. She operated as a sex worker for some time. Luckily, she got in contact with members of Katswe Sisterhood who negotiated with her uncle who later accepted her back home. Primrose is now in form three, but she is still facing some challenges in looking after her child who is also going to school.

*Chido' story:* Chido is a lady who grew up with her maternal relatives. Her relatives started abusing her physically and wanted to force her into marriage at a young age. This led Chido to run away from home and she sought refuge at her aunt's place. Although her aunt at first did not want to accept her into her home, she was forced to accept to do so, thanks to Chido's because of her grandmother who was residing in that house. Chido learnt how to grow mushrooms so that she could raise some money for education. Out of her hardwork and dedication, Chido was able to scale through and defeat her unpleasant childhood experiences. Currently, she is the founder of the Future of Hope Foundation; a foundation which engages in helping and empowering women and girls who are experiencing difficulties in life.

These testimonies, not only show that child abuse is a reality, they also point out how the community in which we live accept and tolerate the perpetrators of these crimes. In fact, none of the testimonies pointed out the concern of any family member or neighbour. In my opinion, one of the reasons of this neglect or tolerance is ignorance. This is why there is need for proper conscientization of the public. When the issue of ignorance is addressed, we should be able to take the necessary measures whenever we notice a case of child or vulnerable adult abuse. I believe that it is in view of creating this awareness or proper conscientization that the workshop in general was organized. It is my hope that this objective was reached.

***Gift Chinyadza***





## Group Discussion Feedbacks

Among other programs that were scheduled for the first day of the “Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection” workshop, there was a session of group work and discussions. We were given a number of questions to guide us in this exercise. After the interactive group session, each group had the opportunity to share with the entire audience what their responses were to the slated questions.

Unanimously, all groups reported to have been touched, moved and challenged by early presentations that included the testimonies of three victims of physical and/or sexual abuse. We echoed these feelings from all the shocking experiences that our invited guests shared with us. However, besides the awful experiences which their testimonies conveyed, there were signs of hope since those testimonies came not just from victims, but survivors of victimization. Their testimonies also bore witness to how they have survived the abuses they were individually subjected to. Indeed, through the willingness of some victims coupled with interventions from non-Governmental organizations such as Childline Zimbabwe and the Future of Hope Foundation whose objective is the aid of victims of abuse, a number of victims of child and vulnerable adult abuse have been rehabilitated into the status of survivors.



After the realization of the grave issue of child abuse in our societies, we expressed various concerns. In fact, we realized that abuse is a complex thing in the society. It is important to be able to identify abuse in its various forms and to be ready to denounce it. Also, various groups noted that, though the abuses perpetrated on girls are the most common, boys are not totally exempted from incidents of abuse in various ways; thus, their plight should not be forgotten. Moreover, the ignorance of the rampant occurrences and means of abuse as well as the form of help – physical and psychological alike - that can be rendered

to victims was also raised as a concern to be addressed. The problem of the culture of silence and the concept of taboos that are associated with the thoughts or proclamation of an abuse suffered within certain African cultures contribute to the perpetuation of such crimes.

In its discussions, each group reflected on suggestions and recommendations concerning the problem of child abuse and the program of child protection. Concerning this point, groups suggested that there should be an investigation into the cause of abuse in all the institution within our society. This will lead to the adoption of various measures that aim at providing a form of civic education that include the respect of children and vulnerable people. The same form of education is needed in order to encourage victims and families to speak out and report various abuse cases. In addition, all the means of communications should be used in order to spread information about the problem of abuse and the importance of safeguarding of children.

Following the point concerning suggestions and recommendations, we were asked to reflect on what we have to do in order to prevent abuse before it happens, how to recognize abuses and what to do when one suspects abuse. In order to enhance the prevention of abuse before it happens, the participants proposed the sensitizing of families on the need to cater for their children. Generally, parents, families and people who are close to a child should lead this battle because they are the ones to know the behaviour of the child. In this line, these people in the entourage of children should be educated on the various abnormal behaviours that shows that there is something that is not right



with a particular child. They should also be courageous to approach and talk to this child. It follows that a relationship of trust must be initiated between the child and these key persons. Sex education is also a key element in the protection of children as it equips them with knowledge about the changes that they experience as they mature physically.



Concerning the aspect of how to identify abuses, the group feedbacks noted that signs such as change of behaviours or observation of unusual behaviours on a child may be pointers indicating that there is something wrong with a particular child. Also, another sign can be the fact that a child is found with expensive items or gifts whose give the parents or guardians are unaware of. After the identification of these signs, participants mentioned that it is important to approach the child and dialogue with him/her or better still, to report these suspicions to the appropriate quarters. There is also a need to alert competent authorities in order to ensure that a child receives help on time and that justice is done.

This group discussion constitutes one of the sessions that left an important mark in our workshop. In fact, it was an opportunity to listen to one another, share ideas, knowledge and experience concerning the theme of the workshop. Helped by the presentation that preceded our group interactions, we were reminded of the reality of child abuse in the society. Additionally, the testimony of those who were involved in the program of child protection showed us that we all have to be concerned with the well-being of children.

**Hubert Niyonkuru, SJ**

## A Tribute to the Victimized...

On that day, it seemed as if I was all alone, with sympathy listening to the narration of the inhumane treatment of those victimized souls, the gross indifference and negligence which accompanied the perpetrated atrocities. The opening remark that 'Africa is the cradle of what it means to be human and humane' was all shuttered right in the face of the audience which was largely African mingled with other cultural backgrounds. I realized that Africa is not immune to being a cradle of what it means to be inhuman or inhumane. With tears flowing down her cheeks, as if appealing to their consciences, Primrose wept as she struggled to tell her story. Courage compelled her to be strong and confront her past, which is now history being told with her as a heroine, and a survivor of such a crude reality. I could feel the air of healing invading her traumatized soul as pain was swiftly being dismissed with profound courage as if summoned from all the four winds of the earth to stand by and watch how the dwellers of the humane earth have turn-coated into perpetrators of abuse (sexual, physical, neglect and emotional) to children and vulnerable adults.

The spirit of Ubuntu is restless and homeless, because it has been banished from our native land, Africa, by those who profess to be its custodians. Natasha could not also afford to keep silent but to break loose the culture of silence and tell her crude story with indescribable audacity. Having been forced to have sex during her early childhood, she was exposed to such act treated with much sacredness in Africa which in turn was left with nothing, not even an iota of dignity. The young: the color of hope is tainted with stains too dark to cleanse. It is an appeal to our humanity. Save the 'color of hope' in Africa.

DEEP IS CALLING ON DEEP...

The deep, the profound, the abyss  
Its depth, its breath, the height and its length stand hopeless,  
Its inhabitants' real beasts, it stands speechless...  
Did I beget them she questions, unblemished and spotless?  
Then why the gross conduct of unspeakable cruelty,  
Why faltering between two opinions of ambiguity,  
Why the quagmire, the cries; the crude reality,  
Where is that humane dexterity?  
To love and to cherish all humanity,  
Are you ashamed now, look in my face and tell me why,  
What is the spell you cast on the ones I begot?  
Tell me! Any land I can go, any depth I can descend,  
To exonerate my own, and restore the dignity of humanity...

Ashley Salima O.Carm



**A Reflection on Sexual Abuse in the Changing Environment –  
A Presentation by Professor Lawrence Daka, SJ**

Former president of Mozambique, Samora Moisé Machel, once said that “children are flowers that never wither”. In other words, Machel regarded children as the future of the nation, and every citizen has the responsibility of caring for the little ones. In our world today, national security is of great concern. Nuclear weapons appear to be the best option for guaranteeing security in some countries like North Korea and the United States of America. In the same world where people feel safe for having mass destruction weapon, children are not so safe. It is not irrelevant to ask what comes to mind when we meet a child. How do we treat a child in need of our attention? Has the hope of seeing children as the future failed?



Children are the most dependable creatures from the beginning of their lives, until nature equips them with enough skills to begin the journey of life on their own. During such crucial times of growth, parents and the extended family are the primary helpers and teachers of the toddlers. It is the responsibility of the family to ensure the safety and well being of children. Experience has proven that children are the future of the world. In fact, all of us were at one point in time defenceless creatures and obviously, we grew up thanks to the work and dedications of our mothers, uncles, fathers and other care givers. These people touched us, they gave us hugs, they kissed our foreheads and some of them

bathed us; for it was normal to do such things. In fact, such acts reflected appropriate signs of love and care for children. Playing with a child anywhere at any moment and time of the day or night was not a case. These were the days when child abuse was something rare and might have been something unknown to many people. But those days are now gone.

Our world has changed and so has our human behaviours. It is true that our world praises any kind of advancements. We have seen multiple technological inventions within the last few decades, but at the same time, the world has become more careful and sensitive to some types of behaviours and human actions.

In the same world where some feel safe and well protected, there are unheard sounds of cries coming from the dark corners of our beautiful infrastructures, gardens, schools and even churches. Those are silent sounds of our children who are ill-treated in different ways. As Prof. Lawrence Daka mentioned, such ill-treatments are most of the times done by the very family members whose responsibility it is to care for their own children. In this modern and changing world, what is child abuse then? Prof. Daka, quoting World Health Organisation (WHO), defined “child abuse and neglect as all forms of physical and or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power” (2002).

The reality in our changing world is that some perpetrators are those who are supposed to offer spiritual, physical, emotional and educational care to the pilgrim souls and innocent minds. Some people believe that the wounds of our mother Church and the modern world are less caused by infidels and lack of complete faith in our Lord as well as illiteracy that it is by clergymen, teachers, nurses, doctors, uncles, fathers, even mothers themselves. However, in the case of the churchmen, the voice of the mother Church still echoes against the perpetrators and strongly stands by the victims, defending and protecting them. The Church definitely allows offenders to face the due penalties. Prof. Daka reminded us of the Canon 1395§2 which states that “a cleric who has offended in other ways against the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment of the Decalogue, if the offence was committed by force, or by threats or in public, or with a minor under the age of 16 years, is to be punished with just penalties, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state if the case so warrants.” {Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela





(SST)}. In addition to this, Prof. Daka pointed out that “Sexual abuse of minors is not just a canonical offense, but also a crime prosecuted by civil law” (*Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, Circular Letter, May 3, 2011*) meaning that both the Church and the civil society are working hand in hand to ensure the safety of children. It is all about preserving and upholding the dignity of the child or vulnerable adult in the changing world.

According to Prof. Daka, there are multiple types of abuses of children and vulnerable adults. The first to be mentioned was the physical abuse. It is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from a single or repeated interaction(s), or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a



position of responsibility, power or trust. This can involve severe physical punishment, making threats, observing violence, and use of excessive force in handling, allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child. Also, in the relation between a child and a parent/care giver, there can exist emotional abuse. It includes persistent criticism, emotional unavailability or unresponsiveness to the child’s needs, exposure to domestic violence and inappropriate or abusive material. It occurs when a child is deprived of affection and security. It is manifested in fear or emotional imbalance, insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviour that become evident in the child’s behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. The saddest and commonest of these abuses is that of sexual abuse of the minors. This occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her sexual

gratification or as an object of sexual arousal, or for that of others. It may be performed through touching, self-exposure, masturbation, sexual intercourse or sexual exploitation of a child including conscious exposure to pornographic images.

Sexual abuse also includes consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 18 years. Whatever type of abuse a minor might have gone through, the truth is that the dignity and respect of the child are all destroyed. Their dreams, and hopes of a better future in the changing world are kept far away and sometimes, beyond their reach. Prof. Daka, knowing that there are some good souls who wish to recognize and uphold the dignity and respect they deserve, left us with some tips for to follow. Such tips are to help us live better without falling into any abusive behaviour towards children. He strongly suggested that we should never hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children. It is helpful not to develop relationships with children that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive or that may place a child at the risk of abuse. We should never use language, make suggestions or offer advices which are inappropriate, offensive or abusive to children. In addition to this, recognising the signs of our changing world, Prof. Daka continued pointing out that, in order to avoid abuses of minor, people should not condone or participate in behaviours that are illegal, unsafe or abusive. They should not act in any way that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, degrade, discriminate against or show treatment of favour to particular children at the exclusion of others. They should not develop sexual relationships with children.

Few years ago, Mozambique rejoiced when a large deposit of natural gas was discovered in the northern part of the country. Up to these days, expectations are high of changing the current economical situation of the country. The same thing can be said of Zimbabwe. These are few signs of how people keep planning to change the already changing environment. But we should also try to make sure that our infants have the best world for themselves. Situations like those told in the stories shared by Primrose, Natasha and Chido should never repeat themselves again.

*Lucas Estevao, SJ*





## Church's Response to Vulnerable Groups

Sr. Dr. Theresa Nyadombo, a member of the Carmelite congregation, led us through a session on the “Church’s Response to Vulnerable Groups” during the workshop. She started off by reinforcing that child abuse is an area of concern whose details are available to almost everyone and consequently, her session would be a revision on what is already known. She emphasized that such repetition is necessary given that the safety of children who are the future generation of our world is highly necessary and as such, cannot be overemphasized. Children ought to be given the safest haven for their holistic growth and maturity, yet reality holds an upside-down expression of what the ideal should be. However, her presentation centred on the place of the Church in this messed-up reality. The Roman Catholic Church is not excluded from this painful plight children and vulnerable adults face since some of her own religious leaders, in one way or the other, perpetrate the same abuse. According to **BBC** (20, Aug, 2018), the Catholic Church has faced an avalanche of child sexual abuse accusations in the last few decades.

Sr. Dr. Nyadombo gave the Greek translation for the word church - ‘*ekklesia*’ which means an assembly or in this context, it means a visible society of baptised Christians professing the same faith under the authority of the invisible head Christ and a visible head, the pope. She reiterated that the consequence of child abuse on a victim which include psychological effects like depression and low self-esteem and this is rampant in our immediate families and societies.

### ***Is the church doing anything about child abuse?***

Dr Nyadombo spoke about the Church’s response to child abuse as a two-way measure. It involves taking both proactive (preventive) measures and reactive measures (Canon law and civil law). In proactive measures, the pope acknowledged that child abuse crisis exists within the church as evidenced by the pope’s letter to the people of God, “calling for a culture of care that says **never again** to every form of abuse. In proactive measures, the Church holds that preventing measures are not the work of few specialists rather, it is every individual’s responsibility because the gospel calls everyone to become an agent of change (Demasure Fuchs and Zollner, 2018 page 3)

In reactive measures, letting the law take its course is the way to go. For many years, the church failed to report sexual abuse cases to law enforcement agencies, preferring instead to handle matters internally by shifting accused

priests to different dioceses and have them undergo psychological therapy (treatment).

To sum up, Sr. Dr. Nyandombo's presentation showed that the Church has taken various measures to deal with the issue of child abuse. She ended her presentation with a quote from Nelson Mandela which says that "to deny people their human rights is to challenge their humanity". In fact, the Church wants to protect the most vulnerable of our societies. That is why in both its reactive and preventing measures, the Church recognizes the rights of the children and thus, the need to protect them from any harm.

**Winifreda Chagongoyeka**







## Protect Children and Protect the Future of our World

Children from different schools within Harare, dressed in their school uniforms, each having a message tag over his or her neck, called for the protection of children. The children rendered a dramatic presentation on how they ought to and ought not to be treated. When they approached the stage, there was a feeling of excitement in the audience. But as they began their presentation the audience became quiet. The children made their presentation in a style that was very clear and understandable. Their message was straight to the point and without any contradictions. By way of gestures and well-articulated words, they created a public awareness of their needs as children which have to be properly responded to. A couple of these needs include love, protection, support, care and attention.



The second part of the presentation was done by some selected adults. They gave a presentation using balloons. While on stage, one of them stood bearing a number of inflated balloons while the others attacked the balloons with the intention of puncturing them. After a round of struggles, the bearer of the balloons was able to successfully keep a few of the balloons away from those who intended the puncture. Unfortunately, she lost a greater number of the balloons to the attacks. She could not protect them all because she was outnumbered.

In that short skit, the balloons represented children and vulnerable adults everywhere; the bearer of the balloons represented an adult who is willingly committed to ensuring the safety of children, and the other participants represented perpetrators of child and vulnerable adult's abuse of any form. The balloons that remained unpunctured after the struggle were the children who have been shielded from victimization. Having established this interpretation of the skit, we can then agree that any action



against abuse and violence in our society is significant in saving some vulnerable persons against the perpetrators of such crimes. However, it may seem that these efforts are fruitless if the number of perpetrators is more than the number of protectors. In this way, the short dramatic presentation invited every one of us to take it upon ourselves to protect children. The protection of children should be the responsibility of every adult.

Reflecting on these two presentations, we are shown the importance of protecting the children who are our future. Children are gifts, as such; they should be loved, cared for and protected. Many children in the world are being abused in one way or the other because they cannot protect themselves. Therefore, it is incumbent on all adults to take it upon themselves to protect children. By protecting the children, we allow them to attain their full potentials in life. One way of helping children towards this goal is by sending them to school for adequate education. They should be supported, encouraged and inspired in order for them to become the best they can be. **Protect children and protect the future of our world.**

*Emmanuel Etim, SJ*



## Child Abuse in Arrupe Jesuit University: Am I Safe?

After all has been said and done, it is still a glaring fact that I am a potential abuser, a potential victim, and a potential accused person - accused of abuse of children and vulnerable adults. A lot is being said about the ungodly nature of the abuse of minors and vulnerable adults around the world. It has become a matter of concern for government agencies and many non-governmental organizations around the world; for every community and household; but most importantly, it has become a grave topic for discussion in the Roman Catholic Church.

The raw nature of child and vulnerable adult abuse was brought to my very face through the workshop held at Arrupe Jesuit University on the third and fourth of January, 2019. During the workshop, there were many talks and presentations given by different personalities; some were so passionate, some even to the point of shedding tears, others were calm and composed as they gave their talks and presentations. Notwithstanding, the cankerworm of



child abuse was emphasized in a very stern and unique way that I became tempted to misinterpret every single action of mine as an abuse of the other person; verbal abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse... and the list goes on and on.

On the second day of the workshop came one of the most important talks by the Child Protection Officer at AJU, Sister Annah Mandeya, who spoke on “Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding (at AJU)”. A former first lady of Nigeria, Mrs. Patience Goodluck Jonathan once said that we all have the Human Immune Virus, but thanks to the words ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ which differentiate one sufferer from the other. Everyone has the tendency of becoming an abuser unless the boundaries are kept and followed in one’s interpersonal relationship. Sr. Mandeya



In conclusion, the whole essence of the child abuse workshop is summarized under the fact that my safety as well as that of every other person is determined by the social boundaries, which are kept and followed in any form of relationship especially with minors and vulnerable adults. However, even as I obediently adhere to the boundaries in relationships, the question still remains, Am I safe? Are those boundaries sufficient to keep me safe? Will my keeping the boundaries to the letter keep me from being falsely accused of sexual misconduct and even sentenced as a sexual abuse offender as has been witnessed in some places

around the world? These questions still highlight my vulnerability as a potential abuser, as a potential victim, but most importantly, as a falsely accused convict of abuse.

**Charles Ugwuonah, SJ**

## Sr. Janice Presentation - Wrap up



The presentation by Sr Janice during the child protection workshop was very spectacular, as it pointed out the way forward in tackling the deadly “disease” of child abuse that eats deep into our society. In her presentation, she discussed the human dignity, saying that human beings possess a special value, which is intrinsic to their nature - a value whose appreciation is the basis of their ethical codes and conducts; a priceless value which ought to be respected. Thus, her concern was to encourage people to see every child not only as a human being, but also as a flower that needs to be protected and cherished.

Furthermore, she alluded to the social teachings of the Catholic Church which are significant in mapping out guidelines and incentives for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults whose dignity and worth should be respected, whose physical and psychological integrity should be protected and whose empowerment should be assured. She encouraged the Church and her institutions to educate the faithful and all who care to listen on possible options for the betterment of the lives of the poor, especially the vulnerable among them. More so, she gave notable examples like technical jobs and proper education which could help them become self-sustaining. Concurring with this, she quotes Pope Francis who says, “People have a dignity that is priceless and a worth that is far more worth than things themselves.”

Another focal point in her presentation was the close relation of child abuse and the sad events that surrounded the birth of Christ (Christmas). Her particular reference was on the ultimate abuse of the lives of the holy innocents in



the town of Bethlehem whose massacre was orchestrated by Herod. This dark story of loss and tragedy shows how long the incidents of child abuse have endured and how much damage it can cause if not forced to a halt. Thus, we were enlightened by the presentation to open our eyes and ears to what is going on around us, and to let our hearts be attentive to the pain of our suffering and victimized neighbors, especially where and when children are involved. Again, this goes accordingly with the letter of Pope Francis to the bishops on the Feast of the Holy Innocents in which he says, “To contemplate the manger also means to contemplate this cry of pain.”

The presentation drove in the injunction of zero tolerance for denial, the failure to help, the covering up of sin and the abuse of power. Hence, she acknowledged the Holy Family as the model of all families and the Church as a source of hope and encouragement in the protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Sr Janice also noted other signs of hope in the concrete works of various organizations, institutions and associations like ZCBC Child Protection Policy, Jesuit policy and action, Childline support, Victim Friendly Unit in Police that try to curb and eliminate the incidences child abuse. She gave a special mention to the upcoming International



meeting of the presidents of every Catholic Bishop Conference to be held in Rome at end of February whose deliberations would hopefully offer more practical ways of curtailing and dealing with the issues of sexual abuse within the Church and in our world at large.

Her opinions were not lacking on what more could be done to protect children and vulnerable adults. She hinted on these by suggesting that the culture of silence wherein abuse cases go unreported be consciously broken. She also called for increased awareness on the need for child protection through platforms of social media and theatres. Other measures she opined include making use of trauma healing tools and intensifying the activities of Social Welfare and the Independent Commission of Human Rights. But more importantly, I think she was convinced that the most effective measure to be taken is that coming from the personal resolve of each individual against this menace called abuse. She portrayed this conviction by calling each one to an awareness of his or her capacity to effect a change. She did so by throwing this question to her audience: “What will I do as result of this workshop?”. In conclusion, according to Sr Janice, “Christian joy does not arise on the fringes of reality by ignoring it or acting as if it did not exist. Christian joy is born from a call... to embrace and protect human life, especially that of the holy innocents of our own day.” It is high time we began to embrace this call.

**Valerie Chidarikire**

## Child Protection: “116!!! It is Free and Can Save a Child”

“It is shocking! So, disheartening!”

“We did not know that the levels of abuse were this high?”

“Oh My! What has become of this world?”

“Did you know of the toll free number, ‘116’?”

All these were feelings that participants of the Child and Vulnerable Adults protection workshop expressed after the presentation by Mrs Ratidzai Moyo from Childline Zimbabwe. The presentation was titled “Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection in Zimbabwe. Mrs Ratidzo Moyo is the Org. Development and Quality Manager of Childline Zimbabwe. For those who missed the presentation, Child line is a “not-for-profit Private Voluntary Organization” which provides free confidential child friendly reporting platforms and counselling services to children, young people and their families. They have a mandate of not leaving a suffering child without aid. Hence ChildLine has various platforms to ensure that every child who needs help has been reached to. It was a reminder that Arrupe Jesuit University was given, a call to be passionate about the protection of children, championing, guarding and protecting children’s rights.

In order to fulfil its mandate, the Childline has various call centres in Matabeleland and Mashonaland, one is being set up in Masvingo whilst Manicaland has a drop-in centre. All drop-in centres throughout the country range to about thirty-four (34), meaning that the organisation has tried to live according to their mandate in ensuring that rights of children are promoted, championed and guarded and that we have safe, confidential child friendly reporting mechanisms giving a 24-hour counselling service. Childline Zimbabwe has managed to offer different services through its reporting platforms. It offers specialised therapeutic support services, strengthens systems of parenting capacity building programs and the buddy system, and lastly, knowledge management of the information received. The main beneficiaries of the services include victims of cyber bullying (in case you didn’t know, it is a crime), gender-based violence, young offenders, victims of trafficking, child protection in cases of emergencies (those who would have called 116), victims of trafficking, those who had contemplated committing suicide, child marriages and survivors of violence against children.

### *The statistics are shocking...*

Mrs Moyo gave some statistics in her presentation showing that Childline Zimbabwe had from 1997- October 2018 responded to about 6.1 million cases, the presentation further showed that from 2017- October 2018 they had responded to about 40,347 cases, these were inclusive of the national ChildLine number **116** (25,486 cases) and the others at drop-in centres (14 861cases). More cases were responded to on the national toll-free line. Of the



cases responded to by the national helpline, 66% were about statutory or protection concerns and the rest non-statutory concerns. A rough breakdown of these numbers shows that 26% related to sexual violence, 21% to physical violence, 18% related to neglect, 7% to child marriages, 7% relates to emotional abuse and the remaining ones related to other multiple concerns such as those of child pregnancies and child labour. These statistics really show how rampant child abuse is and yet the waters seem to be still. At least, the drop-in centres have recorded cases to do with educational and financial support. Despite these disheartening figures, there is a flicker of hope arising from the fact that ChildLine is doing quite a lot as it has responded to about 53.3 % of the cases within the stipulated timeframe.

However, it continues to be worrisome about the fact that 66% of all these reports relates to girl child. In case one would want to know why so much emphasis is put on the girl child, the reason is that the sexual violence ratio of boys to girls is 1:14. There is such a huge disparity. The abused mainly are 32% for those aged between 13-15 yrs., 21% for those between 10-12 yrs., 17% relates to those from 7-9yrs and lastly 12% relates to persons from 0-6 yrs. The last group is worrisome because they are experiencing violence whilst they have least access to reporting schemes. Many girls have faced sexual violence whilst boys have faced more physical violence than their counterparts. Mrs Moyo highlighted that 75% of abuse and violence occurs within the child's home and is from a familiar face. Given all these statistics it is still shocking that 60% of child abuse cases are never reported and only a third of the abused children receive help. There are also cases of intimate partner violence among adolescents and quite often, these cases of violence and abuse are disclosed to peers who in most cases, are in no position to offer substantial help.

### *Have we accepted violence and abuse as a norm in our society?*

There have been various policies, frameworks and programmes that guide child protection in Zimbabwe. Childline Zimbabwe hopes not to just protect but also to safeguard children. With protection, it is only a matter of shielding one from abuse and maltreatment, while safeguarding would protect children from abuse and prevent harm to children's health or development. The UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) has articulated the rights of every child and these should be guaranteed. Children should not be abused based on their responsibilities as articulated in the ACRWC (African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child). All these have helped to inform these policies and frameworks that would help protect children from abuse and guarantee their safety. We also ought to pay attention to areas of marriage, welfare, education, how we handle juvenile offenders, adoption practices and foster care handbooks. To achieve this, Childline Zimbabwe has partnered in different programs like Basic Assistant Education Module (BEAM), DREAMS project and parenting initiatives.

### *What is the way forward?*

Let's make sure that the people we employ into our homes are people we know since 75% happens in families and by familiar faces. Mrs Moyo was against the culture of calling workers aunts and uncles because it gives them room to abuse. We should continue with the awareness campaigns. People should be encouraged to speak out when abused. What AJU has to take out of this is to partner with Childline Zimbabwe like what other corporates bodies have done. Let's take the message to the people and endeavour to change the culture of silence. To report a child abuse **call 116** or use any other platform. **It's free and can save a child.**

*Prosper Tubulo, SJ*



## Its High Time we Stopped Being the Ambulance for the Children

When you abuse a child, you abuse the fate and future of the nation. When you abuse a child, you graft a seed of evil. A seed that will benefit from the goods of society but only bring forth sour if not bitter seeds for society chew or use to germinate even worse seeds. It's time we stopped being the ambulance for our children. Let's be the candle bearers for them.

Despite its shocking statistics on social media and news channels, child abuse can be seen to be very far away especially from the part of the world where we are, Zimbabwe. And so, when the administration of Arrupe Jesuit University organised a gruesome two-days long workshop on the same, for many, it seemed like a far-fudged agenda commanded upon the institution by the heavily-hit Roman Curia. After all, it was only less than three weeks when the Pope addressed the Roman Catholic Clergy who had committed these 'grieve sins' to hand themselves in and face the justice of man as they await Divine justice. It was the first time that a Pope came out so strong on the offenders as compared to the previous incidents where only prayers would be asked for the perpetrators. This workshop would involve the Civil Society, Social Welfare, Orphanages, the Church, the University and a special Unit dedicated to Child Protection under the Police.



Many things were discussed at the workshop. Most of it were not new to the ears in the auditorium. We have heard them or read them on news. However, what moved the house was when two ladies came up and shared their stories. Stories of how the society which was supposed to protect them, to nurture them and to safe-guard them, to mention but the least, turned its back on them. Defiled, raped, rejected with no one to turn to or trust they were forced into prostitution. The auditorium was at the peak of its silence when these stories were shared. A lady broke down as she shared and one could see many faces in the house face down as if covered with shame of failing our sisters, our children. It was an evil which was now in our own neighbourhood. It was in our own houses and all this while we played a blind eye because the news only announced it from across the continent.

Child abuse is an evil that should never go unpunished. It brings a lot of damage to the holistic growth of a child. Children grow up with psychological disorders, emotional imbalances and if not lucky, serious mental conditions. These are the future, yet we want to send them, wounded as they, to take over society. The future is been wounded by us. We are tasked to protect it and take care of it so that in turn, it takes care of us. Chido Govera, from Future for Hope Foundation, shared just how she too was plunged into such atrocities. How she ended up on the street because the street provided better conditions. She is among the lucky ones that are discovered and rescued by Social Welfare and today she is the founder of Hope Foundation and also the United Nations ambassador for Child Abuse in Zimbabwe. She has dedicated her life to ensure children do not go through the fate she had to toll and the consequences that come with it.

The government was not left behind, the Parliament passed an act which resulted in a toll-free line (116) for child abuse cases. Moreover, besides the cases been very marginal, the punishments are harsh. Arrupe as a University, adopted the two ladies who are now trying to get an education to secure their lives in a country whose economy is down on its knees. The whole workshop was truly a once in a life experience. It felt like been on an investigation team, finding the perpetrators, helping to put measures and also helping the victims get a life anew.

However, next time, we shall not be the ambulance, coming in only when the damage is done. The institution has placed in a course to train advocators who will then dedicate their time to go into institutions to raise awareness. This is a huge step indeed.

At the end of the workshop, we were all left with nothing but self-introspection. Many

*Reagan Chengamali, SJ*





## The Way Forward

Mahatma Gandhi once asserted that the true test of a society is how it treats its weakest members. The two days of the workshop on child protection and safeguarding had brought us face to face with a sad truth – we had failed that test. We had failed to take care of the weak – the children and the vulnerable in our midst. Hearing the stories of victims of child abuse was a painful experience. Much more painful was the realization that at that very moment, children were still being abused in some parts of the country. The hard fact left us no choice but to admit that as a Nation, as a Church, as an institution, we had failed to protect those we owed protection. However, it was not the time for self-pity. There was no giving up just yet – not if St. Ignatius had something to say about it. The exceptionally pragmatic founder of the Society of Jesus knew a thing or two about learning from experience. *“By making mistakes I learnt not to make mistakes”* he once said. Like Ignatius, we too had made our own fair share of mistakes. And like him also, we had acquired a pool of experiences. Lessons had been learnt, hearts had been stirred. The question on people’s lips was, what next? Now that we have realized ever more soberly, the dangers posed to our children and vulnerable adults, what do we do?

Thus, when Mrs. Patricia Munemo climbed up the podium to moderate the segment titled, ‘The Way Forward’, the AJU community was hardly short of comments and suggestions. Some felt that more research needs to be done in order to ascertain the root causes of abuse. Others felt that we need to look closer to home and first kick out all forms of abuse from the AJU community. Some felt that the boy child should also be protected as well as the girl child. Others felt that the culture of silence should be broken. Some felt that collaboration and networking should be emphasized. Others felt that there was need to pay attention to our African context and reflect on what role our



Well, at least not everyone seemed to be as worried as I was. A friend of mine upon hearing my concerns bluntly said, ‘its better we run away from children than risk them getting abused’. Perhaps, my friend was right. As the old adage says, *it is better to be safe than sorry*. But do we really have to run away? Do we really have to be afraid when around kids? Do we always have to keep wondering what bystanders may be thinking when we show sincere signs of affection to a child? Is that really the turn that one’s vocation as a religious must now take?

I do believe that there might be some middle ground. We might be able to keep children safe whilst at the same time showing them affection. But the journey towards that middle ground will be by no means easy. Once lost, trust is a difficult thing to regain. Especially in the eyes of a world which is being made much smaller with each passing day thanks to the gains of technology. So, it would seem that we have a herculean task in our hands. But we have no choice but to try. As a church, we have given the world a thousand reasons to believe that their children might be unsafe with us. We now need to come up with a thousand and one reasons that show that children matter to us. So, as Dr. Kizito would always say, let’s roll up our sleeves and get to work

***Edeh Tobechukwu, SJ***



## **The Role of the Police in Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection**

On the second day of the workshop, we had a presentation on the Police's role in protecting children and vulnerable adults which was facilitated by Superintendent (Supt.) Francis Mutema. Superintendent Mutema is a member of the Victim Friendly Unit of the Police Force in Harare, Zimbabwe. On the one hand, Supt. Mutema's presentation left many scholastics unsatisfied because he seemed to have been biased in defining the category of the victims of abuse. He prioritized the aspect of woman and girl child abuse, forgetting that men and boys suffer abuses as well. He highlighted the goals of the police, for example, in supporting the victims and befriending them in order to facilitate their effective recovery. That session of the workshop was an eye opener to some police terms like crime scene attendance and docket – which is a set of documents in which a record of a reported crimes and their investigation processes are kept.

Zimbabwe Republic Police instituted the Victim Friendly Unit in 1997 to help abused women and female children. It started in Mbare and now is in every police station in Zimbabwe. The Victim Friendly Unit deals with cases of rape, incest, assault and many others. Before this unit was formed, the police officers could take cases concerning women and children's abuse for granted. For this reason, the Victim Friendly Unit was formed with the aim of supporting the victims and creating conducive and friendly environment for the victims who come forward to report cases of abuse. It also aims at being empathetic, meticulous, professional, expeditious and maintaining confidentiality when handling cases of victims of sexual offences. The Victim Friendly Unit protect victims who have suffered or who are at risk of suffering serious harm by ensuring that all possible efforts are made to maintain the safety of children in their own homes once abuse/neglect has been discovered or disclosed.

The police play an important role in the protection of children and women through crime prevention and investigation. They are able to gather important information about children who are likely to suffer significant harm, as well as those who cause harm, helping each individual as each circumstance demands. Each police service has a child criminal information disclosure system, which allows anyone to ask the police to check on designated persons who have contact with children. If a person is convicted of child sexual offenses, a risk-based disclosure will be made to the person best placed to protect the child.

In conclusion, offenses against children and vulnerable adults are particularly sensitive. For this reason, the Police are open to collaboration with other organizations especially those centered on social services in their investigation and aid of victims of abuse. The Victim-Friendly Unit is there to help these social organizations and individuals to meet their obligations. Although in my opinion, the presentation was biased, it was nonetheless, educative, formative and an eye opener on how to handle the poor and vulnerable among us. I thank Arrupe Jesuit University for organizing such a wonderful workshop and especially for including this session in the workshop's program of events.

*Vincent Mpoza, SJ*





## Abuse of Children and Vulnerable Adults in a Changing Environment-A Personal Perspective.

What a better way to kick off for the year, 2019! Just three days into the New Year, Arrupeans (students and staff), friends of Arrupe Jesuit University (AJU) and invited guests dedicated two working days to a workshop on the protection and the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The seminar began with some opening remarks from the Vice Chancellor Dr. Kyimba Kizito. In his speech he highlighted six reasons why we were gathered. What struck me most was a realization that our working environment is rapidly changing and how this has necessitated the Church and more so, the Jesuit institutions to develop policies, rules, and regulations on the protection and safeguarding of children and the vulnerable.

As a Jesuit institution of higher learning in Africa, Arrupe Jesuit University (AJU) did set the bar high by making the workshop mandatory for all Arrupeans. Though we may argue on the Afrocentricity of the documents used, I think the seminar was timely, necessary, and resourceful. I cannot but think of a Swahili proverb which says, *'Mwenzako akinyolewa, chako tia maji'* which translates: If you see your friend being shaved, prepare yours). As Africans, we sometimes commit a fallacy in thinking that the reports on child abuse and sex scandals that the Catholic Church and other Institutions in the West are grappling with is something alien to our African culture and mode of social interactions.

The different presentations during the workshop, especially Professor Laurence Dakar's presentation on 'Child Abuse in a Changing Environment' left me with five lessons. First, it opened me to the fact that everyone is a potential abuser. Thus, as a professional Christian who will most likely be in contact with minors and vulnerable adults, I need to be constantly aware of this reality in our ever-changing environment.



Secondly, I learnt that culture is not static. Rather, it changes. Thus, I should not entertain the idea that abuse of children and vulnerable adults is not common or will not be an issue in Africa. It could be that fear and the culture of silence are preventing most victims from openly expressing their anguish and suffering at the moment. Nonetheless, it is a fact that this will not go on for long before the truth unfolds. Hence, I should be at the forefront in protecting and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from various forms of abuse. In addition, the knowledge I have acquired should make me a person that victims can approach without fear.

Thirdly, I learnt that there is a thin layer between grooming and caring. And that the two can only be distinguish after an abuse has occurred. Thus, as a priest to be, I should always probe my action and operations such that my intentions are always kept pure. Moreover, my services should not leave room for doubt or suspicion. They should be carried out with all honesty and transparency.

Fourthly, I learnt that ignorance could be expensive. This is because what was culturally acceptable in our African Society yesterday may be considered abuse today. Thus, as a religious, I should not give room for ignorance especially considering the reputational damage the Church can suffer from my misconduct. To avoid this, I should



have a clear sense of boundaries. This is because abuse is basically due to breakdown of boundaries. I ought to know where care ends and where abuse starts.

On this note, it was both shocking and frightening to learn that gestures such as giving frontal hugs, sleeping beside children, massaging, tickling, wrestling, hugging from behind, and even being alone with a child behind closed doors are inappropriate. Though it sounded scary and even foreign, I think such piece of information was meant as a conscientization on the importance of keeping boundaries. In fact, most abuses occur in secluded places and at moments when the perpetrators think that no one is watching them.

Lastly, I learnt that the protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults begin with me. Our apostolates and ministries can only be a safe haven if I, as an individual, am committed to protecting and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults who come through our gates. Moreover, the podium offers me a privileged position to educate parents and guardians on the values and means of offering the adequate protection and safety to children and vulnerable adults. Thus, in my honour I pledge to make the world a better place for children and vulnerable adults.

*Silas Kemboi, SJ*



## Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Workshop

On the 3rd of January 2019, Arrupe Jesuit University (AJU) was privileged to host the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection workshop which began in the early hours of the day. The opening prayer and opening remarks were given by Fr Martins Okoh and the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Kizito Kiyimba respectively. Right afterwards, Sr. Annah Mandeya, who is AJU's Child Protection Officer, introduced all present for the workshop to the meaning of the phrases - child abuse and vulnerable adult safeguarding. In the course of her presentation, Sr. Dr. Mandeya shared with us the prospects for the future and ways in which we can be involved in responding to the escalating child-and-vulnerable-adult-abuse pandemic in Africa. A number of insightful and informative presentations followed the brief analysis given by Sr. Dr. Mandeya from which I shall point out major striking points and messages.



To begin with, Sr. Mandeya reminded the audience that everyone is a potential abuser. Notably however, she brought it to our attention that we are also capable fighters of abuse in all the forms it takes. Hence, the workshop ushered in a more serious involvement of Arrupeans - both students and staff members in the fight against child abuse which has gone viral in the African continent and the world at large. During the workshop, we were strongly advised on the importance of establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries in our dealings with kids and the vulnerable so as to avoid being regarded as abusers or victims of abuse. The workshop alluded to the fact that Arrupe's involvement in the fight against child and vulnerable adult abuse is of paramount importance. Additionally, it was highlighted that children and youth are the most vulnerable. Persons within the ages of 6 to 24 years account for more than 70% of the victims of abuse cases in Africa. Everybody can help in various ways to reduce the number of abusers and cases of abuse in the different educational institutions in Africa. The different ways through which we can make this a reality include our involvements in the prevention of abuse, care and treatment victims, poverty reduction, women empowerment, research, awareness and trainings. The workshop further invited all who were in attendance to continue helping victims of abuse, educating youths on the importance of reporting all cases of abuse, educating them in proper moral conduct and supporting the Church in her fight against this enemy of every child's future which is abuse.

In conclusion, the workshop highlighted that the fight against child and vulnerable adult abuse is one of the most vivid and worthwhile forms of social activism of our time. Remember everybody is a potential abuser, therefore let's be aware of our boundaries, what we ought to do, and what we ought not to do.

***Sylvester Kanjiva***

## Lessons from the Just Concluded Workshop

Nooooo...! it is wrong. I was startled at hearing of such an absurd experience. Was I dreaming or had I developed a hearing impediment? Unfortunately, the bitter reality soon dawned on me that I was neither dreaming nor having any hearing problems. It was after I heard my companions discussing on the matter of child abuse that this reality dawned. This was reality and I was a great part of it, part of that workshop where the victims shared the atrocities that they faced. But there was something in their presentations which struck my ear in awe. “How could I believe that an eight-year-old girl could get pregnant?” It seemed to defy the little biology I learnt at High School which ranged the age of puberty between 12 and 14 years. I was perplexed, this was truly a bitter reality to swallow. And, whether one is able to get pregnant at that age or not, the truth is, it is wrong to have sex with a minor, consented or not.

However, though child abuse is wrong, it seems to become problematic when we talk about issues concerning ethics. In fact, one might ask, “who is to define what is wrong and what is right?”. One may hold that wrong or right depends on who perceives the action. From this point, one can claim that child abuse is not always wrong. Nevertheless, such views would lead us into moral relativism which can be fatal for the society. Therefore, for the sake of security and tranquility in the society, certain modes of behavior have to be limited or stopped by a communal agreement which we call the Law. In the case of child protection, the Global Convention on Child Protection under the United Nations of which Zimbabwe is a member calls for the welfare and the protection of every child, giving strict guidelines to be followed and throwing away any relativist-cultural approaches. Therefore, any deviant act against the Law ought to be punished.

Child abuse is bad. It has mental, psychological, emotional and physical damages on the victims. It destroys the future of children and the future of a country which will eventually be placed in the care of the same children. It is in this regard that I would love to thank the Arrupe Jesuit University (AJU) for organizing the two-day workshop on child protection for its members. I would also love to thank the different guest organizations, groups and presenters including Child Line Zimbabwe, the Victim Friendly Unit of Zimbabwe Republic Police, the survivors from Katswe Sisterhood, Hope Foundation among many others. They helped us deepen our understanding on child abuse. They also enlightened us on the different ways of being involved in it. We were made aware of the sad reality.

According to the Pro Vice-Chancellor Academics of AJU, Rev. Dr. Evaristus Ekwueme, SJ, the aim of organizing such a workshop was to stimulate the awareness of the students and staff. The hope is that all who attended the workshop would be better equipped with the right conduct towards minors anywhere they find themselves in world. It is my prayer that this spirit that haunts our society be eradicated. I also pray that the spirit that takes away the consciousness and respect of the human dignity, and that promotes injuries and inhumane acts in society would be defeated. To buy into the Jesuit spirituality, all these spirits can be eradicated if we see the value and cultivate the habit of self-introspection and thus, see reality from more edifying perspectives.

*Pierre Nyandwi, SJ*

## Single times

Longing for the times that I knew nothing of love  
From the timid times of infancy and innocent wishes  
And nothing came to me in romantic pages of passions  
Ah! How I miss the noble dreams of childhood!  
Limpid, with no external disturbance

I miss the times when time was not running  
But love was right  
Enough was a father's look, a sweet motherly affection.  
And the unmistakable presence of small friends  
And my heart used to feel full and fearless

But...

Now that I gradually grow up  
I underwent the sensation of feminine beauty  
I fall in love like a lost eagle  
I already see the world flooded with inevitable love and illusion  
I see a world where my heart is doomed  
To cling to woman's beauty, innuendos and pleasures

I miss the kid's times  
The times when the downs were sequences of joy  
And nightfall, a grace and symphony  
The heat times we were shirtless  
And in fashionable shorts, we used to go to the beach  
Raining, the routine was the same  
In bikini, taking innocent rain baths

This growing soul, plants in itself  
Devotees longing for the simple times of joy  
Those times, in which we simply knew how to live, play and smile...

**By: Orcastro Júnior, SJ**



## The Ball Has Been Set in Motion – Message of Gratitude

Greetings to everyone!

“Behold the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes” – Ps 118:23.

I suppose that before getting to this point in the reading of this newsletter, you – the reader would have gotten enough to say about the events of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Workshop that was held in our University (AJU) on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2019. Details must have been given, words spoken, feelings expressed, articles written and highlights pointed out. The workshop is no longer news for the members, friends and well wishers of our noble University. And I would like to remark that the entire event was successful. As such, from the Child Protection office at AJU, and in my capacity as the Child Protection Officer (CPO), I wish to convey my sincere appreciation to all who have contributed in one way or the other in making this event a success.

In the first place, I say a big thank you to the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar (JCAM) led by its president and AJU’s Chancellor, Rev. Dr. Agbonkhianmeghe Orobator, SJ, in collaboration with the administrators of AJU, for finding me worthy to be nominated as the Child Protection Officer for AJU. It is indeed a privilege to take up this responsibility in the service of the institution. At the moment when I received news of this appointment, I was not very sure of what was expected of me, neither was I confident that I could live up to those expectations even if I get enlightened about them. But a greater part of my doubts and skepticism were overridden when I participated in a 3-day training program (23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2018) on “Child Protection and Safeguarding” organized by JCAM. Thanks to this program (and other related programs to which I have been exposed so far), I was equipped with the skills, knowledge, experience and expertise necessary for the assumption of the role of CPO at AJU. It was then my mission to translate the all I had acquired from my training to our context at AJU and a way of setting the ball rolling was the organization of the workshop on Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection at AJU. Secondly, having the necessary expertise in planning such a workshop is one thing, making that plan a reality is another. For the workshop to have turned out as successfully as it did, personnel, time, talent and support were necessary. As the old saying goes: “A tree does not make a forest”. Thus, I relay my gratitude to the University administrative team, especially the Rector, Fr. Gibson Munyoro, SJ, the Vice

Chancellor, Dr. Kizito Kiyimba, SJ and the Pro Vice-Chancellors Academics and Administration, Dr. Evaristus Ekwueme, SJ and Dr Gilbert Mardai, SJ respectively. The same gratitude goes to the African Forum for Catholic Social Teachings (AFCAST) at AJU. Special thanks to Mrs. Dadirai Chikwekwete, AFCAST's Administrator and her team – Uchechukwu Oguike, SJ, Don Remy Niyetigeka, SJ and Joseph Kachitsa, SJ to mention but a few – whose immense contribution was felt not only in the sphere of organization and event-planning, but also within the course of the workshop.

The organizing committee extended invitations to various groups most of whom honored the invitation. I cease this opportunity to thank all our invited guests, especially those who rendered presentations in various capacities during the workshop. I acknowledge the contributions of Mrs. Ratidzai Moyo (from Childline Zimbabwe), Dr. Mercy Shumbamhini, Dr. Theresa Nyadombo, Superintendent Francis Mutema, Miss Chido Govera, the representatives from Katswe Sisterhood and our lovely school children. A number of AJU staff also played key roles during the workshop in the likes of Prof. Lawrence Daka, SJ, Dr. Janice McLaughlin, MM, Fr. Martins Okoh, SJ, Mrs. Patricia Munemo, Dr. David Kaulem, Mrs. Mercy Ngoro, Mr. Mayamiko Kachipapa, SJ and Mr. Francis Zangairai. To cut short an endless list, I say a very big THANK YOU to all the students, staff, friends and well wishers of Arrupe who took part in the workshop. We all contributed in one way or the other to the success of this great event and no contribution is left unacknowledged.

The workshop is not all that there is to ensuring the safety and protection of children and vulnerable adults around us. It has set the ball in motion, but the ball keeps rolling. We have learnt a lot from the workshop, but we would not stop at that. There is need to put all we have learnt into action. Currently, a course on Child Protection is running for whomever is interested in acquiring further knowledge on these concerns. I assure you that we would not stop creating networks and drawing up programs to see that our mission and dream for each child and vulnerable adult is realized.

To God who gives us the strength and grace to fulfil all of these be praise and glory both now and forever. Amen

***Sis. Annah Mandeya – Child Protection Officer, Arrupe Jesuit University.***

The ARRUIPE INSIDER team would like to thank all those who contributed articles for this edition and invites more contributions from all members of Arrupe College for the upcoming edition.

The articles may include:

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APOSTOLATE, SPIRITUAL AND ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

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