

OUR LADY OF NAZARETH CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

From the Catholic Information Service for Africa

NAIROBI, February 24, 2012- His Grace, Bishop David Kamau, Auxiliary bishop of Nairobi, has said that the archdiocese of Nairobi will continue supporting the Marianist in their mission work especially on education.

“Education is the greatest gift you can give to a child” he said and challenged parents to emulate the work of the Marianists by training their children for it’s not only the work of the teachers.

Bishop Kamau was the chief guest as The Marianists in Nairobi celebrated 20 years since the inception of Our Lady of Nazareth Primary (OLN) in the heart of Mukuru-kwa-Njenga slums in Nairobi. They sponsor the school.

Our Lady of Nazareth Primary also nick named ‘*The Oasis in the Desert*’ was started by the Sisters of Mercy in 1992 as a place for giving food and helping the needy. They later started offering lessons to the children of the needy people they were assisting. The Sisters of Mercy later handed over the school to the Marianist who took over in 1997 with 600 pupils.

The *Oasis in the Desert* today has close to 2000 pupils from the Mukuru-kwa-Njenga slums and is ranked position 6 in the district and as the best improved primary school in last year’s Kenya certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) with 25.4% according to the school head teacher Mrs Fransisca Onyango.

The head teacher also said that the school offers free computer lesson to pupils from class 4 to class 8 and also with support from the World Food Program (WFP), Feed the Children Program (FCP), and two very generous private supporters, they feed all the 2000 pupils every day with 10am porridge and lunch as most of these pupils come from poor backgrounds where three-meal-a-day is a dream.

She also appealed for support from well wishers in the school’s program of giving free sanitary pads to girls and free pants to boys, “We want all our pupils to feel equal and that is why we do not leave the boys out”

There was a proposal to the management to extend their wings and open a secondary school for the pupils of Our Lady of Nazareth to move on to.

The Marianist Superior, Bro. Valentine Chola Mulenga, explained that the Marianists understand the importance of extending the primary school to a secondary school and constructing permanent structures. He promised that, if the government can offer the school continued assurances for residence in the slum area, they will be very ready to construct permanent structures and extend to a secondary school education.