The Flock

A Publication of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope





Where there is despair, let me bring Hope

The Franciscan Missionaries of Hope: The Story





On **October 24th, 2026,** the members of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope were joined by friends and well wisheres for the celebration of the Institute's inaugural **Foundation Day.** The FMH Foundation Day is going to be an annual celebration commemorating the founding of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope (the Lyke Community) on **October 26th, 1999**. For it was on this day that, through a decree of the Most Rev. Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki, the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Nairobi, the local Church where the community was domiciled, the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope was formally approved as a Public Association of Christ's Faithful. The formal approval was an answer to a prayer that had been on the lips of the founding *ndugus* ever since their discernment as a group began. We gather today to celebrate twenty-seven years of the determination and perseverance of the *ndugus*, the love and support of the people of God, and most importantly, the faithfulness of God.

The inaugural Foundation Day was not merely a commemoration of a single day or date in the life of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope. Rather, it was a celebration of a story. It is a story which, like all the beautiful stories which we tell or hear, has a beginning.

THE BEGINNINGS

The beginnings of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope can be traced back to a fate that befell nine young men who were in the formation program with the East African Province of Order of Friars Minor. The nine were Francis Kamau, Nicholas Onyach, John Basiimwa, Jogues Abenawe, James Kamande, James Nyangau, Alfred Biketi, Augustine Njuguna, and Ambrose Otieno. For a variety of reasons, between the years 1992 and 1993, these young men either left or were "advised to leave" the formation program of the Order of Friars Minor. Finding themselves out of a Religious Order, the nine were forced by circumstances to band together for mutual support and companionship. he banding together led to the conception of a dream.

The Conception of a Dream

Tangaza College

Tangaza College can be considered the place where a dream which would later transform into a religious congregation was conceived. When Francis Kamau was sent back to Kenya from Livingstone, Zambia, Fr. Andre McGrath, who was the rector of Tangaza TheologicalCollege at the time, graciously opened the doors for him and let him reside in one of the classrooms at the College so that he could complete his philosophical studies at the nearby Consolata Institute of Philosophy. But as it turned out, the classroom was soon to become the refuge of other young men who had been discontinued from religious life for various reasons. However, it should be noted that the classroom space at Tangaza College was simply a refuge for these young men, that is, a place for them to sojourn as they pondered their next move.

Before long, some of the other young men who had been with Francis in Zambia knocked at the doors of the office space where Francis was staying. They had parted ways with the Order of Friars Minor (OFM), and once in Nairobi, they needed a place to stay. Their arrival gave rise to a new crisis: the Tangaza space was now too small to house the entire group. They needed a new place to stay. They turned to the only person they knew who could help them, Fr. Andre McGrath, and as usual, he stepped in to help. With the help of two gentlemen, Mr. Steven Wakuria and Mr. Gabriel Maina, they were able to find a rental house in the neighborhood. It was a house belonging to a Mr. Leparakuo. Fr. Andre graciously agreed to pay a year's rent for the group.

Leparakuo's (June 1993-June 1994)

If Tangaza College was seen as a place of refuge, Leparakuos became a discernment house. It was a place which the group was to use to gather their thoughts and to ponder what was next for them. There was no binding agreement that tied them to each other or to the group. They were free to leave and go their separate ways as soon as the opportunity presented itself. Life at Leparakuos was on a day-to-day basis. But as those who had spent the last couple of years in a structured, religious environment, they naturally found themselves yearning for a structured, community life, with one of them as the leader. Francis Kamau was chosen as the leader of the group. They

were to henceforth commit themselves to communal liturgy, days of prayer and retreat, and regular community meetings of discernment. The group decided to acquire whatever jobs they could get to support themselves. Francis got a job as a driver for the Paul Kelly family, Mama Gatonye, and for the Leparakuos. Nicholas worked with Fr. Bill Sinkele, OP, who was attempting to found a technical school for street boys at Mutuini village, near Dagoretti Market. Jogues Abenawe and John Basiimwa were trained teachers and through the help of a Mrs. Elizabeth Kariuki and the late Mrs. Kibathi, they found teaching positions at Karen primary School (Mrs. Kibathi was the principal). These two ladies would later help John Basiimwa to acquire a teaching position at Forest View Academy. Ambrose Otieno, an Agriculturalist by profession, was employed by the Dominicans. Kamande and Nyangau worked at a school run by Brothers of Charles Lwanga at Gatwekira, in Kibra. Njuguna worked at Nyumbani Children's Home, Karen, where he was to be later joined by Biketi.

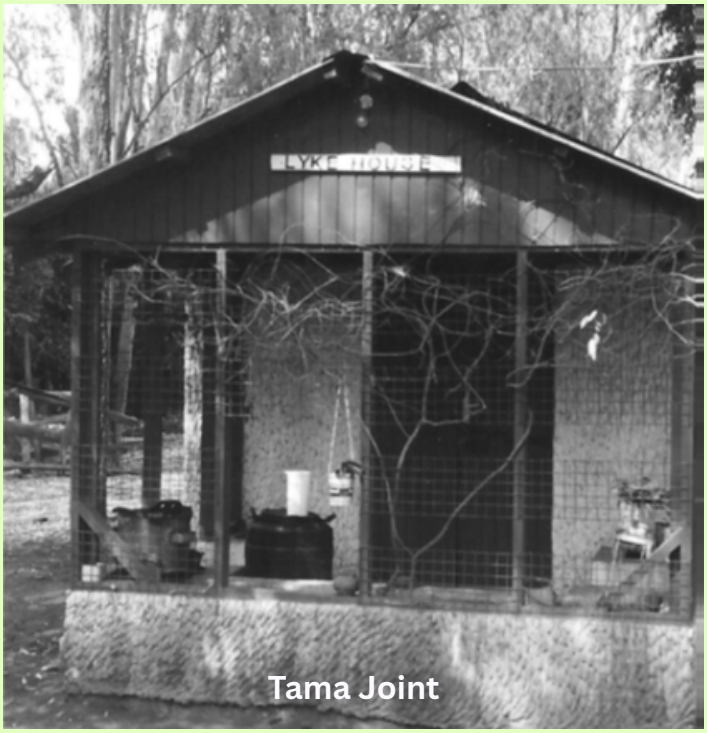
Bishop Ndingi (RIP) Visits

While at the Leparakuo's, the group received a surprise visitation. The then bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Nakuru, the Most Rev. Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki. As part of their discernment, the group had reached out to various Church leaders for guidance and direction. Bishop Ndingi was one of them. They had met Bishop Ndingi on several occasions during their formation years with the OFM. They had known Bishop Ndingi to be a compassionate man of God. Having travelled to Nairobi to attend a function at Tangaza College, Bishop Ndingi decided to use the opportunity to pay the group a surprise visit and see what they were all about. And as it turned out, he was impressed by the enthusiasm of the group. He encouraged them to continue seeking the will of God and not to give up. In fact, he is the one who encouraged them to persevere in praying for God's will. He wrote in their guest book: "Everything is possible for he who prays and perseveres. He left them with a suggestion that they put in writing what they were all about, what contributions they hoped to bring to the Church, and to send it to him. This was the beginning of the process of drafting the community's constitutions. With expert guidance from experienced theologians, canonists, and religious superiors, the brothers composed their mission statement and drafts of their first constitutions and by-laws. The first draft was ready by Pentecost 1994.

The Kangemi Retreat (Sept 17th, 1993)

In 1993, Fr. Andre McGrath was recalled to the United States by his OFM Province. As he was preparing to leave Kenya, he led the group through what they would later refer to as a "discernment retreat." At the retreat, the group resolved to graduate from being an amorphous group of young men to being a quasi-religious community. They resolved to look for good counsel and direction from friends even as they looked forward to growing together in charity and prayer, supporting one another in mutual service.

Ostrich Farm (Tamasha/Tama Joint) 1994-1995



Tama Joint

When the one-year contract with the Leparakuos ended, the group found themselves in a fix. Fr. Andre, their principal benefactor, was thousands of miles away in the US, and from their meagre earnings, the group had no means of raising enough money to renew their contract. They began to think that this was the end of the road for them. But they were not going to give up just yet. They hatched the idea of moving out two by two to take care of themselves, with the agreement that they would meet monthly to review and evaluate their progress. But as it is said that when a door closes God opens a window, when the door to the Leparakuos closed, God sent someone in the person of Sr. Redempta Mbaire LSOSF to open a window for the brothers. And the window that opened for them was in the form of an Ostrich Farm.

Sr. Redempta, a Little Sister of St. Francis, had come to visit the group and after hearing about their plan to split up, she felt that it would lead to the disintegration and ultimate death of the group. She informed them that she knew of an old Ostrich Farm that had been acquired by a family friend of hers (Mr. and Mrs. Mbugua). She requested them not to split until after she had talked to the Mbuguas to see if they could allow them to stay in the Ostrich houses. The Mbuguas agreed and transformed the houses into habitable spaces. The houses were less expensive compared to their former home, but less "comfortable." Though not to the same standard as the former home, at least the brothers had their own rooms.



Ndugus with friends at Tama Joint

Going back to School

With the "housing crisis" taken care of, the group decided to focus on the future. They all agreed that they needed to get back to school as preparation for their future ministry. Francis and Nicholas resumed their theological studies at Tangaza College, John Basiimwa went to Marist International College, while Jogues entered Christ the Teacher Institute of Education, Tangaza. The rest of the group continued with their jobs to support the those who were going to school. For tuition, the group held a fundraising, the proceeds of which supplemented some scholarships which were available for those attending Tangaza College.

Growing Pains

The group experienced a setback, typical of a young and growing community. Those who were working did not want to support their school-going brothers. These and other challenges led to some in the group bowing out. By the end of the "walk-out," only four members remained: Francis Kamau, Nicholas Onyach, John Basiimwa, and Jogues Abenawe.

First Recruits

Although the formal approval of the congregation came in 1999, the remaining four (hereafter referred to as the ndugus) were already envisioning a growing community. In 1997, they recruited new members. Didasi Byarugaba and Frederick Kamande became the first followers. These two not only partially filled the void created by the departure of the five members of the group but also brought a new hope to the ndugus. Their dreams were still on course.

Mama Chege's

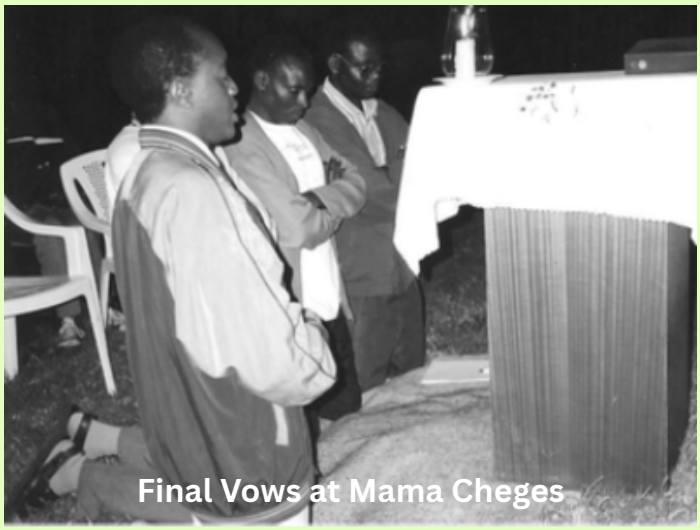
In 1996, the Mbuguas decided to construct a social joint at the premises adjacent to where the ndugus were staying. The erection of the joint turned out to be a problem to the ndugus. Revelers at the joint would sometimes stay until the wee hours of the morning, dancing and playing loud music. The ndugus found it hard to perform some of their activities, including prayers. It soon became apparent that the ndugus had to move once again, and this time around, help came in the person of Mrs. Theresa Chege (RIP). Mrs. Chege was among the members of the local Christian community of St. John the Evangelist Parish, Karen, who had endeared themselves to the ndugus and became their benefactors. Moreover, because her house neighbored the Mbuguas where the ndugus were residing, she oftentimes joined the ndugus for iturgical celebrations. Mrs. Theresa Chege sensed the unease which the presence of the social joint brought to the ndugus. She suggested that the ndugus move out of the Ostrich Farm to a structure in her home which she used to house cattle. And so, the ndugus moved to their third home...from the ostrich farm to what used to be a cowshed.

Further Progress

The ndugus moved into Mama Chege's place in 1996, and it was while the ndugus were residing here that some monumental developments which served to shape the direction and future of the community took place. Francis, Nicholas, and Jogues graduated from Tangaza College, and John Basiimwa graduated from

Marist International College. Fr. Bill Sinkele, OP, became the spiritual director of the community; and the four co-founding ndugus decided it was time they dedicated themselves to the community by making final pledges. This they did on 15th August 1998, the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. And with the help of a Mr. Carmelato from Canada, and Fr. Zagano C.P.

a canon lawyer, the community put together the second draft of the constitutions. It was also while the community was housed at Mama Chege's that the community sent its first members on a mission, and most importantly, received the formal approval of erection as a Public Association of Christ's Faithful.



Final Vows at Mama Cheges

First Mission

In October of 1998, the community sent her first missionaries to the Catholic Diocese of Shreveport, Louisiana, USA.

By the Spring of 1998, Francis and Nicholas had completed their theological studies at Tangaza College, John Basiimwa had completed his studies at Marist International College, and Jogues Abenawe had completed his studies at Christ the Teacher Institute of Education. All the four ndugus were now ready to pursue apostolate and further training for ministry in the Church. Fr. Bill Sinkele, OP, spiritual director of the ndugus, was trying to find a setting where Francis could go to the USA and study alcohol addiction counseling (Francis had been involved with AA since he left Zambia). He had seen a great potential in Francis and felt that in line with the community's charism of giving hope and counseling, the community would greatly benefit if Francis went for further studies in the United States. He was still in the process of identifying a place for Francis when another door opened somewhere else. Fr. Andre McGrath, despite moving back to the United States, had continued to follow with keen interest the developments in the community. When he therefore heard that there was a possibility of Francis going to the United States, he contacted a Mr. Dan Lohman who was his sponsor in the AA, to see if they could do something about helping Francis move to the United States. Dan Lohman introduced Fr. Andre to a Mr. CD Barnes who was then the chairman of the board of the Northwest Louisiana Council on Alcoholism, and a Mr. Dan Talley who was the director at the time. Upon learning about the ndugus, these three men approached Fr. Andre with the suggestion that they could offer Francis (and another brother) an internship in counseling. The council offered two scholarships, and the community now had to decide who, besides Francis, was to move to the United States. At a special meeting held in Ongata Rongai, the ndugus decided to have Francis and Jogues go to the United States while Nicholas and John were to remain behind to do administrative and formation work. With the help of Bishop William Friend of the Catholic Diocese of Shreveport, the two ndugus obtained their visas, and were ready to fly to the United States in two weeks' time.



Shreveort, Luoisiana

Lyke House, Shreveport

Ndugus Francis Kamau and Jogues Abennawe were due to land in the United States in about two weeks from the date they were granted their visas. Fr. Andre was now tasked not only with finding enough funds for the purchase of the air tickets for the two ndugus, but also to find accommodation for them. When he shared his plight with the members of St. Mary of the Pines Parish where he was helping with Masses, and with a certain Mr. Gary who was the then diocesan superintendent of schools, help arrived. The members of St. Mary of the Pines Parish helped with raising funds for the air tickets, while Mr. Gary suggested to Fr. Andre that he

speaks to the pastor of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church to see if he could allow the ndugus the use of the residence at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Academy which was vacant at the time. Fr. Andre approached Fr. Richard Pusch, Pastor of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. Together, they went over to 2932 Murphy Street, the location of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Academy. The building was not furnished, and the ndugus were ten days away from landing in the United States. With the help of Jim and Mary McGill, Fr. Andre's colleagues at the Greco Institute, a few friends from St. Mary of the Pines and the Catholic Center came together, and four days before Francis and Jogues arrived, they furnished the house. Brother Giovanni Reid, then working in Alamagordo, New Mexico, drove 13 hours to Shreveport to join Fr. Andre in welcoming Francis and Jogues. 2932 Murphy Street, later christened to Lyke House, Shreveport, would go on to be a home for the ndugus for close to fifteen years.

Ndugu Francis found training and employment with the Northwest Louisiana Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse as an intern counselor in the Adolescent Treatment Center sponsored by the Council. He served in that position for three years, while pursuing counseling and addictive disorder education at Southern University while at the same time volunteering as a religious education instructor and retreat director on regular basis. Ndugu Jogues Abenawe taught religion and Kiswahili at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Academy for two years before being accepted at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans for his theological studies.



Ndugu Jogues with Students of OLBS Academy

Formal Approval

On 26th October 1999, the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope was born. By a decree of the then Archbishop of Nairobi, the late Most. Rev. Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki, the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope was formally approved as a Public Association of Christ's Faithful domiciled in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. It was a moment which became the culmination of years of anxiety and uncertainty on the one hand, and determination and hope on the other. Anxiety and uncertainty saw the number of the original discerning members drop from nine to the current four. Determination and hope allowed the four co-founding ndugus to remain focused and undeterred. The support and encouragement from the people of God filled them with hope and conviction.

The decree of Archbishop Ndingi Mwna a'Nzeki opened a new chapter for the group. They now had the backing of the local Church. The door was now open for them to realize the aspirations which had been put on hold pending formal approval of the group.

First Ordinations

The formal approval of the community set the ndugus on the path of making some long-desired strides, one of which was petitioning for the diaconate ordination of ndugus Francis Kamau and Nicholas Onyach. Emboldened by the recent good news which had befell them, the ndugus made their request known to Archbishop Ndingi, the local Ordinary and de facto Superior General of the newly approved congregation. The Archbishop graciously approved their petition. The only hurdle which they needed to jump over concerned the date and venue. Ndugu Francis Kamau was by this time residing in the United States where he was working. Ndugu Nicholas Onyach who was by then serving as the leader of the group was also visiting the two ndugus who were residing in the United States (ndugus Francis Kamau and Jogues Abenawe). Once again, the ndugus decided to push their luck to request Archbishop Ndingi if the two ndugus could be ordained in the United States. It happened that the then Bishop of Shreveport Diocese, the Most Rev. William B. Friend, was an acquaintance of Archbishop Ndingi, and the two had no problem with Bishop Friend ordaining the two ndugus to the diaconate. The two were ordained deacons on March 19th, 2000.

The presbyterate ordinations of the two ndugus took place five months later, on August 12th, in Nairobi (Queen of Apostles Minor Seminary, Ruaraka).

Chapter of 2001

The Chapter of 2001 holds a special place in the history of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope because it was the first to be held since the formal approval of the congregation. The chapter, which ran from 1st to 5th August 2001, was held at the Catholic Center, Shreveport, Louisiana. The Chapter was attended by ndugus Nicholas Onyach, Francis Kamau, John Basiimwa, Peter Mallya, and Paul Mutisya. The Chapter elected ndugu Francis Kamau as the Superior General for a six-year term, assisted by ndugu John Basiimwa as the Vicar General. As the Superior General, ndugu Francis had to return to Kenya where the congregation was headquartered.

Housing "Crisis"

When he returned to Kenya in December of 2001 to assume the leadership of the congregation, ndugu Francis was greeted by a pressing housing need. The community had two houses, Kahuho and Karen (the student ndugus were housed in Karen, while those in formation were staying in Kahuho). However, with the membership in the congregation expected to increase, there was an urgent need for a new place. Lady luck was still smiling upon the congregation, because help arrived in the form of the rectory at King'eero Catholic Church.

Kingeero Community

As part of their formation program, the ndugus in Kahuho were involved in pastoral ministry in the local community. Fr. Nicholas who was in charge of the Kahuho formation house helped with the celebration of Masses in the neighboring outstations, specifically Kahuho and Kingeero, and the ndugus participated in the liturgical celebrations in the two outstations. Kingeero outstation happened to have a spacious rectory which was unoccupied at the time. At the suggestion of ndugu Nick, ndugu Francis approached Archbishop Ndingi to request the use of the rectory for the community's formation purposes. The community's stream of luck was still flowing. The Archbishop allowed the community the use of the rectory, with the agreement that the community would oversee the completion of any work which still needed to be done. With the help of youth from Kahuho and Kingeero outstations, the ndugus cleaned the building and made it habitable. Ndugu Nick moved with the postulants to Kingeero, freeing the Kahuho house for use as a house for discernment.

When ndugu Nick moved to the United States to replace ndugu Francis had to move to King'eero to be in charge of formation. After a two-year presence in Kingeero, the good work of the ndugus was recognized, and Kingeero was made a parish under the pastorship of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope (December 2003). Ndugu Frederick Kamande, FMH, was appointed the pastor while ndugu Francis became the parochial vicar (while still wearing the two hats as formation director of the postulants and the Superior General of the community).

FMH Ventures Abroad

ST. BENEDICT THE BLACK IN GRAMBLING, OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP, FARMERVILLE AND ST. MARY OF THE PINES, SHREVEPORT

In March 2003 Bishop William Friend entrusted the community with the administration of St. Benedict parish and its mission, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Farmerville, and Fr. Nicholas Onyach was named pastor.

In December 2009, bishop Michael G. Duca of the Catholic Diocese of Shreveport appointed ndugus Francis Kamau and Henry Kiggundu as pastor and parochial vicar respectively of St. Mary of the Pines Catholic Church. The appointment of the ndugus to St. Mary of the Pines brought to full circle the community's relationship with the parish. The community's relationship with St. Mary of the Pines is as old as the presence of the community in the United States. When Fr. Andre McGrath left Kenya for the United States in 1993, he stayed at St. Mary of the Angels in New Orleans until 1997 when, at the invitation of the Greco Institute, he became a full-time instructor at the Institute while residing at St. Mary of the Pines Church. When in 1998 ndugus Francis and Jogues were sent as missionaries to the United States, their only contact was Fr. Andre. As a result, when they landed in the United States, their first stop was St. Mary of the Pines, and their first night in America was spent there. And it was at St. Mary of the Pines that ndugus Francis and Nicholas were ordained as deacons by Bishop William Friend.

FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIES OF HOPE OR THE LYKE COMMUNITY?

The Franciscan Missionaries of Hope also goes by the name, the Lyke Community. In both formal and informal engagements and correspondences, Lyke Community will always appear besides The Franciscan Missionaries of Hope. It is common to find members of the Institute using the two names interchangeably in speech and in writing. Whereas the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope is considered the formal or official name of the Institute, Lyke Community is the one which is widely known or used by the ndugus themselves and by friends. Perhaps it is the stories behind both names that have made it difficult to stick to one name.

Lyke Community

Lyke Community was the first name by which the community was known during the discernment years. As the group started to establish themselves as a "community," it became apparent to them that they needed a name by which they would not only refer to themselves but also by which they could be known. The first name that came into their mind was "Lyke."

ARCHBISHOP JAMES PATTERSON LYKE (RIP)

James Patterson Lyke, OFM, was an American Franciscan and Archbishop whose path crossed with that of some of the founding ndugus of the FMH. Born in Chicago, Illinois, Archbishop Lyke was a member of the legacy Sacred Heart OFM Province. In 1989, Archbishop Lyke travelled to Kenya to visit with his friend and fellow Franciscan, Fr. Andre McGrath, who was serving as a missionary in Kenya (1987-1993). During this visit, he met and interacted with some of the [future] founding ndugus who were OFM Novices by then, and residing in Bahati, Nakuru. In the Archbishop, the ndugus discovered a charismatic and humble man of God, a man who had passion for ministry and the people of God. Archbishop Lyke's humble style enabled him to open up to the young friars, often narrating to the young African friars his own story, a story that had resonances with their own stories. As a matter of fact, it came across as a version of their very stories, only that it was now being told by someone else, more so an American. The friendship that ensued was instant and mutual, a friendship that would later lead the ndugus to honor him by naming the community after him. Though not [yet] canonized by the Church, the ndugus often look upon Archbishop James Patterson Lyke as their ancestor. They chose his name as a sign of the community's identity, charism and mission.

Franciscan Missionaries of Hope

Franciscan Missionaries of Hope, the official name of our Institute, just like all the other aspects of the Institute, reflects the years-long discernment and reflection during the founding phase. The name was a culmination of both determination and conviction: determination by the founding members to hold on to hope even when faced with challenges and uncertainty; and the conviction that they were being guided by the Holy Spirit in their pursuit.

Following Bishop Ndingi's visit of group during their sojourn at the Leparakuos, their reflection regarding both their future status and engagement with the Church intensified. The Bishop's encouragement of the group and his recommendation that they put in writing what they were about (their identity and mission) turned out to be a much-needed boost. It also brought to their attention a need for a formal name in readiness for formal correspondence with the Church. Lyke Community, the name by which they had been known for some time now, would not do because it was not formal enough.

Franciscan

From the very first moment that the group conceived the idea of continuing to live out their baptismal consecration as religious men, they were all in agreement that they wished to do so following the Spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi. They were of the conviction that St. Francis of Assisi and his spirituality was very relevant to the African Church and her people. In other words, they wished to remain Franciscans.

Missionaries

The group also felt that just as Francis and the Franciscan Movement could not be contained in its birthplace of Europe, they too, in the spirit of a missionary church, were called to be missionaries. They felt they had to continue in the footsteps of St. Francis to spread the message of Christ's love.

[Of] Hope

If there was one thing which had come alive in the group's experience since their ousting from the Order of Friars Minor, it was hope. Being asked to leave a life they had known for several years made them feel as a people without hope. However, through Fr. Andre McGrath, OFM, the local Christian community of St. John Evangelist Parish,Karen, countless people of good will who came to the rescue of the group, and Archbishop Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki, the group experienced God reaching out to them and giving them a new lease of life.

The Franciscan Missionaries of Hope: The Story

The FMH Emblem



The FMH emblem comprises several symbols: an image of a man being embraced in via; a Tau; an open Bible, a Shepherd's staff, and a key. The idea of coming up with a logo was hatched when the group was in the process of writing the community's constitutions. The group saw that it was important to have a logo as a complimentary part of the constitutions. It was meant to be a visual expression of the identity and mission of the community.

The Embrace. The image of a man being embraced in via was inspired by two stories: the biblical parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), and the story of St. Francis embracing the leper. The group saw these two stories as the best visual description of what the community stood for: giving others a second chance. The two stories were the best symbols of giving and receiving hope, the virtue upon which the community was built. The original sketch of the image was drawn by ndugu Francis Kamau under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Tau. As those who were drawn to and were in love with the Spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi, the group felt that the Tau was also an appropriate symbol to include in the emblem.

The Tau was a favorite symbol with which St. Francis used to sign off his letters. Moreover, on a more personal note, they felt that the Tau was also a sign of hope (those who had the Tau sign on their foreheads were spared death-Cf. Ezekiel 9:4).

The open Bible. The group's first calling was to be followers of Christ. And as followers of Christ, the Bible was going to form the foundation of their life. The Bible was to become the guiding post, the Alpha and the Omega of their day-to-day activities. It was to be the springboard of the apostolate of the group, a place where they were to meet Christ.

The Shepherd's staff and key were appropriate symbols to include in the logo because they represented the group's status as a people preparing for ministry in the Church. Because people were going to come to them for direction and encouragement, the ndugus were to be their shepherds, leading them in the ways of Christ. The key symbolizes the kingdom of God. Through their ministry, the ndugus were to help the people of God realize the presence of the kingdom of God in their lives.

Green

Green is the color of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope. It was chosen because of how what it represents is tied to the experience and history of the community:

-Abundant in nature, green signifies growth, renewal, rebirth, health. In nature, green is reminiscent of the season of Spring, a season when new life "springs" forth from dormancy.

-Green is also the color for "going forth" (traffic light).

The mission of the community is to bring hope to those who have lost hope in life because of different reasons. Green became the appropriate color to represent this mission because just as it represented a going forth, a rebirth or abundance of health.

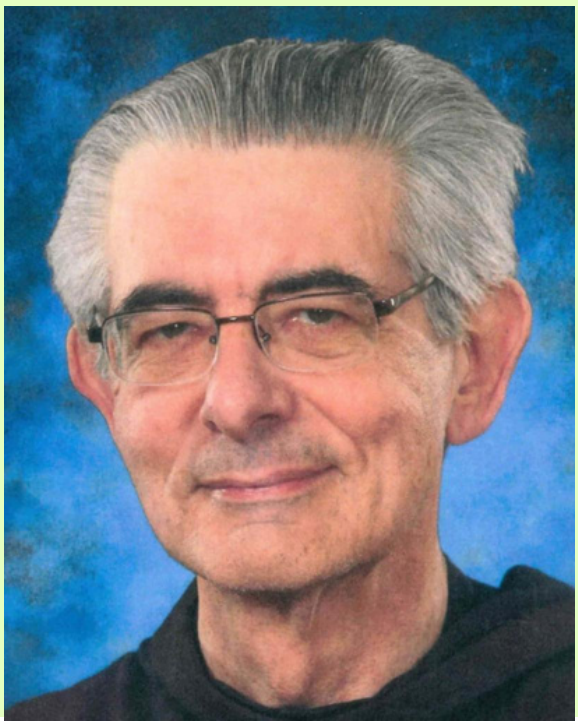
THE CHARISM OF HOSPITALITY AND PASTORAL COUNSELING

The FMH's Charism of Hospitality and Pastoral Counseling is traced all the way back to the time when the founding ndugus were in the formation program of the Order of Friars Minor. Because the Western friars had not fully come to comprehend much about the African culture, they found most of the "African way of doing things" repulsing – particularly the African way of showing hospitality. The African friars were required to limit – if not to entirely cut off – any contact with the local community. Any dealings that the friars had with the locals were to be discussed outside of the friary. And perchance the locals showed up at the door of the friary, they were not to be led into the friary. And perchance the locals showed up at the door of the friary, they were not to be led into the house. This was unsettling for the African friars, and notwithstanding

how much theywould have liked to obey their formators, they were unable to uphold this rule. Often, they incurred the wrath of the formators by welcoming visitors into the house and serving them refreshments. The western friars were struggling to understand why hospitality was so highly regarded by the African friars – even to a point of disobedience. To them, it (hospitality) was tantamount to intrusion of privacy and inconvenience (to the hosting party). But hospitality is not something the African friars "invented" to frustrate their western friar formators. Hospitality is something embedded in their very own beings. Hospitality is something they were taught to value and practice in and out of season. They were brought up knowing that visitors are bringers of divine blessings to the community and as such are to be treated with the utmost warmth and kindness. At any rate, hospitality is not exclusively an "African" thing at any rate. The Holy Scriptures are awash with instructions and commands to be hospitable, a requirement that went beyond being just polite, friendly, or entertaining guests. In the Hebrew Scriptures, hospitality is portrayed as a vital part of the culture and religion of the people. Israelite hospitality "codes" related to two distinct classes of people: the traveler and the resident alien (Leviticus 19:34; Deut. 10:19). It was all in the name of hospitality that our Father in Faith, Abraham, entertained the angels of God, angels that brought him good news (Genesis 18:1ff). It was because of hospitality that Lot was saved from the wrath of God (Genesis 19:1ff). Similar hospitality "codes" can also be found in the New Testament. The author of the letter to the Hebrews reminds the recipients of the letter not to neglect hospitality, for by welcoming strangers, men have welcomed angels in their homes (Hebrews 13:2). The author of the first epistle of Peter reminds the audience to be mutually hospitable (1 Peter 4:9). And in the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus paints the scene of the last judgment in which the hospitable are the inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 25:34-46). Consequently, when the ndugus finally discerned that they were going to found a religious community, they decided that hospitality was going to be a central virtue in the life of the community. The community was going to be a place where hospitality trumps all – among themselves and with those who were to knock at their doors. And this is a virtue that the community has continued to practice ever since. It is the community's resolve to welcome one and all into their midst that endeared them to the people they serve. Members of local communities have always found warmth and generosity in our communities. For a long time, the Motherhouse in Karen, Nairobi, did not have a gate. The ndugus had agreed that if FMH residences were to be "homes" to the people, then barriers, such as gates, had no place. And even when the city council forced FHM to install a gate at the Karen residence, it was agreed that it would always remain open.

The charism of Pastoral Counseling arises from the very nature of the institute as a community of men who have dedicated themselves to be ministers in the Church. As ministers, the foremost duty and responsibility of the ndugus is the people of God. But the ndugus of the FMH take Pastoral Counseling as its charism in virtue of own history. When Francis Kamau arrived in Nairobi-Kenya from Livingstone, Zambia, Fr. Andre McGrath, with open arms, not only welcomed him but also sat down with him and listened to his story. And it was the case with all the others who arrived from Zambia. They were able to pick up their lives and "move on" because there was somebody who was willing to listen to their stories and comfort them as often as it was necessary. Pastoral Counseling as a charism arose from the community's resolve to be a "second chance" community. Giving people a second chance was integral to the community because the story of the ndugus was itself a success story of being given a second chance. And what better way could one give others a second chance than through counseling?

Fr. Andre McGrath, OFM (RIP)



Fr. Andre, born Tim on April 20, 1940, in Chicago, Illinois, was the oldest of six children. His family moved several times during his childhood, living in Coldwater and Kalamazoo, Michigan, before relocating to Albuquerque, New Mexico. After spending a year at St. Mary's High School in Albuquerque, Tim entered St. Francis Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, and later joined the Novitiate at St. Anthony Friary in 1958. It was there that he received the religious name "Andre," which he kept for the rest of his life. He professed his first vows on August 16, 1959. Fr. Andre continued his education at Duns Scotus College in Southfield, Michigan, and later pursued theological studies at St. Leonard College in Centerville, Ohio. He was ordained a priest on June 2, 1967. After his ordination, Fr. Andre returned to Duns Scotus College and began further studies at the University of Detroit, earning a master's degree in English. Following a year of teaching at Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana, he completed a Licentiate in Sacred Theology (STL) in Moral Theology at the Catholic University of America. In 1970, Fr. Andre taught Moral Theology at St. Leonard College for a year before heading to the University of Tübingen in West Germany for doctoral studies. After completing his studies, he returned to the United States in 1973, teaching again at Bishop Luers High School and St. Leonard College. However, shortly after returning to St. Leonard, the school was set to close. Paddie then spent several years teaching at Mount St. Mary Seminary (Athenaeum) in Cincinnati and at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Cleveland, where he worked with and developed a deep admiration of Bishop James Patterson Lyke for his work with the African American community. In 1987, feeling a missionary call, Fr. Andre moved to Nairobi, Kenya, where he taught and served as Rector at Tangaza College until 1993. It was during this time that he met the brothers who would later become the founding members of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope, Lyke community. Paddie returned to the U.S. in 1993, taking a sabbatical at the Franciscan School of Theology in Berkeley, California, before moving to St. Mary of the Angels Friary and Parish in New Orleans. He spent almost two years there as part of the Parish Pastoral team. In 1997, Fr. Andre moved to Shreveport, Louisiana, where he became an instructor at the Greco Institute, an institute for Catholic studies, and was appointed Theologian for Diocese of Shreveport. He also served as a consultant for the Christus-Schumpert Health Care System Ethics Board and was the National Representative for Kenyans at the United States Bishops' Conference Committee on Migrants and Refugees. In 2000, Fr. Andre became the Pastor of Our lady of Blessed Sacraments, Shreveport, where he fostered a loving and supportive relationship with the parish community and served as Local Minister for the Friars in the city. However, by 2014, his health began to slowly decline. In 2017, his condition worsened, and he experienced a loss of appetite, difficulty swallowing, and speech problems. Fr. Andre retired to St. Mary of the Angels Friary in New Orleans, where he passed away on September 8, 2018 – the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Fr. Bill Sinkele, OP

William Sinkele aka Bill is an American who, at the time of our foundation, was a Dominican Friar residing at the Dominican Friary on Masai Lane, Karen. He and Fr. Andre McGrath were very much involved in the promotion of Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) among the religious around Nairobi. With several other priests who were in AA, they intended to establish the first Addiction treatment center in Kenya (not just for the priests and religious, but anyone who was suffering the addiction). They were in the process of negotiating with two potential land sellers around Karen in Nairobi but stepped back after a similar center was established under the banner of Raphaelite Recovery Center in Red Hill, Tigoni Limuru. When Francis joined AA on January 11, 1991, both Frs. Bill and Andre were his sponsors. Following Fr. Andre's return to the United States in 1993, the ndugus were left without someone to serve as their spiritual director. Two Capuchin Friars stepped in and served the spiritual needs of the ndugus. After them, the ndugus consulted with His Excellency Maurice Cardinal Otunga (RIP), then Archbishop of Nairobi, and requested him to appoint Fr. Bill, OP, as their new spiritual director. Fr. Bill assumed the responsibility with passion and zeal. He was just what the ndugus needed, and they loved him. It was through Fr. Bill that ndugu Francis was offered the possibility of going to the United States to train as a substance abuse counselor under one of the Dominican Provinces.

Fr. Bill left the Dominican Order and established the first substance abuse prevention center in Africa where Fr. Francis at some point served as a board member and president. He currently lives in Malindi, Kenya.

Celebrating Our Present



Success in Mission

The seventy-two returned rejoicing, and said, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us because of your name." Jesus said, "I have observed Satan fall like lightning from the sky. Behold, I have given you the power 'to tread upon serpents' and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:17-20*

The mission of our Institute has been met with immense success since our founding. Through the favor of God and the support and good will of the people of God, the Institute has spread her wings to the Continents of Africa, North America, and Europe. Franciscan Missionaries of Hope are presently involved in Parish ministry, Hospital, Prison, and School Chaplaincy.

Parish Ministry

Parish ministry has been central to the Institute's nurturing and growth of her charism and mission. It is in the parishes that the *Ndugus* get the opportunity to live out the virtue of hospitality that has become synonymous to the our name and way of life. The parishes have also become our partners in mission. Not only have we experienced immense support from the parishes where we serve, they have also seen our institute grow and have become part of our history.

Chaplaincies

With God's blessing, the support of the local Churches where we minister, and the support of our friends and partners in mission, the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope continues to grow. Our growth in numbers has allowed us to respond to the needs of the time by accepting invitations to non-parish ministries such as Hospital chaplaincy, professors and counselors in colleges and other institutions of learning; High School Chaplains; Prison Chaplains.

Where We Are

KENYA

ARCHDIOCESE OF NAIROBI

Holy Eucharist King'eero – Parish Ministry

ARCHDIOCESE OF KISUMU

St. John the Apostle Awasi – Parish Ministry

DIOCESE OF NAKURU

St. Stephen Karati - Parish Ministry
Our Lady of the Angels, Bahati: Chaplaincy
Our Lady seat of Wisdom, Bahati: School Ministry
Naivasha Prisons: Prison Chaplaincy

DIOCESE OF KAPSABET

Sts. Simon and Jude, Chemase – Parish Ministry

DIOCESE OF LODWAR

St. Mark, Lokitaung – Parish Ministry

DIOCESE OF MERU

Our lady of Consolation, Nkondi – Parish Ministry

TANZANIA

ARCHDIOCESE OF DAR ES SALAAM

St. Francis of Assisi, Maji Matitu – Parish Ministry

ARCHDIOCESE OF DODOMA

St. Francis of Assisi, Msisi – Parish Ministry
St. Rita of Cascia, Mndemu – Parish Ministry

Celebrating Our Present








USA

ROCKVILLE CENTRE DIOCESE, NEW YORK

St. Mary's Roslyn – Parish Ministry
St. Francis Hospital and Heart Center - Hospital Chaplaincy

ARCHDIOCESE OF MOBILE, ALABAMA

Holy Spirit, Montgomery - Parish Ministry
Alabama Department of Corrections - Prisons Chaplaincy

SHREVEPORT DIOCESE, LOUISIANA

St. Paschal, West Monroe - Parish Ministry
Our Lady of Fatima, Monroe – Parish Ministry

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Resurrection of Our Lord, New Orleans – Parish Ministry
St. Josephine Bakhita, New Orleans – Parish Ministry
St. Patrick, Port Sulphur - Parish Ministry

DIOCESE OF BEAUMONT, TEXAS

Immaculate Conception, Groves – Parish Ministry
Our Lady of Sorrows, China, and Our Lady of Victory, Sour Lake – Parish Ministry

ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Saint Gregory, Cox Creek, KY – Parish Ministry
Saint Augustine, Lebanon, KY – Parish Ministry

ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Our Lady Queen of Peace Weymouth, Braintree – Parish Ministry
Hospital Chaplaincy
Kenya Catholic Community - Chaplaincy



Preparing For Our Future

Educate One Seminarian, Evangelize a Thousand Souls!

"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." - Matthew 9:37

Dear Friends,
The Franciscan Missionaries of Hope was born from the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi. During a Prayer before the crucifix at the Church of San Damiano, God commanded St. Francis to rebuild the Church. He was to do this by bringing Joy and Hope where there was sadness and despair.
In 1993, the co-Founders of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope, in the spirit of and following in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi, were inspired to respond to the call received by St. Francis of rebuilding the Church. Like St. Francis of Assisi, they were convinced that hope and healing are indispensable for the work of rebuilding the Church of Christ. The Franciscan Missionaries of Hope, the name our Institute, precisely expresses this conviction even as it lays out our Mission and reason for existence.

Counting our Blessings
The favor of God resting upon our Institute is evident in our membership which has finally crossed the century mark. The Franciscan Missionaries of Hope is presently constituted of 107 Ndugus. Of the 107, 68 are perpetually professed members. The Institute has 58 priests and 5 transitional deacons. 24 Ndugus are students in temporal vows. There are 9 Novices and 6 Postulants.
Of the 107, we have lost 5 Ndugus to sister death.

The Franciscan Missionaries of Hope continues to grow both in numbers and in mission/ministry. Many young men continue to knock on our doors, seeking the opportunity to say YES to God's call as members of the FMH. Opportunities for mission and ministry are also opening for our Institute across the globe. Wherever we have presented ourselves for mission and ministry, we have always been warmly received and given consideration. A word of gratitude to the many ambassadors who continue to speak well of us even as they act as our references.

The Race Not Yet Won
Over the years, our main challenge has been the funding and resource support of human, spiritual and intellectual formation of the student ndugus in their close to ten years of preparation for ministry. Formation of our ndugus for service and ministry in the Church is the biggest and most important investment that we can make as an institute. It is for this reason that we have dedicated the theme of this inaugural Foundation Day towards creating a sustainable fund that will cumulatively become an investment in hope aimed at creating future missionaries.

Please stand by Us
As a young congregation, the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope is not yet able to stand on her own. It is your support, generosity, and daily partnership that will enable the mission of the Institute to be realized. Whom and what we have become today is a result of the support and goodwill of friends and the people of God. Through your continued support, we will be able to open the doors to the many wonderful young men who knock on our doors. Through your continued support, we will help these young men respond to, and realize their call to serve the Church and the people of God. We appreciate every gift, every support.

Invitation
With all humility, as the Ndugus of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope, we would like to invite you to become partners with us in our mission and the mission of the Church. Please consider joining the Friends of the Lyke Community, a growing community of the friends and benefactors of the FMH. With your ongoing support and friendship, we will realize the vision of the co-Founders of the FMH.
May that spirit of gratitude carry us forward, trusting that the Lord who has been so good and generous to us over the years will continue to bless us in the years ahead.

We thank you for your partnership and support in this mission and journey.

In loving gratitude,
Ndugu Deoson Tayebwa,
Councilor and Coordinator of Friends of the Lyke Community, Africa Region.

Where there is Despair, Let me Sow Hope



PROPOSED LYKE COMMUNITY RETREAT CENTER, TIGONI, LIMURU - KENYA

The Charism of the Franciscan Missionaries of Hope is tied to, and arose out of the circumstances that led to the founding of the Institute. Right from the inception phase, the founding ndugus understood the need and importance of giving Hope. As those whose daily lives were punctuated by being given hope, the founding ndugus resolved that giving hope would be central to their mission if God would bless their intent of founding a religious congregation. Indeed, as a “congregation” was taking shape, the ndugus were already centering their lives around the envisioned mission. It happened that the time when the congregation was taking shape was also the time when the AIDS pandemic was at its peak in the country (Kenya). Families and communities were being devastated by the pandemic. Poor families and communities in the urban centers were the most affected not just by the pandemic but also by the stigma. The founding ndugus experienced the devastation firsthand as their earlier job-hunting took them to the informal settlements around Nairobi where the poor live (Gatwekira, Kibera, Dagoreti Market). Even before acquisition of any formal training, the ndugus found themselves offering counseling services and giving hope. The ndugus made friends and clients, and before long, their resident became both a hospitality and counseling center. Becuase these friends and clients of the community were poor, the ndugus ensured that whenever they visited, they would always be welcomed, attended to, and if possible, served a cup of black tea. It is a trend that has become a tradition of the Lyke Community. In addition to pastoral counseling which “comes” with the responsibility of pastoring n a parish, the members of the FMH are also encouraged to undertake professional counseling so that the tradition of giving hope to the people of God does not die off. So far, The FMH have three professionally trained counselors, and they have kept alive the vision and mission of the Institute.

Whereas the mission of the Institute is centered around the charism of giving hope, and the members have tried as much as they can to live the mission, the one missing piece is a place where this can take place. Presently, the ndugus carry out this important mission in the Institute’s residences and places of work (parishes and

Where there is Despair, Let me Sow Hope

ischools). But with your help, the Institute hopes to find a solution.

Through the generosity of a friend and benefactor, the Institute has acquired a piece of land in Tigoni, Limuru, Kiambu County, on the outskirts of Narobi City. The Institute plans to utilize this piece of land to construct a spirituality center. The center will be multifaceted and will serve spiritual needs (retreat and days of prayer, spiritual direction), counseling (counseling center), meeting space (conference hall) prayer, renewal and rest (Eucharistic Adoration Chapel, prayer garden).

Dubbed the Lyke Community Retreat Center, the facility will not only offer the FMH a space where the members can realize and further both the vision of the founding ndugus and the mission of the Institute, but will also be a long-term investment for the Institute.

The FMH requests for your partnership and support so that this dream can be realized. The Lyke Community Retreat Center will enable the Lyke COmmunity to continue with the mission of giving hope to the people of God, especially the most vulnerable and underprivileged.

For your generosity and support,

May the Lord Bless you and keep You
May He show His face to you and have mercy.
May He turn His countenance to you and give you peace.
The Lord bless you!

