Blog

Religious Life




The residents of Upendo Village in northwest Kenya are actively working to educate their community on effective strategies to prevent HIV/AIDS. By raising awareness of the disease and its impact, they empower individuals to take charge of their health and well-being. (Courtesy of Upendo Village)



by Rhina Guidos

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## Join the Conversation

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Registration is open for a webinar to help Catholic sisters in Africa locate resources to continue their work in the health care field, an event hosted by Global Sisters Report and the All-Africa Conference: Sister to Sister.

"Raising Resources for Healing Ministries" will take place Feb. 11 from 8-11 a.m. EST, or 4-7 p.m. in Nairobi, in observance of the World Day of the Sick and the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Registration has closed, but readers can find a story on GSR summarizing the forum in the week to follow.

Representatives from Sisters Rising Worldwide, Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach, Upendo Village, Medicines for Humanity, Medical Donations Program, Catholic Medical Mission Board, Catholic Medical Mission and DREAM Centers are scheduled to attend.

## CLINIC condemns end to temporary protected status for Venezuelans

The Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., known as CLINIC, said that doing away with an immigration status that allowed Venezuelans to temporarily stay and work in the U.S. is a "betrayal of our nation's moral and legal obligations to protect those fleeing violence and persecution."

The Trump administration announced Feb. 2 that it was terminating in April temporary protected status for more than 300,000 Venezuelans. A separate group of about 250,000 Venezuelans have protection until September.



An elderly migrant woman from Venezuela rests as she shelters for the night at Our Lady of the Solitude Church in Mexico City Nov. 27, 2023, as she and other migrants wait for an appointment to be set up with U.S. Customs and Border Protection. (OSV News/Reuters/Gustavo Graf)

"Venezuela remains in the throes of a dire humanitarian crisis, with rampant political oppression, food shortages, and economic hardship forcing millions to flee," CLINIC said in a statement, adding that the status "offered a lifeline to Venezuelans who have sought refuge in the United States."

CLINIC also criticized Congress' passing of the Laken Riley Act, which allows for the detention of "certain non-U.S. nationals (*aliens* under federal law) who have been arrested for burglary, theft, larceny, or shoplifting. The bill also authorizes states to sue the federal government for decisions or alleged failures related to immigration enforcement."

"Although intended to increase public safety for the American people, the new law could in reality have vast negative consequences and will undermine the rights of

all," said Anna Gallagher, CLINIC's executive director. "As people of faith we are deeply concerned about this law's implications for vulnerable people caught up in our justice system and for the way it could erode due process rights and waste precious resources needed to promote the common good."

## UISG offers course on 'inspiring women'

The International Union of Superiors General, or UISG, is offering a free online course on the teachings of inspiring women "who led with hope and courage in times of adversity," said the Rome-based group. The focus will be on the insights female saints can offer in times of adversity.

The first session, led by professor Donna Orsuto, will be held on Feb. 10-11 and will explore the lives and writings of the "Four Women Doctors of the Church," particularly St. Teresa of Ávila and St. Catherine of Siena. Orsuto will highlight how the saints' spiritual teachings can guide congregational leaders today.

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Orsuto currently serves as the director of the Department of Moral Theology and Spiritual Theology at Pontifical Gregorian University.

The second series will be held March 10-11, and will be led by Sr. Estrella Rodriguez, a member of Verbum Dei Missionary Fraternity. She will focus on a single figure, St. Edith Stein, known as St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Rodriguez will examine Stein's "unique journey from Jewish philosopher to Carmelite nun and martyr, illustrating how her life embodies courage, wisdom, and compassion in the face of profound challenges."

Each of the sessions will be held from 2-4 p.m., Rome time (Central European Time).

To register for the course, visit https://uisg.net/MysticWomen.

## Mercy Sisters voice support for Episcopal bishop

The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas joined in support of an Episcopal bishop who pleaded with President Donald Trump at Washington's National Cathedral in January

to "have mercy" on those afraid of how his administration's policies could affect their lives.

Episcopal Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde, of Washington, received threats and support following her public pleas Jan. 22 during a post-inauguration prayer service when she told Trump of migrants, LGBTQ+ youth and others whom she said "are scared now."



Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde delivers the sermon at a national prayer service Jan. 21, 2025, at the Washington National Cathedral with U.S. President Donald Trump, first lady Melania, U.S. Vice President JD Vance and second lady Usha Vance in attendance. The service came a day after Inauguration Day and the swearing-in of the president and vice president. (OSV News/Reuters/Kevin Lamarque)

Trump later demanded an apology. While some attacked Budde, others praised her, including the Mercy sisters.

"You spoke faithfully, expressing love and concern for the most vulnerable among us, proclaiming the Gospel in its most clear form," said a Jan. 24 letter from the Sisters of Mercy to Budde. "You did not hesitate to speak truth to power. No one should oppose a cry for mercy and no cry for mercy should go unheard. But like many in our country who have done so in times of strife, those in power attack the truth-tellers. Your words provide hope, and your leadership inspires all who seek justice and mercy."

The letter was signed by Mercy Srs. Susan Sanders, Patricia Flynn, Teresa Bednarz, Judith Frikker and Maureen King, who make up the leadership team.

"As you did, we must all stand up for the oppressed and speak up for the voiceless. It is what our faith calls on us to do. We join you in this," the sisters said in the letter. "We keep you, your family, loved ones and our nation in our prayers."

*Chris Herlinger, Global Sisters Report international correspondent, contributed to this report.*