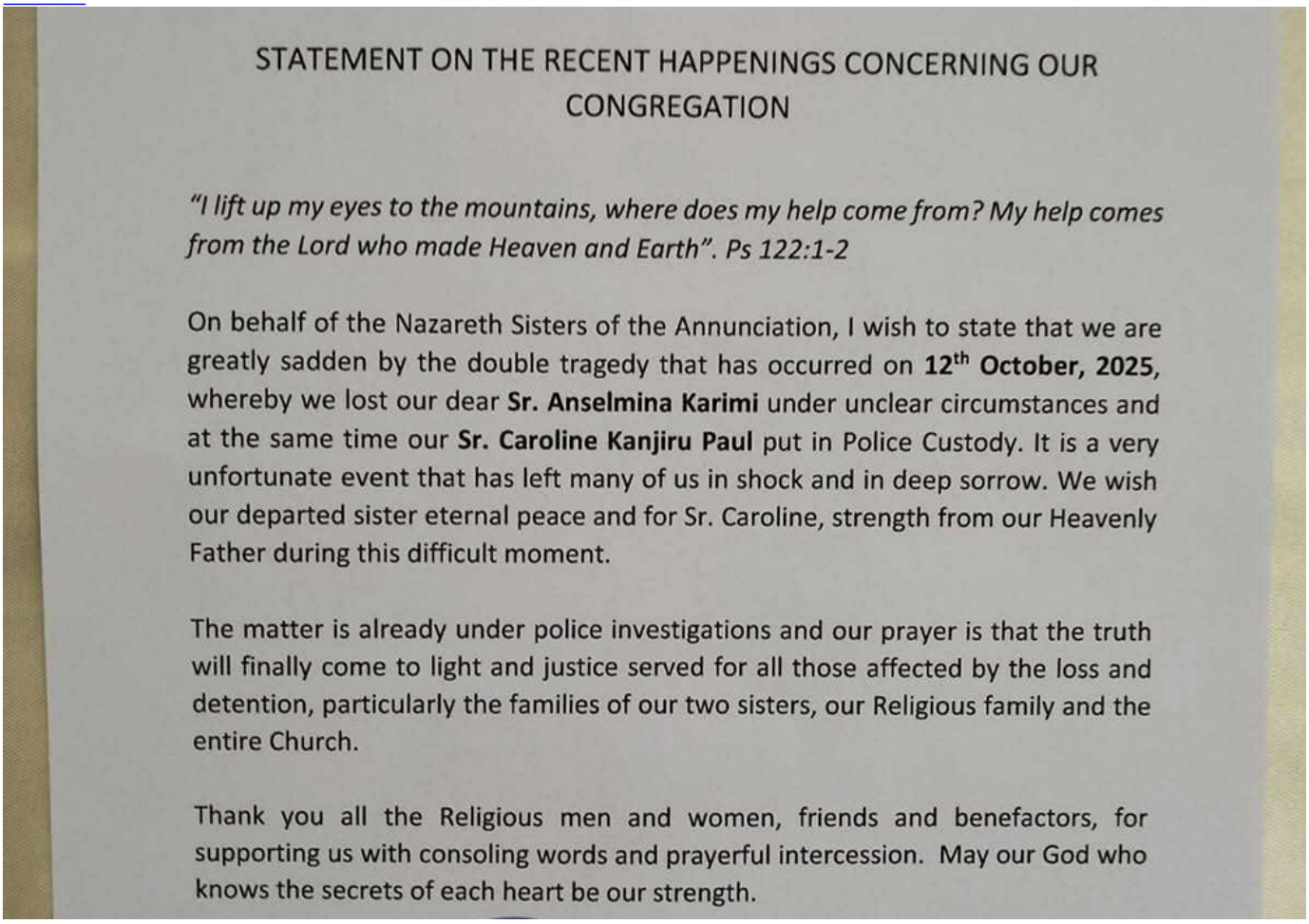
News



STATEMENT ON THE RECENT HAPPENINGS CONCERNING OUR CONGREGATION

"I lift up my eyes to the mountains, where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth". Ps 122:1-2

On behalf of the Nazareth Sisters of the Annunciation, I wish to state that we are greatly sadden by the double tragedy that has occurred on **12th October, 2025**, whereby we lost our dear **Sr. Anselmina Karimi** under unclear circumstances and at the same time our **Sr. Caroline Kanjiru Paul** put in Police Custody. It is a very unfortunate event that has left many of us in shock and in deep sorrow. We wish our departed sister eternal peace and for Sr. Caroline, strength from our Heavenly Father during this difficult moment.

The matter is already under police investigations and our prayer is that the truth will finally come to light and justice served for all those affected by the loss and detention, particularly the families of our two sisters, our Religious family and the entire Church.

Thank you all the Religious men and women, friends and benefactors, for supporting us with consoling words and prayerful intercession. May our God who knows the secrets of each heart be our strength.

Statement released Oct. 15 by the Nazareth Sisters of the Annunciation regarding the death of Sr. Anselmina Karimi and arrest of Sr. Caroline Kanjiru (GSR photo/Doreen Ajiambo)



by Doreen Ajiambo

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Meru, Kenya — October 15, 2025

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In this small town in central Kenya, the arrest of a Catholic sister in connection with the death of a fellow nun has unsettled the faithful and stirred fresh debate about what happens behind convent walls and whether the church is doing enough to address internal tensions.

Sr. Caroline Kanjiru was arrested in connection with the death of Sr. Anselmina Karimi, 65, whose body was discovered at her home on the outskirts of Meru on Oct. 12. Karimi served as the administrator of Nkabune Children's Home in Meru, a church-run institution that provides care and support to vulnerable children. Reports said she was preparing to hand over leadership to Kanjiru. Both sisters were part of the Nazareth Sisters of the Annunciation.

"It is a very unfortunate event that has left many of us in shock and in deep sorrow," said a statement released Oct. 15 by the Nazareth Sisters of the Annunciation. "We wish our departed sister eternal peace and for Sr. Caroline, strength from our Heavenly Father during this difficult moment."

According to Kenyan media reports, preliminary investigations indicate Karimi may have been struck with blunt force. Karimi's phone was switched off around 11 p.m. on the night of her death and remains missing. Detectives are piecing together her movements based on phone records and forensic evidence.

At the Meru Law Courts on Oct. 14, prosecutors argued that Kanjiru should remain in custody for 14 days as a flight risk and to allow investigators to conduct DNA analysis and further forensic work. Her lawyer countered that she had voluntarily surrendered and would comply with any court conditions.

However, Senior Resident Magistrate Evalyn Ndegwa ruled in favor of detention, stating, "It is necessary for the suspect's own safety and protection and to prevent public outrage and retaliation, to have her detained at this stage. And also to enable the suspect to be escorted to the government chemist for DNA analysis."

Kenyan media reports said that Ndegwa emphasized the seriousness of the allegation and noted that detaining Kanjiru would also allow time for emotions within the community to cool. The court directed that she be held at Meru Police Station. At the next motion on Oct. 28, police told the court that no connection was found between Kanjiru and the crime. The sister was released from custody and is now a state witness for the investigation.

The Directorate of Criminal Investigations' Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau has taken over the investigation.

According to media reports, a police source said that Karimi's body was found with bruises on her hands and legs, bleeding from her ears and mouth, and preliminary findings were inconsistent with a natural death.

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According to Kenyan media, Karimi's phone was switched off late at night and remains missing, raising suspicion of possible tampering with the crime scene. Forensic evidence suggests she may have been killed elsewhere before her body was found in her home.

Kanjiru has given an account of events that investigators said contain inconsistencies, including the timeline of when the nun was last seen alive. Ndegwa also cited concerns that releasing her too soon could lead to interference with evidence or witnesses.

The investigation follows another troubling incident a few weeks ago involving Catholic sisters in Asumbi, a small settlement in western Kenya's Homa Bay County near Lake Victoria, where a senior nun was caught on video repeatedly slapping a younger nun inside the convent, with staff nearby.

The Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph, who run a prominent Catholic mission in the area, later condemned the assault as "deeply regrettable" and confirmed that internal disciplinary procedures had been initiated. The incident, the news of which spread quickly online, shocked many Catholics and raised uncomfortable questions about how conflicts are managed in religious communities.

Though separate, the Meru and Asumbi incidents have ignited wider public debate about discipline, mental well-being, and accountability in religious life.

“These are not isolated whispers anymore,” said Everline Gatwiri, a Meru resident who lives near the children's home. “People are seeing videos, reading news, and wondering what is happening in places they've always viewed as safe and sacred.”

Residents and members of the local Catholic community say they are grappling with a deep sense of unease.

“First we saw that ugly incident in Asumbi, now a nun is suspected of killing another nun. If such things can happen in convents, what message does that send to the faithful?” said John Muriuki, another Meru resident.

"These scandals are shaking the trust people place in religious institutions and we have to see real accountability and reform," said Gatwiri.

Editor's note: *This story was updated on Nov. 3 with details of the release of Sr. Caroline Kanjiru.*