

IN LOVING MEMORY OF SR. FRANCISCA SYOMBESA KAESA OSB.

SACRED HEART PRIORY – NAIROBI

May 25, 1964 – April 29, 2024



Sr. Francisca Syombesa Kaesa OSB was born at Mililuni village at Musumaa location, Machakos Diocese, May, 25th, 1964 as a firstborn daughter of Mr. Joseph Kaesa and Mrs. Esther Kanini Kaesa in a family of eight siblings: two brothers and six sisters of whom one has died. Sr. Francisca was baptized on 10th, April, 1978 at Masinga Parish, Machakos Diocese.

Sr. Francisca schooled at Kithunthi Nursery school, Maringa Primary School and later Thatha Secondary School. She was industrious, morally upright, exercised her potentiality and served as dormitory prefect and her good conduct was exemplary to the school.

In her early childhood, she is said to have been named by her great grandmother as *'Syombesa' (related to money)*, because she was born in Hospital and the family spend a lot of money for her delivery. She was experienced by her family as a hardworking and focused person. She always encouraged her siblings to work hard as they grew up together. Her policy was that each should work hard and earn from their own hands. I believe this principle She has served as a role model to fellow religious from her home church. As a youth she was a Sunday school teacher and a choir leader. She is among the first religious in her outstation. Sr. Francisca' life has inspired some other young members of her family to become sisters and priests.

Sr. Francisca joined the Missionary Benedictine Sisters on the 23rd, March, 1984 at Ruaraka as an aspirant, her Postulancy from 11th, July 1984 at Ruaraka, novitiate 11th, July 1985, at Karen. She made her **First Profession on 11th, July 1987** at Karen, Nairobi, **Final profession 24th, June, 1994** at Karen, Nairobi-Kenya. She celebrated her silver Jubilee at Ndanda Priory, Tanzania in the year 2012. Later she took different professional training to support in her mission assignments to include: Theological studies at Pontifical Gregorian University "Regina Mundi" Rome where she successfully completed with MAGNA CUM LAUDE. She trained in Pastoral Counseling at Gaba Institute. Palliative care at Ndanda in Tanzania, Proposal writing by Hilton Foundation, Entrepreneurship and Financial Management. Bee farming at Morogoro in Tanzania. Investment Portfolio management among others. Due to her love of nature and promotion of healthy living, in recent years she trained in NATURAL MEDICINES and qualified as trainer of trainers, founded and was the director of **Medicine At Your Door Steps (MAYDS)** from 2016.

Her missionary services included, pastoral work in Endo parish from 1987 to 1989. She served as formation team member 1993- 1994. Superior of St. Terese of the child Jesus Community- Chesongoch from 1997 – 2002. She was assigned to Ndanda Priory from 2007- 2015. She has been a Council member and Director of MAYDS. In charge of our Gilgil Organic Farm. A member of Preparatory Commission for General Chapter 2005, General Chapter delegate 2018.

Sr. Francisca's love, passion and interest for herbal medicine emanated from St. Hildegard of Bingen who was a Benedictine abbess, writer, poet, mystic, and composer who lived in 12th-century Germany. St. Hildegard contributed much to healing and medicine. She wrote two books that are connected with

healing. *Physica* was about how items in the physical world (plants, gemstones, fish, etc.) could be used in healing. Sr. Francisca backed up her passion for herbal medicine with the two scriptural texts that we find in **Ezekiel: 47:12** that reads *“their fruit will be good to eat and leaves medicinal”*. And **Hosea 4: 6** that says *“my people perish for lack of knowledge”*. She has been undergoing training since 2016 being mentored by Roger William Sharland who is the director of RURAL EXTENSION WITH AFRICA’S POOR (**REAP**). Roger describes Sr. Francisca as *a class A-student who performs beyond her teacher*.

Sister Francisca’s demise is a big blow to the wellness sector. She spent sleepless nights researching and working on wellness programs with the aim of improving on the health of not just her clients but also her colleague sisters and their immediate families. She cared for all the people irrespective of age, gender, religious affiliations, ethnicity, social status or even nationality. According to her, there is only one tribe in the world and that is *‘humanity,’* which she was called to serve. Her hard work and resilient spirit blended with her innovative and dynamic mind which pulled many to her. She loved improvement and she always saw room for growth in every person and venture. Sometimes she surprised us with her amazing love for technology. She was always up to date with every advancement and that’s why computer was her best tool of work.

Sister’s thirst for improving herself and improving others earned her immense credibility in the society. She therefore, caught the attention of several corporate and faith-based entities that admired her style of working and granted her opportunities to serve at different levels. By the time of her death, she was an active member of the National Traditional Health Practitioners Association (**NATHEPA**), Centre for Natural Products and Bio-prospecting (**CENBIO**) of the University of Nairobi, and Business Network International (**BNI**), which is the world’s largest business networking and business referral organization among others.

Besides, she diligently ran a Wellness Centre under the name, Medicine At Your Door Step (**MAYDS**) where she formulated and processed botanical medicine for addressing different health conditions and needs. Her keen interest in the regenerative medicine also encouraged her partnership with Eden Health and Immune Booster (**EHIB**) together with Nelltons Natural Solutions (**NNS**).

Sister Francisca leaves behind a truly rich legacy for always having gone out of her way to prepare and or outsource solutions to people’s health complications.

In the community, members experienced Sr. Francisca, as an intercessor for rain. She was very kind and always ready to lend a hand. During Covid 19 she helped the community whole heartedly with the herbal medicines. She was generous and a caring person to both young and old, she was hard working, passionate in her field of herbal medicines. She was an entertainer especially when she was Mistress of Ceremony, she liked jokes, and she was sensitive to those who were sick. She will be remembered as a very loving sister with great and sharp memory. She was a good teacher of the congregation history, full of wisdom in our Benedictine tradition and a community minded person. She liked to get feedback when teaching, she was optimistic in life. She could easily detect other people’s goodness and had a sense of humor. Sister Francisca was a jovial person, open and genuine, her determination spoke a lot to many. She was such an energetic person and highly remembered by her people in the mission of Chesongoch. She loved her work, she was social and outgoing, a risk-taker, an honest, charming, smiling even in time of difficulties. She was supportive and appreciated the little things done to her. She was a straight forward and a very responsible.

Our dear Sr. Francisca Kaesa, OSB enjoyed good health until this year in February when she complained of abdominal pain, loss of appetite, vomiting and constipation. She tried to cope for two weeks. On 15th February she was seen at St. Odilia’s Dispensary where the doctor ordered for abdominal general ultrasound and abdominal X-Ray. Finding: she had intestinal obstruction and she was referred to Mater

Hospital for further evaluation and management. On the 16th February Sr. Francisca was attended to at Mater Hospital. Abdominal scan was done and the same findings reported. The consultant who attended to her recommended an urgent surgery. She wished the surgery to be done in our St. Scholastica Uzima Hospital. On the 17th February she was admitted at Uzima Hospital where she underwent a successful Laparotomy. After Ten days in hospital, she was discharged. Pathological examination results showed advanced stage of cancer. While in her room here in Karen she was unable to feed and drink adequately. On Easter Sunday Sr. Francisca was readmitted at MP-Shah Hospital in High Dependence Unit for one week. After which the doctors advised on home based Care. She was transferred to St. Scholastica Uzima hospital on the 8th April where she received palliative care until her demise on the 29th April, 2024 at 9:35 am.

God blessed Sr. Francisca so much with spiritual blessings. Sister had mingled with people of different calibers and so she had a wide range of networking. In her time of need people prayed for her from all corners of the world. She had numerous Masses offered, within the community, in her family, friends and clients. She received the sacrament of the anointing of the sick several times within the two and half months of her sickness. She had a very serene, calm and peaceful disposition towards her end. The last word she spoke to the sisters who had surrounded her a day before her demise was “*thank you*”. She died as she had lived - a grateful person. We are happy that Sr. Francisca died a happy and fulfilled person and truly rested in peace!

Let us help Sr. Francisca to echo these words of scripture; “*I have fought the good fight; I have run the race to the finish I have kept the faith...*” (2Tim.4:7).

We thank God for the gift of Sr. Francisca.

**MAY THE SOUL OF OUR BELOVED SR. FRANCISCA
REST IN ETERNAL PEACE AMEN.**

Nairobi, May 6, 2024

*Sr. Rosa Pascal OSB,
Prioress and Sisters of Nairobi Priory*