

Presentation of the MAC Xaveri of Burundi

History of MAC Xaveri Burundi

The Xaveri movement was founded on September 7, 1952, by Father Georges Defour, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in Bukavu.

- It is a Catholic youth action movement, whose patron saint is Francis Xavier.
- Brought to Burundi by Reverend Brother Gerolf in August 1953 at the same time as MAC CHIRO,
- This youth and adult movement focuses on youth, action, and training.
- It works for evangelization by creating an apostolic structure specially adapted to transform the living environment and strengthen faith in African culture.

Organization of MAC Xaveri

- It is organized at the national level as a Federation of Diocesan Coordinations under the authority of their respective Bishops.
- The National Coordination of MAC Xaveri reports to the Episcopal Commission for Laity, Families, and Life (CELFV).

Xaveri Membership

- MAC Xaveri Burundi is present in numerous parishes across all dioceses in the country.
- Its membership is estimated at approximately 28,000 active members, with a Diocesan Chaplain in each diocese.
- A census is underway with the assistance of Xaveri Chaplains at the diocesan level to update these figures.

MAC Xaveri Interventions for the Elderly

- The idea came from the observation that, increasingly, the ancestral values of ubuntu, respect for human dignity, and especially the respect that younger generations owe to the elderly, continue to deteriorate. In the past, young people could not sit down when an elderly person was standing. With the unfavorable economic climate making it difficult to have a decent life overall, the elderly are becoming more vulnerable than other segments of the population.

- With urbanization, they no longer benefit from family assistance as in the past. Grandchildren are no longer interested in coming to live with their elders. As a result, these parents suffer from nostalgia for the past. Their physical condition often prevents them from obtaining what they need. In the past, grandchildren enjoyed spending time fetching water and gathering firewood for their grandmother. In turn, the latter would bless them, share stories, tales, and fables with them. Today, the elderly are bored because they live alone.
- Fortunately, people of goodwill have come to help these elderly people by offering them a place where they can live with others and benefit from various forms of assistance. This is how the Xaveri Movement Burundi works alongside the Saint Elisabeth Hospice, a senior care center run by the Bene Umukama Sisters.

Since 2015, with financial support from African Lives, the Xaveri Movement has undertaken activities with the elderly at the Hospice. The Xaveri Movement has committed to:

- Periodically organizing visits by young Xaveri to the Hospice, with the aim of establishing and developing a mentoring program for young Xaveri residents.

The children visit the elderly, talk with them, and tell them stories. These visits and conversations bring great joy, as they create close bonds.

- Organizing cultural activities: traditional dances, sketches, and poetry.
- Provide social and psychological support through regular exchanges, prayer and Mass sharing, fraternal feasts, appropriate film screenings, cultural evenings, etc.
- If possible, document stories, songs, and anecdotes specific to the elderly. We have not yet been able to successfully complete this activity because it requires significant financial resources.
- Provide administrative and logistical assistance to the Hospice if needed, for example, help create a register of Hospice residents. This activity helps update statistics and ease the workload of the sisters in charge of the hospice.
- Provide food assistance to residents, allowing for improved mealtimes.