

Who is Canon Gideon?

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i) Abbreviations

ABC	-	Abstain, Be Faithful, Use Condoms
AGM	-	Annual General Meeting
ANERELA+	-	Africa Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS
ART	-	Anti-Retroviral Treatment
INERALA+	-	International Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS
FANERELA+	-	Friends of All Networks of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS.
SSDDIM	-	Stigma, Shame, Denial, Discrimination, Inaction & Mis-action
SAVE	-	Safe Practices (A + B + C + PMTCT + Safe blood + Safe Injection + Safe circumcision etc) Access to Treatment and Nutrition, Voluntary; routine & stigma-free HIV testing and counselling. Empowerment of children, youths, women, men, families, communities and nations living with or vulnerable to HIV and AIDS
ACCREC	-	Archbishop Carey Regional Resource Centre
FOCAGIFO	-	Friends of Canon Gideon Foundation
SEDOP	-	Solidarity Enhancement Day of Prayer
STIs	-	Sexually Transmitted Infections
OIs	-	Opportunistic Infections
OVCs	-	Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children

I. Introduction

Rev Canon Gideon Baguma Byamugisha (48) was the first practicing Religious Leader in Africa to break the silence, the negative fear and stigma still associated with HIV and AIDS by declaring publicly that he was living with the infection way back in 1992.

A Teacher by profession, Pastor by calling and Theologian by training; Canon Gideon is a resource person to state, inter-state and non-state actors (particularly faith communities) in their national, regional and global level efforts to:

a) Accelerate the defeat of HIV and AIDS related Stigma, Shame, Denial, Discrimination, Inaction and Mis- action (SSDDIM) and to

b) Promote:

- i. Safe Practices (A + B + C + PMTC + Safe blood + Safe injections, Safe circumcision etc)
- ii. Access to treatment (01's, STI's & ARVs) & to Nutrition
- iii. Voluntary, routine and Stigma-free HIV Counselling and testing
- iv. Empowerment of children, youths, women, men, families, communities and nations living with or vulnerable to both HIV and AIDS and to other preventable, manageable and controllable infections, disasters and epidemics (SAVE).

II Professional Development

In the 16 years of his positive living and involvement in the HIV/AIDS work; Canon Gideon (who holds a B.A in Education, a B.D in Theology and is an M.A student at Nkurnba University) has worked as Tutor (Bishop Tucker Theological College, Mukono); HIV & AIDS Education Trainer (Province of the Church of Uganda); Health Secretary / HIV & AIDS Prevention & Control Manager (Diocese of Namirembe); Church/ FBO Partnerships Advisor on HIV & AIDS (World Vision International) and served on various Boards and Committees (Uganda AIDS Commission, Straight Talk Foundation, PSI Uganda, Ecumenical HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa, Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, National Forum of PHA Networks in Uganda. Africa Think Tank on HIV & AIDS Management, AIDS NGOs in East Africa, African Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected with HIV& AIDS, Infectious Diseases Institute etc).

Canon Gideon is also part time lecturer on "HIV, AIDS & Religion" at Nkumba University (Uganda) and Christian AID HIV & AIDS Good Will Ambassador on SSDDIM and SAVE in East Africa, Sudan and the Horn.

III Pioneering Work

Supported by his Bishops, friends and fellow clergy (led by The Rt Rev Bishop Samuel B. Ssekkadde and Rev. Sam L. Ruteikara) Canon Gideon Founded:

- i) The Archbishop Carey Regional Resource Center (ACCREC) Uganda - for training church leaders and congregations on HIV/AIDS;
- ii) The Friends of Canon Gideon Foundation- Hope Institute for Transformational Leadership and Development (Sponsoring and Supporting Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Vocational & Professional Studies, Health Empowerment and Leadership Skills Development);
- iii) The African Network of Religious Leaders Living with or personally Affected by HIV 6s AIDS (ANERELA+) -which supports members to overcome self and societal stigma, become forces of positive change and action in their congregations/ faith communities and be involved in National level Advocacy, Policy formulation and Strategic planning. The Network reaches out to all faiths and includes more than 1,700 members from 23 countries in Africa. During the XVI International conference on HIV/AIDS in Toronto, the idea of transforming the African Network into an International Network was discussed and passed by The ANERELA+ AGM sitting in November 2006 in Kampala (Uganda). Hence, the Network will serve positive and personally affected religious leaders in Caribbean, Asia, Europe and the Americas and support them in their work against SSDDIM.
- iv) Bishop Samuel Chapel - A small church that is modelling stigma-free congregational level responses on HIV and AIDS;

In 2006, Canon Gideon worked with World Vision, and a circle of concerned Religious leaders, well wishers and leaders of FANERELA+ to found the Solidarity Enhancement Day of Prayer- SEDOP (an Interfaith effort to defeat SSDDIM, multiply SAVE and congregational level HIV & AIDS Responses through combined action and prayer).

IV Authorship

Canon Gideon has authored 4 books on HIV and AIDS and Co- authored 2 others. These books include;

- i) "HIV/AIDS Counselling in A Church Community Context' (1st print 1995, 2nd reprint 2003)
- ii) "Am I My Brotheris Keeper?: Theological and Pastoral Reflections on Genesis 4:9" (1st print 1998, 2nd reprint 2003)
- iii) "Breaking the Silence on HIV/AIDS in Africa: How Can Religious Institutions Talk About Sexual Matters in Their Communities?" (1st print 2000, 2nd reprint 2003)
- iv) "Confronting HIV/AIDS in Church Worship: Special Prayer Liturgy" (1st print 1999, 2nd Reprint 2003)
- v) "Journeys of Faith: Church Based Responses to HIV and AIDS in Three Southern African Countries" Co- authored with Steinitz L.Y; William G; Zondi P (July 2002)
- vi) "Positive Voices: Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS" Edited with Williams G under the "Called to Care" Series (2005)

V. Videos

Canon Gideon has also featured in many HIV/AIDS related Videos aimed at defeating SSDDIM and multiplying SAVE. These include:

- i. "Open Secret; Communities responding to HTV/AIDS in Uganda" (By Strategies for Hope Trust- UK)
- ii. "The Ambassadors of Hope" (By Churches United Against HI V/AIDS S-CHUAHA-Finland/ Tanzania)
- iii. "International Family Health Durban Symposium 2000" by IFH (UK)
- iv. "African Regional Forum of Religious Health Organisations in Reproductive Health" Jan 2001 by IFH (UK)
- v. "The Churches Response to HIV/AIDS in Uganda" (By Christian AID)
- vi. "The African Journey" (Produced by CNN, 2003)
- vii. "The Mission of Gideon" (Produced by the Friends of Canon Gideon Foundation 2000)
- viii. "What Can I Do? The HIV/AIDS Ministry and Messages of Gideon Byamugisha" (Produced by Strategies for Hope, UK, 2004)

VI Talks, Lectures and Sermons on MV & AIDS

Canon Gideon has given talks and lectures on HIV and AIDS related SSDDIM in over 40 Countries of the World. He has three times given statements at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Population and Development (1999) on HIV/ AIDS (2001, 2006) and addressed Africa Heads of State Summits and World Bank foras in Abuja and Washington DC respectively.

Canon Gideon has also given key note addresses in the Global Health Council Annual General Assembly, All Africa Conference of Churches Special Summits on HIV/AIDS, The Anglican Primates Meetings, World Conference on Religions & Peace, World Faiths & Development Dialogue meetings and in the International AIDS Conferences (Geneva, Durban, Barcelona, Bangkok and Toronto); given public lectures in Universities and other higher Institutions of Learning (Oxford University-Balliol College, Oxford Center for Mission Studies, University of Botswana, University of West Indies, Nkumba University, Uganda Christian University, Ndejje University etc); made numerous TV and Radio presentations in various countries and preached over 1,000 sermons on HIV and AIDS related SSDDIM and SAVE in Australia, Barbados, Benin, Brazil, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Dominican Republic, England, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Guyana, Haiti, Holland, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Norway, Rwanda, Senegal, Swaziland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa, Tanzania, Trinidad & Tobago, Uganda, USA, Wales, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

VII Improving The ABC Message

In his prophetic ministry against HIV & AIDS related SSDDIM; Canon Gideon realized very early that the ABC message (although very strong in upholding our Spiritual, Religious and Cultural values on Sex, Sexuality and Sexual health) was-quite often very inaccurate, inadequate and stigmatizing in the context of HIV Prevention, AIDS Care and Treatment.

Canon Gideon saw that the message (as popularly repeated by many Religious Leaders and other AIDS educators) was:

- i. Inaccurate by promoting abstinence, faithfulness and condom use as effective measures against all routes of transmission when in the actual fact, the three were only effective in controlling sexually transmitted HIV infections. "There are virgins who are HIV Positive", Canon Gideon urges.
Also, the effectiveness of faithfulness also depended on the other sexual partner's HIV negative status hoping at the same time that both partners would have guarded against other routes of HIV transmission.
- ii. Inadequate by missing out "The role of HIV testing and AIDS treatment in prevention" and by focusing on one route of HIV transmission (however significant this is) and individual actions and responsibilities only without highlighting equally impactful actions and responsibilities by family members, communities, institutions, organizations and countries of the world "A comprehensive and impactful HIV& AIDS response in multi-sectoral, multi-level and multi-dimensional"- Canon Gideon argues.
- iii. Stigmatizing by portraying HIV positive people as those who "had refused" to abstain or to be faithful while at the same time, portraying condom users as those who have "failed" or 'refused' to be faithful "which is not necessarily the case" - Canon Gideon urges.
- iv. Giving false security to faithful couples who had neither tested for a previous HIV Infection nor guarded against other routes of HIV transmission.

Hence, Canon Gideon together with colleagues in ANERELA+ and FANERELA+ designed "SAVE" as a more accurate, more comprehensive and non – stigmatizing message to strengthen our ABC message:

- S = for Safer Practices (A+B+C+PMTCT+ Safe blood +Safe injections.
Safe circumcision etc)
- A " = for Access to Treatment (including STIs OIs & ART) and to Nutrition.
- V = for Voluntary, routine and stigma free HIV Counselling & Testing.
- E = for the Empowerment of Children, Youths, Women, Men, Families,
Communities and Nations living with or vulnerable to HIV and AIDS.

Canon Gideon has personally conveyed this message to the Office of the US Global \ AIDS Co-ordinator, honourable members of the US Congress, to World Leaders and other Advisors on HIV/AIDS and continues to conscientize state, non-state and inter-state actors on HIV/AIDS to have the courage to move beyond the "ABC" and embrace "SAVE" as the most adequate and more accurate message / strategy to help the World achieve her Universal Access Goals to HIV Prevention, AIDS Care & Treatment by 2010.

Many faith leaders, development agencies and AIDS educators are beginning to see the value and potential impact of "SAVE" on HIV and AIDS and some (like

Christian Aid, have adopted it as their official slogan/message for neutralizing and eventually defeating the pandemic. You too can adopt, encourage and multiply "SAVE" in your communities / nation.

VIII Impact & Awards

The Rev Canon Gideon has been and continues to be a courageous advocate for multi-sectoral, multilevel and multi-dimensional approaches to HIV and AIDS. He has inspired millions of people and leaders world wide to double their efforts in bringing about a world that is safer, healthier and fairer to all her children irrespective of their age, gender or geographical location.

He has outstanding record in promoting the rights of people every where to accurate and relevant health information and services and to freedom from stigma, shame and discrimination. His leadership and vision in founding ANERELA+ has brought positive and personally affected Religious Leaders, their communities and mentors to the fore front of efforts to combat HIV and AIDS related SSDDIM and multiply SAVE. This, together with his personal mission to educate, train and empower children orphaned or made vulnerable children to become the next generation of leaders in the fight against HIV/AIDS made him to be ranked by the media as no. 17 out of the 50 African Leaders who have worked most for the health and development of the continent in the last millennium (See The New Vision Newspaper, January 27, 2003) along side the likes of Yoweri Museveni, Thabo Mbeki, Benjamin W. Mkapa. Joakim A. Chisano, Nelson Mandela, Keith Rumble and others.

Canon Gideon has fully utilized many opportunities extended to him to "*Speak truth to power*" as a prophetic voice in the International Fora through the world. He has worked tirelessly to point out messages and policies of governments, employers, health professionals and community leaders that deliberately or inadvertently fuel SSDDIM and devalue/ demean the self image, confidence, rights and values of individuals, families, communities and nations living with or vulnerable to HIV and AIDS.

Largely due to his untiring and unwavering ministry and work on SSDDIM; Canon Gideon has seen significant growth in understanding, compassionate responses and well-informed actions/strategies within many faith communities, organizations and agencies working on HIV & AIDS.

As early as 2000, Nkumba University of Entebbe Uganda, recognized Canon Gideon's effort with their "Fellow and Distinguished Friend" Award.

In 2001, World Vision International Awarded Canon Gideon the Robert W Pierce Award for Distinguished Christian Service for being "a tireless advocate for those living with HIV/AIDS"). These Awards were followed by others from Stromme Foundation, Norway (2003), Uganda AIDS Commission (2005) Friends Africa (2007) and ICRW (2007).

Also, for his pioneering leadership, creativity and courage in defending the Christian faith against HIV and AIDS related intolerance, rejection, discrimination, blame, inaction and mis-action; St Paul's Cathedral Namirembe Diocese (Kampala, Uganda 2001) and Holy Cross Cathedral, (Lusaka Diocese-Zambia, 2003) conferred upon him the high ecclesiastical title of "Canon" in the Anglican Church, a Church he continues to serve as an Ordained Minister fully involved in supporting various congregations and dioceses to implement the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa HIV/AIDS, TB & Malaria Strategic Plan through Capacity building, Advocacy, Information sharing and Partnerships enhancement.

IX Family Life

Canon Gideon is the eldest of the 14 children (10 alive, 4 dead) born to the late Lay Reader John B. Karakabire and his wife Mary Changwa Karakabire.

Born in 1959, he in 1987 married Kellen (who died in 1991) with whom they produced two children (1 alive, 1 dead). Their daughter, Patience Mary Busingye has grown to be an understanding, compassionate and very involved teenager in the issues of Orphans and other Vulnerable Children.

She wants to be a development worker and professional artist.

In 1995, Canon Gideon married Pamela (herself HIV positive and widowed by HIV/AIDS at a very young age).

Thanks to the advances in the prevention on Mother-to-Child Transmission, Pamela and Gideon now have two children (Love and Hope) aged 4½ and 3½ respectively.

The two, Canon and his wife, are also responsible for a wider family of children who have been orphaned or made more vulnerable by HIV and AIDS and other related calamities.

X His Mission Statement

"To worship God with my Heart, Body and Soul; Serve Him with my HIV positive status and Openness about it; Network and Fellowship with His family of all those Living and personally affected by HIV and AIDS, their friends, their mentors and their careers; Model my character around that of Christ; Minister His Grace and (through study, prayer and action) contribute to the fulfilment of His vision and mission as laid in Isaiah 65: 17ff and John 10:10.

Whereas true friends help me to live out this mission. Enemies distract and disorganize me to frustrate it. (Nehemiah. 4:11)

Faithful are the wounds of true friends but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. (Prov. 27:6, 9) O my God I trust in you; let me not be ashamed; And do not let my enemies triumph over me. (Psalms 25:2)

I will extol you, my God, O Kino I will bless your name forever and ever. Everyday I will bless you, and I will do what I can; (Psalms 145: 1ff)

And you O Lord (through genuine friends, mentors and colleagues in Local, National and International Partnership against HIV and AIDS) will do what I can't."

Two plaques capturing Canon Gideon's Mission Statement hang in his office and Sitting room, their words of which he himself frequently repeats in fellowships and forums.

XI His Final Vision against SSDDIM-Empowering OVCs

Canon Gideon is working with Friends, well wishers and stake holders to establish the Hope Institute for Transformational Leadership and development- a sponsorship and training center for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children; their guardians, and their community leaders in Vocational and Professional studies, Health Empowerment and Leadership Skills Development.

The broad objective of the Institute goes beyond helping children to become self- supporting and productive. The aim is to produce, equip, empower and engage leaders who have the personality, knowledge and skills to significantly contribute to their society in the fight against HIV & AIDS and in the creation of families and nations that are safer, healthier and fairer to all children irrespective of age, gender and geographical location.

The Institute Goal reads:

"To contribute to having the Uganda we want through training and graduating AIDS Competent, Spiritually Empowered and Gainfully Skilled Youths as leaders and as Africa is hope for a future".

XII In Summary

Canon Gideon has successfully challenged HIV and AIDS related SSDD1M within and outside the Church and other faith communities. He has corrected wrong and misleading information about HIV and AIDS and provided accurate and relevant information in a clear and easily understandable manner. He has spread awareness of the multi-sectoral, multi-level and multi- dimensional aspects of the AIDS pandemic, especially the ways in which people's intentions, decisions, and choices for self protection are in many ways frustrated by the socio- economic, political, spiritual, cultural and

gender realities in families and communities, thereby making it impossible to effectively tackle "risky behaviors" without equally addressing "risky environments".

Canon Gideon has also exposed the ways in which poor governance and inequitable global relations lead to glaring inequalities, vulnerabilities and preventable loss of life. He calls upon all of us to strengthen our efforts in effective Policy formulation. Strategic planning, Programming, Personnel development, Partnership building. Purse enhancement and in accurate Proclamations against HIV and AIDS (The Seven Ps).

Together with him (and others like him) we will achieve much more in our battles against AIDS and other diseases of poverty, injustice and marginalization.

LONG LIVE CANON GIDEON!
SHORT LIVE HTV &, AIDS!