



Social Justice and the Engagement of Communities

Invited Talk by
Father Hilary Muheezangango
Monday, May 4, 4:30 p.m.
Illini Union, Rm 210 General Lounge

As a Roman Catholic Priest and Executive Director of COVE Alliance, Fr. Hilary Muheezangango has been practicing social teaching, inspiring others to action, and engaging communities in Uganda and the U.S. for more than a decade. In recent years, he has embraced University of Illinois students in the Learning in Community (LINC) program in service-learning projects that have positively impacted children in Uganda while providing transformative learning experiences for students.

LINC students work collaboratively with partners to provide meaningful service through the conception, development, and implementation of projects that address genuine needs and concerns of community stakeholders. Although short-term community engagement has its challenges, students are encouraged to adopt a critical approach to service-learning. This approach reflects a social change orientation, attention to the redistribution of power, and the development of authentic relationships. This critical approach encourages students to better understand issues of inequality, root causes of social problems, and new ways to challenge structures that may perpetuate problems and create cycles of dependence. Students work across differences to empower individuals and build capacity in communities through access to opportunity and decision-making, knowledge sharing, and skill-building. And this critical approach fosters authentic relationships, which value connectedness and support interdependence and collaboration.

Fr. Hilary has developed a critical consciousness through community action and reflection and has a legacy of inspiring others to action. In this invited talk, he will share his experiences in communities, including strategies for engaging interdependent stakeholders, reflection about the role of social justice in his work, and insights about how to teach people to work in solidarity to make a positive difference in the world.



About the Speaker

Fr. Hilary Muheezangango is a Roman Catholic Priest serving in the Diocese of Kasana-Luweero, Uganda, where he is the Director for Development and Social Services. He is also the Director of the Mulungyomu Agro-Training and Research Center and the Executive Director of COVE Alliance (Children's Outreach and Vocational Education). Born in Uganda, he lived during the dictatorial times of President Idi Amin, and civil war prevented him from going to school until he was 12 years of age. After years of wandering the jungle for safety and living in a refugee camp in Kapeeka, he received sponsorship for his education. Fr. Hilary has earned a Bachelors degree in Social and Philosophical Studies from Makerere University and a Masters degree in Development Studies from Uganda Martyrs University as well as a Bachelors degree in Theology and a Masters degree in Divinity from the University of St. Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary in the USA.

Followed by a Reception and the
Learning in Community Showcase
Monday, May 4, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Illini Union, 2nd Floor Ballroom

