

Kericho, Kenya (2025)

We pray for the Diocesan President and all Mothers' Union members in Kericho.

(A candle is lit)

Kenya is located in eastern Africa, bordering Tanzania to the south and southwest, Uganda to the west, South Sudan to the northwest, Ethiopia to the north and Somalia to the northeast.

Kericho is home to Kenya's biggest water catchment area, the Mau Forest. Kericho is a very green area with a high altitude and virtually daily rains. It is located within the highlands west of the Kenyan Rift Valley and is the centre of Kenya's large tea industry. The hills are covered with fragrant tea bushes. Kenya is one of the world's major tea producers and Kenyan tea has been the leading major foreign exchange earner for the country.

Kenya is a country of contrasts. Its ethnic diversity has produced a vibrant culture but this is also be a source of conflict. Despite being the most advanced economy in east and central Africa, Kenya is ranked just 145 out of 188 countries in the world in the Human Development Index. Challenges to family life include high unemployment, crime, poverty and food insecurity. Peaceful demonstrations were staged around Kericho Town in December as the world marked International Human Rights Day. Hundreds of people from various organisations took to the streets with placards calling for an end to the rising cases of gender based violence in the country with the theme being "Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now". It has been reported that every day between one and three women and girls in Kenya are viciously murdered by their spouses, neighbours, work colleagues or strangers. Women and girls undergo sexual, physical and psychological violence including rape, assault, use of weapons and tools, hot water, acid, fire, domestic violence, stalking and doxing (the revealing of private and personal information online). Later in December the Catholic bishops made a passionate appeal to Kenyans to pray that peace and unity reigned in the country. Archbishop Philip Anyolo said "our togetherness needs to start in our families, let us come together and seek to spread the same unity that will translate into peace in the country".

Today there are more than 450,000 Mothers' Union members in Kenya, all engaged in initiatives that are meeting local needs. The challenges that Mothers' Union members have set up projects to deal with include

- Tackling female genital mutilation
- Peace and reconciliation
- Health awareness programmes
- Eagle (Church and Community Mobilisation)
- Vocational Skills training
- Marriage preparation
- Parenting Programme
- Savings and Credit groups
- Prison ministry
- Hospital visits
- Orphan care programme

Lord, we thank you for everything being carried out by Mothers' Union in Kericho and for the dedication of the members in very concerning times for them. We pray for Kenya in echoing the prayer of Archbishop Anyolo when he said "Let us pray for our leaders so that they can be inclined to abide the will of God while upholding what makes a nation flourish".

Amen

Gill MU / Kericho 2025