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HIV Testing: Leading by Example



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“I have been tested for HIV. I invite all religious leaders to also get tested. Lead by your example. Show that getting tested is responsible and right. HIV is a virus. Stigma is a huge problem and affects so many. We as religious leaders can do a lot to overcome it. That is our moral responsibility.”

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary
World Council of Churches



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“Giving example to check our status among religious leaders is more powerful than all interventions.”

Anggia Ermarini
Chairperson of Fatayat
Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia



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“Religious leaders preach in a temple, in a mosque, and in a church; they are a role model for others, such as students. I recommend people to go for a test. As a religious leader you should talk about it more. As Hindus, we are silent about it, but you should come out of it. When you are preaching, you should talk also about testing. I recommend everyone to have a test done.”

Kamla Fatania
Hindu Council of Kenya



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“I noticed that many people, especially young men, were not accepting to be tested. So I had to go and be tested in order to show them that testing is something that is good for everybody, not just for young people but for old and even those who are elected members, and clergy. Everyone should know their status because when you know your status you know how to cope with the virus.”

Rev. Mukiri Gatonye
African (Greek) Orthodox
Church of Kenya



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“The truth about our HIV status is part of our reality and a clear call to act with justice and compassion for all affected. Religious leaders can act with courage and confidence in being tested. Without the clarity of such information, we cannot make the sorts of decisions Jesus calls for.”

Brother Moy Hitchen
Edmund Rice International
Australia



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“The reason we should know our status is so we are able to take care of ourselves, and take care of those we love. By testing and knowing their HIV status, religious leaders are able to give courage to the rest and demystify the whole idea of knowing your status.”

Rev. Fr John Karanja
Vicar General
African (Greek) Orthodox
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“I took this test myself sometimes. As a leader, I thought I should lead from the front. I don’t tell people to do what I am afraid to do. I took it to encourage everybody else, and it had a big impact. It inspired other people to follow suit.”

*Pastor John Macharia
Seventh Day Adventist Church
East Kenya Union Conference*



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“I encourage everybody to get tested as we work towards the end of AIDS by 2030.”

*Rev. Fr. Joseph Mutie
General Secretary
Organization of African Instituted
Churches in Kenya*



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“It is very important for all of us to get tested for HIV so we know how to take care of ourselves. It should be understood as another normal test like we take other tests for our own health.”

*Bishop Alice Mutuma
Nyambene Synod
Methodist Church of Kenya*



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“One has to know one’s status to live positively, and one should also live in a manner that is mindful of yourself and mindful of others. As faith leaders we have to be in the forefront of explaining what we preach. When we preach something, then we should also be seen as an example of people who are committed to the things that we preach.”

Imam Yusuf Nasur
SUPKEM Nairobi



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“A leader should lead in everything. An imam should walk the talk. Don’t just talk. You encourage people to do likewise. If people know their status, and you as a leader, you explain, they know you have done that. They follow you. People have trust.”

Sheikh Abdul L. Phiri
Tagwa Mosque
Zambia



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“Being a religious priest and a healthcare worker, I went for HIV testing, since it is the only way to know if one is living with HIV or not. It is also the best way to access early treatment and there is no exception for a religious person like me. Moreover, I want to be in solidarity with all my brothers and sisters who would like to do the test for their health and the health of their loved ones.”

Fr. John Phuong Dinh Toai
MI Order of St Camillus Ministers of the
Sick, Vietnam



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“In my faith context, many Christians fear to test because they are afraid of the results. As a church leader, getting tested myself, especially publicly, is a statement that everyone should know their status. HIV status can only be known in one way, through the test, whether negative or positive, and it is the first step towards prevention or care.”

Rev. Pauline Wanjiru Njiru
Anglican Church of Kenya



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