

A Constructive Response to the Da Vinci Code: a Celebration for Africa

Harambee, a charitable foundation established on the occasion of the canonization of the founder of Opus Dei, holds a fundraising event on the eve of the release of The Da Vinci Code movie next door to Sony Corp.

05/11/2006

In an effort to respond constructively to the release of the movie version of *The Da Vinci Code* by Sony Corp., Opus Dei members and others have helped organize a fundraising event for HarambeeUSA on May 15 at 6:30 p.m. The event will be at the Dahesh Museum, 580 Madison Avenue at Madison Avenue and 56th Street – across the street from the Sony Building currently decked out in elaborate *Da Vinci Code* displays to promote the forthcoming movie.

Harambee promotes educational programs in Africa and about Africa – developmental projects on the sub-Saharan region and awareness-building activities elsewhere designed to encourage a positive outlook on African culture. Ngozi Agbim, spokesperson for the event, says Harambee has financed 24 African-run projects in 14 African countries since 2002. For more

background info, please visit
www.harambee-africa.org

“Many people feel pained by *The Da Vinci Code*’s lack of respect for the beliefs of Christians,” said Terri Carron, Opus Dei’s spokesperson. “We choose to organize a celebration, encouraging people to express these feelings peacefully and constructively.” Carron described the event as “a way to highlight some real activities of the real Catholic Church, an institution far different than the caricature presented in *The Da Vinci Code*.”

Building on the successful momentum of its previous work and the dire needs that exist all over Africa, Harambee plans to raise \$1 million in 2006 for the following projects (which are focused especially on education for women):

1) Sudan: a professional training program for women and youths from

South Sudan who have fled the civil war afflicting the country.

2) Kenya: a training program for elementary and high school faculty.

3) Madagascar: professional training for craftswomen and their families.

4) R. D. Congo: a health service program for women and children in the rural outskirts of Kinshasa.

Evening's Program includes:

- Welcoming remarks by emcee Kwesi Blair.
- Linda Corbi, Harambee's International Programs Coordinator, describes new projects for 2006.
- Remarks from Harambee grantee Susan Kinyua of the Kimlea school, Kianda Foundation, Kenya.
- New DVD documentary on Harambee (15 min.)

For more information on the HarambeeUSA, please contact Marie T. Oates at 617-290-7795 or mtoates@bostonprgroup.com.

Media availability of the speakers from 6:00 – 6:30 PM

High-quality (DV) video about Harambee. For journalists only.

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