



## MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA

*"I am a man, and nothing human is foreign to me."*

JPIC / ED

Bimonthly Bulletin

E-mail : [jp-pic.ed@mafrone.org](mailto:jp-pic.ed@mafrone.org)



No. 7. December 2012 / January - 2013

### ***All born equal and free!***

In the preface of the booklet on Cardinal Charles Lavigerie and the Antislavery Campaign, the Superior General tells us that, in our fight against modern forms of slavery, we are motivated by the belief that we are *"all born equal and free"*. For us Christians, this belief and conviction is sealed in the birth of our Brother and Lord, Jesus Christ. Saint Paul expresses it well, in his letter to the Galatians: *"There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither slave nor freeperson, there can be neither male nor female - for you are all one in Christ Jesus."* (3: 28)

In this Christmas Season, like many of those before it, many children will be born in families and situations which make them *less equal* and *less free* than their brothers and sisters, born on the same day and in the same season! Think of the tens of thousands who will be born with the 'chains of abject poverty' around their necks, which is a source of many other modern forms of slavery! Think of those many others who will be born in situations loaded with cultural and religious prejudice and discrimination!

Many of these children will be born in our parishes and areas of our missionary activities. How are we going to make this message - *all born equal and free* - ***become fresh*** for these little ones? (See article of Fr. [Vic Missiaen](#)).

I take this chance to wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Nnyombi Richard, M. Afr.

### **NEWS FROM THE SOCIETY**

#### ***Inauguration of the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Anti-Slavery Campaign of Cardinal Lavigerie***

We have received encouraging news from different sectors and communities about the inauguration and activities of the commemoration of this anniversary. In a number of places, these activities have been the result of a joint effort between the sons and daughters of Lavigerie. We cannot but laud this collaboration and recommend it throughout this year and afterwards. We shall be very happy to receive the feedback on these activities, so as to share them with the other members of our family.

Here in Rome, at Chiesa del Gesù, there were three activities to launch this event: A *Photo Exhibition, Conferences and a Eucharistic celebration* which were surprisingly well attended both by lay people and religious. The festive Eucharistic celebration, which was the climax of these inaugural activities, presided over by the spiritual son of Lavigerie, Mgr Michael Fitzgerald, reminded us that those who daily *"break the bread of life"* are commissioned to go into the world to *"break the chains"* that enslave the lives of their brothers and sisters.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who were involved in preparing these inaugural activities in the different places. Thank you very much!

**NB:** Unfortunately, we could not produce the video of the photo exhibition, as we had promised, because of problems of the 'rights of authorship' on some of the photos used in it. Doing so, would have been very expensive.

It is sad to note that this is a continuance of the chain of exploitation of the 'victims' of these modern forms of slavery! How many of these victims - 'prostitutes, children working in mines etc. - whose photos are now a source of a wealth for the so called 'owners of the rights of authorship' were paid a single penny? On the other hand, what percentage of the revenue from these photos is used to fight against the injustices subjected by these people?

\*\*\*

### **Slide Shows**

Some of you have not been able to get the sound on the slide show prepared by our confrere Emmanuel Quertemont. The problem seems to be with your computers not being equipped with the Power-Point (Pptx) of "Office 2010". We are sorry about that!

\*\*\*

### **FORMATION AND MEETINGS**

**Islam in Europe: Meeting at Mours (France): 9<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> October 2012**

This meeting was organised by ARCRE/PECRE team in Brussels with two main objectives: to take stock of the present situation of the presence of Muslims in Europe and the activities of our confreres in promoting Christian-Muslim dialogue.

There were 20 participants. All the sectors of the European Province were represented except Ireland and Poland. Majority of the participants had an Arab-Islamic experience. Some of the main points from the sharing and inputs were:

- *Diversity* of 'European Islam' due to the origins of the Muslims - North Africa, Turkey, Asia, Africa South of Sahara, etc., and the different social and political realities of the different European countries.
- Increase of *Islam-phobia*, which should be taken as a challenge to strengthen the efforts to promote interreligious encounter.
- Fragility of the confreres involved in Christian-Muslim Dialogue due especially to their well advanced age. There is, therefore, an urgent need for the Provincial team to find

a remedy for this situation in order to ensure the continuity of this apostolate.

A similar meeting planned for next year will bring together the JPIC and ED Coordinators.

You can find more information about the work of ARCRE / PECRE team on their website: [www.arcre.org](http://www.arcre.org)

### **Meeting of the JPIC-ED Coordinators in Kampala, Uganda**

From the 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> November 2012 a meeting of the JPIC-ED Coordinators was held in, in Lourdel House, Kampala. With the exception of the EPO section, all the other provinces were represented. There were 20 participants. A key point, discussed at length, was the role of the provincial JPIC-ED coordinator. The staff of John Paul II Justice and Peace Centre talked about their activities. Archbishop John Baptist Odama (Gulu) talked about the political and religious complications in the search for a just and lasting peace in Northern Uganda and the neighbouring countries of Congo RDC, Sudan and Central Africa. Bishop Giuseppe Philippi (Kotido), who is the chairperson of the JP-Commission of the Uganda Episcopal conference, gave an indication to the participants, of the reality on the ground and the many obstacles ahead, so that JPIC-ED ministry can become an integral part of the pastoral agenda of the Church in Uganda.

One of the remarks made in the reports and discussions was that our formal involvement in ED is lagging behind and therefore there is a need to do something about it. Some suggested that we should, speak of ED-JPIC instead of speaking of JPIC-ED, reasoning that, in reality, ED precedes JPIC!

The participants spent the whole day of 24<sup>th</sup> November at *Sharing Youth Centre*, attending the different activities - talks, songs and a play - to mark the inauguration of the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Cardinal Lavignerie's Anti-Slavery Campaign in the Uganda Sector. The lively and challenging talk on the new forms of slavery by the guest of honour, Mrs Miria Matembe, former minister for Ethics and

Integrity (1998-2003) and now a fully committed women's rights activist, gave food of thought to the coordinators. This was reinforced by the presentation on Child Slavery in Uganda by the John Paul II Justice and Peace Centre as well as other interventions

## **OTHER NEWS**

*Visit of Cardinal Peter K. A. Turkson to the Generalate*

Cardinal Turkson, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, paid a visit to the Generalate on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2012, and gave a talk on *Africae Munus*. Members of MSOLA were also present. According to Cardinal Turkson and in accordance with the wish of the late John Paul II, who had initiated the idea of having this synod, the Second Synod of Africa was a continuation of the First Synod and therefore could only be understood in this context. He said that the image of the *Church as Family of God* proposed by *Ecclesia in Africa* should be the starting point to understand the theme of *Africae Munus: Reconciliation, Justice and Peace*. It is because this 'Family of God' and the continent of Africa itself, are so much wounded by injustices and divisions, caused by ethnic, tribal and political differences, that there is need for reconciliation and justice in order to restore communion and peace both within the Church and the continent.

The challenge to us, the Cardinal said, is to translate the Synod proposals into concrete pastoral programmes otherwise they will remain just an ideology. According to him, reconciliation is to be concretely tackled at least at six levels:

a) Reconciliation with our Faith founded on the Gospel especially in this year of the Faith; b) reconciliation with our basic and common vocation to live in *communion* with God and others; c) Reconciliation within the Church; d) Reconciliation with the Christians of other Churches; e) Reconciliation with believers of other religions; f) reconciliation with the often unsatisfactory outcome of our work in relation to the ideal we would like to attain, (*Africae Munus* # 5).

## **INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS DAYS**

### **December - 2012**

**+01:** Aids Day

**+02:** Abolition of Slave Trade

**+09:** International Day against Corruption

**+10:** International Day for Human Rights

**+18:** International Migrants' Day

**+20:** International Day for Human Solidarity

**+23:** Remembrance of Cardinal Lavigerie's antislavery conference at Chiesa del Gesù, Rome.

### **January - 2013**

**+01.** World Day for Peace: Theme of Pope's Message: "*Blessed are the peacemakers.*" (*See text*)

**+17-25:** Week for prayer of Christian Unity: Theme: *What does God require of us?* (cf. Micah 6: 6-8; *See Text*)

**+20:** International Day for Social Justice

**+27:** Beginning of *Kumbh Mela* Festivals - Hindu. Believed to be the biggest World religious event.

**+27:** Remembrance of the Victims of Holocaust