



MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA

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

JPIC / ED

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Builder of Bridges between People - Passion for dialogue

Our confrere Etienne Renaud passed away in June this year. From the many testimonies offered at his funeral, two phrases seem to summarize his missionary vision and life: *Builder of bridges between people - Passion for dialogue*. This is the legacy that Etienne passes on to us as we continue on our missionary journey in our stormy world.

I invite you to meditate on Etienne's words which he pronounced in his homily, 25 years ago, when for the first time as Superior General, he received five young men - from different races and nationalities - into the Society on the day they made their Oath (Toulouse, 2nd January 1988):

"You are going to find a continent in search for unity, countries confronted with racial and tribal conflicts. The communities of the Missionaries of Africa, not only international but also inter-racial will be a sign and a call. The group you form today is a symbol of what will be our communities of tomorrow.

You are going to find a continent in search of justice, countries confronting the problems of corruption, violation of human rights, inequalities in the sharing of meagre resources. You will have to open your hearts to be in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. The struggle for justice is not optional. The Church everywhere must be a sign of hope.

In the countries where you will be sent, you will find people marching on the way to God, using other paths different from the one that Jesus opened for us. I think, in a special way, of Islam and all types of religious movements springing up in Africa. Remember that the unique solution for a Christian is to go up to the end of the Gospel demands, to be contagious of Jesus Christ, in the respect of other religious paths."

(See: video (13mn): <http://vimeo.com/70931316> ;

Article by Fr. André Ferré, <http://gric-international.org/2013/actualite-du-dialogue/le-pere-etienne-renaud/>)

May his soul rest in peace.

Nyombi Richard, M Afr.

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETY AND ELSEWHERE

Plenary Council in Ougadougou

In the Plenary Council just ended, our commitment to promoting JPIC-ED was surely on the agenda. Our commitment to Christian-Muslim Dialogue was again strongly emphasised. It was noted that if there is anything specific that the Missionaries of Africa could contribute to the mission of the Church today, it is the dialogue with the Muslims. This was said, when at the same time in Nairobi, Kenya, the Westgate Shopping Centre was under terror attack in which more than sixty innocent people lost their lives. In fact, the reaction of the Kenyan people and their political and religious leaders to this heinous act, confirmed our desire and willingness to promote interreligious harmonious co-existence in spite of the contrary winds.

Members of the General Council sign the Pastoral Code of conduct

During the Eucharist that marked the end of the Plenary Council in Ougadougou, the members of the General Council plus the Secretary and the Treasurer General, the Secretary for Initial Formation And the Coordinator for JPIC-ED, signed the *'Pastoral Code of Conduct'*, committing themselves to respect *'the rights and advance the welfare of each person'*. This code 'provides a set of standards for conduct in certain pastoral situations'. This act of the General Council is expected to be followed by *"all the members of the Society of the Missionaries of Africa and people working with them on pastoral projects and in parishes'*.

BURKINA FASO - Ouagadougou

The official ceremony to mark the end of the 125th Anniversary of the Anti-Slavery Campaign of Cardinal Lavigerie took place in Ougadougou on the 8th September. The Eucharist was presided by the Archbishop of Ougadougou, Mgr. Philippe Ouedrago. In fact, this was ***'the end of the beginning'*** of our combat with more concrete action planned against modern forms of slavery. This is what we prayed for throughout the anniversary year and what we continue to prayer for: *"Father, give us your Holy Spirit. May He obtain for us strength and courage for this Anti-Slavery Campaign that we continue in the steps of our Founder, Cardinal Lavigerie."*

BELGIUM - Brussels

A Eucharistic celebration, to mark the 125th Anniversary of the Anti-Slavery Campaign of Cardinal Lavigerie was held in Brussels on the 29th September 2013. It took place in the Cathedral, St. Gudule, where Cardinal Lavigerie gave an anti-slavery conference on the 15th August 1888. The Archbishop of Brussels was the main celebrant while the Provincial, Fr. André Simonart gave the homily.

MOZAMBIQUE

Conferences, debates, radio and television interviews and drama were organised between 29th August and 15th September 2013 to mark the 125th Anniversary of the Anti-slavery campaign of Cardinal Lavigerie. These were in different places: Tete, Dombe, Sussundenga, Chimoio and Beira.

ROME: 50th Anniversary of Pacem in Terris

We are celebrating this year the 50th Anniversary of the Encyclical Letter of Pope John XXIII, *"Pacem in Terris"*. The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace organised a congress in Rome, from 2nd - 4th October. The aim of this celebration as explained by Cardinal Turkson was: *"to verify the translation [of the encyclical] in practice of its fundamental teachings in the field of human rights, the overall common good, in politics, and the fields in which the peaceful coexistence among peoples and nations is played out."* Education of Christians to politics and promotion of interreligious dialogue were emphasized in our search for world peace. Two of our confreres participated in this event: Mgr Michael Fitzgerald and Fr. Sean O'Leary.

World Council of Churches (WCC) 10th Assembly in Busan, South Korea

From the 30th October to the 8th November 2013, the WCC will hold its 10th General Assembly in Busan, South Korea. The theme will be: *God of life lead us to peace and justice*. During this same assembly, the New Mission Statement: *Together towards life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes*, will be launched. The Catholic delegation will have 24 members, among whom our Superior General, Frs. Richard Baawobr and Richard Nnyombi.

All African Conference of Churches (AACC): 50th Anniversary

In June this year, the AACC celebrated its Golden Jubilee of its existence under the theme: *"God of Life, Lead Africa to Peace, Justice and Dignity."* (See website: <http://www.aacc-ceta.org/>)

KENYA: "Voting to pull out of ICC was a voting for impunity"

The Kenyan Conference of Catholic Bishops, Justice and Peace Commission (KCJPC) issued a press release on 10th September describing the vote by the members of parliament to pull out of the International Criminal Court (ICC) as '*voting for impunity*'. Such a vote, says the statement, shows that the members of parliament place individual interests above those of the country. Since then, some other African countries seem to be leaning towards following the vote of the Kenyan Parliament. What message does this convey? Is the ICC neo-colonialist and anti-African, pursuing selective justice, as some say? Will the other National Catholic Justice and Peace Commissions follow the example of that of Kenya? (Read <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24452288>)

FRANCE: Prayer Vigil and Ecumenical Colloquy on New forms of slavery

An Ecumenical Symposium in memory of the 125th Anniversary of the Anti-Slavery Campaign of Card. Lavigerie has been organised by the Missionaries of Africa, the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (White Sisters) and other groups to take place on Saturday, **19th October 2013** (8.30am - 5.00pm) at the Palais du Luxembourg (Paris 5^e). The evening before, there will be a prayer vigil (8.00pm - 9.00pm) in the Crypt of the Church of St. Sulpice (Paris 6^e). NB: It was in this church that Lavigerie was ordained priest on the 2nd June 1849 and launched his Anti-Slavery Campaign on the 1st July 1888.

INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS DAYS

October 2013

- +01:** World Habitat Day. **Theme:** "*Urban mobility*"
- +02:** International Day of Non-violence (Birth Day of Gandhi): **Theme:** "Education for peace"
- +15:** International Rural Women. **Theme:** "*The Gender Agenda: Gaining Momentum*"
- +15:** Id-al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice, Tabaski - Muslims)
- +16:** World Food Day. **Theme:** "*Sustainable Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition*".
- +17:** Eradication of poverty. **Theme:** "*Working together towards a world without discrimination: Building on the experience and knowledge of people in extreme poverty.*"
- +20:** Mission Sunday
- +24:** United Nations' Day
- +31:** Birth Day of Cardinal Lavigerie

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- 20.** Universal Children's Day: **Theme:** "*Stop violence against children.*"
- 25.** Eradication of Violence against Women
- 26.** 121st Death Anniversary of Cardinal Lavigerie

December 2013

- +01.** World AIDS Day. **Theme** (2011-2015): "*Getting to zero: zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS related deaths*".
- +02.** Abolition of slave trade
- +08.** Feast of M. Afr. + Msola
- +10.** International Human Rights Day
- +18.** International Migrants' Day