



AFRAM ZONAL COORDINATOR
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"We can't row the canoe fast with one paddle"
(African proverb)

COORDS-LINK 0807, July 31, 2008

Dear fellow Coordinators,

In the month of July big events have happened in the Society and in the Zone AFRAM. There was the 7th Plenary Assembly of the Catholic Biblical Federation in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (June 24-July 2), the Workshop for New Provincials (July 6-19) followed by the Meeting of the Generalate with the Zonal Coordinators (July 22-24) and the Workshop for AFRAM Pre-Novitiate and Novitiate Formators in Lusaka, Zambia (July 27-August 2). I will highlight some points in this UPDATE and send you ATTACHED Documents which are more in detail.

Dar es Salaam. For the first time in its history the Catholic Biblical Federation held its Plenary Assembly in the African soil, in the "Abode of Peace", the largest city of Tanzania. It was also the first time that there was a very big number of participants, around 235, coming from the different parts of the World. There were more than 20 archbishops and bishops, many priests and religious and a impressive number of lay people engaged in the Biblical Pastoral Ministry. The SVD presence was remarkable: 22 confreres! There were also 2 SSps sisters. The Theme of the Assembly was "The Word of God, Source of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace". Hopefully it could contribute something for the two Synods of Bishops namely on the Word of God in 2008 and on Reconciliation, Justice and Peace in 2009 with a special attention to Africa. (Based on the report of Fr. Joseph Kallanchira, representing Verbum Bible)

Provincials Workshop. The Generalate has invited 30 Major Superiors; three unfortunately were not able to come. Father General, the General Councillors, the Officials and members of the Curia were present. This was a visible sign of their concern for the new leaders. The Four Zonal Coordinators, the translators and the Staff of Nemi were also there to assist in the Workshop. From the AFRAM Zone we had five participants: Fr. Thomas D'Mello (GHA), Fr. Zeferino Martins (ANG), Fr. Paul Shiju Puthenpurackal (BOT), Fr. Eusebio Manangbao (KEN) and Fr. Alexander Kalinayil (ZIM). Fr. Pius Pandai Dosi (MAD) was not able to come for health reasons. Aside from the valuable inputs, group work and sharing the participants had a chance to talk personally with Fr. General and other members of the Generalate. We also had a chance to meet as a Zone. Among the concerns that came out were the difficulties in realising the self-sufficiency programme. Also, some provinces are weakened due to the early departures of young missionaries. We asked Fr. General for a chat and he did cordially accept our invitation. He came with Fr. E Stanislaus Chindecasse (ANG) and Fr. Emmanuel Fianu (GHA), the general secretary. In response to our concerns Fr. General pointed out that self-reliance programme can be achieved only progressively. The Generalate would do its best to support the needy provinces. Besides, self-reliance does not necessarily mean having big projects with entails big investments. Instead we should continue to rely on the peoples' participation and generosity and animate them to support and help the missionaries.

Generalate Meeting with the Zonal Coordinators. Every year the Generalate meets the four Zonal Coordinators during summer. Each Zonal Coordinator gave a report on the situation of the Zone taking into consideration the concrete realities, the SVD identity and the mission statements. A pertinent question had to be answered: what would be the focus of the missionary activities of the Zone for the next years to come (2009-2012)? Please read the report in the attached file. *I would be very grateful if you give your reactions and commentaries.* Thank you in advance.

- After the reports there was a review of the General Visitations of AFRAM followed by an Evaluation of the Workshop for New Provincials. Then, Bro. Alphonse Berger gave an Update of the Assembly on

Brother Vocation. In the end it was decided that the General Assembly will be held in the Philippines (PHS) on the 29th of June to 12th of July. The participants were limited to 38, two-thirds of which are Brothers. From our AFRAM Zone list 4 brothers were chosen and 1 priest plus the Zonal Coordinator. Another important point in the Agenda was the review of the Resolutions and Recommendations of the XVI General Chapter. There were 7 resolutions, 11 recommendations and 1 special recommendation from the section on Finances.

Lumko project. It was not easy to find two confreres to complete the SVD core team for Lumko. We had to take into consideration the qualifications of the candidates and the management of personnel in the provinces. Last July 14 Fr. General convoked a Council Meeting which included the item of Lumko. The provincial of BOT was invited as well as the Zonal Coordinator. Finally two names were chosen. Letters were sent to the concerned provincials asking them to contact the solicited confreres. In case the responses will be positive the next step will be to meet the representatives of the South African Bishops Conference for Lumko. By then a contract will be signed by both parties.

Workshop of Formators. I will give the report for the August Update (0808)

Fraternally yours in the Divine Word,

P. Xene A. Sanchez, SVD
AZC

Please see attached files: (I will send them in separate files)

1. AFRAM Zonal Report 2008
2. Catholic Biblical Federation Assembly 2008