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AFRICA/BURUNDI - Conclusion of the Burundians youth Forum in communion with the 26th World Youth Day

Bujumbura (Agenzia Fides) - In communion with the young people in the world gathered around the Pope in Madrid to celebrate the 26th World Youth Day, the Episcopal Commission for the Apostolate of the Laity organized the 5th Youth Forum, which was held in the diocese of Bubanza, from 17 to 21 August.
According to a letter received by Fides, more than 1450 young people from all the dioceses in Burundi attended. During the Forum, young people reflected together with the Bishops on various topics: the deepening of the theme of World Youth Day ("Rooted and grounded in Christ, firm in faith); "teaching of peace and reconciliation in Burundi", "the meaning of the cross for Christians and the role of the Virgin Mary in the history of salvation"; "the challenges of evangelization of young people today" and "the identity of the Catholic Action movements".
The diocese of Bubanza was chosen to host the Youth Forum because it received the cross of the young people from Burundi for a year and, on 31 August 2011 will be conveyed to the young people of the Archdiocese of Gitega. The cross of the youth is transferred from one diocese to another to allow the faithful to venerate it.
The closing Mass was celebrated on August 21 presided by His Exc. Mgr. Jean Ntagwarara, Bishop of Bubanza, along with several priests who had accompanied the participants. The Mass was preceded by a procession of 2 km, where the young people, carrying the cross, prayed and sung the wonders of the Lord. In his homily and in his final message, the Bishop of Bubanza thanked the Episcopal Conference for having chosen his diocese to host the event. He then thanked the Christian families in Bubanza for the reception and the generosity with which they welcomed the young people from different dioceses. Mgr. Ntagwarara urged the youth to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, offering a good testimony to their peers.
The Mass was attended by several civil authorities including the President of the Senate and the Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture. They all expressed their appreciation for the Church's commitment in promoting the youth pastoral. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 22/08/2011)

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