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AMERICA/COLOMBIA - To evangelize among violence, the atheist ideology and consumerist culture: witness of the Apostolic Vicar of San Vicente

Rome (Agenzia Fides) - "Every community member should become a missionary, evangelist, the laity are having to become pastoral operators, only this will give us strength and courage to continue this mission,": says His Excellency Mons . Francisco Javier Munera Correa, of the Consolata Missionaries (IMC), Apostolic Vicar of San Vicente-Puerto Leguizamo, in Colombia, refering to the document of Aparecida. Mgr. Munera Correa, who works in the south of the Amazon area, where the Consolata Missionaries arrived more than 60 years ago, is in Rome together with the Bishops of Colombia, for the quinquennial visit Ad Limina Apostolorum. Fides Agency interviewed him on the occasion of the meeting with the Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

"We have the legacy of the missionary work carried out by the Catalan Capuchin Missionaries, who have done much in the entire area of Caquetá – the Apostolic Vicar tells Fides -. Here, 25 years ago, the Diocese of Florencia and the Apostolic Vicariate of San Vicente-Puerto Leguizamo were created. In the territory there are indigenous peoples who live along the major rivers-Caquetá and Putumayo; there are also people who came here to colonize, especially migrants, as a result of the violence that was lived in Colombia in the 50s; there are also other groups of people who came to produce gaucho, quina, and many farmers who then found themselves before the problem of the cultivation of coca."

Focusing on the current situation, Mgr. Francisco Javier Munera Correa says that the territory is marked by the guerrillas of the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), present for 48 years with political, social and military control of the area. "Faced with this situation - continues the Apostolic Vicar - as a Church we must evangelize considering some major challenges, first of all violence and the guerrillas, but also other types of violence linked to this, because there are historical and cultural factors that determine the way of living of the community. Secondly, the guerrilla, based on a Marxist, atheist ideology, which promotes the class struggle, and this destroys the foundations of the community and faith in God.

The third challenge is the consumerist culture, which degrades many values ".

The Apostolic Vicar of San Vicente-Puerto Leguizamo emphasizes the urgency of the new evangelization, of "strengthening the proclamation of Jesus Christ to all levels." "If at first it was sufficient to maintain a faith inherited from our ancestors - he explains - now we have to revive faith in our area, along with the formation of the communities. The union of small communities is a hard and difficult task to maintain where you can experience the Christian faith and promote the journey of faith, namely catechesis, formation, growth of faith. This becomes a challenge when, in these same areas, one has to fight sects, proselytism ... The new evangelization must consider these challenges to be able to reach everyone, as indeed already indicated in the document of Aparecida. " (CE) (Agenzia Fides 20/6/2012)

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