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Fondata nel 1927

VATICAN - Cardinal Filoni exhorts the laity to an "active and courageous" presence in Central African land, aware of the valuable contribution they can make as disciples of Christ

Bangui (Agenzia Fides) - The exhortation to take more and more charge in the organization and animation of Christian communities, because it is "an effective way to take an active part in the mission of the Church", this how Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, addressed representatives of movements, associations and groups of the laity of the various dioceses of the Central African Republic, who he met today, July 20, at the "Centre Jean XXIII" in Bangui.
The Prefect of the Congregation reaffirmed that "all Christians, because of their baptism, are called to be missionaries and to evangelize, each according to his/her own identity in the Church and social and professional status." Then he continued: "The active participation in the evangelizing mission of the Church stands today, specifically in terms of strengthening the faith and the authentic witness of Christians. Commit yourselves, therefore, to being 'salt and light' in the Central African land".
The laity is asked to have "a good and adequate spiritual and doctrinal formation," emphasized the Cardinal, and in this sense, the Year of Faith "is an occasion for the re-discovery and study of the fundamental contents of faith." This year especially, hoped the Prefect of the Congregation, "can also offer you the opportunity for reflection and joint action in order to continue with courage and in depth the work of evangelization, renewing your testimony of faith."
In his speech Cardinal Filoni largely focused on the emphasis to be given to young people, to whom is entrusted the future of the world and the Church, and vocations to priesthood and religious life. After recalling that the pastoral care of vocations has as its protagonists, the ecclesial community in its various expressions, the Cardinal pointed out that the laity "is given a very special responsibility for the accompaniment of vocations to priesthood and religious life": "as responsible for Christian families, you participate in a special and original way to the mission of the Church, teacher and mother. May your families offer authentic vocations to the Church.
"The Prefect also recalled the duty of the laity to also provide the financial support of the Church, so it has what is necessary, the works of the apostolate and of charity, and the livelihood of its ministers. The Cardinal concluded his speech with this exhortation: "Lay faithful, it is through you that the Church is made present and active in the life of the world: the world of politics, culture, arts, media and other associations. I encourage you to have a very active and courageous presence in these worlds, a presence without complexes or shame, but rather proud and aware of the valuable contribution you can make as disciples of Christ, 'salt of the earth' and 'light of the world'."
(SL) (Agenzia Fides 20/7/2012)

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