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AFRICA/UGANDA - "We want to preserve the missionary spirit handed down to us by our first evangelizers" says the Bishop of Arua

Kampala (Agenzia Fides) - "The diocese was founded thanks to the work of evangelization of the Comboni Missionaries. The Comboni Missionaries are still present in our diocese and we are very happy to have them with us, " says to Fides Agency His Exc. Mgr. Sabino Ocan Odoki, Bishop of Arua, who this year celebrates the centenary of the evangelization of the area . "The conclusive celebrations started on December 9th and we are very happy to see a massive participation of the faithful, many of whom come here to Arua on foot from the entire territory of the diocese," says Mgr. Odoki. The Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, is on a pastoral visit in Arua for this very solemn occasion (see Fides 12/12/2012; 13/12/2012).
With regards to the future prospects of evangelization in his diocese, Mgr. Odoki says: "We will continue to work in the spirit of the Comboni missionaries, opening new parishes especially in towns like Arua, Koboko, Moyo and Adjumani, and expand the network of centers of Catechism throughout the entire diocesan territory. In this sense we are a missionary diocese, because we have many priestly and religious vocations. "
Among the most important realities created by the Comboni Missionaries in Arua is Radio Pacis directed by Fr. Tonino Pasolini, a Comboni. "After 100 years since the arrival of the first Comboni missionaries in Arua, we are still present, but we are few, because St. Comboni gave us the mandate to 'save Africa with the Africans'. At present most of the activities of the diocese is run by Ugandan diocesan priests " says Fr. Pasolini to Fides Agency. "The Comboni Missionaries are present in the Minor Basilica of Lodonga and in another parish, and in Radio Pacis, which broadcasts in three frequencies. The first two are transmitted from Arua and the third from Gulu. "
"Radio Pacis covers therefore several dioceses in Uganda until Karamogia. The name of the radio itself was chosen to give hope to the people exhausted by the war of the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army), which for decades has terrorized northern Uganda and has now moved its operations in other Countries," the missionary continues. "Thank God, today, in all the regions where Radio Pacis signal is present there is no more war; there is peace and desire to resume their lives," concludes Fr. Pasolini. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 13/12/2012)

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