



AFRICA/BURKINA FASO - Centenary of the Evangelization of Koudougou: an extraordinary opportunity to become more aware of the missionary mandate

Koudougou (Agenzia Fides) - For the first time 100 years ago, in 1912, the Good News arrived in the region including the present diocese of Koudougou, in Burkina Faso, starting from the town of Réo, in the province of Sanguié, in the central West African country. The Diocese of Koudougou was the third region to receive the proclamation of the Gospel in Burkina Faso, brought by the Missionaries of Africa, after the diocese of Koupéla and Ouagadougou, and today, 15 December 2012, the local Church in celebration concluded solemnly the Centenary of evangelization.

The coincidence with the celebration of the Year of Faith, the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, and the Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization, "are not accidental but providential coincidences," writes Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, in his message sent for the occasion to the Bishop of Koudougou, His Exc. Mgr. Joachim Ouedraogo. It is in fact a "kairos, a moment of grace, a call, a call for all of your local Church to take the missionary mandate seriously."

After quoting the first Mass celebrated in Réo on March 12, 1912, Cardinal Filoni pays homage "to the pioneers of evangelization in your region" and to those who succeeded him, and points out that in 2001 the first centenary of evangelization of Burkina Faso had already been celebrated.

Cardinal Bernardin Gantin, then special envoy of Blessed Pope John Paul II, on January 21, 2001, during the closing celebration, said, "Today, of course, is not a closing day, but rather a new beginning ..."

Cardinal Filoni continues: "I want to tell you that today is really a day to emphasize that your mission is to evangelize ... All men have the right to know Jesus Christ and his Gospel, and it is the duty of Christians, of all Christians to proclaim the Good News. The celebration of the centenary is an extraordinary opportunity for you to become more aware of this duty." (SL) (Agenzia Fides 15/12/2012)

> LINKS

Cardinal Filoni's message, in French: http://www.fides.org/fra/documents/C.Filoni_Cent_Koudougou_15122012.doc: