



## **VATICAN - Cardinal Filoni closes the centenary of the evangelization of northern Uganda: "May the power of the Holy Spirit guide you in your Missio ad gentes for the benefit of the Church in Africa"**

Arua (Agenzia Fides) - "May the blessing of the our Risen Lord upon this country and those who govern it, both traditional and political leaders. May His Holy Spirit guide you towards the realization of the New Evangelization. Under the protection and prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Lady of the Missions and Queen of Evangelization, to whom the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples entrusts the Catholic Church in Uganda, may the power of the same Holy Spirit guide you in your Missio ad gentes for the benefit of the Church in Africa and, most especially, for the local Churches here." With these wishes, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, concluded his message at the end of the centenary of evangelization in northern Uganda (see Fides 12/12/2012 and following days). The closing celebration was held on Sunday, December 16 in Indriani, at the Holy Cross Pilgrim Centre.

"In rendering thanks to God, it is important to recall the countless faith-filled people who have worked in so many ways to advance the Catholic faith to where it is in Uganda today - the Cardinal said -. To mention them each by name would take a long time, but through each one of you here, I can see the work of your predecessors – be they Bishops, Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful - who spent their lives to spread the Catholic faith in this region of the world". The Prefect of the Congregation stressed the "particular debt of gratitude to the Comboni Missionaries," who, in the early months of 1912 brought the gospel to this area. "The flourishing of the Church today is an eloquent tribute to the self-sacrifice offered by these Missionaries, and a credit to the tremendous willingness of the local people, who welcomed them and embraced the Faith." Cardinal Filoni also cited the exemplary witness given by St. Daudi Okelo and St. Jildo Irwa, catechists martyrs, pointing out that the spread of the Gospel in northern Uganda would not have been so successful without the generous work of catechists.

"While I offer well-deserved congratulations to you, as God's family, for the spiritual and social achievements already accomplished over the course of the last century in this area of Uganda - said the Cardinal Prefect -, I also wish to exhort you - Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful - in this Year of Faith, to continue to deepen your Christian life through an ever more personal union with Christ in the Eucharist. In this great Sacrament, Jesus, Who is really present, will constantly strengthen you for the future missionary work to be done in this beautiful country and beyond. " (SL) (Agenzia Fides 17/12/2012)

### > LINKS

The full text of the Message, in English: [http://www.fides.org/eng/documents/C.Filoni\\_Arua\\_Msg\\_100\\_16122012.doc](http://www.fides.org/eng/documents/C.Filoni_Arua_Msg_100_16122012.doc):