



VATICAN - The new challenges of evangelization in Africa at the centre of the XX SMA Assembly

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - "Your Society has left a profound impression, of which today we can see the fruits that the Holy Spirit has created for the generous contribution of Saint confreres," said Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, in his homily on the occasion of the XX General Assembly of the African Missions Society (9 April 2013). "About 157 years (1859) have gone by since Mgr. Melchior de Marion Brésillac gave life to his project to create a Missionary Institute for the evangelization of Africa," recalled the Cardinal who pointed out that "your Society in the first 65 years in West Africa lost about 400 members among Priests and Nuns."

For this reason after more than 50 years since the Council and 157 since the founding of SMA the commitment of evangelization carried out by the Church in Africa is in progress, especially in light of the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Africae Munus* on the Church in Africa by Pope Benedict XVI. "Of course, the study of "*Africae Munus* " will be very significant in order to understand all the challenges of this beloved and troubled Continent dear to you, but not least to our Congregation of Propaganda Fide; it is suffice to say that last year I made 7 trips to Africa" said Cardinal Filoni who then pointed out some of the issues on which we need to carry out a serious reflection and comparison.

After the Liturgy of the Word of the Day, Cardinal Filoni concluded with the hope that "the Risen Jesus gives you His peace and His joy, and may Mary assist you in view of your renewed missionary commitment. Thank you for your service to the Missions and may God reward you." (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 10/04/2013)