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Organo di informazione delle Pontificie Opere Missionarie
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AFRICA/NIGERIA - "Threats to marriage and family", warn the Bishops of the Province of Ibadan

Abuja (Agenzia Fides) - "The Year of Faith, which began in October 2012, has witnessed a new zeal and energy and zeal in the laity's outreach in evangelization" say the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ibadan, in Nigeria, in the document issued at the end of their meeting held from August 4 to 5.
"Many new Catholic communities have been founded and others have been upgraded to the status of parishes" is what is underlined in the statement sent to Fides Agency. "More importantly, many more people have drawn closer to God spiritually through the Sacraments, the Bible apostolate, and through the activities of the Charismatic Renewal, the Legion of Mary, and the charitable organizations".
The Bishops also dwell on the political and social reality of Nigeria, recalling first of all the drama originated "from the senseless bloodshed and violence made in some parts of the Country". The Prelates expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the authorities to protect civilians, but are concerned about the threats to the culture of life. "We condemn the decision of the government to return to the dark ages of adopting capital punishment", the document states, reiterating what has already been stated by the Nigerian Bishops' Conference (see Fides 01/07/2013). Another cause for concern is the controversy on the marriage of minors and the debate on homosexuality. "We confirm that a family consists of a man, a woman and children. We empathise with people who live with homosexual and gay tendencies and call on society not to discriminate against them. We however firmly reject all attempts to enshrine these tendencies in the Nigerian Constitution and we appeal to every Nigerian to protect the traditional values of marriage and the family as a way of fostering a cohesive society" the Bishops conclude. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 09/08/2013)

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