



## **EUROPE/POLAND - A family of people to help future priests and consecrated persons in mission countries**

Niepokalanów (Agenzia Fides) - "Adopt missionary seminarians" is the slogan of the initiative that will start in Poland on 1 October, the feast of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, Patroness of the Missions, in order to promote the spiritual and material support for seminarians and candidates to religious life in mission countries. According to information sent to Fides Agency, this was illustrated by Father Bogdan Michalski, National Secretary of the Pontifical Society of St. Peter the Apostle, during the meeting held in Niepokalanów, from September 16 to 18, entitled "Called to mission territories - the future of the Church", which was attended by about a hundred people between diocesan directors of the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS), in charge of the missions of religious congregations and lay mission animators.

Father Tomasz Atlas, National Director of the PMS in Poland opened the meeting which was focused mainly on the Pontifical Society of St. Peter the Apostle, in the context of the 125th anniversary of its founding and the 80th anniversary of the death of its founder, Jeanne Bigard. "We want to create a family of people who come together to help future priests and consecrated persons in mission countries. One cannot speak of true growth regarding the local Church as the universal Church without the presence of indigenous priests", said Father Atlas illustrating the purpose of the campaign "Adopt missionary seminarians".

The main guest of the meeting was father Simeone Stachera, OFM, National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in Morocco, who shared with the participants the experience of the Church in North Africa and the difficulties he faces with regards to the proclamation of the Gospel. The participants were also informed of the Episcopal Commission for the Missions during a meeting with its President, His Exc. Mgr. Jerzy Mazur. The meeting ended with a Mass presided by His Exc. Mgr. Józef Michalik, President of the Episcopal Conference of Poland. (SL) (Agenzia Fides 24/09/2013)