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VATICAN - Cardinal Filoni to the clergy of Equatorial Guinea: "A priest is not an official of the Church, but administrator of the mysteries of God":

Mongomo (Agenzia Fides) - "The fruitfulness of your priestly ministry and the effectiveness of your pastoral action essentially depend above all, on your communion with Christ". This is what the Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Cardinal Fernando Filoni, said to the clergy of Equatorial Guinea, who he met on 31 May in Mongomo.
The Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples thanked the priests of Equatorial Guinea for their commitment to pastoral care, often carried out "in a complex context, in stressful and difficult circumstances, due to difficulties", but they need to revive the missionary zeal. The African country "has been experiencing a rapid and progressive improvement of social conditions" in recent decades, highlighted the Cardinal, pointing out that the Guinean lay faithful are fully aware of their duty to help the Church generously. "We, as priests, how do we respond to the expectations of the people of God?" asked the Cardinal, who continued: "Through the priest who prays, the divine grace works more effectively, making his ministry fruitful and more responsive to the real needs of the people of God. Every priest, therefore, must take care of his spiritual life", he said, because "a rich spiritual life makes a priest more zealous, not only towards the people entrusted to his pastoral care, but also towards those who are not part of Christ's flock. A good priest feels he needs to proclaim the Good News of salvation to the ends of the earth".
Cardinal Filoni then recommended the clergy to live in communion with Christ through a deep and intense life of prayer, and thus be in communion with the Church, to follow the pastoral directives of the Bishops and their dioceses, to use material goods with righteousness, to be charitable and considerate with those who are in conditions of need, to maintain virtuous relationships with the authorities and civil institutions. "The faithful expect from you prophetic words and gestures - he said - . A priest is not an official of the Church who seeks only material gain and career'. He is an administrator of the mysteries of God. Priesthood is not social promotion or a means of personal or family self-assertion. It is not a status to acquire worldly prestige, material possessions and authority of power. It is a service. A priest is a servant, he is at the service of the People of God entrusted to him and has to give his life for him". (SL) (Agenzia Fides 02/06/2014)

> LINKS

The full text of the the Cardinal's speech, in Spanish:
http://www.fides.org/spa/attachments/view/file/C.Filoni_Disc_Cl_31052014_SPA.doc:

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