



VATICAN - PMS Annual General Assembly: the Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith offers decisive contribution to the missionary world helping to fund some 6,000 projects.

Rome (Agenzia Fides) - The Annual General Assembly of the Pontifical Mission Societies May 3 to 8 continues at the Fraternal Domus di Sacrofano just outside Rome. On May 3rd the National Directors listened to the annual report on the activity of the Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith presented by the Secretary General Fr. Fernando Galbiati who announced he was retiring. after eight years of hard work at the head offices of the Pontifical Mission Societies in Rome.

The Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith offers a decisive contribution to the Church's missionary animation and co-operation thanks to prayers and offerings from the faithful all over the world. Fr. Galbiati illustrated the complex and painstaking process of examining each of the numerous requests for assistance sent in from mission territories and then assigning funds to support about 6,000 projects a year. "Our contribution is not symbolic it is real in the life of the Church in mission territories", Fr Galbiati explained. Offerings given to the Pontifical Mission Society for the Propagation of the Faith in 2005 amounted to 125,862,443 US\$ and were distributed to local church projects in different countries all over the world. In his report the Secretary General recalled major changes at the head offices of the Pontifical Mission Societies in 2006: the departure of Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe appointed by the Pope Archbishop of his native Naples and the appointment in his place as Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, of Cardinal Ivan Dias, former Archbishop of Mumbai, India, the first CEP from a mission territory. He also recalled revision of juridical documents of the PMS. "The task of revising PMS juridical structures and operative lines - Fr. Galbiati explained - was a response to a call from the Second Vatican Council to adapt the organisation and operative lines of all ecclesial institutions to meet the needs of the times, in keeping with their initial founding spirit. On the context of this revision we thought it opportune to intervene also in certain institutions funded by the PMS and this led to the establishment of a Domus Missionalis Fondazione charged with the administration of Colleges for priests, religious and lay catechists from mission territories". said Fr. Galbiati.

With regard to how the PMS give economic aid to the young Churches in mission territories Fr. Galbiati recalled that the method is the most practical and dignified. "We are custodians of an institution adopted by the universal Church and which has become, over and beyond the historical contingencies, the Church's principal organisation at the service of prayers and material aid for missionary activity. This is why the PMS must remain a priority in the Church's missionary service ... to regard the PMS solely from a point of view of economic weight would be a serious error of judgement and radical misunderstanding of the origins and nature of their existence and activity". Fr. Galbiati also spoke about the process of preparation for the 1st Asian Mission Congress held in Chiang Mai in northern Thailand (see Fides 18 -21/10/2006). Seeing the success of Mission Congresses in America it was decided that each continent would do well to hold regular mission congresses to assess progress and give new impulse to mission awareness, spirit and activity. "We all hope these meetings will become institutionalised, part of the life of the Church on the different continents, visible signs of the faithful of the world in communion in Christ" Fr. Galbiati concluded. (RG) (Agenzia Fides 7/5/2007; righe 41, parole 562)

> *LINKS*

History, charisma and goals of the four Pontifical Mission Societies in Italian:

http://www.fides.org/ita/approfondire/2006/scheda_pom.html: