



SECAM NEWS

YEAR 2026
JULY
N°07

SECAM ENCOURAGES AMECEA IN DEEPENING ITS SYNODAL JOURNEY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

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**THE SYNODAL CHURCH
IN AFRICA:
JOURNEYING TOWARDS
THE 2028 ECCLESIAL
ASSEMBLY**

**FIRST PREPARATORY
SEMINAR**

 ADDIS ABABA,
ETHIOPIA

 4TH - 5TH
AUGUST 2026

Editorial

CATHOLIC EDUCATION: SHAPING AFRICA'S FUTURE WITH FAITH, KNOWLEDGE & HOPE

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**CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE ON
CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN AFRICA**

**"STRENGTHENING CATHOLIC EDUCATION
FOR INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
IN AFRICA"**

 **ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**
AUGUST 5, 2026 (ARRIVAL) -
AUGUST 8, 2026 (DEPARTURE)





CATHOLIC EDUCATION: SHAPING AFRICA'S FUTURE WITH FAITH, KNOWLEDGE, AND HOPE

The First Continental Conference on Catholic Education in Africa, organized by the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) from 6 to 8 August 2026 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, represents a significant landmark in the Church's educational mission. Under the theme, "Strengthening Catholic Education for Integral Human Development in Africa", the gathering highlights the essential role of Catholic education in evangelization, leadership formation and the transformation of African societies.

The 2025 Catholic Church Statistics demonstrate the global impact of Catholic education, with 102,455 primary schools serving more than 36.2 million pupils and 52,085 secondary schools educating over 20.7 million students. Africa stands as the leading continent in Catholic infant, primary, and secondary education. However, the comparatively lower presence of Catholic institutions in higher education points to the urgent need for increased investment in universities, research, and leadership formation to strengthen the continent's future.

With Africa's young population representing a major source of hope and potential, Catholic schools remain vital spaces for academic excellence and character formation. Beyond transmitting knowledge, they cultivate values of integrity, solidarity, justice, and respect for human dignity. Through their graduates, Catholic educational institutions continue to contribute to society by preparing leaders committed to service in government, business, healthcare, education, and the Church.

Africa's Catholic Education Roadmap

The 2025-2050 Vision of the Church in Africa, adopted by SECAM in July 2025, places Catholic education at the center of the Church's mission. The Vision emphasizes that "investing in education is investing in the future of the Church and of Africa," encouraging sustainable initiatives, local engagement and responsible stewardship to support the Church's pastoral, educational, and social responsibilities.

The Addis Ababa conference will address critical issues shaping the future of Catholic education, including Catholic identity, educator formation, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, safeguarding, environmental responsibility, governance, and financial sustainability. These discussions reflect the Church's commitment to respond to new educational needs while staying true to its mission.

A key outcome of the conference will be the development of the 2026-2031 Continental Roadmap for Catholic Education and progress toward establishing the SECAM Education Commission.

These initiatives aim to strengthen cooperation, improve educational quality, and promote a shared vision for Catholic education across Africa.

Through education, the Church continues to accompany Africa toward a future of hope, dignity, and integral human development.

*Rev. Fr. Rafael Simbine Junior
Secretary General of SECAM*

POPE LEO HAS APPOINTED THREE BISHOPS FOR THE CHURCH IN AFRICA

Most Rev. Vincent Lawrence Mpwaji



On July 11, 2026, the Holy Father has appointed Rev. Fr. Vincent Lawrence Mpwaji, a priest of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam, until now Diocesan Chancellor, as Auxiliary Bishop of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania), assigning to him the titular See of Tacarata in Numidia. Bishop-elect Vincent Lawrence Mpwaji was born on 5 June 1978 in Morogoro, Tanzania. He studied Philosophy at St. Anthony of Padua in Bukoba and Theology at St. Charles Lwanga Seminary in Dar es Salaam. He was ordained to the priesthood on 7 July 2008.

Most Rev. Bonaventure Bosco Gubazire



Pope Leo has accepted, on July 15, 2026,

the resignation from the pastoral care of the diocese of Kabale, Uganda, presented by Bishop Callist Rubaramira. The same day, he has appointed Rev. Fr. Bonaventure Bosco Gubazire, M.Afr., until now rector of the St. Martin of Tours Formation House in Ejisu, in Ghana, as bishop of the diocese of Kabale, Uganda. Msgr. Bonaventure Bosco Gubazire, M.Afr., was born on 3 March 1974 in Kitumba, diocese of Kabale. He joined the postulate of the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) and was ordained a priest on 10 August 2003.

Most Rev. Jean Miguina



On July 16, 2026, the Holy Father has accepted the resignation from the pastoral care of the diocese of Sarh, Chad, presented by Bishop Miguel Angel Sebastián Martínez, M.C.C.J. the same day, he has appointed the Rev. Fr. Jean Miguina, O.F.M. Cap., until now responsible for Capuchin Aspirants in Chad and counsellor of the Custody of Franciscan Friars Minor Capuchin of Chad and of the Central African Republic.

Msgr. Jean Miguina, O.F.M. Cap., was born on 12 September 1978 in Laï, in the diocese of the same name. He was ordained a priest on 21 November 2009 in Moundou.

SECAM ENCOURAGES AMECEA IN DEEPENING ITS SYNODAL JOURNEY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



Opening Ceremony of the AMECEA 21st Plenary Assembly/AMECEA

The Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) encourages the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) to strengthen its synodal journey by empowering young people and promoting justice, hope and good governance across the region.

The 21st AMECEA Plenary Assembly, took place from 19th to 26th July 2026, in Nairobi (Kenya). In a Solidarity message to this Plenary, SECAM First Vice-President, Most Rev. Stephen Dami Mamza, said the assembly's theme, “AMECEA's Synodal Journey with Young People: Building Bridges of Communion, Hope, Justice, and Good Governance,” reflects the Church's mission of walking together in communion, participation and shared responsibility. “Synodality is not merely a method of working but a way of being Church, listening, discerning, and carrying out the mission entrusted to us by Christ,” said Most Rev. Mamza, Bishop of Yola Diocese in Nigeria.

SECAM commended AMECEA for its decades of vibrant evangelisation, pastoral innovation and missionary outreach, describing the region as a major contributor to the growth of the Catholic Church in Africa.

Participation through Small Christian Communities

The message gave special recognition to AMECEA's pioneering Small Christian Communities, saying they anticipated the principles of synodality by fostering participation, shared discernment and co-responsibility in the Church's mission.

SECAM also praised the region's commitment to young people, stressing that they “*are not only the future of the Church but an essential part of her present.*” “*By creating opportunities for their active participation, leadership, and formation, AMECEA continues to demonstrate how the Church can walk with young people, nurture their gifts, and encourage them to become agents of evangelization, reconciliation, and social transformation,*” the message stated.

The continental bishops further congratulated AMECEA for strengthening its institutional structures and advancing financial sustainability, describing the progress as a sign of prudent stewardship and growing ecclesial maturity.

SECAM urged AMECEA to continue providing leadership in addressing Africa's pressing challenges, including poverty, conflict, forced displacement, ecological degradation, poor governance, youth unemployment and religious intolerance.

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12TH FABC PLENARY: SECAM EXPRESSES SOLIDARITY AND COMMITMENT TO AFRICA-ASIA COLLABORATION



Card. Ambongo presenting SECAM's Solidarity Message, with Rev. Fr. Rafael Simbine Junior

The 12th Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), from 20 to 26 July in Jakarta (Indonesia), concluded with a renewed vision for a synodal Church in Asia, committed to build bridges of communion, dialogue, and hope in a world facing division and uncertainty.

Bishops, priests, religious, and lay representatives reflected on major challenges affecting Asian societies, including conflicts, migration, inequality, religious tensions, environmental crises, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and the concerns of young people. Participants emphasized that these challenges also present opportunities for the Church to renew its mission and proclaim the Gospel with compassion.

The Plenary's theme, *"The Call to Synodal Conversion and the Mission of Being Bridges and Bridge-Builders in Asia,"* was highlighted in a solidarity message from His Em. Fridolin Cardinal Ambongo, President of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM).

Africa and Asia, "sister continents"

Cardinal Ambongo described Africa and Asia as "sister continents" that share common hopes and struggles, including poverty, migration, conflicts, and climate challenges. "Together, we are home to the majority of the world's young people," he said, adding that both continents share faith in "the Gospel of Jesus Christ as a source of hope capable of renewing societies and restoring human dignity."

FABC delegates stressed that bridge-building requires transformation within the Church itself, moving toward greater participation and co-responsibility, with stronger involvement of lay people, women, youth, migrants, and marginalized communities.

The Assembly also highlighted education, healthcare, social ministries, interreligious dialogue, and digital spaces as important areas where the Church can serve humanity and witness to the Gospel.

Cardinal Ambongo called for deeper cooperation between African and Asian Churches, saying, "By building bridges between our continents, we strengthen not only our respective Churches but also the witness of the universal Church."

The Plenary concluded with a renewed commitment to walk together in communion, participation, and mission, guided by the Holy Spirit and dedicated to serve a world in need of hope.

SECAM News

The Solidarity Message of SECAM
TO the 12th Plenary Assembly of
THE FEDERATION OF ASIAN BISHOPS'
Conferences (FABC)

is available on SECAM's website.

Kindly click below to download it:

[FABC – Solidarity Message](#)

CHURCH IN AFRICA LAUNCHES CONTINENTAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2028 ECCLESIAL ASSEMBLY



Ahead of the Ecclesial Assembly of the Church in 2028, the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) is organising from 3rd to 5th August 2026 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the First Preparatory Seminar on the theme “The Synodal Church in Africa: Journeying Towards the 2028 Ecclesial Assembly.”

Bringing together Catholic Church leaders, theologians, pastoral agents and representatives of Episcopal conferences and ecclesial institutions from across Africa and its Islands, this two-day seminar marks the beginning of the Church in Africa's continental preparation for the Ecclesial Assembly of the Church in 2028. Building on the global Synodal Process (2021-2024), the gathering will provide an opportunity to review the synodal experience across the continent, discern future priorities, and strengthen Africa's contribution to the universal Church's journey towards a more fully synodal and missionary way of being Church.

This seminar is an opportunity to listen deeply to one another, recognize the fruits already emerging and discern together how God is calling the Church in Africa to serve both the continent and the universal Church.

The gathering will focus on **five key objectives**: evaluating the Synodal Process across Africa; reflecting on the gifts the Church in Africa offers to the universal Church; identifying emerging expressions of missionary synodality; sharing regional experiences and best practices; and contributing to a continental working document that will guide Africa's journey towards the 2028 Ecclesial Assembly.

Participants will engage in prayer, Conversation in the Spirit, plenary discussions and working groups that foster communal discernment and consensus building. The programme will include presentations on the global and continental roadmap to the Ecclesial Assemblies of 2027-2028, testimonies from regional episcopal conferences and ecclesial initiatives and collaborative sessions to identify concrete priorities for the Church in Africa.

The gathering is expected to produce key recommendations and a draft continental document that will guide the next stages of the African synodal journey and contribute to the preparation of the Ecclesial Assembly in 2028.

SECAM News

SECAM TO CONVENE THE FIRST CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN AFRICA



School Boy in a Catholic Church Library in Lomé (Togo)/Charles Ayetan/SECAM

The Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) will hold the First Continental Conference on Catholic Education in Africa from 6 to 8 August 2026 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the theme: “Strengthening Catholic Education for Integral Human Development in Africa”.

The Conference will bring together more than 100 participants, including bishops responsible for education, Catholic universities, national Catholic education commissions, religious congregations, education experts, researchers and partners.

Convened in response to the mandate of the 20th SECAM Plenary Assembly held in Kigali, Rwanda, in July 2025, the Conference aims to strengthen continental collaboration and provide strategic direction for Catholic education as a catalyst for evangelisation, integral human development and sustainable social transformation across Africa and its Islands.

The programme will feature keynote addresses, expert panel discussions, thematic working groups and plenary sessions focused on key priorities for Catholic education. Discussions will address Catholic identity, leadership and governance, educator formation, financial sustainability, digital transformation and artificial intelligence, Catholic universities and research, safeguarding, environmental stewardship and innovative responses to emerging educational challenges.

A major outcome of the Conference will be the development of a 2026-2031 Continental Roadmap for Catholic Education, providing strategic priorities and practical recommendations to guide Catholic educational institutions across the continent. Participants will also advance discussions on establishing the SECAM Education Commission, envisioned as a permanent continental structure to coordinate Catholic education initiatives in Africa.

SECAM News

NIGERIA: BISHOP BADEJO'S RELIEF AFTER THE RESCUE OF ABDUCTED STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN OYO



Most Rev. Emmanuel Badejo



Oyo State Governor Seyi Makinde visits rescued victims in hospital

The Bishop of Oyo Diocese in Nigeria, Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo, has spoken of his immense relief at the rescue of 44 abducted learners and teachers from Oyo State.

Nigerian media said that the rescued 39 schoolchildren and 5 teachers were abducted in the Oriire Local Government Area of Oyo State. They were held in captivity for 56 days.

“I thank God Almighty who made this possible. Huge congratulations and appreciation to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the Governor of Oyo State, (Oyo State Governor) Engineer Seyi Makinde, to all the security organisations and operatives, to the media and to everybody who prayed, pressured and fasted for this joyful purpose,” Bishop Badejo said in a statement.

The Nigerian military said that several soldiers died in the rescue operation. Bishop Badejo expressed sadness and offered condolences to the families of those who died in the operation. “Our sympathies to the families of those who lost their lives in the whole saga. May this ugly episode serve as a wake-up call to all of us, the government and citizens, to collaborate more and do our utmost to

secure our lives and property together,” said the prelate of Oyo.

Adequate rehabilitation to the abductees

As at Sunday, 12 July, parents and relatives of the rescued schoolchildren in the Oriire Local Government Area of Oyo State told Nigeria’s Punch newspaper of their joy and relief at the development. They said they were eagerly awaiting the chance to reunite with their children.

Nigerian authorities have been conducting medical evaluations, treatment and psychological support for the rescued victims.

A Punch newspaper item named the terrorist group affiliated with Jama’atu Ansarul Muslimina fi-Biladis Sudan, commonly known as Ansaru, as responsible for the mass abduction of the teachers and students. “I pray that all will be done to give adequate rehabilitation to the abductees who have gone through harrowing experiences,” said Bishop Badejo.

Fr Paul Samasumo (Vaticannews)

AFRICA READY TO WELCOME GLOBAL CATHOLIC COMMUNICATORS TO SIGNIS WORLD CONGRESS IN KIGALI



From left, Peter Monthienvichienchai, Helen Osman and Walter Ihejirika

From 3 to 8 August 2026, Africa is ready to welcome Catholic communicators from around the world for the SIGNIS World Congress, scheduled to take place in Kigali, Rwanda, according to SIGNIS Africa President, Fr. Professor Walter Chikwendu Ihejirika.

Speaking to *Vatican News*, Fr Walter said preparations for the global gathering are in their final stages, with both the Continental and Local Organising Committees working tirelessly to ensure a successful event. He noted that the Congress website has facilitated registrations and that comprehensive plans are in place for reception, accommodation, transport and airport assistance.

On the theme “*Digital communication for communion, equity, and environmental well-being*”, the Congress will be hosted at the Sainte Famille Hotel in Kigali. Although official registration closed on June 30, Fr Walter said organisers have made provision for late registrations to accommodate participants delayed by travel or work-related challenges. He stressed that the event is open to all Catholic communication professionals, whether they are or not SIGNIS members.

Human dignity in the age of artificial intelligence

Addressing concerns over the Ebola outbreak in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo, Fr Walter reassured prospective participants that Rwanda remains unaffected. He said organisers are in close contact with Rwanda's health authorities, who have confirmed there is no health risk to Congress delegates and that no international travel alert has been issued.

Fr Walter also highlighted the relevance of Pope Leo's recent encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*, saying its focus on safeguarding human dignity in the age of artificial intelligence closely reflects the Congress theme.

The Congress is expected to attract Catholic communicators, Cardinals, Archbishops, Vatican officials and representatives of international Catholic organisations, including EWTN, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, CRS and the American Bible Society. Beyond its programme of discussions and workshops, the event aims to foster networking while showcasing Africa's hospitality, cultural richness and diversity to participants from across the globe.

SECAM News, with Fr Paul Samasumo

RUTSHURU: GREAT LAKES YOUTH CHOOSES HOPE TO BUILD PEACE



This 15th edition confirmed the Regional Youth Forum as a school of Christian leadership/ACEAC

The 15th Regional Youth Forum was organized by the Diocese of Goma from July 16 to 19, 2026, in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Held at the Rugabo Primary School in Rutshuru, this forum, themed "Young People, Be Witnesses of Hope and Builders of Peace," brought together several thousand young people from the dioceses of Goma and Bukavu (DRC), and Nyundo and Byumba (Rwanda).

In a regional context marked by insecurity and persistent tensions, the forum provided a framework for human and spiritual formation, dialogue, and fraternity. The objective was to prepare young people capable of contributing to reconciliation and the building of lasting peace in the Great Lakes region.

At the opening, Bishop Willy Ngumbi of the Diocese of Goma emphasized the Church's mission as a space of communion beyond borders. Welcoming the participation of the Rwandan delegations and the hospitality extended by the families of Rutshuru, he reminded young people that they are called to overcome prejudice and recognize in every person a brother or sister.

"A true pilgrimage of peace"

In his catechesis, the prelate presented the forum as "a true pilgrimage of peace." He distinguished between hope, tied to circumstances, and Christian hope, founded on God's promises and capable of sustaining believers in the face of trials. He then urged young people to become credible witnesses of this hope in a region confronted with security, economic, and social challenges.

To illustrate his message, he offered the example of Blessed Floribert Bwana Chui Bin Kositi, who died for refusing corruption. His courage and integrity were presented as a model for young people called to promote truth, justice, and the common good. Echoing the words of his predecessor, Bishop Faustin Ngabu (1935-2025), Bishop Ngumbi recalled that the young layman was fully aware of the mechanisms of corruption but had chosen to remain faithful to his conscience and the Gospel.

Beyond the teachings, participants experienced moments of prayer, discussion, and sharing of experiences. This 15th edition confirmed the Regional Youth Forum as a school of Christian leadership, fraternity, and commitment to peace in the Great Lakes region.

SECAM News, with ACEAC

IN CAMEROON, ARCHBISHOP KLEDA EXPRESSES CONCERN ABOUT PRISON CONDITIONS



Most Rev. Samuel Kleda, Archbishop of Douala

In a pastoral letter published at the end of June, the Archbishop of Douala, Samuel Kleda, denounced the conditions of detention in Cameroonian prisons. Following up on the appeal made by Pope Leo XIV during his apostolic journey to Cameroon, he called on the authorities to place human dignity at the heart of the prison and judicial system.

The prelate described prisons facing severe overcrowding, where inmates live in particularly difficult conditions. He cited insufficient food, limited access to healthcare, overcrowding, and inadequate infrastructure. He also expressed concern about the cohabitation, in some facilities, of women, men, and sometimes minors, due to a lack of separate spaces. According to him, this situation also fosters power imbalances among inmates and increases the vulnerability of the most vulnerable.

Failure to Respect Legal Detention Limits

Archbishop Kleda also denounces the high number of people held in pretrial detention. He considers it unacceptable that some prisons hold more defendants than convicts and deplores the failure to respect legal detention limits. He

reiterates that every arrested person has the right to a trial within a reasonable time and believes that these delays constitute a violation of fundamental rights.

The archbishop also points to corruption, which he considers one of the main causes of the dysfunctions of the judicial system. The poorest people, he emphasizes, are often the first victims of a justice system influenced by financial means. He calls on Cameroonian and African authorities to strengthen the fight against this scourge.

Finally, drawing on the Gospel, Archbishop Kleda urges the faithful to show their solidarity with those detained. He invites Cameroonians to change their perspective on prisoners, reminding them that, whatever the offenses committed, their dignity remains intact. He also encourages families and Christian communities not to abandon their incarcerated loved ones.

***SECAM News,
With Augustine Asta (Vaticannews)***

THE CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE IN EGYPT LAUNCHED



Participants at the Launch

Under the auspices of Patriarch Ibrahim Isaac and with the approval of the Fathers of the Patriarchal Synod of the Coptic Catholic Church in Egypt, the Catholic Theological Committee in Egypt launched its work, chaired by His Grace Daniel Lotfy, Bishop of the Diocese of Assiut for the Coptic Catholics, at the Seminary in Maadi.

The committee aims to support the educational and intellectual mission of the Catholic Church in Egypt, develop theological research, and deepen faith understanding, thereby contributing to address contemporary intellectual and spiritual challenges and strengthen the presence of theological thought within Church life.

The committee has set a number of key objectives, including organizing regular meetings, conferences, and scholarly seminars, as well as preparing and publishing specialized studies and research that enrich Church life and intellectual discourse on both theological and pastoral levels.

The committee also strives to serve theological thought and Catholic doctrine, supporting priests and deacons with well-documented scholarly materials that combine ecclesiastical heritage with contemporary theological

perspectives. Furthermore, it aims to provide a space for constructive dialogue on current theological issues within the ecclesiastical framework and to prepare qualified theologians across all Catholic dioceses in Egypt, capable of teaching and serving with renewed scientific and spiritual awareness.

The committee operates through three main axes: organizing seminars and formative and doctrinal conferences; producing theological content for various social media platforms; and publishing books, pamphlets, and specialized publications in the fields of theology and doctrine.

The committee comprises a select group of priests and specialists in theological studies from within Egypt and abroad, under the supervision of His Grace Bishop Daniel Lotfy. Fr Joseph Mounir serves as the committee's Secretary General. Its members also include: Fr Fadel Sidarous, SJ; Fr Milad Sidqi, Lazarist; Fr Joseph Abdelmalak, Carmelite; Fr John Paul, Franciscan; Fr Philopater Camille, of the Congregation of the Incarnate Word; Fr Youssef Abdel Nour, SJ; Fr Elias Iskandar, Franciscan; Dr. Ashraf Najeh; Fr Youssef Ghali; and Fr Youssef Bishara.

Source: Lemessenger-online.com

21ST AMECEA PLENARY: “BUILDING BRIDGES OF COMMUNION, HOPE, JUSTICE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE”



Some participants

The Chairman of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA), Most Rev. Charles Kasonde, has declared youth ministry the Church's top pastoral priority for the next four years. He made the announcement on July 19, 2026, during the opening of the 21st AMECEA Plenary in Kenya, under the theme: “AMECEA's Synodal Journey with Young People: Building Bridges of Communion, Hope, Justice and Good Governance.”

During the opening Eucharist of the 21st AMECEA Plenary on July 19, 2026, at the Catholic University in Eastern Africa (CUEA), in Nairobi, Most Rev. Charles Kasonde, Bishop of Solwezi (Zambia), declared: “Your Bishops make young people our pastoral priority for the next four years for three reasons: We want to demonstrate that young people are worth the effort and to help them develop a sense of belonging to this Holy Mother Church.”

Bishop Kasonde said the decision reflects the Church's commitment to nurturing young people as a vital force for sustaining the Catholic faith and advancing evangelisation.

Ambassadors of hope

The bishop cited previous youth engagements in Kampala, Uganda, and Ethiopia, saying they had demonstrated the crucial

role young people play in keeping the Church vibrant. He also recalled the 1989 AMECEA Plenary on youth and highlighted the continued commitment of successive Popes, including Pope Leo XIV, who recently encouraged young people to use the internet responsibly.

Bishop Kasonde urged delegates attending the plenary to become ambassadors of hope for millions of young people across the region and commended the Catholic Church in Kenya for hosting the assembly at short notice.

Bridge-builders of communion

Meanwhile, Cardinal Michael Czerny, Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, encouraged thousands of young people gathered at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa not to lose hope despite global challenges.

Reflecting on Jesus' parables of the mustard seed and the wheat and the weeds, Cardinal Czerny said Christians are called to recognise the Kingdom of God already at work in the world through faith, patience and active participation.

Quoting Pope Francis' 2013 homily, he urged the youth: “Do not let yourselves be robbed of hope,” encouraging them to become bridge-builders of communion and peace.

SECAM News, with AMECEA

CARDINAL FURTADO URGES NEW PRIEST TO EMBRACE HUMILITY AND SELFLESS SERVICE



Cape Verde's Arlindo Cardinal Gomes Furtado/Catholic Diocese of Santiago

Cardinal Arlindo Gomes Furtado of Cape Verde has called on newly ordained Capuchin priest Fr Antonilton Gomes to embrace the priesthood as a lifelong mission of humble and selfless service, placing the needs of God's people at the center of his vocation.

Speaking during the priestly ordination of Deacon Antonilton Gomes at Saint Lawrence Parish on July 12, the 77-year-old Cardinal emphasized that authentic priestly ministry must follow the example of Jesus Christ, "who came not to be served, but to serve."

In his homily, Cardinal Furtado reminded the new priest that the priesthood is far more than a personal spiritual journey. Instead, it is a vocation fulfilled through the generous gift of oneself in service to others. Quoting Scripture, "It is not enough that you are my servant. I will also make you a light for the nations," he explained that priests are called to use the gifts they have received to become visible signs of Christ's presence within the Christian community.

Constantly available to serve

The Bishop Emeritus of Santiago stressed

that priestly ministry requires unwavering humility, fidelity, perseverance, and a missionary spirit. He encouraged Fr Gomes to accompany the faithful in both moments of joy and times of hardship while remaining constantly available to serve. He also urged the new priest to preserve the enthusiasm that first inspired his response to God's call, noting that a lasting vocation depends on continually returning to Jesus Christ through prayer, meditation on Scripture, and the celebration of the Eucharist.

Warning against neglecting one's spiritual life, Cardinal Furtado said that weakening one's relationship with Christ ultimately diminishes the effectiveness of priestly ministry. The Cardinal also appealed to the faithful to support Fr Gomes with their prayers, emphasizing that perseverance in ministry depends not only on personal commitment but also on God's grace and the encouragement of the Christian community.

***SECAM News,
With RECOWA | ACI Africa***

ARCHBISHOP JAVIER HERRERA CORONA: "NORTH AFRICA PRESERVES THE MILLENNIAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE ARRIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY"



Archbishop Javier Herrera Corona (fifth from left)

The Apostolic Nuncio to Algeria and Tunisia, Archbishop Javier Herrera Corona, gave an interview to the website eglisecatholiquetunisie.com following his two successive visits to Tunisia, from March 22 to 29 and then from June 18 to 25 of this same year. Excerpt.

Your Excellency, you have worked in very different contexts and countries. What are your most significant experiences?

I have represented the Holy See in Pakistan, Peru, Kenya, Gabon, England, China, the Republic of Congo, and, more recently, in Algeria and Tunisia. In these countries, I have discovered a Church that, while maintaining the same spirit, manifests itself in diverse forms and structures adapted to the rich local culture and traditions.

I witnessed how, within the local Church, sometimes in hostile environments, Christians manage to form a community to live their faith together and support one another. I learned to recognize and appreciate the vital importance that the local Church, in certain parts of the world, places on communion with the Vicar of Christ, the Pope. I was impressed to see Christians striving to live their communion in a heroic way.

What was striking about your first contact with North Africa, and particularly with Tunisia?

My arrival in this region of North Africa coincided with the apostolic visit of Pope Leo XIV to Algeria. In fact, I settled there two months before the Pope's arrival, which profoundly influenced my first encounter with the local reality. I observed that North Africa still retains the foundations, now thousands of years old, of the arrival of Christianity. These are ever-present and shape strong and steadfast Christians, firm in faith, yet also prudent in order to achieve harmonious coexistence, as our times demand.

What is most important to you in this new mission?

What is most important to me in this new mission, and this is perfectly logical, is to fulfill the mission entrusted to me by Pope Leo XIV, namely, to discreetly accompany this community on its path to salvation, in order to achieve an active, discreet, and prudent presence, in keeping with the context in which we live.

Source: Eglisecatholiquetunisie.com

INSECURITY: MADAGASCAR'S BISHOPS CALL FOR THE DEFENSE OF LIFE



Most Rev. Jean Pascal Andriantsoavina, Bishop of Antsirabe

In a context marked by a surge in homicides in Madagascar, the Conference of Bishops of Madagascar (CEM) is calling for the protection of life. In a message to the nation delivered by Bishop Jean Pascal Andriantsoavina of Antsirabe, Vice-President of the CEM, the bishops express their deep concern about the rising insecurity and offer their solidarity to the bereaved families.

In a message dated July 13, 2026, the Conference of Bishops of Madagascar (CEM) states that it cannot remain a spectator in the face of a wave of murders whose perpetrators and instigators remain unknown. The bishops denounce a situation that plunges many citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, into despair and leads them to question the future of the country. They also lament the weakening of traditional Malagasy values, particularly "fihavanana," a symbol of fraternity and respect for life.

Human life is sacred

Addressing the population directly, the Episcopal Conference of Madagascar (CEM) reiterates that human life is

sacred and urges everyone to reject all forms of violence. Citing the biblical commandment "Thou shalt not kill," they call on citizens to become defenders of life and warn against rumors, defamation, accusations based on racial profiling, and acts of revenge that could further fuel the climate of fear.

The message is also addressed to the authorities. While acknowledging the efforts already undertaken to address the suffering of the population, the CEM demands that concrete actions prevail over mere pronouncements. The bishops call for a thorough investigation to shed light on the true causes of this wave of terror and to ensure that the investigations do not, once again, lead to a dead end. In conclusion, the Episcopal Conference calls on the entire nation to unite in prayer and action to restore peace, preserve human dignity, and strengthen solidarity.

SECAM News

MOZAMBICAN BISHOPS CALL FOR RENEWAL FOLLOWING BISHOP OSÓRIO'S KILLING



Pope Leo XIV welcoming bishops from Mozambique

Mozambique's Catholic bishops have said the murder of Bishop Osório Afonso should become a catalyst for truth, reconciliation and renewal within both the Church and the nation. Their appeal followed a meeting with Pope Leo XIV at the Vatican, where they said the Holy Father expressed deep solidarity and demonstrated a thorough understanding of the challenges facing Mozambique.

The bishops said Pope Leo's compassion has been evident through both his public statements and his personal engagement during their meeting. They noted that the Church continues to mourn Bishop Osório, who was shot dead at his residence on 6 June 2026. Bishop Estêvão Ângelo Fernando was appointed to oversee the Diocese of Quelimane while investigations continue.

Conference President Bishop Inácio Saure said authorities have released little official information about the case. He confirmed only that Bishop Osório was killed with a high-calibre weapon. Following the murder, the diocesan chancellor and another priest, Fr Celso, were arrested, while investigators seized the mobile phones of the late bishop and Bishop Fernando. The investigation remains under Mozambique's National Criminal Investigation Service

(SERNIC), and the Church says it has received no official briefing.

"A martyr of the faith"

The bishops expressed concern over speculation in the media suggesting the murder stemmed from internal Church disputes. They urged patience while investigations continue, stressing that unanswered questions remain about who carried out the crime, who ordered it and why.

The tragedy has also prompted reflection within the Church. The bishops acknowledged the need for greater integrity among clergy and warned against undue influence by wealthy benefactors over seminarians.

Recalling that many high-profile murders in Mozambique have remained unresolved, the bishops said justice is essential for genuine reconciliation. Despite the uncertainty, they remain hopeful that Bishop Osório's death will inspire greater vigilance, unity and spiritual renewal. Bishop Saure described the slain prelate as "a martyr of the faith," saying his sacrifice, though deeply painful, will strengthen the Church's witness and mission in Mozambique.

**SECAM News,
with Fr Bernardo Suete**

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21st AMECEA PLENARY ASSEMBLY, IN NAIROBI, KENYA

