



**SYMPOSIUM OF EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR**

SECAMSEC/2023/03/17

Accra, 12 March 2023

His Holiness  
Pope Francis  
Vatican City

**CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE**

Your Holiness

On behalf of the Church in Africa and the Islands, I offer you my congratulations and best wishes for the celebration of the 10th anniversary of your Petrine mission.

During the period from 11 March 2023 to 19 March 2023, various liturgical and para-liturgical celebrations will be held in all corners of the African continent and its Islands in thanksgiving for the gift of your pontificate and also as a way of renewing our adherence to the teachings of the Bishop of Rome and our affection for Pope Francis.

Holy Father, the ten years of your papacy have been marked by your special attention to the Lord Jesus' preferred ones: the poor, migrants, refugees and all those who live in geographical and existential peripheries. And here you have touched with hand and heart the 1,340 598147 inhabitants of Africa who live in these challenging situations.

Revealing yourself as an apostle of divine mercy, you proclaimed the Extraordinary Jubilee, in the hope of seeing the face of a Church that rediscovers the bowels of mercy and goes out to meet the many wounded in need of listening, understanding and love (God is mercy, p.86).

In these ten years we have seen the development of a missionary option which, by transforming everything, makes customs, language and the whole ecclesial structure become a channel for evangelisation of the present world rather than a means of self-preservation (EG, n.27).

These are ten years of prophetic and servant leadership that goes beyond the boundaries of the Catholic Church and dialogues with the whole world: "If we want a more fraternal world, we must educate the new generations to recognize, value and love all people regardless of their physical proximity, regardless of the point on earth where each one was born or lives (FT, 1). "Human ecology is inseparable from the notion of the common good, a principle that plays a central and unifying role in social ethics" (LS, n.156).

Your Holiness, during these 10 years, Africa has had the joy of welcoming you on four occasions. The Continent is deeply grateful to you for coming to us as a pilgrim of hope, and praying with us for peace, justice and reconciliation and helping us to raise our voices for our economic independence.

Your Holiness, the Church in Africa prays for your health and your ministry.

Congratulations, Holy Father!

Fridolin Cardinal AMBONGO  
Archbishop of Kinshasa  
SECAM President

