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SECAM CONFERENCE CALLS FOR RENEWED COMMITMENT TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN AFRICA



TOWARDS THE 2028 ECCLESIAL ASSEMBLY: THE CHURCH IN AFRICA CALLED TO DEEPEN CULTURE OF LISTENING





AFRICA'S SYNODAL JOURNEY TOWARDS 2028

As the Catholic Church continues its synodal journey towards the 2028 Ecclesial Assembly, the Church in Africa is developing its own continental itinerary, rooted in the realities, experiences and gifts of its people.

At the heart of this process are the Continental and Regional Synodal Teams, established by the Standing Committee of SECAM. Working together, they are called to animate, coordinate and support the synodal journey across the continent, linking diocesan, national, regional and continental experiences. This itinerary unfolds through four stages: Remember, Interpret, Orient and Celebrate.

The first stage, Remember, in the first semester of 2027, invites dioceses and eparchies to look back at their synodal experience since the 2024 Synod. Through local assemblies, communities will identify signs of renewal, unfinished processes and moments of genuine conversion. Their stories and experiences will form narrative reports and letters of exchange with other Churches.

The second stage, Interpret, during the second semester of 2027, will take place at national and regional levels. Synodal teams and theologians will reread these experiences, identify common

challenges, tensions and pastoral opportunities, and discern what God may be saying through them. This stage will transform experiences into theological and pastoral reflection.

The third stage, Orient, in the first four months of 2028, will bring the continental dimension into focus. The Continental Synodal Team and theologians will discern emerging paths, identify shared pastoral priorities and formulate orientations for the future, preparing Africa's contribution to the universal Church.

Finally, the fourth stage, Celebrate, in October 2028, will invite the Church to give thanks for what God has accomplished throughout the journey. African delegates will participate in the Ecclesial Assembly in Rome, sharing the fruits of continental discernment and Africa's synodal priorities.

This journey will be supported by key gatherings: After the preparatory seminar in Addis Ababa in August 2026, the second seminar is scheduled in Yaoundé in May 2027, the Continental Synodal Assembly in Dar es Salaam in March 2028, and the third preparatory seminar in Johannesburg in August 2028.

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

POPE LEO HAS APPOINTED TWO BISHOPS FOR THE CHURCH IN AFRICA

Most Rev. Eustache Ntamwe Makoyo



On **July 29, 2026**, the Holy Father has appointed Rev. Fr. Eustache Ntamwe Makoyo, of the clergy of the diocese of Kabinda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, until now rector of the St Charles Borromée Preparatory Seminary in Kabinda, as bishop of the same diocese of Kabinda. The elected bishop was born on 14 February 1974 in Musoshi, Democratic Republic of the Congo. He studied philosophy at the Saint Paul VI Seminary of Kabinda and theology at the Christ the King Seminary in Kananga. He was ordained a priest on 28 August 2005, and incardinated into the diocese of Kabinda.

Most Rev. Mariusz Kasperski, O.M.I.



Pope Leo XIV has appointed on August 19, 2026, Rev. Fr. Mariusz Kasperski, O.M.I., until now Superior of the Community of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Toamasina and Parish Priest of St Eugène de Mazenod in Tsarahonenana, as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Toamasina (Madagascar), assigning him the titular See of Burca. The elected bishop was born on 15 August 1963 in Wolsztyn, in the Archdiocese of Poznań (Poland). He completed his studies in Philosophy and Theology at the Major Seminary of the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Obra, Poland. He took perpetual vows on 8 September 1991. He was ordained a priest on 21 June 1993 in Obra.

Appointment and confirmations of the Council for the Economy

On August 11, 2026, the Holy Father has appointed some prelates and lay faithfuls as members of the Council for the Economy. Among them is Cardinal Jean-Paul Vesco, O.P., archbishop of Algiers, Algeria.

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Appointment of Consultors of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

On August 18, 2026, the Holy Father has appointed many prelates, priests and lay faithfuls as Consultors of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Among the newly appointed members, there are three Africans:

- Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Katongole, a Ugandan theologian, Professor of the Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend (United States of America);

- Mr. Omer S. Combary, Professor in the Département d'Economie at the Université Thomas Sankara in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso);

- Madam Lucy Afandi Esipila, Regional Executive Secretary of Caritas Africa.



TOWARDS THE 2028 ECCLESIAL ASSEMBLY: THE CHURCH IN AFRICA CALLED TO DEEPEN CULTURE OF LISTENING



The Church in Africa has begun its continental preparations for the 2028 Ecclesial Assembly, with SECAM President Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo calling for deeper listening, shared discernment and openness to the Holy Spirit.

Closing the First Preparatory Seminar on Synodality Towards the 2028 Ecclesial Assembly, Cardinal Ambongo said the two-day gathering had enabled participants to reflect on the action of the Holy Spirit in the life of the African Church and to discern how the continent can contribute to the wider synodal journey.

“We have seen encouraging signs of hope on our continent,” the Cardinal said, while noting that African Churches had also identified priorities aimed at strengthening listening, dialogue and missionary renewal.

Held from 4 to 5 August 2026 under the theme “The Synodal Church in Africa: Journeying Towards the 2028 Ecclesial Assembly,” the seminar brought together Church leaders and representatives to reflect on Africa’s experience of the 2021-2024 Synodal process and prepare for the next phase of the universal synodal journey.

SECAM President urged participants to help local Churches discern the work of the Holy Spirit and share Africa’s gifts with the universal Church. He highlighted the vitality of Small Christian Communities, the commitment of catechists and lay faithful, the contribution of women and the missionary enthusiasm of young

people as important contributions to the universal Church.

The seminar also addressed challenges facing the Church in Africa, including poverty, conflict, insecurity, displacement and limited resources.

Participants were introduced to the four stages leading to 2028: Awareness, Interpretation, Orientation and Celebration, which will involve diocesan and national evaluation assemblies, continental discernment and, ultimately, the Ecclesial Assembly in Rome in October 2028.

The African preparatory itinerary

SECAM Secretary General Rev. Fr. Rafael Simbine Junior presented the African preparatory itinerary, which includes a Second Preparatory Seminar scheduled in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 11-14 May 2027, dedicated to finalising the Continental Document by incorporating contributions from the regions and dioceses. The process will then culminate at the Continental Synodal Assembly in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from 8-11 March 2028, which will consolidate Africa’s contribution to the universal Church. A Third Preparatory Seminar, scheduled for 22-25 August 2028 in Johannesburg, South Africa, will prepare delegates for the final stage of the journey. The process will conclude with the Universal Ecclesial Assembly in Rome in October 2028.

Cardinal Ambongo concluded by calling on the Church in Africa to journey together in “communion, participation and mission,” with courage and generosity in responding to the Spirit’s call.

SECAM News

SECAM CONFERENCE CALLS FOR RENEWED COMMITMENT TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN AFRICA



Some participants of this Conference

The Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) has called for a renewed continental commitment to Catholic education as a vital instrument for integral human development.

The call came during the First Continental Conference on Catholic Education in Africa, held in Addis Ababa from 5 to 8 August 2026 under the theme, “Strengthening Catholic Education for Integral Human Development in Africa.” More than 120 bishops, Church leaders, educators, Catholic university and school representatives, religious congregations, young people and development partners from across Africa and its Islands participated in the gathering.

Opening the conference on 6 August, SECAM President Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo described Catholic education as “one of the Church’s most noble and enduring missions,” stressing its role in forming

consciences, cultivating virtue, strengthening families and preparing young people for service to God and society.

“Education must foster dialogue among peoples”

He said contemporary challenges, including poverty, inequality, conflicts, migration, unemployment, environmental degradation and rapid developments in technology and artificial intelligence, require Catholic education to go beyond academic and technical formation. “Education must create fraternity, foster dialogue among peoples, promote social responsibility and awaken ecological consciousness,” Cardinal Ambongo said.

The conference brought together distinguished speakers who highlighted the importance of Catholic education in Africa, such as the Apostolic Nuncio to Ethiopia, Archbishop Brian Ngozi Udaigwe; Bishop Dejene Hidoto, representing the Ethiopian Catholic Bishops’ Conference; Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona, representing the

African Union; and the SECAM Secretary General, Rev. Fr. Rafael Simbine Junior.

Students from the Cathedral School in Addis Ababa and other Catholic schools also addressed participants, offering their perspectives on the role and importance of Catholic education for young people.

Addis Ababa Declaration on Catholic Education

Enriched by insightful thematic presentations and fruitful group discussions, the conference culminated in the adoption of the [Addis Ababa Declaration on Catholic Education](#) on 7 August. Presented by Most Rev. José Manuel Imbamba, Archbishop of Saurimo, Angola, and 2nd Vice President of SECAM, this Declaration calls for stronger Catholic identity, wider access to quality education for

vulnerable communities, safeguarding of children, ethical leadership, peacebuilding, research and innovation, responsible use of artificial intelligence, ecological education, etc.

Participants also worked on the establishment of a SECAM Commission for Catholic Education to develop a continental framework, strengthen collaboration, monitor progress and promote the sharing of best practices among Catholic educational institutions across the continent and its islands.

The initiative responds to the resolutions of the 20th SECAM Plenary Assembly held in Kigali in July 2025, which called for stronger collaboration and a renewed continental vision for Catholic education

Charles Ayetan

Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM)

Addis Ababa Declaration on Catholic Education

*Adopted Following the Continental Conference
on Catholic Education in Africa*

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

6-7 August 2026

I- Preamble

We, the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences, Bishops, Catholic educators, leaders of Catholic universities and schools, members of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, clergy, lay faithful, young people, and partners in Catholic education from across Africa and Madagascar, gathered in Addis Ababa for a four-day conference from 5-8 August 2026 for the *First Continental Conference on Catholic Education*. We examined the stakes, challenges and perspectives for catholic education in our continent of Africa.

Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the teaching of the Church, the Global Compact on Education, the Kampala Document and the rich cultural heritage of Africa and Madagascar, we reaffirm that Catholic education is an essential ministry of the Church, a privileged instrument of evangelization,

and a powerful force for moulding of character as well as the essential tool for integral human development.

Having reflected together on the opportunities and challenges facing Catholic education in our continent, and having listened to experiences from the different regions of our continent and intending to reinforce the results already achieved, we make the following declarations:

II- Doctrinal Considerations

Based on the teachings of the Church, we affirm:

1. The dignity of every human person, created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1,26-27).
2. The inalienable right of every child and young person to receive a quality education rooted in truth, justice, faith, and human dignity (GS 26, GE 1).

3. Catholic education as an integral part of the Church's evangelizing mission (EN 44, Catholic School 1977, 9).
4. The indispensable role of families as the primary educators of their children (FC 36).
5. The contribution of Catholic educational institutions to nation-building, peace, ethical leadership, scientific advancement, and social transformation (GS 26,31,60, GE 8).
6. School as a precious instrument for learning to weave bonds of peace and harmony within society from childhood through education in moral and spiritual values (AM, 76).
7. The importance of participatory education based on the noble values of African culture, open to the contemporary world and inspired by the Gospel, as a guarantee of the New Evangelization and the integral development of our peoples (Kampala Document 198).

III- Historical Considerations

Based on indisputable historical facts, we recognize:

1. The historic contribution of Catholic schools, colleges, universities, seminaries, and formation centres throughout Africa and Madagascar.
2. The dedication and sacrifices of bishops, priests, religious, teachers, parents, and lay collaborators in sustaining Catholic education.
3. The growing challenges posed by poverty, conflict, forced migration, unemployment, inequality, digital transformation, climate change, declining moral values, and inadequate educational resources.
4. The opportunities presented by technology, research, innovation, artificial intelligence and continental collaboration.

IV- Contextual necessities of our continent

Based on the realities that proper to our continent, we commit ourselves to:

1. Strengthening the Catholic identity and mission of all Catholic educational institutions.
2. Promoting academic excellence integrated with spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, and ecological formation.
3. Investing in the recruitment, formation, and continuing professional development of Catholic educators and leaders.
4. Ensuring that Catholic educational institutions are safe, inclusive, accountable, and committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable persons.
5. Expanding access to quality Catholic education, especially for the poor, the physically challenged, the marginalized, the displaced, and the vulnerable communities.
6. Promoting ethical leadership, peace-building, reconciliation, and responsible citizenship.
7. Investing on new technologies and encouraging responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence in teaching, learning, research, and administration.
8. Strengthening collaboration among Catholic schools, universities, seminaries, religious congregations, and Episcopal Conferences across Africa and Madagascar.
9. Promoting research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and skills development that respond to Africa's realities and aspirations, capable of engendering job creation for those who go through catholic educational institutions.
10. Advancing ecological education inspired by integral ecology and care for creation.
11. Promoting the integral wellbeing of



Some students at the Conference

teachers and educators.

12. Sharing of gifts between institutions and countries.

V- A call to co-responsibility

Knowing that the task for the formation of integral personality requires a synergy of action and co-responsible collaboration, (Final Document of Synod on Synodality 111), we call upon:

1. Episcopal Conferences to make Catholic education a pastoral priority by establishing a functional national structure for Catholic education.
2. Governments to recognize and support the contribution of Catholic educational institutions to national development.
3. Catholic universities, schools, and formation institutions to strengthen quality assurance, good governance, and accountability.
4. Religious congregations and Catholic organizations to continue investing in educational ministry.
5. Parents and families to partner actively in the education and faith formation of their children.
6. Development partners, African Union and others international bodies to collaborate in strengthening Catholic education throughout Africa and Madagascar.

VI. Continental Coordination

To ensure the realization of this Declara-

tion, we recommend the establishment of SECAM Episcopal Commission for Catholic Education whose work would be to:

1. Develop a SECAM Continental Framework for Catholic Education.
2. Establish mechanisms for collaboration, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.
3. Encourage each Episcopal Conference to prepare national implementation plans.
4. Convene periodic continental meetings to review progress, share best practices, and renew commitments.

VII. Conclusion

Putting ourselves at the disposition of Christ who through his Spirit working in us "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (Eph3,20), we entrust this Declaration to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Seat of Wisdom. We renew our commitment to forming generations of faithful disciples, competent professionals, ethical leaders, inventive entrepreneurs and responsible citizens who will contribute to the flourishing of the Church and society.

May Catholic education continue to be a beacon of hope, faith, knowledge, justice, and peace for Africa and Madagascar.

Adopted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

On 7 August 2026

Day of Prayer for Creation



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Season of Creation is soon upon us, a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment. During this season, we join our sisters and brothers in the ecumenical family in prayer and action for our common home.

The season begins on 1 September, the Day of Prayer for Creation. It closes on 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology, beloved across Christian denominations.

Engaging with the Season of Creation Guide and Website

We encourage you to download and engage with the [Season of Creation celebration guide](#) under this year's theme, "*Immersion in Living Water*" (Ezekiel 47:9, 12).

Please see the other languages the guide is available in: [French](#) and [Portuguese](#)

You are also welcome to share your celebrations with Laudato Si Movement by emailing afri-ca@laudatosimovement.org or by adding them to the global [Season of Creation Padlet](#).

Ways the church can engage with the Season of Creation

The Celebration Guide invites communities to live out this year's theme, "*Immersion in Living Water*," through three movements: Contemplation, Immersion, and Sending Out.

1. Contemplation: Spiritual Reflection

- Organise a pilgrimage or prayer walk along a river, lake, or beach, contemplating how water sustains life.
- Hold a Scripture-and-prayer walk in nature.
- Use the Ecumenical Prayer Service (included in the guide) to mark the opening of the Season on 1 September
- Pray the *Via Creationis* ("Way of Creation"), which echoes the Way of the Cross.

2. Immersion: Encountering the Vulnerable

- Visit communities affected by floods, drought, desertification, or extractive industries, listening to their stories with respect and

preparation

- Where an in-person visit isn't possible, invite migrants or frontline community members to speak, or screen a documentary such as [The Letter](#).
- Incorporate a "Bowl of Water" or "Bowl of Tears" ritual into services, where participants immerse their hands in water while naming the tears of the poor and the earth

3. Sending Out: Blessing and Commitment

- Close celebrations with a Blessing of the Waters, commissioning participants to become "sources of life" in their own communities
- Send congregants home with blessed water to bless their own homes and gardens.

4. Liturgical and Community Ideas

- Weave Creation themes into the Penitential Act, Offertory, and Sermon
- Use nature sounds instead of hymns during communion
- Invite youth to prepare drama or liturgical dance on the theme
- Run parish clean-ups, tree-planting, or community garden initiatives; the Coastal Clean-Up on 19 September is a natural tie-in
- Organise "Ecumenical Friday Night Youth Gatherings" or an eco-camp for young people

5. Advocacy

- Host a Water Justice Dialogue with scientists, activists, and Bible scholars.
- Prepare a petition on local water issues (access, pollution, tariffs) to deliver to local government or water providers during the Season.
- Run a digital campaign using #SeasonOfCreation to share stories of affected communities and local rivers.

SECAM with Laudato Si

SIGNIS WORLD AND SIGNIS AFRICA ELECT NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN KIGALI



Fr. Walter Ihejirika (centre) with elected Members of the new SIGNIS World Board

SIGNIS, the World Catholic Association for Communication, has elected a new Board of Directors during its General Assembly held in Kigali, Rwanda, as part of the SIGNIS World Congress 2026. The General Assembly, held every four years, brought together delegates from across the association's regions, with voting conducted in a hybrid format.

Rev. Fr. Walter Chikwendu Ihejirika of Nigeria was elected President of SIGNIS World. Pamela Alemán of Canada and Dr. Magimai Pragasam of India were elected Vice-Presidents, while Dr. Peter Rachada Monthienvichienchai of Thailand was re-elected Secretary General. Adriana Răcășan of Romania was elected Treasurer.

The new board subsequently held its first working session, beginning discussions on priorities for the new term.

Fr. Ihejirika is a Nigerian Catholic priest and Professor of Development Communication and Media Studies at the University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. He holds a PhD in Sociology of Communication from the Pontifical Gregorian University and a master's degree in Pedagogy and Communication from the Pontifical Salesian University in Rome. Before his election, he served as President of SIGNIS Africa for eight years.

SIGNIS Africa

Meanwhile, SIGNIS Africa also renewed its leadership, electing a seven-member Board of Directors on the sidelines of the World Congress, held from 3 to 8 August 2026.

Rev. Fr. Fidele Mutabazi of Rwanda was elected President of SIGNIS Africa. He serves as Managing Director of the Kinyamateka newspaper and Director of Communications for the Episcopal Conference of Rwanda. Chairperson of the Catholic Media Network Nairobi, Virginia Kabugu, was also elected as SIGNIS Africa Vice President, while Rev. Fr. Alexis Ouedraogo of Burkina Faso was elected Secretary/Treasurer. The other members of the board are Sr. Anastância Sebastião Simbe, FMA, of Mozambique, Clarice Azuatalam of Nigeria, Kudakwashe Martin Matambo of Zimbabwe, and Mwami Daka of Zambia.

These new leaderships are committed to strengthening their mission of promoting communication, fostering meaningful media engagement, and advancing the proclamation of the Gospel worldwide, with particular attention to the African continent.

Charles Ayetan

ACEAC

BURUNDI: IN GITEGA, THE CHURCH CALLS FOR STRENGTHENING SOCIAL COHESION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Participants of this workshop

“Without cohesion, there is no development.” It was around this conviction that a dialogue workshop on the role of administrative and religious leaders in consolidating peace, social cohesion, and development was held on July 9, 2026, in the conference room of the Archdiocese of Gitega.

Organized in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Gitega and the Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace (DCJP), this meeting was part of the Peace and Reconciliation Project (PRP). It brought together administrative and political leaders, religious representatives, civil society organizations, as well as members of the security and armed forces.

At the opening, Fr. Terence Manirakiza, chancellor and special envoy of the Archbishop, reiterated the Church's mission to promote reconciliation and social cohesion, essential conditions for sustainable development. "Without peace, there is no development," he emphasized.

Donatien Niyonizigiye, legal advisor to the Governor of Gitega, indicated that security and development are priorities for the province. He invited participants to translate the workshop's lessons into

concrete actions in support of peace and cohesion.

Aloys Misigaro, coordinator of the Peace and Reconciliation Project, presented a paper on the link between sustainable development and peace. He stressed the interdependence between economic development, social inclusion, and stability, calling for the strengthening of community resilience.

Also speaking at this workshop, Fr. Célestin Nsabindavyi, executive secretary of the DCJP Gitega, presented the actions undertaken by the Commission. He specifically mentioned that the organization supports 43 youth associations, representing 1,075 beneficiaries of financial assistance for income-generating activities.

A session on trauma healing, led by clinical psychologist Oscar Niyonzima, also covered psychosocial support, mental health, active listening, and nonviolent communication.

At the end of the workshop, participants pledged to work harder for peace, social cohesion, and sustainable development.

Fr. Jean Noël Ntirandekura

DEADLY LANDSLIDE IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: THE URGENT NEED TO PROTECT LIFE IN MINING SITES



Mining in Central African Republic needs better regulation to protect life

Pope Leo XIV expressed his closeness to the grieving people of the Central African Republic following the deadly landslide that occurred on August 18, 2026, in an artisanal gold mine in Zamboyé, in the Nana-Mambéré prefecture, in western Central African Republic, near the border with Cameroon.

During the Angelus prayer on Sunday, August 23, at the Vatican, the Pontiff declared: “I am also close to the people of the Central African Republic, who mourn the victims of the mine collapse in Zamboyé. May the Lord welcome those who have lost their lives and support efforts to guarantee safety and respect for the law at mining sites.” “According to an initial official report, at least 49 peoples, including 34 Central Africans, 13 Cameroonians, and two Chadians, lost their lives in the collapse. These figures are disputed by several local sources who report hundreds of deaths and numerous injuries. The site, where hundreds, if not thousands, of people worked, has been temporarily closed by the Central African authorities.

Urgent need to protect life

Interviewed by Myriam Sandouno for Vatican News, Fr. Marcello Bartolomei, Vicar General of the Diocese of Bouar, denounces the lack of safety and oversight in artisanal mining.

“There is no oversight of artisanal mining,” the priest states, deploring a “complete disregard for human dignity.” According to him, the landslide highlights a “certain anarchy” in gold mining, where impoverished populations flock to mining sites hoping to make quick money.

Fr. Bartolomei calls for strengthened oversight and safety standards in artisanal mining. Beyond the suspension of certain activities, he emphasizes the urgent need to protect the lives and dignity of miners. “We hope that after this tragedy [...] there will be a greater awareness” of the urgent need for better regulation of gold mining.

SECAM News

BISHOP LURATI VISITS ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL IN ZAGAZIG AND ST. CLARA MONASTERY IN KING MARIOUT



Bishop Lurati (left) with his collaborators in Zagazig

Most Rev. Claudio Lurati, Bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of Alexandria, Egypt, inspected the renovation works at the St. Joseph's School in Zagazig, affiliated to the Apostolic Vicariate of Alexandria.

This came Mid-August 2026, in the presence of Fr Sobhi, the legal representative, and Mr. George Andreas, the financial officer, where the Bishop gave words of encouragement to the attendees, assuring them of the importance of dedication to work sincerely.

Rev. Fr. Bishoy Kamel of St. Joseph the Virgin Catholic Church also visited Zagazig to congratulate him on obtaining a doctorate in media and journalism from the Faculty of Arts, Department of Mass Communication, Mansoura University.

Furthermore, the bishop visited Rev. Fr. Bishoy Kamel of St. Joseph the Virgin Church for Coptic Catholics in Zagazig, to congratulate him on receiving his doctorate in Media and Journalism from the Faculty of Arts, Department of Media, Mansoura

University.

At St. Clara's Monastery in King Mariout

Bishop Laurati presided over Mass marking the feast of St. Clara of Asia at her monastery in King Mariout, Alexandria, on August 11. The celebration brought together priests, religious men and women, and members of various Churches.

In his homily, Bishop Lurati reflected on St. Clara's vocation and her decision to follow Jesus Christ, inspired by the example of St. Francis of Assisi. He highlighted holy poverty as a central element of her consecrated life and spiritual journey.

Fr. Philip Farajallah, Regional Minister of the Franciscan Order in Egypt, noted that St. Clara's vocation was strengthened by the example of St. Francis. He stressed that the lasting influence of saints comes not from wealth or power, but from prayer and living the Gospel.

Source: Lemessenger-online.com

JOINT ENGAGEMENT ON PEACEBUILDING AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH SUDAN



Participants of this meeting/AMECEA

The Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) and the Sudan and South Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference (SSSCBC) have convened a one-day consultative engagement in Juba to strengthen collaboration on peace-building, advocacy and civic participation in South Sudan.

The engagement brought together representatives of AMECEA, SSSCBC, the Church's Justice and Peace structures and other partners to assess ongoing peace advocacy efforts and explore practical ways of strengthening the Church's contribution to peace in the Country.

The meeting focused particularly on the Church's continued engagement with communities at a time when South Sudan is preparing for elections while still grappling with the incomplete implementation of the peace agreement and recurring violence.

Opening the engagement, Fr. Martin Ochaya Lino, General Secretary of SSSCBC, said the meeting was an opportunity for the two Church bodies to jointly reflect on how to advance peace through sustained engagement with the people of South Sudan. "The quest for peace in these two countries remains the

most important concern of the people because these countries have never known peace," Fr. Ochaya said.

Peace is fundamental to sustainable development

The Church in South Sudan has reaffirmed its commitment to civic engagement, peacebuilding and accompanying communities amid political uncertainty and preparations for elections expected in December.

Collaboration with AMECEA and Justice and Peace structures was highlighted as essential to strengthening peace advocacy. Incoming AMECEA Coordinator for Integral Development, Fr. Peter Muidie Zingari, pledged to build on existing programmes and work closely with Episcopal Conferences. He identified peace as fundamental to sustainable development and urged participants to translate discussions into practical initiatives. The engagement concluded with a call for continued collaboration, civic education, advocacy and concrete peacebuilding actions to support stability in South Sudan and the region.

*SECAM News,
with Ginaba Lino (AMECEA)*

ACCRA 2026: WEST AFRICAN YOUTH CALLED TO BE AGENTS OF PEACE AND HOPE



Thousands of young people are expected at the West African Youth Days

The first West Africa Youth Days will be held from September 7 to 12, 2026, in Accra, Ghana. Initiated by the Regional Episcopal Conference of West Africa (RECOWA), this gathering will bring together young people from the sixteen countries of the sub-region around Christ.

According to Rev. Fr. Vincent de Paul Boro, First Deputy Secretary of RECOWA, these days aim to be “a prophetic sign” and to make young people “agents of peace and hope” in a West Africa facing the challenges of peace, security, unity, and justice.

The idea for this gathering dates back to 2019, when youth leaders in Burkina Faso proposed, during the third plenary assembly of RECOWA in Ouagadougou, the creation of West Africa Youth Days, modeled after World and National Youth Days. Approved by the bishops in February 2020, the initiative was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Under the theme “Take Courage (John 16: 33): Catholic youth as actors and agents of peace and hope in West Africa,” the conference will offer

opportunities for formation, prayer, spirituality, cultural exchange, and missionary engagement.

For RECOWA, young people are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but also the missionaries of today, called to bear witness to the peace, hope, and love of Christ in their families, communities, and nations.

The event also aims to create a space for dialogue and training on the role of young people in the Church and society, strengthen the bond between young people and pastors, and encourage their active and responsible participation in ecclesial and social life.

In a sub-region marked by political, security, and community crises, RECOWA thus hope to make youth a driving force for unity, peace, and hope. “Accra 2026 aims to be a prophetic sign for West Africa,” concludes Fr. Boro.

SECAM News,
with Françoise Niamien
(Vaticannews)

ALGERIA: BISHOPS CALL FOR TRANSFORMING THE IMPACT OF POPE LEON XIV'S VISIT INTO ACTION



Pope Leo XIV was welcomed in Algeria with great joy

The Catholic bishops of Algeria have called on the country's Christian community to deepen the spirit of communion and renewal inspired by Pope Leo XIV's apostolic visit to Algeria from April 13 to 15, 2026.

In a letter addressed on June 3 to the Church in Algeria, the bishops and vicars general expressed their continued joy over the visit, describing it as a moment of “communion, pride, and joy” shared by the Catholic community and many Algerians. They also thanked Church members, friends and the country's authorities for contributing to the success of the Pope's visit.

Beyond the emotion

The bishops encouraged Catholics not to remain focused solely on the emotion surrounding the Pope's visit but to reflect more deeply on his messages to the Church, the Algerian people and the wider world. They highlighted Pope Leo XIV's call to build Christian life on three essential pillars: prayer, charity and unity.

The letter also emphasized the Church's

mission of fraternity and dialogue with Muslims. Recalling the Pope's appeal to Algerian Christians to remain a “humble and faithful sign of Christ's love,” the bishops urged believers to bear witness through simple gestures, genuine relationships and daily dialogue.

The Prelates further highlighted the witness of Algeria's martyrs and Saint Augustine, encouraging Christians to become heirs to this tradition through fraternal charity and faith. They also drew attention to Algeria's rich history, culture and faith heritage, and to the Pope's message that peace requires justice, dignity and forgiveness.

Concluding their letter, the bishops challenged the faithful to discern what concrete step they have taken, or are prepared to take, in response to the Pope's visit, describing his presence as an invitation for the Church to “take a step forward.”

SECAM News

DRUGS IN MAURITIUS: RELIGIOUS LEADERS CALL FOR JOINT ACTION



Religious Leaders at this meeting

About 30 leaders from different religious communities met on Tuesday, August 11, 2026, at the Bishop's House in Port Louis, at the initiative of Bishop Jean Michaël Durhône. Describing the drug situation as "alarming," they agreed to strengthen their collaboration and join forces to address the growing problem in Mauritius.

Participants noted that drug use, particularly synthetic drugs, now affects all sections of society, with a worrying increase among younger people. Families, both rich and poor, are directly affected, while several communities are experiencing a deterioration of their social fabric.

Family and youth at the centre of concern

Discussions highlighted the weakening of family life, marked by poor communication, growing distance between parents and children, peer pressure and the influence of social media. Religious leaders stressed the need to strengthen education and prevention from an early age, while restoring greater importance to dialogue and family presence.

Drug abuse was also described as a symptom of deeper social changes, including the parallel economy, antisocial behaviour, the normalisation of drug use and collective indifference.

Better coordination of existing initiatives

Religious communities are already involved in awareness campaigns, counselling,

support for people struggling with addiction and their families, as well as spiritual, therapeutic and rehabilitation programmes. However, participants acknowledged the need to improve information-sharing and coordination among these initiatives.

One proposal was the creation of an interreligious platform to share information, coordinate programmes and develop joint actions. The establishment of regional interreligious groups and an audit of existing initiatives were also suggested.

Religious leaders also expressed their willingness to strengthen cooperation with the government, NGOs, specialised organisations and law-enforcement agencies to address prevention, support for affected people and the reduction of drug supply.

At the end of the meeting, Bishop Durhône recalled the importance of the family as the "foundation of society" and stressed the need to remain hopeful. "We are not giving up," he said, calling on religious communities to pool their experiences, programmes and resources.

A committee was established to coordinate future actions. For the religious leaders, the fight against drugs is a collective responsibility requiring a united response from Mauritian society

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IMBISA MOURNS THE PASSING OF CARDINAL JÚLIO LANGA AND BISHOP JANUÁRIO NHANGUMBE



Cardinal Júlio Duarte Langa



Bishop Januário Machaze Nhangumbe

The Inter-Regional Meeting of the Bishops of Southern Africa (IMBISA) has expressed deep sorrow following the deaths of two distinguished shepherds of the Catholic Church in Mozambique: Cardinal Júlio Duarte Langa, Bishop Emeritus of Xai-Xai, and Bishop Januário Machaze Nhangumbe, Bishop Emeritus of Pemba.

Cardinal Júlio Duarte Langa died on August 3, 2026, at the age of 98. In a message of condolence, IMBISA recalled the words of Revelation 21:4: “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain.” The bishops described Cardinal Langa as a man of steadfast faith and dedication to the Gospel whose life left a luminous legacy of service to the Church and his neighbour.

IMBISA conveyed its closeness in prayer and affection to the Episcopal Conference of Mozambique (CEM), the Diocese of Xai-Xai, and Cardinal Langa’s family. The bishops prayed that the Good Shepherd would welcome him into eternal peace and comfort all who mourn his passing with the hope of the

resurrection.

In a second message, IMBISA also joined the CEM in mourning Bishop Januário Nhangumbe, who died on Sunday, August 23, at the age of 92. Citing Romans 14:8, “If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord,” IMBISA called upon the Lord to welcome this “faithful servant” into His Kingdom of light and peace.

Bishop Januário served the Church with wisdom, pastoral zeal and a generous heart. For nearly two decades, he shepherded the Diocese of Pemba, leaving an enduring mark on the spiritual life of its people. His paternal care, attentive presence and deep sense of history made him a source of hope and faith for many.

Their lives, the bishops said, remain an inspiration to the Church, particularly to those called to become shepherds after the heart of Christ.

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