

PMS NATIONAL AND DIOCESAN DIRECTORS FOR MALAWI AND ZAMBIA PREPARES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY MONTH OCTOBER 2019

By: ECM's Stella Zulu

Following Pope Francis' setting aside of October 2019 as an Extraordinary Missionary Month (EMM) to foster greater awareness of *Missio Ad Gentes* and animate the missionary transformation of church life and pastoral activities, National and Diocesan Directors of the Pontifical Mission Societies of Malawi and Zambia, held a regional meeting, with Zimbabwe in absentia, to share best preparatory approaches of evangelization and also promoting Missionary Cooperation within the region.

During this meeting, the directors reflected on the opportunity that has been given for them to reflect and revisit the foundational mission document, *Maximum Illud*, and a subsequent important document on missionary activity, *Ad Gentes*, to promote missionary activity.

The directors gave updates on national preparations for the EMM October 2019 for a common understanding and approach to the celebration and to discuss measures going forward. Reports on PMS activities carried out in their particular dioceses were also presented. Furthermore, the directors reflected on the role of PMS in the Church and shared individual understanding of PMS for the renewal and personal commitment in carrying out their duties in the particular dioceses they serve.

Addressing the directors during the meeting, Fr. Joseph Kimu, Director of Radio Maria Malawi and one of the presenters at the meeting, challenged that for the revival of missionary consciousness in the Church, the PMS directors have a greater responsibility to work in the mission of the Church and to therefore find ways to motivate people.

“As PMS directors, you have a greater burden to convince, first the priests and religious and then the laity of your local churches, to collaborate in the various missionary activities which PMS promotes every year. This then calls for theological, spiritual and pastoral catechesis on the missionary nature of the Church”. Said Fr. Kimu

He also encouraged the directors to always be strong in doing mission work through the realization that Jesus Christ is the first missionary as He came down from heaven to save mankind from sin and eternal damnation and pledged his followers to be missionaries.

On his part, the National PMS Director for Zambia, Rev Fr. Edwin Mulandu, addressed the Directors on the Nature, Mission and Ecclesiological Missionary Role of PMS Today. It was said that there is need for a comprehensive approach towards activities, to encourage lay faithful participation in missionary cooperation, ongoing formation to continue cultivating the missionary consciousness in children and the elderly, and also an integrated approach towards promotion of all the four societies of PMS.

In common sharing of ideas to address problems PMS is facing, the directors resolved to promote and make well known the other three societies of PMS due to the realization that Holy Childhood is the most popular and well known society than the others. They also shared the role of PMS in the universal and local Church, stressed the need to implement Episcopal Conferences' and diocesan child protection policies, due to the fact that they are in constant interactions with children, and encouraged each other to continue motivating parish priests to send collections rendered by PMS main eventse.

The regional meeting was held at Montfort Lake House Conference Center in the Diocese of Mangochi in Malawi as a remote preparation for the local churches of Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe for the EMM October 2019 celebration and also to promote missionary cooperation in the mission work of the church. The Zimbabwe team was in absentia due to unforeseen circumstances.

Malawi
Lilongwe
4 december
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