

24 May 2012



It was especially significant and moving this morning to pray for vocations in Africa, a continent rich in hope for the future, and in this house which perpetually resounds with the bright and lively voices of many young women in formation.

Energized by this spirit, we launched into the *second stage* of our meeting, the purpose of which is to help us grasp the *response the Church must to make to the needs of Africa*, allowing ourselves to be guided by the priorities indicated in the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Africae Munus*, in the light of the upcoming Synod on the New Evangelization and our personal knowledge and experience as missionaries.

Our sharing session on the general assembly level concerning what we reflected on more deeply in our communities to prepare for this continental meeting was rich, well focused and convergent.

In coherence with our reflection on the needs of this continent, we agreed that the priorities we should keep in mind in a special way are: a new evangelization based on the Word and Eucharist and characterized by prophetic announcement and denouncement, reconcilia-

tion and dialogue; more intensive commitment in the areas of catechesis and the Church's social doctrine so as to form consciences that are upright and sensitive to the requirements of justice; the effort to shape a Christian African culture; a commitment to Christian families so as to help them become true "domestic churches"; the human and spiritual formation of the people and of youth in particular, helping them to discern and grow in values; our presence in the media "so as to make them not only a tool for the spread of the Gospel but also for educating the African peoples to reconciliation in truth, and the promotion of justice and peace" (AM 145).



As in the first stage of our meeting, in this second stage too our work teams grouped together by theme the key ideas that emerged in our latest sharing sessions, ranking them by priority and organizing them in diagram form. In the plenary assembly that followed, the four diagrams were discussed and their common and divergent points were highlighted. Tomorrow we will listen to the input of another expert, Fr. Francesco Pierli, a Comboni priest who has worked in African for many years.

At the beginning of today's plenary assembly, Fr. Sabino, our methodologist, complimented us for the commitment with which we are carrying out our work, saying that this is noticeable in its results. He said we deserved a reward...and in fact this evening we have been invited to a party, which we are sure will be very lively and replete with the vivid colors and music of Africa. Where? In the same place where, for five days now, we have been praying, comparing ideas, voicing our dreams and hopes, and trying to trace out new and realistic paths for our mission in Africa-Madagascar.

