

3rd December 2009

Dear Parish priest,

Re: Christmas Appeal

Greetings and best wishes from the Order Apostles of the Jesus in England.

You might have heard about the Religious Missionary Order of the Apostles of Jesus. We're the first indigenous Clerical Religious Order to be founded in Africa by Bishop Sixtus Mazzoldi and Fr John Marengoni both of whom were Comboni Missionaries. The Order was founded in **1968** in Moroto Uganda, after the expulsion of the Missionaries from Southern Sudan, and in answer to the evangelization needs of the Church in Africa and the world. Our Mission is the very Mission Jesus gave to his Apostles to continue his ministry so that...'all may have life and have it to the fullness (Jn.10:10)'. Since its foundation, the young Order grew rapidly in numbers and in strength. It went through lots of difficulties of civil wars, but it survived and its missionary's works are now bearing much fruits in several continents: Africa, Europe, Australia, South and North America. Today we are over **390** Priests and perpetual professed Brothers, 33 Novices, about 130 Major seminarians and several others in our 4 junior seminaries. Indeed the Order is a sign of hope for the Church in Africa and the World, particularly this time of crisis in Vocations to priesthood.

We (Fathers **Moses, John and Jimmy**) members of the Apostles of Jesus working in the Archdiocese of Birmingham would like to thank you all for the support and encouragement you give to us in our pastoral missions. Wherever we are or go within the diocese; we are warmly received with love.

During this special year of the priests, we would like to ask you to extend this Mission partnership to the entire Order of the Apostles of Jesus who sent us here. This appeal is in the name of our two seminaries in Juba-Sudan and Nairobi-Kenya, both of which are undergoing major reconstructions. The former needs a particular attention because during the civil war in the Southern Sudan, this Seminary in Juba was occupied by the Sudan Armed Forces for over 17 years. After the Peace Agreement signed in Nairobi in 2005, the seminary was handed back to us entirely destroyed and without any compensation. A lot has already been achieved after 2 years work of reconstructions, but more funds is still needed (about **£90,000**) to complete the work.

During this year of priests we appeal for your financial support to enable us to rebuild our seminaries for the training of these future priests. Please remember Apostles of Jesus during this Christmas with your presents or donations. You might consider taking special collections or allocating this year Crib Offering for us; or perhaps making your project part of your parish fundraising this Christmas in support of this Religious Order. We wish you the very best and Merry Christmas to you all.

Yours in Christ,

Rev Moses Pitya David, AJ

Parish Priest