

AUXILIARIES OF THE MISSIONS



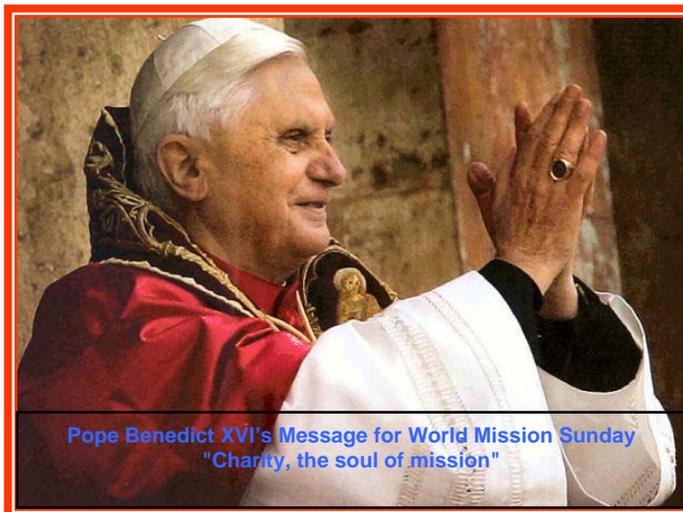
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CHARITY: SOUL of the MISSION

By His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI*

God's love which gives life to the world is the love which has been given us in Jesus, the Word of Salvation, who is the perfect icon of the mercy of our heavenly Father. The love which God has for each single person constitutes, in fact, the very core of living and preaching the Gospel, and all who hear it in turn, become witnesses. Unless mission is animated by charity, that is, unless it flows from a profound act of divine love, it risks being reduced to a mere philanthropic and social action. The message of salvation can be then summed up in the words of Saint John the Evangelist: "In this is manifest the love of God for us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we may have life in him" (1Jn 4, 9). The mandate to spread the message of love was entrusted to the Apostles by Jesus after his resurrection, and the Apostles, inwardly transformed on the day of Pentecost by the power of the Holy Spirit, began to bear witness to the Lord's death and resurrection. From that time on the Church continues this same mission which constitutes for all believers an indispensable and permanent duty.



Pope Benedict XVI's Message for World Mission Sunday
"Charity, the soul of mission"

humanity. In the beginning man came forth from the hands of the Creator as the fruit of his own loving initiative. Sin darkened the divine imprint. Deceived by the devil our first parents, Adam and Eve, lost their relationship of trust with their Lord, giving way to the temptation of the evil one who persuaded them that God was a rival and wanted to limit their freedom. However, God did not abandon them and promised salvation to them and to their descendants: He foretold the coming of his only Son, Jesus, who in the fullness of time would reveal to them his Father's love, a love capable of redeeming every single human creature from the slavery of evil and death. In Christ therefore, we have received immortal life, where all men of all times has been given the possibility of entering into communion with God, our merciful Father who is ready to welcome home his prodigal son. The astounding sign of such a love is the Cross.

This is love in its most radical form. It is there that this truth can be contemplated. It is from there that our definition of Love must begin. In this contemplation the Christian discovers the path along which his life and love must move"

*These are excerpts from the Pope's Message for the World Mission Sunday, Given at the Vatican, Rome, 29 April 2006

Every Christian community is called, then, to make known God, who is Love. With his love God permeates all creation and the history of

My Dear Friends,

May 6, 2007

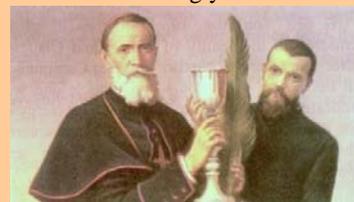
Peace in Christ Jesus!

The Upper Room has served as a venue for a multitude of turning-points. Pilgrims from all over the world sigh in reflection within the very walls that witnessed the Jesus of the Last Supper, who despite the locked doors entered and greeted the first apostles "Shalom!" The peace that the world gives is the mere absence of war and trouble. But the peace that only Jesus can give is the disposition of wholeness at every instant of one's life. It does not come from without, for it is neither circumstantial nor generated from external stimulus. It is *from within* the believer's heart.

Indeed our Peace is not something. *Our Peace is some-One.* Jesus is our Peace. (Eph 2:14) May our Peace be our model! We are called to embody his peace to others. If it costs our lives, so be it. Mission areas like Sudan badly need Jesus. For in the Upper Room, the voice that is heard: "This is my body" is the same voice that avowed: "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me so am I sending you." *Duc in Altum!* From the Upper Room, we are sent into the world to launch out into the deep for a better catch.

Your Partner in Mission,

Fr. Augustin Miciano, SDB
Mission Animation Office
FIN



SALESIANS MINISTERING AMIDST WAR IN SUDAN



After two decades of genocidal war in Sudan, where hatred and ethnic intolerance prevailed, a peace accord was signed in April, 2005. Africa's longest and bloodiest civil war was finally showing signs of an ending. Sudan has been so bloodied and terrorized by lawlessness that it will take generations to recuperate from the horrors perpetrated there. Darfur in Sudan had become famous as the world's worst manmade humanitarian crisis of our time because of unparalleled inhumanity against one's countrymen.

TONJ: An Important Salesian Presence

In the face of all this suffering, the Salesians have maintained a presence in Sudan experiencing the threats of violence, hunger, and the desperation of a people forcibly evicted from their homes. In Tonj, the Salesians have been caring for people escaping the marauding forces.

Just getting to Tonj can be a difficult task. The only time that trucks can make the journey to Tonj is during the dry season and providing essential goods to the people is a constant problem, both because of the cost and the dangers of journeying for two days in an area where lawlessness is rampant.

The "Don Bosco Mission Center" in Tonj is an oasis in the desert of death that surrounds it. The people are able to find renewed trust and hope for the future. The Center is jointly administered by the Salesians of Don Bosco and the Salesian Sisters and its ministries include: a large parish, a school, a medical clinic, and a leprosarium.

The work in Tonj has not been easy. The Center was forced to shut down its operations for a number of years during the most violent stage of the war. One Salesian was held prisoner by the guerrillas for eighteen months. The buildings were sacked. It has only been since the beginning of 2002 that the Salesians have been able to be an active presence in the city once again, and they have returned with great enthusiasm and zeal.

Because schools were shut down for nearly twenty years, the educational level of the people has suffered. But they are eager to learn, and their thirst for knowledge and formal education is strong. Classes on the most primary level are attended by students who range in age from 6 to 16. Adult education has students from 17 to 50. Playing catch-up for years of neglect means that everyone is at the most rudimentary level of education, but their eagerness to advance is very evident to be seen.

(to be continued)

"And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful." (Colossians 3:15)

MISSIONARY CLUB MEETING

The gathering, which intended to echo the Versiglia-Caravario Bible Service last February was held on Sunday, 2:00-4:00pm, May 6, 2007 at Room 310, St. John Bosco Parish Center, Makati. The 40 participants came from the different Youth Ministries. Majority of them were from the Don Bosco Pugad, Home for streetchildren and Migrant Youth.

It started with the praying of the Holy Rosary. It was followed by a short welcome address and introduction by Ms. Bheng Cuasito, a salesian lay missionary volunteer and mission animation staff. After a few moments of silent reflection, Bro.L.A.Custodio, a diocesan seminarian gave a recapitulation of the life of the Salesian Protomartyrs. His message was also based on the theology of love found in the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*. According to him, "to love is essentially to be vulnerable...open to wounds, yet open to life. Just as Jesus witnessed to the Father's AGAPE, so must we, with utmost EROS witness to Him like what the martyrs did." He also stated that in gossips, "it is easier to destroy people than to edify. Like venom, we feel "high" knowing that there are people who are



worse than us." It is about the "itch" that our tongues have in telling bad tales about others. Our "itch" ought to be re-channeled to telling the Good News: *Eu+Aggellion*. This is the news that saves. This is the news that edifies. Tell the world of

His Love! The message ended with a call to action and commitment for the participants to spend their time, treasure and talent to be members of the Missionary Club. It is a powerful means to express one's love for those who have not yet heard of the Gospel.

After the sermon, the participants proceeded to the group dynamics to share their insights and personal suggestions on evangelization. Some of them reflected upon the necessity of propagating God's love story with humanity. Most of them were touched by the lives of countless

martyrs and saints. According to them love is the sole uniform of every Christian disciple. Although there is no state in the world in which love is legislated, it is still the voice of Christ trying to permeate all cultures that compels us to follow His example. He did not just talk about it. He walked the talk.