

3. Healing for the Victims

the victim: O Lord, I cried to you for help
And you, my God, have healed me (Ps. 29)

the perpetrator: But now I have acknowledged my sins
My guilt I did not hide
I said I will confess
My offence to the Lord
And you, Lord, have forgiven
The guilt of my sin (Ps. 31) ...silence

4. Assistance to other persons affected

the victim: Have mercy on me, O Lord
For I am in distress
Tears have wasted my eyes
My throat and my heart (Ps. 30)

the perpetrator: His ways are faithfulness and love
For those who keep his covenant and will
Lord, for the sake of your name
Forgive my guilt, for it is great (Ps. 24) ...silence

5. A just response to those who are accused

the victim: Vindicate me, Lord, in your justice
Do not let them rejoice
Do not let them think:
“Yes we have won, we have brought you to an end” (Ps. 34)

the perpetrator: How long, O Lord, will you forget me?
How long will you hide your face?
How long must I bear grief in my soul
This sorrow in my heart day and night?
How long shall my enemy prevail? (Ps. 12) ...silence

6. An effective response to those who are guilty of abuse

the victim: Lord, hear a cause that is just
Pay heed to my cry
Turn your ear to my prayer
No deceit is on my lips
From you may my judgment come forth
Your eyes discern the truth (Ps. 16)

the perpetrator: In you I hope all day long
Because of your goodness, O Lord
Remember your mercy, Lord,
And the love you have shown from of old
Do not remember the sins of my youth
In your love remember me (Ps. 24) ...silence

7. Prevention of abuse

the victim: To you, Lord God, my eyes are turned
In you I take refuge; spare my soul
From the trap they have laid for me keep me safe
Keep me from the snares of those who do evil (Ps. 139)

the perpetrator: O search me, God, and know my heart
O test me and know my thoughts
See that I follow not the wrong path
And lead me in the path of life eternal (Ps. 138) ...silence

All: **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen**

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item 107

Africa – go forth!



The African Continental Meeting of Major Superiors of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate has just concluded in Yamoussoukro, Ivory Coast. From 16 to 23 February 2013 the participants reflected on many important issues like formation, financial management, creation of income producing projects, opening of a new mission in Malawi, community life and above all, the realization of the Pallottine charism in this huge continent. *Collaboration* and *internationality* are two key words for the growth of a Pallottine presence and apostolate in Africa.

In the XX General Assembly of our Society, the theme of Pallottine presence in Africa was presented under the title "Africa, get up and walk". While this phrase was an obvious challenge to the African confreres to guide and build up their own destiny, there was also the presumption of a certain sickness and helplessness

in the whole situation in Africa. While we must never deny the enormity of the challenges faced there, no one must dare to think that it is a sick and helpless continent. Such pessimism and desperation do not correspond to reality and are counter-productive in finding creative solutions. It must be remembered that each continent has its own challenges. There is much youthfulness in Africa. The situation is much worse when we are faced with old age and decay with no one to replace and build up a future. Therefore, the new phrase should be: **Africa – go forth!** From a Christian point of view it means being sent, being missionary people who are willing to be evangelized and to be evangelizers. From a human point of view, it is an invitation to build up a future for Africa, by Africans themselves of course, with every available help from God and fellow human beings.

In this context, I can think of 5 phrases that sum up my vision for Pallottines on the African continent. African Pallottines should be:

1. **Self-believing:** Trust in your own dignity and worth and have the confidence to build up your own destiny. It is more a psychological issue. There have been many historical experiences endured over centuries that can make you doubt your own dignity and ability. Your collective unconscious must get rid of aggression and feelings of inferiority in a healthy way. They should be replaced by positive attitudes, of self-worth and self-respect.
2. **Self-transcending:** This is the call to the supernatural domain, to genuine trust and faith God. Our call is intrinsically to transcend ourselves theocentrically through love. Without such a deep and existential spirituality, nobody will be able to transcend the limitations to freedom created by prejudice, negative experiences and cultural and social boundaries.
3. **Self-depending:** This is a question of self-responsibility. We are all interdependent and this is a sign of maturity. Over-dependency and independency are often marks of underlying insecurity. Especially in the economic field, Africa has been over-dependent. At times this served the interests of those who were powerful. Too much financial dependency can often become a great curse. At the same time, it must be remembered, there are too many poor and helpless people who need material support and our pride or arrogance must not block much-needed help for these people. The challenge is to work for one's daily bread, earn one's living and live within one's means. We cannot live as kings and princes using the money given for the needy. A more dignified existence means earning our daily bread through the work of our hands, as St Paul often insisted.
4. **Self-giving:** This means being compassionate and empathetic towards the needy. The blessings that we receive should be shared with the less fortunate. We must not forget the poor when we are blessed with many gifts. Such an insensitivity towards fellow human beings by those who shared the same plight initially is not uncommon.
5. **Selflessness:** This is the ultimate measure of spiritual and human maturity. This is true charity, the spirit of generous giving. But let us remember: only one who has genuinely found his self will be able to lose it. If one hasn't found it, he will continuously try to preserve it and defend it – as happens with psychological defense mechanisms. One who has found eternal security in the infinite love of God through a living faith will let himself go. He shall not fear because he has found his security in God. The Lord is the fortress, the real rock in his life.

In short, if Africa has to go forth it must begin with a healthy self image, both humanly and spiritually and must be filled with a new spirit of mission, which is generated from within by positive values of faith, hope and charity. As I see it, this new journey has already begun in our communities in Africa.

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