

## THE APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF BENIN

Thursday 24 May 2018, the parish of Saint Pierre de Kouande and his parish priest, Father Antoine Bio, hosted the first meeting of the Apostolic Movement for the Diocese of Natitingou, in Benin.

There were a hundred faithful present, supported by the diocesan assistant, Fr Cyrille M'Po Banamba-Ni, who in August 2017 came to visit the Catanzaro central seat.

After the meeting and the prayer of the Holy Rosary, a conference was held to present the spirituality and history of the Apostolic Movement. The celebration of Holy Mass followed, was done with great enthusiasm and in communion of prayer with the members of the central seat.

The meeting was then concluded in the joyous sharing of lunch, before the participants resumed the way back, which for many was long and tiring.

Significant images of the very participated meeting are available on the Apostolic Movement website, at the link of the foreign Branches.

Let us accompany this important event of evangelization with prayer, so that it may bear good fruits.

## VISIT TO CATANZARO OF THE BISHOP S.E. OUEDRAOGO, BURKINA FASO

Last June 4th, in the parish church of the Mother of the Church in Catanzaro, the Apostolic Movement welcomed with joy the visit of H.E. Mons. Joachim Ouedraogo, Bishop of the Diocese of Koudougou (Burkina Faso) and Vice President of the Episcopal Conference of Burkina Faso and Niger.

The bishop presided over the Mass in the weekly meeting of the numerous members, to which the Central Assistant Msgr. Di Bruno and several other priests co-celebrated.

In the homily, Msgr. Ouedraogo, expressing enthusiasm for the warm welcome, wanted to attest to the happy perception offered to him by the assembly: a movement in which "the smell of fraternity, love and faith is felt", which testifies to the living presence of the Risen Lord and is animated by a sincere and faithful missionary impulse for the remembrance of the Gospel entrusted to the Church.

We are the Lord's vineyard - he reminded - and He takes care of each one of us as his treasure and protects his Church. We too are called to take care of the Church and give her life by listening to the Word of God - the water of our faith - and prayer - which is the breath of the Christian.

At the end he joyously recalled his first meeting with the Apostolic Movement through the priest Fr Franco Bruno, and he greeted all the people present, attesting that they have conquered his heart. Promising to return and recommending mutual prayer, he so kindly invited some adhering members to visit him in his community, because he said, "it would be nice to have the Apostolic Movement in my diocese."



## Daughter, your faith has saved you

True faith is built on three pillars: the Word of God, the truth of God, the history of God. If one of these pillars is absent, never might faith be called true. The pillar of the Word of God is planted in the heart when, believing with great certainty and invincible conviction, one obeys every Word addressed to us. Without Word there is no obedience, without obedience there is no faith, because faith is obedience to every command of the Lord. There is no faith when one does not obey the Law and not even when the Gospel is neglected, even tampered with or adapted to the demands of our sin. True faith adds nothing and takes nothing away from the Word of the Lord. Do not kill is do not kill. Do not commit adultery is do not commit adultery. Just as do not steal is do not steal. As there are no reasons in the Word of God to kill, so there are no reasons to adulterate and to steal. What the Lord says we do it. What He forbids we do not do it. What He does not say nor forbid must or must not be done always starting from his Word.

The pillar of God's truth reveals to us that He always remains faithful to what he said. If he says to Abraham you will have a son, Abraham can wait in joy. The son will be given to him. If he says that in disobedience He cannot bless his people, because blessing is the fruit of obedience to his Word, the people must be certain that no blessing will come upon it in disobedience. If the Lord says that without conversion, there is no stability, but everything becomes uncertain and without hope, that is how it will be. If he

then says that those who do not keep his Word do not have any right of justice to be welcomed into eternal dwellings, the damned can always confirm that this was so and so it will be. No man has ever been able to prove that our God is unfaithful. Today, however, the Christian of our day is setting all his "faith" on God's infidelity, that is, not on his eternal truth, but on the lie of his heart. Either we return to God's faithfulness or we will all slide towards non-faith. But without faith there is neither life nor blessing. We are lost.

The pillar of history is necessary because from a truth of God we can deduce many others. The woman who suffers with a serious loss of blood, sees, hears and is told the story of Jesus. He is powerful in words and deeds. He can perform any miracle. There is nothing in nature that He cannot govern, even the impure spirits obey him. This is the story of Jesus. Where does this truth bring? It generates a new faith in the heart of woman. If Jesus is this power of grace, blessing and healing, it is enough for me to approach him as the wood is approached to the fire and immediately I will be healed. As the fire burns, so I will be burned in my sickness. It suffices for me to touch it. Then the fire of his omnipotence will think of healing me. Instead, Jairus still does not have this truth. Jesus helps him so that he does not stop having faith. Mother of God, Woman of the purest faith, help your children to live with true faith.

**Father Costantino Di Bruno**

### Movimento Apostolico

Non-profit Apostolic Movement Weekly.  
Free distribution. Publisher: Apostolic Movement  
Responsible Director: Costantino Di Bruno.

With ecclesiastical approval of the  
Archbishopric Curia of Catanzaro-Squillace.

Authorization no. 75 of 8-2-1990 of the Court of Lamezia Terme.  
Directorate, Editorial, Administration: Via B.Musolino, 23/E, Catanzaro.

Internet: [www.movimentoapostolico.it](http://www.movimentoapostolico.it)  
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Printed by the press office of the Apostolic Movement

# CONTINUATORS OF THE SANCTIFYING WORK OF CHRIST, MASTER AND PASTOR

## Reflections starting from the homily of H.H. Francis in the Holy Mass with priestly ordinations (22.4.2018)

The priest has an ever delicate task concerning the salvation of humanity and the very children of the Church. By divine vocation, He is called to be a mediator between Heaven and earth, between God and man and between man and God. If the priest is missing, there is no Eucharist, nor forgiveness of sins in the Sacrament of Confession and nor authentic teaching of the Word of God. Even the prayer of man is as if deprived of a necessary help which is priestly mediation, which is realized in particular during the celebration of Holy Mass. In short, without the priest, the gulf between man and God remains very profound, because there is no "human bridge" that allows the Holy Spirit to work fully and make all things new.

For this reason, Pope Francis, before imposing his hands on the head of the ordinands, invited each of them to be "aware of having been chosen among men and constituted in their favour to await the things of God, [and therefore called to] to exercise in joy and sincere charity the priestly work of Christ, solely intent on pleasing God and not themselves or men" (see Homily).

The priest must necessarily be guided by the only desire to live his ministry in perfect communion of intentions, words and deeds, with Christ the Lord, the only Priest of the New Covenant, and in harmony with the faith of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. If he lives and works unhooked from Jesus Master and Pastor, he wastes his forces in vain and exposes his very high vocation to total failure.

It is not enough to have received the sa-

crament of the Order to operate effectively in terms of salvation. It is necessary that everything be done with great faith, with a spirit of sacrifice, with a prayerful heart and in perfect humbleness before God, in the constant delivery of his life to him. Before being ordained, it is not by chance that the priest affirms to be willing to "unite himself intimately with the Lord Jesus, model of his priesthood, and to renounce himself in order to be faithful dispenser of the mysteries of God, guided not by human interests but driven by the love of Christ for the salvation of the brothers" (cf Priestly promises).

The heart of the priest must be consecrated in truth (see Jn 17: 15-19), because only in this way will he be able to "build up the House of God which is the Church and continue the sanctifying work of Christ Master, Priest and Pastor, [ ...] by making perfect thorough the personal ministry the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful" (see Homily).

Hence the need for a perennial conversion to the Gospel, of a daily journey made in poverty in spirit, towards the total self-spoilation in order to "bring the death of Christ into one's own members and walk with him in newness of life" (Homily).

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption and Queen of the Apostles, support the priests in their delicate mission, console them in the trials of life, place lay people at their side willing to help them and make them grow in holiness every day, so that salvation may be accomplished through them and everyone can experience how great the love of God for every man is.

Father Raffaele Rimotti

The  
Lord's Day  
ROMAN RITE

LITTLE GIRL, I SAY TO YOU, ARISE!  
(XIII SUNDAY O.T. YEAR B)

**GOD FORMED MAN TO BE IMPERISHABLE (Wis 1,13-15; 2,23-24)**

All humanity is quenched with poison of death. Its forms and modalities are without number. Every day new ones are invented. Today by human law also it has been established that man can kill man by making a real slaughter of innocents who have not even seen the light yet. Thus the poison of death is drunk even when one wants to get arbitrarily out of time, ignoring and despising the divine will. Our God created man for incorruptibility. He placed no poison of death in his nature. He made him in the image of his essence, which is eternal and immortal. Where does this poison of death that tomorrow, in eternity, turns into a poison of eternal death, come from? It is a gift to the man of the devil. Out of envy of humanity, he tempted the first woman, the woman tempted the man and both drank the poison that led the whole of humanity to death.

**BY HIS POVERTY YOU MIGHT BECOME RICH (2Cor 8, 7.9.13.13-15)**

St. Paul has organized a collection in favour of the Churches of Judea tried by a heavy famine. Not only that, he asks some disciples to take care of this work with great zeal and wisdom. All good works must be taken care of. Without care the result will always be a failure. He himself gives the motivations that will have to drive everyone to be extremely generous. The more one is stripped of himself and of his goods in order to enrich others and the more God dresses us of himself and of all his goods. While our measure is always limited and finite, that of God is divine, eternal, unlimited and infi-

nite. Jesus is God. As God he cannot be undressed of himself. He assumes our flesh. In the flesh he strips himself until death on the cross. He became poor for us. He gave us all of himself. In his humanity he also gave his divinity. What was the fruit of this annihilation for us? The Father raised him above all other names and constituted him Lord.

**IMMEDIATELY HER FLOW OF BLOOD DRIED UP (Mk 5,21-43)**

A man asks Jesus to go and heal his daughter who is about to die. Jesus leaves to go with him. In the meantime, a woman, who has been suffering from blood loss for twelve years without being able to recover despite having consulted the greatest doctors of the time, has a thought of very strong faith: If I touch even the hem of his cloak, I will be healed. She approaches, touches his cloak with her hand and she is healed of her illness. Jesus wants her to confess the miracle that happened and he tells her the reason for her recovery: her faith. Jairus arrives near his home and receives the news that his daughter is dead. He is also invited not to disturb the Master. It is at this moment that Jesus reveals himself to be true Master in faith. He invites Jairus to have faith even after the death of his daughter. If Jesus had not been able to work the miracle, he would not even have come. Instead he came to reveal himself Lord also over death. The whole world must know that He is the universal Lord over all that exists on earth and in the heavens, on the visible and on the invisible, on life and on death.

*by the theologian,*

Father Costantino Di Bruno