

NCS MARKS EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY MONTH: OCTOBER 2019

The National Catholic Secretariat (NCS), Accra has marked the Extraordinary Missionary Month, October, 2019 (EMM OCT 2019) with a symbolic Eucharistic Celebration held at the Secretariat's Chapel on Wednesday, 9th October 2019. The National Director, Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS), Ghana, Very Rev. Fr. Isaac Ebo-Blay led the entire staff of NCS in the unique celebration in which the Paschal Candle was lighted as part of the symbolic actions.



NCS Secretary General Rev. Fr. Lazarus Anondee (3rd left) & PMS National Director, Very Rev. Fr. Isaac Ebo Blay (middle) pose with NCS Staff at the occasion

In his brief but catchy homily, Fr. Ebo-Blay reminded the staff gathered, of the Jonah syndrome “in all of us – the inability to forgive or to show mercy”. He said that the greatest attribute of God that human beings easily forget is God’s mercy. He called on everyone to be merciful as our heavenly Father saying, “Mission without mercy is no mission at all”.

The Eucharistic celebration was followed by a candle light procession from the NCS Chapel to the ground premises where the ceremony was concluded.

The PMS Director in his address gave a succinct account of the background of EMM OCT. According to him, Pope Francis during his Angelus Prayer on World Mission Sunday, 22nd October 2017, publicly announced to the whole Church, his intention to designate October, 2019 as an “Extraordinary Mission Month”, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Pope Benedict XV’s Apostolic Letter (*Maximum Illud*).



Father Ebo-Blay said that on the same day, Pope Francis entrusted the work of preparing for the event to Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples (CEP) and President of the



Supreme Council of the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS). He said that the preparation should raise awareness among the particular Churches, the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life and among associations, movements, communities and other ecclesial bodies.

Pope Francis, the PMS National Director further disclosed, gave the theme for the EMM OCT as: “**Baptised and sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World**”. He stated that reawakening an awareness of the *missio ad gentes* and reinvigorating the responsibility of proclaiming the Gospel with new enthusiasm, are themes that combine the pastoral concern of Pope Benedict XV in *Maximum Illud* with the missionary vitality expressed by Pope Francis in

Evangelii Gaudium: missionary outreach is pragmatic for all the Church's activity.

On the Church's Tasks in the mission, the PMS Director said that the Church has always had the whole person in view – body, mind and soul. He declared: “wherever mission stations were established, health centres, schools and other social services followed. He explained, “this was not a trick to attract people, but an expression of the will to follow the example of Jesus in his ‘manifesto’ to the people of Nazareth (LK.4: 18-19)”.



Very Rev. Fr. Ebo-Blay explaining a point to NCS Staff, Rev. Sr. Elizabeth Mgbaramuko, SHCJ at the Celebration

“Evangelization”, Fr. Ebo-Blay noted, “is not about converting individuals”. “The Gospel is meant to penetrate and change culture and social structures and the whole of human reality”. He said that the commitment to a holistic development and to social justice, peace and the integrity of creation is part of the mission of the Church and of all the disciples of Jesus.

PICTURES ON THE EXTRAORDINARY MONTH OF MISSION INITIATIVES

The National Catholic Secretariat (NCS) Accra, Ghana marked the EMM OCT. 2019 with a symbol Eucharistic celebration held at the Secretariat's chapel on

9th October 2019. Rev. Fr. Isaac Ebo-Blay, the PMS National Director, Ghana led the entire staff of NCS in the unique celebration in which the Paschal Candle was lighted as part of the symbolic actions of being baptised and sent.



The PMS Ghana National Council, made up of the Episcopal Chairman, National Director, Diocesan Directors and Diocesan Coordinators held their meeting at the SVD Conference Centre at Adoagyiri-Nsawam Ghana from 12th to 16th September, 2019. The meeting afforded members of the Council to know preparations being made for the EMMOct.2019 in each of the 20 dioceses.

- The PMS National Director, Ghana at the extreme right with the rest of the Council members.



- As part of the EMM initiatives. The National Council members took sometime off to visit the physically-challenged children at the Orthopaedic Training Centre where members interacted and shared with them the love of the Gospel.

The children were also happy to see members and express their joy by singing and dancing with Gospel music. The National Council members made some cash donation to the children at eh Centre as a gesture of love.



- St. Barnabas Catholic School, Accra, as part of the EMM muliatives produces some exercise books with the EMM Logo printed on them for distribution to other deprived schools by way of sharing learning resources with the poor. The school children, most of whom are also Missionary Childhood Children were accompanied by their teachers for the missionary animation exercise.



- The Missionary Childhood Children in St. James Catholic Church, Accra; made “Missio Banners” to demonstrate what they would do by way of Mission

to themselves and to others. Their animator, Sister Alberta (HDR) held her Missio Banner with the harsh tag “My Mission is to help the Poor and put smile on their faces.” What is yours?



- In Parishes and Schools in the cities and Urban areas, “Missio Banners” with harsh tag “#Our Mission is ...” were prepared for all parishioners especially the Missionary Childhood children, their teachers, and animators. Three (3) female teachers in Teshie Hedor Catholic Primary B5 took a picture with the children after School Mass.



- The Parish Priest of Christ the King Parish, Accra; Rev. Fr. Andrew Campbel, SVD held his Missio Banner of hope and love to people before his visit to the Lepers at the Leprosarium in Accra.



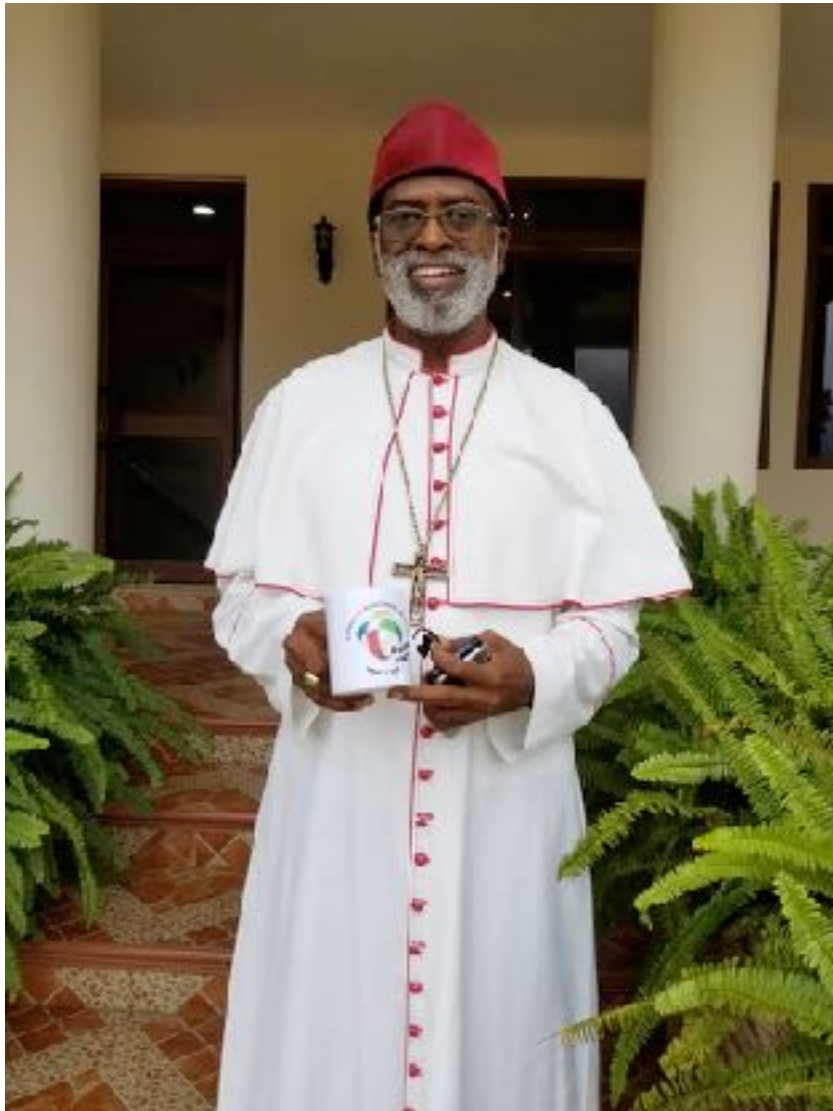
- The Metropolitan Archbishop of Accra, Most Rev. John B. Kwofie with some Catholic Nuns and lay faithful after a Symposium to close the EMMOOct.2019 at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Chaplaincy, University of Ghana, Legon – Accra.



- A parishioner at St. Thomas Catholic Church, Accra carried her Missio Banner to promote good health among people who live in slums of Accra as her mission after Sunday Mass ready to visit the sick.



- The Metropolitan Archbishop of Cape Coast, Most Rev. Charles Gabriel Palmer-Buckle holding a mug with Baptized and Sent logo after EMMOOct.2019 for the Clergy and Religious in Accra.



Rev. Fr. Isaac Ebo-Blay

Pms National Director Ghana