



Conclusions of the III Assembly Comboni Lay Missionaries in Africa Anchilo, Mozambique, 24-30 July, 2017

Introduction

The 3rd African Assembly of the Comboni Lay Missionaries took place in Anchilo (Mozambique) from 24 to 30 July, 2017. The participants included seven comboni missionaries (MCCJ), one Comboni Missionary Sister (CMS), nine Comboni Lay Missionaries (CLM) and four lay people from other groups, coming from eight countries.

We feel that we are on the path which was started with the 1st meeting in Layibi (2011) and continued in Kinshasa (2014). We love our CLM vocation and feel called to do everything possible to implement it in our African reality, despite all the challenges we are facing. We would like to encourage all the groups to find the way to realise the missionary aspect of our vocation – to create mission communities inside our country and find ways to start also the missions outside our country.

Let local and expatriate CLM members hold hands and walk together to fulfil the Comboni's dream to "Save Africa with Africa".

After our reflection together, we have come to some conclusions that will allow each province to set up a plan of action. Below are the conclusions on the different topics.

Organization

We agree that the current structure of the CLM organisation is good. The problem is how to put into practice the decisions made by the International Committees and Assemblies.

- We have to focus on implementing the decisions made in the previous assemblies (whether continental or international).*
- We have to improve the organisation so as to work on communication among the Committees and the groups in the various countries.*
- As we have only one CLM group in each country, which includes local and expatriate members. We should have a common program decided in the assembly, one coordinating team that shares the responsibilities and makes the important decisions together. Those CLM who live near one another, should also try to share some of the activities, prayers, meals, formation...*

Formation

As agreed in Kinshasa and at Layibi, formation needs to be a priority.

We should exchange our formation program and themes so that we can journey together (among the country groups and the African and Central Committee coordinating teams).

Already in Layibi, it was agreed that at the discernment stage of formation, we should have had community and mission experience. We should see how to put this into practice. Each country should analyse its own situation and provide ways for this experience in a proper

manner – having concrete program of activities and prayers, a person to take care of the candidates during the experience, the length of experience (like from 3 to 4 weeks). If in the country there is a community of CLM, the experience should take place there; otherwise the candidates should be accompanied by the CLM at another venue. If there is no CLM community, we can think about going to other provinces, or to organize it in collaboration with the MCCJ or the CMS.

Mission Fields

Going to the mission “ad gentes” is still a great challenge if we talk of the African reality, mostly because of the economic situation, the different circumstances of family environment and the lack of proper preparation.

- We should think about not only going abroad, but also about getting involved inside our own countries. We should go out to our own people, our own poor and abandoned, maybe in other parts of the country. We should analyse where people need our presence and ministry, considering our own possibilities.
- We should encourage our people to consider the possibility of going out of their own countries. We should analyse the challenges and solutions also with the province.

Finances

We agreed that we should continue to follow the agreement of Kinshasa:

- We want to include the financial aspect in our spiritual life, in order to live a life based on Providence. In this context, we ask the groups to include the topic on our we relate to money in our formation programs, placing our stability and confidence in God.
- In the process of our financial autonomy, we invite the various groups to form their members in the various economic aspects, such as the development projects based on the local needs, the search for funds, keeping the accounts...
- Knowing that we all belong to the CLM Family, we are called to be responsible for and to support the group. In this sense, all the CLM must contribute to the fund of the local group. From this fund, the group in turn should contribute to the international common fund, managed by the CLM Central Committee.
- We are also called to inspire the local Church and all people of good will to support our missionary activity.
- In order to reach our financial autonomy, we invite the groups to start fund-generating activities such as in the field of agriculture, animal husbandry, pharmacies, videos, internet and photo-copying centres, production of local handicrafts, conferences, formation, dialogue and promotion of various events.
- It is not enough to engage in projects, as we are also called to give financial reports with great transparency (ledgers, bank accounts with more than one signature...).

The Comboni Family

- We should collaborate with the Comboni Family, by being present during the various events, feasts and assemblies, when invited. We should also take initiative by organising the different programs together.
- Where there are other groups who live the same charism, we should get to know one another and find ways of collaboration.

JPIC

Already at Layibi, we talked about importance of getting involved in JPIC and make it one of our priorities in Africa. We feel inspired by the encyclical "Laudato Si" and our own Comboni charism. This time we want to encourage the CLM in Africa to put it into practice through some concrete ideas:

- Increasing the sensibility in the CLM groups and providing formation on JPIC (maybe someone from the group can become a JPIC promotor), so that we may be well prepared to start the work on this issue.
- Looking for people and organisations with whom we can collaborate (like the JPIC Commission in the parish or the diocese, Comboni Family, NGOs and other social organisations) to analyse the situation together and prepare the plan of actions. We cannot work alone, we need network of people and institutions locally and internationally.
- Encouraging and increase awareness among the people in our parish, town, diocese, etc. by promoting workshops, meetings, etc.

Communication

We confirm the resolutions of the meetings in Layibi and Kinshasa: communication is essential for the success of mission and it is a responsibility of all the CLM, as it has been for St. Daniel Comboni.

- Clear and consistent communication needs to be established and maintained by all the CLM. They need to communicate properly with the following:
 - Fellow CLM Community Members
 - Coordinating Team
 - MCCJ in charge of the CLM and Provincial Superior
 - African Committee
 - Central Committee
- The Coordinating team of African Committee will prepare a communication guideline as a tool to be used by the CLM to answer questions of communication procedure, structure, the dates when the reports and any topic relating to communication are due.
- Create a WhatsApp group for all the CLM coordinators in Africa.

Contributions from the meeting held in Anchilo (July 29, 2017) of the Comboni Missionaries and the Comboni Missionary Sisters who accompany the CLM (Nampula, Mozambique).

After a fruitful sharing among the participants of the meeting, their proposals are as follow:

1. Proposal for the 2018 assembly: to avoid the language of "local" and "international" CLM (this creates divisions and confuses the group's objective). Care should be taken not to neglect the group of CLM formed on the country. Instead of calling "International community", they may be called "Prioritise Community".
2. During the time of formation, we should emphasise the aspect of interculturality.
3. The CLM living in the same country should organise their work together, plan together and evaluate the work done together.

African Committee, Anchilo 2017