



BICAM NEWSLETTER

A News Letter of the Catholic Biblical Centre for Africa and Madagascar (BICAM)
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Dear Coordinators,
Dear Animators of
Biblical Apostolate,

"May the Lord show you his face and bring you peace"
(Nb 6,26)

This is the way the Lord wanted the Levites to bless his people. I am happy to comply with this will of God using the same words to wish you God mercies and blessings during the New Year 2009.

Looking backward to what the Year 2008 has been for us, my mind captures two main events: the 7th CBF Plenary Assembly in Tanzania, 24th June - 3rd July 2008; and the 12th Synod of the Bishops on The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church. It was for all of us, events full of grace and hopes for which we are grateful to God.

At this moment of the year, we cannot avoid looking forward to the future, considering the agenda of the Year 2009. Again, just to mention a few events, Africa is honored with the visit of Pope Benedict XVI in Cameroon and Angola in the first quarter of the year; in October Africa will be the concern of the Universal Church, with the Second Synod on Africa whose theme reads: *"The Church in Africa at the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace"*.

In view of this synod, we embarked together on a pastoral journey at the end of our Continental workshop in Tanzania, 30 July - 3 August 2007 on the theme: *"Bible and Social Issues in Africa"*. In the framework of this journey I suggested in our Newsletter some Biblical passages for our reflection.

At this end of the year 2008 and the eve of 2009, I ask myself: For us in Africa, *"What is God's message?"*

The answer follows immediately the question: *"God's message is peace for his people, for his faithful if only they renounce their folly" (Ps 85,8).*

As we know, peace is a gift from God, yet the fruit of human efforts and endeavour. I am not then surprised if the Lord put a condition to the peace he gives: *"if only they renounce their folly"*. Truly we need to turn away from our folly in Africa. We are just crazy in many things we do and in the way we do it. From a Biblical point of view "folly" is first and foremost lack of the fear of God. That fear has an ethical connotation: there things we should not do if we really fear God. The list is long. In relation with the theme of the Second Synod on Africa, let me just quote another verse of Ps 85:

"Love and Truth join together; Justice and Peace embrace" (v.10). The Biblical text is self-explanatory and the message self-evident: we cannot attain Justice and Peace if there is no Love, no Truth. In preparation to the 2009 Synod may we be sowers of Love, Truth, Justice and Peace wherever we are and whenever we meet.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Your brother in the service of the Word,



Fr. Moïse Adeniran ADEKAMBI
Director, BICAM

NEWS FROM BICAM, NEWS FROM OUR REGIONS AND COUNTRIES

NEWS FROM BICAM

***16th -19th October 2008**

Accra, Ghana

The second SECAM Standing Committee Meeting was held. The director of BICAM was in attendance as member of SECAM Secretariat. At the said meeting, he presented his annual report to the committee. Concluding his report, he expressed gratitude to all who are toiling, sowing or reaping with him in their dioceses, countries and regions to make the word of God known and loved by all.

***23rd-30th October 2008 - Sudan:**

The Director of BICAM visited Sudan. The visit was aimed at knowing the reality of BA in a country labelled "Arabic or Islamic". The goal of the visit was to encourage the National Coordinator and to be a sign of this "Organic Pastoral Solidarity" Ecclesia in Africa is talking about. He had the opportunity to visit El Obeid and Wau dioceses. The National Coordinator shared with the Director his activities, difficulties, challenges, hopes and projects to carry out his mission as coordinator, organizer and animator of BA in Sudan.

*** 30th October-7th November 2008- Uganda:**

The Director of BICAM made an official visit to Uganda. The aim of the visit was to familiarize himself with the reality of Bible Apostolate in that country and to foster collaboration with BICAM and the national structure of Biblical Apostolate. The main activities held during the visit were: meeting and sharing with various people and groups involved in Biblical Apostolate under the guidance of the coordinator in the person of Msgr David Kyenuye.

***15th -18th December 2008-Accra, Ghana:**

The first BICAM Advisory Board Meeting was held from 15 to 18 December in Accra. In attendance were two out of the three ex officio Members (the Director of BICAM and the Representative of Africa on CBF Executive Committee), the three elected Coordinators and the SG of CBF. The main agenda was planning BICAM Pastoral Activities for the next three years (2009-2011).

**NEWS FROM THE REGIONS
(October to December 2008)
No News**

**NEWS FROM COUNTRIES
AND DIOCESES
(October to December 2008)**

BURKINA

About 20 members of the National Commission for Biblical Apostolate met from 22nd to 24th October 2008. The group met to discuss the action plan of Biblical Apostolate of each diocese for the year 2008/09. During the meeting, a brochure on the Year of St. Paul titled "Live the year of St. Paul at Burkina Faso-Niger" was published.

Nsawam - GHANA

19th October, 2008 marked the end of the fifth Dei Verbum Course in Biblical Pastoral Ministry at the Divine Word Catholic Conference Centre under the theme "*Do you understand what you are reading?*" (BICAM Newsletter N.3/2008). The Director of BICAM sent a goodwill message at the closing ceremony. In his message, he enumerated the identity and the mission of BICAM in Africa and its islands. He stressed that the Biblical Pastoral Ministry in the church owes it a duty to the entire human race, including Christians to live a life that is biblical. He said Christians these days seem to be far

from the Word, hence the need for the theme. He however lamented about the way our society has been polluted these days with wars, conflicts, crimes, corruption and hatred; it is a clear indication that we do not really understand what the Bible teaches us. He therefore tasked the Biblical Pastoral Ministry to draw humanity closer to the Word in order to establish an intimate relationship between Mankind and God.

MAJOR BICAM WORKSHOPS IN 2009

- 1. 23rd - 30th March, Bissau:** Workshop for Portuguese speaking countries.
- 2. 20th - 25th April, South Africa:** Workshop for the IMBISA Major Seminaries' Bible Lecturers.
- 3. 2nd Week June, Central Africa Republic:** Workshop for the Bishops' Conference.
- 4. 1st - 8th July, Tunisia:** Workshop for Sub-Saharan African Students.
- 5. 4th - 9th November, Cameroon:** Training workshop for ACERAC Region Coordinators.

