

Fr. General just completed his canonical visit of West Africa where our brothers are present in Togo and Burkina-Faso. From May 18 to May 30, 2012, almost two weeks, he was able to meet and talk to all the brothers in order to encourage them and accompany them in their religious and apostolic common life. What were the highlights of this visit?

Vocation Ministry is holding its own; the proof is in the pudding

By way of reminder, the Assumptionists returned to West Africa in September, 2006 (having once been in Ivory Coast). Their growth has been due to the generosity of religious from both of the Congos, from France, Madagascar, Burkina-Faso, and Romania. From the very beginning, these missionaries (from six different nationalities) have made vocation ministry a top priority. In six years we can see the fruits of their labor: 6 temporarily professed, 4 novices, 8 postulants, more than 10 candidates.



It is significant to note that during this visit Fr. General blessed the new novitiate house, St.

Augustine's Novitiate. Isn't that a clear sign that the Assumptionists want to set roots in West Africa and work for the coming of the Kingdom of God in this part of the dark continent?

Missionaries with their hands in many pots!

But these missionaries haven't been involved solely in vocation and formation ministry. In six years they have been able to discern several areas of apostolic work where they might want to invest their energies in the future for the hastening of the Kingdom of God in West Africa: parish ministry, youth ministry, inter-religious dialogue, and the media.



In Sokode (Togo), the Assumptionists run a parish, Our Lady of the Assumption, in the Komah neighborhood. During his visit Fr. General had an opportunity to preside at the Eucharist there and meet with the parish council. He was happy to see that our brothers and their lay collaborators have been able to build a family church where each one is considered to be a living stone. Our spirituality is greatly appreciated and lay-people find in it nourishment for their life of faith. The emphasis we place, for example, on the doctrinal aspect of the faith is quite striking. So it is that parishioners appreciate the fact that we take so seriously youth ministry and adult formation with courses such as Bible study. In the city center the Assumptionists are in charge of a center called St. Augustine Cultural Center which is intended to be a place where young people can meet and talk, where ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue can take place. In only four years the Center's reputation has extended beyond the borders of Togo thanks to the international trips that have been organized and allowed young people from various countries and religions to meet and talk about a number of topics for almost a week… Finally, the bishop has entrusted the supervision of the local radio station to the Assumptionists.



