



**WORD OF SUPPORT AND REASSURANCE FROM THE PLENARY GENERAL COUNCIL
TO THE RAVAGED POPULATION OF BENI AND BUTEMBO IN NORTH KIVU/ DR CONGO**

To Bishop Paluku Sikuli Melchisedech
To the Assumption Family
To the Entire Population of the Diocese of Butembo-Beni (DR Congo)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Peace be with you!

The Superior General of the Assumptionists and his Plenary General Council met in Rome from December 1-10, 2014. All of its work took place under the cloud of the daily massacres that are rocking your region, especially the territory of Beni. Every day we prayed for all the families put to the trial by these events and for the entire Church in the Diocese of Butembo-Beni.

Brothers and Sisters, first of all we give thanks to God for your faith and hope in the Lord, to whom we lift our pray that he might come to visit you during this Advent season, a time when we prepare ourselves for the birth of the Prince of Peace. We applaud the role that the Church is playing in seeking reconciliation, peace, and justice in your country and we pledge our full support.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, however long the night might last and the weight of suffering, do not grow tired of showing your support for your fellow countrymen and for working for the coming of the Kingdom for which you have given your lives. It is in this way that you can work for communion and cultivate true peace, not that of arms, but that of the love which Jesus Christ alone brings, the Prince of Peace. In Him we place all our hope.

We assure you that, wherever we may work be throughout the world, sisters and brothers are praying for your parents, brothers, sisters and friends who have been kidnapped in recent years and for our abducted Assumptionist brothers, Frs. Edmond, Jean-Pierre and Anselme. We are making every attempt possible to be with you and for you a voice of support so that your cry of anguish, which is also ours, may be heard in our respective countries. In the name of and for the love of all these innocent souls, we request that all men and women of goodwill, all men and women of compassion, bring an end to arms and work for peace!

God never rejects the cry of the poor. Hold fast in faith and hope lest you succumb to the temptation of the Enemy.

May the Lord bless you, console you, and strengthen you in your faith. May the light of Christ which is to come brighten the darkness of these nights you are living and may the dawn from on high not delay! This is our fondest wish for you in this season of Advent which is preparing us for Christmas.

Rome, December 12, 2014

Rev. Benoit Grière, A.A.
Superior general □
In the name of the Plenary General Council