



Africa Anglophone General Assembly kicks off

MANGOCHI, Malawi – The SMM Africa Anglophone General Assembly has kicked off on the 23rd of September at the Namiasi Pastoral Centre in Mangochi district.

Emeritus Bishop Alexander Pagani, SMM who was the main celebrant during the opening Mass of the assembly, shared about the life of Padre Pio since it was also the Feast Day of Padre Pio (St. Pius of Pietrelcina). He encouraged all confreres to emulate the life of Padre Pio for being humble, committed, prayerful and loving to our Mother Mary by praying the Holy Rosary and other devotional exercises. He said, "Padre Pio was a spiritual director and a confessor to many including Saint John Paul II who always walks with the Rosary in his hand. Three days before his death, he advised the Christians to love the Blessed Virgin Mary and do their best to encourage others to love her and always pray the Rosary."

After the Holy Mass, all confreres gathered at the Montfort conference hall around 9:00am to begin the assembly. After the opening prayer, the Superior Delegate Fr. Lonely Paul Mashonga, SMM welcomed Fr. Wismick Jean Charles, SMM, the Vicar General, Fr. Felix Mabvuto Phiri, SMM, the Assistant General responsible for Africa and Madagascar, and all the confreres present. In his speech, he invited all confreres to evaluate the entity and pave the way forward. He said, "Brothers, as you understand the purpose of our gathering, we would like to make an account of what has taken place and what has not yet happened in terms of administration, initial and ongoing formation, mission, finances, community life and unity of the delegation."

Likewise, Fr. Felix Phiri in his opening remarks emphasized on reviving the spirit of Montfortian lifestyle just like how the first missionaries opened their 1902 mission in Nzama. He stated, "This assembly is an opportunity to re-evaluate ourselves in drawing from our forefathers of

Nzama. Since 2012, we have incarnated ourselves into the lives of those whom we are called to serve.”

In his remarks, Fr. Wismick expressed gratitude to the steering committee of the assembly by preparing themes in line with the General Chapter 2017. He challenged us with the following questions:

- What do you do now as an entity? And why?
- What do you want to be in the future?
- What do you want to do? Why?
- How do you get there? And when?

Among those present during the opening Mass were 27 confreres : 4 from Uganda, 2 from Kenya and 21 from Malawi. Patrick Brennan (Pat), an active friend of the Montfortians and a former Montfortian student from England who visited Fr. Charlie was also present.

Fr. Jairos Mpina, SMM