

**FOURTH CARMELITE CONGRESS OF AFRICA, MEDAGASCAR
AND THE ISLANDS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN
Yaoundé, October 13-19, 2019**

The fourth congress of the Carmelite Family of Africa, Madagascar and the Islands of the Indian Ocean had as main theme: "The Teresian Carmel in Africa and Madagascar in dialogue with its own cultures with a regard to fraternal life". It was opened on Sunday, October 13, 2019 during a solemn mass, in the Basilica of Mary Queen of the Apostles of Mvolyé, presided over by His Excellency Jean Mbarga, Metropolitan Archbishop of Yaounde.

The Congress, which lasted from Monday 13th to Friday 18th October, was attended by our the Superior General of the Oder, Reverend Father Saverio Canistrà, and by the General Definitory in charge of Africa, Madagascar and the Islands of the Indian Ocean, Reverend Father Daniel Ehigie.

The congress was also blessed by the paternal and comforting presence of our brother His Eminence **Lars Anders Cardinal Arborelius O.C.D**, Bishop of the Diocese of Stockholm, Sweden. The entire Carmelite family in Africa, Madagascar and the Islands of the Indian Ocean express their gratitude for his so comforting and encouraging presence.

MESSAGE OF THE CONGRES

To our brothers, sisters and the secular order of the Teresian Carmel of Africa, Madagascar and the Islands of the Indian Ocean, of the Church of God spread throughout the world.

We, your brothers and sisters, with our Father General, Saverio Cannistrà and our brother **Lars Anders Cardinal Arborelius**, gathered in Yaoundé, Cameroon to reflect on the theme: "Teresian Carmel in Africa and Madagascar in dialogue with her own cultures in reference to fraternal life", send you our fraternal greetings in Christ who was at the center of our discussions during this congress.

We had the joy of discovering through the various rich presentations that fraternal life, as a pillar of our charism, embodies a lot of wealth that we must continue to explore to achieve a balance in our communities in Africa, Madagascar and the Islands of Indian Ocean.

The congress was a moment of grace, of listening but above all of a response to God, who addresses a question to the Carmelites of Africa, Madagascar and the Islands of the Indian Ocean through the General Definitory of our Order on our identity: "Who are we?" Our answer to this question is explicit: "The sons and daughters of Teresa who strive to be faithful to her lifestyle as received by God's call".

It has been an opportunity for us to appreciate the experience of fraternal life after the jubilee celebrations of our communities in Africa, Madagascar and the Islands of the Indian Ocean. It has emerged that the fraternal life is effective; it is growing through a dynamic of construction that nourishes itself on the values of culture, transcends them in order to flourish and develop its members through a progressive assimilation of fraternity, values of the Word of God and our Carmelite heritage.

We conclude this congress by making a vibrant appeal to the Carmelite communities of Africa, Madagascar and the Islands of the Indian Ocean to continue the building of fraternal life under the humble service of the superiors according to the pedagogy of Christ, encouraging community members to align their personal ambitions to the objectives of the

circumscription, to be continually open and accept each other for mutual enrichment on human, spiritual, religious and social plans.

With hope, may the post-congregation renews in every Carmelite of Africa, Madagascar and the Islands of the Indian Ocean, the living conscience of the personal and communitarian vocation to Carmel. May each and every Carmelite be, for others, a stimulus mediation of encouragement to live and perpetuate fraternal life.

And may the Virgin Mary, Queen and Beauty of Carmel intercede for us and accompany us to live the resolutions and recommendations of this congress.

THE CONGRESS RECOMMENDS AND PROPOSES:

1. That values and counter-values in Africa in Madagascar and the Islands of the Indian Ocean be clearly identified.
2. That in order to build fraternal life in the communities of brothers of nuns and seculars, cultural values must be foundational building blocks and the counter-values discarded.
3. That the construction of fraternal life initiated from cultural values, be enlightened by the word of God, the texts of the Church on fraternal life and our Carmelite heritage.
4. That brothers, sisters and members of the secular order and missionaries be formed in the knowledge of the cultural, biblical and Carmelite values of brotherhood with regard to the building of fraternal life.
5. That each member of the community be attentive to the obstacles of this building of fraternal life in order to resolve them by permanent conversion.
6. That formation be permanent and extended to community members to embody the values that promote fraternal life.
7. That community members should wake up to their Carmelite vocation and their personal commitment to it.
8. That personal and community obstacles to fraternal life should be identified and that appropriate measures of resolving them should be sought.
9. That communities should frequently update themselves with regard to social changes, multicultural realities, personal commitments and values in order to enhance their assimilation in view of making fraternal life more dynamic.