

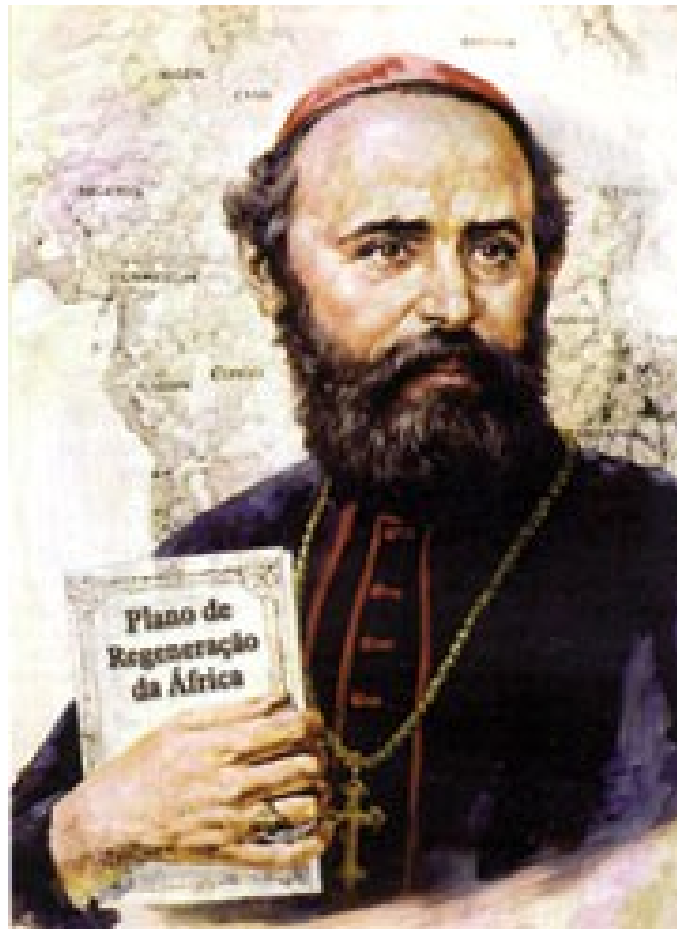
# PLAN FOR THE REGENERATION OF AFRICA

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PLAN FOR THE REGENERATION OF AFRICA

PROPOSED BY

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SUPERIOR OF THE INSTITUTES FOR AFRICANS IN EGYPT

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REGENERATION OF AFRICA BY AFRICA

**2741** Even today a mysterious darkness still covers those distant expanses which go to make up the immensity of Africa. It is undoubtedly true that civil governments and private institutions have directed their energies to dispel, even for a moment, that oppressive gloom with theme rest glimmer of the civilization of which Europe is so proud. Yet all the efforts of so many selfless men, their very great sacrifices, have been brought to nothing before the insuperable barrier by which nature seems to have striven to separate those inhospitable lands from the culture of the rest of the world. At various times expeditions have been organized; they were inspired by the hope of compelling nature, even in those limitless regions, to unlock, for the benefit of the human family, the unsullied treasures produced by her in such abundance. Yet the countless initiatives of those great-hearted heroes came to grief on the rocks of risk and hindrance; their energies were exhausted, they became discouraged and their progress was halted.

**2742** The Catholic, who is used to judging things in a supernatural light, looked upon Africa not through the pitiable lens of human interest, but in the pure light of faith; there he saw an infinite multitude of brothers who belonged to the same family as himself with one common Father in heaven. They were bent low and groaning beneath the yoke of Satan, and they were placed on the threshold of a most terrible precipice. Then he was carried away under the impetus of that love set alight by the divine flame on Calvary hill, when it came forth from the side of the Crucified One to embrace the whole human family; he felt his heart beat faster, and a divine power seemed to drive him towards those unknown lands. There he would enclose in his arms in an embrace of peace and of love those unfortunate brothers of his, upon whom it seemed that the fearful curse of Canaan still bore down.

**2743** Here we can only make passing reference to the many and varied ecclesiastical Societies and religious Orders who, in past centuries, with the blessing of the Vicar of Christ and the good wishes and prayers of all right-minded people, took the way of the desert and went down into the burning wastes which the Africans inhabit. Their purpose was to raise the standard of the Cross among those unlettered and brutalized peoples who were living in the most abominable and degrading fetishism. Nearer to our own day, his Holiness Gregory XVI of happy memory, towards the close of his pontificate, set up the Vicariate Apostolic of Central Africa, the largest Vicariate in the world, taking in, as it does, twice the area of our enlightened Europe. The immortal Pius IX, still gloriously reigning, being no less zealous for the sublime works of the apostolate, confirmed the decrees of his predecessors and sent out Missionaries. They travelled by way of the Nile and it was in 1848 that they penetrated the new Mission entrusted to their zeal. Indeed they almost reached Latitude 2 degrees north.

**2744** The Missionaries who labored in the midst of immense privations in this vast field, now laid open to the love of the Gospel, were three sons of St Ignatius and many worthy priests from Austrian and Bavarian Germany, especially the German Tyrol. They were recruited by the distinguished Committee of the Association of Mary and through the enthusiastic interest of the praiseworthy Professor Mitterutzner. On the banks of the majestic Nile, which flows between the Tropic of Cancer and the Equator, they succeeded in founding four very important mission stations and chose as their center of communication the capital of the Egyptian Sudan, the political conditions and geographical position of which destined it to be the forward base for Europeans who ventured into those distant lands. Even the tiny Institute founded in Verona by that generous priest Father Nicholas Mazza, whose name is a blessing for Christ's Church, strove also to bring the mite of its charity to those wretched brothers of ours. The names of the students of this Institute, who gave their lives as a peace-offering on the altar of their love, are written on the tombs provided by the African sands and they will always be remembered with gratitude by those who now follow in their footsteps. Finally, the numerous Franciscan family, perhaps more prepared by the spirit of their vocation than any other to face the greatest privations life can offer, entered upon the work of caring for this abandoned vineyard.

**2745** Yet it must be admitted that, even though the efforts and labours of these courageous champions of Jesus Christ certainly equaled the greatest that had gone before, the results achieved were so poor as to amount to nothing. And, perhaps like the footprints they left in the sand, which were blown away by the desert storms the few shoots that sprang up, watered by their sweat and blood, were scorched by the searing force of those passions, more ferocious than the tropical heat, in whose grip poor Africa is held.

**2746** We, too, were a member of those apostolic expeditions and we were, by God's mercy, among the very few to survive, of the hundred and more who threw themselves into that daunting undertaking. We have carefully studied the nature, customs and social conditions of those distant tribes and we have concluded that, in terms of apostolic zeal, the Mission of Central Africa is like a fortress prepared for war, which cannot be taken by storm but must rather be conquered by siege. And indeed, even when, again and again, very well-equipped Catholic expeditions have tried to take it by storm, the end has always been simply the sacrificial death of the intrepid soldiers. We must, therefore, prepare with energy to use the tactics of a siege, and begin by consolidating secure positions which may serve as redoubts and fieldworks such as are necessary for the purpose.

**2747** For any mission whatsoever to be guaranteed continuity, it must have a stable center from which there may incessantly issue a spirit of vitality which spreads vigorously through the whole organism, assuring its continued existence and assisting its ministry. This living center would administer and make possible the annual recruitment of new missionaries, from among whom it would be possible to reinforce the band of missionaries in the field, continually reduced in number by the harshness of the climate, the extremely hard work and martyrdom.

**2748** Such a center of vitality is generally advisable in the Institutes and Seminaries of Europe which exist for the benefit of the missions in Asia, America and Oceania. This is so because between Europe and these three continents there exists a certain similarity of temperament and of customs. At the very least, between the one and the others there exists a potential for intercommunication and a readiness continually and lastingly to receive the fascinating impressions of life which the spirit of the Gospel usually impresses on the structures of human society. Such a useful center, sending out the spirit of vitality so very necessary for the preservation and continuity of the foreign mission, would not, however, if it existed in Europe, be helpful and effective in the matter of the conversion of the Africans. Experience has clearly shown that European missionaries cannot do the work of redemption in those burning regions of the African interior, because the conditions are ruinous for their health, and also those they cannot bear the weight of the exertions, the multiplicity of the discomforts or the harshness of the climate. In the same way, experience has shown that in Europe Africans cannot receive a complete Catholic education which enables them subsequently to be dependable, in body and soul, in promoting in their native land the propagation of the faith. This is because either they cannot live in Europe or, by the time they return to Africa, they have become unsuitable for that continent because of the European habits which have become almost second nature to them, habits which become repugnant and harmful in the conditions of African life.

**2749** We, who in those dangerous wastes were often smitten and exhausted by harsh diseases which brought us to the very threshold of the grave, have seen with our own eyes how fatigue, privation and the fatal African climate have brutally cut down even the most physically robust of missionaries. There were indeed those who survived the dangerous journey down the White Nile and who prepared themselves to preach the Gospel to the brutalized savages by learning the language of the tribe among whom a Catholic mission had been established. Yet, hardly had they done so, than they quickly succumbed and soon died, thus rendering fruitless their work for the conversion of the Africans who, because of the continual decimation of the missionaries, still lie in the power of the most degrading fetishism.

**2750** Further, Propaganda, which is acquainted with all the institutions which have undertaken the education in Europe of individuals of the African race, is well able to confirm the ineffectiveness and inadvisability of the creation of an indigenous clergy, educated in our countries, yet destined to evangelize Central Africa.

**2751** Faced by the facts of experience, the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide has been deeply concerned, and reduced, in spite of itself, to the hard necessity of abandoning the important mission of Central Africa, if no way can be found of assuring a more effective conversion of the Africans.

**2752** The heart of every good and faithful Catholic, inflamed as it must be by the spirit of the love of Jesus Christ, will surely be deeply wounded and grievously stricken by the appalling idea of seeing the Church suspend, perhaps for many centuries, her work on behalf of so many millions of souls still languishing in the shadow of death. So the path so-far-followed must be altered, the old system must be changed and a new plan must be drawn up which will lead more effectively to the desired end. This will serve to strengthen the superhuman virtue of Christian love, and it will expunge forever from the mind of the Catholic philanthropist the distressing thought of leaving those vast and populous regions cloaked in unbelief and barbarity, when they are clearly the most needy and abandoned in the world.

**2753** On this important subject we said to ourselves: "Would the conquest of the tribes of unhappy Africa not be better effected by siting our center of operations in a place where Africans can live without changing and Europeans can live without succumbing?" Our thought has become set on this great idea; and *the regeneration of Africa by Africa* seems to us the only programme to be followed in bringing about so dazzling a conquest. This is the reason why, in our weakness, we have thought it permissible humbly to suggest a way along which the lofty goal may more probably be reached. On this goal every thought of our life will be centered and for it we would be happy to pour out the last drop of our blood.

**2754** We hardly dare in all reverence to rise from our lowliness to engage in the discussion of so Catholic a problem, which has perhaps taxed the minds of the deepest thinkers. Yet we shall be forgiven if the impulse of our heart, where we feel most strongly the cry of misery directed towards us all by those unhappy sons of Adam who are our brothers, should carry our mind away from the path of truth and certainty. Perhaps the Plan, which flashed before us as we sighed most ardently for those unhappy regions, when put into effect, would not have the advantage of achieving its purpose with great speed, while in other missions the apostolic workers are already harvesting the fruits of their labours. Yet, nevertheless, it is towards this goal that it unfailingly tends and, for its complete execution, it needs only the shortening of the days which God, seated on his eternal throne, has decreed for its accomplishment.

**2755** Not only the inhabitants of the African interior, but also those peoples who live along the coast and in all the other parts of the great peninsula, although divided into thousands of different tribes, have more or less the same temperament, habits, tendencies and customs, well-enough-known to those who have concerned themselves with them over a long period. It seems to us, therefore, that the love of the Gospel may offer them similar remedies and help, such as to be effective in communicating to the great family of the Africans the precious advantages of the Catholic faith. We would consequently consider it opportune, and indeed almost necessary, that among the many ideas that could be put into effect for the regeneration of the Africans, that one ought to be chosen which unites in itself an absolute unity of conception together with a general simplicity of application. And this would seem to us to be the case with the plan which we have developed for the conversion of the Africans, a plan which, although vast in its extension and very difficult to put entirely into effect, nevertheless, seems to us both *one and simple* in conception and application.

**2756** This new plan would, therefore, not restrict itself to the old-established borders of the mission of Central Africa, which have been proved unsuccessful for the reasons outlined above, but it would, rather, include the whole African race; it would consequently extend and develop its activity over almost all the countries of black Africa.

**2757** Now, although the Holy Apostolic See has never succeeded in planting the faith with stability among the huge tribes of Central Africa, it has, nevertheless, been profuse in its loving concern for the islands and coastal regions which surround the great African peninsula, and has founded there twelve Vicariates Apostolic, nine Prefectures Apostolic and ten Dioceses which flourish more or less splendidly. These in fact are:

**2758** In the *north* the Vicariate Apostolic of *Egypt* entrusted to the Friars Minor of the Observance, and the Vicariate of *Tunisia* entrusted to the Capuchin Fathers; the two Prefectures Apostolic of *Upper Egypt* and of *Tripoli* entrusted to the Friars Minor of the Reform, and the Prefecture of *Morocco* entrusted to the Friars Minor of the Observance of the Province of St James in Spain.

**2759** In the *west* the three Vicariates Apostolic of *Senegambia*, of *Sierra Leone* and of *Guinea*, entrusted to the Reverend Fathers of the Holy Ghost and of the Sacred Heart of Mary, and the Vicariate of *Dahomey* entrusted to the Seminary of the African Missions of Lyons; the Prefectures Apostolic of *Senegal* and *Congo* entrusted to the Reverend Fathers of the Holy Ghost and of the Sacred Heart of Mary; the Prefecture of *Annobon*, *Corisco* and *Ferdinando-Po* entrusted to the Reverend Fathers of the Society of Jesus.

**2760** In the *south* the two Vicariates Apostolic of the *East* and *West* Districts of the *Cape of Good Hope* entrusted to the Missionaries of the United Kingdom, and that of *Natal* entrusted to the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate from Marseilles.

**2761** In the *east* the Vicariate Apostolic of *Madagascar* entrusted to the Reverend Fathers of the Society of Jesus; the Prefecture Apostolic of *Zanzibar* entrusted to the Reverend Fathers of the Holy Ghost and of the Heart of Mary; the Prefecture of *Nossibé*, *St Mary* and *Mayotte* entrusted to the Reverend Fathers of the Society of Jesus; the Prefecture of the *Seychelles Islands* entrusted to the Reverend Capuchin Fathers of the Savoy Province.

**2762** In the *north-east* the Vicariate Apostolic of *Abyssinia* entrusted to the Reverend Fathers of the Congregation of the Mission and that of the *Galla* entrusted to the Reverend Capuchin Fathers of the French Province.

**2763** Among the ten Dioceses, particularly flourishing are, in the *north*, *Algiers*, in the *east*, *Port Louis* on Mauritius, and *St Denis* on Reunión Island in the Indian Ocean. It is therefore natural that, in order to put the suggested plan into effect, these Vicariates, Prefectures and Dioceses, already established around Africa, will have to be asked to help and co-operate. They witness at especially close quarters the distressing misery and extreme need of the vast populations of the interior, populations on whom the bright star of the faith has not yet shone. Accordingly, they will be able validly to contribute with their authority, advice and work in assisting and facilitating the great undertaking of the regeneration of the vast and numerous tribes of the whole of Africa.

**2764** The plan, therefore, which we propose is: the creation of innumerable Institutes for both sexes to surround the whole of Africa. These would be carefully situated at the least possible distance from the interior of the continent, in stable and fairly civilized areas, in which both Europeans and Africans could live and work.

**2765** These men's and women's Institutes, each situated and set up according to the regulations of the canonical provisions, would admit young African men and women with the aim of educating them in the Catholic religion and in Christian civilization and of thus creating a group for men and one for women, destined each in its own way, gradually to advance and to spread into the African interior, there to plant the faith and civilization they have received.

**2766** To the direction of these Institutes would be called the religious Orders and the Catholic Institutes of men and women, as approved by the Church, or recognized or permitted by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, with the permission of the latter and the mutual consent of the Heads and Superiors General of those Orders and Institutions.

**2767** These Institutes would be placed under the jurisdiction of the already existing Vicariates and Prefectures Apostolic on the African coast, or of such Vicariates and Prefectures as the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide might decide to set up, as the work of the new Plan develops.

**2768** The personnel in charge of these Institutes would direct their African students according to the rules and spirit of their own Societies, suitably adapted to the requirements of the African interior. Their special aim would be the direction and successful organization of the Institutes for African men and women, without, however, neglecting to promote and effect, as far as possible, the good of the country where the Institutes are situated.

**2769** Small colleges for the African missions will be set up in Europe with these aims: to train groups of European Missionaries to direct the African Institutes on the lines described above, to undertake new missions among the African peoples, and to open a way to the African apostolate for all the secular priests of the Catholic countries who might be called by God to such a sublime and important mission.

**2770** While fully respecting the system of every male and female religious Congregation and Order and their freedom to educate the natives in accordance with their own ideas and to form some of them as religious, we dare humbly to express our opinion, which is that, in general, the education to be given to all the individuals of either sex who belong to the Institutes surrounding Africa must be characterized by the following goals: to impress and plant in their souls the spirit of Jesus Christ, integrity of behavior, firmness of faith, the principles of Christian morals, a knowledge of the Catholic catechism and the basic elements of necessary human knowledge. Besides this, all the men will be instructed in the practice of agriculture and in one or more skills of first importance; and every woman will be similarly educated in the most necessary of women's skills. Thus the former will become honest, virtuous, useful and active men and the latter virtuous and capable mothers and wives. We believe that this active application to work, in which we want all the members of the African Institutes to be involved, will have a powerful influence for the moral and spiritual good of the individual Africans, who are especially inclined to laziness and inaction.

**2771** Once the religious and civil education has been completed in the Institutes, the Administration will do everything in its power for the benefit of an individual student of either sex who leaves the jurisdiction of his or her Institute, giving help and advice so that they may be enabled to keep to the healthy religious and moral principles which were impressed on them through the teaching imparted to them.

**2772** From each of these Institutes surrounding the great African peninsula there will be formed groups of men and women destined gradually to transfer themselves into Central Africa with the aim of initiating and consolidating there the saving work of Catholicism, and of setting up Mission Stations from which will shine out the light of religion and civilization.

**2773** The group of young African men, made up of those individuals judged to be most suited for the great purpose, will be composed of:

1. Catechists to whom will be given a broader knowledge of the sacred sciences.
2. Teachers who will receive every possible instruction in the most important sciences adaptable to the countries of the interior.
3. Craftsmen, to whom will be given a practical knowledge of the necessary skills most useful in the central regions, to make them into virtuous and capable farmers, doctors, phlebotomists, nurses, pharmacists, carpenters, tailors, tanners, blacksmiths, builders, shoemakers, etc. This group of craftsmen will also become honest and virtuous merchants who will promote and participate in the trade of home-produced and imported goods. This trade will gradually create and introduce a source of that prosperity which will raise the black peoples from their abject poverty and powerlessness to the condition of the civilized nations. From all these elements of indigenous industry there will be produced the material means to maintain the development of the Catholic missions in the African interior.

**2774** The group of young African women, similarly formed from those individuals most suited for the great purpose, will be composed of:

1. Instructresses, to whom will be given the most complete education possible in religion and Catholic morals, so that they may spread these principles and their practice in the degraded African female society on which, as is the case among us, almost entirely depends the regeneration of the great family of Africans.
2. Teachers and housewives who must promote the education of women in reading writing, keeping accounts, spinning, sewing, weaving, caring for the sick and practicing all the domestic skills most useful in the countries of Central Africa.

**2775** These small groups will be gradually transferred from each of the different Institutes which surround Africa to various points in the countries of the interior. While each individual member will work to propagate religion and civilization, as he has been trained, and to develop agriculture in those unspoiled and unoccupied lands, he will remain free to embrace whatever state of life he feels inclined towards.

**2776** From the group of catechists formed by the young African men, there will be chosen a group composed of those individuals who most distinguish themselves for their holiness and knowledge and in whom there appears to be the readiness to enter the clerical state. These will be directed towards the priesthood. In the training of this special group the great variety of subjects which seminarians in Europe are obliged to study will be avoided. The teaching will be limited to those theological and scientific subjects that are of first importance, such as are sufficient for the requirements and needs of those countries. Also, given the quick physical and intellectual development of the Africans, we would not wish this training to be prolonged to the *twelve* or more *years* usual in Europe. We would consider *six* to *eight* years sufficient, as might be judged advisable in each case. However, the peculiar instability and weakness which characterizes the African race must mean the use of the greatest caution in deciding when aspirants to the priesthood may be allowed to proceed to Holy Orders. We are fully convinced that it is absolutely necessary to lay down that they must not be allowed so to proceed until after several years of proven constancy in the principles learned, spent in a strict and irreprehensible celibacy in the already-existing missions of the African interior. We consider the same circumspection necessary in the formation of native religious of either sex for any Order whatsoever.

**2777** From among the young African women who do not feel inclined to the married state will similarly be chosen the group of the Virgins of Charity, made up of those individuals who have most distinguished themselves by their holiness and in the practical teaching of the catechism, of languages and of feminine skills. This special section will constitute the élite of the women's group

and will be entrusted with the direction of the girls' schools, with carrying out the most important tasks of Christian charity and with exercising the ministry of the Catholic woman among the savage tribes of Africa.

**2778** In this fashion, through the most important ministry of the indigenous clergy and of the Virgins of Charity, assisted by the good work of the catechists, teachers, craftsmen, instructresses, women teachers and housewives, many Catholic families will gradually be formed, and flourishing Christian associations will be founded. Our holy religion will spread its saving influence over the African family and will gradually extend its wholesome sway over the vast expanses of the unexplored regions of the whole of Africa.

**2779** Experience has shown that it is only a *long and continuous stay* in the countries of the interior, and not a *temporary stay*, which is dangerous and even fatal for Europeans. Accordingly, the setting up of Missions and the founding of Christian communities in the countries of Central Africa will be personally begun and set in motion by European missionaries, commissioned by their respective Vicars and Prefects Apostolic. These European missionaries must be substituted by others every year, or within two years, in the on-the-spot direction of the central missions, until such time as experience indicates that it is possible safely to entrust native priests or catechists of proven suitability with the permanent direction of the Missions and Christian communities of the interior, once they have been founded and set in motion by the European Missionaries.

**2780** On the other hand, the statistics of the African Mission show that European women, given their advantageous physical flexibility, the character of their moral life and their social and domestic habits, withstand the harshness of the African climate much longer than European men. Accordingly, with the approval and permission of the respective Vicars and Prefects Apostolic, European women's religious Institutes may be set up in the countries of the interior less fatal to the life of the Europeans, so as more effectively to offer the marvelous and important services of the Catholic woman to the work of the regeneration of the great African family.

**2781** Since the temperament and character of the African race is very changeable and inconstant, we think it wise and necessary for the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide to authorize the Vicars and Prefects Apostolic to organize frequent apostolic visitations to the missions and Christian communities of those parts of the interior within their legitimate jurisdiction. The purpose of such visitations would be to correct, confirm and improve the conditions of Catholicism in those dangerous areas, where base selfishness and the fanatical fury of Islam often corrupt and devastate the work of the Christian priesthood, and where the tenor of life, the climate and other special circumstances contribute to weaken both the body and the spirit, and to enfeeble ecclesiastical discipline, putting the faith at great risk. Suitable European missionaries should be commissioned to undertake such visitations and, without any risk whatever to their lives, as we have explained above, they can carry out their important mission to the great advantage of all.

**2782** In order to develop the gifts of the most able members of the indigenous clergy, and to train them as able and enlightened leaders of the Christian communities of the interior of Africa, the Association in charge of directing the new plan will, as its great work progresses, found four great African theological-scientific universities at the most important points in Africa. These could be, for example, Algiers, Cairo, St Denis on Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean and one of the more important cities on the Atlantic coast.

**2783** In these university centers, as in other important places on the islands and along the coast of Africa, may in due course be founded little centers of specialization in craft studies. These would be for the young African craftsmen found most suited to a more advanced training. Thus, by means of



the introduction of these crafts which would improve the material conditions of the immense African tribes, the missionaries would find it easier to introduce the faith in a deeper and more stable way.

**2784** To put the new Plan into effect and to direct it, an Association shall be set up, composed of individuals of intellectual ability, of generosity and of great action. This Association will take the name of the ASSOCIATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY FOR THE REGENERATION OF AFRICA, under the patronage of THE IMMACULATE VIRGIN, ST JOSEPH HUSBAND OF MARY, AND THE PRINCES OF THE APOSTLES.

**2785** The special Mission of this Association will be *to deploy and call to action the total strength of Catholicism on Africa's behalf*, Hence it would lie within the Association's competence to:

1. Communicate with the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide and to deal with matters concerning each of the most important of the new Association's undertakings.
2. To conduct dealings with the generalates of the Orders and men's and women's Congregations, to agree on the personnel necessary for the foundation of the African Institutes or the establishment of new Vicariates and Prefectures Apostolic in Africa.
3. To deal with the pious Association for the Propagation of the Faith, and with the other Associations which have the same aim, in order to secure the financial and material means required by the Missions and Institutes which will be started in Africa with the authorization of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide.
4. To provide the financial and material means for the setting up and maintenance of the preparatory stages in Europe, which aim at training the personnel for the African Missions.

**2786** 5. Gradually to set up little colleges for the African Missions in the most suitable centers of the various Catholic nations, to open up a way into the African apostolate for all those members of the secular clergy called by God to so sublime a ministry; and then to set up little centers of craft studies to train suitable individuals to introduce the teaching of the necessary and generally useful skills in the African Institutes.

**2787** 6. When the Association has the necessary personnel at its disposal for the foundation of an Institute in Africa and when the special aid for that Institute has been guaranteed by the pious Associations for the Propagation of the Faith, the Association will, with the agreement of his Eminence the Cardinal Prefect General of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, refer to the Vicar or Prefect Apostolic of the African Mission in whose territory and under whose jurisdiction the Institute is to be founded, in order to obtain the necessary authorization.

7. The Association will communicate directly with the Vicars or Prefects Apostolic of all the African Missions to inform itself, as far as possible, on points of topography, on the customs of the African peoples and on the results of their practical experience in the apostolic ministry. This will enable the Association to provide a better preparation for the most suitable students so that they may participate with greater effectiveness in developing, on as wide a front as possible, the work of Catholicism among the tribes of Central Africa.

**2788** 8. Finally the Association, studying and putting into effect the most effective methods of executing the new plan, will summon up and deploy all those elements of Catholicism, of which at present the regeneration of Africa is in need, and will revitalize and reinvigorate those which already exist. Thus deploying all the power of Catholicism on Africa's behalf the Committee's work will generate new ideas, new institutions, new plans, such as are likely to lead to a wider and more effective development of the evangelical ministry in the vast and unexplored regions of the whole of Africa.

**2789** This, then, is our Plan which is, as we have mentioned, laid out like a battlefield, prepared for the siege on the formidable fortress of Africa. Ordinary attacks have always proved without effect

and have always ended with the death of the intrepid soldiers, and so we have adopted the strategy of a siege. Our institutes, set up around the periphery of the great African peninsula, are like the redoubts and fieldworks necessary for this purpose.

**2790** Our soul is full of the dearest hope that the new Plan for the Regeneration of Africa which so well pleased our Most Holy Father, the immortal Pontiff, Pius IX, and was received with utmost favor and enthusiasm by so many illustrious Prelates and Bishops of the Catholic Church and the most notable and sublime civil and ecclesiastical intellects in the world, will receive the co-operation of all those holy institutes which have until now concerned themselves with, or sought to further, the spiritual advantage of the African race. We also hope it will be protected and assisted by those pious Associations which provide the financial and material means for the Holy works set up for the Propagation of the Faith and trust that it will at the same time find an approving echo, support, favor and help in the hearts of the Catholics of the entire world, clothed and filled as they are by the spirit of that superhuman charity, which embraces the immense vastness of the universe and which our divine Savior came to bring to the earth.

**2791** We hope, yes we indeed hope, that the Holy Church, echo of the Eternal Word of the Son of God across the centuries, destined to reign over all the nations of the world, will mercifully spread its glorious mantle over this part of its inheritance. We hope, too, that her glorious sons will hasten with concern from every corner of the earth to offer their work, to bring Catholicism and civilization to the wandering African tribes, scorched by the fiery summer's heat, but not yet, after forty years, enlightened by a ray of the true light. The apostles who will march out to the great victory will not carry back to Europe the spoils gathered from the vanquished; but they will rather bring to the vanquished the treasure of the Catholic faith and of European civilization. Unlike triumphant soldiers, they will not enslave these peoples as vanquished tribes, but following the example of the Divine Pastor, they will remove the yoke of oppression from their shoulders and bring these wretched creatures into the free and joyful flock of the Church, so that the vanquished, not conquered by force, but rather victorious over themselves and their savage nature, will have won for themselves the true religion and the great benefit of civilized life.

Fr Daniel Comboni, Apostolic Missionary

*[Of the PLAN, we publish the 1st manuscript of 1864 and this latest version as a documentation of the changes which were made until this edition]*