



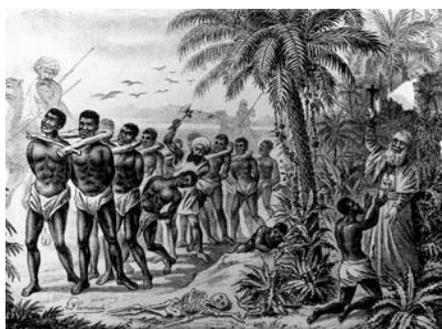
Let us Break the Chains!

125th Anniversary of the Anti-Slavery Campaign of Cardinal Charles Lavigerie

Rome, Chiesa del Gesù – 9th -18th November 2012



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**A photographic display, a series of talks and a Eucharistic celebration
to commemorate and to re-launch the efforts of the Missionaries of Africa,
White Fathers and White Sisters in the fight against slavery.**

At the end of the 15th century a powerful and monstrous traffic in human beings developed in the world: **the Slave Trade**. It is estimated that in the course of four centuries not less than fourteen million Africans were captured and deported by European traders to the American plantations and forced to work in abominable conditions until their death. Historians also calculate that ten to eighteen million Africans were snatched from their villages by Arab traffickers. From 700 AD these controlled the slave routes through the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Sahara Desert.

Press Office

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In 1888 a Catholic bishop, the French Cardinal Charles Lavigerie launched an anti-slavery campaign with the objective of stopping this ignoble « trade » in black Africans. Today, 125 years further on from this historic initiative, the White Father missionaries are continuing their founder's work of denunciation through a photographic exhibition – **LET US BREAK THE CHAINS!** – showing the tragedy of slavery (although it is officially abolished) in Africa, from the time of the slave ships to our own day.

PROGRAMME

Chiesa del Gesù, Rome

Friday 9th November

18.00: Opening of the Photographic Exhibition: 'Let us break the chains'

18.30: Talk: "Schiavitù, profitto, globalizzazione. Un problema aperto", in Italian
by *Raffaele Masto reporter and writer.*

Saturday 10th November

16.00: Talk in French: "A commitment to human dignity: the campaign of Cardinal Lavigerie against slavery in Africa in the 19th century from 1880-1890".

by *Fr. Jean-Claude Ceillier, MAfr.*

Followed by a talk in English "Human Trafficking: 21st Century Slaves, the silent epidemic. Our Story and our Challenge"

by *Sr. Margaret Kennedy, SMNDA.*

Sunday 11th November

11h00: Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald, M. Afr. Apostolic Nuncio in Egypt.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION

The Exhibition: 'Let us break the chains!' has been put together by the magazine *Africa, missione e cultura* and is a collection of 40 photographs from the past and the present. These are photographs from archives, which relate the history of the commitment of the Missionaries of Africa to the liberation of slaves in Black Africa. With these photos there are also photographs which show situations of modern slavery such as, immigration networks, child labour, sweatshops, prostitution and slavery due to debt.

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The images tell of the different situations such as the civil war in Liberia where 20,000 child soldiers fought and the lives of African women, victims of sexual exploitation. They also show the traditions which persist and are used to enslave men and women in Mauritania, Benin and Senegal. The harvesting of tomatoes in Southern Italy attracts thousand of immigrants each year who are forced to live in conditions of slavery. There is also the story of the young Congolese miners enslaved to look for rare minerals for the West; gold, diamonds, copper, cobalt and coltan.

The Exhibition is composed of a series of panels with **reproductions of etchings from the 19th century** taken from the *Archives of the White Fathers and the White Sisters* in Rome. The **photographs** come from the *Associated Press France, Olycom, Contrasto, Aurora Photos, Sipa Press* and present the problem as it is today. The comments on the photographs were made by Marco Trovato, the coordinator of the review Africa. Designs were produced by *the Photographer's Room* laboratory.

TIMETABLES

The Exposition is **free** and takes place in the **Church of the Gesù, Piazza del Gesù, Rome**. (Bus 40, 46, 62, 63, 64, 70, 81, 87, 119, 492, 628).

The exhibition will be open **every day from the 10th to the 18th November** at the following times

- Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday **from 9h00 to 13h00 and from 16h00 to 20h00**
- Friday, Saturday and Sunday **from 9h00 to 13h00 and from 16h00 to 21h00**

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THE PROMOTERS



The Missionaries of Africa, White Fathers and White Sisters, were founded by the French Cardinal Charles Lavigerie (1825-1892). The male branch of the congregation was nicknamed the "White Fathers" because of the long white tunic (*gandura*) they wore and which became the official dress of the Society They also wore a white cloak (*burnus*) which was typically worn by men in North Africa. The proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus to Africa and dialogue with Islam is the *raison d'être* for the Institute. The fathers, brothers and sisters work in parishes, schools and hospitals. They are also concerned with human, spiritual and professional formation in the media, refugee camps and prisons. They work at various levels for Justice and Peace and Interreligious Dialogue in Europe and Africa.

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