

The Society of St. Peter the Apostle was founded by a young French girl, Jeanne Bigard born on 2nd December 1859. In 1878 after the death of her father when she was nineteen years old, pledged herself to “abandon the world and its vanities” and to give herself to God's work.



Jeanne Bigard

Though painfully shy, Jeanne and her mother Stephanie, started a campaign to raise money for the support of indigenous priests in training in mission countries. They begged for money from house to house, they asked for prayers and they distributed pamphlets stressing the great need for seminaries in countries like Japan. Jeanne gave her own dowry for a new church in Japan started by St. Francis Xavier. Until 1903 when Stephanie Bigard died, Jeanne and Stephanie collected huge amounts for the training of missionary priests and fired many other people with their passion.

The charismatic and significantly lay nature of the Pontifical Mission Societies is clearly seen in the foundation of the Society of St. Peter the Apostle. The Society was born in France on the suggestion of the Vicar Apostolic of Nagasaki, Msgr. Cousin, who was convinced of the necessity of the diocesan priests. Therefore this Society is particularly concerned with one of the most urgent necessities for the progress of evangelization: the education and formation of diocesan clergy through the construction and maintenance of seminaries in mission territories.

The official date of the foundation of the Society of St. Peter the Apostle is 1889 in Caen, France. With the Encyclical Letter *Ad extremas Orientis* Pope Leo XIII recommended the Work to all Christians and on 3 May 1922 Pope Pius XI declared the Society of St. Peter the Apostle “Pontifical” together with the Pontifical Mission Society of the Holy Childhood and the Pontifical Mission Society of the Propagation of Faith.

The significance of the work of Stephannie can be found in the words of St. Paul: “How can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how will they hear of him unless there is a preacher for them?” (Rom. 10:14-15). The increase of diocesan priests and religious finds its justification and necessity in the words of Jesus “As the Father sent me, so I am sending you” (Jn. 20:21).

Pray unceasingly for the vocations to the priesthood and religious life in accordance with Jesus' command: “Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers to his harvest” (Mt. 9:38).

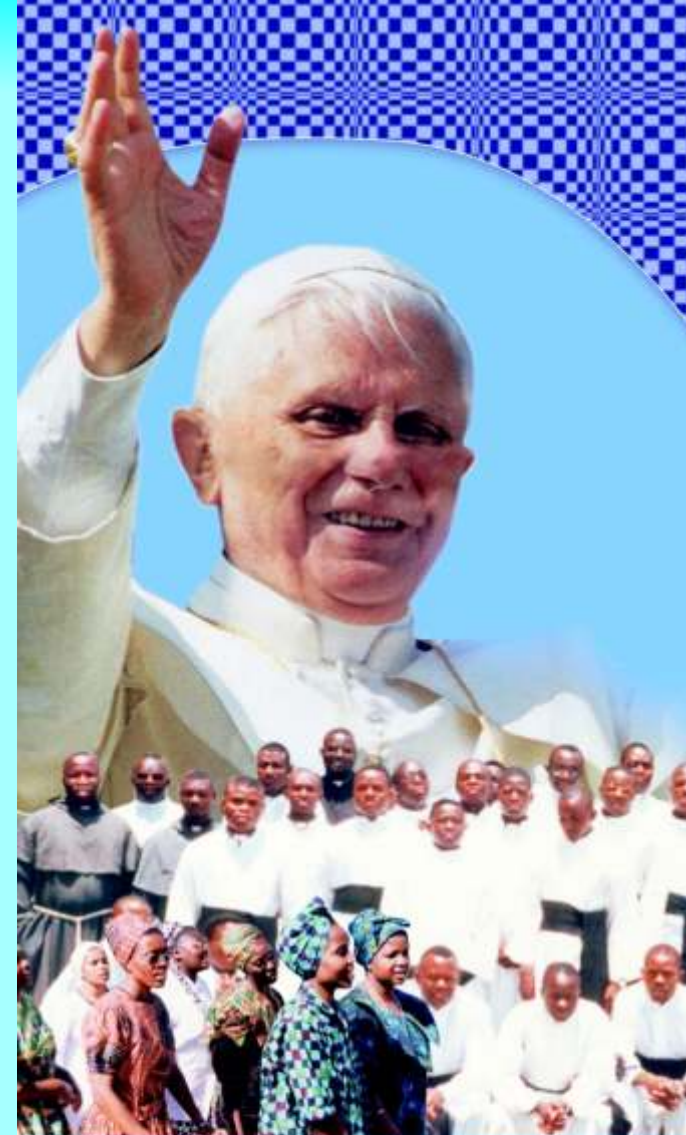
The National Offices of the Pontifical Mission Societies are situated at the Catholic Secretariat of the Zambia Episcopal Conference, Kabulonga Road, Lusaka-Zambia

CONTACT DETAILS

The National Director
The Pontifical Mission Societies
P.O. Box 31965
Lusaka-Zambia

Tel.: +260 1 266642/262613/262641

Email: pmszambia@zec.org.zm



THE PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETY
OF ST. PETER THE APOSTLE

THE PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETY OF ST. PETER THE APOSTLE.

This Society supports the formation of seminarians and novices, and the on-going formation for priests and religious. The society has played and will continue to play a tremendous role in the formation of indigenous clergy and religious.



Funds collected for the Society of St. Peter the Apostle are used to build and maintain seminaries, take care of a basic grant for seminarians and for the post graduate studies for the priests and religious.



Our prayers and donations show our desire to share the cares of those who bring the Word of God to others. In basic terms this means that no seminary or formation house should be too small or ill equipped to train those whose desire and vocation is to become priests and religious brothers and sisters. Many young men and women are waiting to take up the light and pass it on, and many of



those are too poor to contribute anything to their training; this gives a wonderful opportunity for the People of God to take part in the training of their priests and religious by giving generously to the collection for the Society of St. Peter the Apostle. An important part of the Society of St. Peter the Apostle is to encourage prayers for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

