



1885: Foundation of Mpala (Notre Dame). The sisters moved there in December 1897.

1888: Lavigerie consecrates Léonce Bridoux in Paris. He is Apostolic Vicar of Tanganyika.

Conference given at Saint Sulpice (1st July 1888)

Enough of suffering! Enough of blood! Enough of this infamy! Enough of these insults to civilisation, to all the principles which the Christian world lives by and which it can no longer allow to be trampled under foot! Such is the cry which rises up from every heart. This is what is asked for by God's Vicar, once again, through my voice. But, brethren, what are the practical means which must be taken to fight again African slavery?

The first is charity, but it is inadequate in itself, because it cannot alone save these millions of human beings. Moreover, there is a danger therein. Trying to redeem all the slaves and announcing one's intention of doing so, will only arouse further greediness among the slave traders and cause them to multiply their captures. But even if one cannot or must not try to ransom all the captives, and if Leo XIII indicates, as we shall see, a more efficacious remedy, what should be said about a missionary who finds during his travels one of these unfortunate creatures. Must he not, as did the Good Samaritan in the Gospel, look for means to relieve his sufferings and, if he can, remove him from his sad lot by paying his ransom? You will see what my missionaries say in the letter I have spoken about. You will share, definitely, their sentiments and their regrets. Listen to their words of distress and their powerlessness to free the slaves they came across on the very day they wrote: "The Arab chief promised to leave early tomorrow morning, and allow us to ransom, among the victims of this afternoon's manhunt, the women and children whose ransom we can pay. And this is what took place. Imagine the joy of those ransomed who could return home, but at the same time imagine the despair of the poor unfortunates who cannot be saved, and who are carried off by force, chained one to another in the middle of their cries of despair! If only we had the means to save everyone!"

It is here, my dear brethren, that your help could be useful, and, however, I am not appealing for it at the moment. In preceding years, preaching in France for my apostolic work, I directly collected

alms from Christians. I am not appealing this year in your churches. I dare not ask any more from those among you who are not well off, whilst, in these difficult times, all the ordinary charities are asking for help. But those among you who are more fortunate than the others, take a look at your finances, and if they allow for it, listen to your own consciences, that little something which speaks to you in secret! It is more powerful than mine, it is the voice of the One who teaches that "everything you do in his name for these poor captives, it is for Him you have done it". He is the One of whom each year that we sing: "in order to redeem us from slavery, God has delivered up his own Son".

When you have taken the decision to undertake this work of mercy, in the proportions called for, our missionaries are ready to act as your intermediaries. Those among you who are familiar with the history of the past, will recall that in centuries of faith, Christians took upon themselves to include in their Wills an item "for the redemption of their souls", as they said in a touching manner, "the redemption of captives." They knew that the surest way of obtaining mercy from the Redeemer, was themselves to have taken part in the work of redemption.

But I repeat, my dear brethren, that charity, however great it may be, will not suffice to save Africa. A more prompt, more efficacious and more decisive remedy is needed. When our Holy Father, the Pope, had finished appealing for charity, he then appealed for force, a peaceful force, which would be used not for attack but for defence. For that, he addressed himself to Christian nations. These can do a lot through their moral strength with the Muslim princes, on whom these African slavers depend, in making these same feel responsible for the continuation of their infamies.

