VOICEAFRIQUE
CATHOLIC NEWS ANALYSIS
FOLLOWING THE FOOTPRINTS OF GOD IN AFRICA

VoiceAfrique Weekly Update
Catholic News Analysis from Africa by Africans, for Africa and the World
November 9, 2026

Begin your week with Sr. Helen Kasaka, the Pan-African Catholic Review and PACTPAN Updates

As an African proverb reminds us, **"One hand cannot tie a bundle."** This saying highlights the importance of working together. Our individual contributions become stronger and more meaningful when joined with those of others. In the Church, as in society, collaboration enables us to respond more effectively to the challenges of our time and to build a future rooted in solidarity and hope.

Dear friends in Christ,

Greetings from Kibeho, Rwanda.

As we begin a new week, we bring you stories reflecting the life and mission of the Church in Africa and beyond. This week, we highlight the Church's call to protect Africa's natural environment, celebrate significant milestones in the life of Cardinal Wilfrid Fox Napier, and share news of the election of a Tanzanian religious sister to a leadership position in the international Catholic medical community. We also feature reflections on Pope Leo XIV's participation in the United States midterm elections, alongside updates from PACTPAN and the wider Church.

Around PACTPAN this week

VoiceAfrique Story of the Week: Will Pope Leo XIV's Vote Count?

In this week's VoiceAfrique Story of the Week, Fr Stan Chu Ilo reflects on the significance of Pope Leo XIV's participation in the United States midterm elections. In his article, *"Will Pope Leo XIV's Vote Count?"* Fr. Ilo considers the Pope's decision to exercise his right to vote, highlighting the importance of civic participation and the responsibility of Christians to contribute to public life.

The Holy See Press Office confirmed on 30 October that the Pope had cast his ballot by mail. Speaking to journalists aboard the papal flight to Uruguay on 6 November, Pope Leo XIV expressed his pride in being American and in exercising his right to vote. His action offers an opportunity to reflect on the relationship between faith, citizenship and the Church's prophetic responsibility in society.

Read more: http://Voicea.org/will-pope-xiv-vote-count/

Podcast: All Saints, All Souls and African Reverence for Ancestors

This week's English podcast features a conversation with Fr Augustine Ikenna Anwuchie on *"All Saints, All Souls and African Reverence for Ancestors."*

The discussion explores the relationship between African understandings of ancestors and the Christian teaching on the Communion of Saints. It considers how African communities honour those who have died, while distinguishing this reverence from worship, which belongs to God alone. The conversation also reflects on the hope of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and its significance for Christian faith.

Listen to the conversation on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdmFoH5JFo4

Voice Afrique – Le Podcast

In this French-language edition of *Voice Afrique – Le Podcast*, B. Roger Dayamba and Sr Agnès Sory discuss the Church of the Sheaves and Africa's contribution to the universal Church.

The conversation invites listeners to reflect on the place of the African Church in the wider Catholic community and the gifts it brings to the life and mission of the universal Church.

Listen to the podcast on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53Hxg0-bKvg

In the wider Church

SECAM calls for the protection of Africa's natural environment ahead of COP31

The Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), in a statement issued on 6 November, has called for greater protection of Africa's forests, waters, lands and biodiversity ahead of the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31).

The statement draws attention to the importance of safeguarding the continent's natural resources and calls for a renewed commitment to ecological responsibility. It also highlights the need to protect communities whose livelihoods and wellbeing depend on the environment.

The appeal places the protection of creation within the Church's wider mission of promoting human dignity, justice and the common good.

South Africa: Cardinal Wilfrid Fox Napier celebrates five milestones

The Catholic Church in South Africa has celebrated five significant milestones in the life of Cardinal Wilfrid Fox Napier, OFM, at St Patrick's Cathedral in the Diocese of Kokstad on 8 November.

The celebrations marked his 85th birthday, 65 years of religious profession, 56 years of priesthood, 45 years since his episcopal ordination and 25 years since he was created a cardinal.

Born in Matatiele on 8 March 1941, Cardinal Napier joined the Franciscan Order and was ordained a priest in 1970. In 1981, he became the first indigenous Bishop of Kokstad. He was appointed Archbishop of Durban in 1992 and served in that ministry until 2021.

He also served as president of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC), contributing to the Church's engagement with peace, dialogue and reconciliation during South Africa's transition to democracy.

Tanzania: Sr Dr Sarah Deogratius Kahumbya elected FIAMC Vice-President

Sr Dr Sarah Deogratius Kahumbya has been elected Vice-President of the International Federation of Catholic Medical Associations (FIAMC) in Rome on 8 November.

A medical doctor and member of the Theresian Sisters of Bukoba, Tanzania, Sr Dr Kahumbya has been associated with Catholic healthcare initiatives, including Cardinal Rugambwa Hospital in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam and the Tanzania Catholic Medical Doctors Association.

Her election brings an African religious sister into an international leadership role within the Catholic medical community, highlighting the contribution of consecrated women to healthcare and the Church's healing mission.

From the Vatican

Pope Leo XIV continues his apostolic journey in South America

Pope Leo XIV is undertaking an apostolic journey to Uruguay, Argentina and Peru from 6 to 17 November 2026. The visit marks his sixth international apostolic journey and includes encounters with local communities, Church leaders, civil authorities and representatives of other Christian and religious traditions.

In Uruguay, the Pope visited Montevideo, Paysandú and Florida. His programme included a Mass at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Thirty-Three in Florida.

After arriving in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 8 November, the Pope's programme for 9 November includes a visit to Pequeño Cottolengo Don Orione, the celebration of Mass, an encounter at the Catholic University of Argentina and a meeting with Christian and other religious leaders. He is also scheduled to celebrate Vespers with bishops and members of synodal teams.

On 10 November, the Pope is scheduled to visit Córdoba. On 11 November, his programme includes a visit to a federal prison complex in Buenos Aires, Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Luján and departure for Peru.

In Peru, the Holy Father is expected to visit Lima, Chiclayo, Cusco and Pucallpa. The journey offers an opportunity to strengthen the bonds of communion with the local Churches and encourage communities in their Christian witness.

Looking ahead

PACTPAN webinar: Synod and Synodality Palaver Unit

The PACTPAN Synod and Synodality Palaver Unit will host a webinar on Wednesday, 11 November 2026, at 5:30 p.m. West African time and 6:30 p.m. Central African time.

The webinar will provide an opportunity for participants to engage in reflection and conversation on the Church's synodal journey.

Join the webinar:

Zoom
link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85162940660?pwd=EQ8hwbFzkdMAnvN6EzhwdkqCyaBYQs.1

Meeting ID: 851 6294 0660
Passcode: 332164

Tangaza University to host conference on Benedict XVI and the renewal of the Church in Africa

Tangaza University will host an international conference from 19 to 21 November 2026 under the theme *"Constellations of Hope: Africa and the Renewal of the Church in the Vision of Benedict XVI."*

The conference will reflect on the contribution of Pope Benedict XVI to the life and mission of the Church, particularly in relation to Africa. It forms part of the commemorations marking the centenary of his birth in 1927 and the 40th anniversary of Tangaza University.

Cardinal Peter Turkson is among the principal speakers. Participants will be able to attend in person or online, with coverage also available through Capuchin TV.

Register to participate online:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/cv5dNU5mR2-BKhkjwcuh4Q

As we begin this new week, let us continue to walk together in faith, hope and solidarity, recognising that each of us has a part to play in building the Church and serving our communities. May the Lord guide our work, strengthen those who serve others and bless all our efforts to bring hope to the world.

Thank you for being part of the VoiceAfrique Catholic community.

