

CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MOROCCO

Archdiocese of Tangier



DIOCESAN YOUTH COMMISSION

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Brief description

The Archdiocese of Tangier is rich in experience and Christian life. Throughout its history in the Kingdom of Morocco, it has moved from serving Christian captives to sacramental ministry and the formation of the Christian community. It should be noted that since Morocco's independence (1956), the Christian community has diminished considerably with the gradual disappearance of the European population. This has not limited the Church's activities, but it has also directed its mission towards intense social work in favour of Moroccan society and the sub-Saharan migrant population.

Around the year 2000, Morocco experienced a major influx of sub-Saharan migrants, not to mention those from other continents; a significant number of them are Catholics, which has given rise to a new vision of pastoral care in general and youth ministry in particular. In fact, in the archdiocese of Tangier, 9096 of the Christian population is young. During the period of the vacant seat of our archdiocese (2019-2023), activities with young people have not ceased, even if the rhythm and structure have been maintained with little intensity. Since the arrival of Archbishop Emilio Rocha Grande as Apostolic Administrator of Tangier (February 2022), youth ministry has become one of the main axes of the archdiocese's evangelising action.

The pastoral care of young people aims to enable each young person to feel part of a family, to be well cared for, to grow in Christian formation and to celebrate the faith with dignity and fidelity in a country that welcomes us fraternally. The aim is to help young people from different continents to grow as human beings and Christians, even if the vast majority of them are African. Forming, accompanying, celebrating, promoting, evangelising and consolidating young people, especially the young people themselves who are the active subjects of this journey, is not only the proposal of the Youth Commission of our archdiocese, but also the project proposed by the Holy See to the universal Church.

In August 2023, we were able to organise the World Youth Day in Tangiers with the participation of around a hundred young people, with the help of a Moroccan association whose aim is to help religious minorities in Morocco, and also with the help of several Christians and Muslims of good will who helped us financially, materially and logistically.

In July 2024, we celebrated a diocesan youth day in Rio Martil with the support of parishes, diocesan cultural centres and Christian and Muslim friends from Morocco and abroad.

The aim of youth ministry is to encourage and strengthen the life of faith during the period when young people are living in Morocco. When we meet Christians and Moroccans who support us, we feel a spirit of fraternity that expresses in a practical and concrete way the Islamic-Christian and ecumenical dialogue that we try to maintain in the archdiocese. What we sow will blossom later, because God always works wonders, using even the smallest gestures to make his Kingdom grow.

The youth components of our archdiocese

Sub-Saharan students AECAM

For a number of years, the Kingdom of Morocco has maintained good diplomatic relations with the countries of the African continent. This has resulted in the granting of scholarships to enable a large number of young sub-Saharan Africans to study at university in various Moroccan cities. Many of them are Christians and live their faith with dignity and freedom.

Contrary to what they imagined before their arrival, they soon found themselves in a new family: the Aumônerie des Étudiants Catholiques au Maroc (AECAM) which, for more than 25 years, has been the

family that students form and rejuvenate every year in all the cities where young Catholics study. AECAM offers them the opportunity to grow in their social and spiritual lives. Its mission is to accompany young people in the strengthening of their faith and in their integral development as citizens of Africa and citizens of the Kingdom'.

Young people from migration backgrounds

They are young people in search of a better and more meaningful life; sometimes they are children of workers. Some come from Europe and elsewhere, but the vast majority are sub-Saharan.

Many are actively committed to the Christian faith and generously give their time and skills by participating in parish groups and movements. They feel part of the Church and live in it with passion, united with the other members of the Christian community.

Current challenges:

Given that some of the parishes in our archdiocese are far apart, the Commission's mission is to visit and encourage the young people in each group, while respecting the autonomy of each parish. The aim is to consolidate the faith and the sense of family in the archdiocese.

The Youth Commission of the Archdiocese of Tangier needs financial resources to carry out its mission of serving young Christians: many of them are scholarship students who find it very difficult to make ends meet; others are young people looking for a job that will enable them to obtain a Moroccan residence permit; all of them find it very difficult to provide for their own needs.



Youth Commission needs in the Archdiocese of Tangier:

- **Transport** for visits to parishes: Our parishes in the archdiocese are: Saint Jacques le Majeur in Nador; Saint Joseph in Al Hocéma; Notre Dame des Victoires in Tétouan; Saint-Esprit; Tanger Cathedral; Notre Dame de l'Assomption in Tanger (Francophone); Notre Dame du Pilier in Larache; Saint Bartolomé in Assilah; Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi in M'diq.
- **Training.** Provide trainers with transport or other appropriate means. Training materials: brochures, Bibles, etc
- **Logistical equipment**
- **Financing of the Commission's activities**
- **Health and housing needs for some young people:** Many young people do not work, while for young students, the student grant does not cover them in the event of illness. Some have difficulty paying the rent.

On behalf of the Diocesan Youth Commission, we entrust the realisation of the accompaniment and all these activities to Divine Providence, also counting on the help of charitable people. We ask you to pray for the young people of our archdiocese and for the success of the mission entrusted to this Commission.

Would you like to collaborate with us?

Archdiocese bank account:
007640000441900030409240
Attijariwofa Bank.

Especify your donations by saying:
«For youth ministry in the diocese of Tanger».
May God bless you !