

2023 Biennial Plenary Assembly of the Tamale Ecclesiastical Province Pastoral Conference (TEPPCON)

Brief Background

TEPPCON stands for Tamale Ecclesiastical Province Pastoral Conference. It is a joint institution to coordinate the similar and varied pastoral, economic, social and political concerns and activities of the five Catholic Dioceses, (Tamale, Navrongo Bolgatanga, Wa, Damango, and Yendi), politically referred to as the five regions of the North.

TEPPCON was initiated and established in 1977, by the Servant of God, Cardinal Peter Porekuu Dery, the then Archbishop of Tamale, with the then two other Bishops, Most Rev. Rudolf Akanlo of Navrongo/Bolgatanga and Most Rev. Gregory Kpiebaya of Wa Diocese.

TEPPCON was established with the aim among others to:

- Foster a coordinated approach to pastoral care in the province.
- Promote a more unified and effective way of spreading the Gospel of Christ.
- Suggest practical direction regarding pastoral and evangelical activities in the Province.
- And to address other crucial issues affecting the people in the province.

To achieve these aims, **TEPPCON** set up 10 commissions besides the Executive Committee to critically address and coordinate the major areas of pastoral, socio-economic, political and development concerns of the Province.

These commissions are:

1. Primary Evangelization Commission
2. Commission for the formation of catechists (Formation of Pastoral agents)
3. Laity Formation Commission
4. Sacraments Commission (for sacraments and liturgy)
5. Youth Formation Commission
6. Justice and Peace Commission
7. Commission for the promotion of dignity of women
8. Education Commission
9. DEPSOCOM Commission (communication)
10. Inter Religious Dialogue Commission

Four years ago the ten commissions were merged into five because of funding challenges. As research bodies that do a lot of investigations and conduct baseline surveys on critical issues that affect people in the province, it was difficult to maintain ten. TEPPCON now has five commissions that do the work of the ten commissions.

The reconstituted commissions are as follows:

1. Justice and Peace, Inter-religious dialogue and the promotion of the dignity of women.
2. Laity and Youth formation
3. Primary Evangelization, Sacraments and Liturgy

4. Ongoing formation of priests and religious and catechists

5. Education and Depsocom.

TEPPCON comes off every two years with the Core Executives and the Commissions as well as TEPPIA and TEPPART to review its developmental and administrative objectives.

The theme for the 2023 Conference was **THE CRISIS OF EDUCATION IN GHANA: THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND STAKE HOLDERS**. This theme had a lot for participants to reflect on. It afforded Government and all education stakeholders an opportunity to dialogue on their responsibilities towards saving the educational system from collapse, by providing quality, accessible and sustainable education through sound policy initiatives and implementation arrangements.

Other topics discussed included the following:

- Building Resilient-Peaceful Societies in the context of rising Communal Conflicts in Northern Ghana in the wake of Violent Extremism: The Role of Stakeholders
- Promoting Synodality for Effective Evangelization in the Tamale the Ecclesiastical Province: The Role of Priests, Religious and the Laity
- Developing Active-Responsible Citizenship in Northern Ghana: The Role of the Catholic Church
- A Christian perspective of Ghana's economic crisis
- The Apostolic Exhortation Laudate Deum, of the Holy Father Pope Francis, to all people of good will on the climate crisis
- Dioceses, Provincial Offices and TEPPCON Commissions made presentations on their activities.

The 2023 TEPPCON was organised from **27th to 30th November**. Over two hundred (200) dignities participated in the opening ceremony. Sixty (60) delegates from the five (5) Dioceses of the Tamale Province participated in the four Day conference.

Attached are some addresses and pictures of the Conference.