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A journey through Africa

Zurich. A ten-day trip through Africa, during which Chief Apostle Richard Fehr served the brethren in South Africa and Zambia, has come to an end. The highpoint of his journey was the retirement of District Apostle Duncan Mfuné.

Chief Apostle Fehr conducted the service for the departed in Port Elizabeth (South Africa) on 6 March 2005. In the course of this divine service he ordained three bishops: Gregory February (*1956), Ralph Kenneth Hardick (*1944), and Abernathy Mkhanyiseli Lutuli (*1972). More than 140,000 brethren from all around the Cape District enjoyed the divine service via transmission.

On Wednesday evening, 9 March 2005, a large festive divine service took place in the Dinwiddie church in Johannesburg (South Africa). This northern region of South Africa belongs to the District Church of South East Africa. Here too, the chief apostle ordained new apostles and bishops: for the Church in Mozambique, he ordained Daniel Francisco (*1966) an apostle, and for the District Church of South East Africa, he ordained Bishop Sipho Jidhi Shabangu (*1960).

Chief Apostle Fehr served the congregation with a passage from Isaiah 26: 2: "Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in." He pointed out that it is possible to become righteous through faith and grace. The chief apostle continued by saying that faith grows from the word of God and that grace has its source in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

On Saturday the journey continued northward to Zambia, where a choral concert in the evening put the brothers and congregations in the mood for the Sunday. The festive divine service on Sunday took place against the backdrop of District Apostle Duncan Mfuné's (*1937) retirement.

The district apostle has been a minister of the New Apostolic Church for 46 years. He has been New Apostolic for 50 years, and has served as an apostle for 30 years, 16 of them as district apostle of the District Church of Zambia and Malawi. The Church in these countries counts some 1.4 million members in 7,500 congregations who are served by some 32,000 ministers. Chief Apostle Fehr described the retiring district apostle as having a "gentle nature and a joyful disposition", who had led his brethren in faith with deep love, a wise heart, and a strong faith.

As successor to Duncan Mfunne, the chief apostle ordained the new District Apostle Charles Ndandula (*1953). He comes from Ndola and speaks English, Lozi, Bemba, and Nyanja, in addition to his mother tongue of Luvale.

Another six apostles and five bishops were ordained for various African District Churches during this divine service. Francisco Cabuma Dibaia (*1962, Angola), José Mario Cambinda (*1958, Angola), Vincent Kalala (*1959, Republic of the Congo), Aaron Sitali Katungu (*1951, Zambia), Ranford Simumbwe (*1964, Zambia), and Marcel Mbolode (*1957, Central African Republic) were all ordained apostles. Severino José Ndala (*1971, Angola), Tshipungulu Ilunga Kouprino (*1958, Republic of the Congo), Albert Kalombo (*1958, Central African Republic), and Fabien Uzabakirikho (*1958, Rwanda) were ordained bishops.

The service was broadcast by television and radio throughout all of Zambia. The chief apostle based this divine service on a Bible passage from Ephesians 5: 8: "Walk as children of light." In reference to this passage he noted that children of light are willing to reconcile, deal peaceably with others, and love harmony of the soul. In this light it is possible to see many colours and shapes, he said.

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