

Evangelization campaign to launch in 12 European cities



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am (CNA/EWTN News).- Church leaders from 12 major European dioceses who are hope to re-evangelize their cities during Lent 2012 met this week in Rome to finalize plans for a new initiative called “Metropolitan Missions.”

“The climate of unity among the cities that share same project was very strong,” Auxiliary Bishop Jean Kockerols of Mechelen-Brussels, Belgium told CNA at the conclusion of the Jan. 9 meeting.

“It was very interesting to hear from the other 11 cities who are working on the same priority,” he added.

Also represented were the Metropolitan Archdioceses of Barcelona, Budapest, Cologne, Dublin, Lisbon, Liverpool, Paris, Turin, Warsaw and Vienna. The meeting was hosted by the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization, which is headed by Archbishop Rino Fisichella.

The Archdiocese of Mechelen-Brussels is calling its Lenten series of events “Metropolis 2012 – Paths of Conversion.” The organizers plan for the Feb. 22 – April 15 series to create a stir in the Belgian capital by making “everyone more aware of what it means to be Christian.”

The Cathedral Church of Sts. Michael and Gudula will host one of the events, which will involve five afternoons of testimonies on the theme of “conversion paths.” The gatherings will feature a series of famous Belgians reading and reflecting upon passages of the Confessions of St. Augustine.

On Palm Sunday, 15 churches across Brussels will open their doors for anyone to visit and, over a cup of coffee, ask any questions about the Catholic faith. The Sacrament of Penance will also be available.

On Good Friday, April 6, there will be an all-day reading of the Gospel of St. Mark in the historic downtown church Notre-Dame-du-Finistère. This will also be broadcast on large screens in the streets

surrounding the church. The chapters and verses of the Gospel will be interspersed with musical interludes played by violin and harp.

Meanwhile, both Archbishop André-Joseph Léonard and his auxiliary Bishop Jean Kockerols are planning to touring parishes to provide teachings sessions on the Catholic faith. Many other events at the parish level are also promised.

The Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization was established in 2010 by Pope Benedict XVI. He said he wanted it to “promote a renewed evangelization” in traditionally Christian countries which are living in a “progressive secularization of society and a sort of ‘eclipse of the sense of God.’”

This year’s “metropolitan missions” are the first of their kind. If deemed successful, they could be introduced elsewhere around the world, including the United States, in the coming years.

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