



International Bulletin



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“Witnessing with Hope”

“Five year of being evangelized in order to evangelize”

Another International Assembly approaches with new needs, new hopes and a new impulse for evangelization. This Assembly will provide us with an opportunity to reflect on the manner in which we have engaged in ministry during the past five years ... a time in which we have experienced wars, upheavals, disasters. We are called to be disciples of Christ through our membership in the VMY.

Evangelized in order to evangelize, a call that Jesus proclaimed at the time of his ascent into heaven and a call that was made anew to all the members of the VMY during the last International Assembly that was held in Salamanca, Spain (2015). As I write these lines, I recall the words of the hymn, we are called to evangelize the world, to evangelize as we grow in our faith.

During these past five years I have been blessed and I have received more than I deserve.

This time after the Assembly has provided all of us with an opportunity to discover more about our large Vincentian Family. I have enjoyed the opportunity to minister, hand in hand, with members of the other branches of the Vincentian Family ... opportunities to evangelize and to be evangelized. This voice in the desert which united us together during our gathering in Salamanca revealed how many people in our communities hunger and thirst for the Word of God. Furthermore, that voice in the desert revealed the fact that in the midst of a world in which many words are spoken, only people of faith can transform words into actions and decisions which change life, which give people joy and a purpose in life.

Brothers and sisters, I am certain that this next Assembly (like other Assemblies) will provide us with a new impulse to grow in our following of Jesus Christ. Let us pray that we might respond to this call to conversion and thus live in imitation of Jesus and his mother, Mary.

Andrew Wagdy
Councilor for Asia



VMY throughout the world

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America

Cuba

Young men and women from this country initiated the month of January with a time for prayer in gratitude for the experiences of the past year (2019). At the same time, they placed in the Lord's hands all the pastoral activity that they will engage in during the present year. The members also had a celebration in the "Psych pedagogical Center of the Golden Age" for Elderly Disabled Persons and administered by the Daughters of Charity.



The Dominican Republic:

The members of the VMY participated in a project of Tapitasx Quimio, a project on behalf of children who are engaged in a struggle to combat childhood cancer. The group collected more than 250,000 bottle caps (the original goal was 5,000). This news was published at:

<https://www.dominicanasolidaria.org/noticia/250000-tapitas-entregadas>

Spain

An Extraordinary National Assembly was held in Spain from December 6-8, 2019 under the theme: "She desired it, She desires it. This was a time of intense work: the document about the renewal and dynamization of the pastoral ministry of the VMY was approved, the National Statutes were renewed, and a new National Coordination Team was elected.

Europe

Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Eighty members of the VMY travelled from various countries to Šibenik, Croatia in order to participate in the National Meeting. This was an opportunity for prayer, formation, a charitable campaign and the celebration of the Eucharist. All the participants made their Marian Consecration on this special occasion. Congratulations!!!

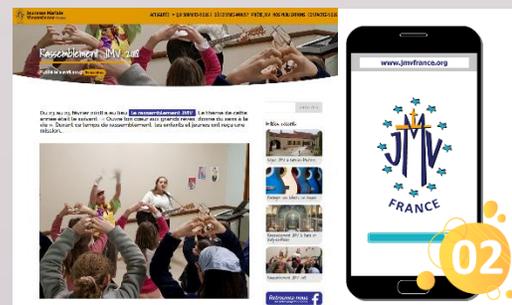


Slovakia

On last October 30th, 60 VMY members gathered for a national writing competition named Vincolympics focusing on the The Holy Bible and saints in Vincentian Family. One of the prize is the pilgrimage to Paris, Rue du Bac that is taking place this year.

France

The VMY of France had established their web page which can be visited at www.jmvfrance.org. The objectives of the page is to widely spread the association and to publish the information about the situation, activities and history of the association. This would hopefully be a way to encourage young people to meet and associate with the VMY.



Informal Preaching as an Evangelization Strategy

[2015 General Assembly: #3 of the Final Document]

Pope Francis has stated: *Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey* (Evangelii Gaudium, #127). This text exhorts us to communicate to others the love of God that we have experienced as Vincentians, as followers of Christ ... a love that we have experienced as a result of our encounters with other persons. Love is a power that attracts, that is reflected in people in their manner of being. If the heart is filled with God, then people will inevitably open themselves to the love of their brothers and sisters.



Sister Amadita Pinzón, DC
International Delegate of the VMY

As we continue our journey, then little by little our faith matures through an experience of God who is revealed in our daily life. Jesus tells us that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. How much good we can do!!! There are so many people who thirst for God!!!

Let us learn from Jesus who approached the widow of Naim: *When the Lord saw her, his heart overflowed with compassion. "Don't cry!" he said. Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it, and the bearers stopped. "Young man," he said, "I tell you, get up"* (Luke 7:13-14). Jesus transformed this woman's sadness into joy; he restored her son to life and gave her son back to her. We, as disciples of Jesus Christ, can approach other young men and women who are living in darkness and we can communicate life and hope to these individuals ... how many parents would rejoice at that happening!!

Let us also reflect on the attitude of Jesus when he cured the crippled woman: *When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Dear woman, you are healed of your sickness!" Then he touched her, and instantly she could stand straight. How she praised God!"*

Jesus first looked at the woman, then he spoke to her and proclaimed freedom. He then placed his hands on her and she could stand straight. The encounter with the gospel is an experience of a personal encounter with Jesus ... and that encounter results in joy and freedom and praise of God. Therefore, in imitation of Jesus let us humbly share our experience with other brothers and sisters and proclaim to them that Jesus is alive and offers all people his salvation and friendship.

One way to make that proclamation is through tenderness. Pope Francis, speaking about this idea stated: *if God is infinite tenderness, then man too, created in His image, is capable of tenderness. Tenderness, then, far from being reduced to sentimentalism, is the first step to overcome the withdrawal into oneself, to leave behind the self-centredness that disfigures human freedom* (Address of his Holiness Pope Francis to the participants at the Conference on the theme "The Theology of Tenderness of Pope Francis", September 13, 2018). Let us come to value the tenderness that we possess and at the same time let us also understand that we have been called to reach out to others. Let us be fearless as we proclaim Christ through respectful and friendly conversations. Informal preaching is hopeful witnessing.

VMY Poland

Witness



Marlena Łopatka
National President of the VMY Poland

The National Council of the Vincentian Marian Youth in Poland began to prepare for the General Assembly 2020 since March 2019, immediately after receiving news from the International Council that the V General Assembly would be held in Bydgoszcz. We are very happy with this decision and at the same time we also feel that we have a great responsibility. At the beginning, there were many conversations with regard to the lodging of the delegates and the place in which the Assembly would be held.

An important event took place in August 2019 when Father Irvin Amaro, CM (International Subdirector) and Yancarlos Carrasco, (International President) visited us. As a result of that visit we were provided with more details related to the preparation of this General Assembly. With some more time, a tentative plan was developed, and a web site was created so that individuals could begin to register for this event. Then, in a meeting of the National Council, individuals were given specific responsibilities. We were in constant communication with the National Secretariat in Madrid. We were very happy that so many individuals and institutions in Bydgoszcz helped in preparing for this meeting. Many of the people in Bydgoszcz, especially members of the Saint Vincent de Paul parish, are awaiting the opportunity to extend a welcome to the members of the VMY, the representative from throughout the world who will participate in this important meeting. We are now preparing for a meeting (March 2020) with the members of the International Secretariat in which we will discuss the next steps in our preparations for the Assembly ... the members of the Preparatory Commission will also participate in this meeting.

Much has been done ... but there is still much to do. We are confident that with your prayers, everything will be successful. Our groups in Poland pray the rosary every day for the success of the General Assembly and we encourage you to do the same. We look forward to seeing you all in Poland.

International Council and Secretariat

- The Director General of the VMY, Father Tomaž Mavrič, CM, has confirmed and published the following appointments: **Karla Beatriz Escobar Melgar** (President: El Salvador); **Josué Romero Rodríguez** (President - Spain); **Sr. María Estela Chocoj Bernardino D.C.** (National Sister Advisor – Guatemala); **Sr. Elena Marizabel Samayoa Bran D.C.** (National Sister Advisor - Honduras); **Sr. Lucía Palacios Andrino D.C.** (National Sister Advisor – El Salvador); **Sr. Daysi Suyapa Cruz D.C.** (National Sister Advisor - Nicaragua); **Sr. María Ester Molina D.C.** (National Sister Advisor – Costa Rica). **Fr Emad Ibrahim, CM** (National Advisor - Egypte)



- From January 31 until February 3, the members of the International Council met in Madrid. Present for the meeting were: International President, Yancarlos Carrasco; President of the Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family and Director-General of the VMY, Father Tomaž Mavrič, CM; the Subdirector General and Director of the International Secretariat, Father Irving Amaro, CM; the representative of the Superior General of the Daughters of Charity, Sister Carmen Pérez, DC; the International Delegate, Sisater Amadita Pinzón, DC; the four International Councilors: Andrew Wagdy, Councilor for Asia; Bienvenu Fouda, Councilor for Africa; Rafael Cruz, Councilor for the Americas; Ricardo Ferreira, Councilor for Europe. The members of the International Secretariat, that is, the four volunteers, the Director and the Delegate representing the Daughters of Charity also participated in this meeting: Yvette Ramanjakatiana, (responsible for French - speaking members); Patricia Roppa, (responsible for Portuguese - speaking members); Eddy López, (responsible for Spanish - speaking members); Joseph Công Thành Nguyễn, (responsible for English - speaking members).

- We express our gratitude to all those countries who participated in the contest to select a logo and a hymn that will accompany us during the time of the V General Assembly that will be held in Poland.

- We congratulate the **VMY Philippines** on winning the Logo competition of the V General Assembly.

