



International Bulletin



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“Witnessing with Hope”

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LET US JOURNEY TOGETHER!

Dear members and friends of the VMY

Today I want you to help me respond to the following questions: What gives value to life? What gives value to your life? ... Certainly, what gives value to life is not the things that we have but the person who we are. Knowing that we are part of a plan desired by the Mother of our God makes us privileged men and women and gives purpose to our lives.

What is the purpose of our life? With Mary, the Mother of Jesus, we want to be men and women who serve, who leave home and go forth from our places of worship, go forth in order to accompany life, to sustain hope, to be the sign of unity... to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation (Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, #276).

Pope Francis, in his new encyclical which is as an extraordinary guide for the building of a more just and fraternal

world, invites us to move out from our comfort zone and assist our neighbor and reach out to the less fortunate members of society.

We are invited to dream! ... to dream together! In many situations, dreaming of something great and endless is often viewed as fantasy and/or a deceitful reflection of life. The arrival of the feast of Christmas shows us that dreams can come true. The Eternal has become flesh and continues to be present among us. There is nothing more powerful than to dream together.

The path to Christmas, marked by the Advent season, has meaning and continues for four weeks. It is a time characterized by four virtues: peace, faith, love and hope. Let us make those virtues resound and resonate with every step that we take throughout the day!

During these 190 years of our history and evangelizing mission, we have walked together and focused on a lifestyle and a symbol that distinguishes us and makes us unmistakable ... the Miraculous Medal. We have a mission to make this medal known to the ends of the world.

Let us dream and embark upon a journey through life with the following conviction: where there is faith there is love; where there is love there is peace; where there is peace there is God and where there is God, nothing is missing!

To Jesus with Mary!



Bienvenu FOUA ABOUNA
International Councilor VMY: Africa

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VMY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD



Africa



Gabon

The Pilgrim Virgin visited the homes of every member of the VMY in Gabon/Libreville. The members reflected on the theme: how God acts through Mary? There was time for prayer and praise and sharing. The objective of this time was to encourage the members in their own journey of faith so that they might walk together with Jesus and Mary.



Cameroon

The National Council renewed their activities on September 12, 2020 in Yaundé-Nsimalen, in the house of Saint Louise de Marillac. All of this began with the celebration of the Eucharist during which the members recalled their companion Raissa, who died during the month of July.



Tunis

The members celebrated their official recognition on September 27, 2020. During the ceremony they were blessed by the parish community. The members are students from different countries who came together for the purpose of living their faith as Christians and doing so from the perspective of the Vincentian charism. Above all they want to always remain as members of the VMY.



Rwanda-Burundi

The members of the VMY in the parish of Nemba visited a poor neighborhood during which they engaged in various charitable activities and assisted many elderly residents. This is one of the activities that the members carry out in as they attempt to lead Christian lives and follow the example of Saint Vincent de Paul.

America

Honduras

From November 4-20, different groups organized themselves in order to assist those families who were victims of hurricanes Eta and Iota. They provided these families with food and clothing and other items that these families needed.

Venezuela

On November 28th, the members celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Association in this country. During that celebration they recalled their journey. This was done through the various social media networks and virtual platforms. The International Secretariat congratulates the members on this historic occasion.



Syria

With the project, "A piece of heart" the members raised funds in order to provide a better future to some children who were in a difficult situation. They provided these children with school supplies and other materials that they needed in order to begin classes in September 2020.

Asia

Vietnam

During the past six months, members and advisors of the VMY, together with the Church and the broader society, assisted people living in Central Vietnam. They distributed food and other vital necessities. The people in this area had been seriously affect by more than ten violent storms.



It is time to dream

Formation

In light of everything that is happening around the world (people concerned only about themselves and not caring about others), it would seem that this is not a good time to dream. Nevertheless, without any hesitation, we can say that this is a time to dream. We say this because the love of God and our relationship with the living Christ do not hold us back from dreaming; they do not require us to narrow our horizons. On the contrary, that love elevates us, encourages us and inspires us to a better and more beautiful life (Christus Vivit. #138).

Therefore, I propose to you **three simple activities** that you can do in order to dream and to share those dreams inside and outside the VMY groups:

1. Act:

yes, act ... because those persons who act, who move forward in order do that which is good, those persons draw closer to God and are sustained by God. Such individuals have no fear of dreaming because God sustains them. Therefore, we have to act and move out of our comfort zone.

2. Share our joys and hopes with others:

In the same way that sharing our sorrows lightens our burden, so also sharing our joys and hopes increases and multiplies that joy and hope. Our vision of reality changes for the better and our hearts are opened to give and to receive in a grateful manner.

3. Contemplate reality:

Everything around us shapes our reality and we can change that reality if we begin to see it with eyes of hope. Contemplating reality in the depths of our hearts will assist us in making the decision to dream in a manner that enlightens our life and the life of others.

Then there is a **bonus**: yes, I said there were three activities, but what is the use of dreaming if those dreams cannot be fulfilled. Therefore, the last activity is **keep our feet on the ground**. It is time to dream and to dream big because we have a God who is BIG. Let us keep our feet on the ground so that we might journey together and share our life with others. Let us also remember that Jesus is with us and that he promised to remain with us until the end of time (Matthew 28:20). With God's help we can continue to dream Big and to trust that those dreams will become reality.

Eddy López

*International Volunteer of the VMY
Spanish-speaking countries*



Witness: Impelled by Her Active Charity

VMY Philippines

In the Philippines, we are currently reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the devastation of super typhoons that left many people homeless and starving. In this time of dire need, I feel ever more impelled to be like our Blessed Mother in her response of active charity. Mary has shown the way of active charity when she left the comforts of her home and went in haste to help her cousin Elizabeth.

I am a seminarian at St. Vincent Seminary in TandangSora, Quezon City. Since early November of this year, my brother seminarians and I have been actively helping the cause of #VincentHelps, the Vincentian response to the needs of the poor and marginalized.

As a seminarian, I open myself to God in the silence of prayer and the demands of service to our neighbor. Our founder, St. Vincent de Paul, is right when he said, "Go to the poor and you will find God". Indeed, when I went to places that were battered by super typhoon Ulysses, I saw the sufferings of the people at the margins of society: the naked, hungry, thirsty and poor. In their sufferings, I saw Christ's own sufferings. Perhaps this act of solidarity animates Jesus' concern for those forgotten by the world: Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me (Mt 25:40).

As a Child of Mary (VMY), I place myself at the disposal of God's dream for the world in the same way that Mary did. Thus, the plight of our brothers and sisters in need beckons me in a truly personal way to respond to the call of service.

Allowing myself to be moved by the Spirit, I sense the gentle invitation to share God's love to our masters, the poor. I always pray that our work and mission may inspire others to love God better.

Mother of Christ, teach me to know and love your Son, so that I, too, may be capable of loving and be a beacon of light in these challenging times. O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you.



Arvel Pam Anthony S. Cui
Children of Mary- VMY
Philippines

We are looking for new volunteers!

We need **three young volunteers** to serve the Association. The mission involves communication with the Spanish, French and Portuguese speaking countries. We hope there are willing young people who desire to engage in this experience of service. **Communicate with your National Council for more information.**



International Council and Secretariat

- The Director General of the VMY, Father Tomaž Mavrič, CM, has confirmed and published the following appointments: **Sister Anna Dounavi, DC** (National Advisor: Greece); **Sister Caroline Yacoub** (National Advisor: Lebanon); **Fr. Giuseppe Martinelli, CM** (National Advisor; Italy). **Fr. Ilson Hubner, CM** (National Priest Advisor; Brazil); **Sister Geovani de Fátima Domingues, DC** (National Sister Advisor; Brazil)
- On November 6th the Spanish speaking advisors participated in a formation session organized by the International Secretariat of the VMY. Sister Angeles Infante, DC shared reflections on the theme: The Advisor as one who accompanies.
- On December 5th the 1st meeting of the Portuguese-speaking advisors and presidents was held virtually. We appreciate the participation of all national advisers and presidents of the VMY in Angola, Brazil, Mozambique and Portugal in this meeting, which has united the participants in fraternity and collaboration.
- We are grateful to all the countries for their participation in the initiatives proposed by the International Secretariat on the social network platforms during this past year. We invite you to continue to participate so that you might spread of joy of the VMY throughout the world and thus give joyful witness to the love of God as we fulfill our mission.
- The V General Assembly will take place in a virtual manner in July 2021. We ask for your prayers for the reorganization that will be necessary and for the work that is now being done. We also thank the VMY in Poland for their active participation in the Preparatory Commission.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!