



International Bulletin



April 2020

"Witnessing with Hope"

n° 127

Dear Friends,

We are called to witness with Hope

Have you ever considered the fact that there is a reason for everything that happens to us in life?

That is so because we need to find a path in order to move forward. Today there are people who need this impulse of hope in order to continue to grow and to continue to live their life in a meaningful manner.

I think of so many sisters and brothers, friends, neighbors, colleagues, nurses and health care providers ... so many wounded individuals who are in different ways effected by the pandemic and I ask myself: what would we do if we had no hope? We would commit suicide because life has to be nourished by hope. Pope Francis stated that **"young people should not be hopeless because hope is part of their manner of being"**. (WYD 2013, Brazil)

When we are not well it is because we have closed our heart. We do not open ourselves to Christ or to others and refuse to receive Jesus' call and to be sent forth. Let us open our hearts to Jesus' requests; let us listen to him and continually search for him: **"let us constantly pray"** (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Perhaps you are asking: how can we give witness in the context of a world health crisis, at a time when we are quarantined and obliged by circumstances to form new habits? Be assured that now, more than ever, we ought to feel called to place our hope in the living God, called to **allow the light of Christ (which we received at the time of our Baptism) to enlighten each one of us.**

As Vincentians we understand that to give witness implies accepting the mission that has been given to us, a mission that flows from God and is fully realized in the person of Jesus Christ. Easter is always the beginning and is the source of hope for a new life. Easter is God's affirmation of life. **Christ's resurrection offers us new life ... may we given witness to new life and share this life with others.**

In the midst of the instability of present time when we feel agitated, let us look toward Mary, our shining star; when we must confront stormy winds and find ourselves in the midst of tribulations, let us once again look toward Mary. Let us call upon Mary during times of danger and anguish and uncertainty. Let us call upon Mary and not lose hope or become pessimistic. Under Mary's protection we have nothing to fear and with Mary as our guide, we will not grow weary. With Mary at our side we will be able to come through this time of crisis and meet anew and embrace one another.

Life continues to move forward ... let us allow ourselves to be "infected" with Hope!!!

Happy Easter!!

Bienvenu Fouda
Councilor for Africa



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Africa

On March 7th, 2020 the Nation Council met in the house of the Daughters of Charity in Camp-Sonel. Representative from the various regions and the Director participated in this meeting. There was a celebration of the Eucharist, sharing of experiences and reports on activities as well as the financial status of the Association.



Cameroon

Nicaragua

On March 15th the IV National Assembly was held in Boaco. This was an unforgettable event during which the young men and women were able to share their experiences. The participants reflected upon the legacy of the Vincentian Marian Youth and elected a new National Council.

America

Albania-Kosovo

On February 22nd a national meeting was held to prepare for the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Association in this country. Various activities were held in order to enrich the life of the Association and motivate other young men and women to participate in the VMY.

Europe

Slovenia

March 6-8 a spiritual retreat was organized for a group of children ... and they took as they model the shepherd children at Fatima. There were some presentations on vocation and the meaning of prayer and sacrifice. There was also the inspiring witness of two young people who are disabled, Urban and Ana.

Spain

In response to the pandemic, the National Coordinating Team prepared the live transmission of the Easter Triduum. This was done on Youtube and allowed people of every age to participate in these celebrations which included: prayer, catechesis, celebration of the Eucharist, adoration of the cross and other related rites.

Italy

The Association in Puglia initiated a program called: God's Quarantine. On Instagram TV, young men and women read the scriptures and shared their reflections. They became a voice of hope in the midst of a fragile world as they shared and transmitted God's love.



Portugal

The group of young men and women of San Esteban in Chaves are assisting elderly people by going to the supermarket and the pharmacy to provide these people with their medicine and goods. We ask our Lord to accompany these individuals as they carry out this mission and we also thank them for their generous commitment and spirit.



To be witness of the gospel everywhere

Formation

“Filled with the love of Christ, young people are called to be witnesses of the Gospel wherever they find themselves, by the way they live” (Christus Vivit 175)

Recently, the world has been confronted with the pandemic of Coronavirus (Covid-19). There are thousands of people who have died and/or are facing the reality of death because of insufficient medical treatment. Yet there is even greater danger that these individuals may not experience the consolation and comfort derived from evangelical faith and hope. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life” (John 3:16). God is always faithful to his promise and he offers us the gift of life. Nevertheless, the acceptance of God’s gifts depends on our free decision.

Young people, this is the time, more than ever, when we are called to bring the Good News to those who have not yet experienced the love and hope of the Risen Lord.

We can only give witness to God when we ourselves have truly experienced the presence and love of Christ ... a presence that fills our daily life. Therefore, let us take advantage of this opportunity when we are spending most of the time in our home to take the time to encounter Jesus and listen to Him through prayer and reflection on the Scriptures. Let us draw closer to Jesus by deepening our relationship with Him and opening ourselves to receive his great love and peace.

Once filled with Jesus’ love, let us not hesitate to communicate that love to everyone whom we encounter during the course of the day. Perhaps this love will take the form of an understanding gaze, some kind word, a friendly smile, active and attentive listening, some charitable act... Anything that is done with true love means that we are giving witnesses to the Gospel in a most effective way. We should remember that Jesus told us:

“This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35)

The coronavirus is microscopic in size, yet it is powerful and we have seen it spread rapidly throughout the world. In the same way, if we do little things with great love to the people around us, the Gospel of love will be rapidly spread to every corner of the world and will conquer all.

Being an apostle does not mean carrying a torch in the hand thus, possessing the light, but it mean being that light... (Saint Alberto Hurtado)



Joseph Cong Thanh Nguyen
International Volunteer of the VMY
(English-speaking members)

WITNESS

VMY IN APU



Camila Moriello
VMY – Miraculous
Medal Headquarters
Buenos Aires, Argentina

From January 17th to the 26th, had the joy of participating in a shared mission with our sisters and brothers in La Dársena – Santiago del Estero as well as with families from various neighborhoods. In groups, these individuals visited the families residing in Bocatoma, Escolano, La Isla, San Ramón and other villages. There these missionaries were able to contemplate Jesus on the face of each person that they visited. In the afternoons the children, adolescents and adults participated in catechetical sessions.

To be on mission is to live a lifestyle that is dedicated to service. It implies becoming involved in a sincere encounter with one’s sisters and brothers, an encounter in which God speaks to the heart.

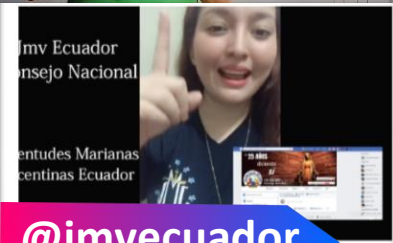
Even though we may lack our everyday comforts we ask: why do we experience such joy and happiness?

I believe the only response is found in the reality that when God provides us with the grace to abandon ourselves to God’s care, it is then we are able to live our life in a more meaningful manner. Therefore, we give thanks to God and to Mary, our Mother, for having enlightened us and guided us during our missionary experience ... indeed, this has been an unforgettable experience.

Witnessing with hope on the social media networks



@zdruzeniemaria nskejmladeze



@jmvecuador



@jmvapu



@jmvcolombia



@JMVSyria



@jmvcenmex



@jmvresp



@jmvportugal

We appreciate that in all initiatives you can label us so we will be attentive to share all the activities that are carried out in each country. Find us on Facebook: JMV Internacional; Instagram: SIJMV and Twitter: @sijmv and also look up with the Hashtag #WitnessingWithHope

International council and secretariat

- The Director General of the VMY, Father Tomaž Mavrič, CM, has confirmed and published the following appointments: Daniel José Alcántara Castillo (President: Dominican Republic); Victoria del Rosario Fargas Mendez (President: Nicaragua)
- During an extraordinary meeting of the International Council, it was decided to postpone the General Assembly until next year (2021). This decision was prompted by the current situation with regard to the coronavirus (Covid-19). The intention is to protect the members who will participate in this General Assembly. We ask that you accompany us with your prayers.

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www.secretariadojmv.org

¡Happy Easter!