



INTERNATIONAL TEAM / MARIANIST LAY COMMUNITIES
EQUIPO INTERNACIONAL / COMUNIDADES LAICAS MARIANISTAS
EQUIPE INTERNATIONALE / COMMUNAUTÉS LAÏQUES MARIANISTES

December 8, 2009

SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

TO: Marianist Lay Communities and the Marianist Family

Dear friends,

The new MLC leadership team completed its first annual meeting in Rome on November 14th, 2009. The members of our team are: **Félix Arqueros Pérez** (Europe), **Isabel Duarte Quapper** (Latin America), **Ernest Kasongo** (Africa), **Susan Vogt** (North America, Asia, Australia and Ireland) and **Bro. Domingo Fuentes, SM** (Assessor).

We began our week on Sunday, November 8th, with a day for prayer and play. It was an opportunity to know each other, and prepare spiritually for the work ahead. Bro. Michael McAward gave us a tour of Rome. We visited and prayed at each of the four Basilicas – St. John Lateran, St. Paul's Outside the Walls, St. Mary Major, and St. Peter's.

On Monday we visited the **Pontifical Council for the Laity** to introduce our new team. We had an hour long meeting with Msgr. Miguel Delgado Galindo. We shared the reality of MLC life in each of our regions and gave a report on our International Meeting in Nairobi. We discussed the importance of both formation and social justice work in our lay spirituality. We ended the meeting by greeting Prof. Guzmán Carriquiry, the Under-Secretary of the PCL.

Our International Team meetings began with brief reports from each of our new Regional Responsibles. We are all thankful to the past leadership team of **Anthony Garascia**, **Lorna Mueni Kilonzo**, **Ana Blazquez Ubach**, **Ezequiel Reggiani**, and **Isabella Moyer** for their help and support in this time of transition. We also thank all the **National Responsibles** who sent us their reports. This information provides us with the current reality in each of our countries. And, it gives us much joy to receive news from all our sisters and brothers whom we are called to represent.

The focus of our meeting was to discern our **vision and objectives** for the next four years based on the Challenges given to us in Nairobi. Isabel used her administrative talent, and guided us through a process to identify our "big" vision first, and then objectives and tasks to make that vision a reality. We also decided to structure the work of our team on our Marianist system of the **Three Offices – Education** (Formation), **Temporalities**, and **Religious Life** (Zeal). Despite the limitations of time, we completed our team meetings with a basic foundation to guide us in the coming years:



THE VISION: In community, we hope to continue finding spiritual and formational nourishment, but we also work to further strengthen the social justice and missionary aspects of our communities. (Marianist Lay Communities in the Church and in the World, 2:12)

FORMATION

- To increase the number of Marianist Lay Communities world-wide, with a special focus on Youth.
- To collaborate on formation programs that guide and nurture both new and old members to live lives grounded in the Gospel, our Catholic tradition and Marianist spirituality.
- To promote the formation of leaders, spiritual advisors and assessors for Marianist Lay Communities

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- To grow in social and political commitment in mission with a preferential option for the poor.
- To promote existing social justice projects at the grass roots level. Sharing good works will inspire other good works in the spirit of Contagion given to us by our Founders.
- To encourage global support across the miles by sharing both financial and human resources.

HOW will we work towards this Vision?

- In the SPIRIT OF FAMILY, given to us in our Marianist Charism
 - Collaborating with all Marianist Lay Communities at the Regional, National, and Local levels.
 - Collaborating with all the branches of the Marianist Family: The Society of Mary, The Daughters of Mary Immaculate, and the Alliance Mariale.

WHAT TOOLS are needed for this Vision?

- Communication
- Networking
- Financing



We hope to address all the Nairobi Challenges within this structure, while focusing on the bigger vision of Formation and Social Justice. Our new document, “Marianist Lay Communities in the Church and in the World” will be our inspiration.

We are preparing a list of specific objectives and tasks for each of the Three Offices. The Three Offices are:

- EDUCATION: Félix and Ernest
- TEMPORALITIES: Susan and Isabel
- RELIGIOUS LIFE: Domingo and Isabella

Three of our days in Rome were spent with the World Council of the Marianist Family (WCMF). The WCMF reports can be found at www.marianist.org. We are excited and energized by the spirit of family experienced in the meeting. As we discerned the objectives and goals of the World Council, we realized that the goals of the MLC are also the goals of our larger Marianist Family. We will be collaborating closely, especially in the areas of formation and social justice, so that the work of each branch is not done in isolation. In this way we will grow as a family in both spirit and action.

In this season of Advent, a time of hope and expectation, we renew our alliance with Mary. With her, we remain open to the Holy Spirit. May our individual and communal “Yes” to the mission of her Son help to bring God’s reign of peace and justice to all.

Affectionately,



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