



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM

PRO LAICIS

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Vaticano,

8 January 2014

Dearest friends of the Marianist Lay Communities,

It is with great pleasure that I address all participants of the International Meeting of the Marianist Lay Communities, which will take place in Lima, Peru, from 26 January to 2 February 2014, with the theme "Faith of the Heart in the Heart of the World". I greet you all on behalf of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, who as part of the Roman Curia is a concrete sign of the Holy Father's pastoral concern for the different associations of Catholic faithful around the world.

I especially greet Isabella R. Moyer, your president, who will finish her term with this meeting. I particularly thank her for the close contact she maintained with our Dicastery during these years as president, together with all the members of her international team.

This meeting is an important step for you all. You will be celebrating twenty years since the first meeting held by your association in Santiago, Chile, back in 1993.

There have been many significant events over the past few years that have led you to reflect on some important themes.

With all of the Marianist family, you have commemorated 250 years since the birth of blessed William Joseph Chaminade and together with the Catholic Church you have celebrated - 50 years after Vatican Council II - the Year of Faith, which has recently finished. Thanks to your president's initiative, you have reflected on the role of the Marianist Lay Communities in the New Evangelization on the occasion of the XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on "New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith."

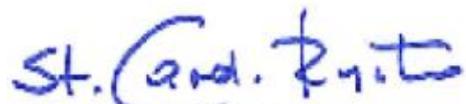
These anniversaries enable you to acknowledge a strong call to reflect on the key elements of your charism and to rediscover in a renewed way, your association's identity, your membership within the Church and the fundamental values that give you life.

We are sure that by departing from these reflections, in the following years, under the guidance of the new international team, you will be able to engage yourselves in a fruitful way in the apostolate works that the Marianist Lay Communities carries out in the world.

Miss Isabella R. Moyer
President
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CANADA

You will certainly find many prompts for your personal, spiritual and apostolic growth in the words of the Holy Father Francis, who recently reminded us that "All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized." (*Evangelii gaudium*, 120). Thus it is necessary to ensure that there is an ever-growing "awareness of the identity and mission of the laity in the Church" because "We can count on many lay persons, although still not nearly enough, who have a deeply-rooted sense of community and great fidelity to the tasks of charity, catechesis and the celebration of the faith. At the same time, a clear awareness of this responsibility of the laity, grounded in their baptism and confirmation, does not appear in the same way in all places." (*Evangelii gaudium*, 102).

It is precisely in the deepened and thoughtful reading of *Evangelii Gaudium* that you can find an important stimulus for your Christian vocation and for your belonging to the Church, that we hope may always be animated by the "delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing" which the Pope shows us is the cornerstone and foundation of the Church's journey in years to come.



Stanisław Card. Ryłko
President

(Stanisław Card. Ryłko
President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity)