

Walk with us as we deepen our faith!

A GLANCE BACKWARDS... IN ORDER TO SEE MORE CLEARLY IN FRONT OF US!!!

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Dear Friends

We publish today the 100th edition of our International Bulletin! How wonderful that this event should occur at this moment. We have many reasons to be grateful and all of us at the International Secretariat give thanks for all that has occurred during these past fifteen years of our history. We give thanks for the people who have served with enthusiasm and dedication during these past years and we also give thanks for those who have recently arrived here at the Secretariat as well as for those who will come in the future.

We are now journeying through the season of Advent which will lead us to the celebration of the feast of the Nativity. This, then, is an appropriate time to pause and to look back and to allow ourselves to be filled with awe as we come to realize the many different ways in which God has been present to us during this past year, during this Advent season. It is also good to look toward the future and consider the possibilities that God extends to us in the coming days.

If Advent is a time to relive the hope of the promise of a new heaven and a new earth (cf. 2 Peter 3:13), it is because we recall the events surrounding the Incarnation. And what do we await if not the salvation of Our Lord! The Christmas season is a time when we renew our awareness of an event that continues to be relevant at the present time, namely, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word of God, was born in a stable in Bethlehem. God became man and entered into human history.

Christmas is a feast of joy because it is a feast of faith that is life-giving and it is also a feast of family and friendship. It is for this reason that Guardini stated that every gift ought to be a symbol of the one great gift in which God offered up his Son for the salvation of the world (cf. 1 John 4:9).



Christmas is around the corner and therefore we ask: how have you prepared yourself to receive the Son of God?

Argelys VEGA
International Councilor



VMY IN THE WORLD

Angola:

After a long and, at times, discouraging journey, the VMY groups of Santana and S. Mateus were encouraged and animated by Sister Aldamara and Sister Rosario to continue their journey. Thus, the team was restructured and more parishes and mission centers became involved in the activities of the Association.



Responsible persons assumed leadership and were focused on achieving the objectives that had been placed before them. We pray that Mary might continue to enlighten the path of these young men and women so that they can dedicate their life to this Association.



Equatorial Guinea

The VMY group in Micomeseng, together with the members of the Miraculous Medal Association, celebrated the Eucharist on the feast of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. At the conclusion of the celebration there was an opportunity to share as members of one large family. This year the group in Micomeseng is composed of more than 40 members and a group is beginning in Mokom



Mozambique:

During the summer the advisors visited the various groups in order to encourage and revitalize the members. Some of the members have pronounced their promises and made their Marian Consecration. During this same time there were some meeting with the regional presidents and there are plans to have a meeting with all the lay advisors. May God continue to bless all those involved in this ministry on behalf of so many young men and women!



Brazil:

On September 12-14 (under the motto: *young people evangelizing young people*), there was a meeting of the members of the Association in the city of Vila Velha. As one persons stated: some one hundred and fifty young men and women from Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo and Mato Grosso do Sul participated in "three days of divine grace".



During that time there was a series of presentations and workshops that provided the participants with an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the mission of the VMY so that, in the words of Pope Francis, they might shine forth as the most appropriate instruments to evangelize other young men and women. This is the path that we must travel if we want to live our faith in a meaningful manner. In 2015 another meeting will place in the city of Petrópolis.

Mexico:

From November 21-23 the National Assembly of the Association took place and the representatives for the 2015 General Assembly were elected, namely, Diana Velásquez (National Coordinator) and Ana Lilia Juárez (a committed laywoman).



Panama:

On September 20-21 the members of the Vincentian Marian Youth Association participated in the National Meeting of the Laity which took place in Puerto Armuelles and commemorated one hundred years of Vincentian presence in this country.



Spain:

This year the members of the Vincentian Marian Youth Association reflected on the theme: **dream of something great and make a decision on behalf of Christ**. Such is our hope and our hope is also intimately bound up with our life. As Pope Francis has stated: *The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus (Evangelii Gaudium, #1)*. Thus we have good reason to deepen our understanding of the missionary dimension of our Association.



Everyone who is baptized is called to be an evangelizer, called to bring the Good News to all people, especially those who are most poor. The members of our Association are ministering in various countries: Bolivia, Honduras, and Mozambique ... they are the individuals who make that dream a reality and all who support the men and women in these distinct missionary sites also give life to that dream.



Portugal:

From August 20-24 the XXX National Encounter of the Vincentian Marian Youth Association was held in Achada (Maфра) with the participation of some 180 young men and women. The theme of this gathering was: **Like Mary, blessed are those who are called!** During those days the young men and women were invited to reflect on their vocation in life and their vocation in the Church. The participants were also helped to realize that all of them share a fundamental vocation, namely, the search for holiness.

FORMATION

"ACCOMPANYING MARY IN HER "FIAT"

We are in the midst of the Advent season, a special time although somewhat mysterious. This is a time when we are invited to reflect on Mary as she awaits the birth of her child. Each Sunday during the Advent season we will light an additional candle on the Advent wreath. Indeed, the Advent season leads us to reflect on the reality of light which is more powerful than the darkness. In other words, this is a time to pause and reflect on that reality of light which becomes brighter with the passing of each day. I want, then, to dedicate these words to Mary, our Mother, who followed the Light and who gave birth to the Light of the World.

Let us consider the words, to Jesus with Mary! At some time during our life have we thought about the meaning of those words? What do those words say to us? Mary was chosen by God to give birth to Jesus, to lead us to Jesus. If we reflect on Mary we must also reflect on Jesus. Consider for a moment Mary as she awaits the birth of her child. At various times she, like every expectant mother, must have questioned herself about her ability

to be a good mother and provide for her child. It is very possible that she was startled by the events surrounding her pregnancy. There are many details about those events that we are uncertain about, but we do know that God admired her faith. Mary had developed a personal relationship with God and trusted that God would provide for her. The Light which appeared in the midst of the world, guided Mary as her life unfolded. Therefore, if we want to find Jesus, if we feel that Jesus has abandoned us, if we feel as though we are walking in darkness, then let us cry out to Mary who gave birth to the Light of the World and who can help us to walk in the Light.

Mary is the wonderful model for those persons who accompany others. During her life Mary accompanied Jesus and silently walked with him. She was Jesus' first disciple. She was with Jesus when he took his first steps, when he healed various individuals, when he instructed the multitudes, when he suffered and died. Mary is also with us ... she accompanies us at every moment of our life; she speak to

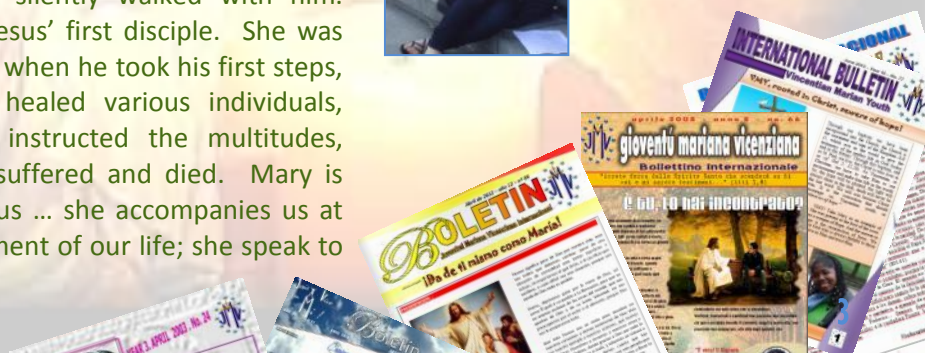
us, listens to us and intervenes on our behalf before God.

We are approaching the conclusion of this year, a time during which we have reflected on the theme of accompaniment. During the summer our advisors gathered together in Paris in order to reflect on that theme; our motto this year has been: walk with us as we deepen our faith; we have had meetings and workshops which provided us with an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of accompaniment. Therefore, as we glance behind us we might ask if our desire to deepen our faith was realized. We might also reflect on what we hope to accomplish in the coming year.



To Jesus with Mary!

Karmen KUNC
International Councillor



MOVING TOWARD THE IV GENERAL ASSEMBLY

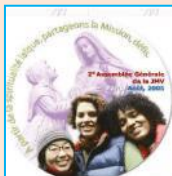
IV General Assembly, Salamanca 2015

Dear Members and Advisors throughout the world:

In a few months we will celebrate our IV General Assembly. We hope that you are enthusiastically preparing for this event which provides us with the opportunity to accompany one another and to walk together in the faith. These days of preparation allow us to continue the mission which has been given to us, that is, evangelized in order to evangelize.

EVANGELIZED WE EVANGELIZE

International team



WITNESS

WHEN JESUS CALLED ME.... I RESPONDED

Dear Friends:



My name is María and I am a convert to Christianity. I am one of those lambs who responded to the call of the Shepherd. It was difficult for me to change my religion ... in fact, I had to confront many obstacles and difficulties, situations that were caused by my family. I had to choose between my family and God and with much help and support I was able to opt for my Savior and I have continued to walk in the way of the Lord.

Three years have passed since I made that decision ... three years of living a Christian life; three years of being in awe at God's infinite love. During this journey there have been times when I have wanted to give up and walk in a different direction, but Jesus, together with his Blessed Mother, supported me. They led me to the Vincentian Marian Youth Association where I now participate in the activities of this Association. The advisor has helped me to discern the path that I am to walk and I am now surrounded by friends who share in my life as a Christian.

Today I can say that the two most important people who support me are Jesus and his mother, Mary. I give thanks to God for the blessings that I have received and I want to share with you three realities that gave me strength during my journey: fidelity to prayer, trust in God, praying the rosary.

Your sister in Christ,

María

(for reasons of personal security we have changed the name of this woman and omitted her country of origin)

"Normally, Christmas seems to be a very noisy holiday: it would do us good to have a little silence and to hear these words of love"

Pope Francis



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL AND SECRETARIAT

- The Director General of the VMY, Father Gregory Gay, CM, confirmed and published the following appointments: **Roderic Ndonjou Datoyo** (President, Cameroon), **Fr. Pavol Noga, CM** (Advisor, Slovakia), **Sister Mariana Kusnieriková** (Advisor, Slovakia), **Sister Rita Khoury** (Advisor, Lebanon), **Sister Lisa Laguna** (Advisor, USA).

- Father General confirmed Sister **Bernardita Garcia Ortin** to serve another term as International Delegate to the Vincentian Marian Youth Association. We are grateful for her willingness to serve in this role and to accompany us on our journey.



- The International Council and Secretariat want to welcome the new French speaking volunteer, **Tony Barakat** who comes to us from Lebanon. Let us keep him in our prayers so that his mission might be a source of many blessings for our Association.

- On November 1-2 the volunteers participated in the second phase of **Missionary Formation for the VMY (Spain)**. During those days we were able to reflect on the importance of our missionary vocation. There was also time to share prayer together and all the participants were invited to give life to the words: *dream of something great and make a decision on behalf of Christ!*.

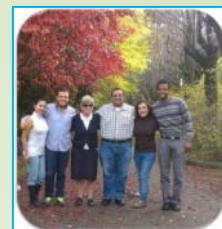
- On November 14-15-16, the Sub-director International, **Father Irving Amaro, CM** and the French speaking volunteer, **Tony Barakat**, participated in a European Encounter during which the participants examined ways to insert themselves into the midst of civic life in order to assist those who live on the fringes of society. This was an opportunity to establish some stronger networks and to become aware of some other methods of self-financing. It also provided the participants with an opportunity to examine some other methods of utilizing the social media.

- The International team wants to thank **Bienvenu Fouda (Cameroon)** for his three years of service and dedication to our Association as a volunteer. We pray that Mary, our Mother, might bless him as he takes his next step in his journey through life.



- On November 15, 2014, Yasmine Cajuste (International President) and Reginald Caen were married. We want to congratulate them and pray that the Lord will fill them with countless blessings as they begin this new stage of their life together ... may they continue "to cast out to the distant shores".

- On November 21-22-23 the members of the International Secretariat had a planning and integration meeting in Los Almendros (on the outskirts of Madrid). We want to thank the members of the VMY in that area for sharing their accommodations and their time with us.



- On November 29-30 the members of the Preparatory Commission for the 2015 General Assembly met in Madrid in order to prepare for our gathering in Salamanca. We are thankful to all of those who are engaged in the on-going preparations for this important event of our Association.



To be part of this International Association is to give witness to countless other young men and women, especially those who have become discouraged and find it difficult to dream and to rejoice in the events of daily life.

Thank you for taking part in this journey, for contributing your testimonies to the Bulletin, testimonies that we have published in these one hundred issues ... Let us continue to proclaim our faith in Christ and let us do this with joy and with confidence and with the service in those many different places where God has placed us and where God continues to call us!

Thank you and let us continue to walk together as we develop our faith and proclaim that faith to others!!!

