

Pastoral Care of Vocations

Europe-Canada



Go and share the gift you have received!

Martillac, July 15-19 2015



MEETING for PASTORAL CARE OF VOCATIONS - MARTILLAC JULY 2015

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Sharing our Charism... Making our Family visible... These are phrases that have been heard in Holy Family meetings and gatherings for some time now. In Europe and in Canada, where not only Consecrated Life, but the Christian life in general seems to be increasingly on the margins of society, members of the PBN Family have been asking themselves and each other what can be done. The meeting that began in Martillac on the evening of July 15, bringing together representatives of all five Vocations from six European countries, was a further step in finding a response.

Hopes
for
the
Meeting

We want to experience our Family in the complete sense of the word – for some of us, it is the first time to be in a gathering with all five Vocations present

We are hoping to enthuse each other to carry things forward – to go home with something good and encouraging to share among ourselves and with others

We would like to continue to deepen our Charism, and in the area of Pastoral care of Vocations to see how to transmit it to others through our various fields of action

We feel a need to gain clarity regarding Pastoral Care of Vocations – how can we go about putting it into practice? We would also like to reflect with the different Groups to see how they want to go about this-

Some Background information

In 2013 there was an Intervocational Meeting in Martillac in order to reflect on how to move pastoral care forward in Europe/Canada. When a follow-up meeting of “Searchers” proposed for July 2015 turned out to be impracticable, a decision was taken to organize instead a 2nd Intervocational Meeting with the aim of raising awareness in the participants and spurring them on to action in view of the urgency of living and transmitting the Gift which we have received in the Holy Family.

In their letter of invitation, the Team wrote:

We were happy to agree to this new proposal because we need to continue what has been begun even if this presupposes a difficult and complex challenge, especially in Europe and Canada. On other occasions we have taken part in activities which were organised and co-ordinated by this Team at an intervocational level. We are aware that this is a proposal of the Institute but we want to share it and move it forward, if possible, with your participation and collaboration.

If we want to be faithful to the Gift which we have received – which it is not just for us but for everybody – we do not think that we can give up or abandon what we have begun because of these difficulties. Living and transmitting this Gift is a common responsibility which we must take on consciously for the good of the Family: *“Each member and each Vocation is responsible for the whole and for making our Charism known and visible, witnessing to hope and joy in our world.”* (Declaration of the Congress of the Family, 2012)



The European-Canadian context urges us to share our charism

Objectives:

- To evaluate what we have done since 2013
- To have some time to reflect on the way we live the Gift (the Charism).
- To become aware of our responsibility as members of the Family.
- To become sensitive to, and spur ourselves on with regard to the urgency of passing on our Charism.

July 16

The theme of the **morning prayer** was "looking back in order to move forward" – beginning with a song asking "Who?" accompanied by moving images : **who is** ... teaching someone to be sincere – welcoming someone into our home - surrounding us with patience – keeping hope intact - venturing into the most unsafe neighbourhood ?

Then the story of Latif – a beggar who became an adviser to the King, but who took time every day to re-visit his old tunic, his walking stick, and his plate – all he had when he moved to the luxury of the palace – because he did not want to forget "**Who I am and where I come from**".

And Jesus – who came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up... and they were amazed... and said, "Is not this Joseph's son...?"

OPENING ADDRESS

Sr. Ana María ALCALDE began by welcoming all to this meeting, and expressing her gratitude to each one for having accepted the invitation...

A FAMILY Meeting:

**8 Lay Associates; 1 Priest Associate; 4 Consecrated Seculars;
4 Contemplatives, 21 Apostolics**



Here we share some of the key passages of Ana María's address:

We hope that, during these days, we will have an experience of being Family and rekindle together the Gift we have been given. We are here in the very place of our origins beneath the gaze of Our Lady of All Graces, the Founder and the first members of our Family. The setting itself is on our side.

I want to comment on the fourth of our objectives: *To become sensitive to, and spur ourselves on with regard to the urgency of passing on our Charism.*

I think, at some time or other, we will all have had the experience of moving from being spectators to playing a leading role. When we take this leap, everything changes. We move from theorizing to being involved because something affects us directly. Something similar can happen to us with the Charism. I can stay at a safe distance where I am neither too far away nor very involved – accepting suggestions without going into them deeply; I choose whatever I find interesting, thought-provoking or practical... This stance is not enough, nor it is satisfying, because the Charism is our specific way of living the Gospel; it is the Good News that changes and transforms our lives and gives meaning to our Mission in the world by determining our identity as individuals and as a Family.

With regard to the *Holy Family* Charism, I can ask myself from the very beginning, “Am I personally affected by the Charism? Do I feel responsible for this Gift?” At this point we can ask ourselves if our Charism – our vocation – is just one more thing among the many which occupy us on a daily basis or if it is our point of reference which colours and gives meaning to everything.

What kind of desire do we have to share the Gift of the Charism? It does not belong to us alone. We must always remember that the Charism is a gift to be shared with others.

This does not mean that we have to proselytise. We who have the grace of being called to live this gift and share it must do this, above all, by “infecting” others with it through the quality of our lives, presence and action wherever we are. We must be “embers” which radiate their fire and warmth around them from underneath the ashes.

It is not a question of numbers. What matters is that the lives of those who are here and of those who will come in the future are as consistent as possible with who we say we are, i.e. with the gospel values that inspire our spirituality as we contemplate the Holy Family – the lovely image of the Trinity – and the first Christian communities. “Being and creating Family” as we understand it today – embracing the whole of creation – is inescapable when we take on the Mission we have received and listen to the cries of Humanity and of the Planet.

Revitalization will result from a sense of belonging, from the personal and collective owning of the Gift, the common call to be ONE “Family” which embraces all of creation. Vitality will also result from sharing the Gift with others who feel called.

If we live what we are with passion, we will be able to transmit and spread the Gift we have received.

It is not our task to create the Family of God. God will do that. It is our responsibility to make it visible.



Rosi García, one of the four members of the PCV Team facilitating the meeting gave the group a few minutes to become aware of what touched and moved them in what they had just heard. Some of the comments that emerged from the sharing :

- ☉ We in the Holy Family must not forget our origins
- ☉ From what Ana María said, about not proselytising, but "infecting" others – I wonder if we have the "virus" that can infect others...?
- ☉ Often, where we are, it may be important to be less occupied with what we transmit as to be ready to receive, to have open ears, to listen to what is said and lived around us, to the expectations of the people
- ☉ We need in-depth personal work: the movement and the urgency to transmit has to come from within so that we turn from being spectators to actors.
- ☉ Here, today, we are a visible expression of the Founder's dream. Ana María's reflection is calling us to action so as to share that dream with others.

MAKING CONTACT WITH OUR OWN REALITY

Geni Dos Santos led the group to the next step in the process.

A slideshow portrayed some of the beautiful architecture and historical buildings of Europe – and some sad images of the suffering and need, the poverty and unrest, that is also a feature of European life.



Rosi García

Geni Dos Santos

Some brief but challenging facts shared by **Lorette Laffargue**:

Europe is made up of 50 countries, of which only 28 belong to the European Union.

Cyprus and Albania are culturally, but not officially, part of Europe, while Turkey leans much more towards the Near East. Only half of Russia belongs to Europe.

Europe is much more vast and varied than we imagine – we hear of so many countries, and think of them as so distant from us that they do not concern us,

When we in the Holy Family think of Europe, what are we aware of – only those countries where the Holy Family is present?



Geni recalled the fact that the Team had sent out some preparatory questions for reflection before the meeting:

- ? ***What features do I see in my context that are in line with God's dream?***
- ? ***What features are in contradiction to it?***

Having shared the fruits of this reflection in linguistic groups, the findings were written as briefly as possible on "Post-It" notes, in two colours, which were then fixed to the map of Europe, denoting the aspects that are in line with God's dream and those that contradict it.

A degree of convergence could be seen, but there was also a good deal of variety in the responses.

- ✓ Reaching out, increasing solidarity, voluntary work, mobilising for important causes
 - ✓ The benefits of (relative) economic prosperity, such as health care, education, modern technology
 - ✓ Respect, acceptance of diversity, relationships with people of different languages and socio-economic ideologies
 - ✓ Hearts open to emerging problems, new peripheries, welcoming, listening
 - ✓ Faith, searching for God, for spirituality
 - ✓ Desire for peace, sense of harmony with creation, care of the planet
 - ✓ Commitment of Christian communities in various activities
 - ✓ Relationships and communion within the PBN Family
-
- x Money, profit comes first
 - x Consumerism, greed, corruption
 - x Terrorism, violence, drugs, trafficking, aggression
 - x Discrimination, rejection of difference, lack of respect
 - x "Using" the Church – benefitting without any commitment
 - x Abuse of women and migrants
 - x Economic insecurity, unemployment, homelessness,
 - x Hopelessness, suicide, landmarks disappearing, loneliness
 - x Ourselves – lack of authenticity, Individualism, fear of others, self-sufficiency, inability to accept limitations



Inter-European Groups:

Geni introduced the next step in the process by pointing out that the participants would now be challenged with another European reality – different languages! She encouraged the groups to listen with eyes and hearts as well as ears, for this was an opportunity to read the "non-verbals" and to communicate beyond words.



What are the areas in which I feel it is most urgent to share our Charism?

The results of the work on the above question were also written on "post-it" stickers, and grouped on the board by Adela, according to theme.

- ♣ **We need to work as a Family** to struggle against everything that can disrupt communion, living inclusion, respect for the dignity and diversity of each person; be attentive to the quality of all our relationships.
- ♣ Live in relationship with **creation**: respect and care for the earth
- ♣ We have come a long way, but there is still much to be done to achieve **equality of vocations** in our Family and develop the awareness of our responsibility for the WHOLE.
- ♣ Attention and involvement in the difficulties and **issues in our context** e.g. immigrants, homeless; struggle against the fear in us – risk reaching out.
- ♣ Speak about God to **the young** despite the challenges of being able to communicate..

With the comment that our field of action is where God's dream is not being lived, all the stickers were put on the map of Europe...

The final Session of the day centred on the **Declaration** drawn up at the PCV meeting in 2013:



Declaration

PASTORAL CARE OF VOCATIONS EUROPE/ CANADA

Martillac 2-5 April 2013

“Share and make our Charism known”

We, the 33 members of the Family gathered in Martillac, feel called to renew our commitment to Pastoral Care of Vocations from our Charism and the awareness that all is Sacred, One, Interrelated and Diverse.

We desire a pastoral care of vocations that:

- Is open to all people, giving particular attention to the young who seek for meaning in their lives.
- Involves us and calls each member of the Family to be responsible for living and transmitting what we are
- Is characterised by the quality of our presence and our relationships (respect, welcome, listening....)
- Facilitates the realisation of God’s dream for each person and all creation
- Permits us to feel we are instruments because we acknowledge that the Spirit goes before us, is active in each person and leads each one to fullness of life.

We see the need to take the following steps:

- ✓ Make decisions on how to put into practice the proposals of this meeting in the different units and involving all the vocations. Specify the actions that we can carry out
- ✓ As a Family find ways of making our Charism known so as to be more visible in our contexts
- ✓ Transmit in our respective countries the results of this Meeting

We wish to communicate to the leaders and members of the Holy Family in Europe and Canada the views of this group, so that we may continue journeying together, seeking new paths and applying the above steps in the different countries. Thus we will continue to give life to our Charism, following the signs of our times.



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Having had time to read the Declaration, and to reflect on what has been lived since 2013 in this domain, each "country group" chose what would be brought to the assembly. A session followed for sharing of experiences, clarification and comments.

Various creative initiatives were reported:

- The Project that had been born in Martillac for the "Graves" area – where representatives of all five vocations had come together to inform people of Holy Family Charism and spirituality in successive meetings; a similar effort had taken place in St. Mandé
- Members of the contemplative community at La Solitude, Martillac had met with some groups to pray with and for them
- In Bordeaux, the Holy Family had taken part in an event to commemorate three Founders from the city: Chaminade, Marie- Thérèse de Lamourous, and Pierre Bienvenu Noailles
- Almost everywhere, there had been intervocational initiatives – for meetings, for a round table discussion (in Marseilles); in Spain an intervocational Team was set up for Pastoral care of vocations – extensive work is being done in the area of youth work..
- In Ireland, prayer cards with a brief introduction to the Family had been composed, printed and distributed in parishes, at meetings etc..

It is not possible here to convey all the impressive activities and initiatives that have been undertaken in response to the Declaration. These efforts have contributed to greater awareness of the PBN Family, increased "visibility" in the various contexts and a heightened sense of responsibility on the part of all the Vocations towards the whole Family.

This very full and very enriching day ended with the Eucharist, concelebrated by Fr. Louis Despeaux (Priest Associate) and Fr. Andrea La Regina (Rome), who is known to all at the Generalate, where he celebrates Mass for the community.





July 17

Be a FIRE that kindles other Fires



This was the theme of the day. To begin, Lorette guided the group into a deep prayer-reflection based on the story of Moses and the Burning Bush. (Shared in three languages on the Holy Family Website through the following link ...saintefamillebordeaux.org/prayer-and-reflection)

Adela: A fire that cannot be extinguished: this is what Moses experienced and lived; the fire, the dynamism of our charism burns within us through the very fact that we are **members**.

What does it mean to be a member?

A Member is a person who becomes part of a group because (S)he:

- feels in agreement with its values, customs and common interests
- understands the mission and the objectives of the group
- knows that (s)he is accepted, welcomed, valued and wanted by the group
- commits (her)himself freely and responsibly
- feels motivated to play an active role:
 - Sharing her/his gifts and limitations, ideas, feeling and vulnerability
 - Gives support
 - (S)he is not afraid to say (s)he belongs to the group
 - If necessary, (s)he is able to defend it

The kinds of commitment can vary:

Supporters: people who are not members of the association but who collaborate in its activities and are interested in its objectives.

Collaborators: people who give support, financial or otherwise, without playing any part in the development of the association.

Active Members: people who are involved in activities as well as in the maintenance and development of the association.

For us in the Holy Family

“Being a MEMBER” means taking seriously God’s call to live the mission and Charism of the Family of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles.

At the last Congress of the Family,

*“We hear the call to a new and deeper understanding of our identity as **ONE FAMILY**. This requires of us a radical change of mindset. **Each member** and **each vocation is responsible for the whole**, and for making our Charism known and visible, witnessing to hope and joy in our world” (Declaration of the 4th Congress of the Family).*



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When we take up our responsibility as members we live our mission *from within* at all times. We know that what we are and what we do are influenced by our mission.

It gives us an identity in society even though we do not publicize it.

The following questions were given for personal reflection - questions that can usefully challenge each one of us :

♣ *WHAT KIND OF MEMBER AM I?*

How would I define myself?

♣ *WHAT DO I COMMUNICATE, WHAT DO I PROCLAIM?*

Where do I feel most authentic, happy ...

Energies in my life; positive forces that get me moving...

♣ *What do I communicate/proclaim by my gestures, words, attitudes...?*

Focusing on myself as a MEMBER and the IMPACT on others

Points emerging from group work:

How do we **nourish** the gift received?

- ⊕ Through our prayer and personal relationship with God
- ⊕ The Eucharist, the Word of God
- ⊕ Through the Eucharistic miracle, a unique gift to the Family; Adoration
- ⊕ Through our sense of belonging to a universal Family : Family relationships
- ⊕ Meetings; interacting, working with the other Holy Family vocations
- ⊕ Community life, fraternal life, group life
- ⊕ Through the Founder's words, his writings, his life.
- ⊕ Reflection on the charism, and all official Holy Family documents
- ⊕ Let life circulate in the Family through information/communication
- ⊕ By putting our gifts at the service of the Family – different commissions, vocational meetings, etc.
- ⊕ By "going daily to Nazareth"

Noteworthy in this sharing were the aspects that were constants (underlined) named by most, if not all of the groups.

Ana María, however, pointed out that we nourish the Charism by **living the Spirit of God Alone as it was lived by Jesus Mary and Joseph**, "with zeal and detachment bordering on heroism".



How do we **share** the gift?

- ☉ By proclamation and witnessing – telling the story of the Charism
- ☉ Faith and action
- ☉ Authenticity of life
- ☉ Availability for service, welcoming, listening
- ☉ Simple relationships: Healing in all milieux; forgiveness, reconciliation, saying no to what disrupts communion
- ☉ Celebrating important Family events in wider community
- ☉ Attention to needs of others, respecting the dignity of each one.
- ☉ Build up Family spirit
- ☉ Through all the various activities we are involved in from day to day.
- ☉ Be positive and hopeful, avoid the negative, e.g. " we are dying out... no vocations", etc. It is important to keep the Spirit alive, and our awareness of belonging to the whole Family of P.B.N.

Beginning the afternoon session, **Lorette** evoked the symbol of the Tree, used with such effect by the Founder to present the richness the diversity, and the depth of the gift received by the Holy Family.

The tree which the Founder glimpsed in his vision has roots which are strong and very deep – it has withstood every storm for almost 200 years. What elements made up that fertile soil in which the Holy Family tree was planted? A great deal of love and fidelity have been its sun, its water.. This is why it is still alive today. But if we neglect to take care of it, or forget to nourish the roots, the whole tree will be weakened. Let us not allow the gift we have received to wither and die!

The process followed for the rest of the afternoon:

♣**Stage I: 10 minutes personal work**

Let the **Roots that you consider essential to your life as a Member of the Holy Family** surface in you. Make a note of what comes to mind spontaneously

♣**Stage II: SHARE what you have noted.** No comments are made at this point. It is a time of listening.

Third Stage: As a Group, LOOK FOR THE ROOTS THAT GIVE US OUR IDENTITY

Write down your findings for the Assembly





The work on this theme lasted the rest of the afternoon: the Assembly was rich, and remarkable in the elements that were constants – chosen by each of the seven language groups.

It emerged during the exchanges and the facilitation, that certain elements which had surfaced, though essential to Holy Family life, could be considered part of the **tradition** that nourishes our identity; others were **means or attitudes**, rather than fundamental "**roots**".

Ultimately, the latter were identified as follows:

"ROOTS"

- The Family (Association) founded by Pierre Bienvenu Noailles
- The Spirit of God Alone, as lived by Jesus, Mary and Joseph
- The first Christian communities
- The Holy Family of Nazareth, image of the Trinity and Church in embryo

TRUNK (Tradition)

- The life of Pierre Bievenu Noailles and the "First Mothers"
- Holy Family history- from the foundation to modern times
- The story of the various foundations
- The Eucharistic Miracle
- The Scripture texts chosen for us by the Founder
- The Founder's Dream
- Martillac

FRUITS (Attitudes)

- Communion, unity
- Holy Family way of living the Gospel
- Apostolic Zeal
- Mercy
- Gentleness
- Fidelity
- Service
- Trust in Providence
- Love of nature

Ana María: *In the Family of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles, there are strong interconnections – a thread running through the whole of the Charism : the dimension of **God as Family** , the **Family of Nazareth**, the **Church as Family**. The image, the imperative we need to live and bear witness to in a variety of cultures, is that of **being Family**, and playing our part in **creating the Family of God**.*



July 18

The experience of Moses (Ex 3: 6-12, 4: 10-18) was once more central to the Morning Prayer, led by Lorette. : God has heard the cry of the people, and will use Moses to deliver them : Go, God says. I am sending you to Pharaoh – I will be with you ...

*You need a leader to guide your people; You choose an old man.
And Moses steps forward.*

You need a rock to be the foundation for the building; You choose a renegade. And Peter steps forward.

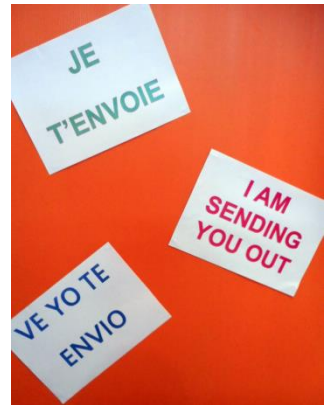
You need a face to express your love to this world; you choose a prostitute: Mary Magdalene.

You need a witness to cry out your message; you choose a persecutor, and Paul of Tarsus steps forward.

Today you still need prophets to gather your people.

Is it possible that you are choosing me?

But even if I tremble, and even if I stutter, how can I not step forward?



The task for the morning : further deepening of the 4 "roots" of our Charism. Each of the four main language-groups drew one by lot, and worked on the following questions.

- **What content do we give to the roots?**
- **How can we express them today?**

The Family

Content : Five vocations, open to all, in every continent, with the following characteristics –

- Ⓢ Universal, Relational, Interconnected
- Ⓢ Where all members are equal, and live in complementarity
- Ⓢ With a strong sense of the common mission that each one feels responsible to carry forward .
- Ⓢ With the need to know one another better

Expression for today:

- Ⓢ In whatever situation we find ourselves, according to our specific vocation
- Ⓢ In our families, among the sick, in our Parishes and communities
- Ⓢ In our Group
- Ⓢ Through prayer, and service that is loving, discreet, silent and gratuitous, in communion with the P.B.N. Family



The spirit of God Alone, lived like Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Content:

Response to the presence of God in us and to God's loving design for everyone

Expression for Today

- ☉ The spirit lived by Jesus, Mary and Joseph of Nazareth
- ☉ Availability
- ☉ Attitude of prayer, of faith, of listening and discernment
- ☉ Choice to live the Gospel
- ☉ Trust, abandonment, docility to God-in-us

First Christian Communities

Content

- ☉ God is the centre
- ☉ One in spirit, mind and heart
- ☉ Shared all in common
- ☉ Concerned for the needs of others
- ☉ Lives that were simple and ordinary

Expression for today

- ☉ Commitment to prayer and the Eucharist
- ☉ Witness, lead by example, imitate
- ☉ Be inviting and welcoming
- ☉ Helping people to develop/understand a personal relationship with God

To live like this In today's world, we need to face the challenge of opposition



***Cross of God Alone,
Martillac***

Holy Family of Nazareth, image of the Trinity

Content

- ☉ Contemplation of the Holy Family of Nazareth
- ☉ One and diverse
- ☉ Communion
- ☉ The plan of God

Expression for Today

Living Holy Family values: Communion, the primacy of God, availability, inter-relational, presence, welcome, service to others.



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Stimulated by a comment from Adela Vanaclocha that there are many concepts that describe the Church of today, whereas the lives of the first Christian communities were based on their **experience** of the Spirit moving and acting in and through them, the question arose:

Where and how can people live such experiences today?

Various ideas and experiences were shared, and the conversation began to focus on how to touch the lives of young people:

- We need to go where the young people are. They are searching. They do not expect us to be able always to enter their world – we need to be who we are, take interest in them, be prepared to listen, to spend a good deal of time...
- It is important that the young are helped to reflect on their lives: they also have values, and it is possible to get Holy Family values across to them.

The topic of family was also raised :

The Scriptures speak of the 1st Christian Communities as being united in heart and soul, living in unity – and this attracted others; but what does "Being Family", being community, mean in today's situation? What does "family" say to people today, when the whole idea, the whole reality, is in question and apparently under threat?

In the afternoon session, led by Geni Dos Santos, the participants were presented with further questions for group work and sharing in the assembly :

Aware of what the present-day context requires of us and desiring to live our Holy Family common mission fully – the Mission of communion...

- ? **What changes, what kinds of "going forth" what actions are called for if we are to share the Gift we have received?**
- ? **What resources can we count on?**
- ? **What do we have to face and overcome in order to be able to share our God-given gift?**



Adela Vanaclocha Lorette Laffargue



**Changes
and
Actions**

**...to share
the Gift**

Take up the Declaration of 2013 again, and implement it.

Change the way we understand the word vocation, and Pastoral care of Vocations : we need to overcome the idea that this refers only to priestly or religious vocation, that it is much broader than that

Members of the Family to continue to work together as at present; to focus on specific needs; live and work together in our everyday contexts; be open to encourage joint projects and other initiatives

Improve and increase the communication between us

Be on the watch for everything that creates bonds of unity

Begin from our network of relationships Collaborate with others who are working along the same lines. With other organizations, take a stand to give voice to the voiceless, even in political matters.

Ask ourselves whether the movements we belong to, or want to participate in, promote communion

Organize and promote meetings which make known the different vocations.

Keep in mind the upcoming bicentenary of our Foundation

Live out of the conviction that we have received a gift for the others, the conviction that we are all responsible for all the vocations, that we are all pcv workers. Make known the Gift through everyday circumstances,

Be enthusiastic, and share it in our groups and communities

Resources

Experience. Hospitality and prayer

Persons; spaces to meet one another and other organizations. A wealth of people of all the vocations who are living this gift. Different Groups in the Family: PCV Teams, Leadership Teams, information teams

Social networking, blog, Facebook, personal communications, meetings, accompaniment processes.

**Obstacles
we
face...**

Narrow notions of vocation. Misunderstanding of the purpose of the PCV teams and consequent rejection. Negative attitudes, narrow-mindedness, prejudice, mistrust, discouragement, rivalry and competition.

Fear: we "don't know how to.... "

Failure to value our gift sufficiently to present it to others; lack of courage, enthusiasm and determination.



July 19

"Laudato Sii"

Today, the last day of the meeting, began and ended outdoors: Morning Prayer in the "Contemplatives Garden" just outside the Hall; the Closing Eucharist on the Island: an opportunity to connect with the Good Father's desire to make of La Solitude a place of beauty and peace, and also with Pope Francis' important Encyclical.



Prayer in the Contemplatives' garden

How do we want to communicate what we have lived in this Meeting? By what means?

This was the question that occupied the participants as the morning's work began.

After a few minutes in a "buzz session" in small groups, two suggestions were brought forward:

- ? A Letter
- ? A Declaration

The merits and demerits of both suggestions was discussed, and finally, it was decided that a **letter** best suited the needs at present – the following were some of the reasons given:

- > A letter is more personal, gives more impetus, can animate
- > We still need to deepen and implement fully the last declaration, so a letter would be better
- > A letter which shares the experience could encourage the whole Family to go through the same process..

It was pointed out that the Report of the Meeting, which will be sent to the whole Family, would give an outline of the process followed, and the questions raised at the meeting. It would therefore not be necessary to include these details in a letter.

Ana María remarked that not all the countries represented at this meeting are at the same point with regard to intervocational collaboration, implementation of the 2013 Declaration, etc., so it would not be advisable to draw up a uniform process: each group, each Unit, would need to start from where they are.



What's in a Name?

Time was given for a drafting committee to work on the letter. In the meantime, the assembly took up the subject of the name "**Pastoral Care of Vocations**". Many feel that this name could give the wrong impression – it could be understood in a very narrow sense.

The dialogue explored other concepts, other suggestions- there was a desire to express something of the reality of accompanying people (not just the young) who are searching, who want to make a choice in life, who are on a spiritual journey...

Seeing the difficulty of finding another name which adequately expressed the reality, someone suggested that the difficulty may be more local than general. It would therefore be the important responsibility of those working in this domain to make sure that people understand the *raison d'être* of the Team, to avoid confusion and misunderstanding

The final result: to leave the name as it stands!

Ana María began the afternoon Session with a brief outline of the **genesis of the PCV Team for Europe and Canada.**

This had been born at the end of the Institute's Initial Formation Session in 2012. A sense of concern and urgency had been felt by the representatives from Europe and Canada, who come from societies that have become secularized and largely post-Christian. In spite of this, there is evidence of a thirst for spirituality and a search for meaning... Convinced that our Charism has something to contribute in this situation, and encouraged by the General Leadership Team, the Sisters decided to form a Team that would explore ways of transforming PCV so that some of these needs could be addressed.

The 2013 Meeting was attended by members of all five vocations. It drew up the Declaration which has been referred to so often during this meeting. However, it should be noted that the organizing Team was made up only of members of the Apostolic group. Its mandate finishes with this meeting – if we want to move forward with this initiative, we will need to consult the leaders of the different vocations in Europe and Canada, to name members from each vocation, for **it can no longer be the responsibility of the Religious institute alone.** And from the results, it would seem that this is the way ahead.

After dialogue, the proposal was made that there should be a 4-day meeting every two years – i.e., the next one could be scheduled for 2017.

Draft letter

Having had time to hear the contents of the letter, the group suggested certain modifications: to make the language a little more impassioned, to make it clear that the support and encouragement of the various Leadership Teams – of all vocations – was expected, etc. The drafting committee was entrusted with the task of inserting the amendments into a final draft. The assembly agreed that the letter and the Report should go out at the beginning of September, when the dispersal of the summer would be over..



There remained only the "thank you"s to all involved in the success of the meeting, delivered by one of the participants, to the Martillac community, the Organizing Team, the Translators, the General Leadership Team and all who had accepted the invitation, and had given themselves fully in and through the process.

Closing words from Ana María

Our deep appreciation goes to the members of the Vocation Team Europe- Canada for having taken on the responsibility for the task entrusted to them, and for carrying it through right up to the present.

Thank you to all those who have facilitated our participation in this meeting: the two communities of La Solitude, the workers, the translators ... thank you to each one of you for your valuable participation. Thank you all those who have accompanied us with their prayers and expressions of support.



Thanks to Jean-Luis (priest Associate), the leaders of the Lay Associates, the Secular Institute and the Leadership Teams of the Religious Institute, for having accepted the invitation and sending members of their Teams to this Meeting. .

The journey up to now has been important; and at this point, we are not "closing" anything –on the contrary, we are beginning a new phase .

We have got in touch with our "roots"; now we spread out the "branches". Let us leave behind our inertia, our discouragement, our fears... Let us go out to our places of mission, to our groups, to our everyday life with the awareness that we are "sent" to proclaim Good News: we all belong to God's Family.

Strengthened by what we have experienced these days, we leave here enriched, convinced and motivated to offer to others the Gift that we have received as Family. Together we have rekindled the "fire" and now we are more determined to share it, by lighting other fires.

Whatever point each one of us has reached, let us welcome the words of our Founder who today tells us once more to "Go Forward"!



At the Mass on the Island

We offer the fruits received...





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