

BULLETIN

INTERNATIONAL VINCENTIAN MARIAN YOUTH



Give something of yourself as did Mary!

INTRODUCTION...



"...Abandon yourself to Divine Providence and you will understand what I am saying!"

Cleber Oliveira
International Volunteer VMY

Dear friends of the VMY Association,

May the peace of Christ be with all of you!

Normally in this space one finds a reflection but at this time I want to share with you my personal testimony. I am very happy to be able to share with you in this Bulletin my personal experience as a member of the International Team of the VMY. I begin by giving thanks to God, to the International Team, to the members of the Vincentian Family, and most especially, to each and every young Vincentian ... may the Lord, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, grant each of you many blessings! I have had the wonderful opportunity of participating in this Association since 1998, in other words, for half my life I have been a member of the VMY. I feel rooted in this Association by something unexplainable, but then, what explanation is there for the reality of love.

To be an international volunteer is a mystery. Indeed many factors came together in order for this to happen. The mystery, however, is God who was revealed in the Son. Yes, it was God who was the origin of all this but I would also add here the following: love for the Association, self-surrender, the dynamic of giving-receiving that results from this experience which ultimately is not simply another experience as a volunteer, but is a mission.

During the past three years I have lived with the other members of the International Community of the VMY in Madrid (Spain). There I shared my life and experiences with

other members who, like myself, were studying and serving in the Secretariat. There we engaged in many different services that ranged from cleaning the house to representing the Secretariat in different forums. Each member had specific tasks. I was responsible for maintaining communication with those countries that speak Portuguese. At the same time I was responsible for helping groups in the area of formation, translating documents from Spanish into Portuguese. I was also web masters and therefore responsible for the production and editing of texts, photos, and videos, etc. Living here in Spain I was able to participate in the life and the activities of the JMV and in various apostolic activities on behalf of those persons who are poor.

The ministry at the International Secretariat has also reaffirmed for me the fact that the VMY is united as an Association. Indeed the international dimension and our unity as an Association is strengthened by the new technology and the various international gatherings. The joy and enthusiasm and involvement of the young men and women is very similar in all the different groups ... what changes is the situation in which these young people find themselves.

Time does not stand still and so my experience in the Secretariat will come to an end this summer. As I reflect on the time that I have spend here I see that there were many good days. There were also some small storms during which time the rains fell and fertilized the soil... the seeds took root and produced fruit. I now take with me some

wonderful experiences that I have had here, friendships that God has allowed me to establish, memories of people and places where I was able to share my life as a Christian. Back in Brazil I will continue to live as a member of the Vincentian Family and will be involved as a lay advisor of the VMY in my country.

To those who might be a little shy, I want to assure you that there is no secret to service; fear is cast aside as one confronts problems and difficulties in a direct manner. Abandon yourself to Divine Providence and you will understand what I am saying! Do I realize that saying this is much easier than doing it... but then, who says that life is easy? We need no other example than that of Jesus who fulfilled the mission that was entrusted to him by the Father. I believe that in prayer every young person has to discern God's plan. Then as we actualize this plan we will discover ways to serve other young people and the poor.

In Spain I have had the opportunity to participate in an active manner in three groups of the VMY and I see this as a graced experience. I simply want to thank all of you for the many blessings that you have given me. I ask your forgiveness for my limitations and finally, I ask for your prayers and assure you of mine. I also want to encourage you to participate in the gathering in **Belo Horizonte** and later in the gathering in **Rio de Janeiro** which will take place in **July 2013**.

I will see you there!

OCEANIA...

Solomon Islands: The VMY on the Solomon Islands is working to establish (by 2014) the Association there in a proper manner, that is, to elect lay leaders, to clarify the nature, the identity, membership, and the governance of the Association and to do this in accord with the International Statutes. Thus they will begin by writing national statutes. They are also using the VMY's book of prayer.

ASIA...

Vietnam: Correction: In the previous bulletin we published the fact that the VMY was celebrating its 10th anniversary when in reality they are celebrating their 80th anniversary!



AFRICA...

Kenya: The VMY continues its project that is focused on a struggle against fleas (literally, jiggers, a type of mite). Recently, Father Gregory began to work with the group in Kitale. Despite the difficulty of displacement of individuals he has been able to begin a process of formation with the members. As a result of their activities, their work and their support of the people, the group has received from the bishop of Kitale an acre of land on which they can plant vegetables in order to obtain an income that will allow them to serve the poor in this area where hunger is a serious problem.



Nigeria: The provisional National Council is working with the groups so that they can participate in the next National Meeting that will take place in August, 2012. One of their projects for the future is elaborating a national manual for prayer.

Algeria: The VMY in Algeria organized a formation session that dealt with the Marian consecration. This took place from March 25-28 in Argel, the the Provincial house of the Missionaries of the Congregation. The theme of the session was: Give something of yourself as did Mary!,

With the participation of twenty youth and leaders.

Cameroon: The National Council of the VMY in Cameroon met in the western part of the country in April, 2012, to reflect about various points relating to the life of the Association, among others, the fund raising campaign. The national advisors have visited the groups in order to encourage their participation in the National Assembly which will take place in Buea from July 17-24, 2012.



Ivory Coast: The young men and women are working together in order to coordinate their activities on a national level. Since January they have been publishing a Bulletin (every two weeks) that has strengthened the formation dimension of the groups and has also made the Association known to more people. We pray that they might continue with this dynamism and thus attain their objectives.

The Republic of Central Africa: For the past two years Father André Béranger Ebode, CM, the advisor of the Association, has been working with young men and women in order to give new life to the VMY in this country. There are now five groups that are functioning and some groups that are still confronting problems with regard to communication, organization, etc. The Association is functioning with a provisional National Council and will continue to do so until such time as they feel prepared to elect a permanent council.

Togo: The Association in Lome is preparing for their traditional gathering in the summer which this year will take place from July 24-30 in the parish of Holy Family (Hanuyigba Douga in Kpalimé). They are expecting the participation of about one hundred young men and women. The young man, Tino, has requested some materials from the International Secretariat and the group is also being supported by the collaboration of the members of the Association from the Ivory Coast who are helping them elaborate the program for this event.

We also want to express our desires and offer our prayers so that all the activities that are planned for the summer might be successfully accomplished and be beneficial to all involved.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL! and remember, the holidays are not moments of absence of God!

SERVICE ON BEHALF OF THE POOR...

Well now, Sisters, I implore God, the Source of charity, to grant you the grace to learn how to serve the sick poor corporally and spiritually in His Spirit, in perfect imitation of the Spirit of His Son, and also to bless you. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen (CCD:IX:51).

A week later he once again spoke about serving the poor: *We have a great Master who has taught us the meaning of serving the poor. In other words we are talking about corporal and spiritual service, integral service because in each person God is present and in every person we see the face of Jesus Christ.*

As Vincent reveals to us in his conference of 1653, service is not only corporal but also spiritual.

Integral service reveals our evolution as persons. Our society is sensitive to the dignity of persons, to their inalienable rights that are recognized by all governments. It is important, however, that the poor themselves becomes protagonists of their own promotion.

What are the causes of poverty? Without a doubt we can point to unjust social structures. Yet it is in the midst of these structures of injustice that we must serve. At the same time our service involves

establishing closer relationships with those who are poor and accompanying them in the suffering.

We have specific challenges:

To evangelize young people through the VMY. The members of the VMY have an experience of God as a result of their service/evangelization of those persons who are poor. As members of the VMY we are committed to the integral promotion of the human person, a promotion that enables us to see Christ in the poor and the poor in Christ.

This mission is also the mission of the Church of which we are members. This means that we are willing to do that which Christ did while he was on earth. And what did he do? He loved! He loved unconditionally. Are you willing to make a contribution to the fulfillment of this mission? We have been called to become involved in this mission in a special way and there is no doubt that many young people can collaborate in this effort. Invite your friends and speak with them about the joy that results from serving the neighbor. Indeed, our service consists of caring for those persons who need us here and now and therefore there is no need to go searching for people who live far away or on other continents.



Sister Bernardita García, DC
International Delegate VMY

Self-Financing in the VMY...

WHEN THE CREATIVITY IS PUT TO THE TEST...



Thank you



The self-financing campaign of the International VMY has taken off the ground and the first miles have been traveled but we are nonetheless aware of the fact that there are still many more miles to travel.

We know that many countries are developing specific activities for this campaign. Such is the case in **Spain** where they have produced and are selling different items with the logo of the VMY. Also in **Brazil** the former members of the VMY have been called to come together in November 2012 where specific actions will

be decided with regard to this matter. In **Portugal**, the members are involved in an evangelization process in which they are using the Missionary Rosary and selling these rosaries.

In up-coming editions of this bulletin we will present other activities and ideas that are being utilized by the VMY in different countries. In the meantime, we thank everyone for their involvement in this project and also pray that we might all continue to remain united in these different efforts.

Witness: VMY in Spain...

MOZAMBIQUE AND BOLIVIA...

In Spain there has been a missionary witness in the VMY for the past eighty years. During this time we have participated in the "sending forth" of some of our members. Spain has two permanent communities in which we are involved: Mozambique and Bolivia.



Mozambique: in the city of Nacala and Nacuxa, even though the official language is Portuguese the people there speak Macúa. The lay missionaries offer services in various pastoral activities:

Education: reading and writing programs, coordination of the on-going formation of teachers in the Vincentian schools, coordination of other activities whose purpose is that of integral formation.

Social Action: accompaniment of victims of domestic violence and prison ministry.

Evangelization and parish ministry: youth ministry and collaboration in various parish programs.

Bolivia: There is a community in Cochabamba where individuals are working in the rural indigenous area.

They are coordinating the social ministry of the local church and also making a contribution to the on-going formation of the people. In the parish of San Pedro various projects are being promoted: in the Center of San Pedro, a program dealing with nutrition of children, in the Center Sigamos, a program for people with disabilities, prison ministry, programs of social action and women's promotion, there are also medical centers where people are cared for and the Association Sacabeña provides care for people with disabilities.

Evangelization: the community accompanies distinct groups in their process of on-going formation. This involves catechesis in the rural areas as well as the city, coordination of youth ministry and accompaniment of the Permanent Commission of the Parish Pastoral Council.

Vincentian Family: they support and are members of the Team of the Vincentian Family, the National Council of the VMY and accompany the groups of the VMY in Sacaba, etc.



VMY Spain

Council and Secretariat...

INTERNATIONAL...

- The Director General confirmed the following appointments: **María Jeannette Martínez Morales** (President, Chile), **Petra Hrib** (President, Slovenia), **Tomás Maro**, (President, Slovakia), **Shirley Klump** (President, United States), **Sister Sabina Guastadisegni, DC** (Advisor, Italy), **Sister María Josefa Pascual Zabalegui, DC** (Advisor, Bolivia), **Father Salvatore Fari, CM** (Advisor, Italy).
- The Council and the International Secretariat express their sincere appreciation to **Cleber Oliveira (Brazil)**, which ends this summer's three years of volunteering with the Association as a translator of Portuguese language, and webmaster, and **Jorge Salazar (Nicaragua)** for his service as volunteer Spanish-speaking countries, who for family reasons return to his country this month of July. May God sprinkle abundant blessings on them!
- On May 12th, Bienvenu and Celber participated in the final session of the missionary formation course in Spain during which time there was the celebration of the Eucharist in which Cleber Oliveria was sent forth to the **Vincentian Mission in Mozambique** (Africa).
- On May 26th the members of the Secretariat participated in a **Youth Gathering** that was organized by the VMY in Madrid.
- On June 3rd there was a **virtual meeting of the International Council** to deal with themes concerning the life of the Association on the international level: the European gathering, new volunteers for the Secretariat, the self-financing campaign. We continue to ask for your prayers so that all of our decisions might contribute to the further development of the VMY.
- From July 15 to August 15 the **VII Latin American Mission Encounter** will take place in Ecuador. This is an opportunity for the members of the VMY to renew the missionary dimension of their live. We ask for your prayers for this gathering and for the popular mission that will also take place there. Two members of the International Team, Argelys Vega and Sister Bernardita García, will participate in this gathering.
- On July 18, 2012, the **International Day of the VMY** we ask you to be attentive to the publication of the **President's Message** which will help us to reflect on the meaning of this day. At the same time, as stated on December 8, 2011, the President will also give us a report on the self-financing campaign.



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