

Your Associations of Catholic Action boast a long and fruitful history, written by courageous witnesses of Christ and of the Gospel.

The Church has recognized some of them as Blessed and Saints. Following in their footsteps, you are called today to renew your commitment to walking on the way of holiness, keeping up your intense life of prayer, encouraging and respecting personal ways of faith and making the most of the riches of each one, with the guidance of your priest-Assistants and those in charge who can teach ecclesial and social co-responsibility.

May your life be “transparent”, orientated by the Gospel and illumined by the encounter with Christ, loved and followed without fear.

Make your own and share the pastoral decisions of the dioceses and parishes, fostering opportunities for meeting and for sincere collaboration with the other members of the ecclesial community, creating relations of esteem and communion with priests for a lively ministerial and missionary community.

Cultivate authentic personal relations with everyone, starting with the family, and offer your readiness to participate at all the levels of social, cultural and political life, constantly aiming for the common good.

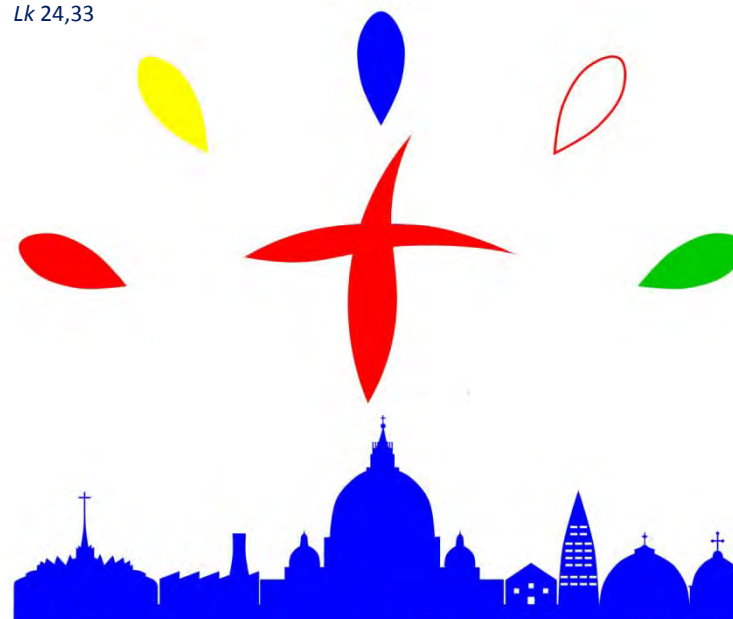
BENEDICT XVI, *Message on the occasion of the Sixth Ordinary Assembly of Catholic Action Forum*, 10th August 2012

DOCUMENTS IFCA's VI ORDINARY ASSEMBLY - Iași 2012

IFCA International Forum of Catholic Action

Lay Catholic Action members ecclesial and social co-responsibility

*They set out at once
and went to Jerusalem*
Lk 24,33



A VI-a Adunare Generală • VI General
Assembly • VI Asamblă Generală • VIème
Assemblée Générale • VI Assemblée Generale
ROMÂNIA • 2012

DOCUMENTS VI ORDINARY ASSEMBLY

Iași, 22-26 August 2012

INDEX

Presentation 3

Message of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI 5

22th AUGUST

- Welcome – Emilio INZAURRAGA 8
- Welcome – Oana TUDUCE 10
- The Catholic Church and CA in Romania
Oana TUDUCE 12
- Homily – H.E. Msgr. Virgil BERCEA 15
- Biblical reflection: Memory, identity and Christian mission
H.E. Msgr. Florentin CRIHALMEANU 18

23rd AUGUST

PUBLIC ACT

- Opening (*scheme*) 21
- The love of Christ urges us to evangelise
Msgr. Antonio GRAPPONE 22
- Lay Catholic Action Members. Ecclesial and social
co-responsibility
Emilio INZAURRAGA 26
- Ways of co-responsibility of the laity between local
and global entities
Sandro CALVANI 39
- Exercises in co-responsibility
Franco MIANO 64

24th AUGUST

- Guided visits (*schemes*) 82
- Missionary mandate. *Homily*
H.E. Msgr. Luis Armando COLLAZUOL 85

25th AUGUST

- The front rows are the most sought - *Homily*
H.E. Msgr. Domenico SIGALINI 88
- Towards the year of faith (*Synthesis of the message*)
H.E. Msgr. Francisco-Javier LOZANO..... 91

STATUTORY SESSION

- Activities 2008-2012 (*Schematic synthesis*)
Maria Grazia TIBALDI 92
- The Normative Document from 2000 up today
Michele PANAJOTTI 100
- Financial report
Gianni ROTONDO 105

26th AUGUST

- Homily – H.E. Msgr. Card. Salvatore DE GIORGI 108
- Secretariat 2012-2016 115
- Participants 116
- Programme «afterwards»..... 117

*Other documents
of the VI IFCA Ordinary Assembly
may be found on the website*

www.catholicactionforum.org

*Translation in Spanish, Romanian and French
ppt presentation
Material for deeper study*

Rome, February 2015

PRESENTATION

The VI IFCA Assembly was held in August 2012 and we are presenting the documents in 2015. In this short period we have seen great and profound changes in the life of the Church and in the world.

CA would like to express its gratitude to the Lord for Pope Benedict XVI and for Pope Francis who have listened to the voice of the Holy Spirit which guides the Church, with great generosity. We have also witnessed the canonization of John XXIII and John Paul II and the Beatification of Paul VI: the Popes of the Second Vatican Council who, together with a number of lay people and priests, urge us to live our vocation as a universal call to sanctity.

The Assemblies are special occasions which give us the opportunity to reflect, plan and evaluate our being CA and to dialogue on our common perspectives but above all they foster friendship. The Assembly in Iasi was another such occasion. It was an occasion where representatives from so many countries and continents met in a historical and ecclesial context which helped them to understand the sufferings and hopes of a young deeply rooted Church, which thrives in a situation where it is a minority.

The message by Benedict XVI to IFCA Assembly (August 2012) and the speech by Pope Francis to XV ICA Assembly (May 2014), which was attended by a number of IFCA countries, were the point of reference for the Assembly and during the years which followed it.

A *CA en salida*, as we call it thanks to Pope Francis, is a CA which seeks to take co-responsibility as its everyday expression of full participation in the Church, a living experience of communion and mission in the Church and in the world, in search of justice and peace.

We are aware that “co-responsibility” asks for a change in mentality especially as regards the role of lay people in the Church. They are not to be considered as «collaborators» of the clergy, but as persons who are really «co-responsible» for the Church’s being and acting. So the consolidation of a mature and committed laity is of great importance. The laity should be able to give their own specific contribution to the ecclesial mission, in respect of the ministries and tasks which everyone of them has in the life of the Church and always in cordial communion with the Bishops ” (from the *Message* by Pope Benedict XVI).

A CA *en salida* is a CA which lives in the world and faces realities boldly and with a positive outlook. Definitely it does not evade realities but seeks to enter into these realities and strives to change them from within. It does not do this alone but together with others. It believes that it is co-responsible, as the title of Calvani’s intervention rightly says. It offers “Ways of co-responsibility of the laity between local and global entities” in the light of the Social Teaching of the Church.

A CA *en salida* is a CA which renews itself, promotes the participation of young people, children, adults, families, students and workers. It works at national, diocesan and parish level and firmly takes upon itself the contemporary challenges, facing them all with a common perspective. It urges us to share the resources, challenges and problems of our local realities with a universal, “catholic” vision.

And how? Pope Francis indicates how: «With these three *attitudes* – staying with Jesus, *going* to the outskirts and *living the joy* of being a Christian. You can live your vocation and avoid the temptation of feeling “secure”, which has nothing to with “*staying with Jesus* (...) and as persons called by Jesus to live and to spread the joy of the Gospel».

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI

*To my Venerable Brother Bishop Domenico Sigalini
General Assistant of the International Forum of Catholic Action*

On the occasion of the Sixth Ordinary Assembly of this International Forum of Catholic Action I wish to address a cordial greeting to you and to all who are taking part in this important meeting. I greet in particular Emilio Inzaurraga, the Coordinator of the Secretariat, the National Presidents and the Assistents. I address a special thought to Bishop Petru Gherghel of Iași, and to his diocese, hosting this ecclesial event at which you are called to reflect on “ecclesial and social co-responsibility”. This is a topic of great importance to the laity that fits in well with the upcoming Year of Faith and the Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization.

Co-responsibility demands a change in mindset especially concerning the role of lay people in the Church. They should not be regarded as “collaborators” of the clergy, but, rather, as people who are really “co-responsible” for the Church’s being and acting. It is therefore important that a mature and committed laity be consolidated, which can make its own specific contribution to the ecclesial mission with respect for the ministries and tasks that each one has in the life of the Church and always in cordial communion with the bishops.

In this regard the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* describes the style of relations between lay people and pastors with the adjective “familiar”: «Many benefits for the Church are to be expected from this familiar relationship between the laity and the pastors. The sense of their own responsibility is strengthened in the laity, their zeal is encouraged, they are more ready to unite their energies to the work of their pastors. The latter, helped by

the experience of the laity, are in a position to judge more clearly and more appropriately in spiritual as well as in temporal matters. Strengthened by all her members, the Church can thus more effectively fulfil her mission for the life of the world» (n. 37).

Dear friends, it is important to study in depth and to live in the Church this spirit of profound communion, characteristic of the beginnings of the Christian community, as attested by the *Acts of the Apostles*: «The company of those who believed were of one heart and soul» (4:32).

May you feel as your own the commitment to working for the Church's mission: with prayers, study and active participation in ecclesial life, with an attentive and positive gaze at the world, in the constant search for the signs of the times. Through a serious and daily commitment to formation never tire of increasingly refining the aspects of your specific vocation as lay faithful called to be courageous and credible witnesses in all social milieus so that the Gospel may be a light that brings hope to the problematic, difficult and dark situations which people today often encounter in their journey through life.

Guiding people to the encounter with Christ, proclaiming his Message of salvation in languages and ways understandable to our time, marked by social and cultural processes in rapid transformation, is the great challenge of the new evangelization. I encourage you to persevere generously in your service to the Church. Live to the full your charism which consists in taking on the apostolic aim of the Church in its entirety, in a fruitful balance between the universal Church and the local Church and in a spirit of close union with the Successor of Peter and active co-responsibility with your own Pastors (cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, n. 20).

In this phase of history, in the light of the Church's social Magisterium also strive to be, increasingly, a laboratory of the "globalization of solidarity and charity", so as to grow, with the whole Church, in the co-responsibility of offering humanity a

future of hope and with the courage to formulate demanding proposals.

Your Associations of Catholic Action boast a long and fruitful history, written by courageous witnesses of Christ and of the Gospel. The Church has recognized some of them as Blessed and Saints. Following in their footsteps, you are called today to renew your commitment to walking on the way of holiness, keeping up your intense life of prayer, encouraging and respecting personal ways of faith and making the most of the riches of each one, with the guidance of your priest-Assistants and those in charge who can teach ecclesial and social co-responsibility. May your life be "transparent", orientated by the Gospel and illumined by the encounter with Christ, loved and followed without fear. Make your own and share the pastoral decisions of the dioceses and parishes, fostering opportunities for meeting and for sincere collaboration with the other members of the ecclesial community, creating relations of esteem and communion with priests for a lively ministerial and missionary community. Cultivate authentic personal relations with everyone, starting with the family, and offer your readiness to participate at all the levels of social, cultural and political life, constantly aiming for the common good.

With these brief thoughts, as I assure you of my affectionate remembrance in prayer for you yourselves, for your families and for your associations, I warmly impart to all the participants in the Assembly my Apostolic Blessing, which I gladly extend to those you meet in your daily apostolate.

From Castel Gandolfo, 10 August 2012

WELCOME

EMILIO INZAURRAGA
IFCA Secretariat Coordinator

I would like to greet you in the name of CA Associations in different parts of the world re-united in the International Forum of Catholic Action!

The theme chosen for this Assembly is important if we wish to continue maturing together as a Church which is a mystery of missionary communion and as active lay people in social life. In view of this co-responsibility we cannot ignore whatever goes on in the Church and in the world.

We invite all CA groups in the world to reflect on this theme. This is nothing new as this means living the ideas presented by the Council but the challenge is to put them into practice.

The Assembly is an ecclesial meeting of men and women of faith and of priests with whom we share an experience of communion. It is a workshop with a statutory dimension during which the 5 countries on the Secretariat are elected.

We have come to Iasi as pilgrims who follow Jesus and who lead a fraternal life at the service of the Gospel.

In short, the definition of our identity is that we are lay people in the Church and Christians in the world, in the local Church and in the universal Church. We have members of all ages and from all walks of life. *Formation* and *Popularity* are our priorities.

CA is at the service of the growth of the whole Christian community, of the pastoral projects, of the evangelical animation of all spheres of life.

IFCA may be considered a place where different countries meet and show solidarity among themselves. It is an instrument which promotes and deepens CA's specific ministeriality in the different historical, cultural and ecclesial contexts. IFCA was set up in 1991 after a first meeting of some CA Associations in 1987 during the Synod on the laity. The recognition on the part of the Pontifical Council for the Laity (PCL) was given in 2000. The assemblies were held in 1994 Vienna, in 1997 in Buenos Aires, in 2000-2004 and 2008 in Rome and now in Iasi.

We treasure the legacy which John Paul II left us in Loreto in 2004 and repeated by Benedict XVI in 2008: *contemplation, communion and mission*.

Some updated numbers up to 2012:

- 26 member countries: 9 in Europe, 9 in Africa, 7 in America and 1 in Asia.
- 9 observer countries and 1.500.000 members.

Best wishes for this Assembly with a word of thanks to the CA and the Church of Romania. We thank them for giving us such a warm family welcome!

WELCOME

OANA TUDUCE

National President of CA in Romania

Good evening and welcome in Romania!

Bon soir et bien venus en Roumanie!

Buona sera e benvenuti in Romania!

Buonas tardes y bienvenidos in Romania!

Buna seara și bine ați venit la această întâlnire!

Excelențe, Prea Sfințiile Voastre, dragi participanți,

Your Excellencies, dear participants,

It is a great joy for me to welcome you this evening in your own language, in my name and in the name of the Catholic Action Association in Romania: welcome to our home! I am pleased to be able to welcome you and host you in our home, because at last we too, as Catholic Action, have the opportunity to host you after so many of you have received us in your countries and treated us as brethren.

For us, who form part of Catholic Action in Romania, and who have participated in so many meetings organised in your countries of origin, this is an occasion, maybe the only one, of having you here, in our country, in one of the most beautiful and active Dioceses of the Romanian Catholic Church: the Diocese of Iași. Even if for some of you, up to a certain extent, your arrival in Romania seemed impossible especially when it came to the acquisition of the visa, thanks to your courage and perseverance, we have succeeded in overcoming these difficulties.

We ardently hope that all these signs of trust and acknowledgement, both on IFCA's side and on the part of all of you, who have chosen to participate in this meeting, be recompensated by unforgettable moments experienced in our country. Hoping that you will feel at home, we will do our best to offer you beautiful moments, which will make this meeting unforgettable.

Now, to help you to get an idea as to who we, Catholic Action in Romania are, I will be giving a familiar presentation about our country, our Catholic Church and also about Catholic Action in Romania.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CA IN ROMANIA

OANA TUDUCE

National President of CA in Romania

The Catholic Church in Romania, a country with an orthodox majority, is principally made up of members of the major Greek-Catholic Archiepiscopal Church and of those of the Latin Church besides a small community of members of the Armenian-Catholic Church united in an apostolic ordinariate.

Catholic Action is a reality which had already existed in the Romanian Catholic Church way back in 1928, under different names (General Association of United Romanians, Association of United Romanian Youth, Catholic Action). This tradition was interrupted during the communist dictatorship and was resumed as from 1990 in different dioceses of Latin and Byzantine rite.

In 1998, after repeated experiences of exchanges among the lay associations present in the Romanian Catholic Church, it was decided that a structure, which could bring together these associations at national level, should be set up, a type of Catholic Action.

During one of the first meetings held in Cluj-Napoca in January 2005, the organisational aspects were discussed. On the 9th April 2005, in Blaj, a protocol of associations and the constitution of the Catholic Action Romanian Federation was signed. This Federation was made up of: "Saint Joseph" Catholic Action of the Diocese of Iasi, the United Romanian Youth Association - ASTRU Blaj, ASTRU Cluj, ASTRU Oradea and the General Association of United Romanians - AGRU.

During the National Assemblies of the Federation, held in May 2006 in Șumuleu-Ciuc and in December 2006 in Paltiniș the

organisational structures, the Statute and the three-year programme of activities were outlined.

In 2007, the Bishops' Conference of Romanian Catholics approved the Statute of the Federation "*ad experimentum*". It confirmed the elected president and nominated the spiritual assistants.

In 2008, ASTRU of the diocese of Lugoj started the process of joining the Romanian Catholic Action Federation, a process which was finalized in 2009.

During the General Assembly in March 2010, held in Oradea, the structure of the federation was redefined and the Statute was finalised. This was approved that same year by the Catholic Bishops' Conference.

The Statute of the Romanian Catholic Action Federation (ACRO) states that its aim is to bring together all the different Catholic Action associative forms and to focus on the facilitation of lay apostolate in the Catholic Church of the two rites present in Romania. "Catholic action associative form" means a structure which answers to the four fundamental characteristics laid down in the Second Vatican Council Document *Apostolicam Actuositatem* 20, 2-3; ecclesiality, secularity, working as an organic body and collaboration with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

Through its activities, Catholic Action Romania aims at promoting dialogue and collaboration among its member associations and at fostering co-operation with other associations which have the same objectives. It has representatives at national and international level especially with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Romania.

The aim of the activities proposed by the Romanian Catholic Action is the formation of lay people. It aims to instil in them the spirit of an apostolic laity. Among the activities organised by the Romanian Catholic Action we could mention: courses of unitary formation, formation courses for youth, adults and children, conventions for the Federations' spiritual Assistants, unitary

summer camps and different workshops for young people during the National Meetings for Romanian Catholic Youth.

Apart from formative meetings, Romanian Catholic Action leaders attended a number of organisational meetings: meetings of the national teams of every sector: children, youth, adults; leaders' councils, National Councils members and national and international meetings.

Every year, in the month of October, during the week when the liturgical commemoration of our Federation's patron occurs – Saint John Paul II - the Romanian Catholic Action holds a national event "Catholic Action Days". This project is meant to promote Catholic Action at national, as well as at local level, through promotional activities and specific Catholic Formation sessions.

Romanian Catholic Action is a member of the International Forum of Catholic Action (IFCA), an organ which helps associations, federations and movements in different countries to get to know each other.

22 August 2012 – Santa Maria Regina Cathedral
EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

H.E. Msgr. VIRGIL BERCEA

Bishop of Oradea

In charge of the Laity, COMECE Vice-President

I will open my mouth and filled with the Holy Spirit I will raise these words to Mary our Queen. Thus enlightened I will celebrate and sing her wonder with joy.

Your Excellency, Msgr. Bishop Petru,
Your Eminencies, Your Excellencies,
Dear hosts, dear friends,

In the Eastern Church, the liturgical year starts on the 1st of September because, according to the tradition inherited from the old Law, this day (which was also the beginning of the civil Jewish year) saw the beginning of the creation of the world. On this day, our Saviour started his public life, when, in the synagogue he read the passage from the *Prophet Isaiah* (61: 1-2) which said: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me; He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, (...), to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord." (Lk 4: 18-19)

The first feast in the Byzantine liturgical year is the Nativity of the Mother of the Lord (8th September) and the liturgical year is concluded with another feast dedicated to the Mother of the Lord: The Dormition and the Assumption to Heaven in body and soul. Today, here, we celebrate the feast of the Virgin Mary crowned as the Queen of Heaven and earth by Her Son and our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this context I open my mouth so that together we may praise her by singing joyfully her marvels, in the words of the *Akatis* hymn.

O Mother of God, o unconquerable protectress, we, your city, saved from terrible disasters, raise a hymn of victory and thanksgiving to You. You, who have invincible power, free us from all evil and we will shout out to You: Rejoice Virgin Bride.

Mary is the Queen and the Mother. She is the *Theotokos* (Mother of God) and the bride of the Father. She is the crowned Queen. Joy springs through Mary. She is the Queen who wipes away Eve's tears. She is the King's throne and shows us the Sun of justice. Mary is the beginning of Christ's miracles and the celestial stairs through which God came down. Mary is the bridge which helps us pass from Earth to Heaven and the Miracle praised by the angels. The Light, which does not set, was born of Mary and God's will for us, destined to die, was fulfilled in Her. Through Mary we dare approach God. She is the Mother of the Lamb and of the Shepherd. She is the face of the Church and is the one who opens Heaven's door for us. Mary, the Queen, is the apostle's voice and is the foundation of our faith. Mary is the Mother of the star which never sets and Mother of the day which we do not know. Mary is the wise councillor of the faithful and the column of fire which consoles those who are in the dark, the nourishment which substitutes the heavenly manna and the promised land.

I will open my mouth and I will be filled with the Holy Spirit. While I celebrate I feel enlightened because Mary is the divine Bride and the one who has redeemed Adam's guilt – She is the end of hell. Mary is all without sin and is the palace of the unique King. Mary is the never fading flower, the treasure of purity and chastity, the lily and the fragrant incense, the most precious myrrh.

Mary, crowned Queen, is the unploughed earth because from her the divine sprout came out. She is the source of living water.

Mary is the morning star who bore the sun Christ in her womb. She is the seat of light and the door through which only the Word passed. Mary is the divine gate to heaven for those who are saved.

Mary, the Queen, is our Virgin Lady, higher than the heavens. She has given birth to the giver of the law; She is the beauty of the apostles and the reason for our joy. Mary is the bush which is not burnt and the column of virginity. She is the king's precious diadem, the praise of priests, the immovable tower of the Church. Mary is the cure and the salvation of our soul, the Divine Bride who has opened Heaven for us when before it was closed. Mary is the Lady of the world; She is our Lady.

United here around the Altar to celebrate Holy Mass, we all praise the Mother of God so that She may give us Her Son again and we may sing Her praises: the old mystery is today revealed to us: that God, the Word, became the Son of the Virgin Mary.

Rejoice Virgin Bride! I will conclude the praises which we sing in the *Akatistos* with the words of Eminescu:

Having chosen you as our Queen
We kneel before you in prayer,
Raise us and save us
Be our shield of strength
And balwark of our salvation

May your adored look
Descend upon us
O, Mother most pure
And forever Virgin Mary...

Biblical reflection

MEMORY, IDENTITY AND CHRISTIAN MISSION

H.E. Msgr. FLORENTIN CRIHALMEANU

Bishop of Cluj Napoca

«...They set out at once and went to Jerusalem...»
(Lk 24:33).

We shall join Jesus and His disciples on their journey, letting ourselves be guided, in three ways, by the Word of the Scriptures:

1. in renewing our memory,
2. in rediscovering our Christian identity
3. in bettering the understanding of our mission within the family of the Catholic Church.

Thus, we will become witnesses of the Hope of the Resurrection in the world and able to motivate others to discover the joy of the returning towards «The Heavenly Jerusalem».

1. Listening to the Word reactivates our memory

«Was not it necessary that the Christ should suffer before entering into His Glory?» (Lk 24:26).

Despite the temporal apprehension that is always waiting for spectacular visible changes in society, Jesus shows that in order to change the world one must begin with an inner change in the way of thinking (*meta-noeo*), in a change of «our own interior world» in our own scale of values (see *Spe salvi* n.4).

Is it not true that the obstacle to faith is to be found within us, within our heart?

How many times the word of the Scriptures, which we hear and pray over, passes by without touching our souls, without changing our lives as believers? As Pope Benedict says, the real

crises of faith is in fact a crises of hope which has to motivate our faith. (cf. *Spe salvi* n.17).

Let us decide to receive the Holy Word with an open heart so that it may come and once more enkindle hope in our souls. The Word of the Scripture should remind us of the Divine Plan and of God's Redemption and should instil in us a new impulse which arouses new hope in our souls.

2. The celebration of the mystery reveals the presence, confirms the identity

«While He was at table with them, he took the bread, he blessed it and breaking it, he shared it with them». (Lk 24:30).

The presence of Jesus was revealed at the breaking of bread. Many times, we too fail to recognise Him on our earthly pilgrimage. It is important that we participate attentively in Holy Mass and that we try to receive Holy Communion as worthily as possible in order to strengthen our Christian identity.

Let us ask ourselves as to how we attend Holy Mass.

What are the prayers and the devotions by which we try to strengthen our Christian identity? Are we genuine «eucharistic people» (John Paul II)? Is the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, the Eucharistic Mystery, the centre of our Christian life?

3. Living the presence that transforms us into witnesses of the hope of Resurrection and renews our mission

«They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven» (cf. Lk 24:33).

The central point of the whole passage is the supper at Emmaus, the moment of «the breaking of bread». For us too, even today in the Church during Mass, this is the moment when our eyes of faith should be opened and when our spiritual life should be filled with new hope. Thus we will be able to renew our

spiritual identity and to remind ourselves as to *who we really are* in the light of the Mystery of Christ's Resurrection. We do not only attend the Eucharist celebration when the bread is broken, but we also participate actively in this great Mystery.

So, let us ask ourselves as to *where our place* in the Church and in the society is today? Where does Jesus want us to be? And as such, what *should we do* to direct our life of faith according to the Plan of the Divine Wisdom?

Let us ask the Risen Lord to accompany each one of us on the way to the «Heavenly Jerusalem» and tell him, just like the disciples on the way to Emmaus: «*Stay with us, o, Lord, as the evening is coming and enlighten us by Thy word and presence on our way to the Heavenly Jerusalem! Amen*».

«And may the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in your faith, so that in the power of the Holy Spirit you may be rich in hope » (*Rm 15:13*).

Christ is amongst us! He is and always will be!

■ *Public Act*

Opening

The Public Act was introduced with songs by the Choir “Fiat lux” of Oradea.

After a short prayer, led by the Bishop of Iași Msgr. Petru Gherghel, there were messages of welcome by:

- Emilio Inzaurraga, IFCA Coordinator;
- Oana Tuduce, CA Romania President;
- Preasfințitul Virgil Bercea, Bishop of Oradea, in charge of the laity in the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Romania;
- Msgr. Ioachim Băcăoanul, Auxiliary Bishop of Roman and Bacau Archdiocese and delegate of the Orthodox Metropolitan of Iași;
- Msgr. Antonio Grappone, representing the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

H.E. Msgr. Domenico Sigalini, IFCA Ecclesiastical Assistant, read the message which the Holy Father Benedict XVI sent to the Assembly’s participants.

The Opening of the public session ended with greetings from the local authorities:

- Viorel Lupu – Vice-President of the Region of Iasi
- Romeo Olteanu – Prefect of the Region of Iași
- Mihai Chirican-Vice Mayor

THE LOVE OF CHRIST URGES US TO EVANGELISE

Msgr. ANTONIO GRAPPONE

Head of the Office of the Pontifical Council for the Laity

*Reverend Excellencies,
Brethren in the priesthood,
Dear Catholic Action friends,*

First of all I would like to convey to you the greetings of the President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, Card. Stanisław Ryłko, who regretfully could not be present at this important event, especially because, as many of you know, a Congress for the lay faithful in Africa, organised by our dicastery, is about to start in Cameroon. This is an occasion of great importance and is very demanding as regards the preparations. Next Tuesday, I will be going there to see to the final arrangements on the spot. I thus appeal to your prayers.

The theme which you have chosen this year, taken from the Gospel where it speaks about the disciples of Emmaus: «They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem» (Lk 24:33) confirms Catholic Action's traditional tuning with the Pastors' orientations, especially with that of the Holy Father. In fact, the verse from Luke evokes the coming important appointments which await all the Church: the Bishops' Synod on the New Evangelisation and the opening of the Year of Faith, planned on the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council. These are events which are closely correlated and which throw light on one another.

The experience of the disciples of Emmaus shows in a particular way the close relation between the act of faith and the urge to evangelise. Thanks to the Word which they accepted on their journey, which reached its peak with the Breaking of Bread, the two

disciples progressively recognised the Risen Lord, first and foremost in their hearts, so to say unknowingly, through the fervour of divine love aroused in them by their travelling companion and finally in full consciousness, thanks to the gift of the Eucharist. This admission, which shows what the acceptance of faith means, reverses their initial plans, that is, it frees them from their disappointment and fear and fills them with enthusiasm and zeal to spread the joyful news of the Risen Lord to the other disciples and to all Jerusalem. Benedict XVI, in his Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei*, with which he announced the Year of Faith, clearly stresses the same connection between an experience of faith and the announcement of faith: «*Caritas Christi urget nos (2Co 5:14)*: it is the love of Christ that fills our hearts and impels us to evangelize. [...] Faith grows when it is lived as an experience of love received and when it is communicated as an experience of grace and joy» (n. 7).

Confirming the essential, faith in Christ and love for the Church, which brings Christ to men of our times, and renews our commitment towards the new evangelisation, is a programme which particularly fits Catholic Action. CA will definitely be among the protagonists in the forthcoming ecclesial events, as stated in *Porta fidei*: «all the ecclesial realities, old and new, during this year, will find a way whereby they will make the profession of the Creed public».

On the other hand, at this historical moment, it is very important that we explicitly renew our adhesion with Christ, our faith, so that finally we may leave behind that sterile attitude which, during these last decades, has characterised Christianity especially in the West. Not only, there has been also the tendency to look upon faith as something outdated, if not absolutely as a private matter, irrelevant to the active commitment to which we are called. A situation which the Pope has denounced on several occasions, even in *Porta fidei*, where we find: «It often happens that Christians are more concerned about the social, cultural and political consequences of their commitment and keep thinking of faith as a self-evident

presupposition for life in society. In reality, not only can this presupposition be taken for granted but it is openly denied» (n. 2).

Catholic Action's special educative experience will help you to find suitable ways and occasions so that each member may, in full consciousness, renew his loyalty to the faith of the Church, thus making himself predisposed to develop the ecclesial and social co-responsibility, the typical dimension of the Lord's disciples. Benedict XVI wanted to stress the sense of the educative charism which the Lord has entrusted to you: «being educators means treasuring a joy in your heart and sharing it with everyone so as to make life more beautiful and better; it means giving a meaning and an aim to life's journey, presenting the beauty of the person of Christ and falling in love with Him, with His way of life, with His freedom, with His great love full of trust in God the Father. Above all it means always aiming high in all situations towards that "a little more" which comes to us from God. This entails a personal acquaintance of Jesus, a personal contact » (Meeting with Catholic Action children and adolescents, 30 October 2010).

Above all, Catholic Action is called to help all Christians to rediscover the beauty of their faith and their proper Catholic identity, offering their contribution in all environments, but especially in parishes, where their presence is widespread and well incorporated. Help parish priests and the faithful to find again the motivation to evangelise! This is how blessed John Paul II urged Catholic Action members: «You have at heart that which is at the heart of the Church: that many men and women of our times may be charmed by Christ; that His Gospel may shine again as a light of hope for the poor, the sick, for those who hunger for justice; that the Christian communities may be always more lively, open, attentive; that our cities may be hospitable and pleasant to live in; that humanity may follow the ways of peace and fraternity» (John Paul II, *Homily* at Loreto, Montorso Esplanade, 5 September 2004).

On the other hand, reaffirming our faith in Christ, as passed on to us by the Church, also means re-enforcing our sense of belonging to Catholic Action: «When you join Catholic Action – Benedict XVI stressed, when you meet the other Catholic Action children and adolescents – say to each other and to all those who love the Church, that you are ready to be co-responsible with your Pastors for the Church's being and acting» (Meeting with Catholic Action children and adolescents, 30 October 2010). Therefore, for you, living the Year of faith to the full means that disposition «to carry on with your journey, to be faithful to Catholic Action's identity and aims» (ibid.).

May the Lord guide this convention and bless your work so that it may bear fruit of sanctity for Catholic Action and for the whole Church.

CATHOLIC ACTION LAY PEOPLE ECCLESIAL AND SOCIAL CO-RESPONSIBILITY

EMILIO INZAURRAGA

National President of Catholic Action Argentina

IFCA Secretariat Coordinator

Dear friends,

The theme which we have chosen for this Assembly is at the same time an invitation to reflect and to get involved.

Ecclesial co-responsibility and social co-responsibility are the characteristics of our being Catholic Action members. We might say that they are part of our lay identity, they are the two faces of the same coin.

I will try to give some points which might help to introduce us into the theme, so as to go deeply into the concepts and to discern as to how we can best direct our work and our Catholic Action associations.

The Church, a mystery of missionary communion

When presenting the Church as the People of God (*LG 2*), the Second Vatican Council acknowledges the responsibility of its members (Bishops, priests, consecrated persons and lay people) to promote communion and to be missionaries. They assume this responsibility starting from their different charisms and ministries and from their individual responsibilities.

Because of our baptism we are all brothers and equal in dignity. We all carry a responsibility which varies in degree and is shown in different ways.

All the members of the Church – and we as faithful – are responsible and we become basically so at the very moment when we undertake to carry out our duties as a Christian community: to evangelise, to celebrate our faith and to live and promote fraternity.

In his *Letters* (1 *Corinthians* 12, *Romans* 12 and *Ephesians* 4) Saint Paul presents the Church as the Body of Christ. In these letters he speaks about the diversity of its members, of their specific functions and how necessary it is for all the members of the one body to complement one another and to show solidarity to one another.

At the same time, as laity, we are members of a Church which has been sent to the world as a sacrament of salvation, to serve all men and all peoples. Our communion is missionary and our mission is for communion.

These three dimensions of the Church are reflected and synthesised in the Church's definition as a mystery of missionary communion.

Twenty years ago, during the IFCA Constitutive Assembly, the Servant of God Cardinal Eduardo Francisco Pironio, when synthesising these concepts, said:

"The Spirit of God is recreating CA in the spirit of a Church which is a mystery of missionary communion:

Mystery: *as an itinerary, a school of sanctity.*

Communion: *with our Pastors, with the rest of the People of God, with the other associations.*

Mission: *as a presence, announcement, sending out."*

The laity

The impulse given to the lay vocation by the Second Ecumenical Council is evident. In fact, the Decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem* is specifically dedicated to this. It was the first Council to treat the call of lay people to holiness, to be leaven of the Gospel, there where they lead their daily lives. The theme of the call of lay people, committed in the world and in temporal realities is treated in a very direct and explicit way.

The ecclesiology of the Council drafted in the *Lumen Gentium*, opens the way to a full understanding of the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church which is the People of God, which exists to extend the Kingdom in the world, as highlighted in *Gaudium et Spes*.

It insists on the necessary participation of lay people in the missionary work of the Church, in the building of these two realities: the ecclesial and the social.

During the years which followed, this consciousness matured both in the Teaching of the Church as well as in the life of our communities. The Synod on the Vocation and Mission of the Laity and the publication of *Christifideles Laici* were undoubtedly very significant. One cannot forget other facts – for example – the presence of lay auditors at the synods, their participation in pastoral councils, the consultation with specialists on temporal matters.

Undoubtedly in many communities, the potential of this “sleeping giant” is not fully deployed as yet.

Still today, because of a clerical mentality (on the part of both priests and laity) in many places the laity struggle to be protagonists. Although only a few question the “letter” of the conciliar documents, it does not seem easy to put this into practice in the everyday life of the community. Even the passivity and inertia of many lay people who are unaware of their co-responsibility in the mission of the Church, in the building of the Christian community and in the annunciation of the Gospel, slows down the carrying out of these conciliar developments.

We are lay people! This is one of our constitutive characteristics which calls us to live our secular involvement to the full, with all the risks which this entails, but also with all the graces this calls for. It is therefore up to us to sanctify the world from within and “*to seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to God’s plan*”¹. “So any type of spirituality, formation or apostolic work which distances CA member from the concrete world and from the actual historical moment, derails him from his lay nature and distorts his lay character”.

¹ LG 31

The Second Vatican Council – Church-World relations

The Second Vatican Council has been the greatest event in the life of the Church during the XX century. Open to the action of the Spirit, the Church reflected on: its interior life and its efforts towards unity; its place among men and in the world.

On many occasions and in many spheres we have been witnesses of a great disposition to discern the signs of the times, to «*recognize and understand the world in which we live, its expectations, its longings and its often dramatic characteristics*» (GS 4).

An evangelic discernment helps us to realize, to “see” the actual complex situation, the difficulties, the obstacles and the possibilities to move on together in order to be of service to the world. Besides, a greater involvement in the relations with the world has been developed and this not only at diplomatic levels. It has aimed at proposing a social friendship which helps peoples to discover ways of dialogue and fraternity.

The Second Vatican Council suggested that the Church should look at the world with deep comprehension, with sincere admiration and with the sincere aim not to overpower it but rather to serve it, not to despise it but to appreciate it, not to condemn it but to sympathise with it and save it.

The Council has opened a new missionary phase in which, as a People, faith is presented to us as a vital experience, which is beneficial to man and for his life, and not only as a collection of norms and prohibitions.

This, among many other, is a clear sign of the commitment and the pastoral style opened by the Council to communicate faith.

Following Christ's pedagogy, who always reverted to inviting and always respected our freedom, we are to propose rather than impose, to radiate by being testimonies of the beauty of our faith rather than to conquer.

Gaudium et Spes has opened the horizon for dialogue with the world. It cautions us that the preoccupations experienced by humanity and by every individual are the preoccupations of the

Church. It clearly calls for and stresses the importance of fully acknowledging and respecting the dignity of the human person as the centre of our pastoral reflection.

During these past 50 years we have gone a long way, however, many of the issues raised by *Gaudium et Spes* have not been tackled as yet. These are continually calling us to address them. We need a deeper study on dialogue, on the discernment of the signs of the times and to find ways of presenting to today's world the liberating truth of the love of God.

I recall the testimony given at the Council by a lay auditor from CA Argentina, Margarita Moyano. She related the following anecdote: «At the opening of the last session of the Council in the Basilica of Saint Peter, Pope Paul VI said: "In future what will men ask about this Council? What was the Catholic Church doing at that moment?" The Pope went on: «It was loving today's men, as they are and wherever they are!».

Co-responsibility

In the Teaching of the Church, the conciliar teaching included, there has been an evolution of the terms which refer to the laity, that is:

- Collaboration
- Participation
- Co-responsibility

It seems that the term "co-responsibility" has been repropounded and it has taken a new momentum.

During his last visit to America (Mexico and Cuba) the Holy Father encouraged Pastors and reminded them of the pastoral care which they should give to all and to every member of the Church, in keeping with the different pastoral vocations. He mentioned particularly lay people and exhorted them «to give them an ever more special attention... to lay people who are involved in

catechises, in the animation of the liturgy and in charitable and social work. Their formation in faith is crucial so that they may be a fruitful presence of the Gospel in today's society. Besides it is not fair if they feel treated as if they count very little in the Church, in spite of the fervour with which they carry out their vocation and the great sacrifice which sometimes this dedication entails».

I felt very pleased, appreciated and acknowledged when I read these words by Pope Benedict XVI. He puts a particular stress on the generous and committed dedication of many lay people who, together with their daily responsibilities, live their faith profoundly at the service of the ecclesial community. Not without many sacrifices, they live the vital synthesis between their faith and their way of living.

Again Benedict XVI, in May 2009 in the Basilica of Saint John Lateran, during the inauguration of the Ecclesial Convention of the Diocese of Rome, said:

«In our times, many baptised have strayed from the way of the Church and they no longer feel part of the ecclesial community or they refer to their parishes only to receive religious services on special occasions. This calls for a change of mentality especially as regards the laity. We have to move from the idea of considering them as “collaborators” of the clergy to the idea of acknowledging them as truly “co-responsible” for the life and the work of the Church, promoting the consolidation of a mature and committed laity».

Also, the close relations with the Hierarchy constitute a richness and a characteristic which is specific to CA. The Bishop is the focus of unity in the local Church just as the entire episcopal College, with the Pope as its head, is in the universal Church.

If we apply this relation when it comes to apostolic co-responsibility and to ecclesial communion, we avoid two mistakes: independence and servitude.

This in no way suppresses the legitimate freedom of initiative nor does it paralyse the responsibility of a mature laity.

All this calls for a positive, practical, sincere and ongoing dialogue and an active participation by the laity in the planning and execution of pastoral initiatives.

Our communities

This idea of co-responsibility calls for a personal as well as pastoral conversion. Our communitarian life has to be revised. We have to pass from “a conservative pastoral ministry to one which is definitely missionary”... “so that the Church is seen as a mother who goes out to meet her children, as a welcoming house, as an ongoing school of missionary communion”².

As a Church we should be real testimonies of communion, who journey together, who joyfully experience unity in the diversity, resulting from the variety of the organisations which enrich the life of the community. And so organicity should be the realization of communion.

New evangelisation should be the engine, “starting from within our communities”, to encourage people so that they may develop all their potential and have the courage to risk perspectives and talents.

This is much more than studying or participating passively, talking, listening to decisions which have already been taken or sharing an agenda of actions and deadlines which could be shared by email; it means rather, encouraging people to contribute their share, to discuss, to elaborate, to develop that which is already started and to reconsider all that which could be better, in the carrying out of our mission.

Organic pastoral work is a sign of conversion and as such it should be a pastoral activity which reflects everybody’s contribution and which is the result of a sincere communitarian discernment and of which everybody feels part. This helps to develop the resources available and avoids uniformity and disorganisation.

² Aparecida 370

Naturally this result can never be achieved if everyone goes his own way, "tends his own garden" and if people from different spheres are not involved. It is difficult and inconsistent to plan pastoral work with workers without involving the workers themselves or pastoral work with families without involving families.

We cannot concentrate all the time on our intraecclesial tensions or on trying to live together but ensuring that the individual groups "do not bother one another". The groups need to stop to see what is actually important or to work out together the pastoral plan which best suits the realities of the diocese or the parish. It has to be ensured that everyone finds a space where he can give his share and offer his views as to how a common project can be improved. Also we should encourage one another to carry on with the project and to be faithful to our commitment until the project is concluded.

For example, from our experience, we know how difficult it is to co-ordinate and announce the catechesis of initiation with the groups and the movements which can help in maturing the faith of those who receive the sacraments and in encouraging them to keep participating in the community.

Authority

Very often the word is linked with power, dominion, imposition, success. But for us it means service, humility, love. "It means entering in the logic of Jesus who bows down to wash the disciples' feet, who truly seeks the good of man, who cures the wounds, who can show such great love that He gave his life, because He is Love."³

On the 24th March 2006, during the Consistory, Pope Benedict XVI urged the new cardinals to remain faithful to the commitment which this nomination brings with it and reminded them that "the total and generous availability to serve others is the distinctive sign

³ Benedict XVI, *Angelus* 30 January 2012

of the authority of the Church". For us "greater authority" is equal to "greater service" and this service is expressed through:

1. The humble search for the will of God, by trying to create a climate which favours a communitarian discernment.
2. A consistency between what we think, say and do. We can explain what we mean, but we can teach only by what we are. ... "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses".⁴
3. When promoting the dignity of every individual, one has to consider positively every member of the community, promote a development process, help in the development of skills, correct in a fraternal way. It means helping each and everyone to find his place, to bring out his talents, to share them for the good of all and to believe in the common project.
4. In "Living and promoting a spirituality of communion and participation: the ecclesial communities are communities of missionary disciples around Jesus Christ, Master and Pastor. From this stems the need for a predisposition to be open, to dialogue, to be ready to promote co-responsibility and to foster an effective participation by all the faithful in the life of the Christian community. Today more than ever it is a pastoral urgency for us to be witnesses of ecclesial communion and sanctity."⁵
5. In the formation of teams, in the distribution of work (thus avoiding overloading individuals, concentration of responsibilities and protagonism) and the formation of new leaders.
6. In the instilling of strength and hope in difficulties, keeping the mission always in mind and living up to our charism.
7. In making one's own work effective, by trying to make the proposals materialise, by sharpening one's sense of responsibility, by making plans become a reality, by transforming

⁴ Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 41

⁵ Aparecida 362

complaints into positive action and by presenting results and successes as the success of the group's efforts.

Generally, we are more in favour of changing the world than in changing ourselves and sometimes this also applies to us as a Church.

In Aparecida, the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean proposed that we should "put" our structures (groups, organisations, pastoral plans, time-tables, way of doing things) through the "sieve". We should discern their validity and encourage each other to change, keeping the first Christian communities as a point of reference.⁶ This is simple but demanding. We should ask ourselves:

- if we have a *strong missionary determination*⁷
- if we support *the transmission of faith*
- if we live a *spirituality of communion and participation*⁸.

Our faithfulness should be directed to Jesus, to the mission and not to the structure and so this should be reflected in the way in which we carry out our duty: What are our priorities? What type of service do we give to those in need and to those marginalised by the community? How do we integrate them? How are the formation processes of pastoral workers, of leaders, of catechists, of teachers, of priests? What space do we give so that we may be able to listen to what the Spirit is telling us through the signs of the times wherein God manifests Himself? How do we face the cultural and social challenges?

Even our way of thinking could limit us and this accentuates when we are rigid, when we feel "settled", tied to a few concepts and to our roles (our "duties"). Our mind becomes more reactive

⁶ Aparecida 369

⁷ Aparecida 365

⁸ Aparecida 368

when we close up within ourselves, when we do not open to the permanent novelty of the Gospel, when we stop seeing the seeds of truth which are found in all of us, in each and every one of us.

Thus one can notice that even some lay or consecrated leaders have an authoritarian style of leadership. They are jealous for their own space of power, have a very individualistic way of thinking and acting, are always preoccupied that the life of the community might invade their own personal project. “Me, do not disturb me”. Or those who are very experienced but not much inclined to go on learning “Do you mean to teach me?” or when faced with new suggestions re-act by saying “No, because it is no!”.

Personal and pastoral conversion should be a habitual exercise for us. Jesus has taught us to get up when we fall, to help each other by correcting one another in a fraternal way, not to be scandalised, to listen, to seek always the ecclesial and common good. We should habitually train ourselves to serve, celebrate, reflect, correct and to re-start always with a “firm missionary decision”.⁹

Everything in common

When we act in all circumstances of life, we should do it with the aim of evangelising, of radiating the beauty of our Faith which is not only good for us but is good for all of us.

As missionary disciples, as lay people, we profoundly share the fate of all humanity, its hopes and its anguish. None of that which is human is meaningless to us, none of what happens to humanity can leave us indifferent.

It is there, in the concrete social realities where our every day lives unfold, that we experience our encounter with Jesus, our Friend, where our vocation matures and where we carry out our mission by trying to assist and serve others, especially the excluded and the forgotten. This is how we should show our social co-responsibility.

⁹ Aparecida 365

The social concept of the Church is a source of inspiration for all men and women of good will. It is an inspiration which could enlighten our decisions, our attitude, our behaviour, our work. In our CA formation programme, the Social teaching of the Church has a special place and we cannot do without it. It is our inspiration. Journeying towards sanctity for us also means "*giving ourselves to be of service to the common good*".¹⁰

Social friendship

A social friendship different from that of networks, of social webs. Civil friendship is the most authentic evidence of fraternity, it is inseparable from freedom and equality.

Fraternity means an awareness that we are brothers, sons of the same Father.

It is the freedom which lets us opt for goodness, justice, solidarity, peace, love.

It is equality which makes us all deserving of the same dignity.

This is all about a principle which is not being commonly practised in today's modern political societies, especially because of the prevalent individualistic and collective ideologies.

We consider friendship to be gratuitous, disinterested, detached from material goods, a gift, an interior disposition to the needs of others.

Social friendship is not an unattainable inconsistent or naive proposal.

It is not to feel good, to be "politically correct", but to forget all sectorial and corporate interests and to set ourselves to seek the common good together, to reach agreement and overcome differences, to eliminate privileges and to favour those who feel excluded or marginalised.

¹⁰ Benedict XVI to Catholic Action, May 2011

Style of leadership CA lacks today and which is to be developed

1. Contemplation of the face of Christ in the poor.
2. A consistency with our religious, ethical and moral convictions. Ability to say an emphatic “no” to illegal trafficking and to corruption. Bribes and corruption rob people of their money. Corrupt people are accomplices in the kidnapping, torturing, sexual abuse of persons, in human trafficking and in the trafficking of weapons and drugs. Strong convictions are lacking.
3. A vocation to a social and political commitment. A healthy militancy.
4. Perseverance.
5. An ability to dialogue.
6. An ability to answer to the most pressing needs.
7. A sober and simple way of life.
8. An emphatic “no” to violence.
9. Sensitivity for the environment which is a historical responsibility.

WAYS OF CO-RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LAITY BETWEEN LOCAL AND GLOBAL ENTITIES

Summary of the original presentation in English taken and translated from a PowerPoint

Dr. SANDRO CALVANI
*Director ARCMDG at AIT*¹

Objectives of this presentation

To realize and act with urgency

1. Re-define the social responsibility at the place of work;
2. Reach and involve the whole community;
3. Respect the environment;
4. Re-define the market focusing on people's needs;
5. Involve civil society;
6. Join the networks of Excellence for social responsibility for the common good.

1 Re-define the social responsibility at the place of work

- a sense of belonging on the part of the staff;
- team work;
- respect for the staff's roles;
- respect for the right for work;
- a safe and secure place of work;
- aim at an excellent process and product.

¹ Centre of Excellence ASEAN on the Objectives of Development for the Millennium of the United Nations, Bangkok Thailandia.

www.arcmdg.ait.asia www.sandrocalvani.it alessandro.calvani@gmail.com

Formation and advancement for the staff at the place of work

- the learning and advancement of employees is fundamental for improving their sense of responsibility;
- encourage learning at every phase and through the right mechanism;
- make use of the new media and of specific studies;
- monitor the employees' development through an annual performance rating report by the management;
- hold in-depth discussions about responsibilities, jobs, performance needs.

At the end of this session, one should be able to identify, describe and discuss further:

1. Fundamental sectors of lay people's co-responsibility in the Social Teaching of the Church;
2. The definition of co-responsibility in modern times;
3. Some good practice in facing the challenges presented by globalization in the next decade;
4. How a co-responsible programme is part of the testimony by Catholics and of the ways of communicating with society.

2. Problems, solutions, co-responsibility are no magics

They are all man-made and can be controlled by man.

3. Irresponsible individuals vs. Responsible communities (1)

Prevalence of individual interests

Greater importance to the market

Stronger individualistic aspirations

Lack of a sense of belonging and authenticity

Ethical auto-determination and relativism

Greater freedom for financial systems

More efficiency, innovation and competitiveness

The result: A society wherein there is more inequality, more anger, more tension, more social frustration, more unemployment.

Prevalence of co-responsibility for the common good

Greater importance to education

Importance given to values and to the service to others, especially to the weak

A sense of co-responsibility

Enforcement of regulations

Greater solidarity, a stronger sense of brotherhood, search for happiness rather than for riches

Result: More equality, less social tensions, more employment.

4. Challenges in balancing freedom and responsibility

Addressing a growing need for a truly global alliance to make the balance between freedom and responsibility much more stable.

5. Ten fundamental issues in the Social Teaching of the Church

The following ten principles highlight major themes in the social teaching of the Church during the last century:

1. Dignity of the human person;
2. Common good and community;
3. Option for the poor;
4. Human rights and responsibilities;
5. Government's roles and subsidiarity;
6. Economic justice;
7. Stewardship of God's creation;
8. Promotion of peace and disarmament;
9. People's participation;
10. Global solidarity and human development.

6. The social mission of the Church and of the laity is constitutive and not optional

6.1. Dignity of the human person

The belief in the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching. This principle is grounded in the idea that the person is made in the image of God.

The person is the clearest reflection of God among us.

Women and men have a significant place in the social order. Human dignity can be recognised and protected only in communion with others.

The fundamental question to ask about any social development is: what is happening to the people involved?

6.2. The common good and the community

The human person is both sacred and social: we realize our dignity and rights in relationship with others, in community.

Human dignity can only be realized and protected in the context of relationships with the wider society.

The way we organize our society, in economics and politics, in law and policy, directly affects human dignity and the ability of individuals to grow in community.

Everyone has a responsibility to contribute to the good of the whole society, to the common good.

The common good is the sum total of all those conditions of social living - economic, political, cultural, legal, religious, customary - which make it possible for women and men to readily and fully achieve the perfection of their humanity.

Individual rights are always expressed within the context of the promotion of the common good.

There is also an international common good.

6.2.1. THE COMMON GOOD AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

“Social responsibility” - the human building of the world - is not “secular” in the sense of being outside God’s plan, but it is intimately linked with the dynamics of God’s reign.

Therefore faith and justice are necessarily linked together. Living justly requires us to be involved in the structures through which we organise our society - that is, the political, economic, social, religious, legal and cultural structures.

6.3. *The option for the poor*

The moral test of a society is seen from the way it treats its most vulnerable members.

The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of a nation or of a civil society.

We are called to look at public policy decisions in terms of how they affect the poor.

A healthy community can be achieved only if its members give special attention to those with special needs, to those who are poor and marginalized.

6.4. *Human rights and responsibilities*

Human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met.

Every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency, starting from food, shelter and clothing, employment, health care, and education.

Corresponding to these rights are wider reciprocal duties and responsibilities.

6.5. *Role of governments and subsidiarity*

The State has a positive and unavoidable moral function.

It is an instrument to promote human dignity, to protect human rights and to build the common good.

All people have a right and a responsibility to participate in political institutions so that the government, with everybody's participation, may reach its objectives.

It is an instrument to promote human dignity, to protect human rights, and to build the common good.

Responsibilities and decisions should be given all possible attention at individual, community and local institutions level.

The setting up of mediating structures regarding families, neighbourhoods, community groups, small businesses and local government and participation therein should be encouraged.

6.6. Economic justice

The economy must serve people, not the other way round.

All workers have a right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, and to safe working conditions.

The economy is for the people and the resources of the earth are to be shared equitably by all.

There has never been such profound inequality in the world

The distribution of global consumption (2011) shows sharp inequalities.

Human work is the key to all social contemporary social problems.

All governments and industry should aim at full employment.

In the productive process, work should have precedence over capital and over technology.

Fair salaries and workers' rights to organise themselves should be respected.

6.7. The management of creation

The goods of the earth are gifts from God, and they are intended by God for the benefit of everyone.

There is a "social mortgage" that guides our use of the world's goods, and we have a responsibility to care for these goods as stewards and trustees, not as mere consumers and users.

The way we treat the environment is a measure of our stewardship, a sign of our respect for the Creator.

All property has a 'social mortgage'.

People are to respect and share the resources of the earth, since we are all part of the community of creation. The right to private property is a fundamental right but it is not absolute and untouchable.

It is subordinate to the right to common use, to the fact that the goods of the earth are meant to be shared by all.

6.8. Promotion of peace and disarmament

Catholic teaching promotes peace as a positive action which directs our deeds. John Paul II says: "Peace is not just the absence of war. It involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. It involves collaboration and binding agreements." In the Social Doctrine there is a close relationship between peace and justice. Peace is the fruit of justice and depends on a just social order among human beings.

6.9. People's participation

Society should be structured in a way that allows for dialogue between its different sectors and does not foster polarisation between classes or other groupings.

In choosing a particular system, people should not allow themselves to be deceived by the language used. e.g. "Public ownership" of different economic enterprises, might be a deceptive title, since it may refer to a kind of "state capitalism", which leaves real power concentrated in the hands of a relatively small managerial group. Similarly, a "free enterprise system" might in practice be one that concentrates power unduly in the hands of a few.

6.10. Solidarity and global development

We are one human family. Our responsibilities to each other cross national, racial, economic and ideological differences.

We are called to work for justice at global level.

Rich countries are responsible for poor nations. The structure for international order should reflect global justice.

7. Co-responsibility for the humanosphere

Responsibility is the word which unites all the other key factors which determine today's way of life: people, planet, profit.

A new sense of *responsibility* inspires all the current global changes. Public institutions, civil societies and private and public companies act and behave with a sense of responsibility in all they do: from the services or products they give, to the way they deliver or sell... from the workplace to the marketplace, from family life to ecclesial life...

A new sense of *responsibility* inspires all modern global changes.

Development, security and human rights are not an end in themselves; they reinforce one another and depend on each other.

"In our interconnected world, the human family will not enjoy development without security, it will not enjoy security without development, and it will enjoy neither without respect for human rights".

(Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, 2000)

A new sense of *responsibility* inspires all modern global changes.

It is time to recognize that human capital and natural capital are as important as financial capital.

“Let us face the fact that the old model has collapsed. We need to create a new one, a new model for dynamic growth, a new paradigm based on stable economies and on decent jobs and opportunities for all”.

(UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, May 2012)

8. The forces which are changing co-responsible trends

1. Globalization
2. Digitalization
3. Empowerment = a truer co-responsibility

8.1 Globalization

What are the global public goods? (1)

Global public goods are commodities, services or resources with shared benefits. These have two characteristics:

- they produce benefits that are impossible to prevent everyone from enjoying;
- their consumption by one individual does not detract from that of another.

An example of a global public good is clean air.

What are the global public goods? (2)

International public goods (global and regional) address issues that:

- are deemed to be important to the international community, to both developed and developing countries;
- typically cannot, or will not, be adequately addressed by individual countries or entities acting alone;
- and in such cases are best addressed collectively on a multilateral basis.

Why do we need to care more about globalization now more than before?

<i>Some examples before</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>Today and tomorrow</i>
HIV infections worldwide	0 (1960)	40 millions (2005)
Carbon dioxide	300 ppm (1992)	380 ppm (2005)
Refugees worldwide	5.7 millions (1978)	19,2 millions (2005)
Avion flu	Negligible (2005)	Serious threat (2010)

CO-RESPONSIBILITY ON GLOBAL PUBLIC GOODS IS WEAK

- Institutional arrangements are unclear;
- Cross-border externalities can discourage provision of GPGs
- Policy making is typically at national level; International cooperation is difficult to negotiate and to implement;
- United Nations, development banks, regional institutions are part of the problem.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IS VIRTUAL AND LACKS TRUE CO-RESPONSIBLE

- State-centred politics and GPG deficit necessitate international cooperation;
- Cooperation can be in the form of international laws, agreements, and protocols;
- Such cooperation could be difficult to obtain and its objectives even harder to implement.

8.2. The digitalization of social networks makes them more powerful and makes them more difficult to control

Social networks have eliminated distances, differences and indifferences.

8.3. Acquisition and transfer of power

People look up to the government to solve big problems.

Today 90% of the consumers and 85% of the executives believe that non-state institutions should play a broader role in society.

All kinds of human organizations have re-discovered the sense of responsibility and of empowerment

The expansion of the humanosphere is giving more power to all the protagonists.

Society, the environment, justice and peace are the centre of the humanosphere and should be a priority in family life, in education, in politics and in business. Greater attention could be given to the humanosphere by exploiting the sense of responsibility that runs through all corners of society and institutions.

This helps co-responsibility to flourish in all areas of lay activities. It puts believers in a position to live their sense of responsibility.

9. There are different views on social responsibility

- People have lost control of their life and their future; greed rules the world;
- It might appear and/or to be only cosmetic, without a genuine revolution of the Nations socio-economic governance;
- A restriction on free trade?

For example Milton Friedman (1912-2006):

Business has no responsibilities! *"The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits."* *"What does it mean to say that business has responsibilities? Only people can have responsibilities!"*.

"...in a free society business has one and only one social responsibility: to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, that is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud."

10. Carroll's social responsibility pyramid (see chart)

Philanthropic responsibility	By being good social citizens
Ethical responsibility	By being ethical. Doing good and avoiding evil
Legal responsibility	By respecting the law which codifies the good and the bad
Economic responsibility	By being profitable, basic principle on which all the others are based

11. Towards a stronger sense of the humanosphere, to get out of the desertification of responsibility

Identify and act with a sense of urgency.

1. Re-design social responsibilities at the workplace;
2. Reach out and involve the community;
3. Become environment friendly;
4. Re-design the market focusing on people's needs;
5. Engage the civil society;
6. Join excellence networks of social responsibility for the common good.

11.1 Re-design social responsibility at the workplace

- Staff sense of belonging;
- Team work;
- Respect the roles of all staff;
- Respect of labour rights;
- Healthy and safe workplace;
- Focus on excellence in the process and of the products.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE WORKPLACE

- Staff development is fundamental to improve responsibility;
- foster learning at all stages and through the right mechanism;
- use the new media and case studies;
- monitor staff development through annual performance rating by the management;
- in-depth discussions on responsibilities, skills, competencies, performance and development needs.

MORE RESPONSIBILITY GENERATES MORE EFFICIENCY, LESS ABSENTEEISM, AND...

Employees need to know that the institution appreciates their contribution;

Providing excellent working conditions leads to tangible savings from decreased recruitment costs and lower absenteeism.

AND... INCREASED ABILITY TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN STAFF

As society expects better social and environmental responsibility from businesses, so potential employees look for companies with strong values so that they can feel proud working for them and will want to maintain the job.

A GREATER SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY MAXIMIZES EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

Staff satisfaction is a key benefit for undertaking programs which entail responsibility.

In general, people prefer working for 'good' companies, and if satisfied, probably, the employees involved will be more motivated and committed and thus more productive.

11.2 Reaching out and involving the community

Active involvement in the local and global community.

Seek to support and to work in collaboration with the community where one lives or works.

Encourage lay people to involve themselves in the community and in philanthropic causes.

11.3 Become environment friendly

Create, experience, enforce, celebrate a sense of communal responsibility to protect the environment.

Act incessantly to minimize environmental damage and take steps beyond what is required by law.

Inform and educate friends and colleagues in local and global environmental ethos and encourage the duty of acting in a responsible way.

11.4. Re-design the market focusing on people's fundamental needs

The United Nations Global Compact (UNGC).

A strategic collaboration between firms and the UNO in order to improve conditions of work and co-responsibility on the part of workers and firms.

The agreement is taken from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Biennial and independent audits of the firms which represent the major part of the volume of the annual purchases.

Random independent checks on a sample of firms.

The UNO Global Agreement expects companies to embrace, support and declare, within their sphere of influence, a set of values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights at international level; and ensure that they are not accomplices in human rights abuses.

LABOUR STANDARD

Businesses should respect the right of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all types of forced and compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges; undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and encourage the development and diffusion of environment friendly technologies.

ANTI-CORRUPTION

Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Members of the UNO Global Agreement per every million inhabitants

Germany	1,5	United Kingdom	1,9	Austria	2,5
Finland	2,3	Switzerland	4,9	Norway	5,0
Sweden	5,9	France	7,9	Denmark	16,5

11.5 Involving the civil society

Reach every day the lives of as many people as possible;

Keep in mind that your service or business has an impact far beyond the site where it operates.

Show a commitment to be ready to participate with and listen to social, economic, and political groups interested in business or institution concerned.

Be committed and stimulate a genuine dialogue with external groups which are open to the future.

11.6 Join networks which assume responsibility for the common good

For example We Serve, Oikoumene, Red cross, Rotary International, Médecins sans frontières.

Caritas Internationalis, Transparency International, Lawyers without Borders, Amnesty International.

World Economic Forum. World Wildlife Fund, The Green Grid: a consortium of IT companies and professionals seeking to lower the overall consumption of power in data centres around the globe.

Climate savers Computing Initiative: brings together industry, consumers and conservation organizations to increase the energy efficiency of computers and servers.

The UN Global Compact: promotes collaboration in the building of the social legitimacy of businesses and markets.

12. Talking and preaching is part of the problem...

Co-responsibility is part of the solution.

13. Either change or... die!

"In a time of drastic change, it is the unlearned who inherit the future. The learned find themselves equipped to live in a world that no longer exists". (Eric Hoffer, US social writer, 1902-1983)

14. The evolution of social responsibility in business

1970:	Shareholders' responsibility
1980:	Philanthropic projects
Early 1990:	Transparency in business' management
Late 1990s:	Encourage stakeholders' involvement
Early 2000:	Healthy competitiveness
Late 2000s:	Collective responsibility of the business

15. The evolution of the sustainability of business

1970:	Quality management
1980:	Health and safety at the place of work
Early 1990:	Respectful management of the environment
Late 1990:	Health, safety and environment
Early 2000:	Three basic priorities, Profit, Person, Planet
End 2000:	Sustainable markets.

16. The failure of past social responsibility policies and their re-birth

The sense of responsibility in the past was incremental, marginal, anti-economical.

These are the reasons why this sense of responsibility failed particularly when addressing the very issues we claim to be most concerned about.

A revolution is needed and if this succeeds, this will change the way we speak and practise our responsibility and finally the way of carrying out our transactions and manage the public goods.

17. Social responsibility in the future

It will be based on creativity, glocality, graduality, circularity, ability to react/to answer adequately to new situations.

18. The Internet could help to contribute towards a more effective social responsibility

WWWeb

Collective information
 Networks in collaboration
 Partecipation by users
 Social media
 Pooling up of knowledge
 Checking of programmes before
 New communication philosophy

Social Responsibility

Global common good
 Innovative partnerships
 Activists' involvement
 Panels of activists
 Reports within reasonable time
 Social undertakings launched
 A new way of doing business

19. Social responsibility tomorrow: a new design for businesses and services

Value creation - good governance - societal contribution - environmental integrity.

“Social responsibility can only be resilient if it is part of the DNA of an organisation, i.e. it will only survive the vagaries of fickle markets, fluctuating profits, financial crises and leadership whims if it is totally embedded in the corporate culture, strategy and governance systems”. (Wayne Visser, 2008)

20. The new design of social responsibility

Model of Social Responsibility 2.0.

<i>DNA Code</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
Value creation	economic development	Beneficial products, good inclusive business
Good governance	institutional effectiveness	trasparency, ethical conduct
Societal contribution	stakeholders orientation	Philanthropy, fair labour practices
Environmental integrity	sustainable ecosystems	Renewable resources, zero-waste production

21. From the past social responsibility model towards the new model

<i>Social responsibility model</i>	<i>Sustainability and responsibility</i>
Philanthropic	Collaborative
Risk-based	Reward-based
Image-driven	Performance-driven
Specialized	Integrated
Standardized	Diversified
Marginal	Scalable
Western	Global

22. From the past model of social responsibility towards the new model: changes

<i>Past</i>	<i>Present and future</i>
Vertex of the pyramid	Base of the pyramid
Charity projects	Social enterprise
Social responsibility indices	Social responsibility rating
Social responsibility departments	Social responsibility incentives at all levels of the enterprise
Ethical consumerism	Ethical production
Product liability	Responsibility for the production methods
Social responsibility reports	Data steaming of social responsibility open to all
Stakeholders groups	Social networks
Process standards	Performance standards

23. Think bigger

Sustainability is... a set of conditions and trends in a given system that can continue indefinitely.

Sustainable development is... a strategic process of continuous change in the direction of sustainability.

24. The challenge ahead for new social responsibility policies

The success of the new social responsibility policies will depend on: Creativity, Scalability, Responsiveness, Glocality, Circularity.

25. Social responsibility as the door which gives access to new public-private and state-society partnerships

Social responsibility > social market > social media

Social responsibility:

Understand expectations	>	Understand situations
Two way communication	>	Trust
Transparency	>	Social acceptance

Sustainability

Limited resources	>	Efficiency
Strategic means of observation	>	Technical innovations
Operational excellency	>	Competitivity

26. the new global risks (from the World Economic Forum, WEF)

Committed to improving the state of the world, the WEF has identified 80 global “threats”.

Which are the global threats in this coming decade?

- Global Risk 2011 (6th edition) analyzes the global risks in the coming decade.
- Provides a high level overview of 37 global risks, and how they are interconnected.

How are they interconnected?

1. Cross-cutting risks: these aggravate other risks and inhibit the ability to re-act.
2. Link between risks with strong interconnections.
3. Special cases: high level of uncertainty.
4. Risks which have to be watched.

Cross-cutting risks aggravate other risks and inhibit effective response.

Economic imbalances: one of the most serious risks of this decade in terms of impact is under-estimated. Disparity between and within nations leads to social fragmentation, undermines national solidarity due to the weakening of traditional/institutional trust and replaces these with “tribes/diaspora”.

Global governance failure: risks to paralyze global challenges.

Is governance proceeding in a confused way?

Will it come to nothing like “G20, G2, G.zero”?

Will it be partly replaced by more agile new structures? e.g. non State bodies. Or will we go back and abandon definitely a coordinated global governance?

CLUSTER #1 – MACRO-ECONOMIC IMBALANCES

Global governance failure > Economic disparity

Three negative and non-exclusive scenarios:

- Frequent fiscal crisis and crisis in banks in developed economies.
- Very fluid liquidity of asset bubbles in emerging economies, increased pressure on currencies.
- Stagflation of advanced economies and inflation in those emerging.

CLUSTER #2 – ILLEGAL ECONOMIC IMBALANCES

Contagion of other risks

- Illicit trade is hard to quantify, perhaps 7-10% of the global economy and of the global growth.
- It heavily influences other risks: fragile States with effects on geopolitical conflicts and terrorism.

CLUSTER #3. FOOD, ENERGY, WATER

Feeding the next billion people

- 1 billion more people by 2020.
- 50% increase in the food demand by 2030.
- 30% increase in the water demand by 2030.
- 40% increase in the energy demand by 2030 aggravating climate change.

CLUSTER #4. NON-CENTRAL RISKS WHICH COULD BECOME CENTRAL

Slowing down of the Chinese economy > if real, it could bring about political instability in all the region.

New technology threats > unintentional consequences of the synthetic biology, nanotechnology and genetic engineering.

Marine management: experts differ widely on the possibility of marine territory disputes and the decline of fish stocks.

Space security: systematically underestimated.

Five trends to watch out for

Cyber security: Cyber theft, espionage, war, terrorism are evolving rapidly but are not well understood.

Demographics:

- Ageing population in advanced economies adds to fiscal stress.
- Emerging economies which do not create jobs enrage young people.

Resources security: fluctuating prices of raw materials and of energy

De-Globalization:

- Economic nationalism and anti-immigration sentiments.
- Blocking global trade mechanisms e.g. restrictions on the movement of goods.

Weapons of mass destruction:

- CBRN risks.
- Nuclear proliferation.
- Illegal acquisition.

27. Governments cannot do it alone

Old systems and institutions simply cannot cope with the new complexities and their rapidity.

“These challenges require the involvement of the entire society; The role of public relations and co-responsibility is therefore the key.” (Klaus Schwab, World Forum of Public Relations 2010)

28. Beyond 2015: imaging our future

Co-responsibility beyond 2015: which are the threats and the challenges a sustainable governance of global public goods has to face?

In 2015:

Two billion people will be living on less than \$ 2.50 a day.

One billion people will not have adequate access to clean water.

About 2.4 billion people will not have a decent energy source.

1.2 billion will be suffering from chronic hunger.

All this is morally unacceptable.

29. A century of development 1900–2000

- Global population: x 4
- Global economy: x 14
- Industrial production: x 40
- Use of energy: x 16
- Carbon dioxide emissions x 17
- Sulphur dioxide emissions: x 13
- Ocean catches of fish: x 35
- Number of pigs: x 9
- Forest areas: x 0,8
- Agricultural land: x 2
- Blue whales: x 0,0025

30. Chronic poverty challenges world justice

In spite of the spectacular successes of nations like China, Thailand, Malaysia and Brazil in raising living standards and in spite of advances secured by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), climate change is one of the issues that threaten to worsen the situation by raising sea levels, by increasing drought and reducing crop yields.

**31. The little known mechanism of co-responsibility
to create poverty-free societies**

Social mobility	>	Social industries
Business formation	>	Social responsibility
Access to credit	>	Financial availability for innovation
Access to market	>	Entrepreneurs closer to markets

“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and re-learn”.
Alvin Toffler, writer on future societies, 1928
(from *Creare una nuova civiltà: Le politiche della terza ondata*, di Alvin e Heidi Toffler)

32. Examples of people in action for change and co-responsibility

Those who are culturally creative know how to: invent, imagine, care for, explore new ways, come out with new solutions, inspire others, help the human race to progress.

www.arcmdg.ait.asia www.sandrocalvani.it

EXERCISES IN CO-RESPONSIBILITY

Introduction to the Workshops for Bishops, priests and lay people

FRANCO MIANO

ICA National President

Responsibility, co-responsibility, sanctity

The idea of responsibility/co-responsibility immediately brings to mind the word “response”, which in its turn brings us to another question. Responsibility, if taken in its full sense, is closely linked with one’s vocation: it is the answer to a question, which stems from within, which comes from the Lord, and which we try to follow after having discerned, encouraged and supported by our brethren and by the community. Responsibility is inseparably linked to the acknowledgement of one’s vocation.

For its members, an association is an important place where they can exercise and develop the dynamics of question and answer. In fact, it is a space where one succeeds in discovering the gift which God has bestowed on each and every one through an ongoing “exercise”, helped by others, most particularly by the testimony of those who have already taken definite decisions in life and are happily following these decisions in their everyday life, and as Benedict XVI pointed out in his message to the participants of the Italian Catholic Action XIV Assembly, they have “before them the example of men and women who are pleased with their faith”. In an association, all this does not happen in an artificial way but it comes about naturally, in all the ordinary circumstances and in all interpersonal relations.

Also, when a person “joins” an association as a member, he understands that he is committing himself to a communitarian destination. This means that one cannot receive a gift and claim to keep it to himself, but one has to offer it to the community, to

society and to the world. The good news which we have received and of which we are responsible, has to be passed on and made available to others. And here we have a basic point between responsibility and co-responsibility: we must leave aside the dimension of "ownership" and adopt a spirit of gratuity. This attitude is testified by the option taken by Catholic Action, whose proper vocation lies in being an answer to a gift shared by all and putting it at the service of all.

In actual fact, if each one of us responds to his proper vocation and so accepts its responsibility, there is still a common call to sanctity, as reaffirmed by Vatican council II, and in a certain sense, here we are all co-responsible. The fact that we belong to an association, which promotes this vocation and is an authentic school of sanctity, encourages and stimulates this calling in us. This is definitely not an interior or spiritual sanctity, but – or rather – strongly incarnated. It is an active and concrete sanctity in the ecclesial journey and in the history of men and is thus full responsibility and co-responsibility in real life. In fact, in Catholic Action, the call to sanctity is not only a personal call but is also a communitarian call. Members assume the responsibility to lead a holy life, to discover the project which God has for the good of the individual members and for the Association, so as to accept His will and "live and act in a holy way".

Catholic Action helps us to understand that even along the way to sanctity, a way, which is so personal and unique, we are called to be together. According to Paul, we are "called to be holy together" (1Co 1:2).

Along this journey, we have the support of the many saints and blessed who were members of this Association; that "crown of faces" who are effective points of reference and who, even today, encourage us to answer in the affirmative the question, which Benedict XVI put to Catholic Action on the 4th May 2008. The question was: "Is it possible for you to transform your life into a masterpiece of sanctity?"

Our effort towards communion

Responsibility, co-responsibility and sanctity all lead us to intensify our efforts towards communion which is the fundamental breath of our lives and of our Christian life. Within this perspective, all our Christian commitment, all our apostolate stem from this fundamental urge. “The faithful are therefore called to engage in the apostolate as individuals in the varying circumstances of their life. They should remember, nevertheless, that man is naturally social and that it has pleased God to unite those who believe in Christ into the People of God (cfr. *1 Pt* 2:5-10) and into one body (cfr. *1Co* 12:12)” (AA 18).

Here we have two different points of view: one coming from an anthropological point of view; the other from an ecclesiological reflection. In fact, one sees the need, engraved in human nature, to develop social relations, because a person’s experience can only find its fulfilment in friendly interactions with other men. One can also see that organised apostolate answers to God’s wish to see Christians united as His people, to see them living united as members of one body. Organised apostolate is therefore an answer to human and Christian needs and at the same time “signifies the communion and unity of the Church in Christ” (AA 18).

John Paul II in *Christifideles Laici*, no. 20, says “Church communion then is a gift, a great gift of the Holy Spirit, to be gratefully accepted by the lay faithful, and at the same time to be lived with a deep sense of responsibility. This is concretely realized through their participation in the life and mission of the Church, to whose service the lay faithful put their varied and complementary ministries and charisms”.

In Loreto, on the 5th September 2004, the Pope entrusted Catholic Action with a clear call: “The second task is *communion*: try to promote a spirituality of unity with the Pastors of the Church, with all your brethren in faith and with the other ecclesial associations. May you be the leaven of dialogue with all men of good will.” And again, in his message to the Catholic Action

extraordinary Assembly, he said: “You have chosen to *live, as lay people, for the Church* and for the totality of its mission, ‘dedicated – as your Bishops have told you – with direct and organic links with the diocesan community, to help everyone rediscover the great value of a faith lived in communion, and to make of each Christian community a family which takes care of all its sons’. (cfr. *Letter from the Permanent Episcopal Council of the Italian Episcopal Conference, 12 March 2002*)”.

And the exhortation which Benedict XVI made in his speech to the Italian Catholic Action, on the 4th May 2008, reaffirms this when he said: “By assuming the general apostolic aim, in a spirit of close union with Peter’s successor and with an active co-responsibility with your Pastors, you incarnate a ministry, balanced between the universal Church and the local Church, which calls on you to give an on-going and irreplaceable contribution towards communion”.

This is an exercise in communion which is not simply *ad intra* or to be understood – once again - in an irenic way, but it is a full, intense and fruitful co-responsibility, which makes you feel one people and all brothers and deeply dedicated to others. In fact, on the 4 May, the Pope goes on to say: “This deep ecclesial breath, which identifies your associative charism, is not a sign of an uncertain or an out-dated identity; rather it is a sign of the great responsibility with which you take your vocation as lay people: enlightened and sustained by the action of the Holy Spirit and constantly rooted in the Church’s journey. You are provoked to rediscover, with all courage, new ways of merging the announcement of Christ’s salvation to contemporary men and the promotion of the over-all good of individuals and of the entire human family”.

A co-responsible, social, ecclesial sense

The effort for communion expresses and, in a certain sense, resumes the multiplicity of forms of co-responsibility with a close

link between the natural, social and ecclesial dimension of a Church as the people of God.

In Catholic Action, one gets the warm feeling of being at home and knows that even the small groups in which one operates are part of that unique CA family – and naturally – in a wider sense, of the Church, - whose style we learn and experiment right from our childhood and keeps accompanying each one of us along the way even into the future. This does not necessarily mean that we are to assume an irenic attitude as much as making together courageous choices, keeping in mind people’s pleas and fully appreciating each contribution with all its simplicity and creativity, thus assuming responsibility of everyone and altogether feel co-responsible.

The association is thus a place where we can share and in which, as in all families, different generations can interact, discuss ideas and expectations, dreams and disillusion, disappointments and joys. In this way, it is possible to cultivate and strengthen an authentic and effective style of relationships. This style puts love for the individual and his way of living as its focal point and fosters a love, which makes us able to face conflicts with a clear and open mind and to foster communion and hope in people’s hearts in our everyday lives. For example, in the parish, Catholic Action has always been a “gymnasium” which fosters an ecclesial and social sense and an urge for unity and integration. It also strives to be a testimony of that communion, which is a gift and a commitment, and entails a transformation of our itineraries so that they may lead towards a fraternity which has no limits.

Associations, therefore, have the role of promoting an authentic and co-responsible humanity. This also serves as an example for the extra-associative community. Considering the solitude experienced by contemporary man, associations are expected to be able to regenerate the beauty of encountering, to be safe and joyful points of reference in any cross-road in one’s life. Living an associative life, therefore, means launching oneself into the everyday life of the people and trying to diffuse an authentic style of communion and a

great urge to establish good relations, which, today, at a time when ephemeral and narcissistic attitudes prevail, can be the best opportunity to announce and to be witnesses of the Good News. In short, this means educating CA members to become responsible for and co-responsible with others for others and carers of their brethren. Therefore, Catholic Action's "we" acquires a special prophetic importance in a historical period wherein disintegrating forces, models of divisions and egoistic temptations are always becoming more evident. We should always be looking for unity in the richness of diversity: this is where the prophecy of Catholic Action lies. Particularly in this turn of history, Catholic Action is called to intensify it in order to re-establish links which penetrate into people's lives.

Belonging to an association helps one to develop and experience relationships; it educates him, helps him to grow and instils in him the sense of "we" and helps him to cherish its beauty. And it is a "we" which does not end with the group or with the association but broadens, widens and opens until it embraces the diocesan and universal Church, the region, Italy and the world. It is therefore a "we" with a strong ecclesial and social value. It is a "we" which becomes "an added value" in the building of communion and co-responsibility in every place and situation.

In fact, the associative experience does not become a "pure organisational factor", but, from the human and spiritual aspect, which enlivens the encounter between persons, it becomes – as stated in the CA formative Project - «a familiarity which leads to communion» and an «involvement which leads to co-responsibility».

Associative life is in itself a place where the members live communion and co-responsibility. The structures, which help them to mature and to deepen their associative life, are not simply means which facilitate the encounter between "I" and "you", but they ensure that the fruits, which overflow from these relations and which make us "we", are not lost. In this sense, the places which

house this associative life are authentically formative and are irreplaceable schools of fraternity and offer an on-going exercise in ecclesiality.

Co-responsibility in the Church: the *sensus ecclesiae*

There is a profound and deep link between communion and co-responsibility. Precisely because linked with communion – or rather derived from it – co-responsibility is experimented, lived and experienced concretely through belonging to an association certainly not in an active or “unionist” sense, but rather in a spiritual and participative sense.

Card. Tettamanzi, in his opening speech at the IV Ecclesial Convention, explained that the Church's communion, “in its interior spirit and in its historical reality, flourishes and gives fruit always and only as an undivided and indivisible triad: communion-collaboration-co-responsibility. The Church's communion leads to collaboration: from the heart and the soul to the hands, to concrete deeds in life, to the undertaking of initiatives, in short, to reciprocal gifts and service (cfr. *Romans 12:9ss*). And, in their turn, communion and collaboration cannot but lead to different forms of true and proper co-responsibility, because encounter and dialogue are between free and conscious subjects, between minds which weigh up realities and wills which freely face and give shape to those same realities, and this in areas of discernment and of evangelical-pastoral decisions. Definitely, it is a co-responsibility which embraces different abilities and different roles of the varied members of the Church, but always an authentic co-responsibility”.

In his presentation at the Convention, Msgr. Brambilla made an appeal along these lines when he said: “...we should cultivate a *communal lay vocation*. Today more than ever, lay people are expected to give witness together with others and in all possible ways. Witnessing cannot be an isolated act, but it is only possible in ecclesial communion... Testimony cannot be given if not within the web of ecclesial communion relations. On the horizon there appears

a time when the Church is either a community which embraces many charisms, services and missions or simply it cannot exist... Lay people should watch out for the dangers of ecclesiastic bureaucracy. Instead they should promote and favour an integrated pastoral work, the reading of new signs in the life of the Church, the encouragement of prophetic projects, even if partial, the ability to be part of cultural, social and civic spheres especially as regards the younger generations. The lay person is a 'synodical' man, able to 'advance together with others' (*syn-odós*), above all to open new ways. ... (Let us think) of a Church made up of people who work, so that, from simple collaborators in the hierarchical apostolate, the laity become co-responsible in fostering a common evangelical zeal" (*Theological pastoral horizon*, presentation at the IV National Ecclesial Convention Verona 2006).

This is strongly felt by associations, which for quite some time have been offering formative programmes to foster an authentic co-responsibility which is not based exclusively on functional aspects. Feeling a sense of belonging to the Church as "people who believe", calls for a co-responsibility which means sharing in the Church's mission. It also has an added value precisely because we do not do this only as individuals, but as an associated group of lay people.

Probably, we should also keep a double track. On the one side we should ensure that we are part of pastoral life and are ready to give our share whenever our collaboration is requested and to get involved in the different spheres of pastoral life. On the other hand, lay associations have the task of opening new ways and foreseeing new possibilities which fosters an encounter between God and his people and helping to achieve a truly integrated pastoral action in the Church. It is therefore opportune that lay associations promote a greater qualification of ecclesial service, especially in a situation where, very often, the emergency seems to be the most widespread element. They are continually pestered by multiple problems which require immediate solutions and to do this they risk proposing

initiatives which seem disconnected between themselves and which have very little to do with people's growth.

It is thus unavoidable that associations continue to offer formation itineraries which give co-responsibility its most authentic significance. In an interview on the *Rivista del Clero* (Magazine for the Clergy), Mgr Brambilla re-affirms that the education for co-responsibility, in an ecclesial sense, "is the lymph in Catholic Action's most beautiful tradition. Today, this should mean educating people to the *sensus ecclesiae* and not simply educating lay 'collaborators in the hierarchical apostolate', but 'lay people who are co-responsible for the same mission'. When a person is 'co-responsible', he, not only, gives a hand, but shares a common dream, works on projects with others, shares the same passion, assumes personal risks, as in the case of the prophets of the New Testament who were not isolated prophets. They can be prophets only together, also assuming a personal responsibility, but within the life-giving atmosphere of an ecclesial consciousness" (11/2008).

Therefore, one can be co-responsible only if one is sustained by a great passion: an ecclesial passion. Also, only, if one feels at home in the Church. On the occasion of Catholic Action's 140th anniversary, Card. Bagnasco said: "Dear friends, you know what having an ecclesial sense means: you know it and you live it as simply and as deeply as your home affairs". Co-responsibility and participation are not to be taken simply as "belonging" to an organism, but as "feeling part" of a shared life: it is that *having close to one's heart* which leads to *taking care of*.

Co-responsible in a passionate participation

This is a great task carried out by organised lay associations, which precisely with their great passion for the Church, offer participatory courses which are a living experience in co-responsibility. Today we realise how important this is. Today's crisis in participation, which, by now, is very evident, can only be

overcome by helping people to go through meaningful experiences in authentic participation.

As Catholic Action has made the democratic option as one of its fundamental characteristics, in Catholic Action this is a daily experience. A democracy which can be seen not only when members vote to elect their leaders but it is experienced day by day in the discussions and in the planning of the lines of action which orientate the direction which their Association should take. A democracy which does not limit itself to the planning and executing stages only but also carries out a careful evaluation and corrects where necessary and keeps moving on; that is, a democracy which is a school and a course in full co-responsibility.

In short, giving importance to the democratic dimension, at a time when the logic of the 'I' prevails over that of the 'we', means that we still believe strongly in the importance of discussions, participation, co-responsibility, which are the fundamental values which have always been unobtrusively and discreetly ingrained in the life of Catholic Action, of the Church and of the Country. In fact, as we have already said, co-responsibility is the concrete expression of communion, through the openness to share the choices which concern everybody.

Co-responsible with the pastors for the life of the Church and of the world

Undoubtedly, associated lay apostolate is a concrete expression of co-responsible communion especially with those who are witnesses, guides and guarantees of ecclesial communion, namely with their pastors. Catholic Action deliberately assumes co-responsibility with its pastors as one of its fundamental options and one of the four "characteristic notes" which identify it.

This is what John Paul II said in his message to the CA extraordinary Assembly: "As lay people you have chosen to form an Association whose distinctive link with your Pastors safeguards and promotes the members' *constitutive lay characterization*. The spirit

of this 'syntax of communion', which characterises the ecclesiology of Vatican II and the rules of democratic participation to associative life, help you to express to the full the unity of the entire ecclesial Body of Christ and the variety of charisms and vocations, with full respect for the dignity and responsibility of every member of the People of God".

The Pope goes on to say: "I urge you to devote all your energies to the service of communion, in close unity with your Bishop, collaborating with him and with all the clergy in the 'ministry of the synthesis', so as to weave, a strong, tighter fabric of cordial communion, which is intensely human precisely because it is genuinely Christian".

Therefore, above all, this refers to co-responsibility and collaboration with the Bishops but also in everyday life, with priests. It was not a random decision when, on the occasion of the Year dedicated to the Priesthood, Catholic Action sent a Letter to priests, wherein it reaffirmed its desire to intensify and enrich its deep relation with pastors: "a spiritual friendship" which is not simply an end in itself but which is beneficial for the Church and for the world. "The Association – the text says -, with its rich tradition and in its ordinary life, has experienced and continues to experience the link between lay people and priests in a spirit of communion which is nourished by spiritual friendship and grows within co-responsibility in the service to the Church's mission".

These virtuous attitudes seem even more necessary for the future of the Churches in Italy, so that, they may help contemporary men and women to love the Lord of history ever more, to sustain children, young people and adults to understand that desire for God which characterises the life of every individual and which today takes on different traits; ranging from indifference to anxiety, from deep searching to gratification of the prodigious, from a courageous following, to actions of generous solidarity...

In these pressing situations calling for an ever more authentic and deeper encounter with the Gospel, we would like to renew

Catholic Action's commitment to make our Churches places where the Gospel shapes people's lives. It seems that this is the most significant meaning of pastoral action. It makes the announcement of the salvation, brought about by Jesus, lasting by reaching out in space and in time. We work closely with our priests so as to be a sign of that unity, which can speak to contemporary men about the Gospel; of that communion, which is a promise and a commitment for everybody, and which, in places marked by solitude, mistrust and individualism leads to that peace and serenity which today every woman and man craves for.

The daily fabric of lay people's conditions is today pressured by different demands which have a deep effect even on relations: job precariousness, changes in daily-life situations and increased mobility to mention only a few examples. Seeing this, we realise the need to consolidate the vital links between priests and lay people, with a little more humanity.

"With you, we mean to enrich the lives of our Christian communities in a way which helps them to experience the beauty and the tenderness of God's love. With you we want to renew our formation experiences, linked to daily life, which help to make our Christian faith more popular. We need to discern, helped by spiritual direction; to be guided and motivated by an intense sacramental life, with a special love for the Eucharist; to be helped to deepen our relation with the Lord, which grows especially through daily prayers. Sustained and accompanied by your priestly experience, therefore, we want to be and to be involved in those situations in life, where our presence, reflections and expertise as lay people are required, in order to be credible testimonies who respect others. Guided by your ministry, we wish to express our sympathy as Christian community not only by strengthening listening and dialogue but by continuing to be present with Gospel values and to support people in the spheres of affection and pain, as well as in public spheres... so that we may be always more authentically at the service of the Church's mission".

Belonging to a Catholic association means being in communion with priests, following itineraries of concrete formation leading to a co-responsibility which fosters sincere “friendly” relations with priests, cultivating a deep spiritual understanding which does not mean that there is always full agreement but which leads to the sharing of ideas and to the undertaking of projects with passion and determination. In this way, we can overcome the normal divergences which sometimes may arise because together we can turn them to something higher and thus raise even the quality of our personal relations.

With the ability to identify and utilize the methods and tools which foster co-responsibility

If co-responsibility has such an ideal and high value, it must be reflected concretely in everyday life: in the way priests and lay people take responsibility of the future of their Church and in the way they take decisions about the fundamental choices which help the community to give testimony of its faith in the places where it is rooted.

This can only be achieved if the internal relations of the ecclesial community are marked by dialogue and by a common effort leading to a communitarian discernment which could be an effective exercise in sharing.

And in this, we foresee a good opportunity to highlight the specific competence of lay people who “because of their formation and profession are in a position to contribute, through their expertise and specific experiences, towards communitarian discernment. Catholic Action’s contribution from this aspect was affirmed during the Ecclesial Convention held in Verona in the document *‘Volti e segni di speranza’ (Faces and signs of hope)*. This means that lay people’s involvement in the evangelising mission of the Church should not be as mere collaborators but as people who are co-responsible, thus acknowledging a fundamental dimension in the lay vocation”.

The pastoral Note after the Verona Convention, no. 24 – rightly entitled “*A demanding co-responsibility - way of communion*” says: “Co-responsibility in fact is an experience which is a concrete expression of communion through the willingness to share the options which concern all. This means that those places, which foster spiritual discernment and the ability to listen to each other and where discussions about current situations take place until well-thought out and fully-agreed upon decisions are taken, should be fully functional”.

Undoubtedly, Catholic Associations have a remarkable and significant contribution to make in this regard, as they offer an ongoing exercise in discernment which is developed, for example, within the Catholic Action groups, even through their formative itineraries. This experience, which also has a methodological connotation, could also serve to help in communitarian discernment.

The first places where dialogue between lay people and pastors can develop are undoubtedly Pastoral Councils whose contribution is highlighted once again in “*Volti e segni di speranza*”. “We should qualify these further because these can help to foster a communitarian reading of the signs of the times”.

Note (no.24) goes on to say: “This seems even more necessary, as the organs which facilitate ecclesial participation and especially Pastoral Councils – diocesan and parochial - are not going through happy times. The importance of co-responsibility urges us to give them new life through developing original ecclesial style and ways of reaching consensus and of assuming responsibility.

We particularly need places like these as they help people to experience that ecclesial responsibility which stems from their proper vocation. They are the places where the questions, which concern the life of the Church with all the problems within it and those faced by the whole of society, can be tackled. The joint and organic participation of all the members of the people of God is not

only an objective but it is a way of reaching our goal, that of a transparent and incisive evangelical presence”.

Co-responsible for communion. Associations, Groups, Movements

Communion among the different associations, groups and movements deserves particular mention. These are called, not only to live in communion within themselves but also to be in communion with the Church and among themselves. Thus they can show concretely that it is possible to live that ecclesial fraternity which makes them the “leaven of dialogue” and which in itself is an on-going exercise in formation for co-responsibility. Here we are talking about a journey which is well under way, as we can see from the many initiatives which a number of associations undertake together. Among these, we can mention the common formative text for members over 20 years of age, promoted by Catholic Action. But maybe it is necessary to follow this up with greater attention and involvement so that we may be ever more co-responsible, in communion and through communion.

In fact, *Christifideles Laici* (n. 29) clearly states: “Oftentimes these lay groups show themselves to be *very diverse* from one another in various aspects, in their external structures, in their procedures and training methods, and in the fields in which they work. However, they all come together in an all-inclusive and *profound convergence* when viewed from the perspective of their common purpose, that is, the responsible participation of all of them in the Church's mission of carrying forth the Gospel of Christ, the source of hope for humanity and the renewal of society.”

That is why the fourth National Ecclesial Convention insisted on the convergence among these lay associations. Definitely, this does not mean ignoring their individual specific character. On the contrary, through their specific identity, movements and associations can open up better to an inter-exchange of their gifts and this is the most beautiful element in reciprocity. In fact, the *Pastoral Note* after the IV Ecclesial Convention (n. 27) states: “These

last years, the lay faithful have been protagonists in an intense ecclesial experience, which has given the different groups – associations, movements and old and more recent communities – the richness of going through a way that makes different experiences and sensibilities gest closer. This helps them realize that the fact that they work together makes their initiatives more effective and a better united expression of Christian testimony. In spite of their diversity, they all get their inspiration from the Gospel and all have the same urge to manifest it in the world. But we have to accelerate the pace, which leads to a lay physiognomy, which is neither uniform, nor scattered or in opposition against each other, but is animated by a spirit of communion which generates a unitary testimony although manifested differently. This process of proximity and reciprocity is expressed in different ways ranging from informal occasions where they can get acquainted and establish friendly relations to occasions where they can discuss and collaborate. (...) The important role of creating a convergence among lay Associations, Movements and Groups falls on the Lay associations' Boards set up at diocesan, regional and national level. We appeal to them to commit themselves to give new life to their own physiognomy”.

Co-responsible *in* history, co-responsible *for* history

However, associations are good examples of formation in co-responsibility within the Church, as well as within civil society. It is a co-responsibility which stems from the Christian sense of history, from the consciousness that we believe in the God of history and that this history is the life of the persons whom He loves and whom we also love. Thus co-responsibility – we have repeatedly said this– always grows from love because it originates from Love.

The responsibility which everyone learns to carry, therefore, is not a burden which slows us down, but the passion for others, that passion which makes us prompter and quicker. It is the responsibility which can make us review the past, re-invent our own

history and look at limitations positively. It is a responsibility which has the sense and the passion for the future.

A responsibility of this type cannot be improvised: it can only result from a patient educational exercise and from auto-education. It is a formation which gives full value to participation and is fostered and experienced in Catholic Action. It is a formation which rules out any temptation of delegating and makes one feel a citizen and not an occasional guest in our cities. The task of educating in responsibility towards “the city of men” puts great demands on us: we are called to help each and every member and the entire Christian community to attain “a look which can penetrate into the crevices of life, an alertness to keep a critical eye on today’s ways of expression so as to be acquainted with them and to use them prophetically to communicate the beauty, the sense and the worth of a saved and redeemed life” (*Volti e segni di speranza*).

Educating in civil responsibility means having a Christian sense of history, having the patience to wait and the joy to sow; it means knowing that good can never be attained in full. The awareness of this is the other side of a true and sincere love for one’s city.

Those who realize the prevalent tension between the ultimate aim of man’s full promotion, which is never fully reached, and the acts of justice and solidarity, which can never fully rise up to the height of this goal, do not regard this limitation as a brake but as a further impulse towards a responsible and passionate commitment towards one’s own country.

Formation in civil responsibility thus also depends on one’s education towards the common good and leads to a deep reflection on goals and projects even if these seem to be opposed to current tendencies. Here we are talking about a relevant cultural research on “being together”. We are expected to “be together” even though we are aware that present times are difficult moments for so many people. Catholic Action is expected to “be together” by its very nature.

Vittorio Bachelet used to say: "This is a commitment which calls for an upright and strong ideal and for strict adherence to the important unchangeable principles of human co-existence always in keeping with the historical sense of the time. It also entails the ability to find ways and means whereby these principles can be applied" and a consciousness of the "need of a spiritual, intellectual, moral and technical preparation so as to be able to put into *concrete* practice those principles in everyday human co-existence in which one is called to live" (*L'educazione al bene comune, in Scritti civili*). (*Educating for the common good, in Civil Writings*)

With a sure compass in the III Millenary

11th October 1962-2012

50 YEARS AFTER THE SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Witnesses, images, perspectives for the future

Chiara Santomiero (IFCA press office) coordinated a soirée during which the testimonies from the different Countries have alternated with video projections of the event of the Council. All the participants have related about the years of the Council and of the post-conciliar period, highlighting the diversity of situations and the consequent difference reception.

At the same time they have underlined how the Council has renewed the Church in dialogue with the world, particularly through the lay people's commitment. Also Catholic Action's contribution before, during and after the Council until today, has come out.

GUIDED VISIT IN THE CITY OF IASI WITH VOLUNTEERS FROM CA ROMANIA (22-26 August)

The city of Iasi is the principal centre of Moldavia, with a population of over 300.000 inhabitants. The first information about the city dates back to 1407. From 1859 to 1862, under Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza, it became the capital of Bucharest and of Valacchia. When the capital became Bucharest, the city of Iasi continued to develop and remained an important centre in Romania, with an interesting cultural and artistic life.

The IFCA Assembly participants visited different museums: the Memorial Museum, the History Museum, the Romanian Literature Museum and the Culture Palace, impressive because of its size. They also admired the Copou Garden and the Botanic Garden of the city which is the largest in Romania.

An important visit was that to the new metropolitan Orthodox church, built in a neoclassical style, with frescoes of outstanding beauty. The church holds the relics of Saint Parascheva, patroness of Moldavia.

The last visit was to the Latin Catholic Bishop's House, which is found near the Cathedral of the Diocese of Iasi. The new Cathedral "Mary Our Queen" was built in the 90's because the old cathedral dedicated to the "Assumption of our Lady" was too small. The new cathedral, which has a circular shape, as a reminder of the crown of the Virgin Mary, culminates at the central part of the dome, with a 10 meter high cross. Inside, one can admire a mosaic of the Virgin Mary and those of the tabernacle which is situated behind the main altar. Other mosaics, which embellish the cathedral walls, depict the mysteries of the Rosary.

24th AUGUST

On the 24th August, in the morning, the IFCA Assembly participants went to the Catholic Marian Sanctuary of Cacica where a Mass was celebrated presided over by Msgr. Collazuol, Assistant of CA Argentina. After Mass they visited the Marian Sanctuary of Cacica, which was declared a Minor Basilica by Pope John Paul II during the Jubilee Year of the year 2000. Here one finds also a replica of the Grotto in Lourdes and a copy of the Famous Black Madonna of Czestachowa.

The Cacica Sanctuary is the largest Marian Sanctuary in the Dioceses of Iasi and every year, on the 15th August, on the feast of the Assumption of our Lady, crowds of lay faithful, even from other countries, gather here together. Some come on foot and others come in traditional costumes on carts, to pray and sing hymns to Our Lady

A visit to the Orthodox Monastery in **Voronet** followed. This Monastery is known all the world over for its colour, Voronet blue, which changes its tonality depending on the light and for the frescoes which depict the Universal Judgement. These frescoes, which cover all the external western walls, depict the part of the Apocalypse in a very full and detailed way, and repeats in a very original way the fresco by Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel. The Monastery in Voronet was built by Prince of Moldavia Stephen cel Mare (the Great) in the year 1488. The external paintings, done in 1547 during the principality of Petru Rares, are a masterpiece of medieval art in Moldavia.

After Voronet, the group visited the **Agapia Orthodox Monastery**, renowned for its museum. This museum houses important collections of sacred art objects and also the workshops where the religious carry out their work. It is the largest Orthodox female monastery in Romania with about 350 nuns. The frescoes

by Nicolae Grigorescu, done between 1858 and 1861, give a great artistic value to the monastery.

The last visit of the day was to the **Harlau Wine Museum**. Here the participants discovered that the history of the Moldovian people is intertwined with the traditions linked with wine-making. The day came to an end with the tasting of typical wines and gastronomic products of the region.

Marian Sanctuary in Cacica, Rumania

MISSIONARY MANDATE

HOMILY *John* 1:45-51

H.E. Msgr. LUIS ARMANDO COLLAZUOL
Bishop of Concordia, Argentina

As he heard the word "Follow me" from his Master, Philip, the fifth disciple of Jesus, immediately became his follower. His friend Nathanael, later called Bartholomew (Tholemeus'son) was the one who received the message.

Why was Nathanael able to believe in Jesus?

- Thanks to a witness: Philip who had listened to the calling and followed Jesus announced it to him and accompanied him to Jesus: "Come and see". "And how can they believe in him if they have never heard of him? And how will they hear of him unless there is a preacher for them? (*Rm* 10:14)
- And thanks to an inner disposition: "A man without falsity", that is without double messages, without double life that hinders the meeting with the Lord and overshadows the witness. "Blesseds are the pure in heart, because they shall see God" (*Mt* 5:8).

What did he believe in?

- First of all, he believed with human hope in Philip's witness: "We have found Him";
- But the witness and his friend's words were instrumental for his personal meeting with Jesus and for his faith: he confessed Jesus as "Master", "God's Son", "King of Israel".

What was the outcome of the meeting and the act of faith?

- Jesus' promise for a new light for his life "you will see even greater things", "they will see the open heavens"...
- and participation in the Master's plan: Nathanael - as a disciple (he followed the Lord), as an apostle (according to the tradition he preached the Gospel in India and in Armenia), and as a martyr (he drank the Lord's chalice).

The Church is entrusted with the mission to announce and diffuse the Kingdom of God till the very ends of the world, so that all human beings believe in Christ and are redeemed.

A new awareness is growing: the mission belongs to all the Christians, to all the dioceses and all the parishes, and to all institutions and ecclesiastic associations. (RM 2)

Every local Church, by its very nature, is missionary. It is evangelized and evangelizes:

- faith must be always presented as God's gift to live in the community (families, parishes, associations),
- it is to be announced both through witnessing and through preaching.

Like Philip and Nathanael, the Christian community, should first evangelise its own territory but then it has to reach also outside its sphere (Nathanael as a missionary *ad gentes*). A participation in the universal mission of the Church is the clearest sign of a mature faith.

To be missionaries we should have an open mentality and this applies to individuals as well as to communities.

The Lord always calls us to share with others the goods that we possess, beginning from the most precious gift, which is our faith.

In the light of this missionary command we should evaluate the validity of our organisms, movements, parishes and all our apostolic work within the Church. The Christian community can

overcome the divisions and the inner tensions and regain unity and vigour only through faith (*RM 49*).

The carrying out of the mission is the duty and the responsibility of the local Church. We should all be missionaries. It is not a task reserved for just a few.

The missionary aim of a particular Church implies openness to the universal Church. Without the *Mission ad Gentes* the missionary dimension of the Church would be deprived of its main significance and of its exemplary way of action.

A missionary lives and acts in virtue of the received mandate and even when he is alone he is united, through invisible but profound ties, to the evangelizing activity of the entire church.

The community that sends the missionary *ad gentes*:

- is always united in pray with him
- accompanies him by sharing his experiences
- helps him from an economic point of view
- strengthens its passion for the missions.

The commemoration of Saint Bartholomew helps us to renew our missionary zeal, in the different local Catholic Action circumstances.

Let us ask the Lord to keep on fostering missionary priestly and religious vocations and may Mary, Queen of Apostles, be with all missionaries!

THE FRONT ROWS ARE THE MOST SOUGHT

HOMILY Mt 23:1-12

H.E. Msgr. DOMENICO SIGALINI

Bishop of Palestrina - IFCA Ecclesiastical Assistant

Our society is built on images. If one does not have an image he or she does not exist. For most people, only those who appear on TV exist. If you are seen on TV therefore you are. Events have to be seen on TV to be taken as facts; ideas are propagated there. A fact carries more weight if it is seen on TV rather than if it is read or heard. This is a reality we cannot ignore, but which can create uncontrollable impressions, distorted personalities and appearing becomes more important than being.

Even without TV, the human person always nurtured an urge to be seen, the yearning for the limelight, the desire to have our names written down on tombstones. The arenas where all these dreams can become reality are many; the political, cultural and public arenas and the show business. Unfortunately even religion can be made to serve such a purpose.

But the Gospel is as clear as crystal about this. "They love to take the best seats at meals and sit in front rows in the synagogues; they all want to be saluted in the city squares..." But you should not be like that. He who is to be the greatest among you is to be your servant. And this is no false humility.

If one shoulders responsibility he cannot hide, he cannot refrain from his commitment with the excuse of humility or by giving the impression that he does not want to show off. There

are moments when authority has to stand out. But what should shine out is that the fulcrum of all is Jesus. He is the teacher, he is the saviour, only his word counts, only his life is to be imitated and only his Gospel is to be above each and every consideration. Today, even during our liturgy, the Book containing his word is given its dignified place; the crucifix is put in the centre; the tabernacle placed at the centre and lit. And yet these are all symbols.

The most important thing is that our heart revolves round one centre which is Jesus. Unfortunately we start with so much zeal and then we tend to slow down just as we are pushed off centre when in a crowd. We are robbed of our place. That is how we gradually rob God of his place.

This is even the temptation for many people in the Church. From enthusiastic servers they become important, and from important they become self-centred and less dedicated to selfless love. Service can call for the assumption of responsibility, which increases our prestige. Our responsibilities are acknowledged according to our position in the hierarchy and the trick is done.

If one is not careful, it is easy to start thinking that everything is revolving around him and not around our Lord whom he serves in the persons entrusted to him. It is for this reason that, very often, in our communities, people engage in a race for prestigious positions rather than to offer service.

It was so in Jesus' times and it is still so today. But our guilt can be greater. Jesus has always shown us clearly that life's purpose is to serve, a life for which he paid dearly. It is in dying on the cross that he is identified as the suffering servant. He continuously reminds us that we should never love front rows but always keep in mind that "the greatest is to be your servant".

It is only by looking at him that we can purify our intentions. We should go back to the joy when we took the decision to give

authentic service, when we were inspired us to take our first generous step and to promise God our perseverance.

Jesus came into the world to give back to God his central position, because only in Him rests our hope.

It is only Him that we should follow.

TOWARDS THE YEAR OF FAITH

Part of the Message of the Apostolic Nuncio in Romania and the Republic of Moldova, His Excellency Francisco-Javier Lozano

In the name of the Holy Father, Benedict XVI, whom I have the honour of representing in Romania, I wish to convey to you his cordial greetings as well as sincere congratulations on the fact that the days you are now living are, for you all, an opportunity for receiving grace and for spiritual growth.

As the Holy Father has written in his Message for the VI Ordinary Assembly of the International Forum of the Catholic Action (IFCA): In this period of history, in the light of the Social Teachings of the Church, you should work towards becoming a laboratory of "the globalisation of solidarity and charity", towards growing, along with the whole Church, in corresponsability and towards offering to mankind a future of hope, by having the courage to formulate demanding goals.

The Holy Father, through me, thanks the organisers of the International Forum of the Catholic Action (IFCA), the dioceses, the parishes, the religious communities and all the associations who, with great generosity, have worked to prepare and to make this event happen. The Lord will not stop blessing you. May the Virgin Mary accompany you on your way. May she mediate for each of you, so that the VIth Ordinary Assembly of the International Forum of the Catholic Action may help you to grow in faith and in love.

The Holy Father Benedict XVI assures you of his prayers and blesses you all with all his heart.

■ *Statutory Session*

ACTIVITIES 2008-2012

Schematic Syntesis

MARIA GRAZIA TIBALDI
IFCA Secretary

During these years IFCA has consolidated its presence in the different continents and today it embraces 27 member countries and 22 observer countries which together represent 1.500.000 members.

In the life of the universal Church

Beatifications

- Participation in the beatification of John Paul II – 1st May 2011, Rome
- Participation in the beatification of Giuseppe Toniolo - 29th April 2012, Rome

27th April 2012. Seminar organised in collaboration with the Iustitia et Pax Council and the Pontifical Council for the Laity: “In the school of Giuseppe Toniolo. The involvement and the contribution by lay people in the international community, for a world which is more just, peaceful, human”.

Speaker: Sandro Calvani.

Synod

- **IFCA's participation in the Synod for AFRICA**
Rome, 4-25 October 2009
Seminar organised with the Giuseppe Toniolo Institute for the International Law for Peace during the sessions of the II Special Assembly for Africa (Rome, 19 October 2009). Theme: "Reconciliation, Justice and Peace in Africa".
- **IFCA participation in the Synod for the MIDDLE EAST**
Rome, 10 - 24 October 2010
Seminar promoted by the Toniolo Institute, ICA and IFCA on the 8 October: "Jerusalem: open topics of international law".

Participation in initiatives by the Holy See

- *VII World Meeting of Families*
Milan, 29 May - 3 June 2012
- *New evangelizers for the New Evangelisation*
Vatican City, 15-16 October 2011
International Convention promoted by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation
- Towards the New Evangelisation Synod

CA Promotion

Meetings for Ecclesiastical Assistant

- National Meeting for Ecclesiastical Assistants promoted by CA Romania
- Meeting with bishops from South East Europe promoted by the Catholic Bishops Conference in Europe, Chisinau 2009
- *Annus Sacerdotalis*
- Participation in continental meetings

- Bishops' Conference in Myanmar and Romania
- Meetings in Rome

Continental Meetings 2010-2012

General theme:

"LIFE, BREAD, PEACE, FREEDOM"

Catholic Action and the laity in their cities for a more humane world

AFRICA (East)	KIGALI - Rwanda 10-14 March 2010
EUROPE	KRAKOW – Poland 6-9 May 2010
AMERICA	CITY OF MEXICO – Mexico 8-11 July 2010
AFRICA (West)	DAKAR - Senegal 19-23 January 2011
ASIA	BANGKOK - Thailand 22-25 March 2011

CA PROMOTION in Africa

- Aceac (Association of the Bishops' Conference of Central Africa) Countries: Burundi, Rwanda and Dem. Rep. of Congo and Acerac (Association of the Bishops' Conference of the Central African Regions) Countries: Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and the Central African Rep.
- National Meetings in Cameroon together with Chad
- National Meeting in the Centrafrican Republic
- Kenya Project 2006-09 (Italy - Romania): Golden Jubilee CA Nyeri
- 2010: collaboration with Mali

CA PROMOTION in Europe

- POLAND – Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, Slovacchia...
- ROMANIA – Moldovian Rep., Bulgaria, Holy Land
- ITALY – Albania, Holy Land
- BULGARIA (a twinning experience CA Fermo – Malchika Russian Dioceses)

History of CA

- Study Seminar on the history of CA
- Participation 150° CA Ticino (Switzerland) – October 2011 (Burundi, Italy and Poland)

CA PROMOTION in Asia

MYANMAR

- January 2009: Paul Themoi's participation in a convention promoted by FABC-OE (Evangelisation Office)
- June 2011: Meeting with the Episcopal Conference for all the dioceses
- March/April 2012: Participation in the Youth National Day (ICA National Youth Sector and the Diocesan CA of Imola)

Youth

Youth Co-ordination Key points

- To be a link between CA youth leaders of the different countries
- To promote formation, coordination, exchange of material and ideas among CA Youth leaders of the different countries

- Promotion of CA young members's participation in the events organised by the Universal Church (WYD, International Forum, etc.) and in IFCA initiatives
- Promotion of friendship with the Holy Land

The IFCA Youth Coordination Group met in Rome in March and October 2009 and then during the continental meetings.

World Youth Days

- Cologne, 2005. Constitution of the Youth Coordinating Group
- Sydney, 2008
 - *A preparatory and follow-up programme on the theme "Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati a pilgrim with us"*
- Madrid, 2011
 - *A preparatory and follow-up programme on the theme "TOGETHER pilgrims towards Madrid 2011"*
 - Meeting with Fr. Eric Jacquinet, responsible for the Pontifical Council Youth Sector during the Youth Conference held in Rome in March 2009
 - Participation in "International Meetings for the organisers of WYD", Pontifical Council for the Laity, Rome 3-5 April 2009
 - Spiritual formation: a Biblical meditation every month prepared by Stella Morra with a presentation by a young CA witness to sanctity.
- Rio de Janeiro, 2013
 - A preparatory and follow-up programme on the theme "TOGETHER pilgrims towards RIO 2013"*
 - in collaboration with UMOFC –WUCWO*

Participation in the Asian Continental Meeting

- Asian Youth Continental Meeting (2008) in the Diocese of Imus (Philippines). Youth Conference with the participation of young representatives from Italy and Spain
- Meeting with the pastoral referents for young people in Myanmar (June 2011)

Friendship with the Holy land

*After the International Pilgrimage in the Holy Land
(28.12.07 - 6.1.08)*

Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land

- Help in the organisation of the Collection for the Holy Land which is held on Good Friday all over the world

Voluntary work linked with summer activities

- Animation in Parishes and participation in the initiative "Children's Summer" at the Bethlehem Catholic Action Centre from 21 June to 31 July 2009 (Italy and Romania)

Together in the heart of the world

Proposal of a residential and itinerant formation course for young people in the land of Jesus (27 November – 13 December 2010)

Youth Co-ordination – Meetings with young people in new Countries

- February 2010 – Moldovian Rep.
- April 2010/May 2011 - Bulgaria
- November 2009/March 2011 - Albania
- May 2011 – Ukraine, Belarus
- Summer 2012 – Bosnia and Herzegovina

Iniziatives in collaboration with the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome

- *1/ University Course for the formation of the laity*
 - 2009-2011 (3 years): formation course for the laity on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Christifideles laici promoted by IFCA, ICA,PGU
 - 2012: new course for the formation of the laity on a a theological reflection on the laity – promoted by PGU (Hurtado Centre)
- *2/ Long distance University Course in Spanish for the formation of the laity with ICSC (Interdisciplinary Centre on Social Communication)*
 - Work in progress
- *3/ Invitation to Emilio Inzaurraga as a lecturer in a course for diplomats in American countries promoted by PGU together with the International Maritain Institute and UNESCO*
10-22 May 2010

Media

- Website in 4 languages: www.fiacifca.org
- New url for the site: catholicactionforum.org
- Facebook
- Twitter: @catholicactionf
- Newsletter
- H2O and Aleteia

Meetings of the Secretariat

- October 2008 (Rome)
- March 2009 with the Youth Coordination Group (Rome)
- October 2009 with the Youth Coordination Group (Rome)
- May 2010 (Krakow)
- October 2010 (Rome)
- May 2011 (Rome)
- October 2011 (Rome)
- April 2012 (Rome)

Promotion of CA witnesses to holiness

IFCA and the Catholic Action School of Sanctity Foundation

- Towards CA postulation
- Promotion of witnesses at local and universal level
- Series “witnesses” in Italian and Spanish

Frassati's Path

Remembering Blessed Pier Giorgio's love for mountains

- In Italy the paths have been traced and officially recognised by CAI (Italian Alpino Club) in all the regions.
- The recognition of the paths has been launched in other IFCA Countries as well: Argentina, Romania, Poland

THE NORMATIVE DOCUMENT FROM 2000 UP TODAY

MICHELE PANAJOTTI

ICA General Administrator

Introduction

The Second Vatican Council has recalled the value of the experience of associated lay groups which involve themselves apostolically and collaborate with the Hierarchy in a particular associated way.

After the Bishops' Synod held in 1987, some Catholic Action national associations have started a common journey of close collaboration aimed at promoting a common associative identity and the resulting special ministeriality which Catholic Action is called to offer to its own local Churches and to the places where they live.

In 1991 The Pontifical Council for the Laity encouraged the setting up of an International Catholic Action Forum, with a provisional Secretariat with the aim of coordinating and promoting the existing experiences, at the same time respecting the independent functioning of each national reality.

On the 9th November 1991, the constitutive Assembly, made up of the Catholic Action associations and Federations from: Argentina, Austria, Spain, Italy, Malta, Paraguay and Romania, met in Rome and approved the first Normative Document which was revised and updated in the Ordinary Assembly which followed in 1994. This was attended by: Argentina, Austria, Columbia, Spain, Malta, Mexico, Paraguay, Italy, Romania, Italian Switzerland and Venezuela.

In March 1995, after having edited the actual Normative Document, the Secretariat presented it to the Pontifical Council for the Laity for its approval. This was in fact approved in the year 2000.

Why a Normative Act?

Even before giving rules, norms and functioning strategies it is inspired by:

- The need for a visible expression of communion, sharing and solidarity among the Catholic Action groups in the different countries and the resulting communion among the local Churches: “each particular Church in communion with all the others, is a living and eloquent image of the community of apostles gathered together in the cenacle”.
- To harmonize the juridical needs with the pastoral-missionary action of the Forum. In this context the possibility of updating periodically the expressed norms to answer of the exigencies of the Forum’s own mission dictated by the changes in the social, cultural and ecclesial conditions, is itself an added value.

The Normative Act as a case in point identifies: the **composition**.

Associations of lay apostolate constituted at national level, which correspond to the four notes, taken all together, that are set out in the decree of Vatican Ecumenical Council II *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 20, 2-3, and in the Post synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* no. 31,3.

It is worth reminding ourselves of these important and fundamental references:

FROM *APOSTOLICAM ACTUOSITATEM* N. 20:

1. The immediate aim of organizations of this kind is the Church's apostolic aim, that is, the evangelization and sanctification of men and the formation of a Christian conscience among them so that they can infuse the spirit of the Gospel into various communities and departments of life.
2. Cooperating with the hierarchy in their own way, the laity contribute, through the benefit of their experience, and assume responsibility for the direction of these organizations, the consideration of the conditions in which the pastoral activity of

the Church is to be conducted, and the elaboration and execution of the plan of things to be done.

3. The laity act together in the manner of an organic body so that the community of the Church is more fittingly symbolized and the apostolate rendered more effective.

4. Whether they offer themselves spontaneously or are invited to action and direct cooperation with the apostolate of the hierarchy, the laity function under the higher direction of the hierarchy itself, and the latter can sanction this cooperation by an explicit mandate.

FROM THE APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION *CHRISTIFIDELES LAICI* N. 31

1. Among the various forms of lay apostolate which have a particular relationship with the hierarchy, the Synod Fathers have singled out various movements and associations of *Catholic Action* in which "indeed, in this organic and stable form, the lay faithful may freely associate under the movement of the Holy Spirit, in communion with their bishop and priests, so that in a way proper to their vocation and with some special method they might be of service through their faithfulness and good works to promote the growth of the entire Christian community, pastoral activities and infusing every aspect of life with the Gospel spirit".

The normative Act identifies the **aims and the objectives**:

- to be a place where concern and solidarity with the Catholic Action groups of different countries, regions and continents is shown and where a spirit of sharing-solidarity-communion prevails.
- To be a place where problems which call for CA's attention and reaction in the different countries are treated and shared.
- To be a place where new evangelisation proposals are fostered and promoted keeping in mind the cultural, social and pastoral contexts of every Country.
- To represent the Forum members in the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

- To represent the members of the Forum with their particular ecclesial identity in International Civil Organisations.

The normative Act identifies the organisation's operating **Organisms:**

- Assembly, General Secretariat, Ecclesiastical Assistant, Administration.

THE ASSEMBLY: is the primary organ of the Forum. It comprises all Catholic Action Associations and Federations of Movements which are members of the Forum. It is normally held every three years and holds extraordinary sessions, when these are convened by the General Secretariat. It approves declarations, documents and speed up recommendations which are not binding for its own components.

THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT: is made up of five lay people who come from five Countries which reflect CA's variety. The five Countries are elected by the Forum's Ordinary Assembly every three years.

Duties of the Secretariat:

- 1) To see to the organisational aspects of the Forum
- 2) Decide the extent of: representation, communication, the proposed initiatives and the carrying out of the assembly deliberations.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSISTANT: as the voice of the Hierarchy, he is "de jure" a member of the Secretariat.

ADMINISTRATION: the financial resources for the running of the Forum come from the contributions fixed by the Assembly and depend on the members of the Forum and from donations aimed at the promotion of the Forum.

The administration depends on the Secretariat.

Proposed amendments:

- The Ordinary Assembly is to be held every four year and on that occasion the Countries nominate the members of the General Secretariat.
- Because of the importance of having a representation in civil and ecclesial spheres, there is an urgent need to identify a person to coordinate all this. So the Secretariat is to elect the Secretariat's Coordinator from among its members. On his/her proposal, a Secretary and Administrator are nominated. These need not be members of the Secretariat.
- The Secretariat is being faced with new social and ecclesial challenges. These present new opportunities which call for concrete and urgent action. So the Secretariat has to see to projectual research and seek financial resources and to establish institutional relations with public and private entities. In ecclesial spheres, it has to co-ordinate and promote the canonization procedures and so the need for the Secretariat to entrust specific tasks ad personam is obvious. These persons participate in the Secretariat when work related to their office is discussed.
- The need for a greater involvement and more promotion about the Forum's activities, both as regards communication and dialogue, entails that the Secretariat calls periodically meetings for those responsible for IFCA activities at continental level and for specific spheres with special attention to youth.
- The need for a financial plan, which ensures good use of the resources and which establishes the priority of the operative needs, entails that the Secretariat prepares an annual spending budget and a financial report which should then be presented to the Assembly.
- The diversity of the members of the Forum entails that the Assembly lays down the criteria for establishing the contribution which Associations and Federations have to pay and that it indicates the priority of the programmed initiatives even when it comes to the covering of expenses.

FINANCIAL REPORT

GIANNI ROTONDO

IFCA Administrator

It is important that we ask ourselves two questions:

- How can we make our members realize that they belong to a larger CA family which goes beyond the national dimension, sign of a dynamic relation between the local Church and the universal Church?
- How can we promote and sustain the ever growing number of IFCA activities?

The first question is addressed, first and foremost, to you as the richness of your associations definitely knows how to express concretely that CA is a large family. The proposals which you send will be circulated.

We wish to dwell on the second question which is evidently linked to the first. It is evident that IFCA is a house which we have to build together.

IFCA is expanding and this calls for a greater energetic commitment when it comes to its ordinary everyday running which is coordinated by the Secretariat. It is not only the three-yearly assembly with its preparations, the continental meetings, the meetings of the Secretariat (one every year), the circulation of information through the website and the Newsletter, the institutional contacts with the Holy See and the relations with other international organisms. There is also work connected with the setting up of the Youth Coordination Group, initiatives connected with CA Promotion and the establishing of a strong communication network which propagates and sustains Catholic Action all over the world.

How can we contribute to IFCA's growth? Definitely by participating, as national associations, in the activities proposed by IFCA Secretariat, by supporting and being near to those CA

associations in their initial stages or to those which experience difficult situations. The financial support is part of the commitment of every Association which is an IFCA member.

During the V Assembly those present were already asked to reflect as to how together we can increase the awareness that we have to share even IFCA's financial responsibility with a subsequent and new effort on everybody's part to ensure that IFCA has the necessary resources for its ordinary activities. Now it is up to us to find concrete proposals. Thus:

1. we ask every national association to give IFCA its financial support by paying the annual fee regularly
2. we ask you to take proposal n. 1 and 2 into consideration.

Proposal Nr.1

Contribution: 2% of the national balance

Proposal Nr.2

A fee for each CA member

Examples for some member countries:

State	PPP	Factor	Memb. Fee €	1000 Members
Albania	7.95	0.26	0.0526	52.56 €
Argentina	14.02	0.46	0.0927	92.69 €
Austria	37.68	1.25	0.2491	249.12 €
Burundi	0.38	0.01	0.0025	2.51 €
Cameroon	2.198	0.07	0.0145	14.53 €
Colombia	8.51	0.28	0.0563	56.26 €
Italy	30.25	1.00	0.2000	200.00 €
Kenya	1.58	0.05	0.0104	10.45 €
Malta	22.46	0.74	0.1485	148.50 €
Mexico	14.27	0.47	0.0943	94.35 €
Myanmar	1.29	0.04	0.0085	8.53 €
Paraguay	4.82	0.16	0.0319	31.87 €
Peru	7.98	0.26	0.0528	52.76 €
Poland	17.31	0.57	0.1144	114.45 €
Romania	13.5	0.45	0.0893	89.26 €
Rwanda	1.01	0.03	0.0067	6.68 €
Spain	31.13	1.03	0.2058	205.82 €
Switzerland	46.46	1.54	0.3072	307.17 €
Uganda	1.14	0.04	0.0075	7.54 €
Venezuela	12.83	0.42	0.0848	84.83 €

Draft of a plan of the contribution due by each individual country

HOMILY

His Em. Card. SALVATORE DE GIORGI
President Pius XI CA School of Sanctity Foundation

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life and we have believed and known that thou are the Holy One of God.

1. At the end of this VI Assembly of the International Forum of Catholic Action, the assertion of faith, trust, faithfulness which came out of Simon Peter's heart in answer to the provocative question made by Christ at the end of the talk about the bread of life also springs spontaneously from our hearts. We would like to thank the Church of Iasi for having received us with such an evangelic hospitality. Our thanks go to its zealous Pastor, H.E. Msgr. Petru Gherghel, the dynamic Diocesan CA, the Parish Associations and all the faithful present here.

During these past days, full of hope, we have lived the pascal experience of the two disciples of Emmaus, in an atmosphere of prayer, study and joyful fraternity.

We have felt the Risen Lord present and living in our midst.

He has given us His word of life which has helped us to see, speak and listen, especially through the enlightening Message of His Vicar on earth, the Holy Father Benedict XVI, to whom we gratefully renew our filial affection and our fidelity to His Teaching.

We have contemplated Him and rediscovered Him in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, in the transforming power of communion and in the urge to carry out the mission of the Church, which today is being particularly directed towards the new evangelisation for the promotion of faith.

This commitment was already entrusted to us by blessed John Paul II twenty years ago, when, through the farsighted inspiration of the unforgettable Servant of God Card. Edoardo Pironio the Forum was set up.

With renewed trust, this was once more bequeathed to us by His Holiness Benedict XVI. By announcing the opening of the XIII Bishops' Synod on the *New Evangelisation and the Year of Faith* in the coming October, he calls all ecclesial associations to commit themselves to this mission with their specific grace and identity.

And it is also meaningful, and for you stimulating that, among all the lay associations, the *Instrumentum Laboris* for the Synod, once again mentions only CA.

The Forum has already answered to the Pope's appeal by focusing its attention on these two events. Because of its specific role, its special vocation, its special charism and its special ministry, highlighted in the Conciliar and post-conciliar Church's Teachings, CA is called to carry out this mission. This has even been stressed by the Pope. We are to make sure that we never forget this.

Through an open, serene and constructive dialogue, you have dealt with this with great doctrinal competence and with a great ecclesial passion. So I do not have to repeat this.

2. I will limit myself to the word of God which we have just heard and will highlight certain conditions and fundamental requisites for a credible and effective new evangelisation both at personal and associative level.

The first is faithfulness to our Baptism, which opens the door of faith and from where our journey towards sanctity and glory started.

In the first reading there is an allusion to the faithfulness to the God of the alliance which Joshua asked of all the tribes of Israel after having gone beyond the Jordan and before entering the promised land: to serve the God of their fathers or the god of the foreigners.

To his clear and convinced profession “As for me and my house we will serve the Lord”, there is an echo in the people’s answer which is just as clear and convincing: “We too will serve the Lord, because He is our God”.

This is also the answer of our faith.

But if Joshua is concerned because of the possible contamination of the faith of their fathers through contact with people who adore idols, the concern of the Church and our concern is just as great as regards the challenges which the cultural hegemony presents as it becomes ever more pervasive to our faith.

One can think of the agnostic and scientific secularism, which puts God within brackets and leads man to live as if God does not exist; to worldly materialism, concerned only or primarily about material well-being, and to the permissive and liberal ethical nihilist relativism.

But cannot we also notice with bitterness, that especially in the traditionally Christian Countries, the faith of many Christians seems tired, demotivated, vanishing or burnt out both because of the lack of true knowledge of their faith (we speak about religious ignorance) as well as because of the lack of coherence between faith and the way of living.

3. These are challenges which can primarily be faced by trusting in our Lord’s inexhaustible grace. He is the author and guardian of our faith whom we should constantly invoke in prayer, one of CA’s main and valid commitment: prayer, study, action and sacrifice.

It is He who called us, consecrated us and sent us to collaborate with Him in His never-ending saving mission, making us, through Baptism, participants in His triple service; His priestly, prophetic and regal service: a gift of love, which is for us a commitment of love.

He is the unchangeable and eternal Gospel whom we are called to get to know more profoundly, to celebrate more faithfully, to live more coherently and to announce always with new enthusiasm. We are called to this in a world which is changing profoundly and

rapidly, in the present globalization context, characterized by closed circles and refusals, by ways of thinking and living which are far from God, but also by openness and new possibilities for evangelizing which we cannot ignore. This is why the Pope tells us to be attentive to the signs of the times and to be ever more “workshops of globalization of solidarity and of love”.

We are called to announce the good news with new fervour, with new methods and with new ways of expression, so that we may help men to get to know Christ, to lead them to meet Him and to help them rediscover the beauty and newness of the Gospel and how it can fascinate us.

4. But we cannot help our brethren to meet Christ, if we have not met Him ourselves before.

This is the message from Emmaus.

Meeting the Risen Lord means, that like the two disciples, we have to let Him enlighten and nourish us, He, who on these Sundays is presented to us as the bread of life. He came down from heaven for us. He is the bread of His word which changes man's heart and the bread of His flesh, which gives life in abundance.

“In Him – the Pope wrote in his letter when he proclaimed the Year of Faith – all the anguish and longing of the human heart finds its fulfilment. He is the joy of love, the answer to the drama of suffering and sorrow, the power of forgiveness when offended and the victory of life in front of the emptiness of death. All this finds its fulfilment in the mystery of His incarnation, in His becoming man, in His sharing with us our human weakness in order to transform it with the power of His Resurrection”.

Therefore, we should proclaim Him, and only Him. We should meet Him and also help others to meet Him with the dynamism and the joy of the two disciples of Emmaus and with the unquenchable enthusiasm of Pentecost.

5. Also, we are called to announce the Gospel, faithfully and fully without giving in, without compromising, without reservations, without trying to please man, as Saint Paul wrote to the Galatians.

Jesus Himself gave us an example of this in Capharnaum. Even if his words seemed hard to the crowds which had not understood the meaning of the multiplication of the bread, even if eventually many of His disciples abandoned Him, He maintained the whole truth He had announced and repeated it with greater stress. He clarified it further up to the point of challenging the very same apostles.

As evangelizers, we cannot prefer our opinion to the truth of the Gospel. This is guaranteed by the Teaching of the Church because it is the only authentic interpreter appointed by the Lord.

Our faithfulness to the Teaching of the Church is a Catholic Action magnificent characteristic. In its commitment to the new evangelization CA has to shine out in an ever more clear and exemplary way.

For example, one can think of the Gospel of marriage and of the family, which Saint Paul speaks about in the second letter. Here, he reminds us about the mystery and the greatness of this Gospel and refers to it as a participation and manifestation of Christ's love for His Church

But unfortunately today, these values are doubted even by Christians, who join and uphold those who want to declare the family illegal, uprooting it from its natural foundations. For us matrimony is a sacrament, it is the indissoluble communion of a man and woman for life, a life of love according to God's project. This cannot be deformed without disrupting society itself.

6. Besides, we are called to announce the Gospel, not as individuals but together. With the grace of communion, the different components work together thus making their announcement more credible. Their combined participation and their sense of co-responsibility strenghtens their efforts and makes them

more attractive and effective like those of the first Christian communities.

This is CA's most ecclesial characteristic. The familiar relations between lay people and their pastors, recommended by the Council and reaffirmed by the Pope. These relations have guaranteed the effectiveness of our mission throughout CA's long history. This has been reinforced by the example of holy lay people and pastors.

7. The effectiveness of evangelization depends above all on the grace of the One who has sent us but its credibility depends on the testimony of those who have been sent. It depends on our sincere and persevering urge towards sanctity to which we are all called in the ordinary conditions and situations of our lives.

In this perspective, the Year of faith is an invitation to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord. We are called to journey along that new life which we have received in Baptism and which has shaped all our human existence on the radical novelty of the Resurrection. This we do strengthened by love, the love which has been given to us as a gift and as such we should pass it on to others as an experience of grace and joy.

As lay people, the privileged places for your sanctification are the very same places of all your temporal realities. It is your duty to animate these realities with a Christian spirit - the family, culture, your places of work, the economy, sport, as well as especially today, politics. You sanctify yourselves in the world and for the world without leaving the world but without being worldly.

The Pope reminded us this in his message: "Called today to renew your commitment to journey along the way to sanctity... offer your availability to participate at all levels of social, cultural and political life having the common good always as your target".

He said this also on Vatican Radio, when some time ago he addressed CA in Argentina: "Your groups are gymnasias of sanctity. Be generous, welcoming, supportive and above all announcers of the beauty of faith" so that "you may be instrumental in creating a

popular culture, which is widespread, positive and which helps to develop responsible people ready to put themselves at the service of the Country”.

That is why, in the Letter which launched the Year of faith, the Pope invites us to fix our gaze “on the many people who, because of their faith, throughout the centuries, men and women of all ages, have proclaimed the beauty of following the Lord Jesus, there where they were called to be testimonies of their being christians: in the family, in their professional life, in their public life, in the exercise of their charisms and ministries to which they have been called”.

CA’s history is rich of these testimonies of faith, who have been formed in lay sanctity in its school.

Allow me to mention only the last to be enrolled on the list of those beatified on the 29th of last April. I am referring to the Italian Giuseppe Toniolo, who was born in Treviso in 1845 and died in Pisa in 1918. These last few days I have seen him in each and every one of you.

An apostle in the family (as an exemplary husband and father of seven children), at the university (as a highly prestigious lecturer) and in public life (as a CA founder and as animator of the Catholic Movement in Italy)). We admire him for his strong faith, for his faithfulness to the Church, for his enthusiasm in his apostolate, for his constructive and competent involvement in cultural and social spheres, but above all for his interior life and his longing for holiness which made him say: “I want to be a saint”. And following a wise spiritual life rule, which seems to trace and anticipate the suggestions in the *Apostolicam Actuositatem* and in the Exhortation *Christifideles laici*, he did in fact become a saint.

This is what I ask the Lord during this sacrifice with the intercession of Holy Mary, Star of the new evangelization and CA’s Queen and what I wish with all my heart to you and me.

Secretariat 2012-2016

Emilio INZAURRAGA
National President CA Argentina (ACA)

Zénobé NIRAGIRA
National Responsible for CA Moviments in Burundi (MAC)

Franco MIANO
National President CA Italy(ACI)

Anca FRONA
National President CA Romania (ACRO)

Higinio JUNQUERA
National President General CA Spain(ACG)

Emilio INZAURRAGA - Coordinator

H.E. Msgr. Domenico SIGALINI
Ecclesiastical Assistant

25th August 2012

PARTICIPANTS

Africa

1. BURUNDI
2. CAMEROON
3. EGYPT
4. NIGER
5. DEM. REP. OF CONGO
6. RWANDA
7. SENEGAL

America

1. ARGENTINA
2. COLOMBIA
3. NICARAGUA
4. COSTA RICA
5. PERU
6. URUGUAY
7. VENEZUELA

Asia

1. CHINA Hong Kong
2. PHILIPPINES
3. INDIA
4. MYANMAR
5. HOLY LAND

Europe

1. BOSNIA and
HERZEGOVINA
2. BULGARIA
3. CROATIA
4. ITALY
5. MALTA
6. POLAND
7. MOLDOVIAN REP.
8. ROMANIA
9. SLOVAKIA
10. SPAIN
11. ITAL. SWITZERLAN Ticino
12. UKRAINE

PROGRAMME «AFTERWARDS»

21st and 22nd morning Arrivals

Wednesday 22 August - Mary Queen of Heaven, dedication of the Cathedral

- 10.00 Opening of Administrative Office
Tour of Iasi
- 16.30 WELCOME
Presentation of participants by the Youth Coordination Group
- 17.00 Eucharistic Adoration – Prayer to the Holy Spirit
H.E. Msgr. Eduardo Garcia - Argentina
- 18.00 Departure for Iasi Cathedral
- 18.30 Holy Mass in the Latin Rite by H.E. Msgr. Petru Gherghel, Bishop of Iasi – Homily by
H.E. Msgr. Virgil Bercea, Bishop of Oradea, Delegate of the Romanian Bishops’
Conference for the Laity, COMECE Vice-President
- 21.15 Introduction by Oana Tuduce National President of CA Romania
The Catholic Church and Catholic Action in Romania
Biblical reflection on the passage about the Disciples of Emmaus *“They set out at once and returned to Jerusalem”* Lk 24:13-35
H.E. Msgr. Florentin Crihalmeanu, Bishop of Cluj Napoca
Thursday 23 August - CA’s contribution towards new Evangelisation
- 09.00 PUBLIC SESSION
Introduced by Adriana Ianus, Diocesan President CA Iasi
Opening Prayer - H.E. Msgr. Petru Gherghel

Interventions:

- Emilio Inzaurraga, National President of CA Argentina and IFCA Secretariat Coordinator

 - Oana Tuduce
 - H.E. Msgr. Virgil Bercea
 - H.E. Bishop Ioachim Bacaoanu, Vicar of the Archiepiscopia of Roman and Bacau, Delegate of the Orthodox Metropolitane of Iasi
 - Local Authorities Representatives
 - Msgr. Antonio Grappone representative of the Pontifical Council for the Laity
- 10.30 Ways of co-responsibility between local and global entities
Emilio Inzaurraga
Sandro Calvani, Director ASEAN Centre of Excellence for UN Millennium Development Goals, Asian Institute of Technology.
- 12.00 Holy Mass in the Byzantine Rite
by H.E. Msgr. Virgil Bercea
Homily by H.E. Msgr. Anton Cosa
Bishop of Chisinau (Moldova)
Musical Moments by the Choir FIAT LUX of Oradea
Tour of Iasi
- 16.30 Introduction - Franco Miano National President of Catholic Action, Italy
Ways of co-responsibility: workshops with Bishops, priests and lay people
- 18.00 Presentations by countries: Africa
- 19.00 Evening Prayer with the CA Saints and Blessed
H.E. Msgr. Felix Machado Bishop - India
- 21.00 A sure compass for the III Millennium

11 October 1962-2012 – FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE SECOND ECUMENICAL VATICAN COUNCIL
Testimonies, photos, perspectives for the future
Coordinated by Chiara Santomiero – IFCA Press Office

Friday 24 August - Getting to know Eastern Rumania

07.15 Departure
Holy Mass in the Latin Rite at the Marian Sanctuary in Cacica
H.E. Msgr. Luis COLLAZUOL – Argentina
Visit to the Orthodox Monastery in Voronet
Visit to the Orthodox Monastery in Agapia
Visit to the Vineyard and Wine Museum of Moldova
Typical dinner and return to Iași

Saturday 25 August - On the 50th Anniversary of The Second Ecumenical Vatican Council - CA a gift of the Spirit

07.30 Holy Mass in the Latin Rite by H.E. Msgr. Domenico Sigalini, Bishop of Palestrina - IFCA Ecclesiastical Assistant

09.30 CA TODAY: a gift of the Spirit to the Church, a vocation for the world in the light of the teaching of Vatican Council II and of the Popes
Presentation by Oana Tuduce
Presentations by countries: Europe, America and Asia. Separate meetings for leaders of Children, Youth and Adult Groups and Assistants
Tour of Iasi

16.30 Towards the Year of Faith
Reading of the message by Msgr. Francisco-Javier LOZANO, Apostolic Nuncio in Romania
by Msgr. Petru Gherghel

STATUTORY SESSION

Presided over by Emilio Inzaurraga

(Session open for all, but right of speech and vote only for member countries representatives)

- Triennial Report on the Secretariat Activities
- Financial report

by Gianni Rotondo, IFCA Administrator

- The Normative Document from 2000 up today (proposed amendments) Michele Panajotti

ICA National Administrator

- Approval of amendments to the Normative Document

- Acceptance of new member countries

18.15 Presentation of candidate countries to sit on the Secretariat and Elections

19.45 Evening Prayer in the Byzantine Rite

by H.E. Msgr. Virgil Bercea

21.30 International evening

Sunday 26 August - Towards the Year of faith

08.30 Morning Prayer – H.E. Msgr. Venant Bacinoni – Burundi

CONCLUDING SESSION

Presentation of the new Secretariat

Interventions and perspectives

10.00 Departure for the Cathedral

11.00 Holy Mass in the Latin Rite

His Eminence Card. Salvatore De Giorgi

(with the participation of Iasi CA parish groups and CA groups from other dioceses)

12.30 Final celebrations and lunch together

AFTERNOON DEPARTURES - Tour of Iasi



A VI-a Adunare Generală • VI General FIAC
Assembly • VI Asamblăa Generală • VIème
Assemblée Générale • VI Assemblée Générale
ROMÂNIA • 2012

