

Forum Internacional
de Acción Católica

International Forum
of Catholic Action

Forum Internazionale
di Azione Cattolica

NOTICIAS NEWSLETTER NOTIZIE

1997/2

Christ has risen, Alleluia: this is the acclamation of the Church and of Catholic Action all over the world.

Let the Holy Spirit sent at Pentecost accompany us, particularly in this moment while we are preparing IFCA's II Ordinary Assembly in Buenos Aires.

After the late European continental meeting, in Malta, we are motivated more and more to discover that the real dialogue involves a full interaction with God, in the Church, with the world and the cultures so far as to become a dialogue of salvation (cf p. 3).

IFCA, according to its aims and ends, after its first five years of life, continues to offer its contribution to the Church and with representing CA-Associations and Federations of Movements of different countries, is going to be a voice in the dialogue at international level.

Examples of that are the contribution to the next European Ecumenical Assembly in Graz (cf p. 4), the participation of two youths to the international Forum preceding the World Youth Day in Paris (cf p. 7), the participation to the I Meeting of the Middle East laypeople in Beirut next June (cf p. 8), the contribution for the preparation of the Latin American Synod (cf p. 7), the participation in the pastoral commission of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 and - last but not the least - the course held to the CA-lay leaders in Myanmar-Burma last february (cf p. 7).

Many new situations are urging a more and more active presence to support the laypeople of various countries: Albany, Burundi, Sarajevo and Bosnia Erzegovina, Cuba...: an invitation for us to prepare and be ready to answer together to the challenge of the inculturation of faith, to open our heart, to face up to the outstanding problems that are worrying so many peoples: corruption, narcotraffic, poverty...

CA is invited to catch the signs of times to be able to celebrate the year 2000 in a proper way: the answer is within us, the "missio ad gentes" is certainly not yet over.

Our Newsletter aims to be an instrument to share IFCA's activities and to become more and more the instrument to share news from the various CA and from those countries which we are in contact with: we keep awaiting from each of you news about events in programme, or already happened, which help to know each other, to get hints, to share difficulties and hopes.

Eduardo Ramirez Cato

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FINAL COMMUNICATION

European meeting

The international Forum of Catholic Action held its first European continental meeting April 4-6th in Malta.

In dealing with the theme "In dialogue with God, in the Church, with world and cultures", IFCA aimed to place this meeting in the perspective of its second General Assembly that is going to take place in Buenos Aires September 11-14th, precisely on the same theme.

Through these two important stages the Associations of CA which are present in different countries of the world, intend to participate in the common journey of the whole Church towards the Jubilee of the Year 2000; the path is that of the "new evangelization": with the Christian community, through a laity grown up in faith, in dialogue with peoples and cultures, for a lively announcement of the Gospel.

Dialogue leads the Christian faithful and the Christian community to live together with the men and the women, with the families, sharing the common situations and conditions of life, facing the concrete, outstanding problems arising from the complex society of our time. Dialogue makes us listen to the problems and aspirations that the different cultures bring to light. It leads us to search for responses to the questions about life's and story's meaning, about the efforts that peoples and societies mean to make in order to build their future. Dialogue looks like a common journey to rediscover "the full truth on man", God's plan of love on man and men's history.

The search for responses to the "mystery of world", to the "mystery of man" that the different cultures are carrying on through the dialogue, opens to the perspective of the transcendence, to the "mystery of God", which is the heart of each culture. Dialogue then turns into announcement, and becomes dialogue of salvation. The meeting was attended by Mons. Stanislaw Rilko, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, who brought the greetings, and also the encouragement of Mons. Stafford, PCL's President. Mons. Rilko outlined the theme of dialogue in the light of the Magisterium of the Council and in particular of the Encyclical Letter *Ecclesiam Suam* by Pope Paul VI. From the works some common guidelines of commitment came out for IFCA, as a concrete instrument of dialogue among the various CA and with all those situations - particularly in the countries of Eastern Europe - where CA is being setting up or reforming through associations under that name or under other names. The main goal is walking together in order to foster the participation of the laypeople in the Church and in society: adults, youths, children, in cooperation with the Pastors of our own particular Churches. Especially the experience - already in progress - of the twinings between diocesan Associations of the different countries

can be developed as an ordinary activity of IFCA's members in Europe. The second European continental meeting will take place in the diocese of IASI – Romania – in summer 1998. In all probability it will be preceded by some activities for the youths of the countries of Eastern Europe. A special attention was dedicated to the preparation of the forthcoming Ecumenical Assembly in Graz, during which the CA of Austria is going to promote a specific initiative. On the Assembly of Graz an interesting report came from Dr. Helmut Steindl of the CCEE's Secretariat.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of the CA of Europe, IFCA's members (Austria, Italy, Malta, Spain, Italian Switzerland, Romania – greek/byzantine rite and latin rite) and by those of the Non-European countries of IFCA's Secretariat (Argentina, Mexico); by the representatives of some eastern countries as observers (Poland, Slovachia, Hungary, while Albany could not attend the meeting). A representative of MIDADE–Europe (a catholic international organism for the children apostolate) was also present.

Malta, April 4–6th 1997

THE SECOND EUROPEAN ECUMENICAL ASSEMBLY Graz, June 23rd–29th 1997

Reconciliation: God's gift and spring of new life

IFCA was invited to participate with one representative among the CA in Europe, as one of the organizations cooperating with the Council of the European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE). Besides the CA representatives who are participating in their national delegations, IFCA will be present with one representative.

On the occasion of the Second European Ecumenical Assembly in Graz, the Catholic Action of Austria is organizing a Hearing – in cooperation with the Protestant Academy, the Protestant Heilandskirche in Graz and the Catholic Society of University Graduates – on the topic *Being a Christian and Acting politically*. The introduction will be made by Dr. Dantine of the Protestant Church and Cardinal Koenig (Roman-Catholic). After the introduction there will be a panel discussion with the following participants: Dr. Alexandros Papaderos (Orthodox Academy, Creta); Milan Opecensky (Secretary General Reformed World Alliance, Geneva); Rev. Paul Oestreicher (Dean of the Cathedral of Coventry, Church of England); Msgr. Vaclav Maly (Auxiliary Bishop of Prague); Prof. Dr. Miklos Tomka (Social Academy, Budapest).

The moderator is Christine von Khol, journalist and member of the Helsinki Citizens Academy.

The goal of this Hearing is to point out to the participants the responsibility of Christians in today's social political changing world.

The Hearing is at 20.00 on June 24th at the Barocksaal of the Priesterseminar, Bürgergasse 2, Graz. (Translation English/German).

FAX RECEIVED on May 20th 1997
from Salvatore NICITERETSE
Diocesan Assistant of the Catholic Action of BURURI

Bururi, May 7th 1997

THE MURDER OF THE LITTLE SEMINARISTS IN BUTA IS
"A CRIME AGAINST INNOCENCE AND AGAINST THE FUTURE"
as denounced by the director of UNESCO Federico Mayor.

On April 30th in the morning at about 5,30 the small Seminary of Buta is attacked by an armed group. All the buildings: the pupils' dormitories, the teachers' houses, the priests' convent, the Centre of Permanent Formation are simultaneously machinegunned. 40 pupils are killed, 26 are seriously wounded and two of them are still in intensive care. A dormitory is set to fire, 5 cars are wrecked, as well as doors and windows.

The small Seminary of Buta is a house of classic formation for future priests; it was never politicized. Since the crisis in 1993 (october) the pupils coming from 5 of the 7 dioceses and from all mixed ethnic groups have been living in harmony among them and with their teachers of Burundi (hutu and tutsi) and Zaire. The boys who attend this Institute of secondary education are admitted at the age of 11,12 and 13 years and finish the whole secondary cycle between 18 and 20 years, save exception.

It is therefore a big falsehood to say that the small Seminary of Buta was militarized, as declared at the Radio Voice of America by the spokesman of the C.N.D.D. Party, which claims responsibility for the attack to the small Seminary and the killing of the innocent boys caught in their sleep.

ATTACK TO THE SECONDARY TECHNICAL SCHOOL IN KIRYAMA

The Secondary Technical School in Kiryama, directed by the Canadian Fathers of the Christian Education, is a school in Bururi diocese, 21 kms far from Buta.

The day after the attack to Buta, at the same time, the soldiers of the C.N.D.D. occupy the hill on which the Institute's buildings stand, but fortunately they are well guarded. They hurl themselves against the convent of the Canadian Sisters "Daughters of the Providence". They leave it quite empty and partially wrecked; then they attack the convent of the Fathers of the Christian Education, smashing doors and windows, a television set and a jeep.

For which reason have they devastated the house of the Canadian Sisters; damaged the Fathers' Convent and smashed their equipments?
Were they also militarized? What a big falsehood, what an art of misinforming the public opinion...

With this occasion it is worthwhile recalling other attacks of which the Church was victim:

1. In March 1996, the big Seminary of Durasira in Ngozi diocese was attacked, ransacked and wrecked by the fighters of the same C.N.D.D. Party.
2. In the night from 21 to 22 April 1996, the members of the same organization have taken 80 seminarists from the small Seminary of CIYA in Bubanza diocese, after having wrecked and ransacked the buildings.
3. On October 9th 1996 Mons. Joachim RUHUNA, Archbishop of Gitega, was cowardly murdered together with two consecrated persons.

The leader of the troops, named Anicot, ex-seminarist of the small Seminary of Mureke in Ngozi diocese and deserter of the Superior Institute of the Military Boards (SCAM) is well known as leader of the C.N.D.D armed troops in the areas of Gitongo, Rutegama...

SOME IMMORAL BEHAVIOURS OF THESE ATTACKERS

They destroy wildly the life of the weak and innocent people: children, old, women, sick. Here below some terrible scenes as explanation:

- the same morning when the Seminary of Buta was attacked, they set to fire a medical Centre, raped and impaled the nurse; killed 8 old women and a Pentecostal Pastor.

- Since April 30th up today they go on slaughtering cows, goats..., setting fire to the stock of supplies in the houses and in the granaries; setting fire to the houses of both Tutsi and Hutu who neither send their youths to their organization nor pay their dues; setting fire to the medical centres.

That actions like these can find supports and excuses exceeds my understanding.

To think that the authors and the instigators of such acts of barbarism can offer a climate of forgiveness and reconciliation to the Nation of Burundi means to have given up every moral criterium of social living and of God's laws!!

† Bernard BUDUDIRA
Bishop of Bururi diocese and
President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Burundi

IFCA's SECOND ORDINARY ASSEMBLY

Christ, the one Saviour, yesterday, today and for ever

*In dialogue with God, in the Church,
with the world and the cultures*

In the Christian community, through the participation
of a laity announcing the Gospel to peoples and in dialogue with cultures

Buenos Aires, September 11-14th 1997

Programme

Thursday September 11th

- Arrivals
- Reception of the Delegations in the Retreat House "Christ the King"

Friday September 12th

Morning

- 9.00 • Welcome
- Presentation of the Delegations of the different countries
- Report about the years 1994-1997
- IFCA after the official acknowledgement

11.00 • Eucharistic Celebration

12.30 • Lunch

- Break

Afternoon

- 15.00 • Communication *The world we live in.*
- General presentation on the basis of the answers to a questionnaire previously drawn up by each country
- 15.45 • Intervention of each CA (5 minutes each country, on the basis of a questionnaire previously sent, through the presentation of five slides)
- 17.00 • Coffee/tea break
- 17.30 • Going on with the interventions of the countries

- 18.30 • Departure to Buenos Aires
 - * Tour of the town
 - * Lunch at the ACA's location
 - * Return to the Retreat House

Saturday September 13th

Morning

- 8.30 • Eucharistic Celebration
- 9.30 • Communication *The Church and the world: dialogue and path of salvation*
CA laypeople from the Second Vatican Council
towards the Third Millennium
- 11.00 • Mixed workshops
- 12.30 • Lunch
- Break

Afternoon

- 15.00 • Continental workshops
 - Review 94-97 and proposals 97-2000
- 17.30 • Coffee/tea break
- 18.00 • Plenary session
 - Reports of the workshops
 - Presentation of the elections
 - Elections
- 20.00 • Supper
 - Friendly soirée

Sunday September 14th

Morning

- 8.30 • Morning prayer
 - Presentation of the new Secretariat
 - Guidelines for the programme 1997-2000
 - Final Communication
- 10.00 • Departure to Lujan
- 11.30 • Eucharistic Celebration in the Basilica of Our Lady of Lujan
- 13.00 • Typical lunch and folklore show

Afternoon

- 17.00 • Return to Buenos Aires (lodging in Hotels or leaving
for the airport)

*Location: Retreats House Christ the King - Juan de Garay 1147.
Luis Guillón. Buenos Aires.*

NEWS FROM CA

The course of formation to the CA laypeople of Taunggyi, Myanmar

Last February 9-13th about 100 laypeople (among whom 6 women) from Taunggyi, Loikaw and Hakha participated in the course that was urged by Mons. Mathias U Shwe, President of the Bishops' Conference of Myanmar and was directed by Maria Giovanna Ruggieri of ICA and Eduardo Ramirez Cato.

The following themes were dealt with, in the perspective of the formation of those in charge and of the spirituality required:

- * vocation of the CA's leaders
- * formation to responsibility
- * those in charge and the associative dynamic.

We started from the real situations, using various methodologies and making few lectures. The people were enthusiastic about this experience and left to repeat it in their own particular situations.

The most hearty thanks to Mons. U Shwe and to Father Angelo Tin for their assistance and support.

RELATIONS WITH THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE LAITY

The contribution to the Synod of Latin America

As announced in Newsletter 1997/1 the Pontifical Council for the Laity asked Eduardo Ramirez Cato, IFCA's Coordinator and member of the PCL for a contribution to enrich the "Work Document" that the Bishops will use before the Synodal Assembly of Latin America in November of this year. On receipt of some proposals a document was drawn up as a contribution of CA of Latin America to the Church of this continent. We invite you to join us to any initiative proposed by the PCL and to keep waiting for the "Work Document" that will soon appear by the Pre-synodal Council.

Youth International Forum, Paris August 14th-18th 97

Also on this occasion the PCL invited IFCA to participate with two representatives in this International Forum where are invited the young delegates of the Bishops' Conferences and of the Movements, Associations, Communities and ecclesial groups organised at international level.

This Forum will be held before the World Youth Day which is taking place from 19th to 24th August in Paris.

During the meeting of IFCA's Secretariat in Malta on April 4th the CA of Spain and Argentine declared their availability to participate.

First Meeting of the Laity of the Middle East, Beirut June 10th-14th 97

The PCL organised the first Congress of the catholic laypeople of the Middle East: a pastoral initiative – particularly meaningful after the Lebanese Synod and Holy Father's visit – which aims to foster the ecclesial communion.

Among the nearly 200 participants coming from Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Holy Land, Jordan, Iraq, Cyprus, Turkey, Arabia, Kuwait, North-Africa, there is also IFCA's coordinator. He was invited there to represent and to present the Catholic Action together with other members of ecclesial Associations and Movements.

VADEMECUM

Translation into the various languages is under revision. It will be printed under the title *VADEMECUM 2000 Laypeople together in the Church towards the third millennium*.

Various booklets assembled in a folder, available in three languages, with the covers in different colours: green/italian – blue/english – yellow/spanish.

The text is a temporary version for the Assembly in Buenos Aires. There it will be examined and then printed in the final version for the period 97-2000.

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FIRST PART – one booklet with the general Introduction (steps, documents, magisterium – short anthologie, notes)

SECOND PART – seven booklets, one for each national CA IFCA's member: Argentine Austria, Italy, Malta, Mexico, Spain, Romania (greek-byzantin rite) (1. History 2. Structure of the Association 3. Dynamics 4. Statistics and financing 5. Character and mission 6. General informations).

THIRD PART – one booklet for all the countries which are members but with different situations, those who are setting up CA and/or reforming it (diocesan Associations: Paraguay/Asuncion, Italian Switzerland/Lugano, Romania (latin rite)/Iasi, Burundi/Bururi, Colombia, Myanmar (Burma)/Laikow, Taunggyi, (Taungoo); Women CA: Venezuela, Luxemburg (1. History 2. Today's situation 3. Perspectives).

May, 27th 1997