

Forum Internacional  
de Acción Católica

International Forum  
of Catholic Action

Forum Internazionale  
di Azione Cattolica

## NOTICIAS NEWSLETTER NOTIZIE

2006/1

“A year has already passed since the death of the Servant of God John Paul II (...). He continues to be present in our minds and hearts; he continues to communicate us his love for God and his love for man; he continues to inspire in one and all, especially in the young people, the enthusiasm for good and the courage to follow Jesus and his teachings.

How can we sum up the life and evangelical witness of this great Pontiff? I will attend to do so by using two words: “fidelity” and “dedication”, total fidelity to God and unreserved dedication to his mission as Pastor of the universal Church. (...)

In the first anniversary of his return to the Father's House, we are invited to accept anew the spiritual legacy he has bequeathed to us; we are urged, among other things, to live by seeking tirelessly the Truth that alone brings relief to our hearts. We are encouraged not to be afraid to follow Christ in order to bring everyone the Gospel proclamation which is the leaven of a more fraternal and supportive humanity.

May John Paul II help us from Heaven to continue on our way, remaining docile disciples of Jesus in order to be, as he himself loved to repeat to young people, “dawn watchmen” at the beginning of this third Christian millennium”. (Benedict XVI 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2006)

With these words addressed to us by the Pope, we look back on this past year as an important and significant lap in the life of the Church, of the world and also of CA and look forward to the future.

We treasure in our hearts the consignments which John Paul II entrusted to us in Loreto and the sublime example of his death to the whole world as well as the first message and the first homily by Benedict XVI, whose teachings we follow with love. These are treasures which help us, as lay Christians, to live our life with fidelity and dedication, on our journey towards the Kingdom, keeping our gaze fixed on Jesus.

For this three-year period, the Secretariat has focused priorities which fit in with the perspectives of the conciliar Church - 40 years from the conclusion of the

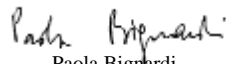


Second Vatican Ecumenical Council - in dialogue with the world, so that Christians, lay Christians, can bear witness to that hope which stems from their meeting with the Risen Christ.

What is the future for Christianity in the global context and in the many local contexts? What is the contribution of young people in the Church, in society and in our associations? What type of CA in our countries, what identity, among the many associations and organisms? Which CA are we to promote, to present and to live with joy and conviction?

These are all questions which we propose for discussion, at continental and national level. This will help us to enrich each other's CA associations as well as our communities with people of different ages, vocations and conditions of life, conscious of the fact that "in the third millennium, Christianity will have to respond ever more effectively to this need for inculturation. Christianity, while remaining completely true to itself, with unswerving fidelity to the proclamation of the Gospel and the tradition of the Church, will also reflect the different faces of the cultures and peoples in which it is received and takes root". (NMI 40)

Let us intensify our commitment, after having met the Risen Christ, like the disciples of Emmaus, like the apostles in different parts of the world, to announce the Gospel and to be witnesses of the love of God and the love of our neighbour, which are inseparable. (cf DC 18)



Paola Bignardi  
IFCA Secretariat's Coordinator

### CALENDAR 2006 - 2007

#### **V American Meeting**

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> May 2006

#### **III African Meeting**

LUGAZI, Uganda, 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> 2006

#### **CA Youth Pilgrimage to the Holy Land**

29<sup>th</sup> December 2006-7<sup>th</sup> January 2007

#### **IV European Meeting**

MADRID, Spain, 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> March 2007

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**NEW HOMEPAGE SITE**

**<http://www.fiCIFCA.org>**

**The website** is an opportunity to present IFCA: the current activities, its brief history, which are the member and the observer countries...

Particularly after the Congress and after the launching of the 2004-2007 programme, a decision has been taken to intensify and improve our communications from IFCA and within IFCA. So the new homepage site will be in 4 languages.

In this way

- the site could become a specific mean of formation especially for the CA Promotion Group which will have a reserved area
- the site will also offer space to the various CA associations and movements which do not have a website.

To attain these goals we need everybody's collaboration.

For communication: [info@fiCIFCA.org](mailto:info@fiCIFCA.org)

## CA school of sanctity

### **Canonization of Father Alberto Hurtado sj**

IFCA rejoices with the universal Church and particularly with the Church in Chile for the new Saint, the Jesuit priest who was the Ecclesiastical Assistant of the Catholic Action Youth Group at diocesan level in Santiago as well as at international level.

H.E. Msgr. Francesco Lambiasi, IFCA's Ecclesiastical Assistant, has taken part in the Eucharistic Celebration presided over by His Holiness Benedict XVI, together with other ICA Assistants and laypeople.

Father Hurtado is the first Catholic Action Assistant from all over the world to be declared Saint: let us hope that through his intercession we will have Assistants, who, like him, "carry out their duty with an outstanding spirit of initiative, dedication and sacrifice".

### **Beatification of Anacleto Flores and companions CA Mexican martyrs**

With great joy, we join the Mexican Catholic Action in celebrating the recent beatification of six of their members who suffered martyrdom to safeguard their faith.

On Sunday 20th November, Feast of Christ the King, the following members of the Mexican Catholic Action, Anacleto González Flores, Luis Padilla Gómez, Jorge Vargas González, Ramón Vargas González, Luis Mañaga Servín and Miguel Gómez Loza, together with another two laymen, were beatified.

On that same day, after reciting the *Angelus*, His Holiness Benedict XVI referred to them with these words: "Today on the solemnity of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, whom they invoked at the supreme moment when they gave up their lives, they offer us the best example and encouragement to be living testimonies in today's society by ensuring that our lives are coherent with our faith".

May the Lord, through their example, help us to live, as best we can, the three consignments, which His Holiness John Paul II last year in Loreto, entrusted to Catholic Action: *Contemplation, Communion, Mission*.

## **Opening of the process for the beatification of Card. Eduardo F. Pironio**

During the Assembly, held in November 2004, the Argentinian Episcopal Conference decided to open the cause for the Beatification and Canonization of Cardinal Eduardo F. Pironio as the promoter group (*Actor Causae*) in the process.

The cause was presented to the ecclesiastical tribunal of the Rome Vicariate in May 2005. The Argentinian Episcopal Conference has nominated Fr. Giuseppe Tamburrino OSB as postulator of this cause.

We would like to share this good news with all those who knew Cardinal Pironio and who saw in him clear signs and outstanding evidence of holiness.

In the diverse positions wherein the Lord called him to serve the Church, the Cardinal worked with so many people. These include Cardinals, Bishops, Priests, male and female members of Religious Orders, members of Secular Institutes and adult and young lay members of ecclesial Associations and Movements.

IFCA is most grateful to Cardinal Pironio because it was he who, as President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, encouraged its setting up and later approved its Normative Document *ad experimentum* on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1995.

The Central Office for the Postulation lies in Via della Conciliazione 1, Rome, close to IFCA Central Office.

## **Life of the Secretariat**

### **Letter to the CA in the world for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary from the conclusion of Second Vatican Ecumenical Council**

Rome, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2005

To IFCA member and observer countries and to CA members

“Today, my thought goes to 8<sup>th</sup> December 1965, when the Servant of God Paul VI solemnly closed the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, the greatest ecclesial event of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which Bl. John XXIII had opened three years earlier. Amid the exultation of numerous faithful in St Peter's Square, Paul VI entrusted the implementation of the conciliar Documents to the Virgin Mary, calling upon her with the dear title of “Mother of the Church”. Presiding at a solemn Eucharistic celebration in the Vatican Basilica this morning, I wanted

to give thanks to God for the gift of the Second Vatican Council.

Furthermore, I wished to pay homage to Mary Most Holy for having accompanied these 40 years of the Church's richly eventful life. In a special maternal way, Mary has kept watch over the Pontificates of my venerable Predecessors, each one of whom, with great pastoral wisdom, steered the boat of Peter on the course of authentic conciliar renewal, ceaselessly working for the faithful interpretation and implementation of Vatican Council II'. (Benedict XVI, *Angelus*, 8.12.05)

Dear friends,

we are starting this letter with Benedict XVI words to show that, together with our greetings for a Holy Christmas and the New Year 2006, we would like to add some reflections which will help us to live a "year of the Council": 8<sup>th</sup> December 2005-2006 together.

We all know that CA is a gift to the Church which has to bear fruit within it. The Church has entered the third millennium with the Council as its reliable compass, which indicates the way for announcing salvation to men and women of our times.

- Our proposal is to organize a Eucharistic Celebration in order to thank the Lord for the Second Vatican Council and to pray for a renewed commitment, at national and diocesan level, as indicated by the Council itself.
- We also propose initiatives which highlight the importance of the conciliar documents and the developments within the Church during these 40 years. In our formation programmes, which we have already planned or are still planning, we should include specific initiatives about the Council, paying particular attention to the younger generation.
- We will be grateful if you could inform us about these activities so that we may include them on the website. On the website, one can find full documentation on these 40 years from the council.

Encouraged by the enthusiasm, shown during the International Congress on CA held in 2004, to live our conciliar identity to the full, the IFCA Secretariat has already started working. A CA Promotion Group has been set up. This had its first meeting at the end of September. The Youth Coordinating Group has started working on the organization of a Pilgrimage for Peace to be held in Jerusalem on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007. At continental level, it is working on the organization of meetings and trying to identify venues and dates. Information about these will eventually be given by January 2006.

Until we meet in Rome and at the other continental meetings, let us all keep united in prayers with our Holy Mother Mary who watches over our journey in communion with Peter and all our pastors.



“At the beginning of this New Year, let us ask her to help all God's People, wherever they may be, to work for peace and to be guided by the light of the truth that sets man free (cf *Jn 8:32*). (Benedict XVI, *Message for the 39<sup>th</sup> World Day of Peace*)

Paola Bignardi  
IFCA Secretariat's Coordinator

+ Francesco Lambiasi  
Ecclesiastical Assistant

### **In memory of H.E. Msgr. Bernard Bududira**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> November, after the Vespers of the Solemnity of the Feast of Christ the King, H.E. Msgr. Bernard Bududira returned to our Father's House.

Msgr. Bernard died in Italy where he was undergoing treatment for serious health conditions.

We can say that the Good Lord has welcomed him in Heaven and as such we have another friend there. At the same time, we are grieved because we have lost an intelligent, open and generous pastor who gave all his attention to the weak and the poor as well as to youth, to the laity and to consecrated persons. He worked very hard in favour of peace, justice, reconciliation and dialogue in his country and in the Great Lakes territory. He was a man with a great heart and a welcoming smile.

We would like to recall his close relations with IFCA and some stages of these from 1994 to 2004:

- Bururi was the first African diocese to ask to join IFCA through a letter by Msgr. Bernard where he presented the CAM involved in the promotion of peace, education and formation...
- He was greatly involved in the preparations for the second IFCA Continental Meeting held in Bujumbura. During this meeting he gave the opening address and also hosted us in his diocese.
- He participated in the International Congress on CA and presided over the Vigil for Peace in the church of Santa Prassede in Rome.

### **Meetings of IFCA Secretariat and CA Promotion Group**

The Secretariat met in Rome on the 26<sup>th</sup> April, after the XII National Assembly of the Italian Catholic Action, which was held from the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> April.

It met again in Rome from 27<sup>th</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October to take part in the first meeting of the CA PROMOTION GROUP which is a priority and a novelty after the Congress.

At present, in its initial stages, the group is made up of the Secretariat and other members nominated from the countries which make up the Secretariat, including some Assistants - Argentina 3, Burundi 3, Italy 9, Romania 3, Spain 1 (2) - and IFCA Secretariat in Rome.

Thanks to the rich associative experience of these people and to the intense formation which they have started together in Rome and is being continued through internet, it is envisaged that work on the promotion of CA in certain countries can proceed and requests from other countries can be seen to.

This aims at involving the countries of the Secretariat as well as the other IFCA member countries by encouraging twinnings and ensuring the participation of *fidei donum* priests (in the dioceses where they come from and in the dioceses where they operate).

This CA Promotion Group will hopefully meet every year.

### **Meeting with the Bishops of SOUTH-EAST Europe (CCEE) 27<sup>th</sup> February 2005 - Sarajevo**

After the V Meeting of the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences of South-East Europe, promoted by CCEE and held in Sarajevo between the 25<sup>th</sup> and the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2005, IFCA Secretariat had a meeting with the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences of South-East Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Greece, the Episcopal Conference Ss. Cyril and Methodius of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia, Rumania and Turkey). All these accepted to lengthen their stay in Sarajevo.

IFCA Secretariat was represented by H.E. Msgr. Francesco Lambiasi, IFCA's Ecclesiastical Assistant, Oana Tuduce, Rumania's representative in the Secretariat 2005-2007 and Maria Grazia Tibaldi - IFCA Secretariat in Rome.

The meeting opened with a prayer to the Holy Spirit. During the first session, each pastor spoke about the situation as regards the laity in their own realities, with special reference to lay associations and to Catholic Action.

H.E Msgr. Lambiasi presented a brief reflection on CA as a charism worth accepting and promoting at local Church's level. It aims at getting together well-prepared lay people at diocesan level as well as lay persons who collaborate with pastors at parish level.

The service given by IFCA these last years in South-East Europe was also highlighted. This included continental meetings as well as weeks of formation for youths.

Rumania's representative spoke about how CA developed into a federation at national level, which embraces all the diverse CA groups of latin and byzantine rites.



During the second part of the meeting, the Episcopal Conferences present passed on their suggestions to IFCA. While adopting a common approach IFCA should keep in mind the different realities. The meeting came to an end with a prayer to Our Lady for the Holy Father and for the future of the laity in South-East Europe.

On Monday 28<sup>th</sup> H.E. Msgr. Lambiasi and Maria Grazia Tibaldi went to Banja Luka where they took part in a meeting for the clergy, promoted by H.E. Msgr. Franjo Komarica. The theme of the meeting was: the vocation of the laity after the Council, CA's ministeriality.

## IFCA AMERICA

### **V American meeting and 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Argentinian Catholic Action**

The *XXV Federal Assembly of the Argentinian Catholic Action*, which this year is also celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its foundation, will be held from 29<sup>th</sup> April to the 1<sup>st</sup> May.

Following this, the *V Catholic Action American Continental Meeting* will be held in Buenos Aires from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> May.

The programme of these meetings will be as follows:

#### **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April**

- 8.30 Delegations will meet near the Argentinian Catholic Action Central Office: Avda. de Mayo 621, Buenos Aires. Departure by bus to Rosario
- 16.00 Official Opening of the XXV Catholic Action Federal Assembly Central Córdoba Club (Children-Youths-Adults and Sectors)
- 21.30 Theatrical and Musical Shows in different City Halls

#### **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April**

- 14.00 Concurrent activities:  
Adults, Youths, Sectors (fields of commitment), Institutions, Assistants and Seminarians, parish Presidents, Children
- 12.30 Eucharistic Celebration
- 16.00 Continuation of group activities  
Concurrently - Statutory ACA Assembly - Rosario, ACA Head Office
- 22.00 Public session in front of the monument to the flag

#### **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May**

- 10-13 Closing session. Central Córdoba Club
- 15.00 Departure from Rosario to Victoria, Buenos Aires

21.00 Address of welcome to participants at the V Catholic Action  
American Continental Meeting by the ACA  
Presentation of the delegations and the working procedures

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May**

8.30 Lauds  
9.00 Opening: Address by Paola Bignardi, IFCA Coordinator  
9.30 Towards the V CELAM Conference: Msgr. Andrés Stanovnik, ofm  
Bishop of Reconquista and CELAM General Secretary  
10.30 America today: opportunities and risks of the present phase of  
change  
11.15 Workshops  
14.30 Visit to San Isidro. Courtesy visit to the Bishop of San Isidro Msgr.  
Jorge Casaretto  
17.00 The future of Christianity in America. How to evangelize today:  
remarks and challenges  
17.45 Discussion  
19.00 Eucharistic Celebration  
21.30 Time for individual sharing

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May**

8.30 Lauds  
9.00 A Catholic Action which answers to America's present day needs  
9.30 Workshops  
11.00 IFCA's contribution in America: objectives for this three year  
period, Secretariat's projects, promotion of Catholic Action  
11.30 Eucharistic Celebration  
Workshops on specific themes:  
• Youths, Formation, Family, Children and Teen-agers  
• Human Promotion, Promotion of Catholic Action  
Concurrently with these Workshops: Meeting of Assistants with  
Msgr. Francesco Lambiasi, IFCA's Ecclesiastical Assistant  
17.00 World CA Youth Pilgrimage to Jerusalem "pilgrims of unity and  
peace": Oana Tuduce - Maria Grazia Tibaldi  
17.30 Reports of the Workshops to the Assembly  
18.15 Time for individual sharing. Visit to the Countries' Exhibition  
19.15 Called to be saints  
A commemoration of American Catholic Action Martyrs  
21.30 Friendly social evening

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May**

8.30 Lauds  
9.00 Closing Session and evaluation

- 10.00 Transfer by pullman to Luján
- 12.00 Celebration in the Basilica of Our Lady of Luján
- 15.30 Transfer to Buenos Aires  
City tour of Buenos Aires and visit to ACA' Head Office
- 18.00 Farewell to the Delegations

## IFCA AFRICA

### **III African Continental Meeting**

The III African Continental Meeting will be held in Lugazi (Uganda) from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2006. The meeting is being organized by IFCA Secretariat in collaboration with the Bishop of the diocese of Lugazi, H.E. Msgr. Mathias Ssekamanya and the Episcopal Conference of Uganda and particularly with the Commission for the Laity. The meeting will bring together participants from all the dioceses of Uganda, representatives of Catholic Action Movements from Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Democratic Congo, Zambia, Kenya, Sudan and Cameroon.

The IFCA CA Promotion Group, made up of TERENCE Mbonabuca, Felicitia Niyongere and Rev. Salvator Nicitirese, together with representatives from Rwanda, Domina Nkundizana e Fr. Gabin Bizimungu, met in Uganda on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March, where they had a meeting with the organizing committee in Uganda.

## IFCA – EUROPE



### **Letter to the Christians in Europe towards EEA3 in Sibiu 2007**

January 2006

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ throughout Europe,  
grace and peace to you all!

As representatives of Churches, bishops' conferences, movements and ecumenical organizations, we have travelled from 44 countries to Rome, where we met from 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> January 2006, during the week of prayer for Christian unity. We shared in prayer and reflection, and launched the process of the Third European Ecumenical Assembly (EEA3).

Having committed ourselves to a common journey, we have sought to build mutual trust and understanding by working and praying together. We have

also endeavoured to foster a spirituality that is rooted in God's Word. Through prayer and action, we hope to engender renewed enthusiasm for our ecumenical journey. We have been encouraged to turn to the one God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - who is the source of communion/koinonia and love.

Every Christian is warmly invited to join this pilgrimage of hope, and to give common testimony by walking with Christ in order to discover a new vocation for Europe. Our continent has taken great steps forward politically and culturally, and yet exploitation, exclusion, oppression and violence are still enormous obstacles on our way. In this context we seek inspiration in our theme: "***The Light of Christ shines upon all. Hope for renewal and unity in Europe***". We seek to be faithful in a new European context, where faith is often marginalized. Our task will be illuminated through the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, who heals the wounds of humanity.

We encourage our fellow Christians to engage with the agendas of the European institutions as they, too, work to bring justice and hope to our continent. The light of Christ will help us all to work for reconciliation and unity in our divided world. There are many ways to be involved in the Third European Ecumenical Assembly. The second stage has just begun. You can:

- start by praying for this ecumenical journey;
- join in celebrations and meetings in most countries across Europe;
- visit the internet site ([www.eea3.org](http://www.eea3.org)) to enable you to know exactly what is happening and to provide you with ideas, documents and other resources;
- encourage others to contribute ideas;
- share the projects in which you are involved.

The third stage in the process will be a gathering in Lutherstadt-Wittenberg in Germany, in February 2007. This meeting will gather the fruits of the various national and regional events, and will contribute to the assembly in Sibiu, Rumania, in September 2007.

The third European Ecumenical Assembly builds on two others, which took place in Basel in 1989 and in Graz in 1997, and on the *Charta Oecumenica*, signed in Strasbourg in 2001 ([www.ccee.ch](http://www.ccee.ch) and [www.cec-kek.org](http://www.cec-kek.org)). It is not an end in itself, but one stage in the response European Christians have made to Christ's prayer "that they may all be one" (*John 17:21*). At the solemn celebration of vespers at the end of the week of prayer for Christian Unity in 2006, Pope Benedict XVI acknowledged that "we have such a long way to go! But let us not be discouraged; rather, let us start out again together with greater vigour. We can count on Christ's unfailing presence; humbly and tirelessly, we beg Him for the precious gift of unity and peace".

Let us join together on this journey!

IFCA participates in the journey towards SIBIU 2007 among the representatives of Associations, Movements and Organisms.
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## IFCA YOUTH COORDINATING GROUP

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### WYD in Cologne: first CA Youths meeting

IFCA has finally answered to the need which has long been felt and has slowly developed the IFCA Youth Coordination Group with the aim to support and delegate responsibility to youths. The person responsible for this group in the Secretariat is Oana Tuduce - a young member from Rumania. A meeting for CA youths was held in Cologne on the 17<sup>th</sup> August. H.E. Msgr. Lambiasi, IFCA Ecclesiastical Assistant and H.E. Msgr. Marcuzo, Auxiliary Bishop of the Holy Land, took part in this meeting, where the idea of organizing a pilgrimage for youths between the 29<sup>th</sup> December 2006 and the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2007 to the Holy Land was launched.

The message given by Oana after the meeting follows:

*We have gone to Cologne to "adore Him".*

*The meeting organized by IFCA in Cologne brought together so many CA youths from all over the world. They spoke about their experience as pilgrims in their own traditions, from the point of view of their Church, their culture and their history.*

*It was a very important historical occasion as it was the first meeting of IFCA's youths from Argentina, Venezuela, Ukraine (UYC), Rumania (Astru and Iasi CA), Mexico, Spain, Malta, Switzerland (Lugano CA) and a large number of diocesan CA associations from Italy.*

*Like the Magi, we all arrived in Cologne from afar, bringing with us different gifts. We all took with us the anxieties and hopes of our associations and of our countries. We went through a time of intense dialogue, prayer and friendship.*

*Many of us asked "And then, after Cologne? It soon became clear that our journey together did not end there but rather, for CA youths, Cologne was the start of a new journey together. There we shared and understood the beauty, the joy and the fraternity of our being members of so many CA associations from different parts of the world. Now, thanks to the "IFCA Youth Coordinating Group", together we can be "pilgrims of peace and unity" in our local Churches.*

*Following the proposal by Paola Biguardi, the coordinator of IFCA's Secretariat, in Cologne we gave each other an appointment: to meet again as "pilgrims of peace and unity" in Jerusalem, on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007. In her message she invited us to meet "to pray for peace, to show our willingness to commit ourselves to work for peace, to express our desire for dialogue and fraternal love... to be pilgrims of peace in the land, where the life given for us on Calvary has made the announcement of the angels' peace to all men of good will possible".*

*The meeting in Cologne has asked for a deep commitment from all CA youths; from those who were in Cologne as well as from those who remained at home and from those whom we meet. Our commitment is to pray for peace and unity; to get to know each other better by exchanging our programmes, our resources and our calendars of activities and by preparing for our pilgrimage to the Holy Land together with the young people in the Holy Land".*

## **PILGRIMS OF UNITY AND PEACE TO THE HOLY LAND**

### **Pilgrimage of CA Youths from all over the world**

**29<sup>th</sup> December 2006 - 7<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

#### **Why pilgrims to the Holy Land**

Our pilgrimage to the Holy Land is an expression of the fact that we are all pilgrims towards Jerusalem, the holy city for the three monotheistic religions, the city of peace for all peoples, the city where Jesus Christ died and was risen for the salvation of humanity and where the Church was born on the day of Pentecost. It is a gift from God.

Our pilgrimage will bring together CA youth from the different continents. It is meant to be a period in the spiritual and vocational experience of each and every one of us following the footsteps of Christ in the place where he was incarnated, where he called his apostles, where he lived until his death and resurrection and where today we will be meeting the living stones, the Christian youth over there. It is for us an occasion where we too will feel that we are living stones of the particular Churches who have sent us and who, through us, will be meeting in that same place where the Apostles lived together the first days of the Church and from where they left to announce the Gospel to the whole world. It is an intensive moment for us as CA members. In fact we would like to:

1. involve and draw our diocesan associations and the regional realities which we represent. We would like to involve them in the preparations and in the benefits which we reap from our sharing with the ecclesial realities we meet;
2. get to know, through the young people who live in the Holy Land today, their Church, their peoples and the social, cultural and political situation in Israel and Palestine;
3. establish twinings between our CA associations and CA in the Holy Land, as well as promote new contacts in order to give continuity to the pilgrimage and encourage twinings between the different CA associations in the world;
4. ...above all, lay the foundation for strong friendship.

#### **Dates of Pilgrimage and programme**

Departure by air from Rome to Tel Aviv Friday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2006 in the evening

Return from Tel Aviv to Rome Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2007 in the afternoon.

#### **Proposed programme**

JERUSALEM                      30-31 December/1 January

NAZARETH 2 morning - 3 - 4 January  
BETHLEHEM 4 evening - 5 - 6 - 7 January

It is envisaged that all pilgrims leave Rome together as a group of pilgrims to the Holy Land.

In the Holy Land participants will be lodged in families (2 youths together), in parishes, in institutes or in hostels run by the Custody of the Holy Land.

## IFCA and ICO

### **Participation in the General Assembly of the ICO Conference**

The General Assembly of the ICO Conference was held between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005. The theme was “*For a culture of peace - today and always, here and everywhere*”. It was held at the Notre-Dame Pontifical Institute in Jerusalem. The first part of the meeting was dedicated to a discussion on the statute particularly on the identity and future of the Conference and of the ICO. This was followed by a study session on “*Our societies’ and organizations’ responsibility for peace*”. Presentations about peace activities carried out by ICO in specific areas (youth, women, agricultural spheres and education) were given.

During their interventions, the Apostolic Nuncio and the Patriarch of Jerusalem gave a picture of the situation which Christians are experiencing in the Holy Land. At the end of the meeting the Conference drew up and published a message “For a culture of peace”.

### **WUCWO – UMOFC**

The General Assembly of the World Union of Catholic Women Organizations on the theme “*Women builders of peace: united in faith and in action*” will be held in Arlington (Virginia - USA) between the 31<sup>st</sup> May and the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

### **IFCM – UNUM OMNES**

The International Federation of Catholic Men will also be holding its General Assembly from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> September in Ghana. The theme

## NEWS FROM COUNTRIES

### Africa

#### **Burundi**

##### **Meeting for leaders and assistants**

From 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November 2005, a meeting for CAM Leaders and Assistants was held in Gitega. About seventy assistants and leaders attended this seminar. The themes studied during the meeting were: the involvement of CAM in the light of *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the Eucharist as a source of joy, happiness and peace and the struggle against the culture of violence and death in order to build a culture of peace.

##### **CAM's Afroconference**

CAM (Xaveri and Chiro) organized an Afroconference in Bujumbura, from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2005, with the theme "*Safeguarding the environment in Africa means protecting the future of children and youth*". The meeting was attended by representatives from Rwanda, Uganda, Dem. Rep. of Congo, Namibia, South Africa, Ghana, Lesotho, Botswana, Sierra Leone and Burundi and was opened by H.E. Msgr. Evaristo Ngoyagoye, Archbishop of Bujumbura who is charged with the Lay Apostolate.

#### **Zambia**

CA in Zambia is celebrating the 72<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of its foundation. These good news were passed on to us by our friend Stanley Mukosa. He has also given us information about the activities which have been organized.

"This year 2005, Catholic Action in Zambia celebrates the 72<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of its foundation. It started in 1933 on the initiative of Father Francis C. Mazieri. To commemorate this occasion, calendars have been printed and possibly T-shirts will be printed as well.

A number of other activities have also been organized:

- on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January, during a very colourful ceremony, 25 new members have been enrolled. These are now full members of CA. The ceremony was held in the city of Mongu, which lies about six hours by car from Lusaka, very near the boundaries with Angola, where CA has not been established yet. The priests have appreciated greatly the reports of the activities which IFCA

carried out in Burundi and in Kenya as well as the meetings in Rome. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> January, a full day was dedicated to the formation of the new members. They studied the themes which had been presented during the International Congress on Catholic Action and during the meeting held in Kenya earlier in May. Many other new members joined after the ceremony.

- On the 19<sup>th</sup> March, a formation seminar was held by myself for all Catholic Action Youth in the Archdiocese of Lusaka.

## America

### Argentina

#### Institute of Political Formation

During 2005, the Institute of Political Formation, founded by the ACA in answer to the crisis which burst out in 2002, intensified its activities.

Its main work is the formation course for persons who are actually involved or will be involved in politics. The course consists of four modules and lasts two months. Each of these deals with a particular area of study under the guidance of a Professor helped by specialists on the themes tackled. The theoretical-practical approach includes an analysis of the national and regional realities within the international context and proposals of diverse alternative solutions to the problems presented.

Course objectives:

- diffuse the Social Teachings of the Church
- improve the level of formation of present or future political leaders, given the actual complexity of the process of decision taking and of the public agenda
- contribute towards the renewal of the Argentinian class of political leaders, so that they may base their actions on values which are shared by all, that is:
  - respect for the rules of the political game
  - credibility linked with transparency in action taken
  - solidarity taken to mean mutual appreciation
  - respect for the national identity, taken to mean a common sense of belonging and a common destiny which is shared by all.

In 2005, the course, which originally was held in Buenos Aires, was extended to other provinces in the heart of the country, like Mendoza, Rosario and Paraná.

### **Competition for Youths on Firm Management “Hope for development”**

Through this competition, ACA aims at diffusing the values and principles of the Social Teaching of the Church, applied to economic-social spheres and to the creation of a virtual community of young people. Through stimulating games, they will be able to apply and deepen the basic knowledge acquired in their course of study, by taking decisions which might imply risks and which are the result of team work.

This Youth Competition on Firm Management “*Hope for development*”, carries with it an educational software dealing with transactions which stimulate the functioning of the market and the behaviour of economic agents. On these depend the fair functioning of the firm's profits which should reflect the firm's social responsibility.

This is aimed at students who are in the last three years of their comprehensive secondary education. These have to create a virtual firm of up to four components, give it an imaginary name and submit it for the competition. From then on, they have to assume that they are the directors of the company.

In 2005, there were 2.500 groups competing, 1.800 students and 450 teachers from public and private schools from all the Argentinian provinces.

### **Competition “Educating for Peace”**

This competition “*We are builders of Peace*” was aimed at children and young students in the initial level, EGB and Comprehensive. They were asked to express themselves in favour of peace.

Students, from Public and Private Schools who participated, were asked to develop the theme of Peace in Plastic and Graffito. The aim behind the competition was to help children and young people realize that, through their behaviour, they too can be builders of Peace in their own circles and that they should show this openly.

In 2005, more than 1.500 works reached the final selection.

### **Beginning of the Jubilee Year**

The Jubilee Year to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ACA, with the theme “*75 Years of Zeal and Service*” started in the Basilica of our Lady of Luján, on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November.

The feast of Christ the King is the day dedicated to the Argentinian Catholic Action. The jubilee is celebrated from the Feast of Christ the King 2005 to that of 2006. This is a time of grace during which CA members want to be a significant time in the life of their association and in their own personal lives.

During this Jubilee Year, on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2006, ACA celebrates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation and between the 29<sup>th</sup> April and the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006 ACA Federal Assembly will be held, during which the new national leaders association will be appointed.

During the Eucharistic Celebration in Luján, ACA members of the different dioceses of the country, gathered together for this special occasion, followed attentively the letter sent to them on the occasion of the Jubilee by the Argentinian Episcopal Conference. They were also pleased with the message received from His Holiness Benedict XVI. *“On the occasion of the opening of the Jubilee Year of the ACA commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation in the Republic of Argentina, the Holy Father Benedict XVI wishes to convey to you his sincere greetings and his fatherly wishes accompanied by prayers for all the praiseworthy assistants, leaders and members. He encourages them to carry on, with continued and renewed enthusiasm, giving their service to the Church by forming and inspiring lay people so that they may be authentic collaborators of the Hierarchy in spreading the Kingdom of Christ in this beloved Argentinian Nation. With these wishes and under the maternal care of the Holy Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles, the Holy Father heartily imparts, as a pledge of the incessant divine help, his apostolic blessing”.*

## **Colombia**

### **The National Assembly of CA in Colombia: the new President**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2005, Yolanda Carvajal de Guzman (outgoing President) has written to inform us that after a lot of hard preparatory work and with the support of Msgr. Restrepo, Auxiliary Bishop of Bogotá and CA Ecclesiastical Assistant, CA organized its National Assembly in Cali. The motto was *“We are the Church in action”*. The participants worked enthusiastically on the themes concerning the Family, the Church and Peace.

During the Assembly, Mrs. Clara Campuzano, who comes from the city of Medellín, was elected as the new President. We convey our best wishes to her in her new post.

## **Guatemala**

In October 2005, we received the following letter from Totonicapán:

*“Warm greetings, in the name of God, of the Holy Virgin and of all the CA members in the Parish of St. Michael the Archangel in the Archdiocese of Quetzaltenango Totonicapán - Guatemala.*

1 - A year from our meeting at the first International Congress on CA, we would like to thank God for this opportunity. It was a marvellous experience which we are now sharing with our brethren.

2 - We are very grateful to you for having remembered the Guatemala CA. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> October we received the “*Documents*” related to this International Congress on CA. In September we also received documents from the IFCM “Unum omnes”. (...)

3 - We have some good news to share with you. The number of young people in our community has increased. With the help of the Documents of the meetings in Lima (Peru) and in Rome, CA adults are rediscovering our identity, our spirituality, our charism and our mission and understand them better. (...)

Recently we celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of evangelization of CA and commemorated our martyrs. We are here quoting one of the many cases which our Bishop, Msgr. Juan Gerardi Martir, relates in his book “Guatemala nunca más”. “In the region of Ixil and in the north of the diocese of Quiche, during the military action between 1975-1976, we find the first victims. On the 19<sup>th</sup> March, the CA President of Nebaj, the members of the Central Council of the Cotzal CA and that of the Youth and Adult Sections in Chajul were kidnapped. Between November 1976 and December 1977, 143 CA leaders and catechists, from the region of Ixil, were also kidnapped and assassinated” (Tomo III, p. 132).

We keep on hoping that some day, at least one of our martyrs will be beatified.

In the name of St. Michael the Archangel we would like to thank you for your attention to our message and promise our prayer for IFCA.

Miguel Ángel Tax, CA President

Miguel Ángel Cua, Commission for formation

José Cop Secretary

## **Mexico**

### **75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CA in Mexico**

Catholic Action in Mexico has celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary from its foundation with a Eucharistic Celebration in the Basilica of Guadalupe on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2005. The diocesan delegations, gathered for the XXVII Plenary Assembly of the Mexican Catholic Action, held from the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> November, took part in this celebration.

Gloria Alanis Escamilla was reconfirmed as the National President.



## Europe

### Bosnia-Herzegovina

#### Newly born: “The Ivan Merz Association”

The Constitutional Assembly of the “Blessed Ivan Merz Catholic Association” was held in Banja Luka, on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2005, the day dedicated to the liturgical commemoration of Blessed Ivan Merz.

The Assembly opened at 10 a.m. with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration presided over by H.E. Card. Vinko Puljic, Archbishop of Vrhbosna-Sarajevo and President of the Episcopal Conference of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The concelebrants were H.E. Msgr. Franjo Komarica, Bishop of Banja Luka and a large number of priests from the diocese and from neighbouring dioceses of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia.

Before the Celebration, three lay people - a lay woman from Banja Luka involved at parish and diocesan level, a layman from Zagabria, member of the Social Christian Accademy and another layman, a medical doctor who emigrated to Croatia because of the difficult situation for Catholics - gave their personal experience as lay people within the Church, highlighting the importance of formation, of the Christian community, of the presence of lay people in society and stressing the need for lay people to work as an organized group. All this without forgetting the great difficulties experienced by Catholics in the Serbian Republic, where the division between the peoples has been and still is a sad reality wherein Catholics are very often penalized.

In the afternoon, the Catholic Association “Blessed Ivan Mertz” was officially constituted. The participants included a considerable number of representatives from the parishes within the diocese. After an intervention by Maria Grazia Tibaldi, representative of the IFCA Secretariat and greetings from a number of friends who came specifically for the occasion - Liutgard Derschmidt, National President of CA in Austria, Rev. Henri Hamus, Bishop Vicar and Assistant for organized laity in Luxembourg, Mr. Vilko Igel, representative of the German National German Community in Croatia and Cardinal Vinko Puljic - H.E. Msgr. Franjo Komarica proclaimed the decree declaring the founding of the Association and nominated Marija Jurkovic as diocesan President and Fr. Josip Bozic ofm as Assistant, with the specific target to launch the Association in the parishes. The Bishop read out the Statute of the Association and approved it for a year.

A well planned formation programme will be prepared and hopefully twinings with other diocesan CA associations in other countries, particularly with Italy and Austria, will be launched.

The next Assembly is planned for the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2006.

## Italy

### **XII National Asembly of the Italian Catholic Action 22<sup>th</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> April 2005**

*“Giving reasons for life and hope. Catholic Action’s mission in the parish and beyond”* was the theme of the XII National Assembly of the Italian Catholic Action. This was held in Rome between the 22<sup>nd</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> April. It was attended by 782 delegates from the various dioceses of Italy.

Prof. Luigi Alici is the new national President.

### **The II Vatican Ecumenical Council - 8<sup>th</sup> December 1965-2005 A Great Gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church**

In order to commemorate the 40 years from the end of the Second Vatican Council, together with the National Service for Cultural Projects of the Italian Episcopal Conference, the collaboration of the Lumsa University and of the Province of Rome, the National Presidency of the Italian Catholic Action organized a series of manifestations to reflect on the way in which CA has received, lived and put the Council into action. The Council was an event which has left its mark on the life of the Church and of CA and it is up to us to see as to how we can put it into practice today in the light of the challenges of our times. These activities included:

- the MEETING held on the 7<sup>th</sup> December with the theme *“The Council, is it in front of us?”*. Various experts and association members together with Cardinal Roger Etchegaray took part in this meeting. The Cardinal, after having dealt with some emblematic faces of Vatican II, recalled how his watch always shows the time of the Council.
- - The EXIBITION *“The great gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church”*. This was held from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> December. It gave a runthrough of the preparations and the development of the Council bringing out its benefits within the Church and in the world. The Holy Father, on his way back from the 8<sup>th</sup> December celebration, stopped at the entrance of the Auditorium in Via della Conciliazione, where the Exhibition had been put up, to greet the National President who was accompanied by the National Assistant Msgr. Francesco Lambiasi.

- a BOOK "A Council for the world. An invitation to Vatican II". The book is aimed particularly at young people and is meant to help those, who, for the first time question the contents and the heritage left by the Council. As President Alici says, in this volume, the Italian Catholic Action wanted to collect some tracks of a long path along which different generations can hold their hands and walk together. To remember. To give witness. To share.

Each CA sector was actively involved in the organization of a specific activity: on the 10<sup>th</sup> December, the ACR put up an activity on the theme "The Council related to children" On the 15<sup>th</sup> December the Youth Section developed the theme "And the Church played rock music. Vatican Council II, the young face of the Church". Cardinal Ersilio Tonini, Bishop Emeritus of Ravenna, took part in the youth activity and exchanged views with Paolo Giuntella - a Tg1 journalist and a young man who lived the Council - and Chiara Finocchietti, a Youth Section National Councillor. The Ecumenical Council has brought out the young face of a Church which can "change the tune". The participants were asked to speak about the message which Vatican II offers to young people today.

## Poland

### **Seminar "The Charism and mission of Catholic Youth Association in the Second Vatican Council Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity" - Sandomierz, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2005**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2005, a seminar on the theme "The Charism and mission of Catholic Youth Associations in the Second Vatican Council Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity" was held at Sandomierz. This was organized on the initiative of the Sandomierz Association and was attended by a number of diocesan leaders. Halina Szydelko and Leszek Bodus, National Presidents of Catholic Action and of the Catholic Youth Association of Poland respectively spoke about the common roots of the two associations and about their present situation.

The meeting was an important step in the search for new ways of cooperation between the two associations, a cooperation which both of them would like to intensify.

### **National Meeting on the occasion of the first centenary of the Encyclical "Il Fermo Proposito" by Pope Pius X - 11<sup>th</sup> June 2005**

A National Congress of the Polish Catholic Action was held at the Catholic University of Lublino on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2005 to commemorate first centenary from the publication of the Encyclical "Il Fermo Proposito" of Pope

Pius X. In this Encyclical the Pope encouraged the apostolate of the laity and the creation of Catholic Action.

The meeting started with a Mass celebrated by H.E. Msgr. Józef Zycinski, Archbishop of Lublino. The participants included CA representatives from all the Polish dioceses.

After the presentation by H.E. Msgr. Mariusz Leszczynski, National Ecclesiastical Assistant, on the meaning of Pius X's Encyclical, Father Tadeusz Borutka, diocesan Assistant of Bielecko-Zywiecko, dwelt on the history of the Association and on the challenges which it is called to face. In her intervention, Halina Szydelko, President of the Polish Catholic Action, gave a picture of the Association's present and on the perspectives for development.

Among the guests there was also a delegation of the CA of Lithuania, which is going to be set up, from the Lituianian diocese of Kowno.

#### **National Pilgrimage to Jasna Gora**

The national pilgrimage of the national Catholic Action to Jasna Gora was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2005. Participants met at the Cathedral of Czestochowa, where they were welcomed by H.E. Msgr. Stanislaw Nowak. From here they went in procession to the Sanctuary, reciting the rosary on the way.

The pilgrimage ended with Holy Mass.

### **Rumania**

#### **National Meeting of Catholic Action Associations in Rumania (ACRo)**

The first National Meeting of the Catholic Action Associations of the Catholic Church in Rumania was held between the 21<sup>st</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2005. This was held at the Manresa Centre run by the Jesuits in Cluj-Napoca.

The participants were the Greek-Catholic Bishop of Oradea, H.E. Msgr. Virgil Bercea from the Rumanian Episcopal Conference (REC) who is responsible for the Lay Apostolate, and 18 representatives - laymen and priests - from various Catholic Action Associations, namely Iasi Catholic Action (Iasi CA), the General Association of United Rumanians (AGRU - Greek-Catholic), the United Association of Rumanian Youth (ASTRU) - Blaj, Cluj, Oradea - and the Association of Catholic Youth of Maramures (ATCM).

The participants studied possible ways of setting up an association at national level and decided to set up a federation under the name of Catholic Action of Rumania (ACRo). This is to be directed by a National Council, through a National Secretariat.

As a first step towards this federation, "a steering committee" was set up with the following terms of reference: to draft a letter with all the necessary information to be sent to all CA Associations; to read and make public at national level the replies received, to convene an assembly for the constitution of ACRO and to submit the request for approval to the REC.

The "steering committee" is to stop functioning as soon as elections for the National Secretariat are held.

The "steering committee" is to be made up of: a Greek-Catholic representative - Oana Tuduce; a Roman-Catholic representative - Anca Lucaci; a secretary - Codruta Fernea and a spiritual Assistant - Fr. Felix Roca.

The Federation was constituted on 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> April at Blaj. Leaders and diocesan Assistants of the various associations attended this meeting.

## **Spain**

### **"Witnesses of hope" - Congress of the Lay Apostolate Madrid, 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> November 2004**

We are reproducing the first part of the communication published by the Federation of Spanish Catholic Action Movements at the end of the meeting. The full text may be found on the IFCA website.

"The first National Congress of the Lay Apostolate in Spain was held in Madrid from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2004. The Congress was part of the activities promoted by the Pastoral Plan of the Spanish Episcopal Conference for the four-year period 2001-2005 and organized by the Commission for Lay Apostolate.

During these three days, two thousand lay Christians, coming from all the Spanish dioceses, together with forty Bishops and a good number of priests prayed, studied and discussed themes like the vocation, sanctity and mission of the lay Christian. It was a very important moment for the Spanish Church as we had the opportunity to meet and to put a face to names we had only known on paper. It was also possible for us to deal with the many various feelings of the laypeople in our country as a result of the charisms, which through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit have appeared in the particular Church in Spain".

### **February 2005 - "Signo" a new magazine of the Spanish Catholic Action**

The General Catholic Action of Spain has published a new magazine "Signo", which incorporates all the other preceding publications. The new

director is Alberto Montaner.

**International University Meeting  
Murcia, 9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> November 2005**

The International University Meeting was held in Murcia from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2005. The theme was: *“The Eucharist, heart of the Christian life and source of the evangelizing mission of the Church”*.

Lourdes Azorín, General Secretary of the Federation of Catholic Action Movements and the General Assistant, H.E. Msgr. Atilano Rodríguez Martínez intervened on the theme *“The Eucharist and Catholic Action”*, in the name of the Spanish Catholic Action.

Silvia Correale, IFCA Consultant for the Canonization Cause of Saints, spoke about *“The Eucharist, source of Sanctity for lay people. Witnesses of Life in Catholic Action”*.

## Ukraine



The Ukrainian Youth for Christ, an association of Ukrainian youths of byzantine rite, has submitted an official request to join IFCA.

This is the text which has been submitted to the IFCA Secretariat:

**Ukrainian Youth for Christ (UYC)** - is an officially registered, non-profit making association of Ukrainian youth. The association has the full blessing and acknowledgement of the principal Archbishop of Lviv (Leopoli) of the Ukrainians. UYC is an independent organization which is not connected to any ecclesial, political or state set-up. UYC collaborates with Catholics, Orthodox and the Reformed Community as well as with Youth Non-State Organizations involved in youth work.

The members of the Ukrainian Youth for Christ are free to join any political or social association which respects democratic principles, national tolerance, reciprocal understanding among the Churches and the universal moral values.

The principles which underlie all the organization's activities are those found in the official Teaching of the Church, especially the orientations given by Vatican Council II, in particular as regards involvement in political and social life and openness to dialogue and ecumenism.

The aim of UYC is to bring together Christian youth so as to propagate moral Christian values and a Christian concept of the world. Through the education of its members, it tries to foster a Christian way of living so that

they may involve themselves to work for the good of the Church and of the Ukrainian nation.

### **Objectives**

The primary objectives of UYC are to:

- help young people acquire Christian values and help them grow in their spiritual life
- Help young people in their formation
- Help and support talented young people
- Introduce young people to the contribution of world Christian culture and science
- Collaborate with youth associations in Ukraine and in other parts of the world
- Educate young people to appreciate their heritage, to research and preserve historical documents and the spiritual and artistic treasures of the Ukrainian nation
- Offer its members formation facilities which help them in their educational, public, social and sporting development
- Participation in local and international Youth Programmes.

### **Activities**

Among the most important activities, one can identify the following:

- spiritual and educational formation of youth
- Organization of seminars, camps, conferences and sharing of experiences among Ukrainian youth and with youths from other parts of the world
- Charitable works: taking care of orphans and elderly people so that nobody feels abandoned and alone
- Commemoration of anniversaries and liturgical and national feasts
- Organization of choirs, theatrical and sporting clubs
- Editing and circulating newspapers which diffuse Christian values
- Formation of youth leaders
- Participation in Youth Congresses in Ukraine and abroad (WYD)
- Organization of congresses, camps, spiritual retreats and pilgrimages to holy places for youth
- Carrying out long term projects

## **Stages of development**

### *I. 1932-1933 - beginning of the movement*

As part of the extension of Catholic Action's activities, on the occasion of the Holy Year of 1933, proclaimed by Pope Pius XI, the Metropolitan of Galizia Andrea Sceptytskyj organized a number of Youth Congresses entitled "Ukrainian Youth for Christ" in various parts of Galizia. In fact the name of the organization - Youth for Christ - comes from the motto of the greatest congress of Christian Youth, attended by about 100.000 youth, held in Leopoli, in Ukraine on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 1933 under the direction of the Metropolitan Sceptytskyj. The great success of the Youth Congress in Leopoli was noted by all the Ukrainian parishes scattered all over the world. As a result, everywhere, in the Ukrainian Academic Centres, Catholic Action Groups were set up.

### *II. 1939-1990 - the diaspora period*

After world war II, the Ukrainian nation was subjected to the totalitarian communist regime. As a result, the Greek-Catholic Church in Ukraine was suppressed and thousands of priests, members of religious congregations and lay people were sent to concentration camps. In these circumstances, the Youth for Christ Movement was transferred abroad. During the period between 1939-1990, the Ukrainian Youth for Christ organized congresses, meetings and festivals in various other countries: Europe, North and South America and Australia.

### *III. 1990-2005 - the present period*

In the beginning of the 90's, the idea of the Ukrainian Youth for Christ and the Movement itself were transferred back to Ukraine. Through the combined efforts of members of religious communities, the laity, the Ukrainian communities abroad and some members of the "catacomb Church" in Ukraine, a great Ukrainian Youth for Christ congress was organized at Leopoli on the 7<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> September 1990. This time the congress was attended by about 40.000 youth and was the beginning of the spiritual and national rebirth of the Ukrainian nation. The Ukrainian Youth for Christ Association, as we know it today, was founded in Leopoli in Ukraine, on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 1990, a few days after the congress.

Today the UYC has a number of members in Galizia and in East Ukraine. The organization's development can at present be divided into the following stages:

- 1990 - 1993: the important help given to the Greek-Orthodox Church in Ukraine after its coming out from the "catacomb" period and the restructuring of ecclesial structures.

- 1994 - 1999: the carrying out of projects aimed at creating mutual understanding among the Churches and based on the principle of “ecumenism from the bases”, that is, opportunities for young people in the different Churches to meet, communicate and cooperate among themselves. In 1999 a big ecumenical meeting was held in Kyiv.
- 2000 - 2005: activities aimed at finding a solution for social problems and at increasing youth participation in social projects based on Christian moral principles.

### **Projects**

Today our projects have, above all, a social orientation as the situation when it comes to social services for youth is rather precarious. The law and state social programmes in this regard leave much to be desired.

The UYC has undertaken the following projects:

1. The maintenance and development of the Christian Youth Centre in Leopoli opened in 1999, which is the only Christian centre in the city and is open to young people belonging to all the Churches. The centre already runs the following courses and activities: an annual course of spiritual meetings; youth leadership training courses; a library which houses 3.000 volumes; a choir and a drama club. When renovation works are completed, there will be a gymnasium, a workshop and facilities for young people facing problems (abortion, drugs, violence).
2. Publication of the magazine “Viruju” (“I believe”) which is aimed at all Christians in general but mostly at young people. The magazine has a circulation in all Ukraine.
3. Evangelizing work among young people, in the outlying regions of Leopoli, by young people themselves. This project forms part of our involvement towards the development of our Christian society. It is rather a difficult project to carry out as out in the countryside social activities for young people are very few because of the many difficulties there encountered.

*How to contact us:* Ukrainian Youth for Christ E-mail: [umx@litech.lviv.ua](mailto:umx@litech.lviv.ua)

### **New CA Youth Association of Latin rite**

Rev. Jacek Uliasz, Assistant of KSM of Sandomierz, a national youth Association in Poland, which has the same characteristics as CA, has for some years been teaching at the Institute of Religious Science of the Seminary in Horodok in the Latin rite diocese of Kamieniec Podolski in Ukraine.

Rev. Jacek has already helped in the setting up of a similar association in the Ukrainian Diocese, the KTM, which now has diocesan leaders.

*News from Rev. Jacek Uliasz:*

“On the 21<sup>st</sup> November - solemnity of Christ the King - Bishop Leone Dubrawski presided over a Eucharistic Celebration which marked the constitution and the launching of KTM’s activities in Ukraine, in the diocese of Kamieniec Podolski. The Bishop signed the decree of the setting up of KTM (Katolycke Towarzystwo Molodi) and its Statute. He nominated Rev. Oleksandr Jazlowiecki as its diocesan Assistant and approved the election of the first diocesan President, Oksana Bewz.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> November, the first CA Youth Group participated in a day’s spiritual retreat. On this occasion, 16 of them were enrolled as official members of KTM, promising to serve God, the Church and their native country.

Presently, the diocesan KTM has 16 members and 50 candidates who are preparing themselves to join. These will be accepted as full members within a few months.

The Cathedral was full of people for the launching of CA. The messages from IFCA Secretariat and from IFCA member countries were received with great joy. A delegation from KSM of Poland (Sandomierz) was also present. The news was given publicity by the media both in Poland and in Ukraine.

Now the KTM of Kamieniec is carrying on with its normal work and is trying to establish KMT in the parishes. It hopes to launch KTM in the diocese of Leopoli and in other dioceses as well as in the Latin rite diocese of Ukraine. Cardinal Jaworski has already been contacted about this and has promised his full support.

The next meeting will be an East-West small congress on Youth Catholic Action which will be held at Sandomierz in May 2005”.

april 2006

