



UNIONE DELL' APOSTOLATO CATTOLICO

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Feast of the Annunciation

VI ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UAC *SYNODALITY: JOURNEYING TOGETHER AS PEOPLE OF GOD*

FINAL MESSAGE

Dear Members of the Pallottine Family throughout the world, greetings and blessings from all who are participating in the Union of Catholic Apostolate 6th Ordinary General Assembly being held in Rome between 13th and 19th March 2022.

As with so many events over the past two years we had wondered whether we would be able to meet face to face. For many this was possible but others not – so our meeting has been held in a hybrid mode. 15 participants have joined on line and 20 have been able to meet face to face. Certainly not ideal, but it has worked. For those of us physically present it has been a great experience of being able to pray, walk, share a meal and a drink, laugh, discuss – just be together again after two years of pandemic.

The theme of our meeting is *Journeying Together as People of God*. This theme was chosen as we respond to the call of Pope Francis to become a Synodal Church – as our Assembly prayer states - *we embrace the model of a synodal Church, a listening Church, a people responding to God's call in this third millennium*. Echoes of this theme have continued throughout our days together. In his message to the Assembly Cardinal Kevin Farrell, the Prefect of the Dicastery of the Laity, Family and Life wrote *Saint Vincent Pallotti did not have the intention to create a spiritual elite but a group of people who are not distant from the rest of the ecclesial community, on the contrary he wanted to help the whole church*. Fr Jacob Nampudakam SAC, the Union's Ecclesiastical Assistant spoke of the call of Saint Vincent, following God of infinite Love and Mercy and as Pallottines we are called to a universal vision, embracing all with compassion and love. *Our mission is Jesus on mission*.

So, looking at Jesus on Mission – what does that mean for us today in this third millennium? Sister Nathalie Becquart xmcj, the Under Secretary to the Synod of Bishops joined us, and spoke of Jesus as a model of Synodality – Jesus was mingling, journeying, listening and dialoguing with others. Our own charism is integral to the call to synodality today. Sr Nathalie spoke of Saint Vincent being a prophetic visionary and today we are living this Synodality as a Public Association in the Church. Saint Vincent recognised that we are all images of God, all one family, we are being called to relationship, go out to the periphery, listen to and dialogue with all, engage in inter religious dialogue and discern the voice of the Spirit.

As you are aware, we have been invited to participate in the living experience of synodality. Several UAC entities responded to the call to document their current engagement, living with the realities of the church today. These responses spoke directly of individuals - joys, sorrows, hopes, anxieties and sufferings.

Fr Derry Murphy SAC presented a comprehensive summary of a paper he had prepared on the history of the development of the UAC. This paper is certainly something we would strongly recommend for reading and study. As Sr Nathalie said we need to discern the voice of the Spirit and looking over the past fifty years, this paper clearly articulates the discernment and listening that took place as our current model of UAC as a Public Association came to life.

Over these days reports from each of the countries have been presented. A common theme of course was the impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic, with the curtailment of face-to-face gatherings and the resulting use of social media which for most was a totally new experience. Other frequently mentioned points that emerged were the recognition of ageing membership, the ongoing need for the development of collaboration between all Pallottine vocations with the need for the growth of Synodality within the UAC, the quest of some groups to reach out to the peripheries as we are called by Pope Francis and Saint Vincent Pallotti. This reaching out being inclusive of youth – listening, dialoguing as one person noted *accompanying young people in **their** world of work and life*, and care for our earth our world as called for in Laudato Si.

Members of the next GCC have been elected, using an online format which ensured privacy. This allowed all participants to vote whether attending in person or virtually. The new Council encompasses a broad representation of vocations, countries and gender. Four members from the previous GCC have remained on the council and six new members have been appointed.

During our meeting we had occasion to remember Fr Hubert Socha SAC, who entered his eternal reward last year, the man who as a canonist, worked with love and dedication over so many years to assist in developing our current UAC legal framework. All who knew Fr Hubert recognised his amazing humility along with such a deep faith and love of his God and the vision of Saint Vincent. Also, we were invited to attend the funeral of Sr. Lucindis Stock SAC, a Pallottine Missionary Sister. Two lives so different, yet equal in living their particular vocation as a son and daughter of God and Saint Vincent Pallotti.

In conclusion we acknowledge and thank Ms Donatella Acerbi, the outgoing UAC President and Fr Roque Gonsalves SAC, the UAC General Secretary, for their tireless work and dedication, reaching out to all in communion.

Donatella noted in her report to the Assembly our task is *Communion*, that is what the Church expects of us, striving together in communion. That communion we are being called to today is an essential element of *Synodality*. A people listening to all, journeying together as an open and inclusive group of people of God. We

indeed must always be open to the Spirit and new ways of responding as we work together as members of the UAC.

May Vincent's call to follow the Gospel of Jesus guide us to continue on our journey of growth together and may Mary Queen of Apostles be our model and intercede for us.



Donatella Acerbi,
UAC President,
On behalf of the participants of the General Assembly.



Charity exercised as described by the Apostle forms all the substantial constituent of the Union; if this were to be lacking the Catholic Apostolate would no longer be in it; therefore [...] the more perfectly the Union will exercise the charity of Jesus Christ through the action of its members, the more luminous and fruitful will be its success in all of its evangelical undertakings (OCC III, 137-138).

La carità esercitata come la descrive l'Apostolo forma tutto il sostanziale costitutivo dell'Unione; se questa andasse a mancare non vi sarebbe più in essa l'Apostolato Cattolico; perciò [...] di tutte le imprese evangeliche, l'Unione farà con successo tanto più luminoso e proficuo, quanto più perfetta eserciterà coll'opera dei suoi membri la carità di Gesù Cristo (OCC III, 137-138).