

## **VI GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The day second of the Assembly proceedings started at 10.00. Fr Rory welcomed the participants and invited us to invoke the Holy Spirit to accompany the work of the Assembly on this second day. The President, Donatella Acerbi, greeted the Assembly and asked Fr Eugene to lead us in a moment of prayer. Immediately following this was a brief presentation on the possibility of the election of candidates to the GCC using an on-line voting system. Then it was time to listen to the reports of the Commissions.

Marek Kalka, the General Bursar was the first to present. Marek began by recognising the work of Fr Norbert Sequeira, he emphasised the sense of responsibility and commitment with which Fr Norbert carried out his work. Marek presented a detailed account of the financial situation of the Union. He had presented to the General Coordination Council several proposals with a view to achieving a stable financial system. He also suggested to the GCC that there be a channel of communication with the other bursars in the Union. He concluded his report presenting three models for a stable financial system to the Assembly.

Following on from the report of the General Bursar, Fr Derry presented a report on the International Formation Commission.

Fr. Derry named the members of the Commission; he stressed the very positive meeting of the National Formation Promoters which took place in Rome from 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019. This was a significant formation event and was enriched with the presence of Dr. Katharina Fuchs of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

The presentation made by Dr Fuchs helped the participants understand the suffering and hardship experienced by some minors and the implementation of necessary and appropriate safeguarding practices.

He also mentioned other areas of formation which were spoken of at the meeting and some specific objectives for the national formation promoters.

Following this report Cheryl Sullivan presented the report of the Juridical Commission.

Cheryl began her report by paying a heartfelt tribute to the late Fr Hubert Socha who is sorely missed in this commission. Cheryl emphasised his fundamental role in the relaunching and development of the entire foundation of St Vincent Pallotti.

Cheryl then presented the different activities undertaken by the Juridical Commission in these past four years; there were a series of meetings, in presence and on-line. There are some pending matters, for example the appointment of a contact person, or persons, for instances of abuse of minors.

Work on the appendices, or commentaries, of the General Statutes, will continue, adapting the spirit of the General Statutes to the present times and needs

Then it was time to listen to the experiences of the National Coordination Councils which were presented in the following order: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Belize, Canada, Cameroon, Colombia, India, Ireland, Ivory Coast, the USA, and Poland.

In listening to the NCCs of the Union we noted similarities of lived experiences: the difficulties associated with the pandemic, a search for solutions to problems, a desire to live our Union anew with courage.

The pandemic with all the attendant difficulties and suffering has tested the members, both in a physical and material sense and also spiritually. In this critical time for the NCCs the members did not 'give up', but responded to the situation in the areas of charitable assistance, fraternal and spiritual support.

In each NCC there is creativity, care for one another and for others, and a desire to grow and to be witnesses of the apostolic and missionary spirit of Pallotti.

The morning session concluded at 14.00.

Many of the members of the General Assembly participated in the funeral Mass and entombment of the late Sr Maria Lucindis Stock, SAC, who died in the Procura of the Pallottine Missionary Sisters on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March.

The second session of the day began at 17.00.

In this second session, Sr Nathalie Bequart, Under-secretary of the Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, joined our Assembly and delivered a presentation on the theme of the Assembly "*Journeying together as People of God*".

Donatella presented Sr Nathalie, outlining her background and current role. Sr Nathalie reiterated continually that the Church of God has convoked the Synod which is journeying together. She drew our attention to the Logo of the Synod, to the people who are represented in it, to the colours which represent different languages and cultures. The Synodal pathway is proposed by the Church in order that all the baptised become protagonists. Pope Francis wants an open Church that gets involved, facing the challenges of our present reality which is part of history. There is a need to grow in the quality of our relationships and in collaboration so that this Synod be truly realized.