



# UAC NEWSLETTER

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Dear Friends,

For all of us this is a time of great joy. The vision of St. Vincent Pallotti continues to gain increased life with the canonical erection of the Union as “*an international public association of the faithful, of pontifical right*” and the approval of the General Statutes by the Pontifical Council for the Laity on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Those of us who were privileged to attend the ceremony were moved by the words of Fr. Freeman as he recalled the evolution of that vision since St. Vincent’s time.

This is for us an historic moment. Perhaps not so important in itself, as the Church had formally recognized Pallotti’s work in his own life time, but it is an important moment for us who are called to bring that vision to the people and the Church of the twenty-first century. It is a moment of new impetus and a moment of new grace, grace to go about the mission of the Union with new confidence and with new creative energy. We are launching a period of experimentation, an opportunity to use the graces given us to advance the reign of God in the spirit of our founder.

For the Scripture reading for the ceremony, Fr. Freeman chose the text of Jesus’ final discourse in the Gospel of John (Jn. 15:1-17), Jesus’ telling us that He is the vine, we the branches, branches that are to bear much fruit. In his day, Vincent bore much fruit in the vineyard of Rome in the many varied apostolic works that he found necessary and opportune in the situation of his day, his city. We now have a new challenge to look at our time and our cities to see how the Union can best serve the needs of the Church today. Let us go forth with new enthusiasm and new confidence to embrace this historic moment with the faith and charity which are to be the hallmark of our newly erected “*international public association of the faithful*”

**General Secretariat of UAC**

## ***News from Rome***

### **PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE LAITY**

It is with great joy that we bring you this latest news about the General Statutes. With its letter of September 3, 2003, the Pontifical Council for the Laity informed Fr. Seamus Freeman, President of the Union of the Catholic Apostolate, of its decision to erect the UAC as an international public association of the faithful of pontifical right and to approve *ad experimentum* its Statutes for a period of five years. The presentation of the decree took place in a formal ceremony in the Council’s offices on Friday, November 14, 2003. A delegation of the Union headed by Fr. Freeman was in attendance. Among the guests were members of the General Coordination Council and its Secretariat, and representatives of the Union from various countries.

On February 25, 2002, Fr. Freeman had presented a request for approval of our General Statutes to the Pontifical Council for the Laity together with a “Juridical Motivation” explaining why that office was approached. A lengthy review followed as to which Vatican office, the PCL or the Congregation for Religious, had jurisdiction. The uniqueness of the Union was the reason for the debate. In March, 2003, Fr. Freeman had received notice from the PCL that it was to be the Vatican office to study and eventually approve our Statutes. The accompanying letter called attention to certain aspects of membership that needed clarification. In May 2003, the General Coordination Council, with the assistance of Fr. Hubert Socha, SAC and Fr. Jan Korycki, SAC, reviewed the suggestions of the Pontifical Council and approved several changes that were included in the final draft of the Statutes submitted for approval. Copies of the approved Statutes will be available early in 2004.

Let us join in thankful praise to God for this moment in our history and ask for divine guidance as we face the new demands this period of experimentation will bring.

## **GENERAL COORDINATION COUNCIL**

### **Meeting of May 17, 2003**

A major concern of this meeting was the completion of a revision of the General Statutes in response to the observations of the Pontifical Council for the Laity. In particular, there was a need to determine which groups at the present time could be regarded as member *a jure* of the Union in light of those observations. It was agreed that given the reality of the Union in many countries this was something in need of further review once the General Statutes were approved.

The Council reviewed the preparations in progress for the 2005 General Congress and approved the redistribution of responsibilities and a projected time-line for managing the preparatory period.

Two other important issues were discussed: the need to strengthen the staffing of the General Secretariat as the Union’s operations expand and the matter of a financial plan to support the Union’s activities at the international level.

Pending the approval of the General Statutes, the Council approved *ad experimentum* the Regulations for the National Coordination Councils of Rwanda and Uruguay. Regulations were also approved for the Spiritual Center of San Salvador in Onda.

## **THE 2005 GENERAL CONGRESS**

Notwithstanding the attention given to the news of the approval of the General Statutes and the November 14th Ceremony at the Pontifical Council for the Laity, the General Secretariat has been busy with preparations for the General Congress.

The General Coordination Council has approved a redistribution of the various responsibilities for the Congress including those of the Council itself, its Secretariat, the Organizing Committee recently re-established in Poland, and the National Coordination Councils. It also approved a plan for the timely execution of the various stages of preparation. This was done to assure the fullest participation of the members of the Union in what will be the first General Congress of the Union under its approved Statutes.

At present arrangements are being made for a joint meeting at the General Secretariat with representatives of the Polish Organizing Committee to review the scheduled tasks and the distribution of responsibilities as well as an overview of the draft schema for the Congress. In the coming months there will be on-going consultation with the National Coordination Councils so that the Congress will be part of the growing communion in the life of the UAC.

## ***UAC in Action***

### **From Argentina**

- *South American Congress for Pallottine Educators* – The Fifth Congress for Pallottine Educators with its theme, “The Pallottine Educator: Identity and Mission,” was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, October 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>. A total of 230 persons from 18 educational institutions administered by Pallottine Fathers, Brothers and Sisters from Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina attended. The main objective for the Congress was to deepen the educators Pallottine identity as a sign of faith and hope in the world. The goal was to promote the Pallottine charism and spirituality in all the schools which continue the work of St. Vincent Pallotti. Fr. Ângelo Lôndero, SAC, presented the theme “Identity of the Pallottine Educator” and Fr. Pablo Bocca, SAC, and Sr. Ines Basso, CSAC, gave the presentation on “The mission of the Educator.”

### **From Brazil**

- *First National Congress* – On June 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> the first National Congress of Brazil was held at the Pallottine Major Seminary in Curitiba. There were 54 members present: Laity, Sisters, Fathers and Brothers. The goal of the Congress was the integration of the members of the Union and increased awareness of the life and work of St. Vincent Pallotti. The program involved workshops, times for reflection, prayer and liturgy. In the conference on the apostolate of the Union particular attention was paid to the reality of today’s world. The closing of the Congress was a celebration of the Vigil of Pentecost which included adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
- *Instituto Sulamericano di Estudos Palotinos (ISEP) – A New Phase* — In July the Fourth Course in Formation and the Pallottine Way of Life was initiated at the South American Institute for Pallottine Studies (ISEP) in Santa Maria with 33 participants from Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina, ranging in age from 17 to 68. The program was presented by Srs. Nilda Roggia, CSAC; Sr. Anyr Mezzomo, CSAC; Fr. Jadir Zaro, SAC; Fr. Edgard Ertel, SAC; and Fr. Ângelo Lôndero, SAC.
- *News from San Paolo* – The month of July was rich in Union activity aimed at animating participants and, as a consequence, groups in the Pallottine ideal:
  - ⇒ a meeting was organized in Parana on the theme “The maturity of apostolic action and the organization of Pallottine lay groups;”
  - ⇒ an abbreviated version of the ISEP program was offered at Curitiba: “Formation and the Pallottine Way of Life;”
  - ⇒ a “Pallottine Youth Congress” was held in Londrina gathering young people from the various cities where Pallottine Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters are present.
- *The UAC at the Local Level – Center for Pallottine Study and Spirituality* – A group of Sisters and laity gather each month at S. José School in San Bernardo to study the foundation of St. Vincent, to deepen their understanding of the mission of all the baptized and how they as Christians are to put it into practice. This year they are focusing on Pallottine spirituality as expressed in Article 1 of the General Statutes. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of each month they gather for a special mass in honor of St. Vincent and are preparing for a special pilgrimage to Rome in July, 2004 when they hope to walk in the footsteps of Pallotti.

### **From Canada**

*Canadian National Congress* – “Setting Our Faces Toward the Future” was the focus of the first National Congress held on June 4<sup>th</sup> at Red Deer. The 81 Delegates made a living experience of the Union, praying together, celebrating the Eucharist and discussing the future of the Union in Canada. They approved twenty four resolutions touching on the five dimensions of life in the UAC – intellectual, spiritual, communal, apostolic and Pallottine.

- *National Pastoral Plan* – The work of the Congress was the culmination of work begun in the spring of 2002 and will continue in the months ahead as the resolutions of the Congress become the basis for the final draft of Canada's national pastoral plan. The plan will address four specific areas of Union life: Resources and Communication, Formation, Councils and Communities, and Events and will serve as a guide for the growth of the Union in Canada.

## From Germany

- *New Initial Formation Program* – In recent months the UAC National Coordination Council in Germany elaborated a formation program, "Journeying toward the Spirituality of St. Vincent Pallotti and the Union of Catholic Apostolate," designed for people who want to join the Union as single members. Based on reflections in the Plenary Session, the Praesidium, the Executive Committee of the NCC, prepared two options. Both consist of two years of formation and endeavour to guarantee a good, well-founded, preparation of the future members.

The first option, which includes five week-long seminars, will be led by Joaquin Cabezas Alonso, UAC, and Sr. Adelheid Scheloske, SAC. The second, a series of six weekend-meetings, will be led by a team that includes the following additional members: Andreas Bühler, UAC; Bro. Edward Fröling, SAC; Sr. Simone Hachen, SAC; and Fr. Bernard Scheloske, SAC. Both options include a Union retreat based on Pallotti's book: "God the Infinite Love" to be given by Fr. Norbert Lauinger, SAC and Sr. Hemma Steingruber, OP. The course will also be open to other members of the Union as part of their "ongoing" formation."

- *Publication* – Fr. Hubert Socha has published an essay in *Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift* entitled "The World Wide Apostolic Network of the Foundation of Vincent Pallotti."

## From Poland

- *President of the GCC visits Local Coordination Council* – On Divine Mercy Sunday, April 27, 2003, Fr. Séamus Freeman attended a special meeting of the LCC of Dolina Miłosierdzia in Czestochowa. While explaining to them the developments regarding the General Statutes, and noting that individual members could form communities, he noted the necessity of sacrifice and the importance of personal commitment in those who choose to become members of the Union with all the rights and duties that implies. He also noted for them the ecumenical aspects of the Statutes and the need today to recognize that we live in world where contact with other religions and cultures is unavoidable.
- *New Local Coordination Councils* – In November of 2002 the NCC nominated 49 persons to serve as "persons of first contact" and charged them with the task of organizing LCC's in their local areas. They were provided with a set of guidelines provided by Fr. Hubert Socha. In September, 2003 the Polish NCC approved 14 new LCC's including 2 in Warsaw, and 1 each in Czestochowa, Poznan, Gdansk, Koszaline, Rzeszów, Otwock and Suchary.
- *Elizabeth Sanna Oratory* – In May of 2003, Leszek Biczuk, a handicapped man, organized this new community of sick and handicapped men and women to offer their sufferings and prayers for the spiritual and physical welfare of Pallottine priests, deacons, brothers and sisters. There are already 80 members committed to praying for individuals by name. Pallottines may write to the community to ask to have a member pray for them. Letters should be addressed to Elizabeth Sanna Oratory, c/O UAC Secretariat, ul. Skaryszewska 12, 03-802 Warsaw, Poland or by e-mail to [zak@ecclesia.org.pl](mailto:zak@ecclesia.org.pl).
- *Financial Planning for Polish NCC* – At its September meeting the NCC approved a plan of contributions for the support of the UAC in Poland and is planning to develop a budget for its operations for the year 2004. Finally professed members of the Pallottine Fathers and Brothers and Pallottine Sisters living in Poland and lay members who have made their act of apostolic commitment are being asked to contribute 3.3 PLN per month or 10 PLN per 3 months, that is,

roughly 10€ per year. The planned budget will include a contribution to the General Coordination Council.

- *Silver Jubilee for Family Retreat* – This passed summer was the 25<sup>th</sup> year of annual retreats for Pallottine laity held in the mountain village of Ochotnica. Over the years more than 10,000 members and contributors of the UAC have participated in this two week retreat for families. This year 150 children, youth and adults attended. As usual they were divided into groups of 40 to 50 for the program which included morning, midday and evening prayer, liturgy, adoration, 2-3 daily conferences and time for relaxing and enjoying one another in the beautiful mountain resort. One important element of this retreat led by Fr. Stanislaw Rudzinski, SAC with the help of Pallottine Sisters and lay animators, is the preparation of lay animators for the coming year through a series of reflections on church documents and text from St. Vincent Pallotti.

### From the United States

- *National Day of Service* - The Collaboration Committee of the National Coordination Council announced the establishment of a Pallottine National Day of Service to be held every year on April 21<sup>st</sup> in honor of the birthday of St. Vincent Pallotti. The Committee believes that a nationwide day dedicated to service would not only unify the efforts of every Cenacle or group, but also increase the awareness of the charism of St. Vincent Pallotti nationwide. Each Cenacle will choose an appropriate service project. In this way all the members of the Union in the USA will be united in the effort of bringing Christ's love to others.
- *Province Jubilee* - The Immaculate Conception Province of the Pallottine Fathers and Brothers celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation. The main event of the celebration was the Mass of thanksgiving presided over by Fr. Seamus Freeman, the Rector General, at St. Jude's Shrine in Baltimore, Maryland, on September 18, 2003.
- *A Special Gift* – A rather significant event of the jubilee was the presentation to the Province of a copy of Fr. Raphael Melia's biography of our Founder, *The Life of the Servant of God, Father Vincent Pallotti of Rome*. This copy was originally sent by Fr. Melia himself to Archbishop Martin John Spalding of Baltimore who had studied in Rome at the University of the Propaganda Fide and there became acquainted with St. Vincent Pallotti. Upon the death of the Archbishop in 1877, the copy went to the Catholic University of America. On the occasion of the golden jubilee, the University presented the copy to the Immaculate Conception Province, as a sign of gratitude for the services provided by St. Vincent Pallotti and all the Pallottine Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and lay faithful throughout the Church.

### From Uruguay

- *Preparing for 2004* – Last spring Uruguay hosted the first joint meeting of the National Coordination Councils of Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay who gathered with members of the Union to prepare for the 20<sup>th</sup> South American UAC Conference to be held in Santa Maria, Brazil in July of 2004. Recognizing this as a critical moment in the growing life of the UAC, they chose as its theme, "Hope, the Love of God, and the Identity of the UAC" and as their motto, "Germinating Life." An organizing team composed of three members from Brazil, two each from Argentina and Bolivia and one from Uruguay is being formed to complete the preparations.

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*"...the good one does alone is little, uncertain and of short duration,  
and the most generous efforts of individuals cannot succeed in anything great,...  
except in so far as they are united and ordained for a common purpose.*

*St. Vincent Pallotti (OOCC IV; 122)*