



# *UAC NEWSLETTER*

January/February 2014

**Dear sisters and brothers in the Union,**

we are happy to present to you in this newsletter a sharing regarding the pastoral initiative called **the "Night of Nicodemus" in the church of SS. Salvatore in Onda**, the Spiritual Centre of the Union of Catholic Apostolate, prepared by Fr. Gilberto Orsolin SAC, along with other news from the Union.

## **1. NIGHT OF NICODEMUS**

What is the Night of Nicodemus? Nicodemus had a personal encounter with Jesus and his life was changed (Jn 3:1-21). We too wanted to have such an experience and propose it to other people, especially to the many young people who pass our church in Via dei Pettinari on Friday evenings. The initiative of the "Night of Nicodemus" was born among the members of the Union, inspired by the words of Pope Francis who invites us to "go out" from ourselves, "opening" the doors of our hearts and of our churches in order to meet the other who is in need. It is a special time of meeting with Christ, which consists of two hours of Eucharistic Adoration and of prayer which take place in the church of SS. Salvatore in Onda, the Spiritual Centre of the Union, every Friday from 8 to 10pm. The time is organised very simply, with periods of silence interspersed every 20 minutes or so with a hymn, the Gospel of the day or a prayer. A Pallottine priest leads the adoration with the collaboration of other members and friends of the Pallottine family, with another priest available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Another group remain on the street outside the church, offering to the passers-by a small leaflet with the image of Jesus and details of the time of the weekly prayer, inviting them to enter even for a moment to pray for their intentions. We also intend to put the following words of St. Vincent on the back of the next version in order to try to draw the hearts of people more: "If I am afflicted, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is my consolation; if I am sick, He is my physician; if I am blind, deaf and dumb, He is my light, my hearing, my speech; if I am dead, He is my life; if I am off the road to Paradise, He is the way; if I am poor, He is my riches" (OCCC XI, 51-56). Those who accept the invitation to enter are given a nightlight and accompanied before the altar where they can place it, stop for a moment of prayer and take a small scroll containing a biblical phrase.

The testimony of several participants gives us an idea of how we are experiencing this new initiative of spiritual renewal and evangelisation:

"For me the Night of Nicodemus is a challenge and a joy. The challenge is the secularisation which we experience not only in the secular world, but also in the ecclesial one. The joy is in seeing people whom we invite agreeing to pray in the church before the Blessed Sacrament. It is often possible to perceive a transformation in them between how they were before coming into the church compared to how they leave after this experience of personal and communal prayer. Nearly all of them thank us for the opportunity to draw close to Jesus and they are often deeply moved. Many others do not enter the church but pour out on the street their personal problems and their problems with the Catholic Church. Still others ask instead with admiration if we really are Catholics. In short, my personal experience is that challenge and joy go together; I feel that we are going against the current of our times and that through our work we can draw close to many people who for some time no longer enter a church or no longer feel themselves to be Catholic".

"For me, it is a pastoral initiative which allows us to draw close to God, to transform sadness into a transfiguring joy, initial refusal and resistance often become a great appointment with the Lord, the beginning of the journey, the day of Life, which is prolonged throughout our lives in the hands of He who said to Nicodemus: "no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and

Spirit” (Jn 3:5). These are words of Hope, the salvific promise which is fulfilled before our eyes, every Friday evening. It is the thirst of people which is satisfied by the mercy of God”.

“I began the path of the nights of Nicodemus with, I must say, a bit of apprehension; then, however, it became truly captivating. I have now understood something more of its meaning: before seeking Jesus through the meditation which I do in church, I am finding myself, and in this way I better draw near to the essence of Christian love”.

The invitation of Jesus is like a hidden treasure. May you too come personally to discover and share with us this profound and lasting joy which knows no limit; or perhaps, if you do not already do so, may you think of organising a similar initiative in your area, going out from the church into the streets, inviting those whom you meet to come and pray even for a moment, in this way opening the possibility of a transforming encounter with the Lord, the living God, who awaits and who welcomes all in the Blessed Sacrament.

## **2. News regarding the Cause of Beatification of Ven. Elisabetta Sanna:**

On January 27th 2014, the Holy Father Francis authorised Cardinal Angel Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, to promulgate the Decree regarding the heroic virtues of the Servant of God, Elisabetta Sanna, member of the Union of the Catholic Apostolate. This pontifical recognition of heroic virtues, which is fundamental for Beatification itself, was completed after the positive vote of the special Congress of Theological Consultors on November 20th 2012, and after the Ordinary Session of Cardinals and Bishops, members of the Congregation of the Causes of Saints, on January 21st 2014. The participants of the Session established that the Servant of God had exercised the theological, cardinal and connected virtues to an heroic degree.

It is worth underlining the title that our Venerable has received in the official documents: Servant of God Elisabetta Sanna, laywoman, widow, professed member of the Third Order of St Francis and member of the Union of Catholic Apostolate founded by St Vincent Pallotti. After St Vincent she is the first person in the Pallottine family to have received such high recognition, apart from the martyrs beatified for their martyrdom. Let us now pray for the recognition of a miracle achieved through Elisabetta's intercession.

## **3. News regarding the Cause of Beatification of Ven. Richard Henkes:**

**The Cause of Beatification of the Servant of God Richard Henkes** from Germany, Pallottine priest and martyr, **has taken a further important step forward**. On December 3rd 2013 the historical experts, Consultors of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, recognised that the *Positio*, that is, the book of 680 pages on the life and martyrdom of the Servant of God, contains the documentation which can constitute a serious basis for the judgement of the theologians.

On February 10th last the General Postulator, Fr. Jan Korycki, handed over to the aforementioned Congregation the same *Positio* which had been completed by the opinions of the historical experts. We are now awaiting a further judgement which will be formulated in its own time by the Congress of Theological Consultors and then by the Cardinals and Bishops.

## **4. Brazil - Fourth Ordinary National Assembly of the Union and Election of a new NCC:**

The National Assembly of the Union in Brazil took place at the Instituto Salette, Curitiba, Paraná, from February 21st to 23rd, during which Dario Ivatiuk Junior was re-elected President of the NCC and Sr. Marinês Pivatto, CSAC, elected Vice President. We wish them and all of the members of the new NCC every blessing and the fullness of the Spirit in their service of the Kingdom of God in the Union, in the Church and in society in general in Brazil.

## **5. Poland - Rosary for the intentions of the Union:**

Since January, some members have committed themselves every day to pray the Rosary for the intentions of the Union - for all members and friends of the Pallottine family and for the intentions entered in the online book of prayer intentions on the Polish UAC website ([www.zak-pallotti.pl/index.php/intencje](http://www.zak-pallotti.pl/index.php/intencje)). Initially, it was planned to continue the prayer only for a few months, but those who enrolled now pray the Rosary on the same day each month. We are certain that such a commitment to prayer and intercession will bring great blessings for all and help all of us to live the call of God to love and service without limits more faithfully, courageously and joyfully.