



UAC NEWSLETTER

November, 2009

First South American Congress of the UAC.

The first South American Congress of the UAC which was simultaneously the first National Congress of the UAC in Brazil, took place from October 29th to November 1st in Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. The theme of the Congress was “The UAC – from the Cenacle to the Mission.”

This event was named a Congress in conformity with the vocabulary of the General Statutes of the UAC, however from 1977 onwards there have been regular South American Encounters in which priests, brothers, sisters and lay persons have always participated.

89 persons, priests, brothers, sisters and lay persons took part in this gathering together with members of the National Coordination Councils of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Colombia, members of the Local Coordination Councils of these countries and some invited guests. The presence of Fr. Nelson Gonzalez a diocesan priest from Uruguay was of special significance.

On the first evening Sr. Helena Marques Pimenta, CSAC and a group of musicians presented a new CD “Acordes Palotinos” as part of the opening activities.

Fr. Derry Murphy, President of the UAC, presented the topic “A vision of the UAC in the world.” This presentation was of great value because he has accompanied the development of the UAC since the canonical erection, he presented the ‘lights and the shadows’ of this period.

The Presidents of the National Coordination Councils presented an overview of the UAC in their own countries. There are difficulties and there is diversity in the life of the UAC, however in each country the desire to grow and to progress is evident. Following on from these presentations the participants sought to identify the challenges which are part of the mission of the UAC in Latin America. The document of Aparecida is a significant reference point for the activity of the UAC.

Fr. Erno A. Schlindwein, SAC, led us deeper into the theme of the Congress with a reflection on the Cenacle. In conclusion he affirmed that the effectiveness of our mission depends on our search for holiness. Then, in a climate of silence and prayer, we participated in an experience of Cenacle the culmination of the entire Congress.

Fr. Nelson Gonzalez evaluated and synthesized the proceedings of the Congress and the experience of this Cenacle; he concluded by noting that it is necessary to allow ourselves be enraptured by the charisma rather than judging; and while activity is important still more important is our manner of acting.

In the light of all this each delegation sought to identify concrete and viable proposals to be undertaken in their respective Councils.

This Congress was truly a Cenacle experience lived in harmony and with a family spirit; a time of dialogue in which each person was aware of the obligation to collaborate and contribute to the common good. There was great joy and a sense of responsibility because we realized that our charisma is relevant and of particular importance for the evangelizing mission of the Church in our times. We want to learn how to work with and as Church, announcing God, infinite love, so that the kingdom of Christ be ever more visible and that there be one fold under one Shepherd. – Srs. Ivete Garlet and Cleusa Casarin, CSAC.

Celebration of the Union, Rome.

On October 31st, in the Church of Santo Spirito dei Napoletani in Via Giulia, the annual thanksgiving celebration marking the first anniversary of the definitive approval of the General Statutes and the sixth anniversary of the canonical erection, took place. The main celebrant was Fr. Zenon Hanon, Vicar General of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate.

Corrado Montaldo, Vice President of the Union, representing Fr. Derry Murphy, the President who was participating in the South American Congress of the Union, greeted those present in the name of the General Coordination Council. This church is of special significance as it was here that the call of God to

found the Union occurred and on this occasion it welcomed many Pallottines who concelebrated the Eucharist together with brothers, sisters of the Pallottine congregations and lay members from Rome and the surrounding areas representing the various Local Coordination Councils of the Union in Italy. The UAC choir animated the liturgy centered on the theme of holiness in anticipation of the Feast of All Saints: this was the topic for Fr. Hanas' homily and of the personal testimonies of three members of the Union, a priest, a sisters and a lay person.

Sr. Danila Caponio, CSAC, from the LCC in Ostia, spoke on "The Spirituality of St. Vincent, a way to holiness", sharing her own experience of rediscovering the universality of the charism of St. Vincent through the life of the Union and of its members; Fr. Jean Bertrand Etoundi, SAC, a young priest of the International College, spoke on "To relive St. Vincent, a holy priest", shared the words of St. Vincent that have spoken to his heart in order to live his priesthood as best he can; Mr. Tommaso di Pasquale, of the LCC in Pietralata, on the topic "Become all things to all people in order to be saints today", told of his life experience, both in his own family and as a Pallottine, in which he posed the question on how he was living this 'to become all things to all people' in the concrete circumstances of daily life and work, while trusting always in the merciful love of God which makes up for our shortcomings.

The shared prayer of the various members led on to a common renewal of the Act of Apostolic Commitment, a confirmation of a common and total spirit of service to the sanctifying mission of the Church according to the Pallottine charism. It would be wonderful if this annual thanksgiving celebration were to take place wherever the Union is present through its members and structures so as to express and make concrete that visible communion with which we know ourselves to be always and above all, children of God and of St. Vincent.

At the end of the celebration a short text written by Paul de Geslin, a companion of St. Vincent Pallotti, was distributed, it recounts a conversation between them on the meaning of true holiness. The following is the final sentence of the text and in reading it we are united, whoever we are and wherever we may live, the same indelible spirit of holiness that St. Vincent left: may this spirit accompany us and open our hearts and minds in the coming days so as to correspond to the call to re-ignite faith in Jesus, strengthen hope in others and revive charity in the world. Gabriella Acerbi of the Quinta Dimensione Community.

"Holiness, my son, is a gift of God and comes directly from his grace without which nobody can be saved. His graces are continuous and we are immersed in them like fish in the sea. Our greatest fault lies in one of the following three things: we do not even ask for grace, or we do not want it, or we do not benefit from it, and this constitutes the life of the sinner: true holiness consists of being attentive to those graces which he gives us and instead of asking God for his grace, showing ourselves to be faithful to those already received and the continuous practice of these three attitudes, this is holiness, and nothing else. (Paul de Geslin, compagnon del saint Vincent Pallotti, edited by Bruno Bayer, Editions du Dialogue, Paris 1972, p. 84-85).

UAC Retreats in India.

The Communities of the UAC in India took a decision some years ago to organize a retreat that is specifically oriented towards the charism of the UAC every three years and that these retreats be open to all the members of the Communities. Mons. Séamus Freeman animated the retreats which took place in 2006. This year Fr. Derry Murphy, SAC, President of the GCC, was invited to animate two retreats for the Communities. The first retreat took place in the Pallottine Animation Centre (PAC), Nagpur, from October 10th to 15th with the participation of 88 members of the SAC, of the Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate and the Missionary Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate, of the Khristsevikas Secular Institute and two sisters of the new community of the Cenacle Sisters of the Sacred Heart. The second retreat was hosted by the Maria Rani Centre in Trivandrum, Kerala, from October 21st to 26th and in this retreat 82 members from the communities took part. Both retreats were characterized by a strong family spirit, openness and cooperation between all and a marked fervor and zeal to make the spiritual riches of our Pallottine heritage available to the Church and the world of our times.

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