

**THE MEETING IN POLAND OF THE EUROPEAN
SECRETARIES APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER AND THE MEJ.
SEPTEMBER 2009**

Friday 25th September 2009

Items of news from Claudio Barriga.

The Challenge of the AOP How to renew this apostolate and make it more attractive to the world at large. We have followed in the footsteps of young people to enable us to reflect on the impact that modern culture has in this day and age. Two months ago Father General expressed I desires for the AOP he hopes that there will be better coloration between the AOP and the ministries of Ignatian spirituality.

What does the AOP means to those who are Jesuits? It is necessary to change the statutes? Father General invites us to renew our way of proceeding(propositions in French) for example for those who believe, for those who practice their Faith and to find other ways for those who are not really committed to the Faith. He commends an involvement with the MEJ, youth movements in general and the chance to get into the schools.

For the last two and a half years Claudio has worked alone but soon this will change. Fr General hopes to set up a team of consultors. He hopes that a new modus procedendi will be found. **What is really essential is to know clearly what is specific to the Apostleship of Prayer in Jesuit ministry.**

It is hoped that there will be advantages is working as a team. Claudio is in the process of establishing two international teams of consultors: one for the AOP and the other for the MEJ.

Claudio informed us of his recent travels and the first video-conference which took place in the Curia with the offices of MEJ in Canada, Egypt, Chile and Paraguay.

The text of Fr Josef Augustyn,SJ (as a separate document.)

News from each European country.

The UK Fr Michael Beattie SJ

This year the most important aspect of my work is the meeting that I have about every three weeks with the young diocesan team that visits the schools of the diocese and beyond to give what they call “retreats” to the pupils. I have given them the simple idea of teaching the pupils to offer their day to the Lord: “Jesus I offer my day to you” and in the evening a simple review: sorry for mistakes made and thank you

for all the nice things of the day. This diocesan team has found that most of the young people latch on to this simple method of prayer and take it to heart. At this early stage they do not mention the papal intentions though in due course these will be introduced.

Poland Fr Tadeusz Chromik SJ

During the last two years nothing new has happened we have just kept going on as usual. We have the review "Prayer and Service which has replaced "The Messenger". We produce 1,500 copies which give a gospel commentary for each week, the Pope's intentions. Thanks to our review we have contact with about fifty groups with whom we organise retreats right across Poland. On the First Friday of the month there is a time of prayer organised by a member of the laity. We publish 40,000 leaflets containing the papal intentions. Our website had 60,000 hits each year. We also have a permanent office.

Greece Fr Demetrios Dalesios SJ

In reality we have a few changes. We have a new place. Meetings have been organised with different groups bearing in mind "The Year of the Priest". These groups consist of ordinary people, priests, young people, children and young couples who are anxious to be good educators of their children.

Syria Fr Zygmunt Kwiatkowski SJ

We feel the impact of political, cultural and economic affairs. The process of globalisation should help a sense of brotherhood yet communication can be the cause of confrontation. Ecology and the growth of the influence of China changes the rules. Everything comes from China. At the root of these differences in culture there is a sense of fear. A million Iraqis with us do not give us confidence. The Christian Church has something to say in these circumstances.

Italy Fr Tommaso Guadagno SJ

Since last January we have a new team and also in the diocese there is new personnel.

We have profited by using the initiatives taken by the Church at large for example "The Year of St Paul" and now "The year of the Priest". We have sent out a small book prepared by Fr Max Taggi SJ and it has been sent to all the bishops. We have the tradition in Italy of praying for priests and I have proffered the idea of adopting a priest in one's prayer. I am fond of icons and I use these together with our publications and I use the internet.

Croatia Fr Mate Samardzic SJ

Not much to report. I am new and with the national Secretary we new to the job. We publish the review "Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary". Mate has not

visited all the groups in his country but he will have more information when we have our next meeting. 7000 people are enrolled in the AOP in Croatia.

Sweden Cristina Ramos

Our National Secretary, Francisco Herrera SJ is in Mexico. He thanks everyone who remembered his jubilee. There are several AOP groups who reflect on the monthly intentions. They use “power point” as they present the psalms. Two brochures are published one of them is produced in conjunction with the Swedish bishop’s catechetical conference.

Malta Fr Raymond Pace SJ

Our team is relatively young. Our main news is the publication of a book of prayers linked to daily living. I have been asked as to how families can be helped with their daily prayers. In this book there are a hundred prayers with a verse or two from the gospels and a prayer which relates to daily living. A group of young people helped with the writing of this book. I now see this book in families. Through this we now have contacts, which would have been in danger of being, lost to our Apostolate.

Michael Beattie asked if it could be translated into English? Raymond Pace said “no” because of the local nature of the text but the ideas could be used.

France Fr Frederic Fornos SJ

We have two plans in mind: to re-dynamise the AOP and to make an internet website which will be launched by Sept 7th

There are three ways of entering the site. 1st by clicking on to the monthly intention. The 2nd entry is La Planete, the contemplation on the Incarnation. (The 3rd entry not listed)

Cristina Ramos(Sweden): How much does it cost? F: A lot of investment, many helpers, many volunteers. It is over 8000 Euros but this is a long-term investment.

Michael Beattie(UK): From the opening, how many visits to the site? 880 but this is without publicity.

Frederic: Our official opening will take place at the beginning of the liturgical years and our aim is to be seen in organisations of international cooperation. The website of the French Province has a spiritual internet site. Our Lady of the Web.(ND du Web)

Claudio: What are relations like?

Lines of cooperation simply. There is no collaboration. As far as the AOP is concerned we wish to make our mark we are seen as a ministry of the Society of Jesus so it is important that AOP is seen as a ministry to the universal Church and is not simply for those interested in Ignatian spirituality. We have a Benedictine and a Dominican in our team that helps us to diversify and soon there will be a Franciscan and a Carmelite.

Portugal Elias Couto

We have the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the (monument) statue of Christ the King in Lisbon. The AOP has worked hard toward this celebration. This is a national initiative and the public TV stations have transmitted the celebration. 100,000 people were present for the celebration. There has also been a pilgrimage for all the dioceses and the AOP had the responsibility for the celebrations. There is an AOP diocesan day in most of the dioceses. New people who will take charge have been nominated by the dioceses.

Our web site came into being at the end of last year. Between January and July 2009 the site has had 22,000 visits. We have 80,000 subscribers to our publications. We are preparing a new web site for the whole Church. The Jesuit Provincial as named Fr Antonio Valerio to work with the AOP and this is why he is with us at this meeting.

Austria Fr Micahel Zacheri SJ

There is nothing much that is new to report. Our Bulletins are sent to Switzerland, Germany and Austria but the Swiss and the Germans prefer to have their own. In Germany a web site has been made and it is called "To pray for the world" A person to be in charge in Germany has been named.

Ireland Fr John Looby SJ

People going to work in the morning often spend 10 minutes making connection and praying with "Sacred Space". There are many commuters and so many shots at this website. Those who walk use portable equipment, SMS (?) with thoughts and phrases for reflection are sent to students.

100,000 copies of our review are sent out. There is collaborative work with Zambia

"Living Prayer" is down from 10,000 to 5,000.

There is a team that gives retreats to youth.

What is the purpose of the AOP? What does it give that is different from other initiatives?

Saturday 26th Sept 2009

Spain Fr Garcia de Medina SJ, Fr Javier SJ.

Our set up is somewhat different from that of other countries, France, Italy Austria etc. We do not have a publishing house as we had in the past but today we have above all the review "The Messenger" which has been in existence for over 100 years.

We have followed a course of action similar to that of Poland. We have suppressed “Heart of Jesus” in the title of our review and this is the reason why we have created another review “Heart of Christ” but we have reintroduced “heart of Jesus”. this time in small print. in our first review.

- 60,000 copies published of the annual papal intentions.
- 40,000 copies of prayer bulletin
- 17,000 copies of “Pray your life” with actual texts of prayers.

We do not organise religious celebrations in our Secretariat but we collaborate with those who do organise these things.

Three of us work in the Secretariat and there is a council with a diocesan director and with Jesuit coordinators. There is no MEJ but there is “Youth for the Kingdom of Christ”. There are 69 dioceses and 56 of them have Jesuit directors. These directors promote the AOP with their publications and meetings.

A Spanish Jesuit, Berardo de Hoyos, promoter of the Sacred Heart, will be beatified next year. There is a successful web site.

***What distinguishes the AOP from other spiritual ministries in the Church?
If AOP did not exist what would the Church be missing? Does AOP bring something quite specific to the Church?***

Replies from:

Polish Group

- 1) To be the leaven in the lump without being visible in our work of the mission of the Church. Our hearts must be changed if we are to change those of others and to move mountains.
- 2) AOP members animate parish celebrations consecrated to the devotion of the Sacred Heart.
- 3) There is cooperation with Jesuits in the parishes and in spiritual initiatives.
- 4) A means of bringing the papal intentions to the parishes.
- 5) Without the AOP there would be no MEJ

French speaking Group

Three important points

AOP concerns the whole Church and all Christian men and women. We are united to the Holy Father by the prayer intentions. It is the easiest of prayers and accessible to the greatest number of people.

It is a worldwide network, universal in its nature and open to the whole world to pray for others and to serve Christ and the Church in the midst of human problems and challenges.

A strong form of prayer that that opens us up, through the papal intentions, to questions that beset our world, e.g., questions of justice, which we can address

through our Eucharistic movements and through our daily offering. It is a prayer that is inserted into daily living and indeed is a pedagogy of the Incarnation.

Spanish Speaking Group

Apostolic prayer helps to give meaning to life. It deepens our relationship with God and it gives a feeling in prayer that God waits for me. Pious people get an interest in worldwide problems and get a sense of renewal in their lives. To have a sense of being a member of a worldwide family which prays together is very important. It is a form of apostolic prayer that draws our attention to the problems of the world and the intentions of the Holy Father orientate us to this end. The AOP opens us up to the world and we are in communion with those who pray the same intentions.

English Speaking Group

The AOP is not simply and exclusively Jesuit. It is for the universal Church for all Christians, for those who have little or no Faith, for the unchurched, for those who have virtually no sense of systematic Faith or belief.

In the 16th century St Ignatius insisted that his men should give special care to people who were uneducated or who were not very poor. In what direction would he point us today? Modern man is very competent in science and technology but is very poor and uneducated in Faith.

The AOP has an adaptability, a flexibility so that it will fit into all countries, all cultures in all generations. Its aim is to meet the major needs of people.

Technology is today even in the hands of poor and uneducated people and in the hands especially of the young. AOP needs to be right there!

Reactions

Garcia Javier SJ (Spain) It is important to realise that young people make great progress in new technology.

Raymond Pace SJ (Malta) We must never sever the link with the Society of Jesus. If we lose interest so will the dioceses and there will be nothing left.

Frederic Fornos SJ (France) Very few Jesuits know that Fr General is the Director General of AOP.

Demetrios Dalesios SJ (Greece) I see different attitudes in the Greek hierarchy and it is those that insist on the need for renewal that gives me the courage to stick with the group.

Raymond Pace SJ (Malta) This is a personal opinion but it should be made plain in the Society of Jesus, to all members of the Society of Jesus that without the AOP, Ignatian spirituality will lose many people and will become elitist.

Michael Beattie SJ (UK) Fr General should be exhorted to speak clearly about AOP in his letters to the whole Society because many Jesuits either ignore the AOP or do not wish to recognise its existence.

Mate Samardzic SJ (Croatia) The link between AOP and Jesuit spirituality is to be found in our retreats. We learn to pray this way but it must continue when the retreat is over. AOP helps people to face the horrors that can be found in our world. Each change in oneself can change the world. You can place limits between the elite and the rest of the world. May prayer should be for everybody.

A “round table” with youth from Lumen Vitae and ERM who share their vision of their own generation as well as their interest in spirituality.

(See the original English version in a separate file for Anne’s testimony.)

Conversation with the youth.

Mariette Jacquet (France) In our meeting we spoke a good deal about new technology, about the internet and how the young are every involved. However, in two of our meetings technology did not loom large and most more importance was placed on personal meetings. A priest, sisters, and people witnessed to their Faith. Anne found on the internet informative programmes entitled “I have confidence in God”.

Zygmunt Kwiatkowski SJ (Syria) What is it that you have found important in these persons: priest, and religious sisters in community?

Ewelina (Poland) In my family have heard a lot of criticism of priests and I have met a priest who is so good and sisters have in their communities people who are so good and attentive to the needs of others. These people have shown me the goodness of God and that God is not an abstract idea.

Cristina Ramos (Sweden) What did your family say when you said that you were more present to Almighty God when you were with the MEJ than when you were with the family?

Ewelina (Poland) This is difficult because my family does not think further than going to Sunday Mass. Yet they have seen me more happy and they share my joy. My father has started to read the Bible and my mother keeps asking me questions. This is a happy state of affairs for me.

Cristina Ramos(Sweden) This interests me because I come from a non-Christian country and my husband has no belief.

Raymond Pace SJ(Malta) What helps you in difficult times, when you are alone or when you meet with young people who have no interest in God?

Anne(Poland) That which helps me is to be close to the Cross of Jesus. I know that Jesus is there even when I feel lonely.

Severine(Poland) I am a person who is en route, trying to find God in my life. I try to pray and it helps me to be heard, in my catholic establishment for example even if I find that there are only nominal Catholics there. I have been at this for eight years but for me it is way of life.

Discussion. *How can the AOP contribute to the experience of Anne and Ewelina that they have witnessed in their Movement?*

Michael Beattie SJ (UK) We are touching on something that is truly essential with the daily offering of the AOP. Anne has said that Faith is not just affiliation to a religion but a relationship. AOP is simply this – building and deepening a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Mate Samardzic SJ (Croatia) A most important thing that Anne said is that Jesus must be always in the first place. We must show that as we pray so we live and as we live so we pray.

Raymond Pace SJ (Malta) The language of the AOP is language of the heart and this we are so close to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the way these two young people speak shows how close they are to the AOP.

Cristina Ramos(Sweden) Everybody can participate in the AOP. It is open to the whole world.

Tomasso Guadagno SJ (Italy) The importance of witnessing is apparent. The importance of symbols and personal encounters. All is important in the AOP and it is interesting to see that young people are sensitive to and aware of this.

Elias Couto (Portugal) As the Father of a small boy the question which concerns me is how to pray with him, how to teach him to pray? How do we find space in which we are aware of the presence of Jesus? How do I experience Jesus Christ? How does it become a reality for me? So I ask the AOP to show me how to approach others in prayer.

Michael Beattie SJ (UK) A Jesuit priest who had a great influence on me used to say “You cannot give Christ to others unless you are Christlike yourself” I think that the witness of these young people run very much along these lines.

Zygmunt Kwiatowski (Syria) Efficiency is a hallmark in modern culture. There isn't enough time to do what we want to do even as Jesuits! We would however profit greatly from listening, meeting and simply being with young people. We are always speaking about the "magis" The need to find time is essential.

Sister Danuta Pusty (Poland) As I have accompanied young people like Severine and Anne, when I was appointed national secretary of the MEJ I had only one idea. My obsession was to inflame them with a living reality of the AOP. After the first insight of the Jesuits, the MEJ came to birth from the AOP and has a profound influence on the young. The Spiritual Exercises have a profound effect on the young and so they easily enter into this Apostleship of Prayer. This relationship between the young and adults has received the blessing of Pius XI. My questions is how can we regain that initial charism and how the Spiritual Exercises help us to enter into this relationship?

Claudio Barriga SJ We will attempt to answer this question this afternoon when we will be speaking about MEJ. Here are two questions for the young people. What means really touch them? What symbols bring them together?

Anne Symbols and pictures are important for me because they put some order into my Faith. Young people are sensitive to pictures, they are a help to communication. As I study philology, it is not always easy for me to speak using simple language. I must have the facility to adapt accordingly. Personally I prefer images which rely heavily on the tradition of the Church.

Ewelina I am human and I need things around me: a crucifix, a picture of Our Blessed Lady are for me important. I do not need contemporary pictures. It is the symbol which speaks to me. I only need simple words to speak to God. I wear a cross and it is a sign of love.

Presentation of MEJ in France and the ERM in Poland.

Presentation of MEJ in France by Christelle Touffet.

The MEJ consists of 10,000 members in France, that is young people and those who care for and help them. There exist diocesan and regional structures to facilitate the MEJ. There is also a national team in Paris and eighteen of these people are salaried. The young are divided up according to age grouping.

New Fire (les Feux Nouveaux FNOU) 7 – 10 years of age.

Young Witnesses (les Jeunes Temoins JT) 10-13 years of age.

Today's witnesses (les Temoins Aujourd'hui TA) 12-15 years of age.

Hope Teams (Les Equipes Esperance ES) 15-18 years of age.

Apostolic Teams (Les Equipes Apostoliques EA) 18-21 years of age.

The thrust of the movement is organised around a theme for the year which changes each year. For the years 2009-2010 the theme is: “ Envoye special, ouvre l’oeil et donne le ton -A special message: Open your eyes and set the tone”. This theme allows us great pedagogical licence which, yearly, is adapted to whatever age group. These propositions help to build up a regular team life, help with the organisation of larger reunions, be they diocesan, regional or national. (The next national reunion will be on 327-30 December for 12 – 15 year olds and for 15 – 18 year olds. The theme chosen is “Avec Lui, plus belle vie – With Him is the way to a most beautiful life”.)

Summer Camps are organised attended by 1,500 young people in about forty camps.

The MEJ in France is built on the principle of “The Eucharist lived and celebrated” The end and aim of all is: “With Jesus Christ Christian men and women are called to receive life and to give of their lives entirely for and with other people. It is in this way that we enter into the offering that Jesus made of Himself in the Eucharist”.

The end and aim of this process is a learning phase which aims to achieve six points.

- 1) build a team; 2) live kindly and courteously together; 3) become Church;
- 4) Pray and celebrate together; 5) Understand Sacred Scripture, the foundations of our Faith and the teaching of the Church. 6) Reflect on how we are living our lives and make choices.

These six points of course are adapted to the relevant age group.

To finish this presentation there is a video to be seen – a day in one of the MEJ camps, with an extract from camp in July featuring Christelle and Claudio.

They were in charge of a camp of 33 young people aged 15 – 18 years old. It was held in La Louvesc. The young people have put together a Show for the National Assembly in December.

Questions

Mariette Jacquet (France) How do you train the leaders?

Christelle: In the midst of the diocesan and regional teams there are people who are in charge of this work and they organise formation sessions, for during the weekends. For example to plan a course of action, according to the age groups, developing skills,....When a camp is about to start the leaders get together three days in advance of the young people to set up the camp. To get themselves ready so that they, as organisers may get to know each other well. All this is important because not all the leaders are actual members of the MEJ.

Javier Medina SJ(Spain) How are the camps organised-by regions?by age?

Christelle: Our national HQ arranges the camps. There are 40-45 camps each year and they receive 1,500 young people, according to their age-group.

Frederic Fornos SJ(France) How is the MEJ related to the AOP?

Christelle: Now because I am here! Yes the MEJ is in association with other Ignatian movements but not much with at this moment but that can change.

Michael Beattie SJ (UK) I have spent most of my life as a parish priest and it seems to me that the six points offered to us by Christelle would be a good guide to animate any parish. I must speak to our bishops!

Zygmunt Kwiatowski SJ (Syria) Perhaps you should organise camps for the bishops!

Presentation of the MEJ in Poland (ERM) by Ewelina

As we consider the way young people live these days we must deepen our knowledge of the ERM.

The objectives of ERM:

- 1) frequent reception of Holy Communion.
- 2) prayer.
- 3) being aware of the needs of others.
- 4) to be an apostle.

These objectives involve the whole person and they participate in the development of the child in every aspect of life. We use modern teaching methods to help them to assist at Mass, to strengthen their characters, to deepen their life as being members of the Church and to help them to become apostles.

The means we use:

Meetings in small groups four times each month. 2) ???? 3) Participation in the sacraments, the Mass, 4) charitable activities and parish activities.

Formation is organised by a national meeting of those who form our young people. There is a national meeting for school children with Eucharistic adoration, Stations of the Cross and various activities e.g. art etc.

This year at the meeting for ten year olds A group of seventeen year olds arrived and there was no group that corresponded to their age. We had to welcome them and set something up for them.

The youngest spend the whole year preparing for their meeting. Each group brings something to the meeting, a project, for example, that they have been working on. The Eucharist is the centre of the meeting. The next meeting in 2010 will be the 80th anniversary of the foundation of the movement in Poland and the 25th anniversary of the movement as it now is.

This year we are setting up three diocesan meetings one of which is in Belorussia (with Poland) and it is the first one in this country. We are organising retreats for pupils in schools and for young people who are preparing to make their First Holy Communion.

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In 2009

We have a course for young people (about 30 of them) who wish to become leaders.

A new activity – weekends of reflection for adults.

Weekends of reflection for adults using the Spiritual Exercises of S Ignatius or the School of Prayer of Pope John Paul 11

Weekends of formation for the priest coordinators in their dioceses.

The MEJ is exists in 28 dioceses and there are 10.000 members and only 8 diocesan coordinators.

The national leader is an Ursuline Sister. The national secretariat is in Poznan.

Questions

What sort of relationship do you have with other groups of young people?

Eweline: It is difficult to get the young together in Poland because there are many other activities and other possibilities.

Sister Danuta Pusty(Poland) In the schools in which I work 75% of children are from problem families (poverty, health, alcohol...) Perhaps the MEJ is a community where formation can be had. The difference between MEJ and other movements e.g. the Scouts is that in the MEJ that is spiritual support.

Michael Zacherl SJ(Austria) the question remains: How do they find what they are looking for?

Ewelina: In the beginning the children do not experience what they are looking for. It is up to us to give them the means to fins what they are looking for by our attitude of mind and our experience.

Michael Zacherl SJ (Austria) I have had a lot of experience with the scout movement but the leaders do not pass on the things you are referring to.

Claudio Barriga SJ The two presentations are very different but I am struck by the fact that the Eucharist is the foundation of all this.

Sunday 27th September 2009

Mass in the morning at the Czestochowska National Shrine of Our Lady

We welcome members of the local AOP

We would like you to share your experience of the AOP and we have a question for you. What is it that you like most of all in the AOP?

-13-

- it deepens my Faith

- I like the AOP because it give me a sense of being a member of a group and our method of prayer brings me close to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
- I have learnt a method of prayer that brings me closer and closer to God and those we care for are learning to pray this way.
- Through the AOP I have come to know the grandeur of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, not only in glory but also in his suffering.
- We are all together with the heart of Jesus in today' world and we are together in prayer in today's world.
- I am very happy with the AOP because I have found there- God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and also Mary the Mother of God.
- I am very grateful to my Mother who introduced me to AOP and it has changed my life.
- I have been with the AOP for 2 years and through the AOP I feel a sense of being untied to the universal Church.
- Thanks to my friend sitting next to me I have been a member of AOP for 2 years I have deepened my Faith and in doing this I am learning to love others.
- The AOP has taught me that how much I lam loved by God and how to communicate this love to others around me.
- The atmosphere created by AOP is 'heart to heart' in relationship with God and one has a sense of the ever abiding and all pervading presence of prayer.
- I have been in the AOP for 28 years. The AOP today is renewed. The daily offering of the whole day puts sense into my daily living.
- I am touched by the simplicity of praying the AOP. It is a way of praying that is both simple and efficacious. I see the fruits in my life and this urges me to take on responsibilities in the Church.
- Stanislaus Gron SJ(Poland) has been involved with AOP for 20 years and he accompanied this group of people to our meeting.

Groups were now gathered according to language to share their impressions and discoveries from these testimonies and also the witness of young people and the MEJ. The question that the groups were asked to address and consider was: "How can AOP be fully part of modern day culture"? A Plenary session followed.

Spanish Speaking Group

There are different types of young people and there is not a single reply. The young see the importance of people: their teachers, their catechists. The AOP can be an inspiration for them.

Antonio Valero SJ(Portugal) There is a problem of finding human resources. The AOP should consider a team that is dedicated to working directly with young people.

English Speaking Group

There does not seem to a transition from MEJ to AOP. In point of fact adults do not come from MEJ, and youth ministry is a very specific activity.

- In the renewal of AOP we must keep the simplicity of this way of praying

- Many of the things that MEJ do would not be possible in certain countries because of the child protection laws.
- **Michael Beattie SJ(UK)** I would like to add my thoughts to the simplicity of AOP. I dearly wish that all members of the Society of Jesus, our intellectuals and all involved in so many ministries may be convinced that the AOP is a way of praying that all should preach and communicate and that it is right at the heart of Ignatian spirituality.

French Speaking Group

- Regarding the testimonies we have heard: it is important to know more clearly what exactly is implied in their statements, the importance of knowing the person who values the AOP.
- The AOP cannot ‘short-change’ the importance of personal contact. You can’t propose a meeting with Jesus Christ in the abstract – you need that personal contact.
- With regards to MEJ, it is so pleasing to have and to see what is being done. This augurs well for the future.
- We have discovered that there is a real closeness between AOP and MEJ.
- The MEJ can help AOP as to the form of AOP and how to communicate its method of prayer, its love of the Eucharist and how the Eucharist can “re-centre” us as we get to the heart of what we are all doing.
- The MEJ should have AOP as part of its training for the leaders of MEJ in methods of prayer, daily offering and the Eucharist.
- MEJ is 21 years old in France and AOP can be a method of spirituality for young professional people and adults. MEJ has its methods and its ways of proceeding and yet AOP is no stranger to MEJ’s systems.
- There is not a concurrence that we are proposing. The AOP is a service to promote prayer in people’s lives but MEJ in France should have one aspect of its existence the AOP for young people.

Polish Speaking Group

- 1) The importance of bearing witness to our Faith. Young people have more need of personal witness than academic or theological proofs.
- 2) We should not be afraid of presenting our ideals and wishes to young people and at the same time we should be realistic in them we propose these.
- 3) The AOP should not expect immediate results. We must teach the value and the ideals of the AOP to young people. AOP must be a journey in prayer for the young. The future of the Church depends on prayer and AOP is the way we would wish our young people to pray.
- 4) AOP members in Poland have got themselves together to train the young people.
- 5) In Jesuit schools the AOP had a head start.

Claudio Barriga SJ Perhaps we can share how all this participation has moved us. Has the Holy Spirit touched us or given us insight in any way?

Frederic Fornos SJ (France) I have been profoundly moved by these Polish testimonies. We are culturally different in France but we try to live that which is essential and it is there in the AOP.

Michael Beattie SJ (UK) It is evident that you good Polish people are very dedicated to the AOP. May I ask you if you have been able to pass this method of prayer on to your children?

- not directly, our children are not members of the AOP but our manner of life as been a model for them, our children belong to other groups in the Church.
- My daughter does not belong to the AOP but I find that she follows in my footsteps. She belongs to different groups and when she is abroad she gathers ideas. My son is a believer but is further away from me.
- I have two sons, one of them is a member of AOP, the other I think he will grow into AOP bit by bit. If they grow into MEJ they would be bale to join, later on, the AP. The AOP is a Eucharistic movement for old people.
- Sister Danuta: I organise pilgrimages for all generations, in order that people will meet each other start communicating. It is not a question of moving from MEJ to AOP but growing in AOP no matter how old you are. Those who grow in AOP create communities where young people become adults. In my community I need people of all ages. Formation in the Eucharistic movement has four elements, 1) prayer. 2) reception of Holy Communion. 3) effort to overcome weaknesses. 4) to become an apostle. The whole thrust is to become an apostle even if you have to suffer.

Claudio thanked all concerned and he thanked Fr Stanislaw Gron SJ. Likewise the Polish contingent thanks Claudio for all he had done and was doing.

Claudio Barriga SJ

A few notices and suggestions for the next meeting.

There is going to be an Assistant in Rome for the MEJ. She is a religious sister and her name is Lourdes. She is a member of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary and she comes from Quebec in Canada.

Before the end of the year I will have decided the date and the place of the worldwide meeting of MEJ in 2012. I have to have several consultations before finalising this.

A project that we have is to offer a third papal intention for each month but one that deals with a pressing current situation. Our problem is that we plan the intentions two years in advance and so we are not touching what could be a pressing current

problem in the world. Behind all this is how to convince the Cardinals that we would like to suppress the two intentions to make things more simple. We would envisage six general intentions and six missionary intentions. The cardinals are only sympathetic to those things, ie 2 general and 12 missionary, that actually exist.

I have already spoken about the wish of Father General to put in place pastoral coordination for young people but at this time I have no further information.

I will now tell you of my travels and we can see if my presence can help you and can we arrange dates.

- October Rome
- November Hong Cong, Macao, China (there is no AOP person in charge but the Church is growing over there), Indonesia (to meet a young Jesuit who is involved with AOP)
- Syria (With Zigmund) Lebanon(for the MEJ)
- January Democratic Republic of Congo
- March India
- April Poland(meeting with MEJ)

The Next Meeting: where and when?

There are good reason for the meeting to be held **every year** and likewise **every two years**.

For every two years:

In the Society of Jesus the various sectors meet every two years and this seems to be a good pattern.

In the current financial crisis e have to think of the expense of meetings. There is the cost of travel and the cost to those who welcome us.

For every year

In Europe it is not too expensive and the Jesuits of the AOP do not have big staffs and tend to work alone. It is pleasant to meet up with colleagues and a happy time is had by all.

Last year we had time to reflect but no conclusions were arrived at.

Zigmund Kwiatowski (Syria) suggested different sorts of meetings: the traditional one every two years and in the between year different types of meetings in language groups, with speakers dealing with particular events as this year we have heard the MEJ

Frederic Fornos SJ (France) We have already had a year to reflect we should be clear in our minds about the European meeting.

Michael Beattie SJ(UK) I would propose Rome or another place where one could have simultaneous translation facilities.

Claudio Barriga SJ If the meeting is in Rome perhaps Fr General would be available.

Written votes were taken and Claudio would count up decide within the next two months.

After time of prayer and reflections – what themes would we like to have for the next European meeting?

Raymond Pace SJ (Malta) An attempt to deepen the relationship between AOP and Ignatian Spirituality. The findings of the meeting to be published and communicated to the whole Society of Jesus.

Zigmund Kwiatowski SJ(Syria) We often insist on the simple daily offering but do we ever think that it could leave to someone deciding on a life of religious consecration? The Exercises are the right tools for this, making a choice in life and there we find a pedagogy of self offering, self offering that clearly exists in embryo often enough in the daily offering of the AOP. The AOP offering can lead to a true mystical life.

Mariette Jacquet(France) The AOP is not a movement but a service to the Church. How can it continue to serve the Church even more effectively within the structures of the modern day Church?

Antonio Valerio SJ(Portugal) What does the AOP offer that distinguishes it from what others offer? What is specific about its service to the Church? Can we deepen our understanding of this?

Raymond Pace SJ(Malta) It isn't easy to connect the two themes.

Mariette Jacquet(France) But if one wishes to deepen one of these two themes....

Frederic Fornis SJ(France) If Fr General wishes to see closer collaboration of ASOP with Ignatian spirituality it would be interesting for us to reflect precisely on our role in this collaboration. By doing this we would get an insight in that which is specific to us.

Raymond Pace SJ(Malta) It isn't simply a Jesuit affair the laity too must be involved in AOP and Ignatian spirituality.

Michael Beattie SJ(UK) If we were to develop these two themes we must remember that lay people as well as Jesuits are well versed in Ignatian spirituality.

Javier Medina SJ(Spain) The AOP has deepened over the years from the time when it was founded and it became the basis of the Eucharistic life of scholastics. There are echos also in the letter of perfection sent to Jesuits. Ignatius invites them to turn the whole of their lives into mission. One can reflect on the 30 years that Jesus spent before he started his public ministry to save humanity. What comes first? To work? What is specific to link AOP with Ignatian spirituality.

Claudio Barriga SJ Continuing our thinking I am very much taken by these two ideas and they seem to me to be very important, to look at the roots of Ignatian spirituality and the AOP and I sure Fr General would be very interested in these ideas.

Claudio Barriga SJ For your next reunion we have the possibilities of Rome, Croatia or France. Then there is the question of my involvement in the European branch of the AOP. I have been very much involved in the preparation of this meeting. I think things should change as I am not intimately involved. I have to know what is going on in Latin America and Africa, too. The meetings are organised at a local level and I come to them as an invited person. So I wish to propose two names of persons who will organise the next meeting. By doing this we could have a more stable team that would prepare the meeting and be in communication with those who would attend the meeting.

Mariette Jacquet(France) it the meetings are every two years it is good to have a team that keep us in contact with each other, but if they are to be every year it would become too much for that small team.

Michael Beattie SJ(UK) it would be good for Claudio if he were just a visitor and not involved in organisation. He could thereby be more attentive to what we have to say and he would have the time to listen and reflect more on our views our opinions and our work progress.

Cristina Ramos(Sweden) I think it would be good for us to have a team that prepares the next meeting and it should mean that the meeting would run very smoothly and be worthwhile.

Claudio Barriga SJ I suggest **Michael Beattie and Raymond Pace** to prepare the next meeting and to set up a stable team.

Raymond Pace SJ (Malta) How many people are there in these teams?

Claudio Barriga SJ In Africa there are four but in other places they are alone and ask for the help of others. This would be a stable team of two or three which would correspond to the country that host the meeting.

The idea was accepted and Michael Beattie and Raymond Pace will prepare the next meeting, where the group must chose a stable team to continue the progress forward of the AOP in Europe.

Michael Beattie SJ(UK) Would there be a chance of websites of AOP, sharing their facilities according to language groups. For example, there are several AOP websites in English(found via Google) that say the same thing. If these could at least mention the names of the national English speaking Secretaries, that would be useful and the same to apply for the other language groups.