

News from Rome, world-council

Day1. Monday February 15

The opening of the meeting of the world-council for the AP took place Monday evening. It started with mass, celebrated in the rooms (chambers) of Saint Ignatius at the Gesú, the place where Saint Ignatius lived and died. The mass was presided by Father Jim Kubicki, the coordinator of the AP for the United States.

Day 2. Tuesday, February 16

On Tuesday morning (the first day), we were 11 people in the room:

- 1) Father Claudio Barriga (delegate of Father General for the AP and the MEJ)
- 2) Father Juan Medina (coordinator for Latin America)
- 3) Father Jim Kubicki (coordinator for the United States)
- 4) Father Rigobert Kyungu (coordinator for Africa)
- 5) Father Frédéric Fornos (secretary of the AP in France, representative of Europe.)
- 6) Father Gabriel Ignacio Rodriguez (Father General's assistant for the north of Latin America)
- 7) Sister Madeleine Kaunde (counsellor of the AP in Rome)
- 8) Father Luke Rodriguez (Father General's delegate for the CVX =Christian Life Community)
- 9) Father Elias Lopez (social apostleship and representative of the Jesuits Refugee Service, at the Curia)
- 10) Sister Lourdes Vaquez (world-wide assistant for the MEJ)
- 11) Sister Dolly (interpreter – translator)

The coordinator for Asia was not able to come because of problems at the last moment.

The international council consists of the first five people on the list. (four with Father Barriga). The other four people form a council of members living in Rome, as Father General wished.

In the morning, the four members of the international council introduced themselves. We were especially struck by the fact that, for all of them, the mission they had received in the AP, led to a real conversion in order to recognize God's call. We were happy to notice that we all spoke out of personal, spiritual experience and not out of theories. As we listened to the presentation of the presence of the AP in different parts of the world, we were helped to express the most essential elements of the AP. Several people, present at this sharing, were deeply touched when they realized that the AP was quite different from what they had imagined, especially when they noticed that today, the AP is present to the problems of justice in the whole world, in many different ways, The accent was also put on the service of the Church.

In the after-noon we talked about the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus.

In 1883 the Company of Jesus accepted and received the mission to encourage the devotion of the Heart of Jesus. The AP, with Father Gautrelet (constitution of 1846) was already oriented towards this spiritual intuition that began in the first centuries, even before Marguerite-Marie Alacoque who was one of its historical expressions.

In 1856, the Sacred Heart became a solemnity.

Ramière continued his work with the "Messenger of the Heart of Jesus" from 1861. The language seems a little old-fashioned in some regions, and we need a renewal, but in other parts of the world this devotion doesn't have any problems.

We talked quite much about the Heart of Jesus, the offering, the Eucharist as being the same mystery expressed in different ways. It was a deeply enriching sharing.

The day ended by quite a long moment of personal prayer before the Eucharistic celebration in Spanish, presided by Frédéric Fornos, who was also the secretary for the day.

Frédéric Fornos,SJ, with the help of Rigobert Kyungu, SJ

Day 3. Ash Wednesday, February 17

The day was reserved for the meeting with Father General. Here are some of the topics we talked about:

- 1) Recreate the AP. In one or two years, Father General wants to present to the Holy Father another way of conceiving the AP, speaking to the world of today. He wants us to enter this process, a process of “recreation”.
- 2) Adaption. To be conscious of the great changes affecting the life of the Church. She is not any longer what she used to be, and she needs more suitable answers. We are living in a world where lay people are more educated than before and the Christian community is more differentiated. Society consists of many more different cultures with a new spiritual context in the world... and this has also influenced the AP. To whom are we going to address ourselves? With what kind of universal language?
- 3) There is a call for cooperation with all the other representatives of the Church, in all the ministries.

Other subjects were discussed; they will be more developed later on.

We are conscious of the fact that the deep changes that Father General is asking us to make, will only be possible in obedience to the Spirit of Christ and that it is a long process that will start with all the national secretaries of the world. Together we will not only be able to renew the AP, but also to “recreate” it, in order to give an answer to the spiritual expectations of our contemporaries. The experience we have in common is our confidence in Jesus Christ whose presence we are feeling during these days, thanks to your prayers

In the afternoon, we worked on the prayer of offering and the intentions of the Pope. This was a very profound and enriching sharing. We understood that this kind of prayer is essential to prepare ourselves for other kinds of prayer.

Rigobert Kyungu led the discussions and was the secretary for this day. We finished by a moment of personal prayer in Saint Joseph’s chapel at the Curia.

Our days are very compact with a lot of work – in Spanish and English, alternated by moments of prayer to let all our discussions be re-echoed within us and to discern how the Lord is leading us. Thanks for your prayer!

Frédéric Fornos SJwith the help of Rigobert Kyungu SJ

Day 4 – Thursday, February 18

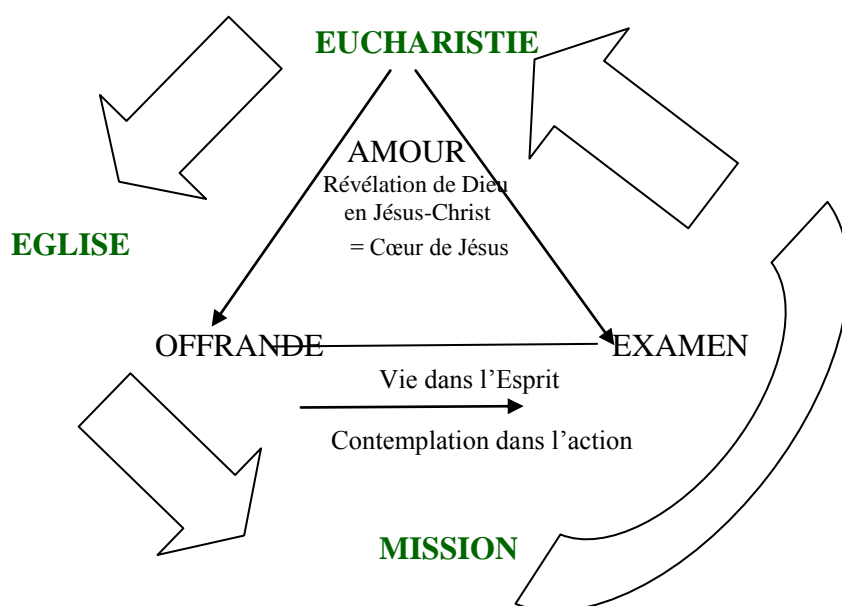
After the initial prayer, said by Jim Kubicki, who was the leader of the discussions for the day, Frédéric Fornos proposed that we returned to the first two days, in order to talk about the things that we considered most important.

The secretaries (of the first two days) summarized these days, and then we shared our ideas.

The advisers had a moment of personal prayer in the chapel before we went on sharing.

Here are some of the ideas we talked about:

- The AP has a content to communicate, but we have to clarify the formulations (expressions)
- We need a clear spiritual pedagogy.
- Looking at our world, we realize that we are really living a KAIROS that we should not miss. The world needs an answer from the AP.
- The mission of the AP is above all a service to help people to pray and to have a spiritual life, and a service for the Church and justice.
- The AP is an “ecclesiastical spirituality” oriented by the threefold
- Eucharist – Church – Mission.
- The AP is trying to communicate the knowledge of God’s Love revealed in Jesus Christ (the Heart of Jesus) as we showed by a triangle in the drawing.
- To enter the Eucharist means to enter into the Heart of Jesus and let us be drawn with him and sacrifice ourselves with him in the middle of the world. The Eucharist is thus being unfold in our lives between the morning offering and the examination of conscience of the evening, making us enter the life of the Spirit and become contemplatives in action.



- The Pope’s intentions concern our mission in the middle of the world.
- We also started talking about spiritual pedagogy which is necessary in order to help others to enter into this experience. We hope to be able to propose a way of entering into spiritual life to live like Jesus.

The second part of the morning was consecrated to the MEJ (the Eucharistic Movement for Young People), the “young branch of the AP” Sister Lourdes Vaquez, who is Father Claudio’s assistant for the MEJ, gave a talk where she explained the spirituality of the MEJ, which coincides with the spirituality of the AP, because they follow the style of Jesus himself, a Eucharistic spirituality (receive all and give all) like Jesus. The offering has thus a central place in the MEJ.

Sister Lourdes told us that the MEJ are preparing a world-wide assembly for September 2012 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. They hope that all the 51 countries where the MEJ is present will be represented. They expect about 400 people. They have already started the preparations for 2012. In Africa, the MEJ is already present in 21 countries.

In 2011 there will be an assembly for the youth from all over the world in Madrid. (Journées Mondiales de la Jeunesse) The MEJ hope to be able to present a show there.

One problem with the MEJ is that there is no world-wide coordination. Father Barriga will certainly return to this problem later on, as he has been given advice about the creation of such a council.

There have also been intensive discussions about the relation between the MEJ and the AP. Somebody even talked about the indissolubility of this relation. In some countries they live quite well together, but in others, they are two very different things. As Father General insisted on collaboration, the bond between these two unities has to be even more strongly confirmed.

In the after-noon, we discussed the text of the regulations of the AP, approved of in 1968. Even if this text contains important elements, its language has to be renewed. We therefore have to start readjusting these regulations, starting at the foundation.

(you can telecharge (télécharger) the text at the international internet site of the AP: www.apostleshipofprayer.net.)

Before we ended the day, we returned to the question that Father General had asked: To whom are we going to address ourselves? Here are some of the answers: To all Christians, but especially to certain groups such as young people, young adults, people excluded from society (the sick, the prisoners, the old) to all those who are seeking a spiritual life etc.

In the end of the after-noon, we were able to sum up the day thanks to a moment of prayer. Mass was celebrated in French by Rigobert Kyungu.

On Wednesday, the members or the council joined the community of the Curia who were entering into Lent with all its staff together with Father General, who concelebrated with the Curia in the chapel. As life in the Curia is a constant penitence, the meals were delicious even during Lent...

We met Father General once again on Friday morning. Tomorrow I will tell you about that day.

Frédéric Fornos S J with the help of Rigobert Kyungu S J

Day 5. Friday, February 19

This fifth day, Rigobert Kyungu led the morning prayer. After that, Jim Kubicki, the leader of the discussions of the day, asked for the report of the day before to be read. Then we thought about the structures of the AP in relation to the actual regulations. After that, we had a moment of prayer in order to find out the most essential points, before we went on talking together, in order to prepare the meeting with Father General in the after-noon.

The meeting took place between three and five pm. Father General thanked the members of the council and through them, all the national secretaries and their groups who help the AP,

because they support and help him with his responsibilities. Then the council thanked him and presented the reflexions of the previous days, thoughts that have to be repeated, deepened, made more specific, even reoriented together with all the national secretaries. Father General expressed his joy to see that the council took these responsibilities seriously. The details of these conversations will soon be communicated.

The evening mass was presided by Juan Antonio Medina, in Spanish. During mass we did not fail to pray for all those who accompanied us with their prayers during this week, because we felt their presence. Thank you, everybody!

We discuss in English, Spanish, Italian and French. There is always a person who translates, coming from the outside or from the inside of the group. Sometimes, though, nobody translates and everybody understands. Thus we experience Pentecost. It is great penitence for Father Barriga, for those who know him. During the whole period of Lent he will not be able to sing all the hallelujahs that he has gathered in the different countries he has visited!!!

Because we had been shut up working hard all the time, we went out to have a pizza in the evening, in spite of it being a Friday in Lent, but especially because we felt that the Bridegroom was together with us.

Day 6. Saturday, February 20

After a moment of prayer, we spent this Saturday morning reviewing together what we had done in order to write a document in common that will be sent to all the national secretaries within ten days. Claudio Barriga will finish the complete review and when it has been approved of, he will send it to all of them. That will be the official document of our meeting that should help all of us to enter the process of reflexion and discernment for the next months. It is our inner readiness to receive the help of the Spirit to “recreate” the AP that is at stake. We have to seek a solution for each continent. We will go on talking about this with you and with Raymond and Michael.

We had lunch with Father General. In the afternoon we went on writing and finishing the meeting. We were trying to find out a way of advancing, step by step, in a concrete way, in the near future. We will have to review and work on this together in each continent.

Father General presided the evening mass to give thanks and to entrust to all of you, through us, the deep renewal of the AP. “Your ancient ruins will be rebuilt; you will build on age-old foundations” (Isaiah 58. 12) the first reading of the day. Then we had dinner with him. He was very relaxed, friendly and happy to be with us. We felt that he believes in the AP, that it might be a true service for the Church and for spiritual life in the world of today, and that he is confident that we will be able to advance towards this “recreation” he is inviting us to make.

Frédéric Fornos, SJ with the help of Rigoberto Kyungu, SJ