

## MERLAP II – June 2007

### Notes from the final plenary session

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#### Group 1

- Would like meetings on the local level and on level of vicariate/province every 2 years; general curia could give some suggested topics.
- Not all CPPS Missionaries are working with the laity -- perhaps the curia could give some suggestions on how to address this.
- Bishops are not always in agreement with practices like communion under both species, adoration of two species.
- In a future MERLAP there should be periods of common adoration at least two times during the meeting.
- Youth will participate in activities of the lay associates if there is something concrete for them.

#### Group 2

- The Congregation should promote study groups on the spirituality of the Precious Blood on the regional level
- There should be more collaboration with other PB congregations,
- There should be special meetings with the groups of youth.
- There should be apostolic activity in prisons, for refugees, sick.
- There should be more publications (e.g., magazines) for the laity
- Why was the Atlantic Province not represented?
- Every three years have regional MERLAP meetings; international meetings every six years.
- Give individual participants a chance to share experiences, possibly to have spiritual exercises first.

#### Group 3

- Lay associates could be more unified by prayers, signs, and common feast days.
- More participation of laity in Cup of Covenant.
- Expand the current website and appoint a person responsible for communication with the laity in charge of spreading information throughout the world, e.g., events such as weddings, birthdays, etc.
- Appoint a responsible priest for promotion of the laity who would make reports to the general curia, who in turn would give general guidelines.
- MERLAP III: there should be more frequent meetings of this kind. Perhaps regional meetings every two years.
- Each country should organize its agenda and this agenda should be sent to the curia.
- MERLAP III: include theological themes on spirituality so we can reflect and share so that this can be taken back to the countries
- Hold the next MERLAP in Salzburg.
- Have the opportunity to use symbols in groups that would lead to greater union among members.

- Organize meetings in which youth can share their life experiences.
- Groups in each country should share their experiences, prayer, including new members using the GOA of Chile as a model.
- Homework for participants in this MERLAP: how can we attract new members?

#### **Group 4**

- The Cup of the New Covenant: provide additional material for formation, such as questions for reflection or an additional sheet with guidance for personal and group work.
- Encourage the laity to contribute to the Cup of the New Covenant.
- Create friendship groups with leisure and social activities to attract younger members.
- Encourage twinning of lay associate groups and sharing experiences and suggestions.
- What do young people expect from us? Perhaps we don't give adequate responses to these voices, using language and prayer experiences adapted to youth.
- MERLAP III: one of themes could be: what are main problems you experience on your groups? There could be sharing of these concerns.
- Keep the MERLAP web page active.
- Offering prayer for those working with us, even economic support to them.
- Have prior themes for reflection and then send reflections to participants ahead of time.
- Encourage the young to participate in MERLAP.

#### **Group 5**

- The general curia must accept responsibility to encourage incorporated members to work with the laity.
- The general curia should encourage directors/leadership teams in ways that allow more frequent communication, e.g., universal days of solidarity in which there are shared themes or apostolic work.
- The curia should organize yearly retreat for members who cannot attend MERLAP, open to any lay associate; possibility of sponsoring individuals who cannot afford this.
- The curia should have one person who could visit each group who could evaluate what is going on with lay associate groups and who could also share news from these groups
- Websites need to be developed, but publications are also important as well as other media.
- The general curia should share resources, including people. There could be visits of lay associates to other countries.
- Would like greater participation of the Italian representatives in future MERLAPs
- There is a need for some kind summary to share with people at the next MERLAP, to evaluate progress, response to suggestions.
- The general curia should encourage Precious Blood at all levels; it is not being shared enough at present.
- Have youth included in MERLAP in the future.

### **General Discussion**

- We cannot expect young people to do what we think they should do; need to organize experiences/events that youth can relate to.
- There could be a curia position for promoting youth ministry. Is there a special Precious Blood way of evangelizing youth? a responsible in each country/region for lay associate.
- There is a need for someone to accompany the lay associates to assess development, to evaluate in the field and not only on paper.
- Instead of a single person, it might be better to think of a team of lay people and members who would accompany and help evaluate lay associate programs throughout the world.
- Develop a list of proposals to be presented to the new general curia.
- The director of spirituality center could also be coordinator for lay associates
- Proposals to be elicited on the local level; then the general curia could propose themes for discussion.
- Set a day in which all members of the country in which MERLAP takes place are invited to meet and to share with the participants.
- There is a need to develop a work plan to be handed to the next general curia – The current moderator general and council can do this.
- Is the challenge of youth the most important issue?
- The provincial/vicariate/mission directors must know what has taken place, since they are the ones who have primary responsibility; provincial should not be the only responsible person, since it is a lay movement.
- Establish a time frame at the end of which the name of contact person in each unit of the CPPS should be sent to general curia.
- A common calendar of lay activities to be developed.
- Discuss the issue of greater involvement of Missionaries with the lay associates at next major superiors meeting.

### **Some repeated items:**

- Regional MERLAPs between international meetings.
- Have a MERLAP for young people.
- Some kind of curia position for contact with lay groups.
- More communication, especially use of the Cup with more lay involvement.