

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

International Movement of Catholic Students (Pax Romana - IMCS) International Young Catholic Students (IYCS)

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Regional activities

EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

It's great to communicate again with you through this newsletter. This year is quite an important year for us. For IMCS, this year we celebrate our 80th anniversary. When we were founded in Fribourg in 1921, we might never have thought that this movement would last more than three quarters of a century and could gather the experiences of more than 80 countries. For IYCS, this year is our 55th anniversary as an international co-ordination, covering nearly

90 countries. Our movements have been part of the life of so many students in different parts of the world. Of course, as a normal cycle of in the organisation, there are ups and downs, good times and difficult times. One particular thing that has remained the same for both movements throughout this time has been our mission to evangelise the student milieu. Another thing is our internationality. Our movements are a place where different experiences from different parts of the world can meet and reflect together. As we witness in our world today, many decisions which have global influence are decided internationally, whether they are political, economic, financial or cultural decisions. No single country can survive without global interaction. The same applies our movements. What we may think is only a local problem in our movements, is not necessarily unconnected to problems in other parts of the world. They are interconnected. Our task is to discover this connection which we can then use as a base to respond to our local problem.

This newsletter is trying to touch and to communicate with you all. With its limited resources, it is trying to convey global experiences from our movements in different parts. So that, we can have a more comprehensive way of seeing the world. This the part of finding the connection between us, locally, and our international family of IMCS and IYCS. It does not play a magic in solving our problems, but it may help us.

In this second edition of this year, the international news is trying to bring more experiences from different levels of our movements. Here you will find articles and reflections from national movements like Australia, Switzerland and Zimbabwe, our representation in the UN, and of course the experience from international secretariats in Paris. We would also like to invite you to give, comments, feedback and input for this newsletter which will be very much appreciated to improve the quality. Have a good reading. 🙏

The International Teams

THIS NEWSLETTER IS EDITED BY: Budi Tjahjono (Co-ordinator), Tarsoo Linus Ade, Natàlia Mendéz i Andrés, Habib Bou Nafeh, and Fr. Michael Deeb, O.P. (Editor) - Margarita (translation). Some of the articles are taken from the national and regional publications. 🙏

Building Bridges: An Experience From The European Ecumenical Encounter

By Ben Witchalls, member of CSC England

Building bridges

Building bridges – a subject close to my heart as an engineering student but a metaphorical reality that has just taken place. East meets West – North with South. The maturity of the youth and the youthfulness of the old must have rarely engaged in such a way, bringing together the Christian family around the table of common faith, each of us with a gift to share. The *European Ecumenical Encounter* is the fruit of an active dialogue that has resulted in the meeting here in Strasbourg. After the Ecumenical meeting in Graz already in 1997, church leaders and delegates from all the Christian faiths have come together with youth representatives from the many dynamic movements across Europe. CCEE (*Consilium Conferentiarum Episcoporum Europae* – the European Council of Bishops' Conferences) and CEC (Conference of European Churches) had decided to celebrate the encounter at this time to coincide with Easter for both the Oriental and Western traditions.

A pilgrimage site in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Witnessing in dialogue and responsibility

The programme of the encounter stressed the dimensions of dialogue and exchange that have to be built among us; a « training hall » where we are all able to discover together in a climate of attention to one another and mutual respect the marvels that God is accomplishing in the churches of Europe. « And above all these things put on Charity ». (Col 3, 14).

The encounter holds many ambitions. As Christians in Europe we have a great responsibility in bearing a credible witness to the gospel and to the possibilities for the peoples of our continent and of the world to live together in a peaceful and constructive way. In Strasbourg the « *Charta Oecumenica* » - guidelines for the growing co-operation among the Churches in Europe', has been signed by the presidents of CCEE and CEC and will be entrusted to the churches and the Bishops'

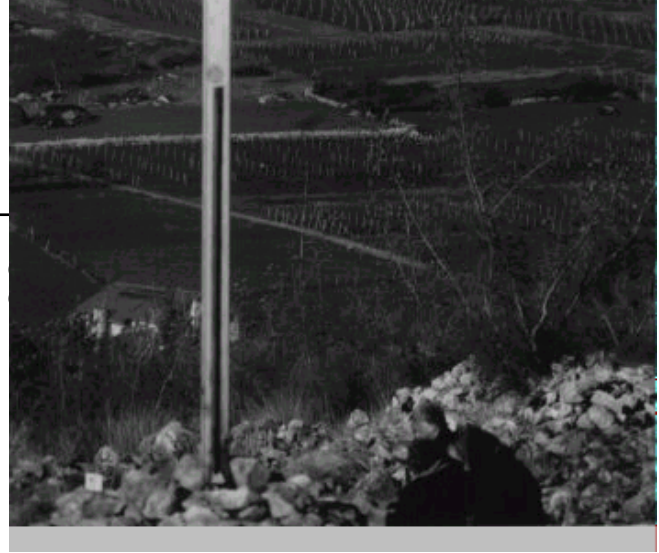
The Position Of The Laity In The Church

By Jameson Gadzirai, University of Zimbabwe, NMCS

The NMCS conference held over the Easter conference was an eye-opener to many, myself included. It came as a platform upon which we as students got to learn about efforts being made with regards to constitution making and information dissemination.

It was an eye-opener also, in the sense that it forged within us an identity as students with the potential to effect positive change within our colleges and in the communities that we serve.

Yet one major issue that continued to echo in the rooms of discussion albeit the dining hall itself, was the



The encounter has inevitably brought back a strong message back to all of our movements also. The church leaders have come together to show their commitment ; to us as young people and to address the fundamental concerns which we share within our movements and our church.

With ecumenism such topics as inter-culturality, education and even globalisation are inevitable discussions which must arise, issues which we have discussed for many years at JECI-MIEC encounters. The most recent encounter in Lithuania, the Colloquium, was well placed in the context of the meeting where Eastern Europe is seen as a growing influence in the political, economic and social landscape of a unified Europe, and one where active dialogue is essential if we are to all benefit from the richness it holds. It was in this area that the church leaders were most impressed at what the youth, a new generation with many different realities, shared in an in-depth and productive reflection. A tremendous emphasis was placed on the young people of Europe – there was a genuine concern for the many issues that we felt were important.

Another strong message to come out of the conference was the value of Christian students ; the value brought to an increasingly multicultural university, society and workplace; the value we hold in manifesting through our actions the Christian message in all spheres of our life. Through such movements that we have in our countries, brought together by JECI-MIEC, the net of solidarity is growing and strengthening, a net based on common interests and understanding.

The most powerful message for me was the support we all had, the Church leaders, laity, youth movements unified in the celebration of our Christian diversity. Unified in the quest to build a stronger and more unified Europe. 🙏 students' involvement in the matters of the Church movement.

I will not be wrong, I believe, if I liken that students' potential to that of a model A1 anti-riot canister.

I take this image in view of the canister's capacity to disperse a riotous mob once it has been diffused. I take the image in view of the fact that the canister is as effective as the students in struggling to get what it wants. I take this image again, because I have had the pleasure of participating in student demonstrations and have witnessed how, if left to itself and not handled properly, a tear-gas canister can have the disastrous effect of dispersing even those who have dared to set it off without proper knowledge as to whom it should target, the direction that it must take, and the consequences that such an act can reap if left unattended.

Students are like the tear-gas canister because they have great potential. On our baptismal and confirmation days we were divorced from the works of Satan and brought to the light of God. We were charged by this separation, and were told that we would reflect God's light amongst all mankind.

This light is like no other. It has a command : « You are the light of the worlda city built on top of a hill can not be hiddenlet your light so shine among men, that they may see your good works, and thank the Lord your Father who is in Heaven ».

We are bred in the knowledge and understanding that we are here to serve a mission. And the priests as well as the bishop that were chosen by God were tasked with making sure that this light would not fade.

Thus, associations like the NMCS were brought into being. However, I feel that the canisters are being left idle by not allowing them to have a hand in the process that leads to their making.

Now, it would not need an intelligent guess to know that an idle tear-gas canister, fully charged, is a danger to both the manufacturer and the riotous group. As the laity, we should be obliged to choose the chaplains



whom we feel will be able to foster our spirituality, and therefore encourage the growth of the Church itself.

The issue raised at the NMCS conference was simple. It was alleged that the Movement did not have a chaplain since its inception, and the bishop only saw the need to have one elected now.

One question which comes to mind quickly is, if they claim that we do not have a national chaplain, and that such a post was never created, then what title does Fr Johnson hold ?

Has he not been there since the Movement was created ?

And have we not grown to regard him as our National Chaplain?

I first got to know him when he asked a question during Mass at our first Mass on campus. And, pregnant with the desire to show that my high school teaching was still strong, I lectured an answer quite in excess of the short one that he expected !

Shy and reminded of my passion for long speeches, I got to respect the man for his recognition of the potential in the student, a right that every student clamours for. I am not trying to write a eulogy, but I am saying that most students share the view that we should be involved in the decisions that will affect us.

This time the Movement has seen the coming of priests, pregnant with the zeal to see our voice grow. Should we suffer the trouble of having another person to address our problems ?

In Shona it is said that the rat finds its therapeutic potions in the very soil in which it lives. The only people who can be able to really understand us are those who have run with us during demonstrations, those who have given us the grounds to air our views, those who have been cultured into understanding that we as students have a potent vision which must break out !

My wish would be to see a revolution in Church

circles. A revolution not bent on metamorphosing that will guarantee us time to practice what the priests and bishops are teaching us.

I hope we will find reason to feel that, as canisters, we have been opened up to spray the potent and holy gas of the Holy Spirit to all and sundry. On that day I assure you the laity will see evil running for dear life – that evil which manifests itself in divisions, fights over position, hypocrisy and incompetence in the Church.

I assure you, if you have never met a canister's venom full in the face, then you haven't experienced what it means to be fully charged with the power to make change. Allow the laity to have a say in their own matters, and the Church will reap a hundred fold. 🙏

NAIROBI DECLARATION FOR GLOBAL RACIAL JUSTICE

We, over 70 participants from 22 countries* mostly from Africa belonging to the ***Pax Romana-International Catholic Movement for Intellectuals and Cultural Affairs (ICMICA)***, the ***International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS)***, ***International Young Christian Students (IYCS)***, and the Catholic National Commissions for Justice and Peace, having met in Nairobi, Kenya from May 13 to 19, 2001 and discussed issues such as globalisation, racial and ethnic conflicts, economic inequity, extreme poverty, gender, environmental racism, youth and human rights education under the theme: in co-operation with the representatives from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Environmental Program UNEP) and the Committee on the Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD),

(*The countries represented were; Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe (Africa), Belgium, France, India, Indonesia and South Korea).

1. Taking note of the historical importance of the forthcoming World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) in Durban, South Africa from August 31 to September 7, 2001 stressing the centrality of the values of "Equality, Justice and Dignity"
2. Recognising the significance of convening the WCAR in South Africa, seven years after the dismantling of Apartheid, the worst form of institutionalised racism in recent history,
3. Appalled by the grave impact and persistent consequences of historic injustices inflicted upon the people in Africa and its Diasporas throughout the world through slavery, colonisation and other forms of domination,
4. Expressing our deep indignation at the continuing injustices such as exclusion and marginalisation of African peoples and nations as a result of the current process of "racialised" globalisation in Africa,
5. Taking into account new manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the changing nature of their causes leading to escalating racial and ethnic conflicts, rapid increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced persons, environmental degradation particularly by dumping hazardous and toxic wastes, extreme poverty, rapid spreading of HIV/AIDS, religious intolerance and other forms of intolerance and prejudice against peoples of Africa,
6. Admitting that internal conflicts originate, among many causes, from systematic and widespread violations of human rights, the absence of democratic governance, the politicisation of race and ethnicity, discrimination against minorities, tribal and indigenous communities and interference by foreign interests linked to the exploitation of national resources and arms trade,
7. Re-affirming that gender inequity constitutes racism and racial discrimination, and that women have been victims of multiple forms of discrimination as manifested in the feminisation of poverty, trafficking and sexual abuses in Africa,
8. Recognising the role of women as agents for change leading to new ways of conflict resolution and transformation, peace negotiation and reconciliation,
9. Regretting the limited involvement of African people and civil society in the preparatory processes towards the forthcoming WCAR 2001 at the local, national, regional and international levels,
10. Noting with grave concern the situations of youth as victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances, often manipulated as instruments in the ethnic and racial conflicts in Africa,

11. Emphasising the transforming role of youth as agents in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in Africa and elsewhere,
12. Re-affirming that all human beings belong to one human race and every one is born equal in dignity and rights,
13. Dedicating ourselves to the goals and objectives of the WCAR 2001:

To the International Community

1. We call upon the international community to condemn historical injustices such as slavery and colonisation as crimes against humanity;
2. We appeal to those responsible for historical injustices to recognise and acknowledge more explicitly their grave impact on the lives and cultures of all peoples in Africa and its diasporas;
3. We appeal to those responsible for historical injustices to engage in the genuine dialogue towards authentic reconciliation by making formal and sincere apologies to the people of Africa and its diasporas and to undertake all possible measures with a view to their redressal in the light of restorative justice;
4. We appeal to all governments, multilateral institutions and civil society to give priority to the eradication of poverty in Africa in their efforts for the promotion and protection of civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural rights with the special attention to the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination;
5. We urge all governments and civil society to support the efforts and initiatives undertaken by the people of Africa towards the eradication of contemporary forms of slavery including trafficking, child soldiers, forced labour and related forms;

To All African Governments

1. We urge all African governments to be more united in the struggle for restorative justice in genuine partnership with civil society in the best interests of the people of Africa;
2. We urge all those African governments who have not signed and ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) to do so as a sign of commitment towards the goals of the WCAR 2001 prior to the Durban Conference;
3. We urge all African governments, to take collective measures in developing preventive diplomacy and conflict transformation such as early warning system to eliminate the scourge of internal armed conflicts in Africa;
4. We urge All African governments to include women and youth from civil society in their delegations to the

forthcoming Durban WCAR 2001;

5. We urge all African governments to reinforce democratic governance with a view to combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
6. We urge all African governments to promulgate appropriate national legislative measures in accordance with international human rights standards and to devise relevant domestic remedies;

To Civil Society in Africa

1. We invite all NGOs and civil society in Africa to play a

leading role in articulating real concerns of the people of Africa and in facilitating a genuine reconciliation process between the victims and perpetrators of historic injustices in collaboration with their governments;

2. We invite all NGOs and civil society in Africa to develop collectively a more systematic and effective monitoring mechanism regarding the implementation and observance of the forthcoming Durban Declaration and Plan of Action by the African governments;
3. We invite all NGOs and civil society in Africa to promote a culture of transparency, accountability and genuine representation of people's needs and rights in combating against all forms of racial discrimination;
4. We invite all NGOs and civil society in Africa to be proactive in enhancing peace and human rights education taking into account the African cultural values of solidarity, community-centred spirituality and

holistic understanding of life;

5. We invite all NGOs and civil society in Africa to foster citizenship beyond racial, ethnic or religious divides respecting diversity and pluralism for the promotion of sustainable peace and tolerance among the peoples and nations in Africa;
6. We call upon the youth and youth organisations in Africa to mobilise their energetic forces and creative ideas for conflict prevention and building a common humanity based on the vision and aspirations of the people in Africa;
7. We welcome the efforts of the Office of the High



Commissioner for Human Rights in encouraging and enhancing the participation of civil society, particularly the youth and youth organisations in Africa in the entire process of the WCAR 2001;

8. We urge all leaders of the Church in Africa to exercise their moral authority towards the establishment of restorative justice through authentic dialogue and genuine reconciliation for the exploited and oppressed people of Africa;
9. We commit ourselves to a global struggle for racial justice as a way of being prophetic witnesses to the values of "dignity, justice and equality" together with all people of good will. 🙏

All Different - All Equal

Participants of Nairobi Workshop, in UN Office in Nairobi, Kenya, May 2001

NEWS FROM OUR MOVEMENTS

Review Of Life : Australian Ycs Experience

James Healy, Australian YCS full-timer.

"How was your week" is the phrase heard many times in Australia each week as YCS groups kick off their meetings. After that, every group heads in a totally different direction, yet always using the See, Judge, Act methodology to look at their lives and the lives of others in our society.

The issues discussed in Australian YCS groups tend to vary greatly between personal and local issues, and wider social issues ; and what better way to show the Review of Life in Australia than to show some Actions students are taking.

In Australia at the moment, how our government treats illegal refugees is under debate. When they arrived, often they are risking their lives to get there, illegal refugees are locked into Detention Centres, with little to do, and few privileges, until their case is heard, often years down the track. A YCS group in South Australia recently wrote letters to young people inside the centre closest to them, offering their friendship, solidarity and support. Their hope is that a long term relationship will form.

A Melbourne group reviewed the pressure they were under at school, so they started meeting for 4 hours every Saturday afternoon to help each other out with homework. Unfortunately they were not able to take things further, but they were keen to look at ideas such as putting

together to hire a tutor, and expanding to start similar programs within their schools.

Just two examples of action taking place through the YCS, but indicative of the different areas our groups are involved in.

Of course, we have our challenges as well! Finding suitable adults who are able to challenge and support our groups is a real struggle, as is making sure we follow up our Actions at consecutive meetings.

Survey On Student Poverty

Mouvement des EtudiantEs ChrétienNes du Québec
Martin Fontaine and Isabelle Lavoie

MECQ is a movement that is involved in society, based on of its Christian values, analysing the situations lived by post-secondary students in order to improve their milieu and their quality of life. When discussing and living with the young people we have realised that a great number of students around us were confronted by serious economic difficulties. That is why the MECQ decided to focus on this problem. The analysis was made over four years.

First of all, we had to go through the step "See". The tool was, in the first part, a pre-survey so as to know in detail the economic situation of post-secondary students. This enabled us to discover that, in spite of the governmental system of "Loans and scholarships", more than half of the responses declared having an annual income of less than 5000 Canadian Dollars, that is three times less than the threshold of poverty established in Canada at 15.000 Can. \$. This situation has several consequences such as the interruption of studies, the impossibility of providing for answer to their essential needs and many others.

Following this pre-survey, an official survey containing 86 questions was set up. 436 students from colleges and universities in Quebec gave their opinions on the sources of student poverty. This survey dealt with three themes:

Participative and Strategic Planning

IMCS-IYCS Latin America

The activities carried out by the national movements fall into the framework of a process of formation that enables the militant to adopt a Christ-centred spirituality that grants him/her the possibility to participate in the reality. The action of the movements is meant to facilitate the connection between the ways of

To finish, I've included 2 quotes from Key Leaders as they explain what the Review of Life is to them.

"A way in which I can express my thoughts on certain issues relating to the student body...Action is the key!"

"The Review of Life is my time to stop and think before I go back into life. It is the closest thing I have to an instructional manual" 🏠

- the causes of the difficult financial situation of students;
- the means to counteract its effects and the feasibility of these means.
- Students' confidence in the feasibility of the solutions proposed

After compiling all this data in the computer, we analysed the results. Here are the main conclusions:

- **the causes:** Students consider that the system of loans and scholarships is not fair. Further more, they underline the government's disinterest in facing of this problem and, finally, they consider the distribution of wealth unequal.
- **The solutions:** Students want a significant decrease in school costs, a fairer system of loans and scholarships and a better repartition of wealth.
- **Feasibility:** Students do not believe it will be possible to reform all governmental structures: they feel unable to do this. That is why they are resigned to trying to make a budget and even to being deprived of essential goods.

This survey helped us better understand this problem, and the efforts of the movement are now concentrated on trying to develop confidence and hope in those students in order to bring about change. To do this, we continue our reflections (Judge) through animating meetings, "discussion-dinners" and thematic informal meetings. Many "sensitising actions" were carried out (ACT). And this is not all...! 🏠

seeing life and the praxis of the militant so that his/her actions give proof of coherent praxis with this vision.

In this way, all the movements, through a series of activities carried out are trying to achieve this aim, that



is, that the life of the militant feels questioned by the life of Jesus. Nevertheless, the sings of time demand that we listen, discern and act, on the contrary we run the risk that our actions will be divorced from the problems that concern the reality of the student milieu.

That is why we need that, as Student Movement, we incorporate methods and tools of planning in our actions, enabling us to identify the problems of the student milieu and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, find the most adequate solution to them.

Within this perspective the IMCS-IYCS Latin American Secretariat has launched a process of Strategic Planning, with a very neat Participative aspect, with the aim to give a follow up of the activities of each of the actions the movements are intending to achieve in order to attain and give meaning the that feeling of latinoamericanicity we all strive for.

The Life Of The International Teams

Habib bou Nafeh

Between February and August the International Team members have participated in a great number of events. The multiplicity of commitments has often prevent us from meeting together regularly in Paris. For instance we have participated in the following meetings:

- In February, Budi participated in the Study Session of the IYCS-IMCS European Co-ordination. About 50 young people were present.
- In mid-March, Habib went to Rome, to the Vatican, together with other members of the Executive Committee of the ICO's Conference to meet with some people responsible for the Pontifical Council for the Laity
- In April, Habib and Natàlia participated in the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva
- During this same period, Mike, Tarsoo and Budi prepared the week of retreat that gathered the 5 members together in April
- In April we also attended different events:
 - o In our Office in Rue de Rennes was held a meeting of the Youth ICO's. The aim of such meetings is to reinforce the links between the movements, evaluate and plan common activities liked the *Panorama of World*, prepared for the WYD 2000 in Rome
 - o The first issue of our Newsletter was published and we hope it answered some of your expectations
- YCS France national Gathering: Mike, Budi and Habib participated and met the students from all over France to celebrate the different identities and plurality in living together

From this moment, some of the team members went visiting the movements in different parts of the world:

Tarsoo and Budi met in Geneva in May with the members of ICMICA to discuss the preparation of the World Conference against Racism. Afterwards, Budi and Linus went to Nairobi to take part in the preparatory conference organised together by IMCS, ICMICA and IYCS to prepare the World Conference.

Budi benefited from his presence in the region to visit the IMCS movement in Rwanda

Mike participated in a meeting of university chaplains' of francophone West Africa organised by the IMCS Pan African co-ordination. This meeting was held in Togo.

This process will take some time for the preparation, the implementation and the evaluation, more or less a whole year.

We believe it is necessary to take time to reflect on the path we have followed, on what has been achieved up to now and on the challenges the Latin American Movements are confronted to and that is why we bet on an Strategic Planning.

“ The Church is essentially a communion, It has to go through history and answer the challenges in communion (...)the facts of history, present and future demand –due to their magnitude and complexity – a communitarian answer...” (CELAM 1994). 🙏

Mike then also visit national movements in Benin and Ghana

A bit later, Tarsoo went to North America to meet the YCS movements in USA and Quebec. His visit reinforced the links with the different local groups and encouraged the Movements in North America to go on with their mission

At this time Luis and Anna, from the European Co-ordination were in Paris and, as foreseen, we met for two days to discuss and reflect on the situation of the movement in general and of Europe in particular Natàlia and Habib participated in the world gathering organised by the CCFD. This consultation gave the opportunity to meet with people from different parts of the world and to mutually learn from each other's experiences

In June Budi went to North America to visit NCSC, CCSA, MECQ, ICO centre in New York, UN office in New York and visited Fr. François Lapier, the former International Chaplain of IMCS, and . Beside having discussion with the leader of the national movements, he also discussed the preparation of the World Youth Day 2002 in Toronto. CCSA in collaboration with NCSC are responsible for the University Day in the Toronto World Youth Day 2002. He also met Tarsoo there.

At this same period Natàlia went to Latin America to visit the new Latin American team in Quito and participated in meeting with the regional chaplains meeting.

Fr. Mike Deeb, O.P, participated in a meeting of international chaplains and responsible organised by the Conference of the International Catholic Organisations, in Dijon, France.

In July the office recovered some of its users: Budi and Mike were back. Natàlia did a world tour: from Latin America she went to Madrid to meet with the funding agency, Manos Unidas. Then she came back to Paris but left soon afterward for the Middle East, to attend the ME Annual summer camp. This meeting was held in Lebanon and she also met the Middle East Regional Co-ordination.

The first week of August we had an “in-depth review” where we all met having Wilbert Tengey, a former member of YCS International Team as a facilitator. He will come and help us with the next ICM. This week did not only help us to prepare for the ICM but also to clarify some ideas and projects for our movements

At the end of August Natàlia went to the IMCS Asia Pacific region meeting, the PAPA (Pan Asian Pacific Assembly) in India

August 24: Sacha, the little baby daughter of Habib and Lydie was born.

In September we continued the preparation for the ICM. Habib had to leave for Africa on September the 14th to participate in the Pan African YCS programme on Peace and conflict resolution in Nairobi and then to visit the movement in Tanzania and Uganda

Tarsoo is going to get married to Mabel Adinya EBE, on 15 December. The blessing will be given in Nigeria. CONGRATULATIONS. We are happy for them. 🏡

OUR REFLECTIONS

Why Do We Bother To “Judge” Or “Reflect” ?

By Fr. Michael Deeb, O.P. IMCS and IYCS International Chaplain

In most of our movements, one of the key ways in which we identify ourselves is through our use of the Review of Life, or through using the “see-judge-act” or “action-reflection-action” methodologies. However, when we look at the reality of most of our groups, we notice that so many find it very difficult to “judge” or to “reflect”. Yes, it is very clear what needs to be done to “see” an issue or problem! We can describe it, analyse it, and decide what we can do to respond to it or change it. Or we can describe an action, evaluate its effectiveness, and plan another action to improve the situation. However, once we have finished “seeing” the problem or the action, and reach the moment when we are supposed to “judge” or “reflect”, we sometimes read a biblical text and briefly discuss it, or we more often than not brush over the usual questions, and just go straight to planning an action (if we even manage to get that far!). “Judging/reflecting” is often seen as an unnecessary element in the process – something it would be nice to do if we had time (which we never have, of course!). This challenges us to re-think what this moment in our lives or our meetings is really for. Is it worth the time and effort, when there are so many other important things to discuss and change?

Doing Theology

The first point that we have to appreciate is that every decision to *act* presumes a conscious or unconscious *judgement* beforehand – about what needs to be done to make the situation better. The question is whether our judgement is based on a *deep reflection*, or just on the *assumptions* that we have always had.

The “reflection” or “judge” part of a meeting is essentially a moment to ensure that our decisions are not based on our *unconscious assumptions*, but rather on a thorough *evaluation* of the reality, issue or problem that we have identified. And to do any evaluation we always need to choose criteria. As movements of Christians, our chief criterion is the person of Jesus (his life, words, actions, and spirit), as manifested to us through Scripture, as well as through the Church, which, through the ages, in its teachings, and in the works of inspired thinkers of the faith (theologians), has identified Jesus’ spirit (the Holy Spirit) in the issues facing people in their lives. Hence, some of the questions usually asked in order to “judge” are:

- What would Jesus do in this situation? or
- How have the leaders or thinkers in the Church seen this issue? or
- What does this issue or question have to do with our faith?

If given the space, these questions can inspire very powerful reflections, since they give the opportunity to stand back from the issue, and look at it from a different

point of view – with the eyes of faith. Doing this is what is commonly called “*doing theology*”.

Sometimes we start thinking about which Gospel texts might shed light on the issue at hand, and this can give rise to a form of Gospel sharing which is deeply rooted in our actual experience, and not just a discussion of nice abstract principles. However, the search for biblical texts can also often have a danger of turning the Bible into a recipe book, which we use in order to find texts that will justify whatever judgement or action we have already decided is appropriate. If we do this, then, of course, this reflection will add nothing new to our reflection, since it will be an unnecessary duplication of what we have already discussed, or it will simply pre-empt what we are likely to conclude anyway (even without this reflection). We are then more likely to pass over it very quickly, if we look at it at all!

No! To “reflect” or “judge” is not simply to *apply* to our situation what others have said. Not even what Jesus has said (because the Gospel does not talk about every situation we are faced with)! Not even what the Church has said (because theology in the Church is always evolving)! When we “reflect” or “judge” we are *doing theology*. We have to engage with the Gospel, with Church teachings, or with inspired Christian thinkers, but we want to develop our *own reflection on the meaning of our faith in our own lives* (in the issue our group is discussing). This is what can and does contribute to the development of theology in the Church as a whole – even if done by a simple student with no formal theological training!

The Impossibility of Absolutely “True” Judgements

But then (the question might arise), if we are not *applying* the Gospel to our situation, are we not in danger of creating our own gospel – maybe even our own heresy? To which the answer must be “Maybe!”. This is always a possibility. But this danger is equally a possibility even if we try to apply the Gospel strictly to our issues. How come? Because, whenever we read the Gospel, our interpretation is based, to a large extent, on our own assumptions, our own life experiences, and our own attitudes and prejudices. How else is it possible to have so many different interpretations of each biblical text by so many learned theologians? So we come back again to the question of our own unconscious assumptions, and how central they are to all the judgements we make! Is there any way we can make a “true” judgement, without our own subjective experience getting in the way?

We can never be absolutely sure that our judgements are true, since there is no judgement that is ideologically neutral. Any criteria adopted are based, whether consciously or unconsciously, on some ideology (system of ideas) or theology (system of ideas about the nature of God). However, this difficulty in establishing whether we are on a “true” path or not is not a reason to despair. Once I can acknowledge this difficulty, the possibility of me becoming more open to others and to their opinions (even

those of my enemies), and to the Absolute Truth (God) is immediately greater, and offers the hope of more dialogue, and maybe even greater unity among us all.

So then, within our movements, what do we need to do to enable our judgements (and hence our actions) to be more profound (to come closer to God)? What will enable us to have a “deep reflection”?

Formation in the Theology of our Movements

The first requirement is that we all acknowledge that our movements are rooted in a particular theology that has been articulated repeatedly in our international meetings over the decades. We *believe* in a God who is present *within* this world, and wants a kingdom – a world – where all people, especially the poor and marginalised, are freed (saved) from all forms of oppression, and each has equal dignity; a world of justice, with a spirit of sharing and service, which enables unity, solidarity and harmony to exist for everyone. This faith motivates us to promote such a new world,

- through building small communities (of students, in our case) – the Church - which are a sign of this new world, by everyone (including the youth) participating fully in common celebration, reflection and action;
- through engaging (from the point of view of the poor and marginalised) with those who have power to promote or prevent this new world being realised;
- through promoting a spirit of broad internationality and ecumenism, which challenges us all to go beyond narrow, exclusive group loyalties (my ethnic, cultural or language group, or my church or movement);
- through critical reflection on all the traditions we inherit, whether secular (cultural practices, gender relations, etc.) or religious (the Bible, sacraments, church structures and practices, etc.), in order to understand the broad social context in which they arose, so that they can be experienced in a rich renewed way in the world of today.

Not everyone in the Church fully shares this theology (system of ideas about the nature of God and its implications in our lives), even though we might all acknowledge the same creed (statement of faith). Our movements have brought people together who share these views of faith, and are committed to forming people (and hence new members) in it. This theology – which is all about *changing the world for the better* - therefore defines our criteria for making our judgements. If, then, the knowledge (and internalisation) of it is weak, a profound judgement according to our movements’ objectives will not be possible, since that judgement could be based on criteria different from those of our movements. Our members are then less likely to have a thirst for changing the world for the better, resulting in our action having a diminished impact. Consequently, if we want our judgements to become more profound, we need to ensure that all our members undergo thorough formation in this theology.

Facing our Unconscious Assumptions and Prejudices

A second necessary requirement for developing a “deep reflection” is to acknowledge the unconscious assumptions (repeatedly referred to above) that lie behind

all the judgements we make. It is very difficult to ever talk about making an “objective” judgement of a situation, since we all have feelings, prejudices and assumptions which we bring to the situation and which determine how we are able to look at it. While we can never fully remove the element of “subjectivity”, at least if we can acknowledge the presence of our own feelings, prejudices and assumptions, it can help us to discern how dominant they are in making the judgement. In a group context, such a sharing can be a powerful moment for facing one’s own prejudices, and hence for enabling conversion to take place.

This highlights another dimension of the “judge/reflection” moment in our meetings and in our lives. We are not only reflecting in order to change the situation for the better, but also to enable me and us personally to come closer to the Truth (to God) through this process of reflection and action. What is the good of trying to change a bad or problematic situation, if I try to address it with attitudes and prejudices that could only make it worse? Unfortunately, often we are not aware of our own prejudices, and this is why we need our small group (which hopefully can grow in trust) to reveal them to us when we, on our own, are not able.

However, in order to be able to confront my own feelings, prejudices and assumptions, I have to have a prior *openness to conversion*, which presumes a spirit of humility. Although this is often difficult to presume, it is nevertheless important to acknowledge that, if we want our judgements to be more profound, and hence for our actions to have the desired impact, such an openness is indispensable.

Difficult but Indispensable

So, why do we bother to “judge” or “reflect”? Because it can enable us (rooted in our theological criteria) to be more critical of the issue we are facing, to be freed of our own cultural and social prejudices, and to become more integrated people. These, in turn, can enable us to have a greater impact in changing the world for the better.

To achieve a more profound judgement in our meetings, then, maybe we could include the following questions in our reflection:

- What are my feelings (assumptions/prejudices) about this issue?
- What are the different ways that other people evaluate the issue?
- Which of these is closest to Jesus’ way? Why?

Unfortunately, we cannot avoid this moment being difficult, because there is no simple, easy way to confront the truth. We are all at least partially blind, and we are all at least a bit fearful of facing a truth which will require us to change. But this is precisely why this moment is so important for us in our movements: because we (like Jesus) are passionately wanting the world (and ourselves) to change for the better. Without “deep reflection”, our action could easily end up responding to superficial issues, and we will lose our impact in the world and in the Church. This has already happened in many places, but it is not too late to recover it! Let us start giving more time to this moment in our reflection! 🙏

The Challenges Facing Specialised Catholic Action Movements In The 21st Century

In the light of the decline and the crisis by many of our movements, as well as most (if not all) other Specialised Catholic Action Movements, our international teams reflected, and produced a document on the challenges facing our movements today. This was intended to initiate a broader reflection within our movements, as well as in other Specialised Catholic Action Movements. Here we reproduce a summary of the document, for the full document, contact the International Teams or Regional Teams.

IMCS and IYCS define themselves as Specialised Catholic Action movements in which we assume the responsibility of conducting an Apostolate in our own milieu, i.e. student milieu. We recognise that the Catholic Action movements are playing less and less significant rôle in the world. This is affected by different situations in the world and in the church. Among others these are:

1. the world is more focused on the need of here and now, the needs for excitement now, and the need for immediate gratification,
2. the world has become more and more critical, tradition is no longer taken for granted and everything is open to question,
3. the uncertainty, confusion, and loss of tradition today results in a crisis of identity among young people, and hence a deep need to discover identity,
4. there is less and less need for young people to be part of the Church,
5. the impact of secularisation, and hence lesser need for the church, results in a decreasing need for the Catholic Action movements
6. on the other hand, there is also the fact that youth today need a greater affirmation of their Catholic identity,
7. they also ask critical questions to which the Catholic church sometimes find it difficult to respond but
8. young people have a lot of energy which can be focused on certain issues.

As movements, we have done quite a number of things which emphasis e both a long term formation and responding to the issues of today. Our focus is mainly raising awareness of students on issues of society and to some degree also the issues the students are facing. The greater focus on issues of society somehow can distance us from the students milieu, which is meant to be our specificity. The review of life, which we believe to be a

Student Progressive Movements

*By Vivian Andyka
IMCS Asian Team*

Each of us carries the sin of this nation. We are the persons in our society with the intellectual background. We know what is going on in our nation yet we keep silent. That is the biggest sin we have done to our nation. The year of 1997 was an historical year for Asia, noted as the start of the economic crisis in most of its countries in the East and South East Region. Looking back at that time, we can see the painful and struggling moments of our

useful tool for dealing with issues is understood differently, and even many of us do not know it, let alone use it. We need to take into account as well the fact that the membership of our movements has been decreasing. The concept of militancy has also been blurred. There is no clear and similar understanding of what it means to being militant of the movements today.

□ Challenges and Recommendations

From the discussion above, we then discussed the challenges we face in our movements, namely:

1. Student leadership: our movement is a student movement, which should be led by students. The fact is that in some of the national movements it is possible for student volunteers to lead the movements, but in other parts of the movements, they are led by older non-students or paid former students. How should we deal with this reality?
2. As church movements, we need to develop better communication with the local church. The fact is that in some movements we have difficulty to develop this communication with the church. At the same time, for us, we need to provide formation in the nature and role of the church (ecclesiology)
3. We need to identify the specificity of our movements in order to attract more students to joint.
4. To respond to the need of young people for an affirmation of Catholic identity today. We need to provide formation on our Catholic tradition with an inclusive perspective, while being open to ecumenism and other religious experiences.
5. We need to develop a pedagogy, which can make the connection between personal issues and social issues and enable engagement in the student milieu. To assist this we need to find ways to provide formation for chaplains and students in the review of life.
6. We need to redefine the term "militancy" as the goal of our movements and provide formation to achieve it.
7. Since the structure of our movements at times seem too heavy, we need to develop a structure, which will allow us to work faster.
8. We need to identify the needs of students today and relate their issues to concrete projects. In our activities, we need also to tackle the personal issues of students like identity, and we need to be more creative in our activities, using the language and interests of young people, like having camps or creating T-shirts, logos, etc.
9. To mobilise students, we need to identify common enemies, from which we can develop a deeper reflection and relate it back to their personal issues.
10. We need to have further reflections with regional co-ordination and national movements on the Specialised Catholic Action. 🙏

people. The increasing cost of living, the bankruptcy of national companies followed by millions of unemployment, which led to enormous of poverty.

As people suffered because of the crisis, they became more aware of the society and its injustice, opening our eyes to the political games behind it. People started to question the credibility of their governments, demanded certain changes, appealed for urgent action on unsettled matters, and even called for the stepping down of their top leaders. Most of this was also paid by the sacrifice of people. People were killed in rallies and many others were kidnapped and injured.

This 'moment of truth' has shown rapid changes in our society. People Power is sounding in almost in all Asian countries. Farmers demand the right of land, workers demand justice in the labour sector, women activists demand gender equality and the people of East Timor asked for referendum.

Progressive Student Movements Now.

Newspapers have reported that in most student rallies, some of the students were killed and badly injured in clashes with the military or with the opposition groups. But students still take part in the people's struggle. Are they patriotic? Why are they so radical?

Other students initiate another way of campaigning for justice by sending their concerns and solidarity to responsible institutions. Other groups bring to the public some data and information about the unseen sins of the State, in order to bring civic education and awareness to people, even though some 'disappeared', or were arrested as subversive activists

IMCS and its Challenges

IMCS Asia Pacific as a movement of students, realising the needs in this era, defines its activities and

Power Without Merci

Gusta de la Vida
JEC Togo

There is an impressive, basic, incisive Gospel text, where Jesus tells a story that looks nearly meaningless. It is in St Matthew Gospel, 18, 23-35. A king calls upon one of his ministers for the reimbursement of a debt of a hundred million francs CFS, more or less, since the expiry date was over. In fact, he threatened to sell him and his family as slaves. Upset by the difficulty of his situation, the minister begs for pity and promises once again to reimburse everything. Kings are not in general sensitive people, but this one king, surprisingly, is moved. Not only does he cancel the punishment but he cancels the debt. It is incredible, unexpected! It is too beautiful to be true. And nevertheless this is it! We imagine the minister going back to his wife to announce the news, he that considered himself nearly a slave. We imagine him inviting all his friends to celebrate. But... of course there is a but...on the staircase of the palace, he comes across one of his servants. This poor guy owed him five thousand francs. No, He is not going to...Scandal! He demands the immediate restitution and, without compassion, he takes his servant by the neck and tries to strangle him: "pardon me, I promise I will reimburse you, let me have a little time:" No luck; he sends this man to jail. The king was astonished. This minister will go to jail to reflect upon his action. And thus it will be for all those who do not pardon their brothers from the bottom of their hearts.

Yes, dear fellow student. I am this insensitive minister and we all are like him. What is our living experience on the campus? Let's go to Campus B: smashed doors! Students beaten during demonstrations! Some students from the ENSI have their books and belongings taken away and burnt, why? We do claim our rights but some people are against our interests! So no pity on those who are against our interests. And nevertheless the "O Father, forgive them because they do not know what they do", rings in our ears. Unfortunately this sentence does not ring enough in our ears. Our body,

actions through the character of the students, - youth in search of identity; having ideologies that are mainly based on analysis; with spirit and motivation- defined as militancy; not afraid to change; and having a strong dream'. Having more than 20 national movements and contact groups in Asia Pacific, IMCS has a variety of involvement as its response to the reality of injustice in Asia Pacific, at national level, sub-regional and regional level. Some significant progress can be seen in our national movements. Certain discussions and programs have been carried on with more concentration on socio-cultural awareness in the context of the social and religious dimension of being part of a bigger community, part of civil society.

Being a progressive movement means being able to respond to the situation in active form. The challenge now is in recognising each movement's identity, ability, strength and weaknesses at the present; preparing the movements with awareness-based programs; in-depth analysis of the situation; discussion on the needs and objectives of change; and, taking responsibility as part of society through concrete actions. 🙏

our desire to study and our passion cry out for revenge! So we are trapped in the vicious circle of hate-revenge-hate. The logic of evil makes hate capable of reproduction, of renewal, of dissemination.

While love says, "You will live" hate says, "You will not survive!". Thus our university is a jungle where the law of retaliation reigns. You smack me, I will smack you! You insult me, I will insult you! Who knows whether we will not reach the point where: "you kill my militant, I will kill yours"!

The first murder, the one of Cain in Genesis 4, 1-16 is presented with a singular eloquence in a paradigmatic text: a text re-written every day in the book of history of people, without a break and in a repeated way that becomes degradation. "Cain fell upon his brother and killed him" Koffi threw himself upon his young brother Abalo and upset him. God asks us "Where is your brother? "What have you done with your brother? And we answer; "I do not know". Am I my brothers' keeper? "The bible says that Cain spoke to his young brother but what did he say? We do not know. This void in Cain's speech is eloquent and shows the inconsistency of the relationship that he had with Abel; a look nurtured by jealousy. In front of this void or this impossibility to dialogue the worst happens. Cain murders his brother!

And it is the same for us. The situation that our university is going through has roots in this lack of dialogue, of true dialogue, transparency between all the Togolese partners in school, that have become the secular arms of some politicians; What a pity. Any violence, treason, any crime is fundamentally bad because its consequences are always serious. But this culture of an eye for an eye, of non-respect the human person finds its place in the temple of knowledge which is the university, and the consequences will be even more serious; I think that we, students, need to have a human and culture training to be at the service of all. Today more than ever we have to nurture the virtues of love, tolerance, dialogue, non-violence, pardon. Some will say: how can I love someone that makes me hungry? How can I dialogue with

someone that despises me? HOW? How? And this is what Christ invites us to do and he gives his example. First with the adulterous woman: “ that the first one among you who has never sinned be the first to throw a stone at her” The Bible says that they left, one by one, the eldest the first. Yes sometimes we only see evil in what the others do. Then in John 18-23 we see a good example of gentle scolding and claiming for justice: “ if I did speak wrong,

show me what I did wrong; but if I did speak well, why do you hit me? “ Dear fellow students, it is possible for us to live in this culture of dialogue, if we do at least want it and if we pray to God for it.

Our university, our country will be a family if each one of our members gets involved and cares for the others. In a winning team, there are never good isolated players without any links or communication with the others. 🙏

REPRESENTATION

United Nations And Our Movements

*By Kevin Ahern,
Representative of IMCS and IYCS in UN New York*

The representation and work of our movements at the United Nations in New York serves a very important role for many reasons. The main reasons are based in our identities as international, as Catholic, as young people and as students.

As International

Currently, there are about 2000 ECOSOC accredited NGOs working on issues with the UN. Many of these NGOs are by far, not as international as our movements, with many of them being national or regional, and most do not have representatives at the UN as often as our movements. As a result, our movements representation often is the most international NGO at various events. This allows us to advocate parts of the world that are not represented at many NGO and UN events. This has led us to get involved in many issues concerning development, disarmament, and poverty eradication that affect different regions differently. Currently the representation is active in the process for the upcoming world conference on Financing for Development.

As Catholic

Our religious identity with the Gospel and its rich Catholic Social Teaching gives our representation a strong moral and ethical base for what we can advocate for peace and justice. In New York, we work very closely with the other Catholic NGOs including many religious communities such as Franciscans International, who have a number of full time representatives. We are very active in the International Catholic Organisation Information Centre, where I serve on the board of Directors. Many of the Catholic NGO representatives, including myself look at this work as a ministry of advocacy. It is a ministry that has a very important role in the UN system in promoting peace and justice with the Catholic NGO community which is very highly respected. Our identity has also called us to get involved in inter-religious dialogue with other religious NGOs at the UN.



Pax Romana Team met Koichiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO, Paris, March 2001

As Young

As young people, our role becomes even more important and unique. When I first began my work with the movements, three years ago, one of the representatives for ICMICA-Pax Romana, Edward Kirchner (former IMCS President during World War II) said to me that one of the reasons that makes Pax Romana so unique at the UN is that: “it brings together both empowered young people and professionals.” Pax Romana – IMCS and IYCS are some of the only true youth NGOs, that have representation in New York. As a result, we are often the youngest people in the room by a number of years. For the last few years we have served as the Vice-Chair of the CONGO-NGO Committee on Youth, a committee where the chair and most of the people who attend are over 60 years old. Most NGOs who are involved in the NGO community in New York are represented by retired adults because the younger people are busy with work or schooling. Because of our young identity, we often work hard to have the word “youth” inserted into many documents and call upon the delegates and the other NGOs to think about how the topic being discussed (from development to disarmament) will affect the young people of the world. One issue we are currently thinking about is how poverty and development affect young people. We have also been involved in a number of education related issues such as a committee on Peace Education.

As Students

As students, our work takes on more personal meaning as each time we participate in the UN system we learn about different issues. The knowledge I have

received from my work goes far beyond anything I could learn in the classroom setting. I was once told that the charisma of Pax Romana is formation. Through our work we are transformed and formed into leaders who will make greater changes in the world with the more we learn. For myself, the knowledge I have gained has been very helpful in my education and my own formation. Our work has also helped the students who are not in New York, as

Report Of The UN Human Rights Commission

Geneva, 29-30 March 2001

Safiatou Simporé
YCS Switzerland

It has been a great honour for me to take part in the plenary assembly of the Human Rights Commission.

The first day I felt a bit lost and I did not quite understand the usefulness of our presence there but, with the precious help of Alex (from IYCS) and Habib (from IYCS International Team) I could feel soon at home.

I followed the plenary meetings with great interest. At the same time, I was surprised by the interventions of the different delegations, everybody could participate on an equal footing. Perhaps this aspect is not relevant to you but for me, it was very important, because when one speaks about Human Rights this aspect must be fundamental. On the other hand, I have my doubt about whether the decisions are taken on an equal footing and applied as they should be. And the norms developed in relation to Human Rights have no use if they are not implemented.

I have difficulties in understanding the position of the UN towards the situation in Palestine, the debt of the underdeveloped countries, where people are living under precarious conditions. There are also many other things for the UN to do. In my view, it is precisely the participation of the NGO's working in this field and especially of those

**Pax Romana Human Rights Internship
Participants during the UN Human Right
Sub-commission, Geneva, August, 2001**

Extract From Our Presentation To The CCFD World Consultation

Paris, 22 May 2001

By Natàlia Mendéz

Thinking about so many examples (human rights formation, demonstrations for women's rights, awareness raising on education policies,...) of social commitment, within our movements I can think "oh, yes... IMCS / IYCS are political organisations". But I must confess I don't feel at all comfortable within this definition.

Even though I know that the word "politics" comes from the Greek *polis* and that it means "community of free men that interact together and do things together" or "community of citizens" (Josep Ma Esquirol), I feel, in this

information on various important issues is passed from the New York team to our members around the world.

After working as an NGO representative for the movements for the past three years, I feel that our role at the United Nations Headquarters in New York is an invaluable one where our multiple identity as international, Catholic, young, student movements is unique. I believe that our role in New York has much potential for growth and could make more effective changes with the UN with our ministry. 🙏

participating in this commission that can make things change and thus improve human life.

Nevertheless Human Rights are not only a UN responsibility. Each one of us has a daily role to play in our own milieue where Human Rights are not respected.

After two days, I realised that, nevertheless, it is the western countries that do their utmost to have human Rights respected in developing countries, even if in their countries the most elementary Human Rights are not respected. I did appreciate our brothers from Algeria who had the courage to remind western countries that they still have a lot to do in the field of Human Rights.



I was sorry to leave the HR commission. I am very interested in all that concerns Human Rights and I would have loved to know the mechanisms this Commission uses and the criteria for making decision and I regret not having had enough time to discuss with other NGO's to see how they work in this field. I do really regret not to have had more time. I am curious about how IYCS can set up a concrete programme to better understand this situation. 🙏

word "politics" there were two connotations that make me doubtful: corruption and power.

We always see in the media how many of the main political leaders are corrupt. But I wonder to what extent political corruption is more corrupt than the corruption in multinational enterprises, or in the media (who are not independent), or in the way of engaging teachers at certain universities... but maybe it is not a matter of comparison. It is a matter of accepting that corruption is present in the political parties and elsewhere. And also a matter of accepting that there is also transparency and the will of building the "common good" in these political parties, and elsewhere. So, I see a first challenge: try to find and show the positive aspect of politics. Go beyond the negative view that makes us fall in with non-involvement, saying "voting is useless", "all of them

are alike"... and identify the political ideas that we would like to happen and try to make them appear more often in the social field.

Concerning the second connotation that bothers me about the word "politics", power... we, as movements, try to avoid this idea of power and choose service.

But, at the same time, we talk about "empowering" students. Give power, so that we have the possibility of provoking changes. "How can we talk and act with a positive sense of power and transformation" acting in a way that everyone is listened to and has the right to speak? That means, acting politically inside a true democracy. So, the challenge is to put politics at the service of change for the good of humanity.

Another problem appearing in this idea of power is that, many of us suspect and affirm that political leaders no longer have power; that power, in this globalised world, is in the hands of multinational corporations; that decisions affecting people are taken inside these businesses that aim to gain more, and not to promote development of communities or any kind of justice. Knowing this leads to disappointment, to this feeling that "I can do nothing".

Or we can give time and effort to be in the international decision-making spaces that are supposed to be able to create control mechanisms in the dream of a global governance that takes into account the person and human dignity.

Or we can organise ourselves in new ways to fight against these phenomena, acting politically, but under

another name without negative connotations. We can consolidate ourselves as social actors, as civil society. We can organise ourselves (or at least we can try) in a structure with internal democracy. And we can keep the will to dream about the world we want to build: in togetherness, in dialogue, everyone being responsible.

And we, being church... does it have any meaning in this issue?

Happy those who are persecuted (Mt 5, 10), you are the salt of the earth (Mt 5, 13), I was hungry and you gave me to eat (Mt 25, 35...) and so many others!

It is in Jesus, in what he said, in what he did, in what he teaches us daily, from whom we draw our willingness to change the world. It is in His call to build the Kingdom here where we work. It is in the hope of His resurrection, in the certainty of His presence, where we find the meaning of our acting.

We accept the challenge to be present in the different structures of our Church, with the objective of giving a word that enriches the dialogue. A word that should be prophetic and accompanied by concrete gestures that denounce injustice, that act for transformation, that announce the Good News.

Because we live an incarnated spirituality, that leads us, each day, to discover Jesus in the poorest, and recognise from their dignity as human beings. Because we try to put faith and life together, to be just one. 🙏

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

In this edition, we present a list of some activities in different regions. Most of the regions of IMCS and IYCS gave us responses but some others did not. For the next edition, we would like to invite all the regions and national movements to share their diaries of past and future activities.

IYCS Asia

- South Asian Sub region Co-ordination Meeting, Bangladesh, April 2001
- South East Asian Sub Regional Meeting, Singapore, June, 2001
- Half year evaluation and planning, Manila, Philippines, July 2001
- East Asian Session, Taiwan August, 2001
- Easy-net meeting, an Asian Ecumenical Meeting between IYCS, IMCS, YMCA Asia Alliance, and WSCF, co-organised with IMCS Asia-Pacific, August, 2001, Manila, Philippines
- Asian Youth Day: We are called to Sanctity and Solidarity, Taiwan, August, 2001
- 6th South Asian Session: Students moved with faith, protect environment – Promote Human Rights, Bangladesh, October 2001
- Hosting International Co-ordination Meeting with IMCS Asia, October-November, 2001

IYCS – IMCS Europe

- Study Session: Students making choices: building a meaningful lifestyles, Hungary, February 2001
- Colloquium: Challenges faced by youth organisations in today's European society, Lithuania, April 2001
- Secondary Summerweek: European Youth Culture, Slovenia, July 2001.
- University Summerweek: The rôle of university in integral formation, Switzerland, August 2001
- European Committee: Evangelisation in our student milieu, France September 2001

- Study Session: Learning in Europe – a holistic Approach, Hungary, February 2002
- Training Session: Transforming action through intercultural learning, Austria, April 2002
- Secondary Summerweek: Who are the poor? July 2002
- University Summerweek: Solidarity and sustainable development, July, 2002



Habib with IYCS Pan African Team, during the visit to Africa, September 2001

IYCS Africa

- Nairobi Workshop as preparation for the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, co-organised with IMCS and ICMICA, Nairobi, May, 2001
- Participation in the UN World Conference Against Racism, Durban, South Africa, August-September, 2001
- Formation Session: Peace Building and Conflict Resolution, for the Great Lake Region and Sudan, Nairobi, September 2001.
- National Visits

IMCS Africa

- Chaplains Meeting for West Africa, Lome, Togo, May, 2001

- Nairobi Workshop as preparation of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, co-organised with ICMICA and IYCS, Nairobi, May, 2001
- Participation in the UN World Conference Against Racism, Durban, South Africa, August-September, 2001
- Formation Session: Education for Peace and Democracy among Catholic Student Movements in Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, September - October 2001
- Survey on Poverty in the Student Milieu, September, 2001
- National Visits



Participants of IMCS West African Chaplains Meeting in Lome, Togo, May 2001, with Fr. Etienne Triaille, SJ, chaplain of IMCS Africa, and Fr. Mike Deeb, O.P., the International Chaplain of IMCS and IYCS,

IMCS Asia-Pacific

- National Visits to Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam
- UNESCAP Meeting: the Third Asia-Pacific Inter-governmental Meeting on Human Resource Development in Youth, Bangkok, Thailand, June 2001.
- UNESCO Annual Meeting of Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All: *Informal Education for East Asia and Pacific*, Bangkok, Thailand, July, 2001
- Participation in ICMICA Human Rights Advocacy Workshop on Racial Discrimination in Chennai, India, July 2001
- East Asia Program: Education in East Asia, Tokyo, Japan, August 2001
- Asia Youth Day, We are called to Sanctity and Solidarity, Taipei, Taiwan, August, 2001
- Easy-net meeting, an Asian Ecumenical Meeting between IMCS, IYCS, YMCA Asia Alliance, and WSCF, co-organised with IYCS Asia, August, 2001, Manila, Philippines
- Pan Asia and Pacific Assembly, Chennai, India, August 2001
- Hosting International Co-ordination Meeting with IYCS Asia, October-November, 2001

IMCS-IYCS Latin America Secretariat National Conference Celebrating 60 Years Of Unec Peru: 19 August – 2 September, 2001

A very important event in the life of the Movement is the National Conference: a space for fraternal encounter and praying together in our big community, a space for reviewing the life of the movement, a space for studying, reflecting on and engaging with what is happening in the University, the Church, our country and the world.

In this meeting we meet as brothers and sisters and placing Jesus of Nazareth in the centre. He has called us to participate in this movement and we still feel him pushing us to be available for of his Kingdom.

The aim of this National Conference is to strengthen and nourish to our militancy as members of UNEC and thus orientate our lives according to the project of Jesus.

This conference aimed to be a space for deep and intense study that will allow us to go on "opening paths", "building bridges" so the movement could now better carry its mission.

When we look at our universities we observe a very significant fact: there is a sector of students willing to build democratic spaces and who have more than once gone onto the streets to express their anger at actions threatening freedom and democracy. The situation of the country is no better than that of our institution of study: we have been through an electoral process where a large percentage of voters rejected both the two candidates, in a situation of recession where nothing has been done to fight against poverty and unemployment. We are living in a society that has not yet recovered from the traumatic experience of 10 years of authoritarian and antidemocratic government ... Our country is thus asking us for a word, a gesture and a saving action (He 3,1-10). What we have learnt in the movement does not allow us to remain unmoved or passive in the face of these situations of injustice.

We will deal with this in three levels:

SEE:

- Discovering and reflecting upon the real motivations of our attitudes and behaviours
- Discovering and reflecting on how the reference to others influences my personal achievements
- How the context of university youth where we are involved influences and impacts on our behaviours, attitudes and values

JUDGE

- Using the project of Jesus as the horizon and the sense of our project of life
- Developing and confronting our attitudes, commitments and motivations with the project of Jesus

ACT

- Defining the perspective of the Movement as one of formation of disciples
- Defining the evangelising role of the movement in the university milieu

Thus, as we are meeting again in the National Conference, it will be for us a moment to have a halt and a centre in our lives and many delegates, chaplains and the National Committee will concentrate in an intense formation work as well as deepening our reflections. Do accompany us with your prayers. 🙏

IMCS and IYCS Middle East

- Summer Camp: Culture of Peace, Lebanon, July, 2001

NCSC USA:

- Hunger Awareness Campaign: October 2001
- National Leadership Training: Minnesota, December 2001-January 2001
- North American Collaboration Conference Call

CCSA Canada

- Discernment Committee Meeting, August 2001
- Preparation of Toronto World Youth Day 2002

MEC Quebec

- Selection of New National Team, August 2001
- The National Assembly, August 2001
- Exchange Program in Review of Life with IMCS Togo, 2001-2002

YCS United States

- Fund raising for the participation of IYCS in UN New York for 2001-2003
- Annual Christmas Soup Kitchen, December 2001
- Networking among YCS Groups in USA



Fr. Mike Deeb with the Students of YCS and IMCS in Accra, Ghana, in May 2001

JEC Quebec

- Summer Camp, Quebec City, June 2001
- National Council, Montreal, June 2001

YCS Australia

- Network with YCS Malaysia, Bangladesh, India, France, Germany, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Quebec.
- 15th National Conference: Students Making Choices, January, 2002 🏰

