

Final Document

A dream come true...

After two years of preparation, hard work and reflection, we have now had the first JMV General Assembly. For five days we were able to share times of intensive prayer, study, reflection and living together, and we believe that we achieved the objectives we had in mind. All this is due to the powerful presence among us of the Holy Spirit whom we invoked over and over again as we prayed: "Come Holy Spirit." Guided by this same Spirit, our Assembly elected its first International Council and set forth the Association's Lines of Action for the next five years. These events left a deep impression in our minds and hearts.

It is not easy to communicate, in all its depth, the richness of the experiences we had together, but these all lead us to declare that our Association is a gift for the Church and for the world in this new millennium. We were able to get to know one another and discover our values. The diversity of cultures among us became a source of enrichment. This was particularly evident in our Eucharistic celebrations, our group work and the times we spent together.

The message of Rue du Bac, which led to the setting up of our Association, is still relevant and is a living force, urging us to be witnesses to Christ the Servant, following the example of Mary, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Catherine Labouré. This message is in our hands and we have been sent to show the world, through our works, that God is love and that Mary is the reflection of God's tenderness.

At the end of our Assembly, we will return to our different countries, our hearts full of love, hope and enthusiasm, and ready to continue our wonderful JMV journey together in this Association which is now established in more than 40 countries. As well as sharing with you the joy felt by our new international co-ordinating team, we address to you this message of hope:

Dear Friends, Brothers and Sisters, we bring you this good news - yes, there is a path that we can all travel together in the new millennium. We have dreamt about the Association to come during the next five years.

In the light of the message given to us at each conference, and inspired by the reflection of all the members of the Assembly, we thought it necessary to concentrate on the seven topics we judged to be the most important. For each topic, we drew up some simple and specific Lines of Action, and together with you, the Association's members, we wish to implement these in the next five years so that we can do even more and be a prophetic force that can transform the world.

1. SPIRITUAL LIFE

Our hope is that we will be able to support one another by our daily prayer, and that this prayer will be something beautiful for God and attractive to young people.

1. We will make prayer an integral part of our catechetical and formation meetings and of our apostolate, service and evangelization, so that prayer will become a natural and spontaneous part of our lives.
2. The International Secretariat, in collaboration with the International Council, will compile a book of prayers for all Association members. This is to help us preserve the spirit of common prayer and so reinforce our sense of belonging to the Association. All countries will be asked to contribute their own prayer material for this project.

2. FORMATION

Initial and ongoing formation of the Association's members is of vital importance. It is a key factor in our faith journey.

1. The International Council and International Secretariat will draw up a general outline for the various stages of formation. Each National Council will develop these in concrete ways according to the circumstances and needs of its Association. This national formation program will be particularly concerned with human, ecclesial, missionary, Marian and Vincentian dimensions of the members.
2. The International Secretariat and the National Councils will be committed to producing creative material suitable for formation programs. This material will be shared and it should be simple, concrete and attractive, so that it will help us in the formation of the Association's members.
3. In our formation programs we will be very mindful of the social dimension of life so we can help our members develop critical and prophetic understanding of events. We will analyze reality from our Marian and Vincentian perspectives thus being inspired to look for specific forms of service and ways of registering prophetic protest.
4. At all levels of the Association we will encourage our councillors, formators and leaders to commit themselves to personal and ongoing formation so that they will become for us true guides and prophets.

3. MARY AND THE ASSOCIATION

Mary leads us to Christ. She invites us to love in the way that He loved. From her we learn humility, simplicity and tenderness in order to become instruments of love in the service of others.

1. We will base our Marian spirituality on the canticle of the Magnificat, which invites us to live in joyful thanksgiving to God for the wonders of salvation.
2. Inspired by this Magnificat canticle we will make a clear option for God who is the only Absolute, and we will take our place among the poor, for this is the "milieu" in which we will be living out our commitment to God.

3. We will promote and inculcate a deeper understanding of the Act of Consecration, the sign that we belong to the Association. All National Associations will use the same formula for this Act of Consecration.
4. The International Council, as well as the National Associations, will produce material for prayer and study that will help us give young people a deeper understanding of the message of Rue du Bac and its relevance today, so as to promote devotion to Our Lady through the use of the Miraculous Medal.

4. LIFE WITNESS

Our mission today is to be a critical and prophetic presence, to be people who will spread the Good News and be a transforming force in organisations that confront the different forms of poverty in our society.

1. In fulfilling our mission we will proclaim the gospel and, as prophets, denounce injustice, first and foremost, by the testimony of our lives and the way that we live in accordance with gospel values. We will be faithful to Marian and Vincentian virtues that should characterize our lives: simplicity, humility and practical charity.
2. As members of the Association we will make our Christian vocation and our social commitment one single experience of faith and life.

5. SERVICE-MISSION

The prophetic young person is someone who is sent to evangelize the poor, help the weak, set the oppressed free, bring down tyranny and defend justice. In this way we will strive to help people, especially all those who are in difficult situations, be the agents of their own development, live in dignity and know that God loves them.

1. We will encourage all the members of the Association to make their apostolate one of organized service as part of the Church, in cooperation with other pastoral workers, and in direct contact with the poor.
2. We will look for ways of becoming more and more involved in social action and thus be a force that can denounce unjust structures in our society.
3. We will draw up service and apostolate projects that will help us reach out to young people, especially those who are in difficult situations.

6. INTERNATIONALITY

We have to be open to other realities and be enriched by them so that we can create one single human family that will benefit from the positive aspects globalization has to offer.

1. We will work at securing approval for our National Statutes in those countries where the Association is already established.

2. We will try, with the help of the International Council, to find ways of establishing the Association in countries where it does not yet exist. In doing this we will rely on the strong support of the Daughters of Charity and the Congregation of the Mission, as well as that of other religious or priests who promote the Association.
3. We will be open and ready to go wherever God and the poor are calling us to evangelize and proclaim God's kingdom, and we will be prepared to go beyond our national borders to do so.
4. We will set up an economic solidarity fund with contributions from funding agencies and National Associations, in so far as this is possible. This will help us to collaborate in helping the poor in emergency situations and assisting projects of Associations that need our help.
5. We will generate interest in the Association by our frequent use of the JMV Web page as well as that of the International Vincentian Family.

7. JMV AND THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY

God calls us to serve and evangelize the poor through effective and practical charity, regarding ourselves as members of one and the same Family which shares its gifts and places them at the service of the poor.

1. The National Associations will join with the Vincentian Family to form a National Coordinating Committee so that we can join forces and channel our energies in order to better serve the poor.
2. The National or Regional Councils will participate with other branches of the Vincentian Family, in drawing up, implementing and evaluating projects for formation and service of the poor.
3. All the members of the Association will be prepared to get to know the other branches of the Vincentian Family and to collaborate with them in mutual support. The National Councils will periodically communicate with the other branches.

We confide the Association to Mary, our only Mother, and we also place in her hands these "Lines of Action" which, with God's grace, we hope to see implemented by all our members in each of our countries:

"O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to You."