

Letter to the Nations

21. Mai 2012

Lettre aux Nations

EDITORIAL

In July 2011 the Intercontinental Team had the wonderful opportunity to get together again. This time Christine Osafo from Germany was with us. Although it is already quite some time since we have met, we would like to share our experience of the meeting with you.

The translators, our friends, were also with us. There was the married couple Gatón and some others who were responsible for the translations into French.

Barbara had to handle the German translations (we thank her very much for her effort).

It is no accident that we begin the editorial with the following points:

- 1°.- the joy at the recent meeting
- 2°.- the mutual effort to communicate

In the two previous points, we recognize the presence of the Spirit of Jesus and the goodness of the Lord who helps us to do our work with joy, to overcome routines, to be patient with others and to fight fatigue before a long working day. He fills us with love and hope when we ask ourselves:

Lord, what we share, think about, try to give form presenting it the Fraternities....will it be carried out into the world and bear any fruits?

It is true that we are called to sow the seeds. Others will probably reap the fruits. Only God knows that.

The words of welcome by Dolores showed us again how important it is to work for the kingdom and justice of God. With this spirit in mind, we began to carry out the required work. We presented the reports of the continents and the intercontinental core team. Our members from Taiwan could be with us via a letter.

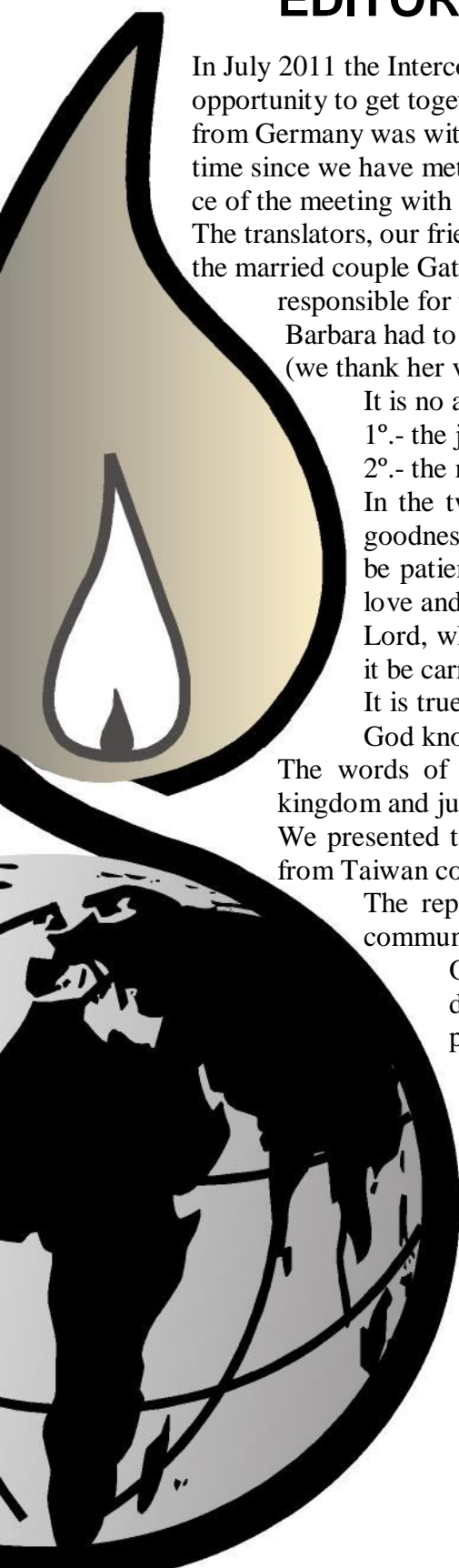
The reports were more dynamic, attractive and better prepared. We are learning to communicate better and to make better use of the time we have.

Obviously, we talked about the statutes. It is considered necessary, and we discussed it a lot, to modify the annexes. Thus, working strategies were proposed.

It is known that the original version of the intercontinental statutes is in Spanish as its content was voted during the committee of Esorial (Spain). It was also translated into French with a few minor errors. Both versions can be consulted for help.

We shared our continental agendas. Some dates are already set, others depend on the availability of the financial resources. It is "our daily bread...". We hope the effort and reliability of the Holy Spirit is going to solve this issue.

(It follows in the following page)



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The projects launched by the continents are ambitious and at the service of the Gospel. Their objective is to improve information and training. They also try to combine life and work and to strengthen the feeling to act together as brothers and sisters. For some projects we need money, for others we share what we already have.

The subject we share and which has been proposed by the committee of Porto in 2010 is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Regarding the realities of the continents, the Core Team makes suggestions on the actions to be taken to reinforce and encourage the agreement.

It is planned to start to work on solidarity. Thus, a questionnaire is prepared to reflect the point of view of our brothers and sisters on this subject.

We have already started to plan the next committee in 2014. Together we have to work on various details to make the committee possible.

How do the subjects of training develop in the continents? All continents presented their available resources. Interest in this area is driven by the need to encourage the fraternal "Get up and walk". Furthermore, training enables us to take responsibility for our lives and to be responsible for the lives of others. Our training does not only focus on the spiritual aspect but on the objective to combine spirituality and teamwork, to overcome fears and complexes and to grow in love and consciousness.

There are so many wonderful things that need to be shared! How should we use the writings and messages emerging from Frater? What did we agree on in other committees? How could they be better taken into account? Our main objective is to take off the dust to adapt them to today's reality. We must not waste a grain of sand that can help us to establish the kingdom of God.

We talked about the issue to unify the logo of the Fraternity which has been suggested during the Committee of Oporto.

Prayers, Eucharist, fraternal atmosphere, work...all in God and with Him. The Committee ended with the ideas from the beginning: Lord, what we share, think about, try to give form presenting it the Fraternities....will it be carried out into the world and bear any fruits?

Let us sow the seeds!



...FROM INTERCONTINENTAL COMMITTEE 2010 I N F O R M A T I O N S

We are still working on the following subjects emerging from the fifth Intercontinental Committee in Porto (Portugal) in 2010: on the core ideas of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, on solidarity in the Fraternity. The work on the latter should be continued till 2014.



Theme: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

All Fraternities are reminded that this subject has been chosen as it affects people in all continents and as many associations were directly involved in its implementation. As believers and members of Frater we must join the Convention. Thus, it was proposed that the Fraternity reflects together on this issue.

The Continental Team in Africa has already begun the work which can be an orientation. All national leaders have already been informed that they should work on this subject. In Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo) they have already begun to do a lot in this area. Frater is the leading organization for persons with disabilities there. On the basis of this work governments can be put under pressure via the platforms that have been created.

The different countries in America have worked a lot on the Convention Frater is involved via other platforms. However, there are still many members at the grassroots who do not know the Convention.

In this context it is important that the countries make their contributions within their own identity and reality.

Europe informs that Hungary consults the presentation of Pino Trejo and the evangelical document Romania works much on this subject. Germany has already begun the work and has asked the national team to develop a plan on this issue.

The Core Team has published an article entitled "Get up and go on. The Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities from the perspective of Frater's identity" with the objective to support the countries in their work. The publication has an introduction and the presentation of Pino Trejo which was translated into Spanish, English, French, Portuguese and German. The presentation was also translated into Hungarian.

The „GUIDELINES“ serve as an orientation for the members at the grassroots. They are available in Spanish, French, English and German. They are provided by the Core Team when needed.

Each continent should work in cooperation with the individual countries and within its situation as well as on the basis of the "guidelines" prepared by the Intercontinental Committee.

Each continent must report its contribution on the issue in the next meeting of the Intercontinental Committee in 2012. The period during which the subject should be prepared is fixed to the end of the year but can be extended when necessary.

Although there are time limits to be adhered we are well aware of the fact that the subject on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will never end as it is always taken into account in our movement.

Preparations on Theme about Solidarity (2012-2014)

Although the subject on the Convention will probably be extended till 2013, the Core Team asks to start to work on solidarity. In this instance it is worth mentioning that the translations of the document on solidarity prepared for the Committee of 2010 should be provided.

The issue will be developed on the basis of a questionnaire completed by each member and then forwarded to the Intercontinental Core Team to prepare a summary. In this regard the position on solidarity of the individual Fraternities is important. The aim is to encourage people to share and not just to take.

The individual countries should use their free days and moments to present these issues and to collect answers that can be compared later.

PREPARATION OF THE INTERCONTINENTAL COMMITTEE 2014

- **VENUE** of the Intercontinental Committee 2014

The venue of the Intercontinental Committee 2014 is not fixed yet. Therefore all Fraternities are asked to consider possible venues and to present them.

There will be set a period of consultation. At the meeting of the Intercontinental Core Team in 2012 it will be decided on the venue according to the criteria that have been set (visa, flights, costs of stay, etc.).

- **PARTICIPANTS** of the Intercontinental Committee

Due to different financial positioning of the Fraternities not all members can attend the Intercontinental Committee. As in previous years, at the meeting of the Intercontinental Team in 2011 it was decided that only the delegates should attend the next Committee.

Almost all countries were contacted and asked to give their opinion on this matter. It is agreed that the Committee should be held per delegation. However, it is emphasized the need for all inclusive participation in future Committees.

It should be remembered that besides of the elected delegates the participating countries must be included in the Intercontinental Committee.

- **CANDIDATES** for the new Core Team

Please remind that proposals concerning suitable candidates have to be submitted six months before the Committee takes place.

Candidates of the different continents have to be proposed to form a new Core Team (in an ideal situation they are from the same country or at least geographically close).

- **FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS** to the Intercontinental Committee

With regard to the organization of the Committee it is important not to wait until the last minute to seek financial support. No matter where the Committee might be held all Fraternities must be aware of this problem.



UNIFICATION OF THE INTERCONTINENTAL LOGO

At the meeting of the Intercontinental Core Team 2011 it was decided to continue developing the process to prepare a unified intercontinental logo and to assess its need. It was concluded that the issue is not to change the logo but rather to unify it throughout the Fraternity.

Although the following idea has not been proposed in the Committee, it is considered a better solution to use the intercontinental logo together with the logo of the individual Fraternities.

To unify the logo leads to a better identification and understanding of the fact that we all fight for the same objective. It is an additional tool to maintain and manifest the unity. It is similar to a label that would be used for everybody and that would imply a better recognition beyond the Fraternity.

In America there are several countries that are registered and whose logo has legal personality. Changing the logo would also mean in this case changing the external image. Thus, it would make more sense to use both logos for these countries.



The continental coordinators will discuss this matter, forward it to the individual countries and gather ideas to later refine and specify proposals.

Ideas on how to proceed:

- The logos provided are forwarded to all countries. Then, every country chooses one single logo.
- The continental coordinators collect the proposals of the countries. Each continental team chooses two or three logos. Later, each continent selects one single logo out of the logos proposed by the continental teams.
- The proposals are forwarded to the Core Team.
- The logos of the continents plus the logo of the Intercontinental Team are presented at the meeting of the Intercontinental Team to agree on one logo which will be put to the vote at the Intercontinental Committee.

CONTINENTAL STATUTES

During the meeting of the Intercontinental Team, the continental coordinators mentioned the need to modify some articles of the continental annexes of our statute. The Core Team in turn has recognized attending the continental meetings and gatherings that the modified articles can have a significant impact on improving the functioning. It has been observed that some continents regulate more strictly than others. In all however there are aspects that need to be further developed. The aim should be to reconcile life with fraternal structures in order to maintain unity and inner identity.

Hence, it is proposed to think about what needs to be changed in the respective continental statutes. Not to implement the modifications as soon as possible but to make conscious choices about the appropriate approaches of each continent.

MEMBERSHIP OF COUNTRIES

Various application processes for membership are evaluated as mentioned in previous meetings. Especially the last meeting of the European Team in May 2011 contributed to the understanding of the application process for membership of the countries Poland and Rumania.

On the other hand, the Core Team needs to know more precisely the list of the affiliated countries. In the future, a simple register would make sense to represent this issue as clearly as possible on the basis of the available information.

With respect to the first issue it should be remembered that possible memberships can be discussed at the annual meeting of the Intercontinental Team in order to accompany the process and take it account in respective meetings and committees.

PROJECTS OF THE INTERCONTINENTAL FRATERNITY

- Multiplier-project in America

The project has not been started yet neither has the money been used. The project exceeds the intended budget. Thus, the project has been redesigned to spend some money on the publication of new training books. The books from the first phase of the project have all been used.

The Multiplier-project aims to train the trainers and to encourage the countries to develop training from the ground up.

It has been noticed that countries where training is offered have the clearest idea of the identity of Fratern.

It has been proposed to disseminate training materials over the internet to make information available to everyone and as many people as possible.



- Project: Translations of the messages of P. François from Europe.

We have already spoken to a Hungarian translator and obtained a preliminary estimate. Both the fraternal members in Hungary and the Hungarian-speaking members in Romania benefit from this project.

The idea is to translate the messages into Hungarian, German and Polish. They have already been translated into Spanish, French and Portuguese. In Slovenia, the messages have already been partly translated into Slovenian for the newsletter.

It is suggested to present this issue in the European meeting to discuss further steps and the financial resources. It would be helpful to translate both the messages and the statutes.

- Projects in Africa

Currently there are no concrete projects quantified. There are many project ideas regarding the needs of Africa. For their implementation it is necessary to promote training in these countries and to use the planned visits for this purpose. The books of the messages of P. François are also needed for Africa.

At the meeting of the European Team in France we spoke about the French edition of the books of the messages available in "Foyer de Verdún". We would like to point out that it is regrettable that the existing books are not given to the people who really need them. The person responsible for France was in charge of valuating the status of the books and of providing them where they were needed. In this respect, there has been done much on the part of the Intercontinental Team, so far without positive results.

It should be remembered that the Intercontinental Team must be informed when there are solidarity initiatives with other Fraternities. In this context we must not forget to develop the issue of solidarity within our movement.

FINANCIAL BALANCE SHEET INTERCONTINENTAL CORE TEAM

Previous balance = 7.193,36 €

INCOME

Contributions from Frater 2011

Frater Austria 2011	235,00 €
Frater Switzerland 2011	760,00 €
Frater Spain 2011	1.380,00 €
Frater Slovenia 2011	100,00 €
Frater Romania 2011	50,00 €
American Team 2011	675,67 €
Frater France 2011	2.000,00 €
Frater Belgium 2011	200,00 €
Frater Germany 2011	1.000,00 €

Total contributions 6.400,67 €

Other incomes (donations by people and entities...) = 3.011,77 €

Total income = 9.412,44 €

EXPENSES

Meeting of the Intercontinental Core Team 2011 = 4.695,08 €

Meeting with European Team in Chabeuil (Fr) = 971,63 €

Plain tickets for the meeting with American Team 2012 = 3.875,31 €

Other expenses (translations, maintenance of the website, telephone, etc.) = 3.852,72 €

Total expenses = 13.394,74 €

BALANCE December 2011 = 3.211,06 €

CONTINENTS

AFRICA. We are planning to have two meetings per year. One in April and the other in October. Therefore the meetings in October 2011 and April 2012. We were invited to attend the national meeting in Madagascar in September 2012.

Depending on our possibilities the following countries should be visited: Ivory Cost, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Togo and Benin. There are no specific dates. The continental meeting is scheduled for early

2014 before the Intercontinental Committee takes place.

In February 2012, the joint continental advisor, P. Xavier Mbemba, had a serious bus accident along with other priests and religious.

After many days recovering in the hospital of Rabat (Morocco) he has written us the following letter which we are going to translate to you now:

...I am still in the hospital. Currently I have started rehabilitation. I need to walk on crutches. Compared to the condition I was in 3 months ago it has improved a lot. I still wear a leg brace on my left leg. As my shin has been injured a lot the doctor hesitates to remove it.

During my time in the hospital of already 97 days I have learned a lot and reflected much on human fragility. With astonishment I see myself in a different physical condition. This all helps me to grow and see life from a different perspective. I will be able to do and live my pastoral work for persons with disabilities in a different way than before.

Thank you for your prayers!

P. Xavier, joint continental advisor - Madagascar



AMERICA. The national meeting in Mexico was held from 10 to 16 July 2011. From 25 to 31 July Columbia was visited.

The meeting of Area I took place from 21 to 28 August 2011 in Honduras. Area I convened to an extraordinary meeting to elect Ana Fernanda Iñiguez from Mexico as the new coordinator of the area.

One visited Cuba and attended the National Assembly in Brazil this year.

The meeting of the continental team of America was held in Panama from 27 to 4 March 2012.

It only remains to offer our condolences on the sad message of the death of Jose Horacio Venturas "Pochi", responsible for Uruguay, on the 16th of May. Let us pray for him and his family and friends.

EUROPE. The European team will attend the European meeting in Poland taking place this summer from 23 to 25 July as well as on the 3 of August. The European meeting is held in Krakow, Poland from 26 July to 1 August.

ASIA. The Core Team visited various Fraternities in Asia during their stay from 10 to 25 April.

We visited China, specifically a group of people in Tianjin, about 150 km from Beijing. In Taiwan we exchanged experiences and information with a group from Tapei and another group from the interior. In Vietnam we visited Fraternities and other associations active in the city Ho Shi Minh the former Saigon. The visits have been made possible as a result of the agreement to promote the Fraternity in Asia made by the Intercontinental Committee. The funds collected during the committee were used to finance this trip.

