

BEING AND WORKING...

in Mother Antonia's footsteps!

Number 1

Dearest Lay Vernians,

the first "decision" that the new General Council has taken, as they met in Rome, between January the 11 and 12th, has been the one of finding a faster, synthetic and efficient way to gather and collect information, decisions and programs.

This is how **BEING AND WORKING ... in Mother Antonia's footsteps!** was born. This instrument will make it possible to build a more unified path inside the Association, it will also be shared with the Sisters and the Missionaries, this novelty will allow us to keep walking as a "Family"!

1. Definitions and attributions of new assignments

The General Assembly of 2019 has decided to create the figure of "responsible of formation and missions", within the General Council and among the regional Councils.

The "responsible for the Formation", at general level, will have to commit to **make** the formative itinerary **known** among the entire Association, this person will also have to **monitor** the itinerary periodically, by keeping a dialog with regional Presidents and people who are responsible for the Formation at regional level. The person elected for this new position will be the main **animator**.

As for what concerns the formative itinerary, we talked about the "permanent formation" (a document related to this issue will soon come to light), and about "annual formation" (the known "spiritual rules").

Some of the principles remain:

A) The President, along with his General Council's collaboration, is responsible for formation and the General Superior, she is the formation warranty (Statute Art.8.1, 8.2, 12 e 21).

B) Each member is in charge of "cultivating their own spiritual life" (Statute, Art.15).

The "regional formation responsible" will be nominated by the regional President among one of his Counselors by the end of march 2020. The tasks will be the ones described above, at regional level, namely "make the formative itinerary known among the local groups, monitor it periodically and to animate the formative process".

The "Missions responsible", at General Council level, will be in charge of **making known, monitor and animate** the charity projects at a general level (that is to say shared by the entire Association); keep **service predisposition** alive, **support and listen** within the Regions, following the vernian charism; this person will also have to **encourage** "apostolic mission" within local regional projects (understanding that apostolic mission is every service carried out wherever every lay vernians live, with fixed dates).

The "regional missions responsible" will be appointed by the regional President, by the end of march 2020, and it will coincide with the figure of his second Counselor. The tasks will be the same described beforehand, but they will be developed at Regional level, as well as within their local Groups.

Having expressed the previous statements, the General Council, after having confirmed availability, nominate, unanimously:

- Counselor **Anna Maria de Rosa Responsible for the Formation;**
- Counselors **Mario Trombetta and Pablo Suarez, both responsible for the Mission.**

Assignments reconfirmed:

- Mrs. **Antonella Cristofalo as General Secretary and responsible for the managing of the Lay Vernian site.**
(This activity will be coordinated with the President and/or the Vice President);
- Mrs. **Anna Bratti as General Treasurer.**

2. Diffusion and deepening of the Assembly Document.

It is understood that the Document produced by the fifth General Assembly, which just has been held, *has a fundamental relevance for every Region/Group and for every single lay vernian*. It provokes reflection on many points both individual and collectively. It's the beginning of a new road taken as a group. It's the Assembly's answer to our times' challenges. Not to be neglected or left aside!

3. Formation and annual spiritual lines

As it has been expressed before there will be a "permanent formation" and an "initial one" for those who declare to have a desire to become part of the Association.

A pamphlet will be created to display a review of the "Lay Vernian formative itinerary", the eight "Rules" (four of which are Mother Antonia's and four of which are of vernian identity), the Statute's approval and the Association approval by the Holy See, the "Promise" formula and some of the assembly documents of great relevance.

Concerning the "**spiritual guidelines of 2020**" it is confirmed that:

"The Missionaries of Charity Council and the Lay Vernian Council renew the purpose of following "a joint programming" along with the Congregation's one, according to both Associations specificities".

This means that according to the Congregation's guideline,

- **The year of 2020** will be "**the missionary year**", in which 1) there will be prayer on behalf of the missions 2) there will be formation and information to distribute 3) testimonies on missions will be provided 4) missionary charity will be done in favor of evangelization.
There will be an extraordinary charity project to help Argentina.
- The evangelic text to deepen on will be the one of the "**miraculous fishing**", (Jn. 21, 1-14), adapted to the demands of both Associations. Lay vernians expect and pray that "the fishing" promotes new lay vocations.
Suggested text: "Evangelii Gaudium"

As it is a firm tradition, every Region will adapt the guidelines according to their own characteristic and issues.

4. Charity projects

The Council considers that one of the most efficient methods to follow the Foundress charisma is to take on to a charity project and to follow it to the end.

The "creativity" involved in knowing how to find the necessary means to achieve can "strengthen" the group spirit and the sense of "belonging" into the Association.

The novelty compared to the past is that there will be a "merge" with the vernian italian Regions. I'm considering three main projects within **Lebanon** (the school is at risk in this region), **Argentina** (the old people have been harshly struck by the crisis and solitude) and **Africa** (the Congregation will be able to point to us which are the most important needs, in March).

Each Region will be free to adopt whatever they find is better suited to their characteristics.

The Missions central responsible people will have to determine in a most detailed manner the contents, publish them and coordinate themselves with every regional responsible to encourage and monitor the task progress.

5. The General Counselors visits to the vernian Regions.

The President and the four Counselors have proclaimed they have availability to meet and visit local Groups both Italian and foreign. This aspect also has a volunteering aspect, which makes it of a great importance.

This trips will be organized previously with the regional responsible people, the group leaders and the Congregation's community, according to the following scheme:

Vincenzo: Italian Regions and U.S.A. eventually (Mount Pleasant).

Mario: Lebanon and eventually Africa.

Pablo: Lebanon and Africa. Delegates **Liliana** Santoro and **Pilar** Cuevas for Mexico.

Najat: Argentina

Anna Maria: Lebanon, Argentina, Africa

6. General Council Meetings.

The Council will meet twice a year, at least, (unless an extraordinary occasion arises).

In the first meeting of the year the Council will be **itinerant**, as requested by the Assembly on the 2015. The second meeting will take place by midyear and it will take place in **Rome**. In this occasion, after the Association's General Council there will be a participation in the "General Council gathered", every member of the vernian Family will be present, (members of the Congregation and of Charity Missionaries).

By 2020, taking the schema into account, the Lay Vernian Council will meet **in the morning of Saturday, July 4th**. In the **early afternoon the Council will gather**, and it will continue till Sunday July 5th.

The Lay Council will meet, between January and February 2021, in the vernian Region of Lombardia-Emilia, in the town of Crevalcore.

Mother Raffaella reminds us the Pope's most recent discourse, occurred on January 9th. This discourse was addressed to the diplomatic corps accredited in the Holy See, which incipit reads thus: *"A new year begins before us, and as the cry of a newborn baby, invites us to happiness and to have a hopeful attitude. I wish this word – hope -, which is a fundamental virtue for Christians, would animate the look with which we delve into our times. Truthfully, awaiting demands realism. (...) It demands that we call our problems by their proper name and that we have the courage to face them"*.

Forward, then, with **courage, realism and hope**, characteristics with which Mother Antonia has answered to the challenges of her own time.

15.1.2020

Vincenzo Fornace

and the General Council