

LAY VERNIAN ASSOCIATION
MINUTES N. 1
General Council 23rd 24th January 2016

The new Lay Vernian Association General Council meets for two consecutive days, **Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th, January 2016**, at the Maria Palladino institute, sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception of Ivrea, in **Acerra (Na)**, beginning at 6.30 pm on Saturday, after the meeting of the groups of Naples, Bacoli, Acerra and Santa Maria Capua Vetere, with the following

Order of the day

- 1- Introductory prayer.
- 2- Approval of the minutes of the previous General Council of 27th and 28th of June, 2015.
- 3- Naming of the General Secretary and General Treasurer.
- 4- Determination of the associative spiritual lines, for formation, for the jubilee year of “Mercy”, 2016.
- 5- Tasks and deadlines concerning Regional Presidents and vernian leaders.
- 6- Management of the site of Lay Vernians and relations with the mass media and networks.
- 7- Singling out “charity projects” for the year 2016 and the eventual coupling of regions.
- 8- Counselors' comments on the “Final Assembly Document” and theme proposal “How to search for Jesus” to all Groups and regions.
- 9- Association' s answer the jubilee year, eventual initiatives to follow.
- 10- Economical situation at the beginning of the new management.
- 11- Various and eventual.

Besides Mother Palma, **the whole of** all the new Council elected on the 24.10.2015, is present, that is, Mario Trombetta, President, Vice president Pablo Suarez and Counselors Massimiliano Genco, Vincenzo Fornace and Najat Tayeh.

The regional president of Campania, Anna Maria de Rosa, her regional counselor Rosanna di Lauro and the Counselor of Calabria, Arturo Riilo, are present due to an invitation of the President. Counselor Pina Mollo is absent, duly justified.

Vincenzo Fornace accepts to write out the minutes.

Before beginning the work the Council expresses unanimously satisfaction for the encounter with the groups from Campania, held in the spirit of a real collaboration and fraternal sharing, rich with stimulus and points on which to ponder.

1- Introductory prayer.

We read together two prayers proposed by Vincenzo. The first, by theologian Romano Guardini: “Give me your Mercy”. The second dedicated to the Immaculate by San Massimiliano Kolbe.

2-Approval of the minutes of the previous General Council of 27th and 28th of June, 2015.

The minutes of the preceding Council, sent to the Counselors in due time, via mail, which talked about the General Assembly's organization its budget, its detailed programme, the preliminary phases of nominating "elected members" and Statute modifications that were to be proposed at the Assembly, are approved.

3-Naming of the General Secretary and General Treasurer.

The President considers that the figure of a General Secretary is very important and that, for varied justified reasons, this function cannot be covered by any of the present Counselors, as was done in the past. A profile is sketched, it takes into consideration the characteristics that such a person should have:

- To be a lay vernian with strong motivations,
- To be available to participate in all the itinerant Councils of the four years, to the formation interregional encounters and the next Assembly, in the country, at his/her own expense, according to the spirit of gratuity and vernian service,
- To be discrete, prudent, and to have the ability to relate to the fellow person with simplicity and humility and full respect of privacy,
- To have a good synthesis capacity and a good level of elaboration of texts in Italian,
- To have knowledge, although elementary of English and Spanish.

We review a list of candidates and individualize as the most adequate to the parameters exposed, the candidate Miss Antonella Cristofalo, from the calabrese Group of Isola di Capo Rizzugo, already responsible for the Association's site, who, contacted on the telephone, thanks and accepts.

DECIDES

To nominate **Miss Antonella Cristofalo as Association's General Secretary.**

Regarding tasks, in the First Council of 18.10.2003, it was specified that the Secretary must write out the Council's minutes and keep up to date the Council's and Assembly's Minutes books.

The Council specifies that she will also have to:

- Keep reports of mailing, in the name of the President and the Council, with the vernian groups with respect to the sending out of associative and formative documentation.
- Write out annually the list of vernians and sympathizers, asking the data and elements to the people responsible.

Passing on to the nomination of the Treasurer, the council, after a brief discussion, proposes unanimously the name of the salient Treasurer, Anna Bratti, Counselor of the Region Lombardia/Emilia and leader of Crevalcore, since she carried out her job in the preceding four years with seriousness and competence.

Anna Bratti, asked on the telephone, thanks for the trust and accepts.
At this point the Council unanimously

DECIDES

- To nominate **Anna Bratti Association's General Treasurer**,
- To ask her to keep the present current account at a Credit institution of her trust and easily accessible, in the best of conditions,
- To confer disjointed signature on the account to the Treasurer and the President,
- To keep control and, if necessary, to solicit the payment of the association contribution to the various vernian regions or local groups,
- To submit to the Council an annual report of income and outcome of treasury and account balance.

4-Determination of the associative spiritual lines, for formation, for the jubilee year of "Mercy", 2016.

After discussion, the Council decides to take on the spiritual theme which was the guide of the assembly, "We search for Jesus", and proposes that all the vernian groups and region **read, discuss and assimilate the four pages (concentrated) of the Assembly final Document**, sent to all the vernian world by mail and inserted in the web site in Italian, English and Spanish.

Besides this, the Council suggests, as spiritual lines 2016, for all vernian lay people, in order to strengthen family spirit:

- 1) **"We search for Jesus in the merciful face of the Father through the corporal works of mercy** (feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, dress the naked, home the pilgrims, visit the imprisoned, visit the sick, bury the dead) and spiritual (admonish the sinners, counsel the dubious, teach the ignorant, forgive the offenses, console the afflicted, bear with patience the bothersome people, pray to the Lord for the living and the dead) **remembering that the name of God is mercy"**,

Suggested texts:

- "God's name is mercy" (Pope Francisco)
- Misericordiae Vultus" (Bolla di indizione del Giubileo straordinario della misericordia – Papa Francesco)
- "Dives in misericordia" (Enciclica di Papa Giovanni Paolo II)

- 2) **Mother Antonia: icon of mercy.**

Suggested text:

"The taste of gratuity."

The Council, sensitive to the fundamental importance of formation,

DECIDES

- To nominate Vice president Pablo Suarez as responsible of formation in Latin

American groups (Argentina and Mexico) and that of Mount Pleasant (USA). He will inform the Council periodically.

- Nominate Giuseppina Mollo responsible for supervising the formation of the Italian regions. She will also inform the Council periodically.
- Nominate Mario Trombetta responsible for supervising the formation of the Lebanon vernian region and the African groups. He will inform the Council.

As regards Kenya and Tanzania the formation problem, according to mother Palma, will have to be followed by the African provincial superior, who will delegate a sister for each of the individual groups.

All information will be in the Lay vernian web site.

5-Tasks and deadlines concerning Regional Presidents and vernian leaders.

At the beginning of the new four year period the Council considers it useful to refer to the importance of Regional Presidents and group leaders who must be the “salt” and the connective fabric of an Association “scattered” around the world.

With this in mind we define the figure, functions and work rhythm better, the necessary ones to comply with the tasks better, in a useful way for the normal functioning of the Association itself.

Art. 4.2 defines the Regional President and the election method.

Art.7. delineates functions and tasks and says:

“The duties of the regional leader are comparable to those of the local leader, but adapted to his level. In carrying out these duties, the leader shall need the cooperation of his Council. In particular, he shall decide, with the help of his Council, the acceptance of requests for admission of members in a written statement and shall handle pertinent issues which are within his area.

Art.6., referred to in 7, and adapted to the figure of the regional, can be read and interpreted in the following manner:

“The regional president has the function of liason inside (within the groups, other regional leaders-Presidents and local leaders-and the general Council with its president, and outside.

He guarantees the Statute observation.

*He promotes the **region life, both** its spirituality and apostleship and the Association development”.*

We intend to make these tasks explicit, also based on what we have experienced.

Statute Specified tasks :

- 1) To use his Council’s help.
Thus, to have constant dialogue with his counselors about “relevant matters in their scope.”
- 2) New members’ admission demands(written) acceptance.
- 3) Relationships inside the Vernian Family, both with the group leaders and other Regional Presidents, as well as the General Council. Such relationships extend naturally to the other two components of the Vernian Family: sisters and missionaries.

- 4) “Constant relationships also outside the association environment”, for example parishes of the various communities, other religious groups and responsible persons of other catholic movements present in the vicinity.
- 5) Guarantees the Statute observance.
- 6) He promotes the **region life**, both its “spirituality and apostleship” and the Association development”.

Tasks implicit in the Statute

- Spiritual and apostolic life
- Communicates and promotes **the spiritual lines** proposed by Mother Palma or the General Council.
- Supervises the evolution of **the spiritual formation in the groups and** keeps contact with the person responsible of it at central level.
- Promotes **regional formative meetings** at least once a year.
- Participates and communicates the **Regional charity project** of the year, he agrees on it with the Regional council, and, after recollection of funds from various groups with the local leaders’ help, and the regional treasurer, sends them to the Verna Fraternitas Onlus in Rome.

Association life

- Sends annually, with the help of local leaders and treasurer, **the association’s contribution** (at least 10€ each lay vernian), to the currents account managed by the General Treasurer.
- Updates annually, after December 8th’s promise, **the list of lay vernians of the region**, with the local leaders’ help, and sends it to the General Council.
- Communicates to all groups the Vernian Family communications from the President or his Counselors.
- Proposes the updating of the lay vernians’ site of his region, keeping in touch with the President or the site manager.
- Custodies and updates, with the help of an eventual secretary, the Assemblies and Regional Councils book, and has a record of the acts of the formation sessions at regional level.
- Names, with his Council, a regional treasurer and eventually a regional secretary.
- Sends, once a year, a **REGIONAL REPORT**, taken from the reports of each group leader, to the General President of the Association. This will be useful for the General President to compile the REPORT TO THE GENERAL MOTHER (ART 22)

Important regional tasks calendar

(calculating that the “vernian year” goes from September to September)

-Regional meetings programme	before 30 September each year
- Regional report. (sept- sept)	before 30 October every year
- Regional list of lay vernians of. (All.B)	before 31 January (after the promise)
- Association contribution	before 31 May every year

Important General Council tasks calendar

- Report to the Mother	before 31 December every year
- general lay vernian list	before 28 February every year

6. Management of the site of Lay Vernians and relations with the mass media and networks.

Vice president Pablo Suarez manifests that since the management of a site of a catholic association is delicate, one or two filters are necessary. For example it should not be able to operate with Facebook, because anyone might have access or operate it. It would be good, he finishes, if there are persons responsible of the associative site.

Mario Trombetta reads a short memo from Antonella Cristofalo, present collaborator of our site, with some proposals for improvement of its operability and efficiency.

She proposes:

- 1- To open a mail address for the Association, which will be controlled regularly by the president and the person responsible for the site itself. The address would be inserted in Home, so that it can be used by associates, sympathizers, or curious people, for information or communication.
- 2- To invite each group or region to open their own web site, where to collect news and activities, which can be useful to debate, to stimulate others and to follow a common thread.
- 3- Each group should have a referent for the site, he/she will keep contact with the President or Antonella.
- 4- Each region might propose its own identification logo, having in mind that the common one is “Open hands to help”.

After deep discussion the Council decides:

- To confirm Antonella Cristofalo the responsibility of the updating of the site www.laiciverniani.net operating with the support of the President, a selection of the material sent by groups/ regions.
- To open the mail address associazionelaiciverniani@gmail.com where everything we desire to publish will be sent.
- To suggest each group or region to open its own site, naming a responsible person. A link with the official Association’s one will be created. If not possible, all groups and regions are asked, as in the past, to sent informative material, reports or photographs, using the mail address given.
- To keep for the time being a unique common associative logo: the one in use.
- To single out other friendly sites to open links with, at the next Council.(proposed by Vincenzo Fornace)

7-Singling out “charity projects” for the year 2016 and the eventual coupling of regions.

The President presents a table with funds collected in 2015 for charity projects, in which we see that three Italian vernian regions have not collected any contribution for

our missions abroad. (in this the distant adoptions are excluded), in spite of having their “twin” and having specific clear projects to carry out.

This way Lebanon, Kenya and Tanzania have been affected. What is worse, **groups have not acted with a spirit of collaboration, enthusiasm and illusion so much solicited by spiritual formers these last years.**

The Council reaffirms the importance, as in similar occasions, of charity projects in an association that takes from the foundress the charisma of “Charity, for free” and, after talking with our Sisters, in the “front line, in land of mission”(art. 8.2 and 14)

It proposes

- To “re launch” charity projects in the next four years.
- To supervise the Italian Regions’ state of advancement with the aid of Mrs Anna Maria de Rosa, present regional president of Campania and local leader of Acerra.
- To promote them in our site in specific sections.
- To help the congregation missions in 2016. These are in a critical status, their various projects divided in five states abroad, coupled with the five Italian vernian regions:

REGIONE ESTERA	GEMELLATA CON	MISSIONE	DESCRIZIONE PROGETTO
LIBANO	CAMPANIA	Ghebaleh	Distant adoption of 80 syrian children without delay, now in charge of our sisters.
ARGENTINA	PIEMONTE	Buenos Aires	Help to poor children from Villa 21, the biggest one in the city.
		P.ta de Agua	House at villa Angelica and make them study, children from Mount Nevado (Andes) at more than 90 km distance.
MESSICO	CALABRIA	Nuevo Laredo	Help children in risk in a narco traffic area housing them in the parish’s oratory.
TANZANIA	LOMBARDIA	Namanga	Masai children, adoptions for sending them to school for a year.
	EMILIA		
	CAMPANIA		
ALBANIA	PUGLIA	Fier	Woman’s promotion

In their turn, the regions abroad will activate internally in order to auto finance themselves.

We remind the rules already expressed which:

- **To give, in each case, precedence to adoptions already existing** in previous years (not to abandon half way the children under assistance)
- **To make economic help go of the Italian Vernian Regions and distant**

adoptions through the **Verna Fraternitas Onlus** (through bank or postal transfer) which will, in turn, direct the amount to the right destination.

- **dare, in ogni caso, la precedenza alle adozioni già avviate** negli anni precedenti (per non “abbandonare a metà strada” i bimbi già assistiti).

Calabria Region.

About the charity projects, Counselor Massimiliano Genco observes that Calabria finances charity works in the region itself.

In order to have access, continues Mr Arturo Riillo, accountant at Isola di Capo Rizzuto, it is necessary to have a statute ad hoc for calabrese vernians, similar to that of an Onlus, and open a current account there,

Among the steps to follow, are: a private contract, the registration in the Income Revenue agency and the opening of a fiscal code.

The figure of those responsible in front of calabrese regional organisms will have to be singled out.

The Council debates the terms of this proposal to evaluate advantages and risks in a context not always easy, such as the present times society presents us.

At the end of the debate the President asks the counselors for affirmative or negative opinions.

The Council unanimously decides to proceed and

DECIDES

- To delegate Mr. Massimiliano Genco and Mr. Arturo Riillo, people of proved seriousness and trust, the opening of an adequate structure to be able to operate with the Calabria Region, singling out the responsible person or persons in the Calabria groups.
- To keep the Council permanently informed of each stage of advancement of the procedure and compile an annual report on developments and results.
- To submit, once in a while, the financing fonts to which they would want to reach.

The 5 per thousand

La Verna Fraternitas Onlus receives annually 5 per thousand from the income declarations, but the amounts are low and limited to a few thousands of euros. These are distributed among charity works by the Onlus Council.

The General Council proposes to run a sponsoring campaign, widespread and efficient, among vernian groups, also through the site, from the first week of May, in constant contact with the Onlus administrators.

8-Counselors' comments on the “Final Assembly Document” and theme proposal “How to search for Jesus” to all Groups and regions.

The Assembly document, an expression of all the vernian groups but also a synthesis of the ideas of representatives at the Assembly, consists of less than four pages. It is an important condensed synthesis regarding the identity of the lay Vernian and future perspectives.

This document has been shared and has been posted in three languages in our site.

Counselors unanimously express that such document, and “Searching for Jesus” will have to constitute one of the fundamental formative threads, as those exposed in point 4, for the next four years and that the groups must read it, comment it and assimilate it word by word.

Vincenzo Fornace, about the said document, emphasizes **the paragraph of the young and the young couples.**

They will be the life-blood of our association and future society.

In some vernian regions like Argentina, Calabria and Campania, the subject is developed and supported with initiatives at various levels.

Vincenzo proposes that:

- Argentina, Calabria and Campania continue with their development plans,
- A commission is constituted in Piamonte, at regional level, to search possible solutions to the problem.

The Council **approves** Vincenzo’s proposal and delegates him to sensitize and stimulate the Piamontese Regional President in such sense.

Pablo Suarez stops at **the paragraph on formation** and observes that the “analysis of the Statute” and those strong points of the “Promise-“should not be proposed at general level, but should constitute, immediately, priority nourishment in the formative groups and regions meetings.

Counselors agree with the proposal.

Mother Palma, on the **paragraph “the sense of family”**, sustains that a good advancement is done with the itinerant Council, its duration of two days, which provides encounters with local groups and the presence of Regional Presidents and their councils. It would be even better to identify initiatives that might unite all the big Vernian Family in its three components.

Counselors receive this proposal immediately and **suggest**

- That Lay vernians dedicate a prayer day on the 25th of each month (a dear date to all Mother Antonia’s family): this way we will be spiritually united to the Congregation and the Missionaries.

Our Mother finishes encouraging all groups to raise within their groups a real fraternity keeping a vivid open group dynamic.

This also, for example, in the Lombardia region, habituated to a specific “regional dynamic” it would be desirable for the Milan group, the Busto Arsizio or the Lurago one to meet at a stable place, to pray, comment on the Gospel or project their charity works, without conditioning the region formation meetings organized at the beginning of the year.

The Council approves Mother Palma’s words and delegates the President to sensitize and stimulate vernians of all regions, especially where this happens.

Mario Trombetta, about formation, taking up what was demanded at the Assembly, proposes to program a formative encounter in Rome, in the next General Council.

9-Association`s answer to the jubilee year, eventual initiatives to follow.

Vincenzo Fornace proposes a jubilar pilgrimage around the Italian regions. A date might be October 1st.2nd.

The Calabria region, however, regrets to dissociate from this and confirms that for their lay vernians a pilgrimage to Assis has been programmed for 23rd,24th,25th of April. Maybe they will be able to send, at most, a delegation.

This aspect will be also treated in the **next General Council**, which will be held in **Calabria, at Isola di Capo Rizzuto, 9th and 10th of July.**

Massimiliano Genco will be in charge, with Antonella Cristofalo, of the logistics and the encounter with local groups.

The Calabrese regional President and his two counselors will be invited to this Council.

10- Economical situation at the beginning of the new management.

Treasurer Anna Bratti has sent the president the bank statement that shows cash incomes and outcomes from 30.1.2012, the opening of the currents account at the Imola Bank, at Crevalcore.

It comprehends the period 2012-2015 of the previous management, which finishes with a positive active balance of 1.197,20 euros, after discounting the costs of the General Assembly, 4.996,75 euros (on line with the provisional budget, General Council 27-28.6.2015) and the collaboration to the lepers and infirm at TBC, besides children from the annexed school, of the Mission of the Congregation in Kadem (Kenya), 5.500 euros, as was decided at the Assembly unanimously.

Mother Palma thanks in the name of the Congregation and explains that the said mission has received less governmental help.

The Council acknowledges with satisfaction that the association annual contribution may also contribute to good works, such as in this specific case, since “the Association is non profit” (Statute Art 19)

Finally, since a Vernian Group has already sent the annual contribution for this year, the new period 2016-2019 begins with an active balance of 1.320,28 euros.

11-Various and eventual

Anna Maria de Rosa, president of the Vernian Region of Campania, informs that at the end of the month her office term will finish, as will her Council's.

She regrets not having been able to have the four groups of her region better united in the four year period, and hopes the next Council will be able to consolidate a regional group relationship, these groups have shown, in their territories, capacity and fidelity to the charisma.

The General Council thanks Anna Maria, Rosanna di Lauro and Pina Mollo and searches who will be able to be present at the election, as the Statute says (Art. 4.2)

Vincenzo Fornace offers himself on condition that the regional Assembly be held within the month of February.

Without more to decide, the Council finishes at 4 pm on Sunday 24th January 2016.

The Secretary
(Vincenzo Fornace)

The President
(Mario V.Trombetta)