



STEWARDSHIP - RESOURCES - MISSION



# ECHOES

## THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

1

To get to know one another and the context of each Unit

2

To explore together the global reality of the Institute

3

To reflect on the role of 'Holy Family Bursar'

4

To study the orientations given by the Institute

5

To deepen our sense of connectedness – working as Body in the service of the whole

6

Discern the calls for today and plan a way forward

**BURSARS' SESSION**

Rome  
12 - 21 June 2019



The International Bursars' session took place in the Generalate, Rome, from 12 - 21 June 2019. In addition to the General Leadership Team and Administration of

Goods team, 18 Unit bursars and the Vicariate bursar completed the list of participants.

## Welcoming

Malinie JAYAMANNE – the General Bursar, who facilitated the meeting along with her team, welcomed the participants, expressing her joy at this gathering of Sisters from all over the Holy Family World. A special welcome was given to the 13 new bursars and whoever had come to Rome for the first time.



## Opening prayer

The Opening Prayer of the first day was a significant moment, in which everybody took part, walking in procession to the hall carrying lighted lamps and paper "leaves" on which the name of their Units was written. These were then pasted on the big olive branch prepared in the prayer corner.

Interconnectedness with the whole of creation was the theme of the Prayer, symbolized in the globe, soil, water, a plant, fire, and a picture of animals. With this sense the group sang, "We all share the same Breath and Essence" and celebrated with gratitude this deep connectedness in a greeting dance.

Click here for the video of the opening prayer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CuBd9JBjxxU&feature=youtu.be>



## Getting to know one another

A "Getting-to-know-you" activity, led by Kumudinie DASSANAYAKE (GLT) was used as a tool for the participants to become better acquainted. All were invit-

ed to stand in a circle, and asked to draw an object, starting with the first letter of one's name. Each was to say aloud, the name of the object and her own name.

This continued in four rounds, so that at the end of the game, many came to know one another's name, interests,

experiences, hobbies and so on. The experience was humorous and interesting.



## Opening Address

The opening address of any Session, usually delivered by the Superior General, is important in that it sets out not only the objectives but also the challenges and questions to be faced. Ana Maria ALCALDE's address in the afternoon of the first day was no exception. Here we share with you some of the highlights:

- ◆ "The goods and resources of the Institute are at the service of the Mission carried out in line with our Charism in a great variety of ways of being present to others and a great diversity of apostolic commitments."
- ◆ We live on a planet that has limited resources, where our ever-increasing consumerism and accumulation of goods come into conflict with the needs of the poor and the cry of the Earth.
- ◆ How has my style of life, which I

chose freely and which is supported by the community, changed?

- ◆ Have we cut down on our consumer habits, simplified our lives, limited our material desires and used only what we need?
- ◆ Finding the appropriate way of relating to God's gifts and using them can be a prophetic sign today, which reveals God's dream for fullness of life for the whole of Creation.



*Please find the link below to get her complete text*

<http://saintefamiliebordeaux.org/v2/sites/main/files/Bursars%27%20Opening%20%20address%20of%20Ana%20Maria%20-English.pdf>

## Journaling

Journaling generally involves the practice of re-reading one's day, exploring the thoughts and feelings surrounding its events. The organizing team felt that it was important to encourage the group to close the day with journaling.

Áine HAYDE therefore explained the methodology of journal writing and asked the participants to pen down their thoughts and feelings at the end of each day's session, discovering the presence and action of God, being grateful for what has been lived.

The day ended with the Eucharistic celebration - a special occasion because on this day we as PBN Family celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of all Graces.



### Day 2,3 :

These two days were fully given to the presentation of the reality of the different Units and the General Administration. It was an interesting day because

participants had the opportunity to know more about the context of the different Units through their information.

### Day 4:

In the morning of the fourth day, a reflection and discussion began on Pooling and Sharing.

The participants were sent for personal reflection with the following questions:

- ? What is my understanding about Holy Family Pooling and sharing?
- ? What do dependence, independence and interdependence mean to me?
- ? Am I comfortable with the way we live Pooling and sharing?
- ? What needs to change so as to live Pooling and sharing according to the spirit of the Founder?

Later they worked in groups sharing the fruit of their reflection. The Plenary that followed was a moment of being enriched by one another.



**Some aspects that were repeated:**

'Pooling and sharing' means not only the financial aspect but it includes all resources – economic, human, spiritual and material; it is both giving and receiving – it is our Holy Family way of living poverty; an expression of being in communion. It implies that all belongs to all and ensures that everybody has what is needed to live mission.

Interdependence is an essential part of living our Charism of communion, being part of a big universe where everything is interdependent. All parts put together makes the whole and one part cannot exist without the other.

Living interdependence is to be aware of these connections, create a fraternal environment, open to give life to others. All – what we have and are – is shared in

view of the life and mission of the whole. In the conversation, clarity emerged around;

The need for a change of mind set - in our way of understanding Pooling and sharing, where some live with the feeling of being 'dependent'. There was strong emphasis on the fact that our goods belong not to individuals or units but to the whole Institute.

They saw that efforts to be self-supporting should not be considered as ways of being independent or self-sufficient, so as to have "no need to ask". The importance of discerning and prioritizing needs and promoting personal responsibility were stressed.

It became clear that exploring the deeper meaning of Pooling and sharing, understood in the light of the spirit of the Founder, is a task not only for Bursars, but for the whole Institute.



A reflection on "Laudato Si" in the afternoon guided by Áine Hayde, led the participants to become aware of the "intimate relationship between the poor and our fragile planet".



**"We are called to a much deeper relationship with our planet than merely admiring or enjoying nature"**, with this given aid for reflection, the participants spent time to be with nature, admiring, enjoying and trying to understand truly why nature matters to us all, and what we can do to protect it, so that we can create a better world for the future generations.



## Day 5: - a free day

Many of the participants were in Rome for the first time, and so became "tourists" for the day; others, who remained in the Generalate, made sure that their free time was well spent.

## Day 6 :

On the sixth day, Amanda Francis, a member of the Administration of Goods Team, a lay consultant working for Buzzacott (a top UK accountancy and consultancy firm in London), dealt with the global reality and the 20 year Financial Forecast of the Institute.

She spoke of the global political-economic uncertainties - the great powers like America, China, and Russia, causing militancy, trade wars; the crisis of migration and the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots; Brexit and lack of leadership; climate change and its impact on all.

She also emphasized the need to produce positive results, while having a negative reality around us. To do something



about it – is our mission. With the changing world, the religious congregations too need to change their mindset and the way of responding to needs! She spoke of the importance of seeing the bigger picture of our institute and the need to balance resources so that all have the possibility to live mission.

The resources of the Institute belong to all; therefore, the importance of Pooling and Sharing was stressed.

Some challenging questions: Where do we want to be in 5, 10 years' time? What path to follow? What are the signs to know that we are moving in the right direction?

While addressing the issue of the role of bursars as financial leaders of the Institute, she encouraged them by saying "You are the people who have the key responsibility to work on this vision" and shared some advice:

- ◆ When buying property consult lawyers and experts
- ◆ Make sure that the banks do not make any mistakes – check your

statements, etc.

- ◆ The most complicated area is investments. Need to make sure that you invest for the right purpose
- ◆ Make sure that bookkeeping is accurate for money coming in and going out.
- ◆ Ask questions, consult, in order to know more about your work
- ◆ Choose lay persons with the right qualities, right values who are able to keep confidentiality
- ◆ Review payroll before it is paid

The importance of the leader-bursar relationship was also stressed.

It was a very informative morning with many insights along with challenges!

## What is CIO?

A Charitable Incorporated Organization based in one country (CIO) is a new structure, which enables International congregations to legally own money even in other countries and to distribute it worldwide wherever it is needed.



Malinie led the afternoon, taking on from the morning reflection. The participants were given time in the assembly to express their feelings after having listened to the global reality—followed by sharing in language groups on what are considered to be important areas that need to be worked on as a body.

### Needs that emerged:

- ◆ Formation for Sisters in the area of finances and Administration of Goods
- ◆ A change of mentality – an understanding of Pooling and Sharing and interdependence –through animation at initial and ongoing formation levels

- ◆ Management of resources in order to make them available to all
- ◆ A re-reading of the Founder's spirit on Pooling and sharing
- ◆ Care for the elderly
- ◆ Proper discernment in relation to property and building, prior to making decisions
- ◆ Having an Investment plan
- ◆ Collaboration and cooperation between the bursar, leader and leadership team
- ◆ Respect and care for the planet
- ◆ Openness to new ministries – especially of increased migration
- ◆ Explanation of the CIO to all members for better understanding

Another full day ended with a time for journaling.



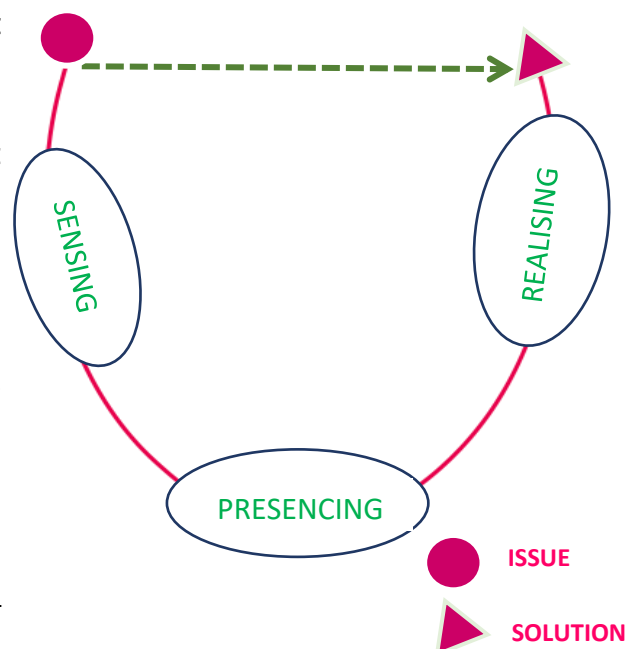
## Day 7

This was an important day as the participants took a direction through the U Process.

Kumudinie Dassanayake, recalling what was done during EGC 2018 and 2019, explained briefly the 3 movements in this model – Sensing/Presencing/Realizing. It is a helpful way to go beyond our tendency to jump from problem to solution. This model has three movements – Sensing, Presencing and Realizing.

**Sensing** enlarges the perception of the problem, not talking at a rational level, but involving all inner movements. She showed how from the first day they have been in the 'SENSING' – observing, listening, sharing, conversing, gathering data –

trying to understand our particular reality as each Unit and the global reality as Institute





**Presencing** means to listen to the Spirit to know the direction of the Spirit because the solution comes from beyond us. Moving on to PRESENCING, it was now the moment of listening to God/Spirit... listening to the inner voice, the inner movement. This was a moment to listen to God speaking to them and to hear the calls addressed to them.

**Realizing** suggests carrying out the ac-

tion. Here, the final result may not be anything that a person brought to the conversation but something new that emerges.

They took time to listen deeply to God speaking to them in what was heard, reflected and understood. They were asked to note down some clear calls.

The fruit of the group work was shared in the Assembly.



## CALLS HEARD AS A GROUP

1. Formation of Sisters, not only the bursars – at an appropriate level – in the area of Finance and Administration of goods
2. Discernment with regard to property and building
3. Animation on Pooling and sharing, interdependence in line with the spirit of the Founder and an understanding about Charitable Incorporated Organization (CIO)
4. Definite action in the living of respect and care for the planet and environment
5. Openness to what is new and responding to needs arising from the different movements in today's world – especially migration.

An input on the 'Role of Holy Family bursar' was given by Malinie Jayamanne through the theme of the session: "Stewardship-Resources-Mission."

A reflection paper was given to the participants to use for later reflection. It explains the 3 circles: context, person and system of an organization relating it to

the primary role as a member, and of a bursar, on stewardship and mission.

**“Role of Bursar** – She is a member, a leader with the specific role of stewarding the economic resources of the Unit/Vicariate/Institute, always to be at the service of the purpose/mission. Taking up the role, is the way of being responsi-

ble and accountable to the ministry entrusted.

**Stewardship** - managing the financial and material resources in a spirit of evangelical poverty, justice and solidarity to ensure that the common mission is fulfilled. It demands;

- ⇒ Awareness of the global and local reality, its impact on the context.
- ⇒ Creative thinking, reflection, animation, planning, accountability, trans-

## Day 8

The day began with a short prayer and it featured presentations by two experts; Veronica Baird SMITH and Marco GROTTESI.

Veronica Baird SMITH is the chief administrator of ACEM: (Association Caisse (fund in English) d'Encouragement Missionnaire), and the secretary of our PBN Foundation; she handles and follows through the projects sent by the Units.

Veronica covered the entire morning dealing with two main aspects - the history of PBN foundation, and the technical aspects of drawing up and presenting projects.

### **History of the ACEM foundation:**

ACEM was created from the time of the Founder to manage Real estate in France belonging to Holy Family. Under that, the PBN foundation was started in 2013 funded by ACEM, to provide financial help for humanitarian purposes - to improve the lives of ordinary poor people by assisting them to have education, small livelihood projects – carried out by Holy Family sisters. It also helps in the professional formation of sisters. Sr. Bernadette Taurinya

parency; making ethical, prudent decisions and evaluating.

- ⇒ When making plans/decisions, to consider both the Purpose of the System and the needs of the Context." (From the reflection paper)

This was followed by an afternoon time of personal reflection and sharing in groups on '**who a Holy Family bursar is for today?** At the plenary each one was given time to share her reflection.

is the present President of this Foundation.

### **Technical Aspect; How to draw up a project:**

According to French legislation, a Project cycle needs to cover some important



aspects if it has to get the approval. So Veronica explained the need of providing a general overview of the project proposal, making real assessment, providing plans of action, time schedule and filling the formal grid to answer the questionnaire.

When the project is ready, it has to be studied by the Unit Leadership Team and with their approval has to be sent to the

General Leadership Team. It is they who will forward it to the PBN foundation.

To provide specific guidance on the structure, the foundation trained our sisters in 2016 and 2018 in Martillac, France.

20 English speaking sisters

14 French speaking sisters benefited from this Training program.

Up to now, 77 projects had been financed and a big portion of this fund (50 %) was spent on the Africa. She used slide show presentations of some projects done across the HF world as examples for better understanding.

**The whole of the afternoon** the participants attentively listened to Marco on Cyber security:



Marco GROTTESI is the IT technician of the Generalate, a friendly and highly responsible person who provides technical support. He also is an expert on the Internet Servers used by several Religious Organizations including our own. He very briefly and clearly explained the importance of cyber security.

We all value privacy- why? Our personal and our Institute's information are more valuable to us than to anyone else. The right to privacy refers to having control over our personal information. This especially applies to what we share with our PBN Family members especially with our Sisters through the Internet.

Cyber-attacks could damage our privacy.

Therefore, security needs to be our top priority. Our data is one of the most valuable assets, yet often most vulnerable. Therefore, it is essential that we use the right system to our individual devices and operating systems; if we do this, we are on the right track towards securing ourselves.

Recognizing cyber threats and being able to protect from online attacks are now required in order to have sustainable transactions.

Some important and practical tips to secure the system and devices:

- ◆ Creating strong passwords to mail accounts and systems

- ◆ Secure transactions; always use a secure browser to do online activities, frequently delete temporary files, cookies, history and saved passwords.
- ◆ Backup important information
- ◆ Do not open email attachments unless you trust the sender and were expecting it from the person trusted.
- ◆ Install and maintain anti-virus and anti-spyware software
- ◆ Contact your technology support professional for assistance.

## Day 9

After a time of prayer, the day began with a summary of the calls they have heard together as a group. Ana Maria, while agreeing with the content, challenged the group to find ways to express them in a more dynamic, motivational way.

A chance was then given for open conversation. Some creative interventions were accepted, amendments were made and the calls were adopted by the group as the way forward.



## CALLS HEARD BY THE PARTICIPANTS

With a strong determination to be proactive, to be open to the new, to change our mindset and to let go of what is no longer life-giving, we commit ourselves to respond, in collaboration with the other members of the Leadership Teams and, where appropriate, after consultation with the members of the Unit, to the calls which we have heard:

- ◆ To ensure that bursars are trained in the areas of finance and the administration of goods. To identify some Sisters as possible future bursars who will follow a program drawn up by the Team for the Administration of Goods. This training to begin as soon as is feasible and not later than the end of 2020.
- ◆ To be discerning with regard to property and buildings and to get the advice of professionals prior to making decisions.
- ◆ In the spirit of our Founder, to grow in awareness that the resources of the Institute belong to all no matter where they are and to

revitalise pooling and sharing and interdependence. To use the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) as an effective means of circulating and sharing resources in order to support the members and to carry out the mission.

- ◆ To emphasise the urgency of commitment to definite action with regard to respect and care for our common home. This implies an

“integrated ecological conversion” that must be expressed in our personal and community style of life so as to respond to the cry of the poor and the groaning of the earth.

- ◆ To encourage active involvement in responding to the new needs of today’s world especially with regard to people on the move and the most vulnerable people in our countries.

Next, the participants took time personally, to go through the calls and to propose some plans that could be taken in their own Units, in relation to the calls.

The rest of the morning, in language groups, they read and studied together the Guidelines of the Institute for the Administration of Goods, given in 2007. Their doubts and questions were brought to the afternoon Assembly for more understanding.

The evening was spent on discussing and explaining certain important practical issues in the living out of the role of bursar.

### Working in language groups



---

*“Material goods are gifts from God destined for all. We accept them gratefully, use them moderately and simply and are careful to share them.” (Const. Art. 26)*

---

## Day 10 - Final Day

The International Bursars' Session came to a close on 21 June 2019. The conclusion of the session included some practical points following from the previous afternoon, addressed by Malinie Jayamanne.

Here are some points of importance:

### **Preparing the annual budget:**

Annual budgets are important as a way of living our spirit of pooling and sharing and to maintain finances. It is necessary a budget should be prepared keeping in mind the amount size, and time.

Pay attention to avoid an unrealistic budget, and remember to fill in the name of the Unit, the year and date.

### **Maintaining proper records:**

In general, the length of time a document should be kept in the archives depends on countries. The best way is to store multiple files securely, for a considerable number of years.

Property files of any buildings and land need to be kept, even if they are 200 years old.

The Assembly continued, to present the final version of the calls heard by the participants during the session. These were read out in the 3 languages and after some amendments were unanimously approved by all.

Usually 6 years plus one to keep Invoices and receipts for property maintenance, bills, General Financial report and General Chapter report

The Insurance documents of purchased vehicles, Legal documents and records of property need to be kept until they are sold or no more.

For audit purposes, be alert to send official confirmation, when receiving money from the common fund or from different countries like; Spain, South Africa and Britain & Ireland.

### **Importance of self-updating:**

In fulfilling your role as bursar, it is necessary to always keep in mind to update yourself – especially with regard to Canon Law and the guidelines of Holy Family administration of goods.

Find ways and means to develop capacity and skills for exercising your role, and be open to get professional help when necessary.

The participants had some space to make any clarification regarding the above.



A meaningful closing prayer was arranged, during which everyone was given the space to express their feelings of gratitude and what they wanted to

carry with them from the session. It also included a moment when all recommitted themselves to the role of bursar, with renewed understanding.



Then Malinie expressed her appreciation of the participants for their commitment, hard work, and collaboration to reach this fruitful end. Sentiments of gratitude were also expressed on behalf of all the

participants, acknowledging the efforts of the administration of Goods team for organizing this session and the support of the GLT.



Suore della Santa Famiglia di Bordeaux, Via dei Casali Santovetti 58,  
00165 Roma, Italia

