



ECHOES

PARTICIPANTS

General Leadership Team:

Ana María ALCALDE DE ARRIBA
Kumudinie DASSANAYAKE
Marian MURCIA
Eithne HUGHES
Geni DOS SANTOS CAMARGO
Micheline KENDA
Malinie JAYAMANNE

Cameroon-Chad:

Solange GRAKA
Fidèle AKAMTSA
Aline MUMBONGO
Delphine NGUEZIA

Canada:

Violette BOUFFARD
Jeannine DUPONT
Francine DORÉ
Paulette LAMBERT

R. D. Congo:

Georgine MUFOGOTO
Elizabeth GITOGA
Perpétue MUMPANGA
Elodie IBWILAKWINGI
Pauline MANZUETO

Poland:

Barbara SYGITOWICZ
Magdalena AJDYS
Agnieszka BURA
Wioletta KRZYMOWSKA

Réseau: (Belgium, France & Italy)

Thérèse SEGRETAIN
Jeanne MEUNIER
Maria PERNET
Simonne RAEMDONCK
Marie Françoise CHEDOZEAU
Françoise VANHOUTTE
Franca DI VINCENZO
Redenta IUCULANO

Translator :

M. Kinga BARTOS

Secretariat :

Marie-Pierre OTIBA

Information :

Annie ANTHONIPILLAI

International Meeting of French-speaking Unit Leadership Teams

27 June to 4 July 2016



The leadership Teams from French-speaking Units gathered at the Generalate for their International Meeting in Rome from 27 June 2016. There were 32 participants altogether, including the General Leadership Team: from Cameroun-Chad, Canada, R.D. Congo, Poland and the European Network (Belgium, France & Italy). After a warm welcome to all of them the participants were invited to introduce themselves; and then all joined in a circle dance – beautifully and gently moving to music – this symbolized the united energy flowing in and through each of them.



Ana Maria then addressed the participants highlighting the importance of responding to the call to live an integrated and prophetic leadership.

The afternoon began with an exercise guided by Eithne, which was intended to help the participants enter a contemplative space in a spirit of listening from the heart, connected to their inner self, and to everything around them: an invitation to live fully in the present moment

“**Four types of listening**” was the theme of a short input by Micheline, after which the participants went into their teams to talk about their own particular reality.



This was presented later in in a symbolic way

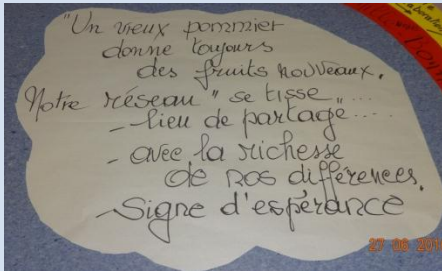
Canada



A plant with different branches. New branches signify new life, but as they emerge, the rest of the plant has to adjust...

Our team is still at the beginning. Differences can emerge, we need to adjust to one another in order to arrive at a common vision, and grow together as a Team.

The three new resources – Network



“An old apple tree always gives new fruits.” The Réseau is still weaving itself into

- a place of sharing centred on the Word of God
- with the richness of their differences
- And being a sign of hope

Cameroon-Chad



Pestle and Mortar:

Vital in their particular context, Women expend strength and life-energy working to provide food for their family, and they do so with joy and generosity. Likewise, we are called to share/give to others. This giving is a source of joy and of difficulties, but it is a consequence of the choice we make.

R. D. Congo :



A “special” hand

As consecrated women, we have a vision and a mission to work in our diversity and complementarity - everyone in their reality share with the others, quality life.

Poland



A Young plant - we have only been together for a few months. We work together, putting in common our potential and dynamism; we have confidence even when are storms; the sun symbolises the grace God gives - light and presence; we are rooted in Christ, working in collaboration, with confidence in each other.

The Second day began with a prayer that helped the participants to see today's world/ their country/reality through moments of contemplation. In an atmosphere of deep listening and trust, each team was then invited to reflect on their particular context.

CONTEXT:

Canada

- ✿ An “explosion” of science and technology
- ✿ The worldwide displacement of people, which also affects Canada
- ✿ Climate change
- ✿ Major changes in values



The Sisters spoke of people who have lost a sense of meaning in life; dechristianisation; a general abandonment of religion and practice; a lack of faith in all institutions, including the Church.

There is break-up in traditional families, leading to a variety of types of family: part-time couples, families without fathers; a society of single people. The existence of homosexuality in the society and in the world is recognised and almost taken for granted..

Changing values have also some positive effects: Canadian young people are active and generous in their efforts to help others – this comes from their love of humanity.

Poland:



A culture of death, of a world without God. Man takes the place of God, and can decide for life. Abortion, euthanasia are taking hold. There is little respect for the aged and sick; breakdown of traditional relationships, now people are creating “virtual relationships”, and gender issues are coming to the fore. There is no space for sacrifice. In addition, noise and chaos prevails in the country, with fear of conflicts, and terrorism. The political situation is precarious, with a very strong and vocal opposition.

Cameroun-Chad:

Experiencing a situation of upheaval, oppression of the poor, war, terrorism, fear and mistrust. The victims of Boko Haram, the terrorists are rising. It is a struggle to move beyond this situation and many young people are victimized, because of war and conflicts. It's a great loss for families. In the country, they experience pain, hunger and an increasing number of refugees entering bring in problems of scarcity of food and medicine. Holy Family presence and ministry have to give more importance to the poor and youth - their health and education. The apostolic Group is present in two countries, but the Sisters are now having many difficulties crossing the border.





R. D. Congo:

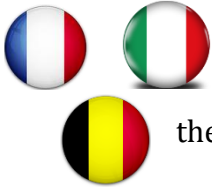
The Unit experiences more global interconnection and solidarity in both good and bad circumstances. There are some efforts to bring peace, but since the country is blessed with extensive natural resources, it is vulnerable to exploitation.

However, the most dominant situation is one of insecurity, fear and terrorism; there is a migration crisis, especially in North and South, along with political instability, in which technological influences play their part.

With 20 years of civil war, the number of killing and deaths have increased, touching everyone at different levels. Violence by armed forces - verbal and in action, lack of respect for lives; the country has become a place for violence and corruption. The Congo is the rape capital of the world. There is a young population with much potential trying to live in this reality.

The National Conference of Religious also speaks out against the violence, awakening consciences to work for justice and peace.

Reseau:



There is confusion and chaos at all levels - government, Church, society in general, causing insecurity; rising terrorism brings division and fear. Lack of vision, increasing social divisions; need is felt to plan for unity among the political leaders, Church and in social Media.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES:

CANADA:

To see God at work in all religions, and even in atheism; to move the borders beyond religion and culture, put Christ at the centre of society. This questions our insertions and our way of being on mission.

The presence of different cultures, religions, is richness for the country; it is an opportunity to live communion, our daily living helps us build this reality. There are also more new avenues for evangelization with the help of the new technology. Communities are involved in evangelization, also living in a multi-cultural community, seeking new ways of living Communion.

There is the challenge of displacement of faith by culture and the influence of new technologies.

POLAND:

The opportunities are to be found in fidelity to the Church, to the Charism and to contemplation; promoting communion and a culture of life; the possibility to proclaim the faith; awareness to the sense of sacredness; desire to lead a holy life; respect for the sick and old, spirituality lived in daily living. We are blessed with relationships, communion, in responding to the situation of the world; space for silence, discernment and personal conversion.

The challenge is to stop the routine, to stop living out of the old model and take risk; to promote the culture of life.

CAMEROON-CHAD:

Values of reconciliation, communion and service are lived in the context. Leadership is lived as a service, it is also to risk, we look for opportunities to extend our presence thus give hope to whoever long for it. Deep listening and contemplation of Word of God, is one way to understand and live our Charism

CONGO:

Promote life; the war-culture in the country urges to work for reconciliation, give good education and formation for the young. We welcome and respect the expression of different opinions.

We integrate the charism of communion by our quality of community life centred on God, working in harmony, promoting Christian values in schools and in ministry; collaborate with lay associates in living solidarity with families; work with Caritas, engaged more in justice, peace and integrity of creation.

RESEAU:

We need to adjust/change our way of seeing – seek what unites rather than what divides. Cultivate gestures of simplicity, laughter, kindness, and closeness to others. Gather together the Associates, to reflect and make it a reality - to live in communion.

We need to bring unity in diversity, evaluate respectfully and live gratitude and joyful giving. Plan to have a common project to give orientation.



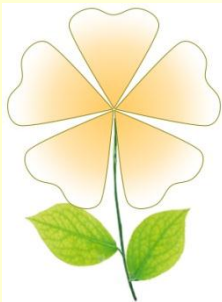
Ana Maria explaining the topic - “Spirituality in the service of Leadership” asked the following questions - “As Holy Family Sisters, which kind of Spirituality we desire to live at the service of leadership? In addition, how can we grow personally to offer the best service through our animation, by contemplating the two images of Annunciation and Visitation? How profoundly we understand and interiorize the effectiveness of our service?” The participants took time for personal reflection on this subject.


Important points that came after the reflection:

- ✿ Leadership is a grace - Mission given by God.
- ✿ This call is not determined by a particular period but remains forever.
- ✿ Being faithful to our prayer, contemplation change our look to read the signs with discernment, and enable us to serve with humility and simplicity.
- ✿ Invitation to live like Mary, to apply our faith even in difficulties - Face the reality with confidence.
- ✿ Each one is called for a mission – Mission has its grace, fullness, this transforms and modifies us – on the contrary brings with it also confusion, cross, dualism that threaten us.
- ✿ The feast of the Visitation – highlights the attitude of welcoming vulnerability with open heart, becoming aware of our fragilities.

Calls:

- ❖ Deepen our prayer-life. It sustains us, changes our gaze and enables us to serve with humility, to read the signs of the times through discernment.
- ❖ Collaborative membership, open to welcome and accept differences
- ❖ Welcome creative ways to observe and evaluate the journey as leaders and giving importance to personal conversion.



 At the end of each day, the participants summed up their experience on one of the petals of the flower that was given to them at the beginning of the meeting.

Third Day (29/6/2016)

Feast of St. Peter and Paul – feast of our Founder

A special prayer was offered for the victims of the attack in Istanbul airport - Turkey.

Continue to pray for your Father who loves you very tenderly always and above all, ask God that he may draw from the tomb of the apostles something of the Spirit and the sentiments of his Patron saint. (To Mother St. Charles Camy – Bordeaux.)



Eithne introduced the day's work, with a brief introduction to the mission of God:

- ⇒ The deepest desire of God concerns the happiness of the human being and the well-being of all creation. This is God's mission
- ⇒ The Bible does not in fact begin by speaking of the Church, let alone about religion, nor even about Abraham or Moses:
- ⇒ It tells us first of all of Adam, which means the human being, that is to say each one of us.
- ⇒ Or, more broadly, it speaks of heaven and earth (Genesis 1). We must not lose sight of this broad perspective.
- ⇒ This is the universe that God has at heart.

- ⇒ Our mission flows from, and is part of the mission of God.
- ⇒ In our role as leaders, we participate in God's mission and the document on Vowed life for mission, and the 2014 General Chapter calls urge us to deepen our understanding in view of God's mission.

After a time of discussion in 5 small groups, the **sharing in the Assembly** brought out the following points:

- 🍃 Our world is becoming more violent, God's mission suffers – we experience God as Love, fullness of Life, relational; Trinitarian God.
- 🍃 Our mission is to be merciful, loving and caring for all creation – especially to the helpless;
- 🍃 Called to become the face of God as of Family; a visible presence in the reality.
- 🍃 Called to give life and not to destroy; to discover the presence of God even in the least sign.

To live this mission we are called to be:

- Women of faith, of listening and discernment, available and passionate.
- Dedicated to respect and develop the sacredness in all creation, without any discrimination.
- Passionate women, contemplating and collaborating in the mission of God by living our Mission of Communion.
- Develop the attitude of contemplation to understand God's revelation to us – be transformative for the sake of the prophetic mission of God.
- Able to risk in humility and confidence

In the afternoon, Marian spoke to the group on Administration of Goods. She emphasized the need to see everything as an integrated whole, if we are to live interconnectedness. We tend to separate Administration of Goods and do not prioritize it. She also said that when evaluating the journey of the past 6 – 7 years, we see little change; there is a gap between our desire and reality. She questioned the group asking to think whether the Unit priorities have any influence on Administration of goods. She challenged the group to widen the vision.

Time given to the units for reflection and discussion then the sharing at Assembly highlighted the following:

- Sensitivity towards Global, local and province reality and accept the changes positively.
- All that belongs to the Institute is for all; we need to open ourselves to share both human and financial resources with all.
- Ready to welcome new decisions, new projects, and new insertions
- Be in solidarity with all; work with women and youth - giving formation and education, taking care of elders.
- Engage in self-supporting projects - cultivating vegetable gardens, living simple life.

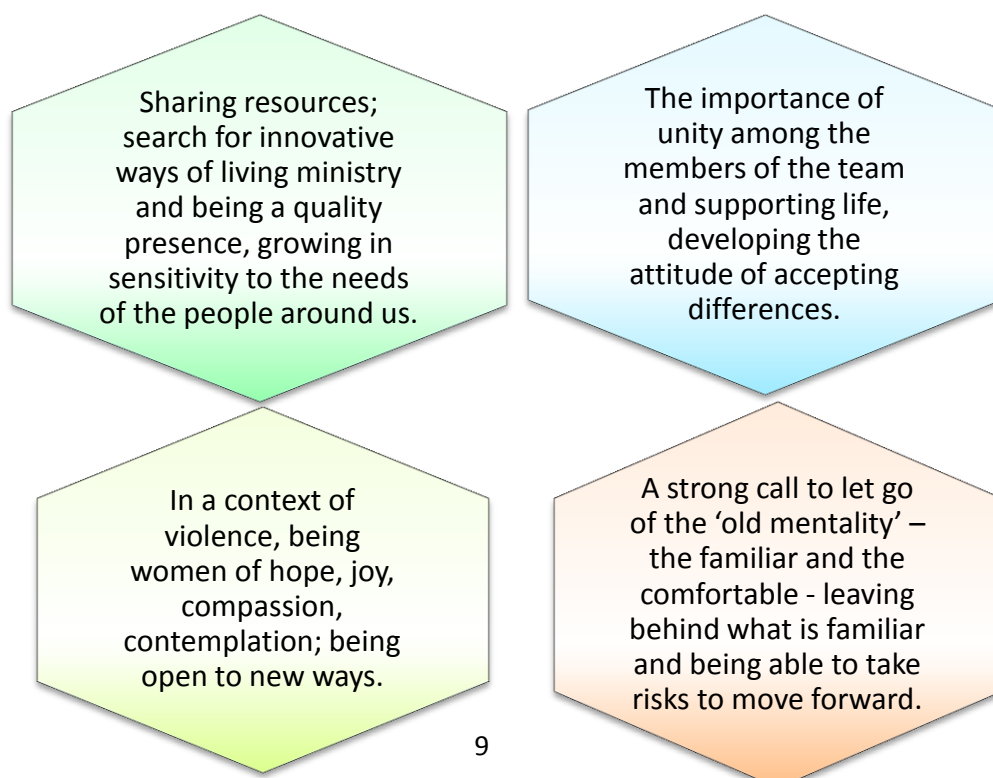
Fourth Day - 30 June:

The day began with a time of contemplation and prayer based on Psalm 132.

Followed by work in Unit Teams to reflect on the following:

**What Does God want from you as Holy Family in your context today?
Is there anything you may have to let go of in order to respond to God's mission?**

The groups spoke of:



At the end of the day, a Power Point reflection challenged the group, awakening them to some important aspects in living Prophetic Leadership.

1 July - The first part of the morning was dedicated to work in the Teams, sharing and dialoguing on the previous day's reflection. Later, following an input on certain tools for fostering openness to change, the teamwork continued.



Poland



Reseau



Canada



Cameroon-Chad



R. D. Congo

The task: to prioritize the 2 most important areas that need attention in their context.

Some important points from the Sharing:

- Change of mentality
- New insertions, new means of Evangelization and quality presence among the youth, refugees, violated women and children.
- Building relationships with the members of other vocations – especially with Lay Associates.
- Inter-cultural community living
- Formation
- Pastoral Care of Vocations and Care for the elders
- Develop Missionary spirit

Team Meetings with General Leadership Team members took place during the last session of the afternoon and the whole of the **morning of July 2**. These were informal conversations around practical questions, or subjects about which the Unit Teams wished to dialogue.

July 2 – afternoon:

Micheline and Geni outlined for the group the process that had been followed during the Session, aimed at helping the participants develop their skills of listening, dialogue and discernment in decision-making.

After the break, Ana Maria invited the participants to enter into a personal review of what they had lived during this time together.

July 3, Sunday, the morning of the final day, all came together to share their experience of these days.

Some aspects shared:

- ✿ Gratitude to God, to the General Leadership Team, for all the opportunities given, which enriched and gave meaning to their search.
- ✿ Felt a call to an Interior journey by means of prayer, silence, and contemplation and deep listening to the signs of the times – a growing sense of the sacredness in all.
- ✿ Called to a full participation in God's Mission – connected to the big Family
- ✿ Attention to the administration of goods as integrated not as separated from the rest of living, to search together and work for the common good.

This time of living together came to an end with the Eucharistic celebration, during which a ritual took place when Ana Maria gave a souvenir to each Unit leader, symbolizing leadership of service, reminding them of the call to active participation in God's mission.





**Holy Family of Bordeaux
Communications / Information Service
Rome
www.saintefamillebordeaux.org**