

# ECHOES



**MEETING OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAMS**

**MARTILLAC, 17 – 23 January 2016**

## **PARTICIPANTS**

### **General Leadership Team:**

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

### **Britain & Ireland**

Gemma CORBETT  
Carmel BATESON  
Catherine LAVERY  
Kathleen DIAMONT  
Claire McGRATH

### **Latin America**

Jenny María NARRO BERNUY  
Nilda Elizabeth CHICO  
Maria de Fátima ANDRADE  
Adela Itati FERNÁNDEZ

### **Lesotho**

Hyacinta MOOPISA  
Celina MOLELEKOA  
Blandina TSIBELA  
Adelina LESAOANA

### **South Africa**

Shelagh WASPE  
Catherine O'GORMAN  
Pearl BENDILE  
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### **Translators:**

Áine HAYDE  
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### **Secretariat:**

M. Kinga BARTOS

### **Information:**

Annie ANTHONPILLAI

## DAY 1 - 17/01/2016



The participants from the leadership teams of Britain & Ireland, Latin America, Lesotho and South Africa came together at Martillac to take part in the International meeting of new leadership teams. The members of the General Leadership

Team animated this session. Geni Dos Santos welcomed the group. An interesting & meaningful approach was used at the beginning of the session: the participants introduced themselves, and wished one another blessings. Positive energy was shared, creating an atmosphere that promised that this meeting would be effective and fruitful.

### **OPENING ADDRESS: Ana María ALCALDE**

Some significant points:

After the General Chapter, we were all mobilised to respond to the urgent calls which are contained in the Corporate Commitment, Decrees and Recommendations. And it is in fidelity to these calls that we are here to respond to one of them which concerns the type of leadership that we want to live in the Institute: *“Open to the newness that the world offers us, we recognise that our co-responsibility as members of the Holy Family requires us to make changes, so that our way of living leadership for mission may be integrated and prophetic”*<sup>1</sup> and in the Recommendations which ask the General Council to encourage and explore ways of providing the necessary formation at local and international levels.<sup>2</sup>

For this reason, the General Leadership Team decided to meet all the Leadership Teams so that we could have a formative experience together which would help us to provide a better service. Our plan is not to meet all the groups at the same time, but to have smaller groups so that the meetings are more personalised and geared to greater inter-action, dialogue and the sharing of experiences. As far as possible, we would prefer that all those taking part in these meetings could communicate in the same language. That hasn't been possible for this meeting but we are going to turn this difference into an enrichment.

The objectives that we propose for this meeting are:

- To enable more collaboration among the leadership teams
- To learn from one another's experience
- To deepen understanding and living of integrated and prophetic leadership for mission

<sup>1</sup> Corporate Commitment 2014 – p.4

<sup>2</sup> Recommendations. General Chapter 2014 – p. 10

I am sure that we all want to live a different style of leadership – one that will be more meaningful, prophetic participative... But, to a greater or lesser extent, we are marked by the “old models” that we have interiorised because of our culture, family, Church, Religious Life and the *Holy Family*. It is a real challenge to let go of these and welcome the new that we are offered today and which the Chapter asks us.



As Teams, we are called to be able to feel together, to share a common vision which should be sought in sisterly dialogue and listening. This generates cohesiveness, trust, and a shared sense of change. In an organisation, occurs only when the personal and collective level of consciousness changes.

Gospel leadership trusts in the Spirit which makes all things new <sup>3</sup> and this faith approach helps us to keep going. We have to take the risk of looking for and practising a different style of leadership. We can ask ourselves this question: Does what we are doing, and the way we are doing it, help to bring about the style of leadership that the Corporate Commitment asks of us?

#### Feelings of the group about the opening address:

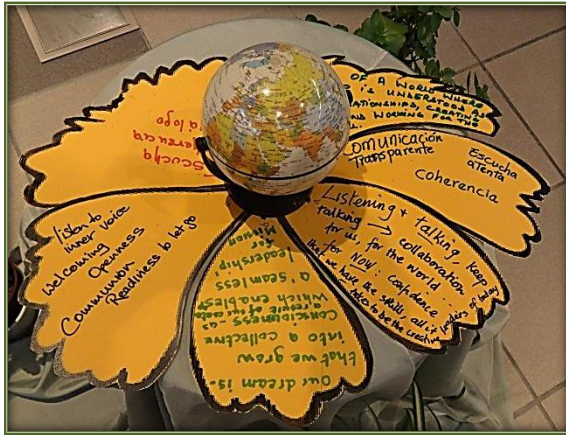
- Importance of extended/ shared leadership
- Blocks by unwritten laws – some units felt that there is a tendency to be blocked by the useful traditions that are widely practice in the communities, while those practices are harmful to new ways.
- Awakening of collective consciousness
- Different stages of leadership – A plural consciousness of different styles of leadership, it is a confusion among the members to what extend they need to stay on/ to let go.
- Collective Consciousness towards leadership’s style, interpretation and reality to see the possibilities in their own context.
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The gathering ended with a prayer, with the emphasis on listening; Listen to God’s call. “Listen, the voice of your God is calling...”

#### Most striking word and phrases: (responses from prayer)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mutual listening	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen to the movements of the love of God
<input type="checkbox"/> The Lord is calling	<input type="checkbox"/> Jesus is attentive to the whole of creation
<input type="checkbox"/> Listen with the ears of your heart	<input type="checkbox"/> Attentive awareness in the stillness of heart

<sup>3</sup> Rev 21: 5



Small groups met to share their expectations and the DREAM for themselves, for the Holy Family and for the world; these were presented in the form of a flower-petal and then each was placed around the globe at the centre, making a beautiful flower.

**Day 2 - (18/1/2016)**

The day began with a prayer “*Lord that I may see...*” led by Eithne: This involved paying attention, leaving everything, moving to another position... and paying attention once more, listening to the reflections and feelings that arose in this simple exercise. Then followed some minutes of complete silence, with the invitation to be fully present to the moment.

**An input on listening**, given by Kumudinie, was followed by a time to listen to their own reality as individuals, and a teams.

**Some points that emerged from the feedback:**

**Britain & Ireland:**

↓ Individuals with specific skills, strengths and weaknesses make a whole, connected to one another and needing one another as a team. Each is given responsibility in particular areas, communities and as links with teams of participation. The word ‘Superior’ is no longer relevant in their reality; they seek to work in collaboration and collegiality. Their experience of an “Extended Leadership Team” comprised of the Teams of Participation and the Unit leadership team, was welcomed by everyone. Also as a team, they bring their own history, personal skills, and sense of humour, particular culture and depth of personal prayer. They also expect confidentiality, support, listening at depth, help and guidance, discernment to move forward and staying with the decisions made in as a team.

↓ **Lesotho:** The team feel that there is much respect, support of one another with prayer, dialogue and consultation among the members. Openness to welcome new things, ready to accept issues, deep listening and collaboration felt deeply among them and that vibrates around the whole Unit. Skills of listening, talents, strengths and forgiveness expressed mutually. Sense of communion and sense of mission and membership are shared among them.

**Latin America:**



As persons, they are in the process of listening, looking for alternatives and waiting with Hope. They see the need to go on with formation, grow as a team in trust and the spirit of discernment and reflection. Their expectation is that they will grow in trust and dynamism, and share their insights and vision with transparency.

**South Africa:**



The struggles they feel are aging and diminishment, even though they believe the commitment to mission is still alive and active. As team, they are involved in promoting the common good; take time for decision-making, respect differences and are open to the reality of context. They expect to work as a team, with much more involvement in consultation and dialogue, and with no hidden agendas. They also expressed their desire for honest searching together in decisions and support in implementing.

**In the afternoon**, the participants worked in their own teams looking at the global/particular context and the opportunities and challenges they face.



Britain & Ireland



Network Latin America



South Africa



Lesotho

### **Lesotho:**

- The country is threatened by Global warming, drought, illness, increase of HIV Aids and changing behaviour; political instability, corruption and greed for power. In this latter, Sisters are not exceptional. Some major steps are taken by NGO's, major superiors, and some other organisations to bring about changes in government policies. The sisters have joined to work with media; it is an opportunity to give voice for the voiceless. They also have created a website for this purpose.

### ***Network Latin America;* made up of 4 countries Brazil, Argentina,Paraguay & Peru.**

- Young democratic countries, with young population, many cultures, some indigenous, institutional violence, corruption, violence in families and human trafficking, willing to open for newness; Vitality of youth, capacity to risk; lot of creativity; fear lack of stability, break down of families; rapid advance of technology blocking relationships; Lack of permanency in commitment, lack of tolerance, fear of conflict; loss of cultural/religious values; questioning, how to live this time of uncertainty?

### **South Africa:**

- The rising crises of technology, high unemployment and climate change are some of the key threats to country. The current socio-economic environment, economic inequality - has tensed relationships. Reaching refugees remains a challenge for the country. There are countless confirmed cases of human smuggling and trafficking. There is no stability in commitments, so the church also facing difficulties in handling faith issues. There is need to use and improve social analysis, as a team to be clear about Vision/goal is so important; this is an essential requirement to create networks to collaborate with others.

### ***Britain & Ireland:***

- 4 different countries - England is very secular, multi-cultural; leadership needs to be counter-cultural because in society "power over" works.
- There are 87 Sisters, 28 of whom are in need of full time care; many of the sisters are aged, (their average age is 78.8) in 14 communities. Blessed with four vocations - Priest, apostolic, secular and lay associates.
- Responding to different cultural backgrounds, learning from them; share resources with the people on the move; Ireland having moved from Catholic background, need to walk with people; Trying to live the new story of universe along with Liturgy which is alienating – struggling to reconcile the two.

## Third Day - 19/01/2016

The whole morning was spent in their own Unit teams sharing a reflection on the spirituality of leadership. The afternoon Assembly began with the sharing of feedback by each team...

The emerging points:

★ A very profound reflection which helped to see the call to service of leadership as having potential for transformation for us and for others; we should not be afraid to present this ideal to others; the Word of God brings comfort, for God is in it all.

★ Feel called to:

- trust in God who is there even where we see no sign of God's presence
- deepen prayer life, not to fear
- deeper listening; clarify through questioning
- patience and allow to be comforted by God
- a shared mission – include others in decision making; to be bold to express needs and be women of faith
- encounter others bringing peace and joy
- make critical observations/constant evaluation – for transformation
- accompany those troubled on the journey

The participants then entered into another reflection and sharing on God's mission in today's world, this was shared by Eithne.

God is revealed as Trinity – mission is the essence of God and emerges from the very heart of God, incarnated in the Son... it cannot be carried out dissociated from God, the Father and creator. Without contemplating the face of God, and being in communion with God's will, the mission loses its purpose, and becomes anti-mission, sterile self-sufficiency.

Mission is the key to understanding the Church, and everything about her, including consecrated life.

God wants men and women to be co-creators – so all of us are in a permanent state of mission. As leaders, how to understand God's mission in today's world? Do we understand it in the context of the larger whole? How do we hold the vision of prophetic call and help our sisters to give themselves for the mission of God?

With this introduction, the group took time for personal reflection based on the Corporate Commitment and some selected articles of Vowed Life for Mission, reflecting their understanding of God's mission in today's world. Later each small group brought three important points.

The next step was to share on what they considered God's call for the Holy Family in their particular context.



Noticeable aspects from the feedback in assembly:



- reveal God-self revealed through Jesus
- live the Charism ardently and make it relevant
- Strengthen bonds between the 5 vocations of PBN Family
- Live attitudes of mercy and compassion
- Deepen sense of responsibility in all
- Collaborate with other religious groups
- Speak truth without fear
- Be a joyful religious presence
- Attentive and present to where life is threatened
- Live in a state of exodus – use resources to take action on behalf of those on the move



- Individualism, fear, structures that do not build communion
- Anything that excludes
- Ministry/insertions that do not respond to today's reality
- Institutionalized living
- Mentality of "my" mission
- Old world view and open to interconnectedness with all creation

**Day 4 - 20/01/2016**

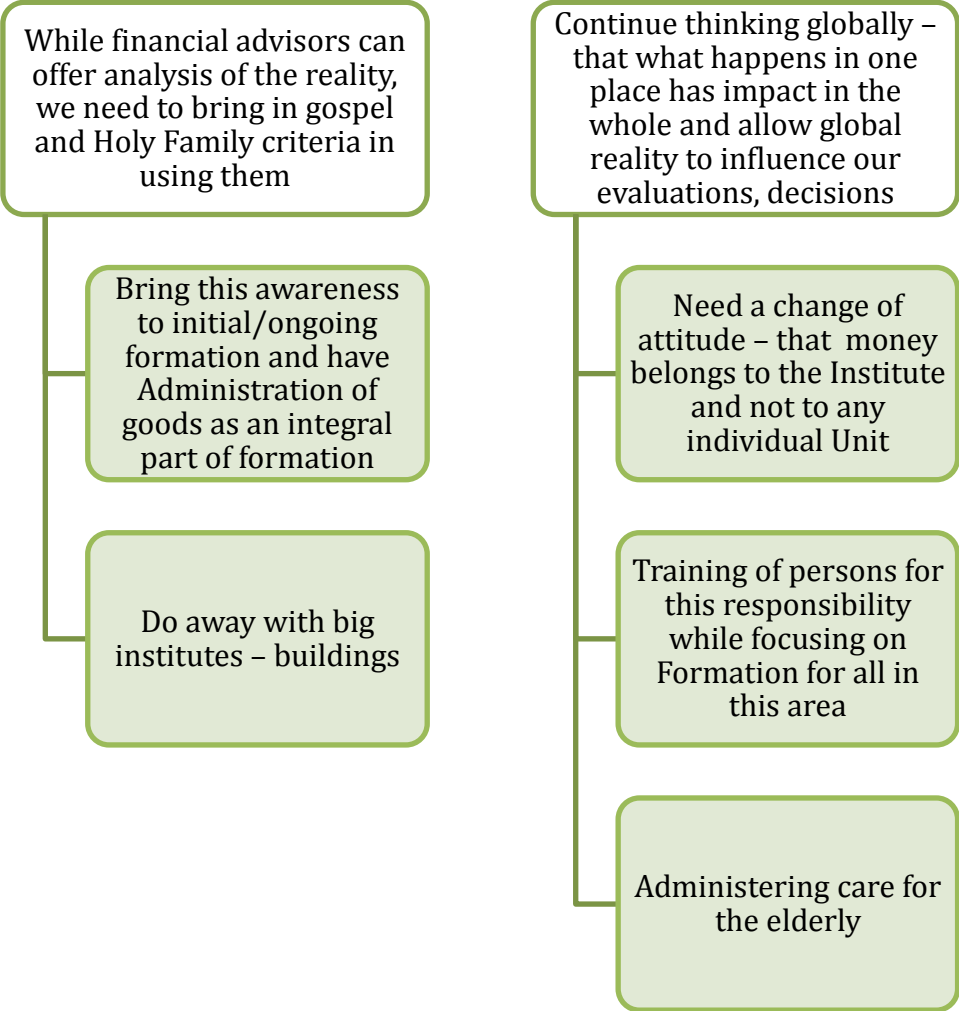
Kumudinie directed all the participants to become aware of the power of now, and to open the heart in the silence and to know the ONE in many. She ended with praying psalm 132; "As you follow the light, you become gentle and kind, you come to live in the light".

Marian facilitated the morning, focusing on Administration of Goods. She emphasised the importance of integrating this aspect in our animation because we often tend to leave it aside.

Both Administration & animation are essential, we have to look at our resources and then make changes. She spoke of the difficulty of appointing a bursar and the need to look at human as well as material assets. Inviting all to look at their attitude towards administration of goods, she stressed on the responsibility of the whole leadership team for this and the lack of sensitivity to see it as essential to mission and part of living leadership. Stating the fact that our world is dominated by an economic point of view, she highlighted the importance of having new ways of administering goods without just following what the financial world demands from us, and having our own criteria in implementing what they propose to us.

The participants were requested to reflect and share in their teams on a section of the report presented to General Chapter on Administration of goods to see a possible way to move forward.

Common points shared:



In the discussion that followed the need to evaluate the advantages/disadvantages of Bursar being part of the LT was noted. There was also a suggestion to prepare potential bursars who can be named later.

**In the afternoon**, the participants went into mixed groups to listen to the calls they hear being aware, that something new is emerging, pointing towards a way forward.

**Day 5 - 21/01/2016**

Prayer led by Geni, focused on 'change'- Everything changes!

You can find the prayer by clicking the following link:  
<https://youtu.be/RieZLasUMTg>

Kumudinie explained that what is more important in our own context is the process of moving towards change; we do so much, but very little happens and we question why our efforts do not bear fruit. We have so many animations, sessions and retreats, we have a lot of ideas, we are reflective, and have skill... all that is there. The time has come to put theory into action.

With this input, the participants took time for personal reflection, then for sharing in their own teams and later to feedback in Assembly on how to go about (the strategic plan)with the two important calls they had identified in their particular context.

The afternoon session was facilitated by Eithne to gather the fruits of the morning's work.

**The areas chosen by each Team to move forward:**

 <p><b>South Africa</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shared leadership and formation for administration of goods.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>B&amp;I</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at new ministries in areas of real need and Administration of goods - looking at resources</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Latin America</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To live Shared leadership and to live in state of exodus - to go to the margins</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Lesotho</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure better Formation on technology, finance, accounting, and Deepening of Vowed life for mission</li> </ul>
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There was interaction after this sharing and a striking point was that all the groups had focused on Administration of goods as an area to work on for future. The discussion came to a close with some sharing by Marian on the Foundation of PBN.

Marian spent the rest of the afternoon to meet with the four bursars of the Units to discuss on some practical issues.

## Day 6 – 22/01/2016

Each link Councillor spent the morning with each ULT conversing around their concerns and any practical issues of interest.

The afternoon was free and a tour to Bordeaux – in the footsteps of the Founder – guided by Áine was enjoyed by all which brought much life and spirit to the group.



## Day 7 – 23/01/2016

The day began with a prayer guided by Micheline based on the Prayer of Oscar Romero. Geni and Kumudinie then spoke to the group about the process used during the course of the six days. A brief explanation of it enabled the participants to understand the journey made together which was a call to live it in their own teams and Units.

The rest of the morning was taken as a quality time to re-read personally the experience of the six days and then to share it in the Assembly, which was extended to the first part of the part in the afternoon. In the final sharing the points repeated were:

- Gratitude for this opportunity
- Appreciation of the reflection on spirituality of leadership
- The importance of listening in living leadership
- The process used was helpful, with potential for working as teams.

The session came to an end with a meaningful closing ritual organized by the small team representing the 4 Unit teams brought energy and insight, urging the participants to make the forward move with the urgency to live out the calls they heard during the session. Prayer, song and dance added colour and bonded the group with hope for the future!

Click here: <https://youtu.be/D75qhiZ77c0>





**THANKS BE TO GOD – AMEN, ALLELUIA!**



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