

# FORUM



## 90 YEARS OF SERVICE: IN THE WORK FOR PEACE

IMCS ANTICIPATING THE CENTINARARY

THE CHURCH: OUR PLACE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

LEADERSHIP: A VOCATION TO NURTURE CHARITY IN ACTION

# Editorial

In November 2012, IMCS leaders from across the world met in Chennai India for a council meeting as well as an international formation program on international students' migration. As part of the tradition of IMCS Pax Romana, the international council meeting should take place at-least twice in between two world assemblies as stipulated in our statutes.

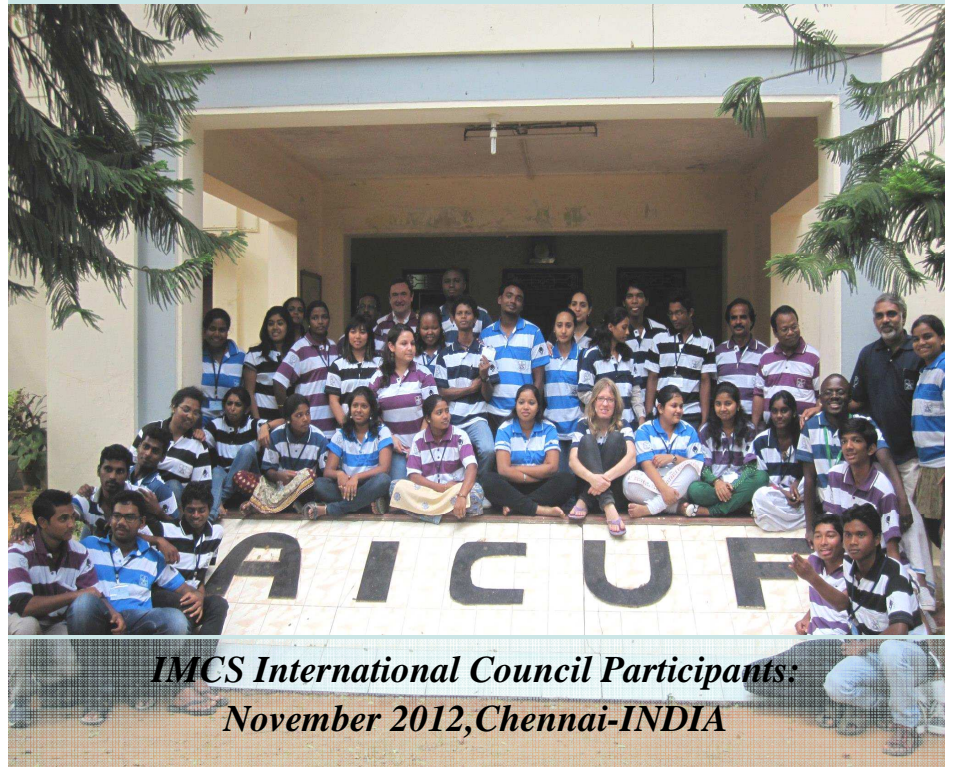
However, the IMCS global student leaders looked beyond the council meeting and deliberated on the realities facing international and migrant students. The bell rang louder than expected when realities were shared and light shed on many hidden challenges faced by the migrant and international students everywhere. Migration then became one of the thematic areas of action until 2014 when the next council meeting convenes in Zambia. Not only was that, the World Assembly that took place in Cologne in 2011 named "migration" as one of the main thematic areas of the movement for the next four of years.

This therefore brings us to the notion that, peace is not merely the absence of war but rather a mutual co existence for the betterment of each and every member of the human family in a world where sense of global citizenship is embraced and respected and above all seen as a means for exchange of knowledge for building a stronger common good. The gospel of Christ was proclaimed by non natives in foreign lands in an effort to spread the word to the ends of the earth. (Lk:10:1-23). Through this exchange and foreign adventuring, we are reminded that those international and migrant students are preachers of the message of peace which is the word "Pax" we carry in our name because this (preaching) "*constitutes the essential mission of the Church. It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent*" (Evangelii Nuntiandi, 14).

Pax Romana which literally means the "Roman peace" in its literal Latin meaning has a different Wikipedia referring to the time of a "militarily imposed peace" under the leadership of Caesar Augustus thus; it is sometimes referred to as "Pax Augusta". However, the name Pax Romana (IMCS and ICMICA) was given us by Pope Benedict XV asking students of the past and present to preach the message of peace which he sends from Rome. Therefore, we are the Pax Romanians of Pope Benedict XV and NOT Augustus era. That is the message of peace we are called to share through the spirituality of action. That is the meaning of the 90th anniversary for us students and for our ancestors. Doing the simple good to our neighbors is the story we are told repeatedly by the scripture.

May there be peace on earth as we continue in this precious mission of renovating our broken and bracketed worlds.

***By the International Office***



## What is the FORUM magazine?

The FORUM magazine is the publication of the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) – Pax Romana. As a crossroads of IMCS Pax Romana members, this student magazine allows for exploration of ideas, discussion of varying viewpoints on certain issues, and a space for sharing on an equal footing. It aims to bring the grassroots experience expressed through words to the global front and features contributions from our six regions.

This 2013 edition features contributions representing all of those six regions (with the exception of the Middle East.) The authors are from the following countries:

Italy, France, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, United States of America, Canada, Chile, Indonesia, Malaysia and Zambia



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# About IMCS Pax Romana

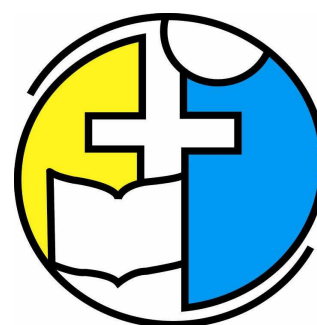
IMCS Pax Romana is the International Movement of Catholic Students which brings together over 80 diverse national federations, associations, and movements of Catholic university and tertiary students from six regions. Since 1921, when it was founded under the name of Pax Romana with the aim of promoting peace and justice at the global level, IMCS has been helping in the holistic formation of students around the globe.

As a Catholic students' movement, IMCS' main mission is the evangelization of the student milieu. Students are encouraged to live their faith by getting involved in society, locally, nationally and internationally.

Since 1949, IMCS has been advocating on behalf of its members as a non-governmental organization (NGO) in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI), and United Nations Education Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO). IMCS is also active with regional inter-governmental and international bodies, such as the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the World Bank to voice the concerns of youth.

IMCS represents Catholic students within the Church as an international association of the lay Catholic faithful, with a special relationship to the Pontifical Council for the Laity and the Secretariat of State of the Holy See.

Inspired by Jesus' teachings and the Gospel values, IMCS encourages students to live a Spirituality in Action, linking faith, intellect and service of others through praying, reflecting, and acting on issues at all levels of society.



**IMCS-MIEC  
PAX ROMANA**

# From the President

Dear friend!

The year 2013 marks the golden jubilee of the encyclical “Pacem in Terris” which remains a legacy of Pope John XXIII. Given the existence of IMCS Pax Romana 40 years before this letter was written, Pacem in Terris remains valuable today than ever in our world amidst the troubled humanity. The angelic hymn during the birth of Christ calls for peace on earth while glorifying the name of God. (Luke:2:14) This call for peace had been reechoed in Pacem in Terris, though it seems to be a reality far away from near happening in a world that is growing more secular and capitalistic with each dawn leaving more poor people at the mercy of the rich with the later getting richer at the cost of the former.

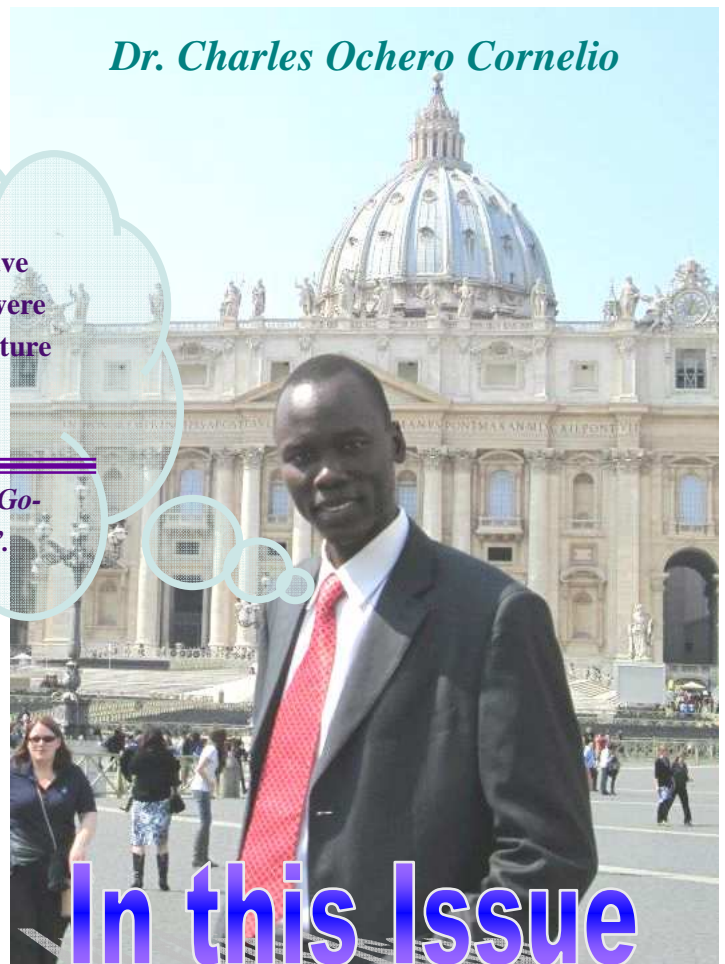
This reality calls for an urgent need of action from students and all peoples of good will if a reverse of the situation has to be made. As members of IMCS Pax Romana family, we find ourselves obliged to answer the question “What could Jesus have done differently if he were to retake His human nature today?” Answering this question brings us to the spirituality of action. That of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and visiting the sick among many others which at the same time confirms our theme for the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of IMCS Pax Romana “*Bridging our Worlds; Going Beyond Borders*”.

It is with a grateful and a humbled heart that I take this opportunity to thank and congratulate each individual member of IMCS Pax Romana family down there in the campus and any servant position, for what s/he is doing for building a safer world for all through the IMCS. Taking the Latin expression “*E pluribus Unum*”- meaning “*out of many one*”, indeed, we have come from different parts of the world but became one body and spirit 90 years ago with the single vision of building a better world as an irreplaceable cause.

As we approach the centenary of IMCS Pax Romana, we equally should continue advocating and working for a just society throughout the different levels of our reach, such as the grass roots, educational institutions, the church and ending up in the United Nations halls. I therefore pray that it remains our intellectual and moral obligations to deliver this “*political charity*” which most modern popes called for through the placement of a human person at the core of their messages.

*May peace prevail on earth and I wish you a happy, informative and enjoyable reading of the FORUM!*

Dr. Charles Ocherio Cornelio



In this Issue

Adopt a Child Program	5
90 years of IMCS Pax Romana: Zambian Experience	6
IMCS Africa Envisioning the centenary	7
What 90 Years of IMCS means for us in Africa	8
IMCS Rwanda in Network Building towards Sustainable Development	9, 10
Let us Listen to the Calling of Christ	11, 12
Finding Christ in Students	11, 12
Fuci & the 2nd Vatican Council	13
Human Right Perspective on Climate Change	14
“Personal Experience”	15, 16
Our Role as Student Leaders: Academics + Faith = Humanity	17
A Graced Night of Confluence & Divergence	18,19
Notable IMCS Former Leaders	20

# Prefarential Option for the Poor

By Njenga Kuria

National Coordinator IMCS Kenya

The International Movement of Catholic Students, Kenyan chapter (IMCS-K), has a project called 'Adopt a Child', by which University students in different chapters would adopt a child and support it both financially and psychologically. In their neighboring primary schools there are many children who are in need of financial as well as psychological support.

Most of the parents of these children are divorcees or single parents or dead leaving these children with a lot of craving for attention and need of support and it's with the spirit of IMCS, 'preferential option for the poor' that the student movement took the initiative of adopting a child. This program was started in 2005 and up to now, the movement has 22 beneficiaries. The first beneficiary of the program is a boy called Erick who has been adopted by Equity Foundation in Equity bank due to his good academic performance. He is currently pursuing his studies at Njiiris Boys, which is a Provincial school

These kids are adopted while they are still in primary school, preferably from class one to class four. Their needs are assessed and if they qualify then the University students take the responsibility of ensuring that the pupil is provided with the basics (school uniforms and stationery). They also provide mentorship. The university students are tasked in assessing the performance and the discipline of the pupils. On completion of primary school, the movement continues to support the student until the completion of secondary school.

*A Classical example in Kikuyu Campus:* The student movement in Kikuyu campus assists two little girls at Thogoto primary school: Sylvia Njeri and Faith Nyambura. They come from a single mother family who works as a cook in the same school. But the income is not sufficient to cater for the needs of a family of six. The members of the movement have been helping the children acquire school uniform and some personal effects. Apart from providing material items they were offered guidance and mentorship.

## "Adopt a child" Program

Financially the program is supported through the following activities

**Personal contributions** – students contribute a minimum of 1 dollar towards this program every semester and give proformas to other students to seek donations from well wishers

**Car wash** – Students organize a car wash within the school and wash any car that comes to the learning institution for 1 dollar and this activity runs for a whole week.

**Shoe polishing** – Students do a door to door visit to the students hostels and request to polish shoes of the residing students and charge half a dollar per pair of shoes

However, this program has faced financial challenges because the money generated from these activities is not enough to support the genuine needs of the poor children. Yet we are planning to come up with more long term sustainable income generating activities to support more pupils/students.

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# 90 YEARS OF IMCS – PAX ROMANA

## 90 YEARS OF IMCS – PAX ROMANA

### The **Zambian Experience**

**As** IMCS Zambia celebrated its 90 years of existence, it was important for us to know where we had come from. During Christopher Malano's (Secretary General IMCS 2007-11) visit to Zambia after the 10th Pan African Assembly (PAA) in October 2010, Arusha, Tanzania, I came across the document "A Brief History of IMCS-Pax Romana (1887-2006)" among his collections. It took me back to our roots as a Movement; how our fore parents worked so hard for the Movement we are so very proud of today. It reminded me of Fr Hans Putman, with his famous song; "It's not an easy road".

IMCS Zambia celebrated this important anniversary during its 12th Annual Convention on 26th February, 2011 under the theme "Student with a Difference; Celebrating 90 years of IMCS – Pax Romana"

I believe our logo says it all.

To mark this important event, a week prior to the anniversary, a new branch of NMCS Zambia was launched in Livingstone Diocese, becoming the third region of NMCS Zambia in the 12 years of our existence as a movement. It was launched under the theme 'Catholic Social Teaching – The Establishment of NMCS Livingstone' in the presence of Rt. Rev. Raymond Mpezele, Bishop of Livingstone, and Mr. John Mwewa, Caritas Diocesan Coordinator.

This was further followed by the launch of another branch of NMCS Zambia, NMCS Chipata in the Eastern part of Zambia on 11th June 2011. It was launched under the theme 'Catholic Social Teaching & Good Governance; The Establishment of NMCS Chipata'. The event was graced by The Right Rev. George Cosmas Zumaile Lungu the Bishop of the Dioceses of Chipata and Ms Catherine Njuguna, the IMCS Pan African Coordinator among others.

Some of NMCS Livingstone members with Bishop Mpezele (holding the left top corner of the banner). This was held after a workshop 'on Good Governance' hosted by Malawi for Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The Anniversary held at the Pope Square, Cathedral of the Child Jesus, Lusaka, Zambia was characterized by two presentations: Substance Abuse and the 2011 General Elections.

It was also preceded by dances, speeches and among them Ms Prisca Tente, 2007/8 NMCS Zambia Coordinator gave an elaborate story of NMCS Zambia since its inception.

The day also marked the official handover from the Joseph Chaila led executive to the Joseph Kayaya led.

As we celebrated 90 years of IMCS – Pax Romana, we remain focused to being the students with a difference and bring about the positive change that the world needs to see.

**By Chaila Mwate Joseph**

**Fidecomisionaria de NMCS Zambia**



**NMCS Zambia: 12th National Renewal Conference**



# 90 YEARS OF IMCS – PAX ROMANA

## IMCS AFRICA ENVISIONING THE CENTENARY

By Catherine Njuguna

IMCS Africa Coordinator

*What is our role,  
how can we be more  
authentic and  
effective agents of  
transformation (salt  
and light) in the  
current situation?*

On November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in the Republic of Benin in West Africa, Pope Benedict XVI published the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation; *Africae Munus* which means Africa's Commitment, marking the climax of the Second Synod of Bishops for Africa (2009). The exhortation built on the theme of the First Synod of Bishops for Africa, *Ecclesia in Africa* (1994) which focused on the 'Church as Family of God' describing the family as a place of belonging, dialogue and solidarity, a place where everyone feels welcomed and the uniqueness of each member is respected and nurtured. There was likewise a special emphasis on the theological themes that are integral to the family of God – personal reconciliation, building a just social order and promoting peace through living the beatitudes, the place that propagates the 'culture of forgiveness, peace and reconciliation'.

Apart from the family, the Synod Fathers further took a serious look at issues ranging from challenges of resource exploitation, trade imbalances, debt, climate change, women in Africa, conflicts, poor governance, migration, corruption, globalization, health challenges, and insufficient media coverage of the real Africa with all its lights and shadows.

The question we probably need to ask ourselves as young people is; what next, what is our role, how can we be more authentic and effective agents of transformation (salt and light) in the current situation? While the Church in Africa is growing in numbers, it is not having the kind of impact upon society it should be having. As one of the delegates, Archbishop Palmer-Buckle of Ghana stated: "The Church has transformed neither society nor itself... Where there has been corruption, Catholics have been involved, and where there has been violence Catholics have been among those instigating it." The Archbishop went on to add that Africans must stop blaming others for their problems, examine their consciences and put their own house in order.

As we enter the Centenary preparation of Pax Romana, her existence and impact, we probably need to look at a greater and more concerted commitment to those deprived of freedom and peace, those violated in their dignity as human beings, those who "suffer from poverty, diseases, injustice, wars, violence, and forced migration."

There is a greater need for ... saints in higher political offices... who will clean the continent of corruption, work for the good of the people, and know how to galvanize other men and women of good will from outside the Church to join hands against the common evils that beset our nations

As members of the IMCS family, we probably need a critical look at what has changed since we joined the movement, whether we have played a critical role in addressing the challenges facing the continent. Now that we have graduated from school and are now Catholic professionals, serving in various sectors of the economy, government, NGOs, churches etc, did what they learn and go through while at the movement have any impact and continue to have impact in our careers, social and spiritual lives today?

Is Africa a better place now that the movement of the young catholic university students (IMCS) is approaching 100 years and what are the areas of improvement? What is the place of the movement in the countries it is operating? A lot has been done by the movement in terms of formation and our reach in terms of impact is wide, both to those who have served the movement and likewise to those we have touched in our work. In virtue of all the challenges addressed by *Africae Munus*, Africa has in itself 'pathways of hope'; through religious, social political and economic dialogue and a deep spiritual renewal is possible. From the outset, Africa is presented as a 'spiritual lung' and this is where we the Lay people come in. We have a civil responsibility; to be good examples in our work and in daily life. We are thus invited to be examples by living our lives according to Gospel values even when, as the Beatitudes tell us, they are in conflict with more popular values. As Youth, we are encouraged to place Jesus Christ at the centre of our lives through prayer, but also through the study of the Sacred Scripture, frequent recourse to the sacraments, formation in the Church's social teaching, and our active and enthusiastic participation in ecclesial groups and movements like IMCS and likewise cultivate a yearning for fraternity, justice and peace.

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# 90 YEARS OF IMCS – PAX ROMANA

## 90 YEARS OF IMCS – PAX ROMANA



In an African life context, the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a person's life is a time to share the tested and proven wisdom, a time to celebrate as we pass on the life-giving heritage to the next generations. I expect the same from IMCS. I hope we would look at the ups and downs of our ninety year journey and learn from them and use what is like food and drink for the journey ahead.

When IMCS was founded in 1921 in Fribourg, Switzerland, it was committing students in Universities and in Tertiary Institutions to exercise leadership and to take responsibility in the mission of the church and in the world.

It was an evangelizing movement in the student milieu through its testimony and openness to the situation of their time of post World War I.

Today more than ever before we need leaders, good leaders I must say, especially in Africa. We know from our experience that good leadership brings development — spiritual, human, social, as well as economic development. It enhances respect, freedom and human dignity and allows for prosperity. It liberates from chains of oppression — poverty, ignorance and diseases. It unites and brings peace.

Bad leadership causes havoc. It divides and destroys. It is diabolic. By their fruits you will know them (Mt. 7: 15-20 and Lk. 6: 43-44). With this pedagogy of see, judge and act; and having an international presence in more than 90 countries in the world, the IMCS' 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary is indeed a vantage point for making a difference in a divided world.

Being guided by the 'preferential option for the poor and its commitment to justice, peace and human development. Aims like Jesus Christ at being at the service of the poor and the marginalized.'

And chaplains, like Christ are spiritual counselors and formators of Christian leaders of today and to-morrow, play an important role in memory transmission and of helping IMCS members to live their Christian faith in their concrete situations.

The 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a concrete pedagogical situation which tells us how far we still have to go!

***Fr. Fratern M. Masawe is a Tanzanian Jesuit, he is the Pan African Chaplain for the IMCS. He is currently based in Rome as an advisor to the General Superior of the Jesuits on issues pertaining to Africa***



# IMCS: The Movement in Africa

*IMCS Rwanda in Networking Towards Sustainable Development*

## DURING AFRICAN RIO+20 in NAIROBI

The last decades are characterized by networking in all economic sectors. There are supply chains, relocation of industries and other types of partnerships. These networks should be built not only for commercial activities but also for social benefits. Nowadays, all people are becoming cognizant of the climate change and there is a need to advocate for sustainability.

The UN summits talk about sustainability, green jobs and green economy; all political leaders talk about sustainable development and all environmentalists' campaign for the same. Why are these decades marked by incentives to protect environment?

The environment is considered as an input in any production process. It is the source of raw materials (natural resource). If there is a continued environmental degradation, the social welfare will decrease too and the world will collapse. The major incentives of environmental protection are improvement of human health, social welfare, reduction of the pollution of atmosphere, improvement of water quality and so on. We need a sustainable economy, the economy that the current generation meets their needs without compromising the needs of the coming generations.



*Muhayeyezu Joseph Desire  
Coordinator of IMCS  
Pax Romana – Rwanda*

As the future belongs to young people, the youth has to campaign for a change in policies regarding environment. The youth has to campaign for green jobs, green economy and sustainable development. They have the responsibility to influence the policy making, discuss with negotiators and have one voice on sustainability. We need a future where our needs will be met, a future without pollution, a future without unsustainable economy.

To achieve these goals, the network building is revealed as a major tool to campaign together at national, regional and international levels. We need to have one voice. We have to have a clear understanding of what we want because it is very difficult to campaign for what we don't know.

# Kigali+20

**Rauka! Act now for a Sustainable Future**

# IMCS: The Movement in Africa

## IMCS: The Movement in Africa

**The** IMCS- RWANDA is trying to network with other organizations of youth. The network allows the creation of a platform where youth can discuss their needs and views. The IMCS- RWANDA has partnered with the East African organizations to build a momentum towards RIO+20, held in Rio de Janeiro from 21<sup>st</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2012. The East African Campaign was called RAUKA. This campaign was organized by KYNC (Kenya Youth Network for Climate change). The KYCN partnered with national movements of youth that have the environment in their portfolio. The IMCS-Rwanda networked with KYCN during the whole campaign. The aim of this campaign was to raise the awareness among the youth and the East African community on sustainable development, green jobs and green economy. Youth from Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda organized different activities in their respective countries to collect views and build a momentum towards Rio+20.

The IMCS –RWANDA is one of the organizers of the KIGALI+20. The Kigali+20 has been the youth campaign organized in partnership with YCS, KYCN, RYCA. The Kigali+20 was held in KIGALI. from 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> June

**7<sup>th</sup> June, 2012: The workshop on Sustainable development (green jobs and green economy)**

**8<sup>th</sup> June, 2012: Outreach activity (UMUGANDA- UMUGANDA is a Kinyarwanda Word meaning “community work”)**

## AFTER UMUGANDA

The objective of this campaign was achieved: young people who have demystified concepts about sustainable development, green jobs and green economy are now aware of environment degradation; after the workshop we committed to campaign for a sustainable future. After the KIGALI+20, IMCS participated in the AFRICAN Rio+20 held in Nairobi from 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2012. This was the end of the Rauka Campaign and to collect ideas from east African countries and make an African Declaration to be sent to Rio de Janeiro.

### *IMCS Rwanda in Networking Towards Sustainable Development*

The IMCS-Rwanda through partnerships and networks is trying to put together Rwandan Youth to have

strong steams that contribute to policy negotiation. This way of working puts people together and can build a global youth voice.

The youth has to campaign for sustainable future. The IMCS- Rwanda is empowering its members and raising their awareness through workshops on sustainable development. We are member of environment and everything that destroys the environment destroys the human being. We have to campaign together and create platform where we can discuss our future.



*The IMCS-Rwanda is a member of IMCS PAX ROMANA International working with the catholic students in Rwanda. IMCS Rwanda works in 8 universities and institutions of higher learning in the country and has around 6500 members. The organization is involved in environmental actions, good governance and capacity building of Christian students. It aims to be the voice of the vulnerable people and the driver of network building towards sustainability in RWANDA.*







«Ils pourront couper toutes les fleurs, ils n'empêcheront pas la venue du printemps», which in English means “they can cut off all the flowers, but they will not prevent spring from coming”. This sentence was taken from a page that contained some orders from the French May. I am quoting it because it evokes that hope, that strength that are so characteristic of us youths, the classic idealistic spirit that we have in the eyes of adults. Then it is necessary to ask oneself, “What am I doing in order to preserve that flame that pushes us to be the main actors of change that we want in our society?” It is very common to find young people who are tired of hearing about political matters, it is so normal to look around us and see without really seeing.

Today it is extremely common to hear talk of social awareness, social commitment, aware students, but are we really aware? What is Christ's call for us today? The question may sound like the typical cliché sermon given by a priest during Sunday mass, however, as Christians we should be able to answer such questions to ourselves. You may not find a concrete answer, but we can try to walk in its search.

As university students, we must be aware three things: first the importance of our training as professionals in terms of knowledge acquisition, secondly our education on values, and thirdly our role in society as professionals. That's why our work as university students and Christians is to be aware of the reality around us, to engage with others based on the basic principles that Christ has taught us, and which have their foundation in love. We are called to serve and that means engaging with seeing what we do not see, and making ourselves heard where we are not heard. Many years ago Saint Albert Hurtado said “*Catholics must be the best friends of order, but this is not the immobility imposed from the outside, but the inner balance obtained from acting with justice and charity.*” As you read these words, which probably served as inspiration for many young people, a feeling of echo hangs in the air, like a cycle or hint that still have meaning for those who are young today, not only us Christians, but for anyone who believes in building a more humane world.

Our struggle is not just about chasing ideals often linked to political ideologies, but rather stand up for basic humanizing principles that are essential to maintain the common good and these include protecting and respecting the dignity of others, to work and take responsibility for a society based on love. So today, I as a Christian college student, do I feel part of that social struggle and of the building of a fair country? Am I aware that the only way to change this society is by building it from the inside, by getting involved?

In fact the very Pope, Benedict XVI, in his message on the XLV World Day of Peace on 1 January of this year states that “In order to be true peacemakers [...] we have to be active within our communities and active in raising awareness about national and international issues, and the importance of seeking appropriate ways of redistribution of wealth, promotion of growth, cooperation for development and conflict solving”, so therefore, he as well invites us to be protagonists of our history and put aside the individualistic attitude around us. We understand that our activities often consume us and leave us no room to live as a community, to work for the construction of a new world, but if Christ did it, and gave his life in the attempt, why can't we give our lives to build a better world?

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*Saint Albert Hurtado. (2011). A fire for University. Excerpts from Saint Albert Hurtado's work. Santiago, Centro de Estudios San Alberto Hurtado*

*Benedicto XVI (2012). In the celebration of the XLV World Day of Peace, Rome.*

# Finding Christ in Students

By Kevin Ahern



After nearly fifteen years of involvement in IMCS, it is not easy to think of one event or moment that captures my deep feelings for the mission and charism of IMCS (and ICMICA). My engagement in the movement began in 1998 through IMCS-USA (NCSC) and the UN Team in New York where I worked with Ed Kirchner, the president of IMCS in 1939. Ed knew some of the founding members of the movement, including Fr. Joseph Gremaud. With him, I learned much.

When the IMCS team asked me to write, many images came to mind. As a member of the International Team, I had the honor to be involved in many interesting activities. With the IMCS in Italy (the historic FUCI), I stood next to the corpse of Pope John Paul II as he lay in St. Peter's Basilica. I also had the opportunity to participate in several high level meetings of the United Nations, World Bank, UNESCO, and the Vatican to voice the concerns of IMCS and ICMICA.

While these activities were interesting, the most powerful experiences for me have been the moments of accompaniment, when I literally “broke bread” with students. Like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), these experiences of sharing food with students revealed Christ and the real meaning of IMCS to me.

I vividly remember visiting with the president of IMCS-South Africa (ACTS) at Limpopo University, where I was warmly welcomed into the student community. I was deeply moved by their generosity and hospitality—even when there were so few resources (and food) to share. Christ was present.

Christ also became visible in a visit to the house of a student leader of IMCS-Bangladesh (BCSCM) in Khulna. I was moved by the Christian faith of her family and the deep generosity offered to me. Christ was also present in the many meals I had with students in other parts of the world from Hong Kong to Jerusalem.

My visits to the Middle East had a deep impact on me as well. Amidst such difficulty, the Catholic students—many descended from the first Christians—witnessed to the mission of IMCS through concerns for social action, spirituality, reflection, and peace. In 2006, we organized a study visit to the young Iraqi refugees in the region. Again, even in the simple homes of refugees, I was met with generosity in the sharing of food. Christ was found in those moments where we could gather around food even when our governments were at war.

IMCS is a very special movement as it brings together students from different cultures and contexts. IMCS members help to bring Christ into the world through their generosity and actions for justice. Although it can be challenging, I have faith that with our co-operation, the Holy Spirit will continue to guide the movement for another 90 years!





# The Church & Our Christian Vocation



## FUCI AND THE II VATICAN COUNCIL

By FUCI Presidenza

On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the II Vatican Council, FUCI (Italian Catholic University Federation) has pursued several initiatives to promote a better knowledge of such an important event for the 20<sup>th</sup> century Christian Church.

Our local groups and regional assemblies have developed thematic trails about the historical context of those years and about the significance of the Vatican Council for the Church and the society of that time. Furthermore, a lot of our university groups have studied the conciliar Constitutions and a few other official documents of the Council to let university students know them.

As National Presidency we have focused our attention on two important initiatives: interviewing some of the people who took part in the Council or got involved in it, and working for the realization of our 61<sup>st</sup> National Congress in Urbino.

We got in touch with six testimonials of the Council and had the opportunity to meet two Bishops who had played an active role in the Council: Mons. Luigi Bettazzi, Bishop of Ivrea and Mons. Loris Francesco Capovilla, who had been personal assistant of the Pope Giovanni XXIII during the years of the Council.

Two journalists who were responsible for the broadcasting service in Italy at that time (Raniero La Valle, director of an important magazine, and Paolo Ricca, who was also a Protestant minister), as well as the National Presidents of FUCI, Adriana Foti and Italo De Curtis were interviewed and asked how our Federation had lived that event and the changes brought about by the II Vatican Council. (Interviews available on YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/user/fucivideo?feature=resultsmain>). The six interviews, collected in a short film were watched by the audience during the opening of our National Congress.

Our 61<sup>st</sup> National Congress (*"Tantum aurora est". 50 years ago, 50 years later: Church, Council, Contemporaneity*) was held in Urbino from Wednesday 25 to Saturday 28 of April and it was organized in collaboration with the local group. It saw the participation of more than 200 students from all over Italy.

On Wednesday afternoon, for the opening session Mons. Marcello Semeraro, Bishop of Albano and expert on the II Vatican Council; Ghislain Lafont, theologian, and Mr. Xenio Toscani, an historian. On Thursday morning Mr Franco Miano, the President of the Italian Catholic Association, Miss Cetina Militello, theologian and scholar of the Council and Fr. Guido Benzi, a Bible scholar gave a lecture about God's Word, conscience and the role of laity in the Church were invited to share their views. The lecture was followed by workshops.

On Thursday afternoon, during the concluding session, a round table discussion was held on the theological developments after the Council with Serena Noceti, theologian, the role of the laity and young people in the evangelization of our society with Enzo Bianchi, Prior of the Ecumenical Monastic Community of Bose, and Mr Marco Cangiotti, Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science.

As we stated in the Introductory Report to the Congress, we believe that today reflecting and talking about the Vatican II is essential to the full understanding of its high influence on the Church and on our society, besides it helps to find out how to realize what the conciliar Constitutions and other official documents teach us. As young Catholic university students we feel the responsibility to make the spirit and the face shown by the Church at that time, live again in order to hope for and trust in a better future and tackle the challenges of our age.

*FUCI Presidenza is a team of leaders of IMCS Italy chosen every two years to run the national movement. They represent all the regions of Italy in terms of the movement's existence. They operate from the Vatican where the national office is based*

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## HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

It is indeed important to engage the international communities, including students and youth, to raise awareness on the adverse impact of climate change. The young people are better positioned to question the current development pattern which continuously ignores the negative impact on environment.

The development discourse has been focusing on economic growth and increase of production of goods, at the cost of the depletion of natural resources. It is the responsibility of our generation to challenge this model of development. In equal manner, the young people should also reflect whether their way of living, which is very much influenced by consumerism, is sustainable and doing justice for others.

On the occasion of its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS), with its commitment to work with those who are made poor and marginalized, is expected to involve in this debate. IMCS should invite its members to address the adverse impacts of climate change from the perspective of human rights. We should not prevent the next generations from enjoying the same rights as we enjoy today. Instead, we need to ensure the dignity and the well being of our Mother Earth, so that our children and grand children can live in harmony with her.

**Budi Tjahjono**

***Former President of IMCS (1999 – 2003)***

***Currently Asia-Pacific Advocacy Officer of Franciscans International, Switzerland and President of NGO Committee on Human Rights in Geneva***



Over the last few years the traumatic effects of climate change have been felt widely throughout the world. We have been witnessing the increasing a number of natural disasters such as floods, drought, increasing of sea level, heat waves, storms, forest fires, salination of agricultural lands in coastal areas, changing and erratic weather patterns and many more which are all linked to global warming. Climate change has always been a part of the history of our Mother Earth. However, the recent changes are induced by human activities. The United Nation Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) confirms it through its report in 2007, expressing the scientific evidence that the recent change of climate is related to the increasing of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which generally is called greenhouse gases.

These threats affect in particular vulnerable people who have a strong and direct link to nature such as peasants, small scale farmers, indigenous peoples, women and children. Unfortunately many of them live in countries which are less prepared to respond to the adverse impact of climate change. The UN has estimated that 262 million people were affected by climate disasters annually between 2004 and 2004. Almost all of them (98 %) live in the developing countries. Tropical cycle hazards have affected around 120 million people every year with an estimated 250.000 people lost their lives from 1980 to 2000. It is very unfortunate that the impact of climate change is not distributed evenly.

The poorer regions and countries, which contribute less to the greenhouse gases emissions, suffer more than the modern and industrialized countries which are historically responsible for the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, especially through the invention of modern industry where the use of oil, gas and other minerals increased exponentially. It is also exacerbated by the increasing consumerism, not only in the developing countries but throughout the planet.

What are the impacts of climate change on human rights? The study of the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2009 confirms that the adverse impact of climate change has affected the effective enjoyment of human rights, more particularly on the right to life, right to adequate food, right to the highest attainable standard of health, right to adequate housing, right to self determination and right to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Therefore, the international community has the responsibility to ensure that all people, regardless of their background, should be able to enjoy those rights without exception and discrimination. The intergenerational perspective should also be considered. If the adverse impact of climate change is not addressed now, the generation in the future will not be able to effectively enjoy their fundamental rights.



# Experiencia Personal



Pax Romana is now over 90 years young. This is an age that should inspire pride in the countless people who have been blessed enough to work for an alternative world in the name of Jesus through Pax Romana. As an organization of lay Catholic intellectuals and students, who use faith and love to promote justice, nothing can diminish the role Pax Romana plays in all the region of the world. For almost a century, young people have been enriched by the journey of service implicit in Pax Romana membership. Pax Romana continues to grow and develop every year and since becoming a representative of the United Nations of Pax Romana in New York, my growth has been unthinkable rapid.

Pax Romana has made me a better Catholic, a better student, and an overall better human being. I am what I am because of the experience I have gained in Pax Romana. While at the World Assembly in Cologne, I was able to revel in the fact that I belonged to an organization with much history and influence worldwide. Even though the international community is experiencing unprecedented chaos, Pax Romana's World Assembly and the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary have reminded me that through God, passion, and a sincere love of justice, all wrongs can be made right no matter how complicated global problems may seem to be. The World Assembly was a time of renewed hope for me. That busy summer of 2011 will forever remain in my heart to keep me strong and prepared for whatever challenges I may face in the years ahead.

*By Christopher Dekki*

# Personal Experience



## A Party of the Memory

Sharing the festivities of the sixtieth anniversary with my friends from MIEC has been for me a reason of profound joy. A beautiful celebration of Memory.

What would we be without memory?

Dazed individuals before a screen where images succeed, the present moment erasing the previous one!

Thanks to Memory we are able to state that IMCS, beyond its current appearance, is also, or above all, the richness of its sixty years of existence.

Nowadays, the International Movement of Catholic Students, despite the crises of our times, has a marvelous wealth of knowledge and experience, a promise for a renewal.

A common wealth of knowledge and experience, nourished mainly by the international presence, which is therefore a constituent of the movement's name.

That is indeed the life of the international team, which commits today to opening new horizons for all of its members, developing the enormously rich experience that underlies in its memory.

*By Magdalena Dourron  
Assistant of the International Team  
Since 1978*



# Personal Experience

## A GRACED NIGHT OF CONFLUENCE AND DIVERGENCE

**It's** Saturday night and a night for the PEACE PRAYER outreach at Geylang. The regular Saturday night-walk is an initiative blessed and encouraged by the Association of Major Superiors of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei due to the burning issue of migration and illegal human trafficking/modern slavery.

The evening began with a para-liturgy led by Cecelia Ee where we experience a confluence of mind and heart that is infused with God's grace. A group of 16 of us, young and adult professionals, nuns, brother, priests of the Franciscan Missionary of Mary, Good Shepherd, Order of Franciscan Friar, and Jesuits, was comfortably seated around a glass-top roundtable. We paused to ponder over the introductory prayer and shared. Mal's sharing particularly struck a cord of resonance in many of us. She is a young professional from the Ministry of Society and Family (MSF) and the parish of St. Joseph.

"Most of my friends would be out clubbing and partying on a Saturday night like tonight," she chuckled, "and they exhorted me to get a life," she added. "But my parents are supportive of me. And I have a life too in the giving and sharing the unconditional love of God with those girls on the streets of Geylang," she concluded. She shared about her experiences with friends, urging them to see the wounded sides of these girls in the sex industry. Her wish is that more young people will come and see for themselves and thus be "lured" by God into such a walk that is filled with consolation, delight, above all, surprises.

Others shared too their thoughts. "Since joining the PEACE PRAYER OUTREACH a year ago, I have stayed with the questions and the search and found myself growing in understanding that has enriched my life as a Franciscan." "Since the curial staff in Rome, from Fr. General of the Society of Jesus to his assistants, have decided to translate the proximity to the poor into weekend ministry, I too felt urged to re-choose to return to the margin, to encounter God in the girls coerced into this exploitative industry." "I came because have been invited and I would like to gain another experience."

After the prayers, those present were divided into groups and we left for Geylang. The night-walk just abound in divergent yet delightful surprises.

The encounter of 3 lay missionaries from the US who came with "I-know-it-all" attitude, carved in stones of pre-conceived theologies (e.g. pain the their joints denotes demonic possession) that translates into prayer of deliverance without sensitivity to the context, background, emotions and needs of the girls seems so offensively misplaced. There was no attempt to work with local missionary groups and no effort to contextualize their understanding of the girls who are so diverse in a situation so complex ( they hail from China, India, Cambodia, Laos, Singapore and Thailand. Some are as young as 13-14. Others just arrived 4 weeks ago).



**Fr. Jojo M. Fung is a Catholic priest belonging to the congregation of the Society of Jesus commonly known as the Jesuits. He is a Malaysian and a member of the chaplaincy team for the IMCS Asia Pacific regional office**

The swoop of the anti-vice squads stirred an air of panic in the alleys at the latter part of our walk. The ladies who were parading the streets abruptly scurried away into the houses and the front gate was hurriedly locked by the pimps. The ladies were treated like 'commoditized and financed' goods in a stall, only to be taken out and hidden from sight during the raid.

It was so demeaning and dehumanizing. It was such an agonizing sight to the heart!

Arising from the goodness of his heart, an elderly pimp of Chinese origin from Singapore shared his thoughts, "this is beyond the call of doing good. We have to do whatever we can to alleviate their suffering. Poverty in their countries has driven them to this. They earned so little that a bottle of water is shared among 4-6 of them. Their lives are so miserable."

On the other hand, the night was dotted with moments of God's "breaking forth" that indelibly marked us. I remembered two striking surprises.

Upon receiving the packet of goodies with deep gratitude, a Singaporean lady of Indian origin stood up from her chair, gently held two of us by the hands and uttered a spirited prayer of blessing, "Bless all the Christian sisters and brothers who bring the Holy Spirit to us. May the Holy Spirit fill their hearts. Bless them as they go around and offer the gifts of love tonight."

**Continue —>**



## A GRACED NIGHT OF CONFLUENCE AND DIVERGENCE

The 'mission-to-the-ladies' has become a mission-in-reverse – she claims her dignity and right as a Hindu believer to shower God's blessings upon us. She mentioned to us that she has read the whole bible except the book of Revelation. God has surprised us through this lady who equalized and reciprocated the generosity of the 'outreachers' of PEACE PRAYER. The 'giver of gifts' from the dominant society becomes the recipient of blessings from the 'receivers of gifts' at the margin of society.

In another street where the ladies are from China, one of them requested for a second packet and when she was given, she immediately replied, "can I offer you a cold drink?" When we said "yes" she was beaming with joy when she passed the bottle to us. Indeed, there was a confluence, a flow of joy from the ladies to us.

They unleashed a latent capacity to reciprocate the delight in our hearts in the personal encounter through engaging us in a brief conversation that normally ends in an assuring embrace (with the ladies of PEACE PRAYER) that affirms their inherent worth as women who suffer the social stigma and the violence of the systemic evil of illegal human trafficking.

This regular social ministry has great potentials. Many have come and see, a few stayed though others have left. Geylang with the ladies is a privileged space where the 'outreachers' periodically experience the God who is born on the margin of society in a manger, only to be a reject of society due to the radicalism of his boundary-shattering Kingdom-message of God's compassion, justice and mercy, a way of life and mindset so deeply rooted in love of God and neighbor.

May those who come bring their talents to bear on the ministry. May their talents develop the ministry by deepening and sharpening the sensibility of the 'outreachers', capacitating the ministry to denounce the systemic evil through documentation, media-release and publication, even dialogue with the relevant authorities to ensure the collective-individual rights of the ladies to a safe environment and sustainable future, especially those who are underage, broken and dispirited, in body and heart.



# Leadership:

## A Vocation to Nurture

OUR ROLE AS STUDENT LEADERS: ACADEMICS + FAITH = HUMANITY



My first experience in this new role was at the III World Congress on the Pastoral Care of International Students in Rome. I participated with the Canadian delegation, and many of the other country delegations had student participants from Pax Romana. IYCS was invited and IMCS outgoing IT members at the time were invited as speakers.

This has been the first time the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant Peoples has invited university students to engage in the sessions. They wanted us to understand the lived experiences of international students and the local students who accompany them through their time at university, so that together we could better identify the guidance campus ministry could offer to international students. This congress understood that as

easily as students can embrace and appreciate a new culture, we can also just as easily be lost in that new culture, and lose sense of our own in the process (or upon our transition back home). When experienced in this way, culture becomes a challenge to the student who returns to their home country and re-integrate into their community.

The question that was raised: ‘how do we integrate culture with education?’ and the answer was: ‘campus ministry.’ Although university prepares students to do well academically, especially in the case of international students, it can lack in preparing leaders who will be able to contribute to building a community that is good and just. So campus ministries hold the integral role of providing students with a faith-life that encourages them to share their culture with the host country and to find and use the skills that will allow them to succeed in their home country.

With a strong presence as Pax Romana student leaders, we were able to model how academic-life *can* integrate with faith-life with the international family we have built across our national movements. The leaders of the Church that were present looked upon us as students who are already being actively formed as leaders, as students who *want* to be leaders.

Pope Benedict XVI, in his address to the congress called the university “laboratories of humanity.” As an international family, our movement has shown its capacity to accompany university students as actual agents of social change through their academic career than be just thinkers.

**I**n an increasingly globalized world, we encounter different cultures on a regular basis. As young adults, most of us have grown up with an understanding of a world that is totally interconnected. Most of us cannot even envision what the world might be like without it. Our generation has accessibility to so many forms of cultural and social exchange that our parents and grandparents might not have had the opportunity for during their undergraduate studies, if they were able to attend university at all.

But in Pax Romana, we see a tradition over our history of an international movement whose mission has been to build solidarity among our nations that celebrate our different cultures, even amongst the differences each has. Our movement has a culture of its own that values bringing peace, justice, and solidarity to the world around us. Our common threads are our identity as Catholics, our work as student leaders, and our gifts as critical thinkers.

At our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, I learned from former Pax Romana students (now ICMICA members) why this movement was formed and what it allowed us to be: students with a love for the university and a love for the Church, who wanted to use their critical thinking learned on campus, to respond to the issues of our contemporary world in a Catholic way. This message and mission that I understand through our intergenerational dialogue with ICMICA members, has helped me immensely in the work I now do with Pax Romana as North American Co-ordinator.

**By Katrina Laquian,**  
*IMCS North American Co-ordinator*

# International Team



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***Charles Ochero Cornelio***

***Secretary General***

***Camila Jara Aparicio***



***Internacional Chaplain***

***Fr. V. Henry Jerome, SJ***



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# Notable Former IMCS Leaders

For over 90 years, IMCS has been engaged in forming leaders for the Church and society. Notable former leaders include:

## ***Heads of State/Government***

*Pierre Werner;*

*Alcide De Gasperi,*

*Konrad Adenauer,*

*Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo;*

*Aldo Moro,*

*Giulio Andreotti,*

*Rafael Caldera,*

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*Veronese Vittorino,*

*António Guterres*

## ***Theologians, Church Leaders and Bishops***

*Rosemary Goldie,*

*Bishop Emiliano Guano,*

*Gustavo Gutiérrez,*

*Albert Nolan,*

*Enrique Dussel,*

*María Pilar Aquino,*

*Bishop François Lapierre*

## ***Saints***

*Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati,*

## ***A Pope***

*Pope Paul VI*