

LAY MISSION PARTNERS PARTICIPATION IN INTERCONTINENTAL ASSEMBLY

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

OCTOBER 2014

Assemblies are held throughout the Good Shepherd Congregation every six years, in preparation for Congregational Chapters. The Asia Pacific Intercontinental Assembly was held in Kuala Lumpur in October 2014 in preparation for the Congregational Chapter 2015.



(Left to right: Mrs Susanna Kei Kanayama, Japan. Ms Cecilia Sevilla, Philippines. Ms Arlina Soerjanto, Indonesia. Ms Nisansala Perera, Sri Lanka/Pakistan. Ms Tan Poh Cheng, Singapore/Malaysia. Mrs Kim Hea Jeong, Northeast Asia. Ms Sashi Natarajan, Central East India/Nepal. Sister Noelene White, Chair of the Partnership Team, Australia/New Zealand. Mr Jason Furtado, South West India. Ms Theresa Symons, Singapore/Malaysia. Ms Rhonda Cumberland, Australia/New Zealand.)

Participants were invited to share reflections upon the experience.

"WHAT EXPERIENCE / VALUE DO YOU CHERISH AND TAKE BACK FROM YOUR PARTICIPATION AT ICA, OCTOBER 2014?"



Jason Furtado – Province of South West India

'We may not do great things, but we can certainly do small things in a great way', said Mother Theresa. This probably sums up my emotions as I left Malaysia after attending the AP-ICA 2014.

Being 'blessed among all the women' there, gave me a unique perspective on how I saw the Good Shepherd gathering as an *uber*-progressive movement that was truly universal in more ways than one.

Concepts that moved me to develop my personal mission were:

1. Rediscover Cosmo centric spirituality in my daily life and mission.
2. A feeling of oneness with the mission and congregation.
3. The richness of the Asia Pacific region as a resource pool for networking.
4. Realities of the Asia Pacific region with relation to human trafficking, Migration and human rights.
5. Methodology of missioning with a strong spiritual foundation based on the current times.
6. Questioning myself daily, on the purity of my mission and the ripple it sends to the waves of the Congregation, in response to the needs of the times, today.
7. A daily examination of conscience of 'where is my voice?' as a Good Shepherd Lay Mission Partner.
8. An understanding of the need to enhance the support structure of the mission with modern networking and information technology.
9. A daily promise to 'leave no one behind'.
10. A clear understanding that 'our Mission is defined by the people we serve.' What an ever-inspiring thought!!

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity given as co-responsible partners in mission.

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"In you, my dear ones, is founded my hope" – St. Mary Euphrasia



Sashirekha Natarajan - Province of Central East India/Nepal

It was a profound experience of realizing my calling for His mission through my participation at ICA. These few days have been a journey of spiritual enrichment. It has broadened my horizons and evoked a deep sense of responsibility to fulfil SME's dreams and aspirations for the Good Shepherd Mission across the world. The activities of discovering our potential, and evolving realizable strategies to work towards our common vision were

I know that the road ahead is challenging. But the bonds and strong relationships that have been reinforced at ICA, gives me greater courage to surge forth in order to save souls. I have the confidence that the network we have established will help us to support each other and work co-responsibly for the cause of rescuing and empowering women and children.

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Promise of tomorrow



Rhonda Cumberland - Province of Australia/New Zealand

This gathering has been one of great promise and excitement. It has presented new opportunities for Good Shepherd communities to strengthen our internationality. I have the hope that we can establish a structure for effective cross-border networking to foster collaboration in the promotion of a common mission identity. A common identity which emphasizes the empowerment of women and girls who are on the margins. This will require us to collectively define and allocate specific tasks that need to be achieved within a specific timeline. At each stage of this process communication is key to a successful outcome.

Establishing internationality will reinforce our common identity as well as the presence of Good Shepherd charism worldwide. The conversations during the sessions have been most liberalizing and the atmosphere here is one of trust and belief. I am confident that we have the capacity, resources, energy and zeal to further develop the internationality of Good Shepherd mission.

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Nisansala Perera - Province of Sri Lanka/Pakistan

My involvement with the Good Shepherd Sisters provided me this opportunity to be involved in APICA and this in turn has opened new avenues for a deeper involvement with the mission at the international level. I was filled with joy and was very touched with the confidence shown by the Asia Pacific Circle of Leaders in selecting me (to attend the Congregational Chapter 2015). I also feel very blessed for this opportunity to represent and be a part of the voice for Asia Pacific. I believe that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide me.

The Chapter theme “Energized by the Spirit, we risk together for mission” resonates as a call in me to transcend local cultural barriers. It is also a call to risk together to move the mission not only domestically but also beyond borders. Through APICA, I have learnt more about co-responsibility and I look forward to strengthening our networking ties at the Chapter next year so that we can be effective mission partners nationally, regionally and internationally.

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Maria Cecilia Sevilla – Province of Philippines

True to the theme, "energized by the Spirit we risk together for mission" is how I summed up my experience at the ICA. The personal and group sharing was inspirational. I am in awe of the passion and dedication of each one on fulfilling the Good Shepherd mission. As a Lay partner we have already embraced and owned the Good Shepherd charism and spirituality.

I am now challenged to respond to what I can do better as a Good Shepherd Mission partner. We face many difficulties in accomplishing our Partnership programs like changing the mindset of both sisters and lay partners towards shared responsibility, authority and decision making. Yet, we also have reason to celebrate as a significant success facilitated by the 6-year effort to implement the Partnership program in terms of formation, organizational level, attitudinal changes and sister- lay relationship. It is a long process but the point is we have started our journey in propelling a better partnership in our region. The challenge is how to sustain it.

We are all agents of change. We do not let things happen but make things happen. We are called to take RISK for the Mission.

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Arlina Soerjanto – Province of Indonesia

It was the most memorable and inspiring experience to participate in ICA. I felt at home amidst all the Good Shepherd fraternity and made many friends. It was an atmosphere of warmth and oneness. The sessions by Sister Rekha were thought provoking and I am truly inspired to be like the midwives, ready to RISK TOGETHER for the growth of the mission. The activities by Jill were powerful; the reflections are still fresh in my mind and I am energized and motivated to partner with the sisters to work for the Mission that God has entrusted upon me.