

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION OF THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN WORKERS (ICYCW)



Activity Report 2018

Prepared by the International Secretariat of the ICYCW

ICYCW-CIJOC

Via dei Barbieri 22-00186

Tel. /Fax: +39 066865259

Email: cijoc.icycw@gmail.com

Web: www.cijoc.org

Photo of participants at the 9th International Congress of the ICYCW held in Seoul, South Korea in Aug-Sept 2016.

CONTENT

Abbreviations

Introduction

Juridical status

Presences of ICYCW around the world

Work of the Coordination

- A) Leaders development
- B) Representation
- C) Chaplaincy

Organization of the Coordination

- ✓ Training Commission
- ✓ Chaplaincy Commission
- ✓ Finance Commission
- ✓ Regional Commissions
- ✓ The International Secretariat

Conclusion

Acknowledgment

Abbreviations

YCW: Young Christian Workers

ICYCW: International Coordination of Young Christian Workers

IC: International Congress

WYD: World Youth Day

ILO: International Labour Organization

AMECEA -Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa

GCM-General Committee Meeting

EART-East Africa Regional Training

WMCW-World Movement of Christian Workers

WWC-World Council of Church

CCIG-International Catholic Centre of Geneva

EARC-East Africa Regional Commission

TEVETA-Vocational Education and Training Authority

REM- Rencontre Europeenne de Militants (Meeting of European YCW leaders)

Introduction

The International Coordination of Young Christian Workers (ICYCW) is an International Coordination of autonomous Young Christian Worker (YCW) National movements around the world. It was created to be at the service of the national YCW Movements all over the world. Its main objective is to help existing movements to grow and develop by remaining faithful to the fundamental objectives of the YCW and its founder.

The priorities of the period 2016-2020 were guided by the ICYCW future plan developed during the 9th International Congress of the ICYCW. The priority areas adopted were:

- Leaders development
- Representation
- Finances
- Chaplaincy

Juridical status

The ICYCW is a non-profit International Youth Organization for the evangelization and education of young people in the world of work recognized by the Holy See through the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life.

Presence in the world

The ICYCW is present in;

East Africa: Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia.

West Africa: Nigeria, Togo, Benin, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea Conakry, Ivory Coast.

Central Africa: Rwanda, Burundi, Chad, Central Africa Republic, Congo Brazzaville, Cameroon.

Indian Ocean Islands: Madagascar, Mauritius, Rodriguez, Reunion.

Middle East: UAE (Dubai), Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Holy Land – Jerusalem, Holy land – Bethlehem. **Latin America:** Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Ecuador, Haiti, Peru.

Asia: India (South and Central), Cambodia, Philippines, China (Handan), South Korea

Europe: Portugal, Spain, England & Wales, Italy, Malta, Hungary, France.

Work of the Coordination

A) Leaders Development

Leaders' development is achieved through formation programs, trainings and exchanges which are organized at International, Regional, and National level.

➤ International level

ICYCW General Committee Meeting (GCM) 2018



The General Committee Meeting of the International Coordination of Young Christian Workers was held during 8th-10th February 2018 in Rome, Italy. It is implemented according to the new resolution on the ICYCW Structure which was made during the 9th International Council 2016. It is made up of the International Secretariat members, a representative from each coordinating movement from Asia, Middle East, Europe, West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa and Islands of the Indian Ocean and a

representative from each of the other commissions. The main purpose of the meeting was to review the work of the coordination and take decisions on matters relating to the work plan, budget and any urgent issue that may not be postponed until the next international congress.

During the GCM the regional commission and ICYCW Commissions (Training, Finance, Chaplaincy and Communication Commissions) made a presentation based on *Leadership, Chaplaincy, Representation, Finance and General* which were indicated on the preparatory document of GCM by the regional representatives except Latin America. Similarities and common points were noted. The international Secretariat also gave a presentation on the activity that was done through the coordination from September 2016-2017.

The participants actively participated in group work based on the following guide questions:

- ✓ How do we create a clear strategic plan for *Leadership, Chaplaincy, Representation, Finance and Communication*?
- ✓ What are the important areas for ICYCW Work in these areas - *Leadership, Chaplaincy, Representation, Finance and Communication*?

Finally, at the end of the group work the participants set the priority according to the discussion results.

Training

During the GCM training was given by Fr Wency on the theme "International Solidary Training in communication and finance". The group discussion was organized during the session with the guide line questions such as: "What is solidarity, communication and solidarity in finance."

Outcomes of the Meeting

Resolution on the Future of the International Secretariat

The GCM of February 2018, made up of representatives of Coordinating Movements passed the following resolution except West Africa. West Africa region voted against this resolution.



As an emergency measure, following the resignation of Noella Subin Song, the General Committee proposes that the post of General Secretary be advertised as a four year mandate from 2018 to 2022. The General Committee also proposes in conjunction with the above resolution that the mandate of Idy Balberan be extended for two years. Idy will continue her work as Treasurer for a further two years. The position will then be open for a vote at the next International Council in 2020.

After reviewing the whole session of the GCM the strategic plan was developed based on local, national, regional and international realities. (For further information see the Annex 1).

The International Secretariat made a presentation on the ICYCW Provisional Budget. The Executive Committee (regional commission members) and the international secretariat members approved the provisional budget for 2017-2020 and the provisionary budget of September 2017- August 2018.

International Seminar

The Indonesia seminar was held on the theme “Reshaping the Future of Work in the midst of digitalization, ecological changes, insecurity and unemployment” from 11th -18th August 2018 in Bandung, Indonesia. It brought together young people from different part of Asia. It was organized by International YCW. The ICYCW participated in this seminar and shared the experience of young people regarding different examples of challenges faced by the YCW in Asia as well as other parts of the world. The discussions in the Seminar mainly focused on flexibilization of work, unemployment, digitalization and ecological changes.

➤ **Regional level**

AMECEA Conference

Catholic Bishops from the AMECEA (Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa) Region have converged in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the 19th AMECEA plenary which was held from 13-23rd July 2018 under the theme “Vibrant Diversity, Equal Dignity, and Peaceful Unity in God in the AMECEA Region”.

The 19th AMECEA plenary brought together about 100 bishops from the AMECEA region. The ICYCW participated and had a chance to give a presentation about YCW activities in the AMECEA region. East African Regional Commission members took responsibility to represent ICYCW.

Monicah Wanjiru from YCW Kenya (Former General Secretary of ICYCW) and Fr Christopher Sichinga regional Chaplain from Malawi participated in the 19th AMECEA Plenary. The Objectives of the presentation focused on: Bringing attention to the existence of YCW in the region, seeking official recognition of the movement at the regional level, presenting realities of young workers in the region, seeking collaboration in the evangelization of young people and the Extension and development of YCW in the region.

East Africa Regional Training and Exchange

During the 2016 International Council (IC) of the International Coordination of the Young Christian Workers (ICYCW) held in Seoul, South Korea it was resolved that East Africa and the Islands of the Indian Ocean Regional Commission be split into two Commissions for easy administration. Thus a resolution was passed to have the East Africa Regional Commission (EARC) and the Islands of the Indian Ocean Regional Commission. In this regard, therefore, the EARC comprises the following member countries: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Malawi. Uganda was made the Coordinating Movement of the EARC.



During the 2016 IC, delegates from EARC developed an action plan which included, among others, extension of the movement into Zambia and the South Sudan, and having a regional leaders' training workshop in Malawi. It was planned that the leaders' training workshop would take place in 2018. It is in view of the foregoing that the East Africa Regional Training and Exchange was held on the theme *"Building the Future of Young People through Innovation and Entrepreneurship"* in Malawi at Our Lady of Africa Conference

Centre in Lilongwe from 25th August-1st September 2018. Young leaders from Young Christian Workers (YCW) movements in East Africa region were engaged in seven days of meetings, sharing, learning, reflection, exchange, and deepening their understanding on the realities experienced by the young people from Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zambia and Malawi.

There is currently no YCW in Zambia. Nevertheless, youths from Zambia were invited to the training so that they could experience what the movement is about. This was in line with the EARC's action plan to extend the movement into Zambia. In attendance were also delegates from YCW Rwanda, MIJARC (Rwanda), Kolping International (Uganda) and the local delegates and participants. The local participants included representatives from the Episcopal Conference of Malawi.

Presentations by Invited Speakers



Mr. Kamwendo of UNDP making his presentation

A number of issues were tackled throughout the training. There were thought provoking, educative, informative and inspiring presentations made by both local and international presenters. There was a case study presentation by Kolping International about JACODEWU's experience in Uganda. An inspiring presentation was also made by YCW Rwanda which showed that, through innovation and entrepreneurship, the movement in Rwanda has created jobs for young people and is contributing positively in the society.

Presentations from TEVETA and UNDP were an eye opener especially for YCW Malawi. Through the presentation it was noted that young people may be trained in entrepreneurship once they are organized and have identified a particular thematic area to be trained on. TEVETA, it was learnt, supports young people with entrepreneurship trainings at a small cost or at no cost at all. UNDP on the other hand highlighted the relevance of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal number 8 with particular emphasis on the role young people can play in realizing this sustainable development goal.

National Movements



Part of exhibitions by YCW Kenya

The delegates discussed a wide range of issues. The delegates also exhibited their local entrepreneurship initiatives. It was noted that young people from other national movements are making money from various entrepreneurship initiatives. The initiatives are either at an individual level or at the movement level. For example, YCW Uganda makes peanut and detergent. YCW Kenya prides in handwork. They make necklaces, bracelets and bangles, among others. They also have branded YCW materials. YCW Malawi displayed YCW branded materials.

Visiting a Local Entrepreneur

On 30th August, 2018 the participants visited a local youthful entrepreneur, Felix Nankhuni who is into poultry and piggery farming. He has a farm along the Mchinji Road in the Western side of Lilongwe. He informed the delegates that he makes an average sum of K70, 000.00 (about US\$95) a day from selling eggs. He also indicated that the demand for eggs is very high and that he cannot satisfy the market. He tipped the participants on the best farming practices and encouraged them to take entrepreneurship



seriously. Apart from farming, Felix is also working. He is a graduate of Economics from the University of Malawi.

The training brings some outcomes like strengthened leadership capacities for engagement and action, put in place a communication strategy that promoted Christian solidarity, consolidated a record of good practices and share with developmental partners (ILO, regional and International Institutions) and developed a networking and collaboration strategy.

Indian Ocean Islands Regional Training and Exchange

The Indian Ocean Islands regional training and exchange programme was held on the theme “Hope into Responsibility” in Antananarivo, Madagascar from 6th -12th September 2018. The main objective of the meeting was to reinforce training on the review of life and provide more examples and experience for the young leaders, help the movement identify and train young leaders who will take on real responsibility in the movement, invite and train more chaplains and adult companions, strengthen the national work of YCW and reinforce and help to ensure the continuity of the previous training formation.

Training and Exchange

The first day training programme included an exchange of the difference realities of the region, a debate among the delegates for identifying the needs of the region, discussion of the needs of adult companions. This led to identifying four challenges of the YCW in the region such as digitalization, good, effective accompaniment, unemployment and financial Education.



During the group discussion session the young people were able to reflect on the value of church and YCW in Society. The discussion showed how for young people it is very important to make change in society and help the church. The session helped the young leaders to take on responsibilities and understand their role as a leader.



In addition to this there was also exchange on communication and the effect of digitalization in the region. Finance education is also one of the challenges of the region. After the exchange the young leaders understood why communication is important for having good coordination in the region and the value of their contribution.

The Training also focused on finance education and the Review of Life. The young people made a reflection on finance and were given an activity

for the review of life to help them think how they will be able raise awareness in financial education. Fr Bernard gave chaplaincy training for some local chaplains who came from the region with regard to the training of the young people.

Regional Commission Meeting

After the regional training and exchange the regional commission had a meeting for two days. The main purpose of the meeting was to evaluate and then plan the implementation of the future plan of the region. The commission had an opportunity to meet with Bishop Odon from the diocese of Antananarivo, Madagascar.

European Presidential Meeting



The European YCW National Presidents' meeting was held in Porto, Portugal from 22-23 May 2018. The main objective of the meeting was focused on the European Militants Meeting (REM) and Chaplaincy Training (July 2019) and the situation of the European Commission. The delegates came from Spain, France, Portugal and Italy.

The proposal date of the next REM meeting is confirmed and the meeting will be held from 25th - 29th July 2019. The main objective of the meeting will be to promote and share experiences of YCW, to strengthen the YCW Movements with more fragile realities, to give training on decent work, to promote a space for discussion on the various themes that concern young workers and to spread the movement in Europe.

➤ *National Level*

National Training in YCW Malawi

The ICYCW conducted training for YCW Malawi members in Finance & Resource Mobilization; Review of Life; ICYCW International Dimensions; The Role of the Youth Chaplains. The East African Regional Commission's Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Christopher Sichinga was also among the facilitators for the YCW training.



Preparation meetings

The ICYCW President held a number of preparation meetings for East Africa Regional Training and exchange programme which was scheduled from 25th August - 1st September 2018 with various stakeholders in Malawi.

Upon arrival in Malawi, the ICYCW President held a meeting with the YCW Malawi President Augustine Mulomole. The following were the agenda items and action points that were discussed: Review of the programme for the ICYCW President's visit to Malawi; updates on progress made towards the preparations for the Regional Conference and brief update on the progress of the YCW Malawi movement.

The ICYCW President also held a meeting with the National Youth Chaplain in Malawi, Rev. Fr. Valerina Mtseka. The following are the issues that were discussed: the reality of chaplaincy in the country, chaplaincy training preparation in the region and experience sharing on the reality of chaplaincy development around the world.

Meeting with the YCW National Executive Committee

The ICYCW President held a meeting with the YCW Malawi national executive. The following are the action points that were discussed: revision of the programme to be sent to national movements by end April 2018, an official letter to the Bishops' conference to be sent by end April 2018, responsibility of YCW Malawi as the main local organizing committee together with the necessary sub-committees, the work of IS to make the preparation documents ready for circulation to the national movements and the documents to be ready by May, 2018, and the fine tuning of the proposal document to be sent to prospective donors by June 2018.

Meeting with the Bishop

The ICYCW President, YCW Malawi and the East African Regional Commission's Chaplain held a meeting with Archbishop Tarsizius Ziyaye of the Archdiocese of Lilongwe where the regional conference will be held. Archbishop Ziyaye represented the Bishops' Conference. The following are the action points that were discussed:

- That the Catholic Laity Council in Malawi should be notified about the conference.
- The Archbishop was impressed with the YCW movement and has encouraged the leadership to be vigilant with fundraising for the conference.
- The Archbishop has asked the organisers of the conference to work with speed;
- The Archbishop has assured the YCW that the Bishops' conference in Malawi will support the YCW movement by issuing support letters to prospective donors.

National Training in YCW Philippines

The International Secretariat had an opportunity to visit YCW Philippines from 23-24 July 2018. The visit mainly focused on sharing and discussion about the present situation, to see what is happening in the movement in the Philippines. The present reality is that they have new young leaders but they are always afraid to make a decision for themselves and are not sure how to continue the mission of the movement.

To the sharing of experiences for the last 6 months in the team they are trying their best to face the challenges with the help of the lay chaplains of YCW Philippines to make some reflection what are possible ways to do, not that just to thinking about the mission YCW but also to thinking how to empower the new young leaders.

During the discussion the sharing of their worries helped them to pick themselves up and to continue to see the Truth of reality that everyone feels like this. This helped them understand that this is a process of learning, as our founder said "allow the young people to make mistake because in this way they will learn how to do the right



thing”. From truth of Faith these young leaders believe that God would not give them this mission if they were not able to carry it out. They should always have hope to continue the mission of YCW in the Philippines and commit themselves to SEE-JUDGE-ACT in order to develop themselves and to help other young leaders in their school, neighbourhood, and places of work.

National Training in YCW Ethiopia

YCW Eparchy of Emdibir

A training and exchange programme was organized by the International Secretariat for young workers in the Eparchy of Emdibir on April 20th 2018. The Training mainly focused on leadership development and finance education. It brought 70 young workers from different parishes. During the session the participants shared their leadership experience and exercised review of life on their real situations. They were also inspired by the activities that the YCW members are involved in, in different parts of the world.



YCW Emdibir currently doing a great job in society as well as in pastoral activities in the church. Some parishes they have their own land and can work on the agricultural activities for income generation for YCW and parishes. At the end of the training the young people developed a four year action plan.

YCW Hosanna Vicariate

ICYCW Leadership training and exchange was held in Hosanna Vicariate, Ethiopia on 3 November 2018. The Training was mainly focused on the historical background and Vision and Mission of ICYCW/YCW, the Three Truths, the Review of Life and YCW Impact around the world. 50 YCW leaders from 20 parishes participated in this training. They also did experience sharing and exchanges on the reality of young people at the local level. The YCW Members were inspired by the impact of YCW around the world.

Currently, the YCW members in Hosanna Vicariate are also doing an action campaign on “Migration” because many young people are migrating to South Africa and the Middle East from this region. YCW Hosanna in collaboration with the national ycw as well as the International Coordination of Young Christian workers (ICYCW) are working on Migration and unemployment issues. Migration and unemployment is the action campaign of YCW Ethiopia for the next 5 years.



YCW Harar Vicariate

ICYCW visited the vicariate of Harar in Ethiopia for a YCW Training and Formation program of young people on 20th November 2018. The training and formation program mainly focused on an introduction to YCW and ICYCW, YCW Vision and Mission, YCW action and impact around the world (Examples from YCW England and Wales, JOC France, YCW Cambodia, YCW Nigeria, YCW Rwanda, YCW Rodriguez and YCW Paraguay), international dimension, Review of Life and the Three Truths. The program also included the election program at vicariate level. At the end of the program, the new Executive Committee (leaders) was elected to work and coordinate the YCW groups at vicariate level. The Executive committee of YCW was set up for the first time in the history of Harar Vicariate.



During the training the young people developed a new action plan which will implement for the next four years. ICYCW offered sincere congratulations to the newly elected YCW leaders and pledged further support and look forward to productive cooperation with YCW Harar and Ethiopia as well as all national movements around the world. ICYCW will continue its ministry of proclaiming the Good News to young people in or entering the world of work and want to do it with renewed spirit.

Visit to Reunion

Meeting with the Bishop

The International Secretariat visited Reunion YCW from 14th-19th October 2018. On the first day there was a meeting with Bishop AUBRY. Irene presented the young people of Reunion, the International Secretariat and the Indian Ocean Islands regional commission members to the bishop. Afterwards the bishop presented himself by sharing his previous experience in YCW.



Noé and Anne Sophie shared their experience of the regional meeting in Madagascar. They stressed the four needs identified in the regional meeting. The needs are as follows: Accompaniment, Technology, Communication, Job Creation and Finance.

Bishop Aubry explained that there is a difference between the time of Cardjin and now and that YCW should be attentive to this change. In the past there were labourers, now, students are the reality. He talked about the Friendship Chart and how important it is to be connected to each other especially with family members. Bishop Audry concluded by adding how important it is to have an adult as Chaplain or lay companion in the movement. He added that this person can help in terms of experience to continue the YCW mission. He also wants to help by giving some of his time to the

young people to make them understand the mission and vision of YCW. He ended by saying that “young people can change the world and that’s why he encourages the young people to continue YCW in Reunion”.

Field Visit



YCW Reunion young Leaders shared their ecological project and how they use organic materials, that is, the greenhouse at Father Jannick FONTAINE old house. The young people prepare the land using organic materials, they also shared how they began the project from looking for the funds, cleaning and beginning to plant. Some of their challenges are how to group and attract more young people to the Movement and how to respond to unemployment among young people.

Meeting with Lay Chaplain

On the last day we had a short meeting of a group of lay chaplains from Reunion where they had the opportunity to share their worries and concerned about the YCW. They face big challenge on how they will be able to support the YCW properly. They also have a great hope because now they have good recognition from the bishop and also, sharing their challenges, they will be able to look for possible ways forward.

Visit to Mauritius YCW

The International Secretariat visited Mauritius for the second time to make a follow-up to the last visit in September 2017 especially on the development of the leaders and Chaplaincy. The base YCW groups are doing a great job even if they have a lot of challenges in their daily life. The young people shared their experience regarding their family situations, school life, friends, and working experiences.



Some of the challenges shared by the young people indicated that many young people are not close to their family. In school there is too much competition and pressure from friends and family; many of them are using drugs and many of the young woman get pregnant too easily and have an abortion because they need to work and some of their family will not accept them. In addition to the above-mentioned challenge, social media is another concern for young people. Due to this, many

young people have ethical problems and are not responsible in making a balance in their life when using social media.

Chaplaincy

It was an opportunity to meet Fr. Jean Michael Durhone the new YCW Chaplain for YCW Mauritius. He shared his present situation about his chaplaincy role and how he can develop the number of chaplains to accompany the YCW in Mauritius. The new chaplain is very aware of the situation of

the needs of the movement. They developed a training plan for YCW leaders and chaplaincy in 2019.

Finally, there were team building activities and a review of life reflection on digitalization. The young people shared their personal experience in relation to digitalization.

Visit to Republic of Central Africa

Fr Bernard from the ICYCW Chaplaincy Commission visited the YCW Central Africa Republic from 12-19 June 2018. The visit was mainly focused on seeing the reality of YCW in Republic of Central Africa. The JOC of the Central African Republic has a long history of several decades but since 5-6 years, the movement is dormant because of the conflict situation in the country. Long-lasting civilization leads to fears, but especially precariousness in the work, because the entire economy of the country is affected.

Therefore, YCW youth no longer have the necessary forces to have the courage to come together, to envision a better future, it is despair that wins most hearts, and many young people find themselves prisoners of drugs, delinquency or training in armed groups. Christians (Catholics or Protestants) react and want to propose a favorable outcome, for example, Ingrid, which brings together friends, and offers the manufacture of handbags with plastic among its members, many young people between 18 and 30, who are students or workers and who could be people able to revive the JOC in Bangui (capital) and in provincial cities. But for that, we must train leaders and find companions: this is the priority of the movement currently.

National Training in Tchad



The International Secretariat visited YCW Tchad and organized leadership training and finance education from 19-23 Novembre 2018 in Moundou and carried out representation work. There was an opportunity to meet the Bishop Joachim kouraleyo Tarounga in Moundou and Djitangar Goetbe Edmond in Ndjamena and shared with them the needs of the young people for support especially in the development of chaplaincy at local and national level.

During the training the young people shared their experience and identified their challenges such as no good education, unemployment, lack of training, absence of good political policy in the country, early age mirriage.

National Training in Rwanda

The International Secretariat also visited YCW Rwanda for it's 60 years anniversary. For the last 60 years the Movement undertook many projects, such as high school education service, technical education and creating employment for the young people in Rwanda through Agriculture, Metal and Wood work, Handcraft, Hair dressing, Welding and Auto mechanic.

The work of the movement gives inspirations to other YCW members around the world. It was impressive that the Government of Rwanda recognised YCW's role in providing education for street children in the country. It is a great achievement that through it's technical education

programs, YCW Rwanda graduating 200 students every year. Despite all the achievements they are still facing a lot of challenges such as how to reach out to more young workers helping them to face the reality of life and be faithful to the mission of the young christian workers.



On the 60th Anniversary of YCW Rwanda the celebrations were graced with over 50 participants (YCW members and Chaplains) from YCW Malawi, Kenya, Burundi, Uganda and one representative from the International Secretariat of the ICYCW. It was a great honour to be part of this important event and the International Secretariat is grateful for the opportunity to share in the impact of YCW around world.

B) Representation Works

The ICYCW brings the voice of young people to different institutions, organizations and forums at international and continental levels. The following has been achieved in 2018.

❖ The Church

Pre Synod Meeting

On the occasion of the pre-synod Meeting which was held from 19th-25th March 2018, three hundred young delegates from all the countries of the world attended. Eleonora, president of YCW Italy represented the ICYCW and other young people contributed through social media.



Pope at Pre-Synodal Meeting: Young people must be taken seriously Pope Francis commits the Church to listen to young people, “no one excluded”, in preparation for the October Synod of Bishops on the theme: Youth, faith and vocational discernment. Pope Francis opened the Pre-Synodal meeting in Rome on Monday 19th of March 2018 with a provocation: “Too often we talk about young people without asking what they think”, he said. “There are those”, said the Pope, “who tend to “idolize”

youth, and others who prefer to keep young people “at a safe distance”, rather than allowing them to be the protagonists of their own futures”.

The contribution of young people

The Pope cited examples of God speaking through young people in the Bible: Samuel, David and Daniel, for example. He told those present that the Church needs them: “You have been invited as representatives of the young people of the world because your contribution is indispensable”, he said. This is because the upcoming Synod is also, in the Pope’s words: “An appeal to the Church to rediscover a renewed youthful dynamism”.

International Conference on the 3rd Anniversary of Laudato Si'

Nearly three years after the publication of the encyclical *Laudato Si' - On Care for Our Common Home* - some of Pope Francis' prophetic words are continuing to ring in our ears. In *Laudato Si'*, the Pope asked: *"What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to the children who are now growing up?"*

On the 5th & 6th July 2018, the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development organised an International conference held in the Paul VI Hall, Vatican City, to reflect on what has happened to the environment during the last three years and how to plan for the future.

On this conference the ICYCW was represented by Marc Besford from YCW England and Wales, Idy Balberan, the International Treasurer of ICYCW and Maria the YCW President of Spain.



During the two days, participants were reminded of the urgency of dealing with climate change, including the need to adopt carbon-neutral lifestyles and seriously invest in non-carbon energy technologies, in order to keep the global average increase in temperature below the two degrees celsius which was agreed at Climate conference in Paris in 2015.

The conference followed the See-Judge-Act methodology, which is central to the YCW. It attempted to look at the challenges in the area of justice and the environment in a holistic way.

Some of the speakers focused on the crisis in food production, especially for the poor. Others called attention to the plight of migrants and refugees and the lack of understanding and empathy among those living in rich countries. The conference also had 4 parallel groups focusing on areas for Climate Change, Serving Our Common Home, Churches and Religions and Indigenous and Young People.

In his conclusion, Pope Francis expressed his gratitude for the efforts of participants "in the service of care for creation and a better future for our children and grandchildren." Pope Francis encouraged them, saying: "Please continue to work for 'the radical change which present circumstances require.' For 'injustice is not invincible.'"

❖ International Institutions

International Labour Organization (ILO)

The ICYCW is represented every year in the International Labour Conference in Geneva. In 2018, the ICYCW participated in the 107th session of the International Labour Conference which was held in Geneva from 28 May-8th of June 2018. The ICYCW represented by the international secretariat and two young leader each from YCW France and YCW Portugal, took part in the following areas of the agenda; Effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (general discussion), Violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work (standard setting, double discussion) and a recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of Social Dialogue and Tripartism, under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008.

In addition to this, there were side event workshops held on 30th May 2018 on the theme “Tripartism Plus Rethinking Social Dialogue in times of Globalization and Informalization”. This workshop for Catholic Inspired Organizations was jointly organized by the International Catholic Centre of Geneva (CCIG), Kolping International/the German Commission for Justice and Peace (GCJP), the International Coordination of Young Christians Workers (ICYCW), International Young Christian Workers (IYCW), the World Movement of Christian Workers (WMCW) and World Council of Churches. The meeting was hosted at the World Council of Churches (WCC).

On this workshop ICYCW focused on the life of Empowering Migrant workers in France. Ms. Floriane Rodier (National Secretary, YCW France) who shared information about actions undertaken to empower migrant workers in France. She began by quoting migrant youth testimonies concerning the obstacles and discrimination they encountered in trying to find a job and in their daily life in France. She also provided examples of concrete local initiatives undertaken by YCW France to address the immediate needs of migrant youth, such as housing, food, etc. Among others, one specific activity described consisted in offering vocational training in order to provide the needed skills to find a job and gain a minimum income to survive. Other initiatives, aimed at offering places for meeting and sharing, encouraging migrants to value their culture and to participate in the social life of the neighborhoods where they lived.



In addition, Ms. Rodier described the efforts of YCW France to engage in social dialogue in order to improve the living conditions of migrant workers in the country, in particular through the advocacy work of a young representative in the “Conseil économique social et environnemental” of the Parliament; and through coordination and networking with other civil society organizations. In addition, active participation in the National Action Campaign raised awareness and called for concrete steps to be taken to address the situation of unemployed young people, especially young migrants.

She concluded her presentation by referring to the serious crisis created by the current reception policies in France which systematically result in violations of the human rights of migrants. In comparison with migration rates in other regions of the world, the statistical data on migration in Europe is not as alarming as is perceived by the general public. She called for a migration policy that was more focused on the human dignity of the people concerned. Several gaps still exist regarding the participation of migrants themselves in social dialogue as well as inequalities in the treatment of migrants based on their nationality, sex, age etc. The present very difficult situation of migrants in Europe cannot be effectively addressed without removing existing barriers to accessing the Labour market. Only work can ensure they are able to live in dignity.

World Youth Day Second Preparatory Meeting in Panama

The Second International Preparatory Meeting for World Youth Day (WYD) 2019 was held in Panama from 7th-9th June 2018. ICYCW fully participated in this meeting. The meeting was mainly focused on the introduction to the second international preparatory Meeting. Some of the agenda

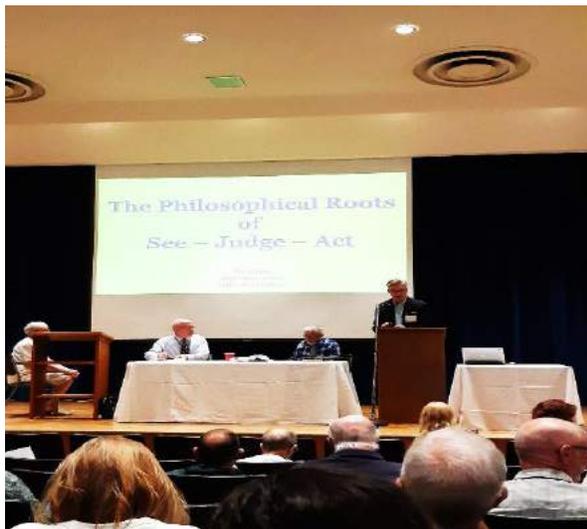
items are: the pastoral preparation of young people for WYD 2019, registration of Pilgrims and volunteers and logistical Aspects of WYD 2019.

Panama City already senses the world youth day event and they are doing a great job for the preparation of WYD 2019. During the preparation meeting the president of Panama was present to discuss some important issues and to give the full support of the government of Panama to the preparation of the next WYD. ICYCW is continuing making a difference through its representation work in the Church and international institutions. Therefore, the International Secretariat of the ICYCW would invited all YCW members around the world to be part of this historical world youth day gathering in Panama in January 2019.



Cincinnati Conference

Mount St. Joseph University in Cincinnati hold a conference on the theme: “Lay Movements as Structures of Grace: Renewing the Legacy of Cardijn, the See-Judge-Act Method, and Catholic Action in the Americas,” It was mainly about young adult Catholics. The tone of the conference was directed toward the world of work, family and neighborhood. The participants drew upon past experience, but only to emphasize the importance of listening to the real experience of today’s young adults.



The Cincinnati conference was dedicated to a person who died more than 50 years ago: Cardinal Joseph Cardijn (1882-1967), the originator of the specialized Catholic Action method and the inspiration for several groups (Christian Family Movement, Young Christian Workers, Young Christian Students and more). The Cardijn method and specialized Catholic Action mostly faded in the late-1960s—at least in the United States. There are Cardijn-inspired groups percolating in Latin America and Africa, conference participants learned. The Cincinnati gathering included representatives from international organizations, the Republic of

Guinea, El Salvador and Chile. Plus, there were representatives from Australia.

The basic premise for Cardijn was different, however he did not start from the notion of bringing people into the church. In fact, he worried that young adult ministry can unwittingly reinforce individualism by conveying the impression that the church is separate from young adult environments. Instead, Cardijn and his movements sought to bring Christianity to young adults in their workplaces and schools and family settings. The basic unit is not the individual who searches

for meaning or faith. The basic unit is a small group, formed among people who work together or study together or live near one another. Thus, ministry is not something *done for* young adults; it is *done by* young adults with an emphasis on their own formation. Success is measured not by how many new people are recruited for parish committees or by how many get involved in liturgical functions. Success is when a Catholic Action group achieves a small improvement in workplace policy or neighborhood relations or school settings.

Several presenters at the conference made the point that talk, talk, talk is not formation. A book club that considers pastoral theology, a speakers' series during Lent, a summer theology update program, or a monthly discussion group about Catholic topics is OK. But these do not really form or retain young adults. The secret ingredient is action. Not run-around activity with only vague goals in mind. No, the key is small focused action directed at a subpar policy or practice in the school, neighborhood or workplace. And then now this must occur a reflection on the action by the entire small group.

The Cardijn method is a tad sophisticated, yet it can be implemented by ordinary people in workaday settings. It requires patience, but it doesn't have to be perfect all the time top-to-bottom, beginning-to-end.

Africa Faith & Justice Network (AFJN) Hosts Briefing on Sudan & South Sudan

International Coordination of Young Christian Workers (ICYCW) has participated on the meeting briefing on Sudan and South Sudan which was held in Washington DC, United States on Wednesday, July 11, 2018. The composition of the participants are included from Africa Faith & Justice Network (AFJN) and staff from several U.S. and international organizations. The event's speakers were Bishop Macram Max Gassis, Emeritus of the Catholic Diocese of El Obeid in Sudan, and John Ashworth, author and analyst on South Sudan who lived and worked in the region for many years.



Bishop Macram began by addressing Sudan's identity challenges. He especially highlighted the plight of the Nuba peoples who fall within his diocese. Nuba peoples are comprised of various indigenous groups who have inhabited mountainous areas of South Kordofan state for thousands of years. People who, as he explained, continue to experience marginalization and ongoing aerial attacks by the government resulting in a humanitarian crisis. He asserted that the "cancer of Africa is tribalism." He also

believes the region has not been on the radar of the international community as much in recent time, despite ongoing human rights violations and violence. He said the government sometimes fuels ethnic divisions but there is also fighting among various groups due to long-standing conflicts. Meanwhile, children and women are always the first victims: many lack access to clean water, half of the country's children are not in school and medical supplies and food donations from humanitarian groups are often stolen by armed groups, never reaching the intended populations.

John Ashworth in his presentation spoke of ethnic fragmentation and United State (U.S) intervention in the crisis. He said with every change of U.S. administration comes a new policy approach toward the region, which can be a disadvantage. The country meanwhile is completely and slowly moving toward a deep fragmentation that seems to have increased since South Sudan gained its independence. These ethnic divisions, he said, make unity impossible and peace building a challenge.



During the Q&A a question was asked about food donations and the safest way to get it to people in need. Both presenters acknowledged the difficulty. The conflict in South Sudan has displaced 3 million people in a country of 12 million. About 2 million are internally displaced and 1 million have fled to neighboring countries, mainly Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda.

Concluding the presentation Bishop Macram Max Gassi called for the appointment of a Bishop for South Sudan as one solution for building peace. But both speakers acknowledged that the humanitarian situation cannot wait: children, as well as adults, continue to die for lack of water, food and medical supplies.

Brussels Conference

The Future of Work Conference was held on the theme: “SHAPING THE FUTURE OF WORK” in Brussels, Belgium by 27th November 2018. A faith-based contribution to the ILO Centenary Initiative- at the EESC (European Economic and Social committee. The main agenda mainly focused on the importance of work from an inter-religious Perspective, Access to work in times of transformations – jobless future or new opportunities for decent work for all?, New forms of labour and flexible working time – start for a more self-determined life or end of job security? And Takeaways for the ILO dialogue and social partners.

Conference of GEPO

The European Group for Workers’ Pastoral Care (GEPO) conference was held in Manchester from 15th-17th of November 2018 for its annual conference to discuss topics around the theme of the Conference: “Social Europe, Workers’ Movements and Social Dialogue - A Common Vision for the European Social Foundation.”

The ICYCW were invited to attend the conference and represent a perspective of young workers in the overall discussions, which were themselves guided over the Conference days by the SEE-JUDGE-ACT method. Marc Besford from YCW England and Wales represented ICYCW to speak up on behalf of young people and many challenges they are facing currently in Europe. There is a lot of turbulence across Europe at the moment and the future of social rights need to be at the top of the agenda.

c) Chaplaincy

ICYCW International Chaplaincy Training and Exchange



The International Chaplaincy Training was held on the theme “A Path to Leadership for Young People” in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 12-17 November 2018. The training was mainly focused on a formation program for Regional Chaplains and Adult Companions for the development of responsibility and leadership among and by young people in 8 targeted regions around the world.

The training was started by the presentation of each region (East Africa, West Africa, Asia, Central Africa, Middle East, Indian Ocean Islands, Europe and Latin America and Caribbean) about the activities done after the last international council. During the training there was a discussion on how to overcome the obstacles to carrying out the tasks listed in the job description of the regional chaplains. In addition to this, the chaplains shared their experience and exchanged chaplaincy training materials. The chaplains also reviewed the chaplaincy future plan of each region and developed a new action plan for the next two years (November 2018-2020).

For follow-up a personal commitment of each regional chaplain was marked on a sheet which was then given to Joan Ramon, ICYCW International Chaplain.

Organization of the Coordination

✓ *Training Commission*

The international secretariat identified one collaborator from YCW England and Wales to the Training Commission in November 2018. The commission held three meetings and in the period between October 2017 and August 2018 and focused most of its work on developing YCW leadership training materials to help in the development of existing and new movements. The commission supported the secretariat in their reflection on the ongoing dialogue between ICYCW and IYCW as well as in their preparation for East Africa and Indian Ocean regional training and exchange in 2018.

✓ *Chaplaincy Commission*

The commission held several meetings and focused on identifying and appointment of the international chaplain and accompanying the members of the International Secretariat. The commission identified the actions required to address the challenges of chaplaincy in national movements around the world. The commission also worked on the preparation of the Regional Chaplaincy Training which was scheduled from 12th-17th November 2018 in Ethiopia. The preparation includes the visa process and organizing the working documents for the Regional Chaplaincy Training.

✓ **Finance Commission**

The finance commission organized several online meetings in 2018. The first face to face meeting was held from 27-28 October 2018 in Rome. The agenda of the meeting was focused on Sharing: how to work together as a commission, review of the things last meeting (what has been done or not done and See the future plan 2017 – 2018), update of the Status of the Finance at the present (Accounting, subscription), project Matrix and update of the pay Pal enlisted.

In addition to this, the commission also discussed possible fund raising activities, donation Campaign, research study for ICYCW, the experience of IS visit to the agencies and feedback 2018, preparation for the 10th International Council discussion, drawing out a plan for the finance for 2 years, audit of the ICYCW account 2015-2018 and finance education.

✓ **Communication Commission**

The international secretariat identified one collaborator from YCW France to the communication commission in 2018. Because of the absence of the General Secretary the commission was unable to organize a meeting in 2018. The new General Secretary, Agnes Monicah will take up responsibility for the communication commission.

✓ **Regional Commissions**

West Africa Regional Commission

In order to implement the future plan adopted at the last international Council, the first face-to-face West African Regional Commission meeting was held at the conference center of the Noviciat of the Son of Charity in Abidjan from 20-25 Septembre 2018. As the Coordinating YCW Movement in West Africa region, YCW Ivory Coast hosted the meeting of the commission. The members of the commission who participated on the meeting were Djemis Jean Nguessan – YCW Ivory Coast, Benedicte Lila – YCW Benin, Justina Awele – YCW Nigeria, Fr Simon Pierre – Chaplain for the regional commission and Fr Simon Mbeté- ICYCW Chaplaincy Commission.



The commission reflected on the regional kit and developed awareness about the role of each regional commission members. The commission also identified the strengths and weakness of YCW movements in the region and developed a plan of action to address the challenges identified. One of the priority identified by the commission were regional leadership development with focus on organizing a regional training and exchange programme in October 2019 which would be hosted by YCW Ivory Coast.

European Regional Commission

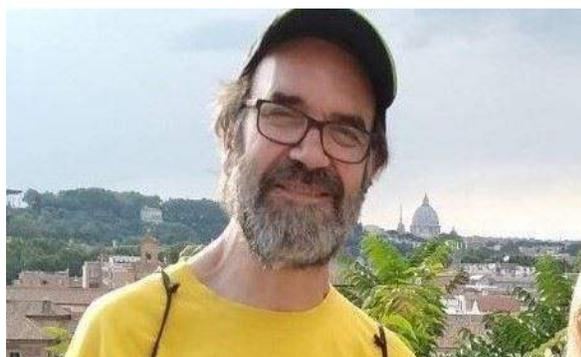
The Europe regional commission held its second face-to-face meeting in Lisbon, Portugal from 20-22 December 2018. The members of the commission were Solange Pereira (JOC Portugal), Berhanu Sinamo (International President), Marc Besford (England & Wales) and Fr Joan Ramon

(International & European Chaplain). The commission focused most of its work on the preparation for the REM-regional Leadership and chaplaincy training and exchange for the movements in Europe which will be held in July 2019.

✓ **International Secretariat (IS)**

The Appointment of International Chaplain

Fr. Joan Ramon Marin, has been appointed as International Chaplain for ICYCW. He is a Prado priest of the diocese of Sant Feliu de Llobregat.



Over the past four years, the International Secretariat of ICYCW has been without the accompaniment of a chaplain (Ecclesiastical Assistant) despite strenuous efforts to identify and secure the availability of a suitable candidate.

Fr Joan Ramon has been involved as a YCW chaplain for 10 years at the local level in Sant Feliu Diocese and at the national level in YCW Catalonia. In the last three years, he has been also Chaplain

at Regional level as a member of the European Commission. His pastoral experience as a parish priest and academic capability as a University professor in Scripture greatly enhance his suitability for this role as also does his facility in speaking English, French, Italian and Spanish and we appreciate his willingness to accept this appointment. Fr Joan Ramon is already very much involved with his new role in the international secretariat of the ICYCW.

The Election of the New General Secretary of ICYCW



A team of three members of the International Secretariat was elected in September 2016 and started their mandate to serve the Coordination for a period of four years. However, the General Secretary of the ICYCW Subin Noella Song resigned on 28th February 2018.

According to the statutory document of the ICYCW we organized a postal election to elect the new General Secretary to replace Noella Subin Song. Agnes Monicah NAMALE from YCW Uganda was elected as the new General Secretary of ICYCW in October 2018 and she will start her mandate in January 2019 to serve the coordination for a period of four years.

International Secretariat Meeting (ISM)

In the period 2018, the secretariat held two International Secretariat Meetings with the aim of reviewing the life and actions of the Coordination and movements around the world and based on these realities proposed actions to be implemented by the Coordination.

Conclusion

In summary, the period of 2018 saw a lot of development in capacity at individual and organizational levels. The different leadership programmes and representation work carried out around the world improved the capacity and ability of young people to take responsibilities at different levels while at the same time imparting positive values to their fellow young people. The representation works brings the voice of the young people from grassroots to international level forums. According to the activity plan of the ICYCW 2018 some of the activities are still on going and will be implemented in 2019.

Acknowledgment

On behalf of all the movements in the ICYCW, the international secretariat is grateful to all individuals, institutions and organizations who supported us financially and in kind for the mission of the ICYCW around the world. It was a period of great learning and we look forward to continue with the same collaborations for improved living and working conditions for young workers around the world.