CHRISTUS VIVIT!

Christ is alive! This GOOD NEWS - that Jesus Christ who once was dead is now alive - begins Pope Francis' latest Pastoral Exhortation “Christus Vivit’. The papal exhortation challenges the whole Church to allow the new life of Christ to constantly renew and rejuvenate her. The Pope's exhortation is the fruit of a long process of walking with the youth and listening to them, culminating with the Synod on the Youth at the Vatican last October, 2018 when bishops, priests, religious, and lay people, including a number of young people, together with Pope Francis, looked at the challenges facing younger generations today and the ways by which the Church can best respond.

Truly, the peoples of Asia are known to be “a continent's true wealth and hope for the future.” (Ecclesia in Asia #4)

Let us remain young with the joy, hope and vigor that the Holy Spirit breathes into us individually and as a community. Only this Easter Gift of the Risen Christ will enable us to be neighbors walking together in love and listening to each other with the sensitivity to appreciate each other as persons and as brothers and sisters and to respect the thoughts, feelings and aspirations of one another.

This proclamation that Christ is alive is the FOUNDATION of our faith. Let us build upon this saving truth and reality our pastoral endeavors to share our faith.

Alleluia! In His grace, let us grow in faith together.

+ GILBERT A. GARCERA.
Archbishop of Lipa
Chairman, Office for Laity and Family
FABC - Office for Laity & Family (OLF) meeting 2019

The FABC Office for Laity and Family (OLF) had its annual meeting on 11 March 2019 at the FABC Documentation Center Conference Room, St. Louis Hospital, Bangkok, Thailand. There was a change in the Leadership of FABC-OLF. His Grace Most Rev. Gilbert Garcera is the new chairperson and Fr. Emmanuel Rozario is the new executive secretary of FABC-OLF. The outgoing executive secretary Fr. Cajetan Menezes and the outgoing chairperson His Eminence Cardinal Patrick D’Rozario welcomed the new chairperson and executive secretary and thanked them for accepting this responsibility.

After a short introduction of the members, handover protocol was followed. The outgoing chairperson His Eminence Cardinal Patrick D’Rozario gave farewell notes and updates on the current status of different offices and desks. He also thanked those who were outgoing, especially, Fr. Cajetan Menezes for his dedicate extra service and for keeping the office going in the crucial last year. While welcoming everyone His Eminence mentioned handover is not easy in the FABC – OLF due to multiple desks and scope of work. He presented in brief the evolution of the Office of the Laity and Family (FABC-OLF).

The new chairperson His Grace Most Rev. Gilbert Garcera thanked the outgoing chairperson His Eminence Cardinal Patrick D’Rozario and outgoing executive secretary Fr. Cajetan Menezes for their good works and great contributions in the FABC-OLF. He asked some questions to clarify certain administrative issues, there were no clear answers. Archbishop Gilbert suggested they sit with the FABC President and Secretary General to discuss about the structure of the OLF and to get clarity.

The outgoing executive secretary Fr. Cajetan Menezes shared about some challenges he faced during his tenure. He mentioned that AsIPA Desk was supposed to be closed, there was lack of clarity in the communication which caused uneasiness and doubt. Then he handed over documents, finances and other related matter to the new leadership of FABC-OLF.

Rev. Fr. Gustavo presented the report on behalf of the Youth desk. He gave the narrative reports on the activities of last year and financial accounts. Last year they had meetings in three regions: Asia, South East Asia and Middle Asia. There will be a Asian Youth day (AYD) youth program in India but the date and venue is not yet finalized. It will be Probably in October in 2020.

Fr. Cajetan Menezes reported on the Office of Laity and Family. There is no activity for Women's Desk. The current challenge is to get a Woman representative for Woman's Desk. Since there is no one for Women's desk, the executive secretary was responsible. There should be a separate budget for the Women desk. There will be
4 issues of the “Laity” Newsletter, and it is to be sent to all the conferences and directors. There is a directory of addresses. Due to change of the leadership so far no program is arranged. Budget for the next three years will be prepared after discussion and clarification.

In October 2020 the FABC will celebrate its Silver Jubilee and hence we have reduced our OLF programs in order to prepare for the Jubilee celebration and wait for the directions that will come from the 50th anniversary celebration. - ER

ART MEETING AT CAMILLIAN PASTORAL CENTRE, BANGKOK MARCH 14-16, 2019

The AsIPA Resource Team (ART) met with the new Chairman Archbishop Gilbert Garcera and the new Executive Secretary of the Office of Laity and Family (OLF), Fr. Emmanuel Rozario at the Camillian Pastoral Centre from March 14th to 16th 2019 for planning the activities for 2019. The new Chairman explained to the team that a new vision and a new direction for FABC will emerge from the FABC golden Jubilee celebrations in November 2020. The future of all FABC Offices and Desks will be guided by that vision and direction.

The ART planned for BILA III program on “SCCs and Youth” to be jointly organized by AsIPA (BEC) Desk and the Youth Desk of the FABC OLF. The details will be published after both the Desks have finalized the outline and after obtaining the Chairman's approval.

ASIAN YOUTH DAY (AYD) 2021

The next Asian Youth Day is in India. Due to the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the creation of the FABC next year (2020), we are obliged to move the largest youth event in Asia which is the Asian Youth Day for the year 2021 instead of 2020 as announced in Indonesia in 2017. The country that will host the youth of Asia is India and we stipulate that the month of the AYD Event will be in October 2021 in Bangalore.

CARDINAL TAGLE CALLS FOR PRAYERS FOR RAIN IN MANILA

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle or Manila, the Philippines, has called on people to pray for rain as about 6.8 million people began to feel the effects of a water shortage in the Philippine capital and nearby areas this week. Supplies will be cut for several hours per day until the rainy season fills dams and reservoirs in May or June, a spokesman utility firm Manila Water has said. “We are currently facing a water crisis,” said Cardinal Tagle, adding that experts have reported that the country was experiencing a mild El Nino.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN INDONESIA RISES SHARPLY

The number of reported cases of violence against women in Indonesia shot up by nearly 14 percent last year, according to the National Commission on Violence against Women, in its annual report issued on 6 March, two days before international Women's Day, the commission said there were 406,178 reported cases of violence against women in 2018 compared to 348,466 the previous year.
http://www.ucanews.com

UN URGES SRI LANKA TO SET UP HYBRID COURT FOR WAR CRIMES

A U.N. investigative body is calling on the Sri Lankan government to establish a hybrid court to handle allegations of war crimes and human rights abuses. The U.N.'s Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) said it should be comprised of international judges, lawyers and investigators,” he said.
http://www.ucanews.com

TAIWAN CATHOLICS URGED TO EVANGELIZE

Some 10,000 Catholics attending the Fourth Taiwan Eucharistic Congress have been encouraged by Cardinal Fernando Filoni to draw on graces of the Holy Sacrament when evangelizing in a homily, the prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples said his presence at the 1 March event was as a special envoy of Pope Francis. Cardinal Filoni stressed that evangelization was not only entrusted to missionaries but to every bishop, priest, religious and lay person, including children.

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POPE FRANCIS ISSUES NEW LEGISLATION FOR PROTECTION OF MINORS

To better protect minors and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuses and exploitation, Pope Francis approved a new law and a set of safeguarding guidelines for Vatican City State and the Roman Curia. Pope Francis established the new norms and legal, criminal and safeguarding procedures with an apostolic letter given “motu proprio” (on his own initiative), published 29th March 2019. The law and procedure were to go into effect from 1st June 2019. Because the safeguarding of children and vulnerable people is an integral part of the Gospel message, “I wish, therefore, to further strengthen the institutional and normative order to prevent and fight abuses against minors and vulnerable adults,” the Pope wrote.

~ The Examiner