

Fourth International Coordinators' workshop, Samobor, Croatia. July 7-11, 2004.



International Coordinators in Samobor, July 2004

Thanks to the enormous and successful efforts of Kristina Pavlovic, Lacek Ilcic, Zrinka Vitkovic, Marija Curlin and many the Croatian Teen STAR teachers, we had an excellent meeting at Samobor, attended by Sr. Marie Jean Bae, from Seoul, Korea, Mary Lou Bryant from Louisville, KY, USA; Laurea DiJoseph, and Mary Ann Fennell from Virginia; Szymon and Agnieszka Grzelak, and their 4 daughters, from Warsaw, Poland; Phayi Moyo from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe; Elizabeth Heyne from Dallas, Texas; Petro Husak from Lviv, Ukraine; Sr. Nora Dennehy from Philadelphia, PA, USA; Anne, Heinz and Nathan Huerzeler from Luchsingen, Switzerland, Angela de Malherbe and Claudine Tannery from Paris, and Bernadette Schiehle from Strasbourg, France; Helga Sebernik from Ybbs, Austria; Elisabeth Pesahl from Leidersbach, Germany; Theodora Ionescu, Aurealia Cotorbae and Cristina Herciu from Bucharest, Romania; Zuzana and Peter Lauko from Slovakia, Kaethy and Hans Von Daeniken from Poschiavo, Switzerland, Maria Michael from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Pilar Vigil from Santiago, Chile; Hanna Klaus from Bethesda, MD, USA.

Each program director brought reports of their activities during the past year, which are summarized below.

Mary Lou Bryant presented her expanded parent curriculum, Petro Husak read a paper on the necessary ethical antecedents for the Teen STAR Program, Szymon Grzelak presented an interim report of the international evaluation which he is conducting, which showed a clear difference in outcomes between students who received the entire program, and those who did not receive the full program, especially if cycle charting by the girls was omitted, and when attendance at parent meetings was negligible. Pilar Vigil presented recent data on the genetic aspects of conception and discussed polycystic ovarian disease (PCOD). Florence Mukwaya presented her program of gender sensitization.

Program needs surfaced, and the participants chose to work on the following:

- 1. Bringing disparate locations of a given theme into one location** in the Syllabus: Helga Sebernik, Kaethy Von Daeniken, Lacek Ilcic and Elisabeth Pesahl.
- 2. International marketing, improved teaching materials** with CD-ROMs, videos: Angela de Malherbe, Pilar Vigil, Elizabeth Heyne, Sr. Nora Dennehy. Pilar will coordinate all inputs by next June. Pilar is currently co-director of Teen STAR.
- 3. Evaluation of teachers at the end of the practicum:** Mary Lou Bryant, Sr. Theresa Kengyero, Petro Husak, Bernadette Schiehle. It was proposed that we call "supervisors" "mentors" and assign teachers to a mentor who will meet with the teachers a few weeks before they begin their programs, review materials, do role plays of parent meetings and/or classes as needed. The second meeting should take place 2 months later and include discussion and an

informal evaluation of progress to date. The third meeting should be held 2 months later and include written student feedback. Questions to be answered: What is the most important thing you have learned so far? Which class have you liked best? Have you used any of this information in your life so far? If so, what? Classes should be observed if possible, but always with prior agreement by the student. Any parent comment?

For the teacher: what do you consider most successful, what can be improved? At the end, administer Exit questionnaire, ask the questions from the third meeting again. If the teacher is incompetent, try one more year. Evaluation can be a group activity. The question of a "contract" with our volunteer teachers was raised. Only re-certification. According to our guidelines, after practicum (one year) teachers are certified for two years, must recertify every three years.

Procedures for guidance for secondary virginity were proposed. Guidance is different from counseling, is directed to maintain or regain personal integrity and return to chastity. Bible quotes may help here, and the formation of conscience.

Expansion to other groups was proposed by Szymon for discussion. No one considered it a priority, so the matter was not considered further.

4. Different needs in different areas, i.e. HIV, drugs. Different aspects and values of the program need to be emphasized in different areas in order to enlist co-operation.

Szymon, Phayi, Maria Michael, Mariann Fennell and Laurea Dijoseph will work on this. i.e. in Zimbabwe, they begin with awareness workshops before attempting to recruit teachers. If a local problem occurred, such as drugs, sex, it is important to discuss it and show how Teen STAR approaches it. Parents need to be sensitized. Giving assignments helps, i.e. by forming a pro-life group. In another site, the girls were charting, but not the teachers. A clear gap which calls for mentoring.

At the end of the working program we were honored by the visit of His Eminence, **Alfonso Cardinal Lopez Trujillo**, President of the Pontifical Council for the Family. He was escorted by Bishop Valter Zupan, Bishop of Krk and chairman of the Family Life Committee of the Croatian Bishops Conference.



Pilar Vigil, Cardinal Lopez Trujillo, Hanna Klaus, Bishop Valter Zupan. Samobor. July 10, 2004

His Eminence Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo, President of the Pontifical Council for the Family, addressed the 4th International Teen STAR Coordinators' meeting in Samobor, Croatia, July 9, 2004. He spoke mostly in Spanish. Dr. Pilar Vigil translated his remarks. The following is a translation from the recording of His Eminence's talk.

I'm very happy with the achievements (of the Teen STAR Program) which were already established by the time of our meeting in Córdoba, Spain. (Third International Teen STAR Coordinators' meeting, July 6-10, 2002.) It was a wonderful meeting and an important occasion to dialog and meet with collaborators from many countries. Hanna Klaus has a good memory. [Hanna Klaus had introduced the participants and briefly described each one's history and contribution to the program.] That is important and I know that Teen STAR is a loved program in many countries; in Korea, in Africa, Latin America, in Europe.

Now, I would prefer to remember with you the points that inspire our work in the Pontifical Council of the Family. I am very happy to meet Hanna Klaus again and Angela de Malherbe who belongs to our Pontifical Council and others who are members of our council, for example Mario Zivkovic and others. I think it is very important that you are involved in this program because **the central part of the program is the truth of the human being and the fact that he/she is recognized in the dignity of God's image.** For the Christian, we are children of God. On the other hand, for the young people this program is very useful to introduce them to the knowledge of sexuality.

As you know very well, we have a document on *The (Truth and) Meaning of Human Sexuality*, which was prepared ten years ago. We also have the document of the Congregation for Sacred Education [Educational Guidance in Human Love – 1983]. Many times the statements by the (Holy See) reiterate what we consider to be true education of the human person. It is very important. It is a kind of anthropology, a Christian anthropology, and true for the human person. For the human person sexuality is very important because nowadays, the battles inside the church, inside the society are about the real concept of the human person. It is always a concept, a special concept of the human person, however we can find a wrong preparation in many countries, a wrong interpretation of God's instructions, concepts related with

to ones promoted by IPPF (International Planned Parenthood Federation). The latter is the model recognized by the people [many governments] but is very bad program, because it does not promote an integral concept of human sexuality, but a partial one.

In many countries where the Minister of Health or Education proposes those approaches which have a permissive sexuality without human and moral values. We could say that we are in front of a terrible moral collapse. ... The [permissive attitude] toward sexuality is not the way to prepare men and women for accepting each other with respect. That is a vision of the human person which sees it as an object, a thing. They have the idea that the human person can be manipulated for other purposes and in that way the human person as an image of God would be finished. Nowadays, the real risk for life is the manipulation of the human person. The people are not prepared to love and to respect each other, to have a real union of love, to get married, to found a new family, to have children, to love life. ... They can use a pill without restriction and do not have a responsible love. Nowadays, the pseudoscientific concepts are confused with science. Technology is not the principle of real integration of anthropology, which do not help very much and many fathers are not paying attention to the sexual education in the family. On the other hand, we have the problem that the parents need to give good example with good conduct. Many young people do not have a family, do not receive love, do not have good role models and at their age, the example of a family is important, where the husband and wife are in love, concerned about each other, where the children are protected and loved. In this age, they need a basic loving, lived testimony to human dignity and this has the value of the sexuality lesson.

We have the difficulty with the integrating sexual education into the family, because the parents have to be prepared better. Also, many times, we fear for what the schools are doing especially about what they are accepting as a model, as in many cases they are accepting the IPPF models. The family, the church and the social group are not integrated. In schools of many countries we can see serious problems because they do not manage an integral sexual education. We even have the same problem in some religious communities in Latin America, in which we had to request that they take away specific manuals because we did not find any difference between the government model and the education model. That is evident in Chile, in Argentina, where we can see the invasion

of the Parliaments in order to prepare the youth for contraception.

You as a movement, we as Council and priests in general come up against the environment and the environment is produced by (seemingly) innocuous laws. In general the Parliaments promote birth control via a concept of sexual education. They count heavily on economic power, they support the use of all kinds of contraception, even more they promote the delivery of condoms at the schools, the people can get them easily in restaurants, in shops, so on. We are in front of a permeable society, without values. The church is presented in the communication channels as intolerant and unjust. The media are not able to realize that we are fighting for the family, for the youth.

The problem is evident in the majority of the Parliaments, we have to ask what are the politicians thinking? What are the legislators thinking? What is the situation in the Parliaments? What's happened with Belgium, France, Holland and Germany? Why has the truth been changed? What has occurred in the past ten years has not occurred previously in the history of the world. The concepts of marriage, life and abortion have changed. This revolution is as if God had made a mistake in the family project, in the creation project, and the Parliaments ask to alter all that is supported in the natural (law), in the dignity and the hope of man, in what has been that way in all cultures throughout history. Now, they are presenting it like a big discovery: God is wrong, the creation is wrong, the human being goes by other roads, the human nature has to be interpreted in another way, all of that is a terrible revolution. The Pope calls it the neo-heathen revolution.

We are really frightened by the things that are occurring nowadays. The United Nations has in its funds US\$16 thousand of millions for the natal control, infection control, condoms, for an insufficient fight against AIDS instead of helping others institutions like you, the church, groups in charge of educate to the youth. We do not have any remote idea of the power that they have. I can say that in Singapore abortion costs only US\$5, so how much does it cost the government? US\$1000 – at least. How much is the cost in France, in Italy, in USA? The amount that the government gives for contraception, for abortion and when we are talking about abortion in USA, we are talking up to the last day of pregnancy, it is an incredible amount of money if we add to this the business of the laboratories, we are in front of enormous power that it is changing the concept of the human and of society.

In this sense, **we have to realize that you are going against the tide; you are going against a new culture, against a new society project. The Pope and I have the idea that we are in front of a dehumanized society, nowadays, the big problem of the human being is that they are losing their roots, they are afraid of life, of love, of marriage and of children. There are so many good people, good families, but the revolution made by the media is terrible.** A month ago, I went to a Congress in Rome about the media and the family. We have to do something, because the media are creating a very poor image of the human.

For different reason the family are afraid to defend principles. Anatrella says that we are bringing up an irresponsible youth, because we are afraid to talk, to face the truths of life, but we have to do it prudently, honestly and not by forcing. The family is in charge of educating the youth.

In that sense, we are fighting against the society, because they think to defend the truth is a dogmatic rigorism which belongs to the Catholics and the Christians. So (they postulate) there is scientific truth and another imposed, therefore we can find two kinds of truths, the political and the scientific, and they do not recognize the truth which comes from God about the human being, his vocation, his dignity, even from the history of nations. They do not know that the truth is one. Marriage is humanity's patrimony and the minimum sexual preparation is, by the way, a conquest of the humanity, because we are able to distinguish when a compromised sexuality exists and when we are in front of the irresponsible one; and all of these are being presented to you as Catholics. You are Christians and science is opposed to your truth and in that way, you are mounting a very large effort to show that the truth is only one, as supported by science and experience, and that it is possible to educate the youth in an integral way.

Certainly, we can say that is not an optimistic view of the present society but we can improve it with an optimistic intention, there are so many goals, values, so many family movements for life, so many programs in which volunteers work not for money but for love. All of that is beautiful and has much more value than the millions of dollars that the mercenaries have. For example, the Pope recognized the value of some government's programs promoted by President George Bush in USA in the special five points that he had presented to the Congress: 1. there is no safe sex, the only safe sex is chastity. 2. He will not give money for contraception and instead of that he

will give money for supporting movements like this (abstinence education), because he wants to support marriage. 3. he opposes abortion. Abortion is considered as nothing in many countries, for example in Russia abortion is seen as only a minor operation, whose risks may entail some hygiene problems but not moral ones.

Also, to talk about US politics, he (President Bush) is doing his best to amend the U.S. Constitution to define marriage as only between a man and a woman, because it is very important that homosexual couples do not have the possibility of this option that unfortunately will be implemented in Spain.

I think that you are in the middle of the hurricane with a coherent position on the human, the truth, the welfare of the family and of youth. I have asked many politicians around the world, when I have visited the Parliaments, what are we doing? What kind of youth are we forming? The same question was asked by the Pope to the person in charge of the Cairo Congress (International Congress on Population and Development, 1994). I say to the good politicians [who think] like you, who are fighting very hard and nobly in spite of the forces arrayed against (our positions): We do not expect victory in the near future. Unfortunately, if humanity continues dehumanizing itself, it can not trust in anybody, because it cannot trust in love.

For that reason, it has been very important for me to meet you in Croatia. I have been able to elaborate some important points about an integral education in human sexuality, about the unity of soul and body of the human person, the human being's truth who is important as a being in himself and is not like a thing. I repeat again, we have to educate in an integral way, a child can not receive the same education as an adolescent receives, and an adolescent (in the developing world) can not be prepared in the same way as an adolescent who lives in a more developed society, in a place where he has within reach all kind of experiences different from teens who live in a place where the family concept is more defended. We have a very serious problem; we have to know when and how we must give a gradual sexual education.

You have to be always sharing the experiences and the achievements of the youth, you have to keep the relation with anthropologist and sexologist and you have to do it inside of the church, and this has an integral value, for example in the courses that you give do not be afraid to talk about abortion, contraception, instrumentalizing the human being, do not be afraid to know about moral

and scientific achievements, for example, if masturbation is licit or not, to have knowledge of anthropology based on church experience, that the people can not say that is a debatable subject, because the truth is only one, because the young people, the human being is at work. Nowadays, we can not confuse the respect due to the homosexual person while objecting to homosexual acts with discrimination. The word "Discrimination" is a magic bar. We have to speak the truth, because behind this truth is God, is Christ.

I want to thank very much, Hanna Klaus and everyone for your attention, the marvelous translation and the opportunity that you have given me, in order to talk to you about education in human sexuality. I think is very important to be immersed, working and fighting with hope as Hanna Klaus (and all of you) are doing at the international level with all Teen STAR programs and always in a checking attitude. (Observing how the youth receive the teaching and how they respond.) The service that you are giving is very opportune and very generous. It is full of complications because you are dealing with the mystery of the human being, you are not talking about a thing, you have the human person and the youth's future in your hands, and for that reason you have to work with patience, with generosity, with the assurance that you are fighting for the human person's good who is loved by God, because He created us, He gave us life. Congratulations and courage.

Workshop News

After Croatia, Hanna Klaus proceeded to **Hong Kong**, where Ms. Jessie Ho, Director of Secondary Education, and Ms. Eva Ng, Secretary of the Catholic Education Office, with the generous support of Miss Alice Woo, Episcopal Vicar for Education, had prepared for two workshops, July 19-23 and 26-30. All together, 60 teachers, nearly all sent by their school head teachers, were certified.

Mrs. Maria Ho Lee was available to teach the Theology of the Body in Cantonese. Maria is a trained theologian who is active in many family life education enterprises. Dr. Kwan, of the Guild of St. Luke kindly taught the Young Men's curriculum. He taught the first workshop in English, but the second one in Cantonese. Even though all participants knew English, the response to the Cantonese presentations was much more lively. Asian hospitality cannot be surpassed. Hong Kong is intensely crowded, over 7.5 million persons in a small area – Hong Kong island, Kowloon and New Territories – resulting in many high rise buildings and almost no green areas. But they still manage to treat visitors like royalty! The evaluations were quite positive. Now to see how many teachers succeed in starting programs.



Teen STAR Teacher Training, Hong Kong, July 19-24



Teen STAR Teacher Training, Hong Kong, July 26-30

Sister Marie Jean Bae, RGS, rushed home from Samobor to prepare for three training workshops. There were 52 participants in **Seoul**, including 6 who wanted to refresh, 48 in **Daegu** and 32 in **Suwon**.



Teen STAR Teacher Training, Seoul, Korea, August 2004



Teen STAR Teacher Training, Daegu, August 2004



Teen STAR Teacher Training, Suwon, Aug 25-29, 2004

Sister has to supplement the translators at the first two workshops, and carry the entire load in Suwon. She decided that it was easier to teach the material herself than to translate Hanna Klaus's words! As a result, she is ready to spread her wings. The support of the Good Shepherd community and Msgr. K.Y. Ahn has been a boon. Sister is full time Teen STAR coordinator in Korea, has an office, a secretary, two devoted volunteers – Veronica and Agnes – and a very full plate supervising all the new teachers. After the workshop, Hanna Klaus was interviewed by Arirang TV, an English language Korean channel. The tape is a good summary of Teen STAR. If anyone wishes a copy, contact me please.

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Country reports, and future workshops will be added in Part II of the Teen STAR News.