

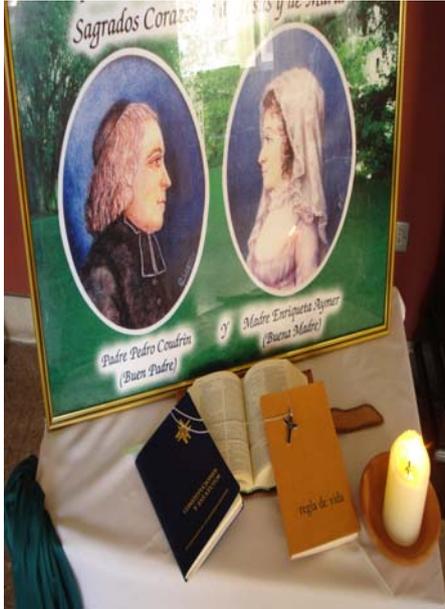


SSCC Ongoing Formation Program, Lima 2010

Paschal Time, Time of Grace

4th Week: Our SS.CC. Charism and Spirituality from April 30 to May 6

Dear Sisters and Brothers:



With the start of the fourth week, the 2010 Lima meeting, reaches its final stretch. The input in recent days focused on the experience of our ss.cc charism and spirituality.

We are accompanied this week by Martin Königstein ss.cc (Province of Chile) who invited us to evoke the first dream of our founders, in an attempt to get into that experience of the Spirit, in which "the strength, life and inner vision" were key to the history of our religious family.

Having some elements to help us begin this journey into the past, was essential ... We thought that some challenges that we had heard in the first three weeks, could serve this purpose, but we soon discovered that the road opened in another very different direction. We had to "go down to the grave", "return to Holy Saturday, to darkness, to emptiness", to walk again the journey of the prophet Elijah: to find God's presence in the gentle breeze...

With this attitude of attentive listening, we approached the historical context which gave birth to our founding charism and we reread the early life of the first communities, as a way to go back to drink from the original sources.

We said then: "The creative fidelity requires, at first, to be connected with what moved our brothers and sisters in the nineteenth century and to discover how they did not make of survival the focus of attention, but that they remained open and attentive to the inspiration of the living God who spoke to them from the needs of people and events in the midst of the French Revolution.

We also recognized that in order to trace the spiritual traits that occurred in the early communities: (adoration, apostolic zeal, the centrality of the person of Jesus, devotion to the Sacred Heart, the family spirit, reparation), it was imperative to ask ourselves what hidden message our charism has for today's postmodern society, where lack of affection for one another and care for our planet are two urgent challenges.

From the work of the Committee on Spirituality of the branch of the Brothers in Chile, we focused on the theme of the dynamism of God's love, the four ages of Jesus Christ, the permanent conversion to which we are called and the mission to which we are called as ss.cc. women.

We discovered then, some clues that could be very interesting in living our charism today, including: the importance of achieving a balance between action and contemplation, to go through life as "wounded Samaritans healing and letting ourselves be healed on the way" to be contemplative- companions and compassionate, to live a spirituality of the Incarnate Heart of Jesus, to recreate community life creating spaces for dialogue where we all have a voice and Providence is our trust.



In this week, we also had the opportunity to work on the theme of the centrality of Jesus Christ as the way that leads us to the Father, from the use of art, with a collection of images collected from the third century. Hand in hand with St. Benedict and his rule, St. Catherine of Siena and St. Francis de Sales we tackled some criteria for a healthy spirituality, discovering together that "we cannot justify everything using the name of Jesus" and that in this, the discernment of spirits is fundamental.

Entering in this path toward our own inner life, we enjoyed the writings of the medieval mystics of Helfta, who allowed us to "peep into the language of love" as a way to deepen the relation of intimacy and attraction with which God continually strives in loving us as his creatures.

To connect with a more recent mystical experience, we traveled to the outskirts of Paris hand in hand with Madeleine Delbrèl, to connect ourselves with the deep experience of a woman who knew how to embody Jesus in everyday life: "looking at Him in the eyes of a pale child, giving the seat to a tired worker".... Allowing, that according to her, Jesus made Himself a God who is close to all who crossed his path.

Adoration as a simple "kneeling" before God, "because God is God" was one of the invitations we received in the week. Thus, in this "hollowing out the soul to make room for Transcendence", we shared our own experience of adoration and tried to find ways to accompany ourselves in the community, when we practice this ministry which the Church entrusts to us.

Finally, the last morning before the final Retreat, the issue of reparation as "the healing of personal and social evil that disrupts and destroys" challenged us to the urgent task of letting our hearts be transformed to achieve peace and make of our own environment a place of harmony for all. In this dimension we recognized the community as a privileged space to live this experience.

Our personal time, our group work and the liturgies of this week were very significant spaces to give thanks "for having known Love and having discovered that by joining ourselves in the name of the Lord, God is there."