

CGI Board Members meet in Paris

By: CGI

“Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last and the servant of all,” (Mark 9: 35b).

This was the theme and ‘marching orders’ of the new Council General International chosen by its 16th President General, Renato Lima de Oliveira, during the inauguration of the new CGI leaders a year ago. A year later, the servants of the poor of the CGI met in Paris for its quarterly meeting to revisit what has been done in the past year; what are the things still to be done, and what the plans are for the future of the Society and the least fortunate that we are serving.



One day before, members of the International Commission for Aid and Development (CIAD) had held their meeting, during which three projects were approved for funding. Other projects submitted could not be financed, due to lack of funds from the CIAD (Read also: Appeal for Generosity "Fund for International Solidarity")

The meeting commenced with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the death anniversary of Bl. Frederic Ozanam last September 8. A special prayer for the victims of several calamities in the past weeks, especially the one still raging in Cuba, Florida and nearby areas (due to hurricane "Irma"), was also included. Some parts of the CGI board meeting were broadcast live via Ozanam TV.

On Saturday, September 9, the CGI team traveled to Berteaucourt-lès-thennes to visit the tomb of the first President General, Emmanuel Bailly, of which the year 2017 was dedicated. The members of the board observed the “Prayer for Unity of the SSVP members,” asking the intercessions of Our Lady of Fatima, St. Vincent de Paul, and Bl. Frederic Ozanam, for the intentions of the poor, the members of the Society, and for our loved ones.

The day was concluded with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist at the Chapel of Saint Joseph des Carmes, above the tomb of Bl. Frederic, in honor of his feast day and the 20th anniversary of his beatification. This was also broadcast live via OzanamTV and the Facebook page of the CGI, with the latter hitting a record breaking 920% increased engagement ('like', share, comment) and an 8,245 reach, where the highest in the past was just around 4,000 from Facebook users.

Also, a part of the activities was the promotion of the new Spanish book about Bl. Frederic, a meeting with the Order of Malta, the announcement of the winners of “The First Conference Literary Contest.”

Indeed, a lot has been done on the first year of the term of the new CGI leaders, but as Bl. Frederic Ozanam once said, "Charity must never look to the past, but always to the future, because the number of its past works are still very small and the present and future miseries that it must alleviate are infinite."

We enjoin everyone to continue praying for each other, especially our servant leaders in the CGI, as we journey together towards Christ who is ever present in the poorest of the poor.