

WUCWO Newsletter May 2015

Board Meeting in Rome



This was intense few days, dedicated to implement the decisions made in Fatima. Mary Elizabeth Stewart was elected Vice President and Araceli Caverro Perez as Vice President for Europe. Anna Paoletti – who is our International Representative at Geneva – was accepted as Board Member for Italy, and Alessia Troni accepted as International Representative at FAO in Rome. Virginia Rivero Lozada was selected as Editor of

Women's Voice. The working groups were organised based on the resolutions that were voted on at the General Assembly. It was an intense time of prayer, reflection, sharing and mutual support. the first Board since the quick meeting held in Fatima just after the General Assembly.

President General in Greece



During a private visit in Greece (March 2015), the President General had the opportunity to meet some representatives of the Greek organization *Fédération des Femmes Grecques Catholiques*. It was very moving and warm. The President, Mrs Cecile Stravoravdi, spoke about the difficulties they are facing especially because of the economical crisis. They feel like “slaves in their own country”. The President General expressed the solidarity of all WUCWO

and promised to let people know about their very sad situation.

After the Greek women there was a meeting with ladies from Ukraine. There is a large community of Ukrainians who moved to Greece before the crisis for work. Their main worry regards the war and their husbands, sons, brothers or relatives who are in Ukraine and are involved in the war. The President promised that WUCWO would pray for peace and justice in their country.

There was a third meeting with women refugees from Iraq. They explained that they were disheartened because they hoped for some help, especially from the Christian countries, but are instead ‘used’ for political plans and their dignity is completely forgotten. They have no rights and even the minimum is not provided. They need to feel that are not left alone, they need our solidarity.

Masses with Cardinal Parolin and Cardinal Baldisseri



During our Board for the Celebration of the Mass we had the honour of having Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Secretary of State celebrate Mass on the first day and Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, the Secretary of the Synod of the Bishops, on the second. Both were very kind and encouraged WUCWO to fulfil its aims. Cardinal Baldisseri thanked us for our contribution to the questionnaire in preparation of the Synod for the Family to be held next October in Rome. Cardinal Parolin paid a special attention to each single participant: at the moment of the

exchange of peace he greeted each person asking about her country and her local Church. After the celebration he patiently accepted to take pictures with the entire group as well as with each single board member. He encouraged us to enhance our service especially in the International Fora paying attention to all the aspects which obstruct the respect of people with a special attention to the peripheries.

Visit to *Dicasteria*



During the April Board Meeting, the Board visited some *Dicasteria* at the Holy See. We introduced all the Board Members present. For some of them it was the first time visiting those offices. At the Pontifical Council for the Laity we met with H.E. Mgr Clemens and Dr. Ana Cristina Villa de Betancourt. It was a gentle and friendly meeting. WUCWO is very much encouraged by this office and we thanked them for their appreciation and support.

At the Pontifical Council for the Family the atmosphere was excellent, the President of the Council H.E. Mgr Paglia expressed his wish to have more women in that office and warmly encouraged WUCWO to offer its service and competence also for the preparation of the World Day for the Family next September in Philadelphia (USA).

At the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace with Cardinal Turkson and Dr Flaminia Giovanelli in a warm welcoming climate we spoke mainly about the coming Conference WUCWO is cosponsoring "The challenges of the Sustainable Development Goals" and we recalled our commitment in spreading the Social Teaching of the Church.

'Women in the Church'



On April 28th the President General was invited to participate in a panel in the Seminar "Women in the Church" held at the Pontifical University Antonianum. It was a special moment opened by Cardinal Ravasi, President of the Pontifical Council for Culture and with many women committed for the life of the Church from all over the world. A very good chance to meet women, to create a network with those who are willing to contribute in an active way to the life of the Church, encouraged

also by the Holy Father who continuously reminds us the importance to give voice to women, to listen to them and involve them more and more.