

Crescendo at the 6th World-Wide Families Meeting

Mexico 14/18 January 2009

The World-wide Network Crescendo "for a human and christian ageing" has obviously given always a great interest to the role of the grandparents and eldest in the family. The Founding Act already stress es the necessity of supporting the family and particularly to promote the fa m ilial and intergeneration solidarity.

The two main actions undertaken by Crescendo in this field are:

The message addressed to the UNITED NATIONS on the occasion of the Second General Assembly on Ageing - held in Madrid in 2002 - and the taking part in the speech at the World- Wide Meeting of Families in Valencia in 2006.

Providentially, a workshop leading to this meeting had been organized in Spain whose main target was the active participation of grandparents and elderly persons to the 5th World- Wide Meeting of Families.

This group,linked to the Archbishop of Valencia, the present Cardinal Agustin Garcia Gasco, has first organized a preparatory International Symposium in 2005 - held at the Catholic University of Valencia - whose purpose was a launching meeting to organize within the Meeting a "grandparents and elderly Congress", as it has previously been organized for the 'Children's Congress'. Simultaneously, other attempts were made in Rome.

All our wishes and prayers have been fulfilled. In Valencia, the Congress of the elderly has been successful, both in its content and audience; and its conclusions have been displayed at the end of the Theological Pastoral Congress.

Besides, Crescendo has been invited to such a Congress among important movements of the Church.

During the Theological Pastoral Congress, a few lectures have made references to the multi-faced aspects of the topic concerning the elderly and ageing.

Last but not least, the Holy Father has declared - both in his homely on the 9th july and in his message on the previous festive day, 8th july that *"the family includes non only parents and children hut also grandparents and ancestors"* and he has exhorted in these terms: *"In no way should they ever be excluded from the family circle!"*

The Pope has also proposed as the topic for the Plenary Assembly of the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council of the Family - held in April

2008 - : *"The grandparents, witness and presence in the family"* and has asked the participants not to forget his exhortation in Valencia on the above mentioned topic. This has been welcomed by Crescendo with great surprise and pleasure.

Unfortunately, Cardinal Lopez Trujillo could not participate in that plenary conference and died after a few days. However he had told his collaborators that, for the Mexico Meeting, he would prefer a unique congress to give a stronger unity and to avoid any dispersion.

Nevertheless the program of the Mexico Meeting which might be found on the web www.emf2009.com 2009 doesn't talk at all about either grandparents or elderly. This, however, doesn't exclude the possibilities of speeches concerning this topic at the Congress.

Crescendo - as already done in Valencia - has been invited at a workshop to which eight others organizations will participate. Among these: Saint Egidio, 'Les Equipes Notre Dame', the Christian Movement of Families, (very well known in Latin America) etc., each one have the possibility of speaking for not more that five minutes.

We hope that we won't be the only ones to deal with the problematic concerning the grandparents in the family, but in any case we have to profit the more we can of this opportunity. The message of Crescendo - for which we have receive some contributions of great interest - should concentrate on what is essential, in other terms, on what Crescendo means by working through the net and, on the other hand, on what Crescendo has already done concerning the United Nations and in the Church, to support the family.

This message will be presented by Jean Marie de Scals Klein, belonging to the family of the Spanish Caritas, who has been one of the most important promoter and supporter for the participation of Crescendo in the 5th World Wide Meeting of Families. He will participate as a delegate of Crescendo. A part from his speech, he will also be a reliable observer of the Congress since his mission will be to establish contacts with delegates of the participating movements.

He will present a report at the next meeting and board of Crescendo.