

REPORT OF THE CICIAMS 18TH WORLD CONGRESS

MARCH 9-11, 2009

MONTERREY, N.L., MEXICO

PROFESSIONAL NURSING: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS EXCELLENCE

A prayer from the World Congress Program Book was, “*The Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe Queen of Mexico and Empress of America we ask her to cover us with her mantel.*” Our Lady of Guadalupe did cover us with her mantel during our Congress. The World Congress was magnificent, magnificent, magnificent! This achievement was due to the many rosaries prayed to our Lady of Guadalupe and the dedication and hard work of hundreds of people.

The collaboration of the dynamic leadership of Mary Vilchez, President of the Movement of Nurses of Catholic Action (MEAC), Carolina Vessic, MEAC’s Chairperson of the World Congress Planning Committee, the members of Mexico Catholic Action (ACM), CICIAMS Executive Board members plus the vigilance of pastoral care and guidance overseen by Fr. Fernandez and Fr. Valdivia, Ecclesiastical Advisors to MEAC and ACM respectively, the World Congress was carefully planned and became a huge success. Twenty-four countries were represented.

On Sunday, there was great excitement as participants entered the Grand Ancira Hotel lobby to register for the Congress. Colleagues from around the world I.E., India, South Africa, Croatia Brazil, Ireland, Singapore, Belgium, United States etc renewed old acquaintances and quickly bonded with new acquaintances. The air was filled with love and joy showered upon us by the extended Mexican Planning Committee members who so diligently and spiritually prepared this huge undertaking. Jesus and our Lady of Guadalupe’s presence was felt everywhere.

The inaugural Mass was celebrated at the Cathedral of Monterrey presided over by Jaiver Lozano Cardinal Barragan, President of the Pontifical Council for Health Pastoral Care. Being one in the Eucharist at this global gathering gave us an intense sense of community. As Mass concluded and the clergy procession started everyone rose, waved individual CICIAMS flags and applauded as Cardinal Barragan and clergy passed by.

On exiting the Cathedral, the air was warm as were the cordial conversations of members as they journeyed across the park to the Grand Ancira Hotel. There at the hotel lobby a lovely cocktail reception was awaiting our arrival. All enjoyed music, dancing, refreshments and socializing.

Monday, at the Convex Convention Center our traditional opening ceremony was preformed. The military band of the state of Nuevo Leon played their national anthem. Next, was the roll call and parade of flags of the twenty-four countries represented. Introduction of the dignitaries at the head table was followed by, Cardinal Barragan who read the blessing sent by our beloved Pope Benedict XVI, via the Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone. The Governor of the State of Nuevo Leon, the Honorable Governor, Jose Natividad Gonzales Paras, Cardinal Barragan and the President of CICIAMS, Marylee Meehan, gave brief welcome addresses. Next on the agenda was the Education Program.

The Theme was **Health**: Chairpersons: Marylee Meehan, International President of CICIAMS, Fr. Mario Garcia Fernandez, MEAC, Isabelle Wilson, WHO Representative, Sello Komoreng, VP English Speaking Africa.

- a. Power Point presentation, *Health is Harmony*, Cardinal Barragan, Vatican City.
- b. *The Right to Mental Health Care*, Mr. Javier Vasquez, Pan American Health Organization.
- c. *Excellence In Patient Care*, Mrs. Maria Jose Martinez Lapena, Spain.
- d. *The Role of CICIAMS in Civil Society*, Rev. Louis Christiaens, sj, Switzerland

At the conclusion of the program, the Congress members were bussed to the Metropolitan Cathedral for a memorial official photo. We then attended the celebration of Mass presided by Very Reverend Mon. Christopher Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio in Mexico. After Mass, participants strolled through the Macroplaza Square to the Santa Lucia River Walk. At the river we all boarded sight seeing boats for a ride on this man made river.

Tuesday's Theme was, **Ethical Principles and Perspective**. Chairpersons: Joan Doherty, UN Representative, Lic. David Padilla, Rector ITESM, and Annemie Vlaemynck, Member of the Professional Committee.

a. ***Nurse Education – Transmitting Values, Dr. Therese Connell Meehan, Ireland.***

b. ***Ethical Perspectives from Different Regions,***

a. Ethical Perspectives in English Speaking Africa, Sello Komoreng, South Africa.

b. Ethical Perspectives in Latin America, Dr. Francisco Diaz, Federation of International Medical Catholic Associations (FIMCA).

c. Ethical Perspectives in Asia, Ms. Angel C.K. Lee, Hong Kong.

d. Ethical Perspectives in Europe, Mrs. Maria Jose Marinez Lapena, Spain.

e. Ethical Perspectives in North America, Mrs. Bernadina Leticia Moriel, Mexico.

c. ***Ethical Dilemmas in:***

a. *Nurse Education*, Theresa Cheong, Singapore.

b. *Community Care*, Sr. Bertha Lopez Chavez, Mexico.

c. *Hospital Care*, Sonia Lopez Garcia, Mexico.

d. *Health Promotion*, Rev. Christian Barchifontaine, Brazil.

As the program progressed, there was time for social meetings amongst regions and the final aspect of the General Council Meeting. Mass at the Cathedral was presided over by His Excellency Gustavo Fadriguez Bishop Vega, President of the Episcopal Commission for the Social Pastoral at the Conference of Mexican Bishops.

Next on the program was a fantastic cultural night...a Mexican Fiesta! The Grand Ancira Ballroom was decorated in grand festival fashion. There were carnival games to be played and prizes to be won. Our Mexican members wore beautiful traditional attire. Music played and participants partook in eating cotton candy and popcorn during the early festivities. The feast of a Mexican Buffet was fabulous and I did hear the tequila was quite good also. Next came another additional astonishing surprise...the dancers!

Aztec dancers in authentic costumes including four-foot feather headdresses, traditional Mexican dancers, Tex-Mex Square Dancers, and Caballeros with their ladies astounded us with their energy, precision and beauty as they dazzled us with their magnificent dancing. To top it all off, on came the Mariachi Band! Cameras were flashing all night (please see the attached photos). To end the evening there were drawings for more prizes! Our Mexican colleagues displayed their beautiful Mexican culture through color, fun, food and entertainment. We all became enraptured by this spectacular perfectly planned and executed cultural event. We all have a special place in our hearts for all our Mexican colleagues. They certainly know how to celebrate life to the fullest.

Wednesday's Theme was, **The Impact of Cultural Diversity**. Chairpersons: Kathy Kirkpatrick, Pro-tem President of NACN USA and Dr. Pedro Silva Sanchez, Specialist in Pediatrics, UNAM

a. *Microdises*, Frans Ingleberst, Mexico

b. *Complimentary Therapies*, Deepka C. Khakha, India

c. *Meeting the Cultural Needs of Patients*, Evelyn J. Madrid, United States.

Mrs. Jane Harkin, Chairperson of the CICIAMS Professional Committee gave a general review of the Congress. President, Marylee Meehan announced that the President of the Catholic Nurses Guild of Croatia, Jelica Stipanicev Mustapic vms, had made the proposal that that their guild host the next CICIAMS World Congress in Croatia in 2013. Every chairperson and program speaker received a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The closing ceremony was altered to accommodate the time schedule for Mass. Dignitaries spoke, the President of CICIAMS gave thanks to all who contributed to this magnificent Congress. Cardinal Barragan presented President,

Marylee Meehan with the *PONTIFICUM CONSILIUM PRO PASTORALI VALETUDINIS CURA, CITTA DEL VATICANO*. His Eminence then gave parting words and his final blessings.

The last celebration of Mass was held at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe presided over by His Eminence Francisco Robles Cardinal Ortega, Archbishop of Monterrey. After Mass, a final picture was taken of all the flags of the twenty-four countries. The final bus trip back to the hotels was somber. We were overwhelmed by the outstanding magnificent, international, educational, spiritual, and cultural event that we had experienced in just four days.

These four days also included two CICIAMS General Council Meetings (plus an Executive Board meeting on Saturday). There were Solidarity Tables to sell items to benefit the CICIAMS Solidarity Fund. Cardinal Barragan had been invited to tour the State University Hospital in Monterrey. His Eminence invited Marylee Meehan, the President of CICIAMS, Dr. Diaz, President of the Latin American Region of FIMCA and Carolina (daughter) Vessic to accompany him on this tour. In addition, throughout the Congress there were media requests and hundreds of photos taken.

Our heartfelt "thank you" is extended one more time to Cardinal Barragain for being instrumental with his contact with Cardinal Ortega and Cardinal Ortega for giving his blessings on the members of MEAC and ACM to host this outstanding CICIAMS 18th World Congress. Cardinal Barragan, upon returning to Rome, retired. We are very grateful for his years of devotion to Pastoral Care for us who serve God in the field of health care. Our beloved Cardinal is from Monterrey, Mexico. How wonderful it was that this magnificent World Congress held in Monterrey, Mexico preceded the commencement of his retirement.

Lastly, all Congresses have difficulties. Our Mexican colleagues overcame every difficulty with superior grace and poise. They walked with God in faith. Their country, bishops, community and families must be very proud of everyone. CICIAMS is extremely proud of everyone.

Now, how does one begin to thank all of the members of MEAC, ACM, CICIAMS Executive Board Members, program chairpersons, speakers, clergy, student nurses, state, community, translators, hotel and conference venues and their wonderful meals and staff, bus drivers, photographers, donors, accountants, web master, computer personnel, audio-visual personnel, gift persons, and the list goes on? Please let it be known that CICIAMS members around the world appreciated every detail that was attended to. May all these dedicated workers and their families be abundantly blessed for all the intense work and sacrifices that went into making the Congress such a wonderful success. Thank you. Our Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe Queen of Mexico and Empress of America did cover us with her mantle. We thank her.

"Thank You" – two simple words with attached profound meaning.

"Mary" and "Carolina" two simple names with attached greatness.

Thank you Mary and Carolina.

God bless,

Marylee J. Meehan

International President of CICIAMS