

2nd Communication:
IV Congregational Seminar on the Pastoral Care of Migrants
November 24-29, 2011 - Caxias do Sul, Brazil

We continue the activities of the 26th and 27th of November.

The morning of the 26th started with an opening prayer led by the sisters of the Province of St. Joseph. After which, Dr. Nivea Nunez de la Paz, a Lutheran theologian and a Cuban immigrant presented 'The Feminization of Migration: Challenges and Potentialities'. She began her talk with the bible phrase from Mk 16 and invited the participants to reflect on the status and role of women in relation with the realities of migration.

Followed then by the sharing of mission experiences:

- Mrs. Adilia de Souza, lay Scalabrinian - women refugees of South Africa;
- Sr. Ires de Costa – non-Christian women migrants in Reggio Calabria, Italy;
- Sr. Idalina Bordignon – women victims of trafficking in Dominican Republic; and
- Sr. Lucia Boniatti – president of the Health System of Mae de Deus, Porto Alegre – Brazil – Migrants experience in Health Care.

The afternoon session initiated with the sharing of the seminar organized by the Provinces of Christ the King and Mary, Mother of Migrants. Immediately, the mission experiences of Sr. Ines Faccioli about the seasonal workers in Brazil and Sr. Maria Arlina Barral on the detained migrants in the 'Estacion Migratoria', Mexico.

The participants went to their respective groups to deepen more their reflections on the day's talks and sharing.

After the day's work, a group of sisters went for a trip to Gramado and Canela, almost two hours from Caxias do Sul. Everybody had a relaxing and fun night admiring the Christmas lights and decorations.

Next day, the 27th is the first Sunday of Advent and it started with a prayer. The prayer was done in communion with nature, embracing the warmth of the first rays of the morning sun.

Back at the plenary hall, Sr. Etra Modica related about the Intercultural Dialogue: a challenge in the missionary formation. She reiterated the need to explore new ways within the Scalabrinian religious formation in order to have real intercultural experiences among the formands of different nations.

Then, the missionary experiences of the following:

- Mrs. Ruth Cruz Gomes, a lay Scalabrinian missionary - Santiago de Cali, Colombia;

- Sr. Elisete Signor - Brazilian immigrants in Boston, U.S.A.; and
- Sr. Milva Caro – Youths of 2nd generation, Germany.

In the afternoon, a panel of four imparted their responses to the challenges of contemporary migration according to their respective organizations:

- Dr. Andrés Ramires – representative of UNHCR;
- Sr. Erta Lemos – director of AISSMI;
- Sr. Ligia Gamba – representative of CELAM; and
- Fr. Rui Pedro – Scalabrini International Migration Network.

Each panelist talked about the experiences of their particular organizations regarding the projects and challenges working with the migrants and refugees. Moreover, the participants actively asked questions to the panelists for more clarifications.

The Provinces of St. Joseph and Our Lady Fatima reported the seminar they organized in preparation of the IV Congregational Seminar on the Pastoral Care of Migrants.

The Eucharistic celebration was presided by Fr. Rui Pedro and was animated the sisters of the Province of Mary, Mother of Migrants.

You can visit the congregational website for more information and photos about the IV Congregational Seminar: www.scalabriniane.org.

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