

CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAMME

Offered by Gregorian University, Rome

- FR JOE MANNATH SDB

In October 2017, someone by the name of Franz Marcus from Germany contacted me. He was coming to Delhi and wanted to meet with me. His letter said:

"I would like to share with you some ideas and experiences about child protection. *"Kindermissionswerk "Die Sternsinger"*, the German branch of the Pontifical Society of Missionary Childhood, supports more than 2,000 projects every year to help disadvantaged children in Africa, Asia, Oceania, Latin America and Eastern Europe. We target vulnerable children such as street children, working children, children with disabilities or diseases, refugees, etc.

"One of our concerns is also the protection of children and their prevention from sexual and other abuse. Together with our Holy Father Pope Francis we consider this a huge challenge in all countries worldwide. As a board member and commissioner for child protection of *Kindermissionswerk* I try to encourage and support measures for child protection of local Churches in different continents.

"In this context we started cooperation with the Centre for Child Protection (CCP) at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome with the purpose of supporting the implementation of child protection measures through education and prevention programs.

"The CCP has developed, partly with the financial support of *Kindermissionswerk*, an E-learning program on Child Protection. The program offers the necessary tools and knowledge to give professional and adequate attention to the

victims of sexual abuse and their families, as well as to establish measures of action to protect minors.

"Our goal is to offer this program to local churches, bishops' conferences, dioceses, catholic universities, *religious*



congregations and formation centers that are interested in organizing education and prevention courses and form trainers and multipliers for child protection.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to meeting you tomorrow and I am looking forward to it."

Franz Marcus and I met, and had a very meaningful conversation about this programme.

The online course offered by the Gregorian is free, with a limited number of seats.

Religious, especially formators, who would like to do this course, can contact me for more details—or check their website.

I have gone through their website and checked the programme and its course contents. It is a relevant and praiseworthy initiative from which educators, especially religious and priests, can benefit.

Here is some information from the Programme Website:

The CCP E-Learning Programme

The Centre for Child Protection (CCP) develops a distance learning programme

(E-learning) for the safeguarding of minors. An interdisciplinary team of international experts is involved in developing a web-based education programme that offers the knowledge required to professionally and adequately relate to victims of sexual abuse and to their families and to act upon of safeguarding of minors. The programme will be available in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

Becoming a Partner

The E-Learning programme can be joined by Institutions—such as Universities, Congregations, Seminars, Dioceses, Schools, etc. By linking the E-Learning programme to their educational programme, these institutions become CCP partners. The partners' institutions will be invited to choose units that are the most useful to their trainees and to combine them with face-to-face sessions organized and held by on-site trainers. By doing so, each partner will be involved in adjusting the content of the E-learning programme according to its cultural, linguistic and legal context, and to its needs.

The Learning-Units

The units are sorted by thematic areas:

- Core Units
- Human Formation
- Theology
- Care
- Systemic Factors and Contexts of Abuse
- Intervention and Prevention

Each unit includes texts, videos, graphics and powerpoints and can therefore address different learning and educational needs. Academic components and recommended readings are also provided for those who wish to implement the programme at an academic level.

The course is free. The number of participants is limited. Those interested can check the website, or write to: crioffice2013@gmail.com

● Fr Joe Mannath SDB is the National Secretary of CRI and the editor of this magazine.



DOCUMENTS IN BRIEF

Kee*p Watch* is a Letter from the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life released on 8 September 2014. It was released during the Year of Consecrated life (30 November 2014 to 2 February 2016). Basically, it speaks about Consecrated Life as a Journey, a journey like the Exodus, trying to search for the face of God and move beyond passing concerns. Here are the major points of the document.

A. Consecrated Life as Exodus

The journey of the Israelites was a journey with God through the symbols of a cloud by day and a flame by night. "At every stage of their journey, whenever the cloud rose from the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would resume their march. If the cloud did not rise, they waited and would not march until it did. For the cloud of the LORD rested on the tabernacle by day, and a fire shone within the cloud by night, for all the House of Israel to see. And so it was for every stage of their journey (Ex 40:36-38)." This evocative icon of Exodus indicates a modern image of Consecrated Life. It includes our modern moments of stop and go, pause and resume, patience and enterprise.

Exodus is full of symbols and metaphors: The burning bush, crossing the red sea, journey through the desert, the theophany on mount Sinai, fear of the lonely wilderness, the gift of the law of the covenant, the column of cloud and fire, manna, water. The symbol of the desert signifies arid solitude and loneliness, lack of basics of life (water, vegetation, friends, life).

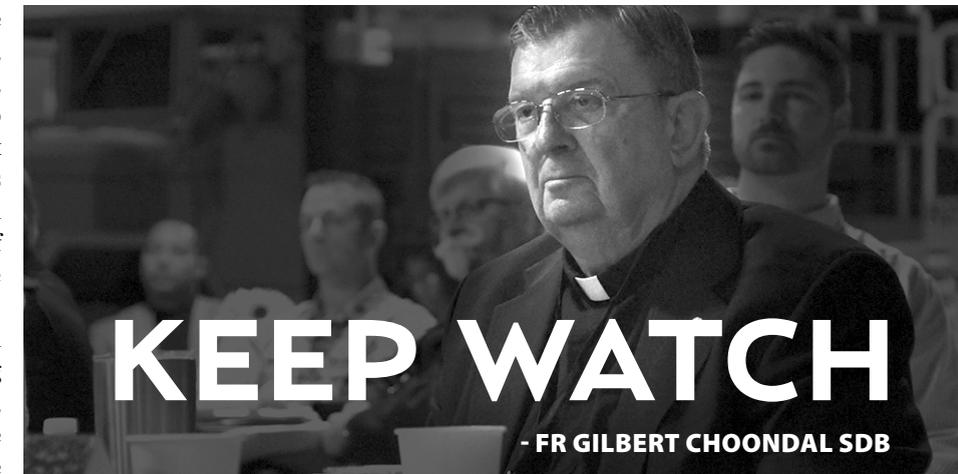
The Symbol of the Cloud (anan): It is a guide for the journey, at times stopping for long time, thus causing inconvenience and provoking complaint, then, rising and moving to show the way. The cloud indicated constant watchfulness, test of faith, patience, and final destination indefinitely postponed, leading to total obedience. The symbolic meaning of the cloud is interpreted as the angel of God (Ex14:19), presence of God, used again and again in psalms and wisdom books, and even in the New Testament (cloud during the birth of Jesus, the Transfiguration, the Ascension).

Consecrated Life Today: It is a kind of journey guided by the cloud in the Post-Conciliar era. It is a journey of exodus. There have been moments of creative fidelity, inventiveness, enthusiasm; so too fragile certainties and bitter disappointments, like walking in darkness at times and watchful prayer. Consecrated life is an unknown voyage (Wisdom18:3), a journey that demands total obedience, trust and faith. It is like the journey of Abraham, who was asked to move to an unknown destination.

B. Living the Exodus

Consecrated Life has evolved into the present form through a journey like Exodus. This evolution can be seen during the second half of the last century:

- ⊕ 1947: Introducing Secular Institutes was a revolutionary gesture in the Church.
- ⊕ 1950: The Vatican called the first World Congress of all Religious.
- ⊕ 1964: *Lumen Gentium*, 6th Chapter (on religious life) brings an ecclesial identity to Religious Life.
- ⊕ 1965: *Perfectae Caritatis*. Decree giving importance to fraternal life and formation (educational formation of religious).
- ⊕ 1963. *Pacem in Terris* introduces new concept ("signs of



the times"), rights and duties, human dignity and even UN Universal Declaration of the Human Rights. Consecrated life has tried to meet these demands, inviting religious to the image of the cloud with trust and obedience through the voice of the Church.

⊕ The theology of *Charism* begins with Vatican II though not mentioned in Vatican II.

⊕ 1971: The word *charism* first appears in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelica Testificatio* of Paul VI.

⊕ The Church guided the Consecrated Life in the last fifty years on these seven main themes:

- ↳ The foundational charism,
- ↳ life in the spirit nourished by the Word (*lectio divina*),
- ↳ fraternal life in common,
- ↳ initial and continuing formation,
- ↳ new forms of apostolate,
- ↳ the exercise of authority and
- ↳ attention to different cultures.

C. Consecrated Life as Elijah's Life

The monastic life is compared to the life of Prophet Elijah: Solitude, asceticism, passion for the covenant, fidelity to the