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On the Some of the Steps that Have Been Taken to Implement the Proposals of the First International Meeting of the Association of the Miraculous Medal (Rome, 10 June 2002)

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Rome, June 10, 2002

*To the Visitors of the Congregation of the Mission and
the Visitatrixes of the Daughters of Charity*

My very dear Brothers and Sisters,

May the grace of Our Lord be always with you!

On November 22, 2001, I wrote to give you some news about the First International Meeting of the Association of the Miraculous Medal, which was held here in Rome last October. I enclosed a copy of the Final Document, which, in addition to the commitments made by the representatives of the Association, included five proposals directed to the Director General.

I write today to offer you an account of some of the steps that have been taken to implement those proposals.

1. The first proposal, which received quasi-unanimous approval, was that an organized international structure for the Association should be created. By this letter, I am announcing the nomination of Fr. Charles Shelby as the International Coordinator of the Association of the Miraculous Medal. Fr. Shelby will continue to live and work in Perryville, Missouri, where he is serving as the President of the Association of the Miraculous Medal at St. Mary's of the Barrens. I am also announcing the nomination of a Coordinating Council of the International AMM, which will assist Fr. Shelby. Its members are: Fr. Janusz Zwolinski, C.M. (Congo/Poland), Sr. Marie Yonide Midy, D.C. (Paris/Haiti) and Señorita Martha Tapia (Mexico). In dialogue with Fr. Shelby, I have worked out a detailed job description for the office of International Coordinator, whose principal function is to help the Director General:
 - to assist and animate the National Councils of the AMM, where they already exist, in pursuing the purposes of the Association;
 - to promote the creation of new national structures in countries where they do not yet exist;
 - to offer formation materials to the Association in various countries, or criteria for composing such materials;
 - to encourage the countries to formulate concrete means for putting into practice the commitments made at the International AMM Meeting in Rome in 2001;
 - to supervise a web site for the International AMM.

2. The October meeting's second proposal was that the International Statutes be revised to correspond more fully with some of the experiences shared during the days of the meeting. Twenty-five of the participants approved this proposal and eight voted against it, but another 35 abstained. Upon reflection, it seems to me that the time is not yet ripe for revising the International Statutes, which were approved by the Holy See only in 1997. Actually, they are quite general and leave us room for considerable flexibility. In my judgment, it would be better for us to wait until we have more experience of the different ways in which the Miraculous Medal Association functions in various countries before we engage in the laborious process of revising the Statutes. The Association is still growing and expanding into new countries. The experience of those countries will be useful in any future process of revising the Statutes.
3. The third proposal was that we elaborate some general guidelines for formation in the AMM and offer supporting material for newly created groups. I am happy to say that a significant step has already been taken in this regard with the publication of

Asociación de la Medalla Milagrosa
Una nueva Imagen para un nuevo Milenio
Editorial La Milagrosa
García de Paredes, 45
28010 Madrid, Spain

Fax: 34 91 593 2369
E-mail: lamilagrosa@auronet.es

Copies can be obtained by writing to the address above (brochure enclosed).

While this book is available only in a Spanish-language version, almost all of the materials contained in the book are also available in English, French, Italian, and Portuguese and can be obtained through the Vincentian Family Office in Rome. If you should wish these materials in one of those languages, please contact:

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Via dei Capasso, 30
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For the future, as mentioned above, one of the tasks of the International Coordinator and the Coordinating Council will be to work on guidelines for formation materials.

4. The fourth proposal of October's international meeting was that another international meeting, or General Assembly of the AMM, be convened within the next four years. I envision that this will happen around the year 2005 and, in fact, I hope that such international meetings, or General Assemblies, will be convened on a regular basis after that too. But since my own mandate ends two years from now, I must place this in the hands of my successor!
5. The fifth proposal of the international meeting was the creation of an international bulletin of formation and information.

This is one of the matters that, I am certain, the International Coordinator and Coordinating Council will be treating soon after their mandate begins.

I am deeply grateful to Fr. Shelby, Fr. Zwolinski, Sr. Marie Yonide, and Srita. Tapia for their willingness to take up this new responsibility. I am delighted that the Association is growing and spreading to new countries. I ask the Lord to help all of us, like Mary, to be attentive listeners to his word, to know how to put it into practice very concretely, and to be an evangelizing force "by word and work" wherever we might be.

Your brother in St. Vincent,

Robert P. Maloney, C.M.
Superior General