

EUROPEAN CHARIS CONTINENTAL SERVICE OF COMMUNION TOGETHER IN HUNGARY

In the Hungarian city Esztergom, nearby Budapest, the first European CHARIS Service of Communion was established during a European assembly of over eighty representatives.

It was a weekend of getting to know each other across the continent and making needed elections possible, according to the statutes of CHARIS. The participants represented eleven European networks of communities and schools of evangelisation, nineteen CHARIS National Services of Communion, and five other nations.

The members of this European CHARIS Service of Communion are (a) one representative of each CHARIS National Service of Communion, elected in their own nation; (b) one representative of each large network of communities/schools of evangelisation, elected by those networks themselves; (c) two representatives of 'specific ministries', elected by the European assembly; and (d) two representatives of Catholics under 30 years old, elected by those participants in the assembly that were under 30. This four categories are described in [the statutes](#), having the right to speak and to vote.

Elections to complete the Continental Service

How to elect representatives of specific ministries and Catholics under 30 is not prescribed in the statutes. The European preparation committee decided to ask all National Services to come with a delegation of three persons including a one under 30. Both national delegations and network representatives were asked to suggest persons who have a specific ministry and would be available to join the continental service for three years.

For specific ministries, the assembly elected Damien Stayne from England, having a ministry to proclaim the Word with signs and wonders, to empower God's people to live the supernatural life and to reach the poor and needy; and Bohumir Zivcak from Slovakia, having a ministry of kerygma, worship and prayer for deliverance.

The young participants elected Josip Bilandžija from Croatia and Tamás Pádár from Hungary.

Continental service started to speak and to vote

After these elections the Continental Service was complete. Now the Service was able to speak with each other and to elect seven members into the first coordinating team. Before this election, there was first a continuation of the reflection on: *What service is needed in Europe?* Secondly the question was raised: *Should all members of the coordinating team come from among the members of the Continental Service?* This limitation is not prescribed in the statutes, but a majority in the European Continental Service chose for it. They also chose to come together physically at least once a year and to continue to use Zoom for other meetings.

European coordinating team elected

Out of seventeen available persons were finally elected (from left to right on the picture): Tony Laureys from Belgium/European network of Sword of the Spirit communities, Josip Bilandžija from Croatia/under 30 reps, Cathy Brenti from France, Zoltan Vegh from Hungary, Pavla Petrášková from Czech republic, Fr. Christophe Blin from Germany/European network of Chemin Neuf communities, and Teresa Lally from Scotland.

Together with Etienne Mellot from France and Paolo Maino from Italy, who both represent Europe in the intercontinental CHARIS International Service of Communion, they have the task to facilitate the work of the Continental Service.

Gift to the world

There was a strong experience of communion in the Lord. During every time of worship encouraging prophetic words and images were coming. "*CHARIS is My gift to the world*", was one of them that struck me.

The preparation committee was composed in 2019 by Etienne Mellot and Paolo Maino. A big part of the preparation was to help the nations in establishing a CHARIS National Service of Communion that represents all expressions of charismatic renewal among Catholics in their area. Part of the preparation was also a conference in Zoom (23-25 April 2021), in which each nation was able to present themselves in four minutes.

The young participants in the assembly will continue to meet in Zoom, together with Giulia Rancan from Italy. She represents Catholics under 30 years in the intercontinental CHARIS International Service of Communion and was also with us in Hungary.

Kees Slijkerman,

former secretary of the preparation team.

National delegations came from Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine.

Network representatives came from Beatitudes, Chemin Neuf, Shalom, Gesù Risorto, Emmanuel, Jesus Youth, Koinonia Giovanni Battista, Sword of the Spirit, Fondatio, European Network of Communities and Schools of St. Andrew.