

Dear friends and colleagues

The beginning of the Lenten Season, they say, is a call not for dwelling on past failures but for thinking ahead, and with this in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about the activities of our association during 2010.

On Monday, February 1, I met with Br. Amnuay and Mr. Glen Chatelier at the Suvarnabhumi Campus of Assumption University, Thailand. I was very pleased to see that Assumption University has already prepared a plan for this year's Annual Conference on the theme "Caring in Truth: Catholic Perspectives in Education Challenges."

As announced last year in Sydney, the Conference will start on August 26, 2010. The program for the first day comprises registration, the official opening ceremony and an address by the Apostolic Nuncio. On the second day there will be talks by various speakers, a workshop, and a presentation by our student delegates on their discussions and activities. The last day, Saturday, August 28, will feature a panel discussion, the business meeting and, after lunch, a cultural visit crowned by a dinner cruise. Details about the Conference will be announced on the ASEACCU webpage.

Since last year, my secretary has been working on the ASEACCU members' list. The results of these efforts can be seen on the ASEACCU homepage, so please take a look to confirm that the information is accurate and up-to-date. The main purpose of this exercise was to enable us to use e-mail as the main tool for communication, so please make sure that any changes in e-mail address and/or contact person are communicated to my office as soon as possible.

While the basic lay-out of the ASEACCU homepage hasn't changed much, we have added some content that should be helpful for all member institutions. For example, the results of an earlier survey on exchange programs among ASEACCU member can be found under "Exchange Activities and Programs." [<http://www.nanzan-u.ac.jp/English/aseaccu/activities.htm>] Please help us to keep this database up-to-date by adding new items or deleting those that have been discontinued. Also, information, especially about changes in the administration of member institutions, will be announced regularly in the "News & Topic" section at the top of the ASEACCU homepage. [<http://www.nanzan-u.ac.jp/English/aseaccu/index.html>]

At the preparatory meeting in Bangkok, two points came up that deserve special

mention. Both are related to money. The first point concerns the payment of the fees for the Annual Conference. On previous occasions, the fees have been quoted in US dollars, but this year they will be quoted in baht, the local currency of Thailand, in order to allow Assumption University, the hosting institution, to have better control over the cost estimate. As you can imagine, unforeseeable fluctuations in the exchange rate can pose rather serious financial problems for the hosting institution.

The second point concerns the collection of the annual dues. For the first couple of years, these were paid mostly in cash, which was collected at the time of the registration for the conference. Over the years, collecting a rather large sum of US dollars in cash has become a burden (and a security risk) for the hosting institution. Using bank transfers instead of payment in cash may appear to be the best alternative, but since the charges for such transactions are rather steep (about \$15 on top of a \$100 payment) either ASEACCU or the paying institution will incur costs in the process. The most convenient and least expensive way is by means of a check made out in US dollars, payable to ASEACCU. The check can be sent by mail or presented at the time of registration. As always, a formal invoice will be sent out later on, by mail, to all member institutions. A special reminder will be included with the regular invoice for those member institutions that have not yet paid last year's membership dues.

Looking forward to meet you in Bangkok

Michael Calmano, svd  
Executive Secretary  
ASEACCU