

PARTICIPATION IN THE PIOUS SCHOOLS IN HUNGARY



SOME HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- **A rich piarist tradition of more than 300 years**
- **1950-1990: controlled and restricted by a communist state**
 - 10 schools >>> 2 schools
 - 237 religious >>> 90 religious
 - very few (hardly any) lay teachers
 - scarce communication with the General Curia or with the other provinces (a sense of „on our own”)
 - many of the present-day religious piarists were socialized in those decades

THE BACKGROUND FOR PARTICIPATION

- The 1990s: re-opening / re-founding schools – a sudden expansion – a „crisis of growth”
 - 2 schools (Budapest, Kecskemet) >>> 8 schools
 - Religious piarists „spread out” from the 2 existent communities
 - the cooperation of lay people (teachers+administrative staff) became an absolute and inevitable necessity
 - smaller religious communities

THE BACKGROUND FOR PARTICIPATION

- a sense of „weakened” piarist presence (in Bp and Kecskemet)
- a sense of nostalgia (even these days, mixed feelings among the religious about the expansion of the 1990s)

THE BACKGROUND FOR PARTICIPATION

- **The 1990s: cooperation without reflection**
 - the Order's proposals were not really understood or received well...
 - lack of understanding, also an unwillingness...
 - „We were more concerned with re-establishing the re-opened schools than with reading documents...”

THE BACKGROUND FOR PARTICIPATION

- Lots of the lay teachers were alumni of the previous period (an „implicit piarist attitude”)
- The attitude of some (quite a few) religious piarists:
 - „do the way we do it!”
 - „we, the religious, give the piarist essence / identity to our schools”
 - accidental and spontaneous relationship between lay and religious

THE BACKGROUND FOR PARTICIPATION

- In some places (e.g., Szeged), the new beginning brought forth a unique cooperation of lay and religious, that resulted in a strong sense of priestly identification and the „empowerment” of the laity.

THE BACKGROUND FOR PARTICIPATION

- From 2003 onwards (the 2 terms of P. József Urbán as provincial 😊) – progress in many aspects:
 - Learning strategic planning
 - Structural developments in the province:
 - Equipo Provincial de Economía
 - Equipo de Pedagogía >>> Dirección Provincial de Pedagogía
 - Equipo de Formadores

THE BACKGROUND FOR PARTICIPATION

- Monthly meetings of the directors (of the schools)
- Regular meetings of the rectors (superiores locales)
- Reaching out towards the rest of the Order:
 - visits to the Provinces of Catalunya and Emaús
 - getting to know the rich realities of the Fraternities / Movimiento Calasanz / CEE
>>> a growing awareness and inspiration

PARTICIPATION: COOPERATION

- Most lay teachers can be considered as cooperators:
 - they meet several criteria
 - a sense of belonging
 - growing co-responsibility
 - members of the R. C. Church
 - many of them are primarily linked to the piarist church community
 - many are open to participate in voluntary activities / youth pastoral activities / summer activities etc.

PARTICIPATION: COOPERATION

- Formation for teachers
 - „Jornadas” (2-3 day) every second year
 - for all the teachers
 - „PIPA” (Basic Piarist Pedagogical Training)
 - human, professional and charismatic
 - lay and religious teachers together
 - 120 lessons (5*2,5 days)
- Local piarist pedagogical trainings
- From 2017: an insertion program for the newly admitted teachers

PARTICIPATION: BEYOND COOPERATION

- 2 local groups (Szeged, Göd) – approximately „Shared Mission Groups” (they don’t call themselves so...)
- inspired by a deeper desire to be connected to the religious community
- not only actual teachers (former colleagues, spouses too)
- 2-weekly meetings: formation / sharing our lives / prayer / supper



PARTICIPATION: BEYOND COOPERATION

- Provincial Chapter 2015 / Biennial Plan 2015-2017: „By 2017, The Piarist Fraternity shall be born in Hungary.”



PARTICIPATION: BEYOND COOPERATION

- The Piarist Fraternity in Hungary:
 - 4 lay people (1 couple😊), 3 religious
 - not a local group – from 5 different places
 - Monthly meetings
 - Next years project: to „spread out from the bridge-head” and to facilitate the birth of local groups (of any modality)

THE FUTURE - OPPORTUNITIES

- Deepening and widening the scope for participation:
 - sensitizing the religious piarists
 - for a better understanding of the topic
 - in order to deepen in the piarist charisma, together with the lay
 - forming local groups (of shared mission?), on the basis of cooperation and informal relations
 - proposing the Fraternity as an option
 - accompanying those who wish to join the Fr.

THE FUTURE - OPPORTUNITIES

- developing youth pastoral – steps towards the Movimiento Calasanz
- the joint effort of lay and religious
- since 2015, a training program for youth leaders
- since 2016, youth groups in Budapest and Szeged
- joint Central-European youth meetings (with the Polish, Slovak, Austrian and Italian province)

THE FUTURE - CHALLENGES

- IF it is not the religious piarist who gives the essence / the piarist quality to any institute or work...
- IF you can be a Piarist as a lay person too...
- THEN
 - ...what is the specific role of a religious piarist in the Pious Schools?

It is extremely important to find the answer to this question so that we, religious piarists, may live an authentic and appealing religious life that bears fruits in terms of new religious vocations too.