For the Coming of the Kingdom of God, out of Love for Jesus Christ.

A Newsletter offering information and formation to help us Create an Alliance between the Laity and Religious, a Lay Assumption.

1. Formation: St. Augustine: “Called by Christ the source of our unity, we choose to live in community according to the Rule of Life and the spirit of St. Augustine, in view of the Kingdom.” Applying this to lay people we might say: “Called by Christ, the source of our unity, we choose to live, through sincere fraternal relations and friendship, in a spirit of community according to the Rule of Life and the spirit of St. Augustine, in view of the Kingdom.”

At first sight we might say that St. Augustine influenced only the doctrinal charter of our Institute and our insistence on community. As for community we need but read N.3 of the Rule of Live to realize Augustine’s influence: “Christ is the one who gathers us together. We live in community according to the spirit of St. Augustine: “Before all else live in a household of perfect harmony, having but one heart and one mind intent on God.” (Rule of St. Augustine).

However, in a chapter on St. Augustine in “Praying 15 Days with Emmanuel D’Alzon”, a fine little book written by Fr. Jean-Paul Muzet A.A., Fr. Jean Paul insists that Augustine’s influence on us is much broader. He writes: ‘The path of an Augustinian formation under the guidance of the Bishop of Hippo is an invitation to conversion of heart.’

2. Information: To learn what different Congregations are doing to foster cooperation with lay-people simply search on the internet for Lay Assumptionists, Lay Jesuits, Lay Religious of the Assumption, Lay Sisters of Notre Dame of Namur etc. One very enlightening article is found under Lay Dominicans: Vivian Gilbreth: “Can Dominicans really be Lay People”. Another under Lay Jesuits is “Confessions of a Lay Collaborator” Michael R. Carey.

The International Commission for the creation of a Lay Alliance is now complete. Mrs. Jane Mwari of our Assumptionist St. Monica parish in a slum of Nairobi was chosen as representative of the African Continent. On hearing the news of her nomination she said: “I am very proud to be an Assumptionist.” Many of the parishioners of St. Monica are refugees from different

African counties. Speaking of Africa there is a large group of lay associates in the Congo. A stunning photo of some of them appears in the October 2008 issue of AA News.

3. Odds and Ends: In a recent issue of The Tablet, a distinguished Lay Catholic Review in England, Fr. Daniel O'Leary, parish priests writes: "This 'return to the laity' encouraged by the Vatican Council is long overdue-not as helpers but as true and powerful leaders at all levels. The gift of prophecy is alive in the priesthood of the baptized. The Holy Spirit in their hearts and minds is ready with undreamed of possibility." Michael Carey, in the article mentioned above, precisely because of the Council's understanding the role of the laity, questions the nature of the relationship between Jesuits and their lay collaborators and this made him think of the story of the pig and the chicken. One morning a pig and a chicken were passing by the village restaurant where a Charity Ham and Eggs Breakfast was being held. "Let's drop in", said the chicken. The pig hesitated saying, "For you it would be but a contribution but for me a total commitment."! Not only religious are called to total commitment. The laity, precisely as laity, is also called to commitment. "Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." (Matt. 10-39). Indeed, at baptism all are called to holiness. And holiness is a call to commit totally to Christ.