

Manual for Mission and Vocation Animation



*“ We are declaring to you what we have seen and heard,
so that you too may share our life.”*

(1Jn 1,3)

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FOREWORD

The missionary dimension of the Church has its beginnings firmly rooted in the time of Our Lord Jesus Himself. In their accounts of the activities of Jesus and his disciples, Mathew, Mark and Luke tell us of the sending out of the twelve to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick (Mt. 10, Mk.6, Lk. 9). St. Luke continues in Chapter ten with another group; this time Jesus sends out seventy-two disciples to proclaim the Kingdom of God and he says to them ***“the harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to do his harvesting”*** (Lk. 10:2). Thus Our Lord himself puts the two important dimensions of the Church – the missionary dimension and the vocation animation dimension – together. He sends out the disciples out not only to bring the good news but also to be aware of the need and ask for more labourers to work in the Lord’s vineyard.

Mission and Vocation Animation (MVA) forms an integral part of our Congregation and therefore engaging in it fully, taking into consideration the missionary nature of the Church and the need for ***“labourers for the harvest”*** is imperative in our daily lives as Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles. To be able to do this effectively, the OLA MVA Co-ordinators came together in Mwanza, Tanzania to work and reflect on how to do mission and vocation animation in our

Institute as this depends to a large extent on the cultures of the different places where we work and on the realities of our world today.

This booklet is the fruit of their labour in Mwanza from the 3rd to the 14th of July 2011. They have worked assiduously to produce guidelines to help sisters who are responsible for MVA in our province, districts, regions and insertions to do their work effectively. Indeed MVA is the responsibility of all sisters in the Institute wherever they are; for this reason, this booklet provides very simple guideline and activities that can be done at all levels of our set up – community, regional, provincial/district and general.

It is my hope that as sisters of Our lady of Apostles, we will all make the most of this invaluable work put together by the MVA Coordinators to help inform and form the people of God to share in the Church's universal mission, and promote vocation. We hope that when we declare what we have seen and heard, the people of God will be drawn to our way of life and share in it.

Sr. Felicia Harry, OLA
Superior General
Roma, 15 March 2012

INTRODUCTION

The Spirit which acts in the world always invites us to reach out to men and women of all races, cultures and beliefs to announce the Good News of Salvation. Our Missionary and Vocation Animation (MVA) must express itself in different ways according to the times and places. The method of our MVA is challenged by cultural and social changes. Thus, we are encouraged to be creative and discover in Jesus Christ, the audacity and dynamism which would help us to respond to the expectations and aspirations in the heart of every human person.

This document is the fruit of our work and reflections together during our international meeting of MVA which took place at Mwanza, Tanzania from the 3rd to the 14th of July 2011, following the 2006 meeting in Lagos, Nigeria.

We are convinced that the same passion which animated Fr. Planque still animates us today: *“To live the mission, one cannot be animated by any other spirit, than that of the love of God and the desire to make it known”*.

MVA is an essential part of our Institute and of the mission confided to us. As a result this document affirms that our first

missionary task is to give witnesses by our joy, our life and our fidelity to the Gospel and to our Charism.

In this document we have the orientations and tools which we hope will stimulate us in our work of mission and vocation animation.

May Our Lady of Apostles, guide our footsteps and may she help us to be faithful to the outpouring of the Spirit.

MVA Co-ordinators

Mwanza – Tanzania, 13 July 2011



DEFINITION

“We are declaring to you what we have seen and heard, so that you too may share our life.” (1 John 1:3)

Mission and Vocation Animation (MVA) consists of, “informing and forming the People of God to share in the Church’s universal mission, promoting vocation *ad gentes* and encouraging cooperation in the work of evangelization. (...) Missionary activity must first of all bear witness to and proclaim salvation in Christ” (*Redemptoris Missio*, 83).



THE RELEVANCE OF MVA IN THE INSTITUTE

MVA “*contributes to communication between Churches and their better awareness of the universal dimension of the Kingdom*” (Constitution no. 21).

More specifically for Vocation Animation, the Acts of the 2003 General Chapter invites us to witness to our call and to “the need for and the beauty of the Missionary vocation in all its forms (...) and to offer to those who feel themselves so called, the possibility of a life-long commitment to Mission according to our O.L.A. Charism and Spirituality.”

As Fr. Planque said, “to live the mission we can only be animated by the spirit of God’s love and the desire to make Him known.”

MVA is at the heart of our Congregation and of the mission given to it.



STRUCTURES

1. General Level

The General Councillor - MVA Co-ordinator will form an “ad hoc” committee from the members of the existing provincial/district committees, when the need arises.

2. Provincial / District level

- A team appointed by the Provincial/District Council for a mandate of five (5) years.
- The sister named by the Provincial/District Council as the one responsible for MVA in the province/District, co-ordinates the activities of the team.
- This team should be in-charge of both *Mission Animation and Vocation Animation*. They should meet at least two times per year.

3. Regional Level

- In each Region a committee should be formed with a co-ordinator and a sister from each country.
- The committee will work in conjunction with the Provincial MVA committee for a mandate of five (5) years.

4. Community level

The MVA teams at the Provincial/District/Regional/Insertion levels take care to have a contact person in each community.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

General Co-ordinator

1. Organize general meetings for Provincial/District/Regional/Insertions Co-ordinators.
2. Collect annual reports from the Provincial/District/Regional/ Insertions Co-ordinators.
3. Encourage the circulation of MVA materials/ documents among MVA Co-ordinators.
4. Publish MVA activities in *Meeting Point*.

The Provincial / District/Regional/Insertion Teams

- **The Co-ordinator :**

1. Co-ordinate the team and MVA activities in the Province/District/Region/Insertions.
2. Should represent the Congregation at the national level where applicable.
3. Give an annual report to the Provincial/ District Council.

- **The Team :**

1. Prepare an action plan based on the Congregational MVA Policy.

2. Prepare an annual budget and submit it to the Council for approval.
3. Collaborate with other religious groups.
4. Prepare MVA promotional materials and see to it that the website is set up.
5. To conscientize the sisters and the laity on the missionary activities of the Church by giving them information and involving them in their activities.
6. Help in forming missionary groups in the local Church.
7. Meet regularly to evaluate activities at least two times in a year.
8. Keep the Provincial/District Councils up-dated on MVA activities.
9. Co-ordinate the OLA Lay Missionary/Friends groups.

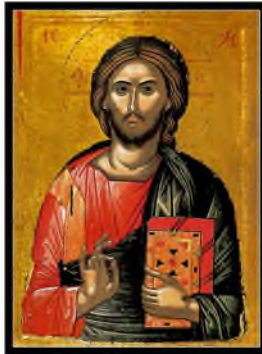


ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS REQUIRED:

The MVA co-ordinator should be able to animate a team.

Members of the MVA committee should:

1. Be passionate about mission, OLA spirituality and our Charism.
2. Witness to Gods' Kingdom by their prayers and community life.
3. Have some knowledge of Missiology, Communication and group dynamics.
4. Be creative, open to the activities of the Universal Church, and world events and be attentive to young people.
5. Ready to collaborate with other Congregations and other Church organizations.



PRACTICAL TOOLS

“Vocation and missionary animation requires the cooperation and the interest of all” (const. 21). Therefore, the tools that follow can be used to prepare and guide OLA sisters for their involvement in MVA activities with the laity wherever they are.



	Content	Tools, Means
Information for OLA sisters and the laity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Word of God 2. OLA Charism 3. Mission of the Church 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bible, Video, talks, fliers... 2. Worksheet on OLA spirituality, on Fr. Planque/ Web site newsletters Life and testimonies of the sisters and apostolate, videos etc. 3. Church documents (<i>Ad Gentes, Evangelii Nuntiandi, Redemptoris Missio,</i>) and other document which talk about Mission.

	Content	Tools, Means
Information for OLA sisters and the laity	<p>4. History of the Mission</p> <p>5. Culture : interculturality / inter-religious dialogue, religions</p> <p>6. JPIC</p> <p>7. Diversity of Vocations, Consecrated Life</p>	<p>4. Books, articles, profiles of Missionaries, personal testimonies of those who have died (e.g. Algerian Martyrs).</p> <p>5. Talks, specific inputs, collaboration with specific groups.</p> <p>6. Collaboration with the MVA Networks, workshops, (planting of trees, clean up)</p> <p>7. Talks, videos...</p>

	Content	Tools, Means
Information specifically for the youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse global realities <i>e.g.</i> especially what affects their lives and Africa. • Information about church activities with the youth <i>e.g.</i>, world youth day • Testimonies from young people about the realities of the world of the youth today. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Website / blog; face book, Twitters; international newsletters</i> • Discover Africa through organized visit. • Monthly meeting • Open days • Seminars



	Content	Tools, Means
To be motivated and to motivate the laity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal witness 2. Direct missionary experience, with emphasis on Ad Gentes and Ad Extra 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Daily witness of sisters, prayer, community life, apostolate, team work, share stories of missionary life – audio visual, bulletins, personal profiles, books, magazines. 2. Promote sending OLA sisters ad extra ; organise lay missionary groups Ad Extra/ Ad Gentes; involve lay groups in MVA formation, Collaborate with SMA and other groups.

	Content	Tools, Means
To be motivated and to motivate the laity	3. Build a family spirit and OLA identity	3. Celebrate mission feasts, Celebrate OLA day with lay people, Attend their social and family gatherings; Get an identity e.g. Uniforms, slogan, name, Display OLA Charism, History, Diversity in OLA House, centres, Schools, Churches, etc.
Motivation specifically for the youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit and accompany young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give them the chance and room to participate actively.

	Content	Tools, Means
Motivation specifically for the youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter the world of the youth and be close to them to discover their needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize travel to Africa, humanitarian services, youth camps, pilgrimages etc. • Come up with specific objectives to guide them and work with them to discover their needs; • Use them to advertise with other youth. • Form youth groups through schools, parishes and cultural centres;



	Content	Tools, Means
Formation of sisters and the Laity	<p>1. OLA Charism</p> <p>2. Church Documents</p> <p>3. Missiology</p>	<p>1. Live out OLA Charism and share it with Lay associates.</p> <p>2. Meeting and workshops on Church Documents, Congregation's documents on MVA.</p> <p>3. Seminars and workshops for sisters. To be given by resource persons including OLA resource persons. Reading materials, literature on missionary activities, promote the books written by OLA sisters.</p>

	Content	Tools, Means
Formation of sisters and the Laity	4. Skills for MVA	4. Sharing of lived experience by sisters on mission; Create a page for MVA in our newsletters.
	5. OLA history	5. Open MVA centers and share Archives in our provinces, Display OLA pictures, Logo, Mission statement in our communities.
	6. Communication skills and Information Technology	6. Formation in Information Technology and communication skills.

	Content	Tools, Means
Specific Formation for the Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation on their role in the Church and society as young people. • Training in human development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sessions • Witnesses of sisters • Travel to Africa.



CONCLUSION

“The secret of an authentic and efficacious evangelization lies in the desire for holiness. The Church and the world have an extreme need for witnesses who are credible by their love for God and their lived sanctity. It is contemplation of the face of Christ which makes emerge the irresistible passion to proclaim it and give it to others.” His Holiness, Benedict XVI – (OPM OMNIS TERRA N° 453, June 2009).

The duty to announce Christ to all people certainly represents an immense task which surpasses all human possibilities. But we know that Christ and His Spirit are the evangelizers, we are their collaborators. Convinced of our responsibility in Mission and Vocation Animation, at the heart of the Church and in the Institute, we OLA Sisters are called to allow ourselves to be fashioned by this love of God *“poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us”* (Rm. 5:5) .

May the Lord accompany us in proclaiming his Word to the contemporary, broken, destabilized and fully-changing society. How do we bring a hopeful response to the world which is searching for it? The youth are awaiting a response from the

Church on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation; what are we offering them? *“In order to awake in others a lively attachment to Christ and the desire to become evangelizers in their turn”* (Cons. N° 21) let us open the doors to hope.

May the Master of the harvest help us to have the courage to do new things.

Sr Denise BANG’NA – OLA

General Councillor

Mwanza – Tanzania, 13 July 2011



C.M.M.J.