

Ernest König  
50 years of AMI  
Greetings

September 1st, 2015

Dear Friends in AMI,

50 years of coherence is an amazing time. One third **of** this time I could share - half of it in “active duty”. The other half I accompanied you in spirit – a reason to share some reflections? Before, in the **Association of Catholic Soldiers in Austria** (AKS), for two years I held the opinion that AMI is something for specialists, for people who want to travel around, for one point on the conferences agenda. Until I became responsible; then I realized that it is much more.

The Presidency started on Sept 22, 1999 with a remarkable speech of Cardinal König and standing ovations at the end; the text you may find in the **AMI** celebrating document. He became a kind of informal patron saint of AMI.

Together; open to the other faithful and to the world, mission-oriented and the paramount importance of an educated conscience were the topics you may find in the paper “The Catholic Soldier at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium”, also included; it inspired other Christian associations to act adequately.

“A stone drops into the water; even small, it draws its circles...” we chanted together and it happened: AKS/AMI and the Catholic Women Organization had a rather distanced relation. Dealing with the issue “Violence against Women” especially in war time; it was rather tricky, but became a base for trust and brought us together.

My predecessors told me that other Catholic Lay Organizations behaved similar to the Catholic women; a reason for the AMI Presidency to apply for the CICO (**Conference of International Catholic Organizations**) Presidency; but not before having asked Cardinal König: His advice to do it and the voting of all 12 Catholic Youth organizations for the soldiers led to a 6 years lasting Presidency of AMI for the CICO.

Half a dozen of in AMI engaged friends permitted to reorganize the CICO with our military knowledge and experience to an efficient organization, launching six projects derived from the overall theme “In Awe for Life”, which seemed to be tailored for soldiers.

Back to the stone, which drops into the water: One of **these** projects was **just** mentioned, “Violence against Women”, chaired by WUCWO<sup>1</sup>,” and AMI; six other ICOS<sup>2</sup> participated. The result was applied at the grass root level and presented on occasion of the 60 years Anniversary of the United Nations.

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<sup>1</sup> World Union of Catholic Women Organizations

<sup>2</sup> International Catholic Organizations

This in brief, what came to my mind, being informed on this remarkable event – 50 Years AMI. Different reasons did not permit me to participate. Therefore I ask you to accept my written greetings.

AMI, in its permanent process of improving, goes into depth and stands for soldiers in an increasingly challenging environment. By fulfilling its mission it may convince friends in Catholic-, Christian- and the other associations of believers – in Awe for Life.

HE may bless your endeavors.

Ernest König