

HISTORY OF THE YTOL WORLDWIDE

Formation of youth teams was an idea that couples responsible for the Teams of Our Lady (TOL), World Movement of Catholic couples, had for some years. Already during the TOL International Meeting in Rome in 1970 it was intended to launch this project, but only in 1976 it was possible to accomplish it.

1976, Paris (France) - It was the preparation for another International Meeting of the TOL couples. Christine d'Ammonville, daughter of French couple responsible for International TOL, Thierry Rosset and some others suggest and arrange a meeting for the young children of couples participating in the TOL encounter. They ask for this, collaboration of Father Guy Thomazeau.

1976/Sept, Rome (Italy) - In parallel to the event of the TOL couples, follows the meeting of young people from various countries realizing, thus, the project of creating an international Catholic youth movement, inspired on spirituality, dynamics and organization of the TOL.

1976/77, Paris (France) - Christine d'Ammonville is seen as idealistic and persistent. Many consider her project as a nice idea only, that time will dilute. Even facing such disrepute, with the help of Father Guy Thomazeau and the couple Jacqueline and Michel Perreau, Christine begins to prepare a 2nd Meeting, to be held next summer. On the other hand, almost spontaneously and without much organization, young people coming from Rome encounter begin to disseminate the rich experience they lived and form Teams in their countries. In the city of Porto (Portugal) Friar Bernardo Domingues, Spiritual Counselor of TOL couples, invites Carlos Grijó to organize these groups that are calling themselves "Youth Teams".

1977/Sept, Gap (France) - Around 100 young people between 18 and 24 years old from several European countries (France, Portugal, Belgium, Austria, Italy and Switzerland) attended the 2nd Meeting. It appears that the design of the Movement begins to bear fruits: the "Youth Teams of Our Lady" (YTOL) are now a reality and leave Gap strengthened and hopeful. Another meeting is scheduled for next year.

1978/Sept Lourdes (France) - The 3rd International Meeting of YTOL at this time still referred to as "the Movement Encounter," animates people and assigns responsibilities. Movement broadens across Europe and brings 160 participants from France, Portugal, Belgium, Austria and Switzerland. In France, where Teams are already working regularly in various regions, the Movement's Animation Team is headquartered, holding the international liaison.

1979/Sept, Sarlat (France) - The 4th International Meeting of YTOL, involving about 200 youth. Representatives of each country are appointed (not called "responsible" yet) and the worldwide operation of the Movement's Animation Team is defined. This, directed by Jean-Michel Vallat, writes the "Contrat - Equipes Notre Dame Jeunes", the first document officially describing the Movement.

Youth Teams of Our Lady International



1980/Aug, Batsurguère (France) - The 5th International Meeting brought together 250 participants from 9 countries (France, Portugal, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, and Spain) including, for the first time representatives from the United States, England and Syria (where there is no Teams yet). The meeting highlight was the celebration of an international Mass in the Sanctuary of Lourdes. The International organization structure is established: each Team must have a Responsible that should maintain contact with the local Sector; each country will have a National Responsible, or group of Regional Responsible, who will liaise with the Movement's Animation Team; countries should organize activities and regional and national meetings; the International Meeting continues to be annual.

1981/Aug, Garaison (France) - 6th International Meeting of YTOL.

1982/Sept, Rome (Italy) - The 7th International Meeting occurs in parallel with the TOL couples. The two movements have a private audience with Pope John Paul II when he blesses the second "Contrat" in the presence of Jean-Michel Vallat, Claire de la Sayette (new Responsible of the Movement's Animation Team), Madalena Fontoura, among others. Father Jean Marie Dubois replaces Fr. Guy Thomazeau as Spiritual Counselor of the Movement, internationally. The meeting finishes with a consecration of the YTOL to Mary in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. Colombia is added as the newest member of the growing Movement.

1983/Aug, Garaison (France) - 8th International Meeting is similar to the previous ones, with the addition of special groups formed for prayer, for music and for pilgrimage to Lourdes. The Movement is officially recognized in France (Diocese of Paris) and its international headquarter is now the same of the TOL couples (Rue de La Glacière, 49 - Paris). Vincent de Feligonde is the new Responsible for the Movement's Animation Team.

1984/Aug, St. Saturnin (France) - 9th International Meeting, in which Denis Miglianico assumes the responsibility for the Movement's Animation Team. The Movement expands to Italy.

1985/Aug, Penafirme (Portugal) - 10th International Meeting, first held outside France. The highlight of this encounter is the pilgrimage to Fatima, when the devotion to Mary introduced by Portugal starts to define the YTOL Movement in a special way. A big step at the level of global organization is achieved through the creation of the International Animation Team (IAT) and the International Secretariat (IS), which replace the Movement's Animation Team. After the Encounter, Louis Duvaux (Responsible of the newly created French National Animation Team), is also named International Responsible, with Odile and Bernard Petit, as the Accompanying Couple, and Father Jean Marie Dubois as the Spiritual Counselor. The Movement now has a total around 2,500 young people.

1986/Aug, La Sallette (France) - 11th International Meeting. Representatives from Spain appear in full strength after a period they devoted to their national structuring, and the next meeting is announced to be in this country. Xavier Charron is the new International Responsible accumulating this year, the responsibility of French National Team.

1987/Jul, Santiago de Compostela (Spain) - 12th International Meeting, with 700 participants. Besides the traditional countries that come in larger numbers, there are new important joiners as Lebanon and Syria. For the first time the post of International Responsible is separated from the position of French National Responsible. The International Meeting shall be biannual, from now on.

Youth Teams of Our Lady International



1988/Sept, Lourdes (France) - IAT Meeting during which the Countries Responsible draft the International Charter, the main document of the Movement. They share important experiences and prepare the expansion of the YTOL for Latin America. Thibaut Roussel replaces Xavier Charron as International Responsible accompanied by the Couple Chantal and André Charbonnier and Father Gilles Rivière.

1989/Aug, Fatima (Portugal) - The 13th International Meeting is marked by the testimony of Lebanese youth, coming from a country in the midst of civil war, as well as the early presence of South Americans. In this particular, Thibaut Roussel, constitutes Catherine Nadas (Cathy) as the first Responsible for Brazil. At the end of the Meeting, Thibaut Roussel passes the office ahead of IS and IAT to Thibaut Fontanet. In July/90 this latter is replaced by Pierre Vérot.

1991/Aug, Czestochowa (Poland) - 14th International Meeting in parallel with the VI World Youth Days (WYD), when the Movement celebrates its 15th anniversary. YTOL expands to Canada and India. Fadi Boustani, Lebanese, receives the position of International Responsible for the first time not taken by a French youth. Father Pierre Lafond is the new Spiritual Counselor and Bénédicte and Gilles Dargnies, the new Couple of IS and IAT. Next year, the IAT get together in Lebanon and issue an important documentation about the International Meetings.

1993/Aug, Rome (Italy) – 15th International Meeting: in addition to nearly 600 young people from 16 countries, there is important presences of representatives from India, Canada, Ireland, Cuba and Korea (in these three latter there is no Teams yet). The theme is "I came so that they might have life" (Jn 10:10) and the Meeting is marked by the YTOL visit to Castelgandolfo (Pope's summer residence), where John Paul II celebrated a private Mass. Hervé Carcel is appointed new International Responsible and in the following year he is succeeded by Béatrice Coing. The YTOL have about 4500 members distributed among 465 Teams, expanding up to Africa (Zaire, Senegal and Togo).

1995/Jul, Zipaquirá (Colombia) - 16th International Meeting held for the first time outside Europe with the challenge of expanding the frontiers of the Movement. Attended by nearly 300 people from Portugal, Colombia, Brazil, Canada, France, Haiti, Spain, Belgium, Lebanon, Syria and Italy, the theme chosen for the meeting was "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (Jn 20:21). The new International Responsible Bruno Duthoit is accompanied by the Couple Zita and Zé Barbosa and Fr. Jean Duranton as Spiritual Counselor. During this Meeting an important decision is taken: the International Secretariat, from the beginning based in Paris, will be transferred to Lisbon, and on July/96 it is named the first International Responsible from Portugal, António Aguiar. In Nov/96 the YTOL is officially recognized by the Portuguese Episcopal Conference.

1997/Aug, Ars (France) – In the 17th International Meeting Aurora Cristas is appointed International Responsible for the next two years. It was attended by youth from Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Lebanon, Syria, Canada and Belgium with the theme: "Lord, where do you live". Following the meeting, several people go to the XII World Youth Days, held in Paris.

1999/Aug, Feytroun (Lebanon) – The 18th International Meeting which has as its theme "The Father loves you" (Jn 16:27), demonstrates the vitality of the Movement worldwide. Marta Barros e Bastos is the new International Responsible, having Rita and Gastão Ferreira as Accompanying Couple and keeping Fr. Jean Duranton as Spiritual Counselor of IS and IAT.

Youth Teams of Our Lady International



2001/Aug, Évora (Portugal) - 19th International Meeting when the Movement celebrates its 25 years anniversary with the participation of 280 people representing Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Spain, France, Italy, Lebanon, Mozambique, Portugal and Syria. "Ecce Mater" ("Behold your mother", Jn 19:27) is the theme of the Meeting that is marked by the strength of Canada. Took over as National Responsible Jaciara Dutra (Brazil) and Mariana Duarte (Portugal). Marta Barros e Bastos passed the post of International Responsible to Maria Noronha e Andrade. In the same year, almost 100 Team members from Portugal, Liban, Canada, United States and France participate in the XVII World Youth Days held in Toronto.

2003/Aug, Brazilia (Brazil) - The 20th International Meeting is attended by 200 people from 8 countries (Portugal, Spain, France, Brazil, Colombia, Mozambique, Canada and USA). The chosen theme is "Behold your son" (Jn 19:26), interpreted through a play by Canada and Brazil. Took possession of National Teams: Marisa Fonseca (Brazil), François Perrin (France), Agnieszka Kuzio (Canada), Fernando de la Cuadra (Spain), Ana Faria Blanc (Portugal). Maria Noronha de Andrade passed the post of International Responsible to Filipe d'Avillez that kept the Accompanying Couple Rita and Gastão Ferreira and Fr. Zé Manuel as Spiritual Counselor.

2005/Aug, Seville (Spain) - 21st International Meeting is attended by more than 250 participants from Portugal, Spain, France, Brazil, Canada, USA, Lebanon and Syria, as well as a representative from Haiti who reported the existence of 90 Team members in this country. The same theme of XX World Youth Days was chosen: "We have come to worship Him" (Mt 2:2). Filipe d'Avillez passes the post of International Responsible to Joana Caiado. After the Meeting, around 100 Team members follow to Cologne (Germany), where the YTOL participate for the first time in the organization of WYD with a booth for advertising the Movement.

2007/Aug, Ottawa (Canada) – 22nd International Meeting of YTOL is attended by more than 200 participants from Canada, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal Brazil, Syria, Lebanon and United States. The theme was "Magnificat". Joana Caiado passed the post of International Responsible to Fernando Mateos de La Cuadra (Seville, Spain), who chooses Manuel Caraballo and Else Sacaluga as Accompanying Couple and Father José Maria Alcober as Spiritual Counselor. Later on an international bulletin has been created by the IS called "Only one body".

2009/Jul, Rome (Italy) – 23rd International Meeting is attended by over 300 people from Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Canada, USA, Brazil, Lebanon, Syria, Costa Rica, Mozambique and Angola. The highlight is a meditation on the life of the Saints: St Nuno of Saint Mary, St. John of Avila, St. Simeon Stylite, St. Francis de Salles, St. Marguerite D'Youville, St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi and St. Antônio Galvão (the first Brazilian saint). The International Responsible couple for TOL, Maria Carla and Carlo Volpini gave a testimony of married life, relating it to the rooms of a house. Fernando Mateos passed the post of International Responsible to Concha Torres (Seville), who chooses Pachi e Bernardo Mira-Delgado as Accompanying Couple and Father Pablo Colón Perales as Spiritual Counselor.

Youth Teams of Our Lady International



2011/Jul, Seville (Spain) – During the IAT an important decision is taken: to revise and unify the International Charter, because it had different translations in each country language. Brazil is selected to host the International Secretariat for the next period (2012-2014). After meeting the young people went to the XXVI WYD in Madrid, where Renato Rocha (Brazil's National Responsible) carried on one of the symbols, the cross, which would go to Rio de Janeiro, site of the next WYD.

2012/Jul, California (USA) – 24th International Meeting. About 300 young people from Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Lebanon, USA and Canada gathered in the city of Turlock, to meditate on the theme "Do whatever He tells you" (Jn 2 5), which took us to the Wedding at Cana and to the faith in God necessary to follow our Christian journey. The presence of Spiritual Counselors from U.S., Spain and Brazil greatly enriched the meeting with reflections of spirituality and faith. Concha Torres (Spain) passed the post of International Responsible to Pedro Evanil (Vinhedo-Brazil), who chooses Dom Filipe Almeida as Spiritual Counselor and Cláudia and Paulo Santos as Accompanying Couple.

2013/Jul, Vinhedo (Brazil) – During the IAT meeting important decisions are taken: rebuilt of the international site (www.ytolinternational.com); approval of the unified International Statutes aiming at Vatican recognition; development of a piloting plan for new countries (organization, manual with meeting's themes, TOL couples training); election of Mary's invocation for IS (Our Lady God's Mother - Theotokos) and from now on IS will be suggesting the same annual study themes for all countries based on yearly Pope's statements for the youth. In the following week more than 350 young people from 8 countries (Brazil, USA, Canada, Costa Rica, Portugal, Spain, France, Lebanon) represented YTOL at the XXVIII WYD in Rio de Janeiro. There, for the second time we had a booth at the Vocational Fair where we could promote YTOL worldwide, distributing 6000 flyers in 3 languages.

2014/Jul, Sintra (Portugal) – During IAT meeting it was sought again the consolidation of the Movement as a form of international union, with the request for official recognition by the Vatican of the International Statutes. International Piloting Manual was approved, as the document to be used on the expansion of the Movement, so that its Charism is kept during growth. In addition, a mobile phone app was presented (www.ytolcompanion.com), which was a tool to help team members in their spiritual path. The International Meeting was held in Odivelas (Portugal) with the presence of 355 people from 8 countries (Brazil, Canada, Spain, USA, France, Italy, Lebanon and Portugal). Pedro Evanil (Brazil) passed the post of international Responsible to Brean Bettencourt (USA). Also, Michael Walecki was chosen as new national Responsible for Canada and Melanie Oliveira as new national Responsible for USA.