

**Meeting of the Latin America and Caribbean Coordination
of Vida Ascendente (VA) with the Executive Committee
of Vie Ascendente International (VMI)
October 15, 2025**

We gathered to discuss the projects and activities we promote for this continent of hope, always invoking the help of our Lord Jesus Christ and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as mentioned in prayer by Bishop Christian Nourrichard, VMI Ecclesiastical Assistant, during the meeting with the Committee.

We have witnessed a different reality before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, which has ravaged humanity, especially the elderly, and left not only physical but also cultural scars, making it difficult to gather again in the same numbers and with the same enthusiasm as before. Many of our members have passed away or reached advanced age, complicating their travel, and their families are requesting greater protection for their safety. This reality is compounded by the lack of support for the integration of newcomers and the renewal of facilitators and leadership. It is a good thing when parish priests and bishops offer us not only their advice, but also their support and collaboration. However, this situation is not the rule, but the exception, and it is preferable to work not for fame, but to support the pastoral care of the elderly, with our charisms, within the pastoral plans of parishes and dioceses, and without losing sight of the promotion of small lay communities. The collaboration of lay people is necessary and important in the face of the decline in priestly vocations observed in several of our countries.

Our staff and communications: In each of our countries, we have an average of ten facilitators, and face-to-face meetings have between ten and sixty participants. The number of participants in the virtual meetings varies greatly, with the most frequent being those organized every Friday by the Alegría Chinauta group, in memory of the last regional meeting held in Colombia, and those held on the second Tuesday of each month to coordinate with the leaders of each country. Another general WhatsApp group is available for anyone who wishes to join us in Latin America and the Caribbean. All WhatsApp groups maintain daily correspondence focused on the Gospel and news of our loved ones; we pray for our sick and deceased, and rejoice in various celebrations.

Regarding our participation in the Church: We are faithful to our charism as associations of the lay faithful integrated into the general pastoral care of our

parishes and dioceses, contributing to and facilitating workshops and pastoral guides on issues related to the elderly. Some of us participate more, others less, in the activities of the Episcopal Conferences, where lay representatives are often perceived as exercising only administrative functions and representing only a minority at the international level. We actively participate in the Cebitepal courses and conferences, in the entire synodal process of synodality organized by the Latin American Episcopal Council, and are currently participating in round tables sharing knowledge on urban pastoral care, family pastoral care, and the pastoral care of small communities. Father Osvaldo Montferrand has always distinguished himself, not only as a continental advisor, especially in Argentina, but also by Father Augusto Meloni in Peru. Thanks to our members, Vida Ascendente is invited to radio and television programs, such as "Blessed" in Buenos Aires and "Cristovisión" in Colombia, respectively. Our advisor in Colombia and for Latin America and the Caribbean, Alirio Cacéres hosts the television program "La Danse du Colibri" (The Hummingbird Dance) and offers virtual conferences on pastoral care for the elderly.

Next Latin American and Caribbean Meeting: At the Chinauta meeting, Argentina was proposed as the next host country, in Río Cuarto. However, the situation has changed: the decline in Vida Ascendente's membership is compounded by the difficulty of accessing the area by air, as its airport is not served by civilian airlines. The provisional president of VA-Arentina, Ana María Vivérn, withdrew this proposal for her province and has not committed to organizing it from Río Cuarto, in a city as complex as Buenos Aires. However, Stella Maris, VA's representative at the Argentine Episcopal Conference, indicates that new members have joined the association and could take over the leadership and organization of the meeting in the future.

Digitization of our historical and bibliographic resources for training in pastoral care of the elderly. In addition to the Gospel and the Ascending Life Manual written by Father Jesús Breña, S.J., a missionary in Taiwan and promoter of Ascending Life in Asia, we have added guides for our meetings on topics related not only to spirituality but also to the physical and mental health of individuals, as well as documents on the history of regional Ascending Life meetings and meetings with VMI. This document contains 360 digitized items, many of which were created thanks to the contributions of Liz and José Antonio Hernández, physicians and former Ascending Life coordinators, and their assistant Claudia Ruiz, in Mexico. You can access them by contacting the coordinator via email: vidaascendenteamlatyelcaribe@gmail.com

Training for facilitators of pastoral care of the elderly and caregivers. The coordination team has submitted a training program on this topic for our countries' consideration. This program aims to promote pastoral care for the elderly in parishes and dioceses, and to connect future Vie Ascending facilitators. Inspired by the experience of VA-Spain, where, convened by a bishop and President Jaime Tamarit, more than 200 people participated in this type of training dedicated to the elderly. In the Diocese of Engativá, in Bogotá, this program is already integrated into its pastoral plan, thanks to our contributions to the parish of San Calixto.

Documents from the Rome Congress, October 2-4, 2025. We will soon make available to you, through our VMI Executive Committee, the main documents from this Vatican-organized Congress concerning the elderly and other international participations. We are grateful for these virtual meetings, which give us a sense of unity and collaboration within the Synodal Church. In these times of discernment and shared journey, we thank the members of the VA Latin American and Caribbean Coordination, especially Monique Ptak and Jaime Tamarit, as well as all the members of the VMI Executive Committee who have dedicated their time and dedication to preparing this meeting.

Let us pray that we may respond to the call to act in the Spirit: with docility and with our charisms, to collaborate in the "renewal of the face of the earth" and of our hearts.

Jairo Morales

Continental Coordinator