



**Annual Report 2016**  
**Report from the President**



*Caritas Europa Executive Board (from left to right): Sebastián Mora Rosado/ Caritas Spain, Henrik Alberius/ Caritas Sweden, Darko Tot/ Caritas Serbia, Patrick De Bucquois/ Caritas Belgium, Martha Rubiano Skretteberg/ Caritas Norway, Philip McCarthy/ Caritas England and Wales, Msgr. Luc Van Looy/ Caritas Europa, Bernard Thibaud/ Caritas France, Hugo Fasel/ Caritas Switzerland, Lukáš Curylo/ Caritas Czech Republic*

One of the most important things for the President of Caritas Europa is the contact with the Secretariat office as well as with the responsables in the different national offices. Although I would like to visit all and each Caritas organisation in Europe, due to the reality of having to lead a big diocese, I can only refer to a constant contact with the Secretary General, the regular relationship with the Executive Board, the occasional visits to the Secretariat and to a written contact with the responsible bishops in the different countries and with the leading officers in the different Caritas organisations in the European context.

As a member of the REPCO and EXBO of Caritas Internationalis I have participated in their meetings, be it per skype or in meetings in Rome. In the field of the humanitarian coordination, both secretariats worked out a common protocol on how to ensure the best cooperation to support the member organisations affected by a disaster. This protocol was finally approved by the Caritas Europa ExBo and the Caritas Internationalis ExBo. Another topic has been raised about the statutes of the regions, so also those of Caritas Europa. The ExBo of Caritas Internationalis and officials of the new Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development – with whom I also met - supported the possibility that the statutes of Caritas Europa could be a reference for other regions. The other topics on the CI agenda dealt with the upcoming joint global campaign on migration and finances.

I also participated in a two day meeting organized by the new Dicastery on the Promotion of Integral Human Development in Rome. A very good start for the new office. It was clear that Caritas plays a leading role in the world of advocacy and in human development. Contacts with many participants could put Caritas Europa on the agenda of many people from many countries. I was able to say a few words to Pope Francis, offering him as well the first copy of the book that was presented to the press about the bishop of Ghent in those days.

The relationship with COMECE (Commission of bishops' conferences in the European Union) and especially with its new Secretary General, fr. Olivier Poquillon o.p., has been positive. I sense that there is still potential for further development of this cooperation.

A meeting in Sarajevo, together with the Secretary General, brought us in contact with CCEE, the association of bishops' conferences in Europe. Also there a great appreciation was shown to the work Caritas Europa does especially in advocacy and human development and migration policies.

Theology of charity has been the concern of the group of theologians who contributed to shape a new Caritas Europa web (Faith and Action) in order to deepen the theological reflection for and from the Caritas workers in the field.

Finally I want to highlight the starting discussion in the Executive Board and with the Secretary General on a leadership programme, including a master degree, for training future Caritas leaders. Some universities have already shown interest to collaborate in this project. This will be further followed up.

To conclude, I feel proud to be able to serve and support Caritas Europa through the Executive Board (ExBo) and Secretariat team in Brussels. Both ExBo members and Secretariat staff are very competent and show a total dedication to the Caritas mission. This effort they shall also allow them to grow in the Christian identity and love.

God bless and give hope to the people in poverty, the migrants, the suffering; God bless the Caritas volunteers, employees, leaders at local, diocesan, national, European and international levels.

+ Msgr. Luc Van Looy



President of Caritas Europa