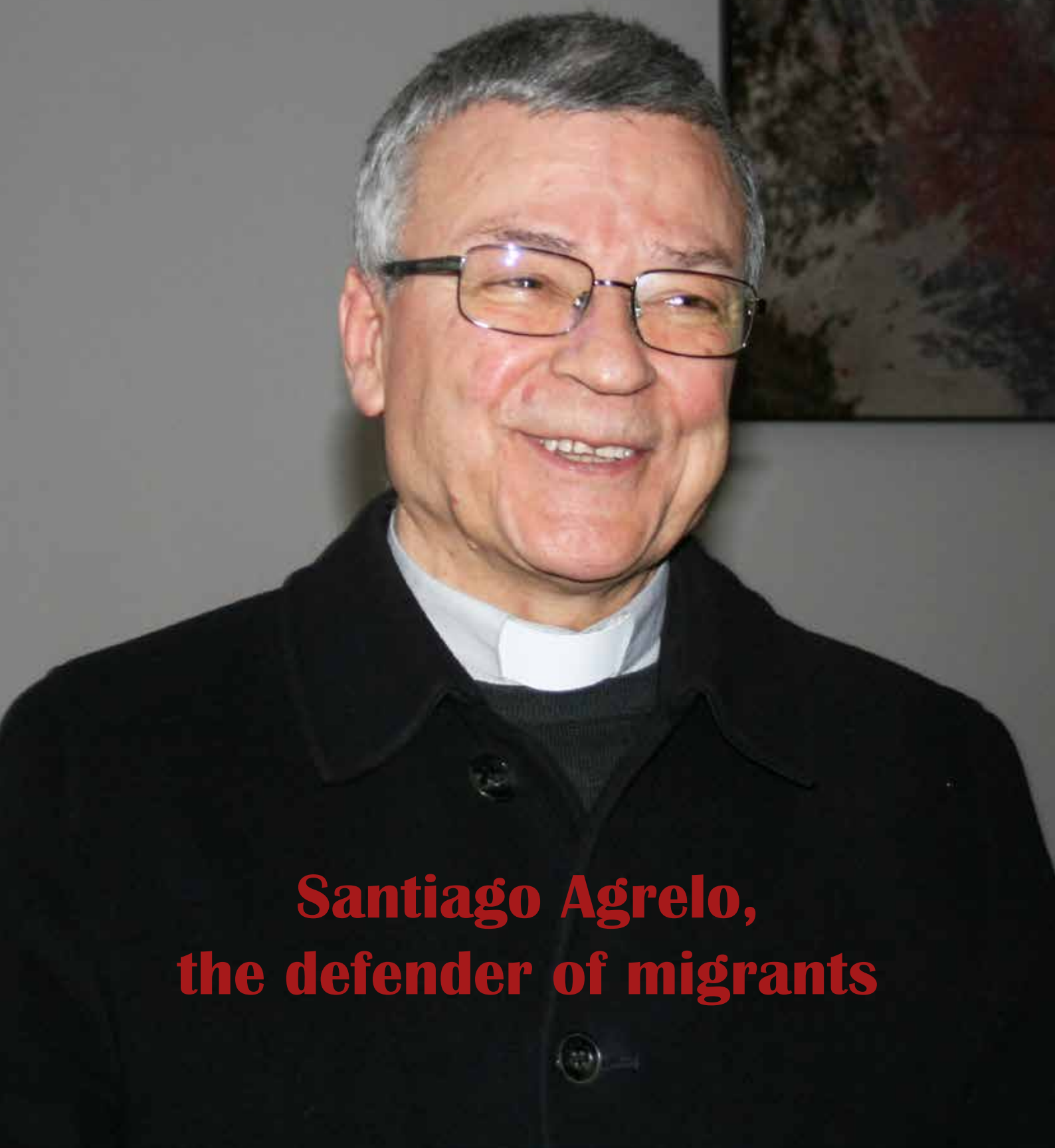


CONNECTA 81

May 2018



**Santiago Agrelo,
the defender of migrants**



Conecta is the internal newsletter of the Blessed Virgin Mary Institute, IBVM, Spanish Province.

A religious community inspired by Mary Ward, who wants to live her spirituality and share it with the people with whom it lives and works.



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Cover photo: Monsignor Santiago Agrelo, Bishop of Tangier, during his visit to Madrid last January.		

Evangeline Latorre, Ibvm, turns 100 years old

On March 22nd, Evangeline Latorre celebrated her 100th birthday. 78 of these years, in the IBVM.

Evangeline has dedicated more than 70 years of her life to “wipe away the shattered faces of the living Christs of this world” as the parish priest of Carabanchel, where she lived and worked for so many years, described her work in 2008. Those who have shared their time and work with her highlight her kindness, her tenacity and her enormous kindness.

She was foundress of the mission in Peru in 1981. She also founded the Sports Day the schools of Spain, as we know them today, since she travelled to Gibraltar in



In this photo, taken in 1881, the first missionaries sent to Peru appear along with the Superior General and the Provincial. From left to right: Begoña Goyoga, M^a Ángeles Pereda, Myriam Ybarra, Agnes Walsh, Evangeline Latorre, Irene Reynolds, Carmen Hormaechea, Josefa Rodríguez and Itziar Arteagoitia

1954 to see how they celebrated the fest dedicated to raising funds for the missions of IBVM in India and Latin America.

The city Council called the BVM community of El Soto to organize a tribute to the centenarian, as usual in town with the people who reach

the century of life. With much gratitude, the community declined the invitation, as it was not advisable because of Evangeline’s state of health. However, a small family party was held at the house, which she enjoyed with her typical kindness and huge smile.

Exploring International Novitiates

Elena Cerdeiras, Ibvm, travelled to Nairobi last February to continue the work begun the previous year in Manila with the International Formation Commission of the Institute. From this meeting, a report has emerged in which an attempt is made to design what the international novitiates of the Institute could look like and where they could be located.

The International Formation Commission, that met on February 18, were asked

to explore possibilities for international novitiates and to

make a proposal to the general leadership.



I would say to the Africans: ‘sons, you are trying to join the system that has made you poor’.

We had the opportunity to chat with Santiago Agrelo, Archbishop of Tangier since 2007. Franciscan, 75 years old. He recalls how sorry he was for not being able to stay longer at the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the IBVM in Asilah, because he had to go on a trip. He remembers with affection Piedad González Cano, and says of her smilingly “she misses Tangier and Morocco, is because that is a church that sticks forever!”.

He considers that the African emigration is a phenomenon impossible to stop, because there many causes that continually push people out of the places where they were born. “I don’t think anyone does it for adventure, they do it for necessity”.

He often denounces the security forces for their treat against the migrants. He always makes clear that this is worse than the mafias for migrants.

“The mafias are those certain people with whom the migrant comes into a contract. It is unfortunate that they take advantage of the migrant’s situation of need, but they do just that, they respond to a need”. He adds, “I like to stress strongly that the father and mother of the mafias are the governments.



Santiago Agrelo, always kind and smiling, as he makes the harshest denunciations against the system in which we live

The mother of the mafia is the policy adopted by governments in Europe”.

However, he state that it’s beyond all understanding why the beat up the migrants, the more vulnerable, those who only want a better life and have the right to it! “I think there are people among the security forces who like violence, but there are many others who don’t like it!”

He declares “I would be afraid... just as wearing the clothes of a Catholic priest does not scare me or condition me, wearing a security

uniform would scare me. The same as being a politician in a parliament, because would be incompatible with the demands of my conscience”.

He says about African migration “When these men and women did not want to leave their countries, we forced them to leave, to use them as if they were merchandise that we owned, to use them in our service; now that they are forced to leave, we don’t want them here, we continue to be the masters of their lives, we continue to treat them as merchandise

that we have at our disposal. Once slavery was abolished, we continued to own slaves. Now we have them far from our homes, but they are still our slaves!”

“I admire their capacity for suffering, their struggle for life, I would not be able to endure one day what they endure for years, I admire their faith, I admire that capacity to dream about the future... but if I could... I would say to them “sons, you are trying to join the system that has made you poor”. They come with the illusion of entering the same system that has impoverished them, their families, and their countries”.

He considers the system

we live in as outrageous. “We are blind and we need to change radically our way of

“ The father and mother of the mafias are the European governments and their policies ”

life and mentality, which is really difficult”.

He has written a book entitled “Contempt to Silence” in which he calls to attention

about the life of migrants and also to break this kind of decree of silence that exists in society on the world of immigration. “The dead from immigration are not worth the same as those of Europe. I always say that if in the Tarajal*, instead of 15 migrants, 15 seals would have died; they would have had more attention. My book is a wakeup call to this”.

** 15 immigrants died off the coast of Ceuta while trying to cross the border into the Spanish enclave, the 6th of February 2014. Justice has not been delivered yet. Spanish Security Forces have great responsibility in this tragedy as they fired rubber bullets and tear gas against the migrants while swimming.*

I Gathering of Great Irlandesas’ Women

The Mary Ward Foundation aims to make this the first of many meetings of women who have relation with IBVM or Loreto. The first featured was Irene Villa, who spoke with Antonio Garrigues-Walker.

Irene Villa is a former student of the Irlandesas School of Cullera, Madrid. She suffered the amputation of both legs due to a terrorist attack by ETA, when she was a child. Not only did this misfortune not discourage her, but it has made her a woman who values happiness above all else. The whole of Spain admires and loves her. She is an example of self-improvement.

Antonio Garrigues-Walker was the special interviewer.



Leioa, in an Unesco contest



This academic year was the first time that the students participated in the International Competition of Audiovisual Pieces [#damia1minutode](#), organized by Unesco since 2010. Its aim is

to raise awareness and sensitize society to the violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For this reason, this competition awards prizes to the best 1-minute audiovisual pieces that de-

fend, promote, claim, disseminate and raise awareness of human rights.

The 2018 edition focused on promoting and advocating Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensuring inclusive, equitable and quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities.

Thanks to the use of ICTs and the dedication of the students, of the 19 finalists chosen for the different categories established by the jury, 5 were groups from our school.

In [this link](#), you can see the finalist videos from our students.



Ana ❤️ Congo

On 10 March, Congolese demonstrated at the famous Puerta del Sol in Madrid to call for the departure of President Joseph Kabila, who is attempting to cling to the power of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Ana Garrigues joined them with Father Marcelo.

Cristina's home made bread

Cristina García, Ibvm, 84, occasionally delights everyone in El Soto with a home-made bread.

She doesn't even have a recipe book, "It's all here," she says, pointing to his head. Cristina was the master cooker in several schools of Sevilla for many years, she celebrated her diamond wedding last October.



Sports Day 2018



The latest months of the academic term, our schools celebrate their **Sports Day**. The school of Leioa celebrated it on March the 16th; Bami, on April 6th; El Soto, on April 20th; Loreto, on April 27th; Aljarafe, on May 11th, and Cullera School will celebrate them on June 22th.

This festive day is dedicated to the healthy and happy competitiveness among

students, in various cultural and sporting activities. The fest has been celebrated in our Schools of Spain since the 1950s, when a young Evangeline Latorre travelled to Gibraltar to see how they celebrated there the festivity day dedicated to raising funds for the IBVM missions in Africa and India. Before, this day in Spain was called Mission Day.

The traditional Houses of the Loreto schools of other countries, here in Spain are called Casa Javier, dressed in yellow, Casa Avila, dressed in blue, and Casa Loyola, dressed in red.

Who wins or gets the third place is not very relevant because, every year, the real winners are sportsmanship, solidarity and fun. This is the authentic tradition.



The Sustainable Development Goals are a main axis of the activities in our schools. Cullera School was stage for the **#WorldLargestLesson**, a programme to explain SDG to children and young people around the world.

Our schools were very involved in the different activities on the **International Women's Day**, last March 8th. Here, some students of Leioa with its banner.



Aljarafe, Loreto and Bami Schools participated in the **Science Fair** of Seville. They came up with an incredible Math and Art project called "Martematicas: The Art of Escape". They organized a fun escape room with electronic locks, mysterious boxes, QR codes... and much more. Science and imagination is always fun.

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If you would like to collaborate with the **Conecta** newsletter by writing, sending some photographs, suggesting a topic, or telling us something interesting to share so that we can write it, please contact us.



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