

IMS news

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Holy Father's prayer St Peter's Square, 27 March 2020



The Newsletter of **the International Missionary Benefit Society**

Editorial

Since March, members of the IMS have had to adapt, dealing as well as they can with the Covid pandemic and some experiencing some very difficult situations. This ordeal encourages us to show more solidarity and closeness between the various members. Indeed, the IMS seeks to live in genuine fraternity and to pay particular attention to the most vulnerable. It is with this goal and in this spirit that the IMS is beginning this second half-year. Let us stay together, listening to each other's needs and remain inventive in facing the unprecedented situation of our world.

Moreover, the community of IMS members is growing! This year, the IMS is pleased to welcome new indigenous communities from Africa as members.

These are particularly young and numerous communities. We wish them a warm welcome!

The year will end with our next General Assembly, which will take place on 17 November. The opportunity to give thanks for the last three years and to share everyone's news.



Sister Elisabeth Auliac

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> Strong response by the IMS during Covid 19

Due to the extent of its international reach, the IMS has been particularly affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. Very many beneficiary members have had to be isolated and perhaps still are. The IMS responded very quickly to continue to provide the best possible support to everyone during this ordeal, to act and to pray.

The President of the IMS immediately wrote to everyone in a letter sent to the Sections.

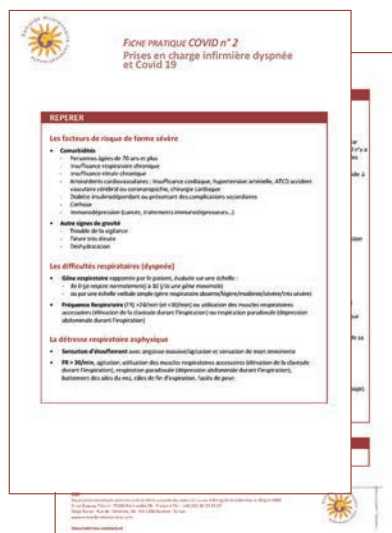
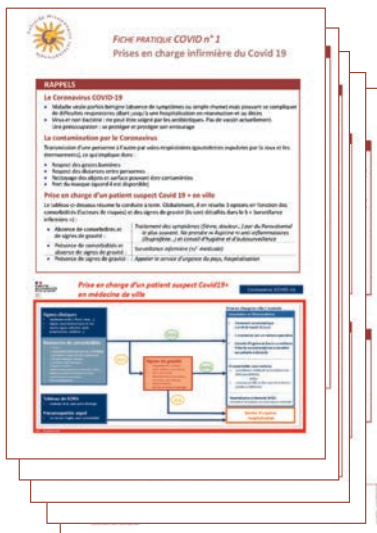
“ All around the world, we are affected by the Coronavirus epidemic. This invites me to entrust our protection into the hands of the Virgin Mother. We see the importance of solidarity with our loved ones, our communities, our houses and also the solidarity and communion of the universal Church. In this context, I wish to express how the IMS is at your sides, quickly taking all the necessary measures to ensure the continuity of its services. ”

Sister Elisabeth Auliac, President of the International Missionary Benefit Society

From the decision relating to the lockdown in the first countries on 16 March 2020, the managers of each Section acted to maintain contact with the groups and to ensure the support of the IMS. Concrete measures in favour of prevention, solidarity and the simplification of procedures have been taken to support each Section during this time.

In order to prevent the spread of infection, the IMS disseminated a range of information to the Group managers and on its website:

- ▶ **a prevention document** giving practical information about the disease, the persons at risk, symptoms, the various precautions to take and the hygiene measures to apply.
- ▶ **an action document** specifically dedicated to IMS-affiliated caregivers to allow them to identify and take charge of a patient with acute respiratory infection in the context of the Covid-19 epidemic.
- ▶ **fact sheets** were also prepared on specific topics:
 - nursing care for the coronavirus
 - nursing care for shortness of breath and the coronavirus
 - as well as on the treatment of coronavirus with hydroxychloroquine



News

On the organisational level, the Local Sections and the Head Office have established procedures to ensure continuity of the service, in particular teleworking and remote meetings. In addition, the procedures have been simplified with, e.g., reimbursement requests and invoices exceptionally accepted electronically.

The IMS has been very vigilant in ensuring that Groups in financial difficulties due to the Covid crisis are not badly affected economically so that solidarity can be maintained.

Finally, the IMS Sections have set up local support operations.

For example, in Yaoundé, where some congregations have been badly affected by Covid 19, the Central Africa section has been particularly active in supporting them!



Steering Committee of 20 May 2020 by video-conference



*Brothers Manuel and Niceforo in a video-conference with their Groups
Central America Section*



*Ms Aura Santos teleworking
Central America Section*



*Sister Joan and Ms Nancy
East Africa Section*



*Sr Dena receives a Group Manager at the Office
West Africa Section*

Social Fund

> Aid since 2017

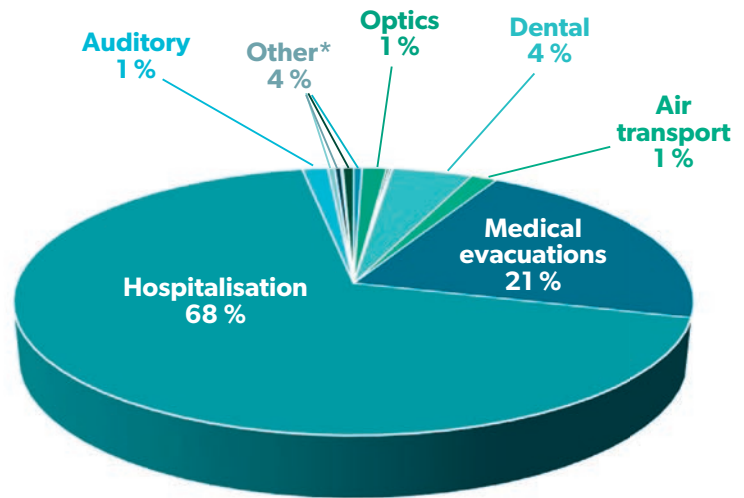
The Groups of the International Missionary Benefit Society can seek exceptional aid for health care.

The Groups first contact their level 1 Social Fund committee, via their Section. Depending on the amount that remains to be paid, they can then apply to the level 2 Social Fund committee, also via their Section.

Thus, between 2017 and mid-2020, **aid was granted for 229 cases for a total amount of €1,012,355**, divided up as follows: 147 cases of level 1 aid for a total of €833,566 and 82 cases of level 2 aid for a total of €178,789. Most of this aid is for **hospitalisations, medical evacuations (EVASAN) and dental expenses.**

You too, please do not hesitate to submit requests for aid when your situation so requires. The Social Fund committee will study your requests carefully. Application form available on the IMS website.

Distribution of aid in %, from 2017 to mid-2020



* Home caregiver, Pharmacy, Convalescent stays, etc.

Institutional Life

> Continuation despite the challenges of the pandemic

The Articles of the IMS state that the General Assembly meets at least every three years. A General Assembly was scheduled for June 2020. In order to maintain the meeting in 2020, the Board of the Steering Committee therefore chose to organise it remotely because the international health situation makes a face-to-face meeting impossible.

In practical terms, **from 5 November**, the delegates will have access to all the reports of the past 3 years on a digital platform which will also allow them to vote electronically and send their questions to the Steering Committee. **On Tuesday 17 November**, the delegates will be invited to form groups according to country and to follow a live video broadcast that will allow different information to be communicated and responses to delegates' questions to be made.

Practical information will be sent to the persons concerned.

This way of working will enable the delegates to participate concretely in the life of the association, to exercise their office, to share their questions and news from the groups and communities. It will not replace the joy of meeting each other and exchanges; that is why, as soon as the international health situation allows, the IMS will consider the possibility of organising a meeting.

Who participates in the General Assembly?

In the first half-year of 2020, the sections were asked to nominate their delegates.

38 delegates have thus been selected to represent IMS members. As a reminder, in each section, the number of delegates of active members (member communities or groups) is calculated according to the number of beneficiary members enrolled in this section:

- one delegate if the section has fewer than one thousand beneficiaries,
- above one thousand beneficiaries, one additional delegate for each additional two-thousand beneficiaries.

In addition, **8 delegates of the founding members have been appointed by the CORREF and 6 delegates of the associated members appointed**