

**FAMILY**

**GARDEN**

**FAMILY**

**COUNSELLING**

**CENTRE**

**REPORT ON ACTIVITIES**

**JANUARY - DECEMBER 2017**

# EDITORIAL

Dear reader:

If you just decided to devote a little bit of your time to the lines of this annual report, I'm very glad. Because if you immerse yourself in reading these pages, you'll learn about all the important things that happened in our centre during the entire year of 2017.

You can read in detail about who we are, get to know the faces of the people that are behind this effort, and read on what others have to say about us. You can find out a bit more about our engaged couples and volunteers, about how we've managed our resources or what specific activities Family Garden has been offering, as well as what's in store for the future. We tried to remember everything that could interest you, and we hope that when you're done with reading these pages, you'll say to yourself: "A lot has been done for the good of families: let's keep up the great work." We added plenty of pictures too, just in case text wouldn't be enough.

Working with our media team, we've spent several weeks preparing this annual report. When I was summarising one of its chapters, named tentatively "Yearly events in chronological order", I realised that all of them were things I'll remember for a very, very long time. I'll remember not only how we were moving into our new premises of the Momma Margherita family house, little by little and with a lot of help from our volunteers, but also many interesting lectures and moving testimonials of married couples we could hear at our place. I'll be remembering the very emotional and sincere feedback we've received from our graduates after they were done with their Christian coach training course... Many of us shed a tear when they shared how the course impacted their own lives. Once again, we welcomed the boys from the Lvov orphanage here. We were approached by many clients looking for a Christian coach: several people selflessly offered us their help with our regular activities. We've gained regular donors willing to contribute with small financial donations and received media coverage from multiple outlets that wrote very kindly about us. In 2017, the number of activities and responsibilities was



KATARÍNA BAGINOVÁ  
CENTRE DIRECTOR

on the rise, but most of all, the amount of work gradually kept piling up... and that's why I now have a new colleague. You can learn more about her when you'll keep reading these pages.

P. S. This year, I attended two world-wide Salesian conferences with my husband Kamil: the first one took place in Rome in January and the second one was in Madrid in November. We were invited to talk about our centre. What I'll remember from these events is their extremely nice and familial atmosphere, the sincere interest their participants expressed toward our activities, and the many questions we answered. However, I also remember one small detail:

From the table, on which the participants of the conference could place their promotional flyers, our annual report from last year started disappearing, so to speak, like hot cakes. I wish the same would happen to this new one, so that as many people as possible will be willing to give it a bit of their time. And if you, dear reader, have any suggestions on how we could do things better, or would be willing to lend a helping hand, don't hesitate to drop us a line.

TESTIMONIES OF MARRIED  
COUPLES

EXPERT LECTURES

COACHING COURSES

COACHING DIALOGUES WITH  
A CHRISTIAN COACH

EXPERT COUNSELLING

MEETINGS FOR ENGAGED  
COUPLES

FERTILITY COUNSELLING  
CLINIC

/ WHO IS  
/ FAMILY  
/ GARDEN?  
/



## CONTACT

Beginning from April 2017, you can find us in the Trnávka district of Bratislava, on the premises of the new Momma Margherita family centre on Pavlovičova Street.

FAMILY GARDEN Family Counselling Centre  
Pavlovičova 3  
821 04 Bratislava-Trnávka

Mobile: +421 949 590 504  
e-mail: bratislava@familygarden.sk  
web: www.familygarden.sk  
fb: www.facebook.com/FAMILYGARDEN.sk



Family Garden is a family counselling centre located on Miličova Street in Bratislava. The centre has been operating since 2014 and is staffed by laymen – Salesian cooperators. In addition to Salesian cooperators, many experts are involved in the partnership effort, such as a gynaecologist, psychologist, a priest, a lawyer, financial adviser, married couples, Christian coaches, and the entire Salesian family. Family Garden brings all these Christian specialists under one roof, helping believers seeking high-quality professional help.

Family Garden offers its help in two main areas – the first one is counselling and the other one is the area of prevention. In the area of counselling, those that are interested have the opportunity to arrange an in-person session with an expert in an area they need help with. Regularly offered testimonies, expert lectures, preparation for marriage, educational programmes, etc. serve as prevention measures.

This project also builds on the previous long-time experiences of married couples trained to provide pre-marital counselling to engaged couples. Family Garden brings time-proven lectures of married couples from the Gatherings for couples in Banská Bystrica to Bratislava. Testimonies of married couples in Family Garden take place once in every two months. Attesting to the meaningfulness of the project is the feedback of the many individuals and couples contacting our centre and finding in themselves the willingness and strength to work on their marital problem or seek expert help. The Family Garden's approach to solving problem situations in marriages or in lives of individual family members is based on consistency and expertise and follows the proven and globally accepted methods of the Salesian preventive system of education.

„THE WORK OF SALESIAN  
COOPERATORS WILL SPREAD TO ALL  
COUNTRIES AND INFILTRATE ALL OF  
CHRISTIANITY. THE HAND OF GOD  
IS UPON IT! THE COOPERATORS  
WILL BE THE ONES TO SPREAD  
THE SPIRIT OF CATHOLICISM.  
MAYBE IT'S JUST MY UTOPIC  
VISION, BUT I HOLD ONTO IT  
NONETHELESS!”

DON BOSCO



## SALESIAN COOPERATORS

The Association of Salesian Cooperators (ASC) was founded by Don Bosco on May 9, 1876 in Turin. After founding the Salesian Order (Salesians SDB and Salesian Sisters FMA), he decided to establish an association in the likes of the third orders (that the Franciscans and some other orders have for laity), however, he insisted that the emphasis shouldn't lie only in religious piety, but also in the active life in loving service to others, especially young people – just as he himself has lived.

Today there are approximately 30,000 Salesian cooperators (singles, married couples, and diocesan priests) living and working all over the world. Slovakia is one of the countries with the greatest representation of this part of the Salesian family – there are currently more than 1,000 Salesian cooperators in our country.

For more information about the ASC centre on the Miletíčova street please see [www.mileticka.sk/asc](http://www.mileticka.sk/asc).





**ELENA ŠTOFIROVÁ**  
**OFFICE MANAGER**

Elena has been a part of Family Garden for four years. Even though she's retired, she still wanted to be useful. She pondered if she should still go and find a job somewhere or give her time to charity or the sick. Then, she received an offer to help out in Family Garden, on the subject of which she says: "The project appealed to me, because it's dedicated to family that faces a huge crisis these days. I myself have often witnessed family problems around me."

Her role is mainly administrative and organisational, i.e. designing and distribution of lecture-related flyers, orders, invoices, or pursuit of grants and dealing with grant-related issues. She is a Salesian cooperator and has four children. When she's not in Family Garden, she takes care of her home and garden together with her husband and gives her time to her grandchildren or her severely disabled daughter.



**KATARÍNA BAGINOVÁ**  
**CENTRE DIRECTOR**

She originally worked as an elementary school teacher. When Karol Maník, the then provincial of Salesians asked her if she wouldn't like to play a part in establishing a centre for families, she quit her job and embarked on a new project.

She coordinates all the activities that take place in the centre and manages expert lectures and testimonies of married couples. As a Christian coach, she meets with clients seeking help in Family Garden. She organises the Christian coach training courses, the all-Slovak conference of Christian coaches, as well as the spiritual growth seminars for the Christian coaches which usually take place somewhere outside of the capital city of Bratislava, because as of now, the number of coaches in Slovakia approaches 150. And as an accredited ICF-accredited coach, she needs to continually educate herself and attend training courses and other activities.

For the last ten years, she's been involved in marriage preparation courses for engaged couples together with her husband Kamil. For even longer period of time, she's been leading the Kremienok children's folklore group she herself founded while she was still a young 19-years old student dancing in a student folklore group called Technik.





BEGINNING FROM JUNE, MIRKA NĚMCOVÁ HAS BEEN OUR NEW CO-WORKER. SHE DECIDED TO GO PART-TIME AT HER JOB IN A SOFTWARE COMPANY WHERE SHE WORKS AS A DATA ANALYST TO BE ABLE TO GIVE HER TIME TO FAMILY GARDEN. AT OUR CENTRE, SHE WORKS PRIMARILY AS A CHRISTIAN COACH. HER JOB IS TO COMMUNICATE WITH CLIENTS SEEKING HELP HERE AND LEAD COACHING DIALOGUES WITH THEM. SHE IS AN ASSISTANT LECTURER OF THE CHRISTIAN COACH TRAINING COURSE AND IN TERMS OF ORGANISATION, COVERS THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH SEMINARS FOR CHRISTIAN COACHES AS WELL. SHE IS A MOTHER OF TWO AND A WIFE TO HER HUSBAND WHO SHE ALREADY MANAGED TO TALK INTO VOLUNTEERING FOR FAMILY GARDEN. HE'S CURRENTLY REDESIGNING OUR WEBSITE.

**At the beginning, there was your decision to enroll in the Christian coach training course. Why did you decide to attend?**

What peaked my interest the most was the name of the course. Up to that point, I thought coaching uses manipulation and means dispensing advice which wasn't something I'd be interested in all that much. When I heard the term "Christian coaching", I pinned back my ears. I was curious to see how Christianity and coaching can be approached.

**"I BELIEVE IN THE POWER AND IMPORTANCE OF THE COACHING DIALOGUE, ESPECIALLY IF A PERSON DOING THE COACHING CONSIDERS IT A SERVICE AND, AS WE SAY DURING OUR TRAINING COURSES, TRIES NOT TO GET IN THE WAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT."**

**When you attended the course, your bias disappeared. What did you gain from the experience?**

I found out that the dialogues in Christian coaching are led in a way that is fully professional; there is no manipulation involved. These courses teach coaching that is in line with my conviction and beliefs. I found my place there.

**So, it's not about an individual not knowing what to do with their life and a coach deciding for them?**

It's not about me being the wise one to whom they'll come and find a repository of knowledge and receive advice. It's about an individual finding themselves at a crossroads and a coach giving them tools to be able to figure out on their own what is important to them and how to act in line with their beliefs. A coach knows how to ask the right questions.

**How many people seeking help at the Family Garden centre have you accompanied as a coach so far? Do you feel you've been able to help them, have you received their feedback?**

During these couple of months, I've been working with 30 individuals. I led coaching dialogues with about 14 of them. In total, I spent about 26 hours coaching. And whether I helped those people? Sometimes, the answer is clear right away from the clients' reactions; other times, it's less evident. Not too long ago, I coached a female client who, after our dialogue, jumped out of her seat and asked me if she could give me a hug. I believe in the power and importance of the coaching dialogue, especially if a person doing the coaching considers it a service and, as we say during our training courses, tries "not to get in the way of the Holy Spirit".

**You say about yourself that you are a cautious, rational type of person and the decision to switch to a part-time at your job to have more time for a non-profit organisation seemed crazy to you. What do you think about that decision now, a few months later?**

I don't consider my work for Family Garden to be your typical job. I view it more as a vocation, as some kind of a mission. Its benefits can't be measured by money; a person that comes here doesn't do it with an intention to develop a career. I perceive that this effort is surrounded by many people wanting to contribute because they are sincerely convinced it's something that's worth it, as well as something that surpasses them. These people are an encouragement and inspiration to me and I'm glad I became a part of this big family.



# RENOVATION WORK AND MOVING INTO NEW PREMISES

During the year of 2017, there was building and reconstruction work underway in the Momma Margherita family centre which we moved to for good on the 1st of April 2017.





“OUR MISSION CAN’T STOP:  
ON THE CONTRARY, WE  
HAVE TO BE CONSTANTLY  
LOOKING AND DISCOVERING  
GOD’S IMPULSES NEEDED  
IN THE CURRENT TIMES  
AND BY PEOPLE LIVING  
IN THESE TIMES.”

FR. MARIÁN VALÁBEK, SDB

# EXPERT GUARANTORS





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“WE ARE DISTINCTIVE; WE ARE DIFFERENT. I BELIEVE WE WILL EXPERIENCE JOY AND FULFILMENT IN OUR WORK FOR FAMILY GARDEN.”



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“WE ARE NOT PESSIMISTS: WE ARE REALISTS OFFERING OUR SERVICE TODAY THAT WE BELIEVE IS OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR TOMORROW.”



## MUDR. MAREK DRÁB, PHD.

We want to show that we've asked for a blessing and have received it, and it fell on a fertile soil. Simply put, we want to demonstrate that we will be able to survive in every area – whether our health or our finances – and will manage to go from a "demo version" created in our medical offices to a "production release". We want to show that those that need us will be able to find us and that we will not disappoint them, and neither will they disappoint us. We are distinctive; we are different. I believe we will experience joy and fulfilment in our work for Family Garden and that there will be new ideas, new people... that we will be able to invite Enrico Petrillo, the husband of Chiara who is like a beacon of light for me, to come here. I want to tear off a bit of blessing that suffering brought about for our medical office. That is what we want to be different in... And finally, we want to show that we will be able to give hope to sick children while they're still in utero.



## DON MARIÁN VALÁBEK, SDB

### EXCEPTIONAL INITIATIVE FOR TODAY'S TIMES

First, a little look back: God is who was behind the birth of the initiative to create Family Garden, as well as the activities offered here. That needs to be our statement and something we constantly need to be aware of, as the explanation of Fr. Angelo Fernandez Artimo, our Rector Major, has indicated in 2018, when he said, "The awareness that the initiative will always be something that's God's; ours is the responsibility and freedom."

Secondly, let's look at the present: In this sense, we want to keep offering our service to families, because it's families where the environment for discerning vocation in its broadest extent is created. Our mission can't stop; on the contrary, we have to be constantly looking and discovering God's impulses needed in the current times and by people living in these times.

And lastly, let's look into the future: The Church will be here even when we won't anymore, and when the nations of present-day Europe will disappear. We are not pessimists; we are realists offering our service today that we believe is of significance for tomorrow. Momma Margherita, Don Bosco's mother, offers us an example of how to serve others. May the process of her beatification and examination of her life opens our souls, so that we'll find ourselves capable of discernment.



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"THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH CHRISTIAN FAMILIES LIVE NOWADAYS HAVE CHANGED DRAMATICALLY. TO MAINTAIN LIVING FAITH SUPPORTING POINTS OF WHICH REMAIN UNCHANGED FOR US CHRISTIANS, WE NEED TO USE NEW MEANS, KNOWLEDGE, AND TECHNIQUES."



PHDR. MARIÁN KUBEŠ, CSC, PCC (ICF)

With every passing year, it's becoming more and more clear that the idea behind the Family Garden project is viable and extremely important. We can see the proof in married couples and individuals alike who seek guidance offered in lectures, as well as help in solving their own personal difficulties, especially in living their marital life. Thanks to a good balance between preventive and corrective activities offered, so to speak, under one roof, both courses of action are mutually enriching. I consider to be very original that Family Garden, in addition to helping people in their problems, also trains Christian coaches for Christian communities interested in that kind of help. This represents a systemic endeavour to which we are called more and more even by the highest representatives of the Church.

It is my desire that the Church in Slovakia would emphasize more decisively the need to care for marriages (and thus for entire families), and in this sense and through parish administrators and deans, would express a clear request toward individual church communities to locally train professionally competent people, individuals and married couples alike. These people would then be able to serve as a companion to married couples in their marital journey for example, just as the *Amoris Laetitia* apostolic exhortation invites us to do.

The conditions in which Christian families live nowadays have changed dramatically. To maintain living faith supporting points of which remain unchanged for us Christians, we need to use new means, knowledge, and techniques. For Family Garden, a new challenge will be to figure out how to project them into the everyday life of families.





"FAMILY GARDEN SHOWS  
US HOW CONFLICTS  
AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS  
CAN BE SOLVED."

LECTURE PARTICIPANT

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"AS A PRIEST, I LISTEN TO  
MARRIED COUPLES, AND I  
FIND IT USEFUL TO LISTEN  
TO EXPERT LECTURES  
FOR PEOPLE LIVING IN A  
MARRIAGE AS WELL. THIS  
WAY, I KNOW WHERE TO  
DIRECT THE PEOPLE THAT  
NEED HELP, AS WELL."

PAVOL KAROL KYTKA OP,  
PRIEST, FRIAR

# LECTURES



"WHY DO I KEEP COMING TO THESE LECTURES? THEY ARE LED BY PEOPLE THAT REALLY HAVE A LOT TO SAY."





IN 2017, THE FOLLOWING LECTURES  
WERE PRESENTED:

MGR. ART. VERONIKA REMIŠOVÁ

How to communicate and present your arguments without anger and with respect, both at home and at work?

BC. VINCENT JEDINÁK, MGR. MÁRIA JEDINÁKOVÁ

The principles of bringing up children upheld in our family

MGR. MÁRIA TÓTHOVÁ ŠIMČÁKOVÁ

How to teach children to act responsibly on the Internet, for their own as well as others' sake

ING. TOMÁŠ LENCZ, MGR. KATARÍNA LENCZOVÁ

I'm trying to advance my own interests, and you keep eluding me – how can we be happy together?

PROF. MUDR. DANIELA OSTATNÍKOVÁ, PHD.

Dissimilarity and complementarity of men and women

MGR. KAMIL BARTKO, MUDR. ALENA BARTKOVÁ

I'm different from my spouse.

Can he/she even know what I need?



MUDR. MAREK DRÁB, PHD.

Is it possible to treat children before they are born?

Is there an alternative to an abortion?

ING. MILOŠ PALDAN, PHARMDR. KLAUDIA PALDANOVÁ

How a crisis almost ruined our marriage

MUDR. RENÁTA MIKUŠOVÁ, PHD.

Does a today's marriage still need natural methods

of regulating fertility?

“WE WANT TO LEARN FROM THE ADVICE  
AND EXPERIENCES OF OTHERS TO ENRICH  
OUR OWN RELATIONSHIP.”

## **CRISES CAN BE OVERCOME**

**ON THE FAMILY GARDEN PREMISES, MR. AND MRS. PALDAN HELD A LECTURE ENTITLED: "HOW A CRISIS ALMOST RUINED OUR MARRIAGE".**

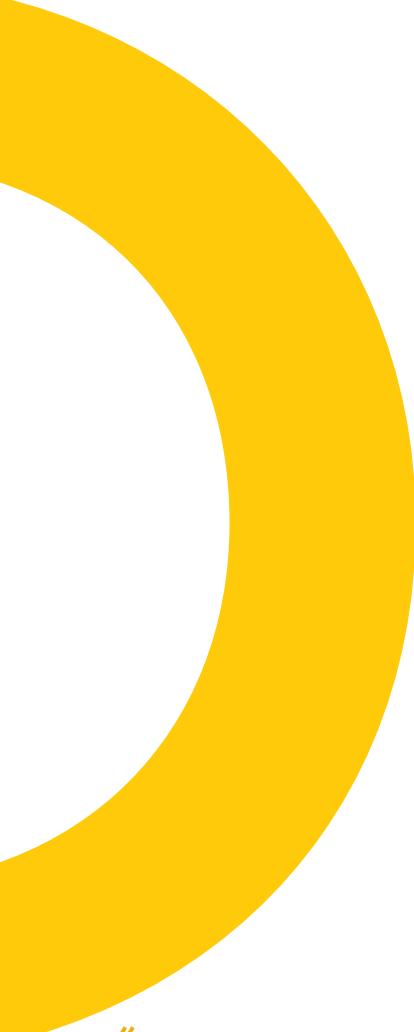
**In the Family Garden centre, you presented a testimony on a very intimate topic of marital crisis. What led you to your decision to share your experience with others?**

We wanted to encourage other couples that crises can be overcome and to repay our debt to God for helping us in our marriage and testify about His help.



**Your lecture was a big success; we received a feedback from people saying that they felt enriched by it. Have you received some direct feedback from the attenders as well?**

Immediately after our lecture, several participants came up to us. Some of them thanked us, while others shared short testimonies about their own experiences. We were also asked to give an interview by a daily newspaper.



**Have you yourself gained something from giving the lecture?**

We gained a new experience and got to know new people. In general, the people working in Family Garden we encountered left a good impression on us.

**Would you be willing to in turn give us your feedback? What do you think about the Family Garden project?**

We perceive Family Garden as something positive and we like your activities and appreciate your effort to help couples and families.

**People often ask us on Facebook if there will be a video recording of your lecture available. However, we don't usually make the content of our lectures public, because we want to keep their more intimate character. How do you perceive this format, when on one hand, one needs to find the courage to come up with their testimony in front of a group of strangers in a lecture hall, but on the other hand, the content of the testimony is not made public and available for a large audience on the web?**

It was precisely the intimate atmosphere and close contact with the audience that appealed to us. At the end of the lecture, there was also time for a discussion in which we could directly answer questions posed to us. A video recording would probably discourage us from sharing our testimony.

**“IT IS NOT EASY TO IDENTIFY AN IMMINENT CRISIS IN A MARRIAGE IN TIME. I'M HERE TO LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT HOW TO BE ABLE TO DO IT.”**

**LECTURE PARTICIPANT, LIVING IN A MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP FOR 30 YEARS**



"ONLY DURING TODAY'S LECTURE, I WAS SHOWN THE WAY TO CONTINUE TO WALK ON IN MY MARRIAGE. THE GOOD LORD BROUGHT ME HERE SO THAT I COULD LEARN HOW TO GO ON."

MRS. MARTA,  
IN A 40-YEAR LONG MARITAL RELATIONSHIP



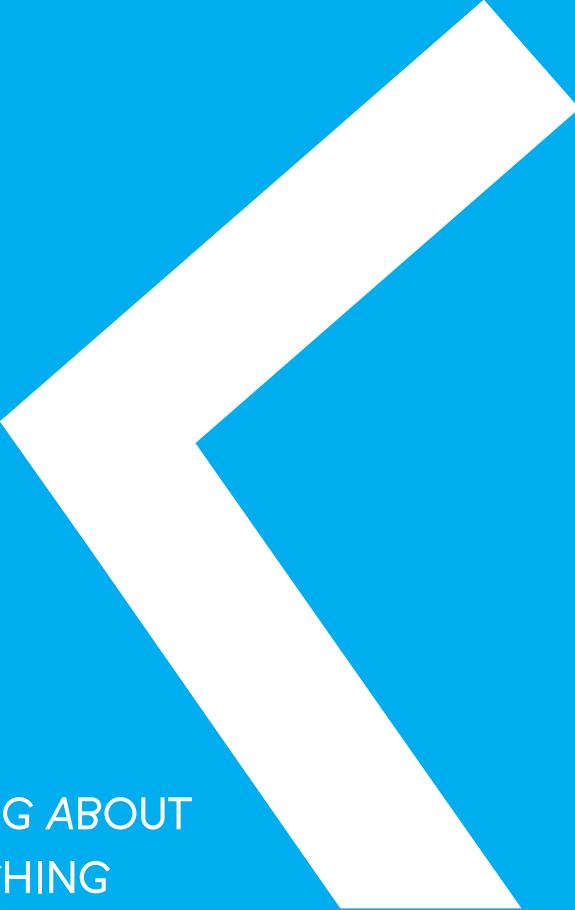


IN 2017, ALMOST 700 PEOPLE ATTENDED  
OUR LECTURES.

BETWEEN THE YEARS OF 2014 – 2017, FAMILY  
GARDEN ORGANISED 60 LECTURES.

FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FAMILY  
GARDEN CENTRE IN JANUARY OF 2014, WHEN  
WE ORGANISED OUR FIRST TALK, ALMOST  
8,000 PEOPLE CAME TO LISTEN TO EXPERT  
LECTURES OR TESTIMONIES PRESENTED BY  
MARRIED COUPLES.

THANK YOU.



“THE GREAT THING ABOUT  
CHRISTIAN COACHING  
IS THAT IT TEACHES US  
MUTUAL HUMILITY AND SELF-  
KNOWLEDGE. THROUGH  
KNOWING OURSELVES  
BETTER, WE CAN THEN  
LEARN TO GET TO KNOW  
OUR GOD.”

PAEDDR. MÁRIA ČAČKOVÁ

# COACHING

# CHRISTIAN COACH

## TRAINING PROGRAMME

### OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAMME

The goal of the programme entitled "Christian coach – basic principles of coaching for volunteers in helping professions" is to provide its graduates with the ability to coach and use the coaching methods when helping individuals, couples, or groups that found themselves in situations they can't deal with by themselves. Such situation may be a relational crisis, a problem, difficulty, unfulfilled ambition, unexpected life change, lack of determination, unsuccessful vocation quest, difficult decision, etc. A coaching method can prove to be successful, if other methods failed to bring hoped-for results, or aren't suitable. Christian coaching isn't supposed to replace other forms of work with a client; its role is to supplement them effectively. The programme is based on the Christian concept of a human person: each of us is called to be an instrument in God's hands in some way, and each of us can be a gift for someone who needs help.

### WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THIS PROGRAMME?

The programme is intended for individuals who work in various helping professions or feel to be called to such service and want to broaden their technique repertoire by adding coaching skills. It is meant for lay people, priests, religious, or married individuals. It can also be of benefit to those who've already had an experience with limitations in life and were forced to revise





their attitudes, values, ideals, or perhaps are in such situation right now. This usually happens in middle age.



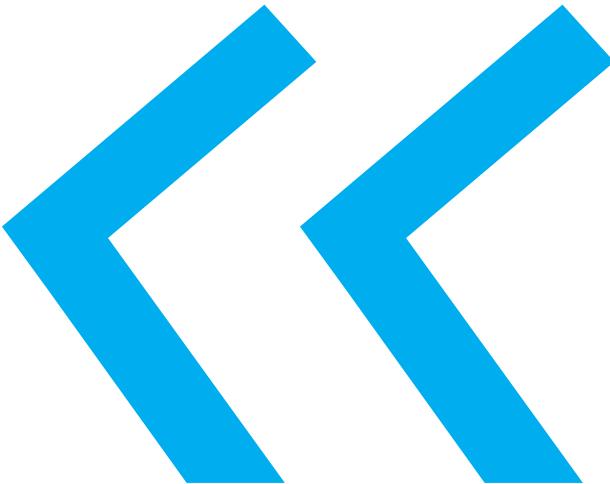
Graduates trained in Christian coaching can effectively serve in parochial and other settings, family and counselling centres, etc. The need for such services is constantly growing, and possible areas of focus for these activities are inspirational described also in the Holy Father Francis' post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (2016).

#### WHAT WILL A PARTICIPANT LEARN IN THIS PROGRAMME?

The programme prepares the participants for an independent coaching through teaching them the concept of a coaching dialogue and its techniques, as well as training them on how to apply this form of help in a community. It covers development of all competences required from coaches by the International Coach Federation (ICF). As an example, among other places, a skilled coach will be able to effectively work within a parochial community in close cooperation with priests, who are often approached by people in difficult life circumstances. When a coach might be able to take over a certain phase of accompanying/guiding from the priest. This way, a coach complements other helping and personal development professions through the distinctive coaching approach.

**"IN TODAY'S WORLD, A PERSON IS FORCED TO SHOW THEMSELVES ONLY IN THE BEST POSSIBLE LIGHT, AND TO PUSH ANYTHING THEY MIGHT STRUGGLE WITH SOMEWHERE DEEP INSIDE. HERE, WE EXPERIENCED THE EXACT OPPOSITE. OFTEN, WE WERE UNLOCKING OUR MOST SECRET CHAMBERS IN FRONT OF EACH OTHER AND THAT CREATED A WONDERFUL UNITY AMONG US."**

**BARBORA BUNČEKOVÁ**



#### **WHY THE TITLE "CHRISTIAN COACH"?**

For Christians, God represents the focal point of their lives, and Christian coaching can and wants to respect this fact. It means that if we are helping a Christian, who found himself in difficulties of any kind, is looking for answers for his various questions, and who wants to follow Christ in his life, this desire to follow Him is what becomes a key value, a foothold the coaching arises from. Subsequently, the coach's role in the framework of coaching dialogues is to help his client to either start out on such journey, or to enable him to walk it better. Here probably lies the biggest difference between a Christian and secular coaching. Therefore, it is completely natural for the coach to pray for his client, and to keep him in his prayers even outside of their sessions. During each meeting, a Christian coach is conscious of the fact that it's a child of God sitting across the table, and that at the same time, they are both children of God within the Church. If the coach learns to ask the right questions, it will be enough. Then they just need to let the Holy Spirit to do His work, and He'll take care of the rest.

#### **LECTURING TEAM**

PhDr. Marián Kubeš, CSc., PCC (Professional Certified Coach – ICF), Mgr. Katarína Baginová, ACC (Accredited Certified Coach – ICF), RNDr. Margita Kubešová, Mgr. Zuzana Funteková, Mgr. Miriam Němcová



“TO SIT IN A PLACE OF THE PERSON COACHED CAN SOMETIMES MEAN TO BE ASKED TOUGH QUESTIONS, AND IT WAS NOT EASY FOR ME TO FIND ANSWERS TO THEM. AND I DIDN’T LIKE IT, BECAUSE I NEEDED TO WORK HARD. NOBODY HAD ASKED ME THESE KINDS OF QUESTIONS BEFORE...”

LENKA BUJNOVÁ

# MARIÁN KUBEŠ

A PROFESSIONAL COACH, MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL COACHING FEDERATION (ICF) AND EXPERT IN COACHING OF MARRIED COUPLES WHO'S PLAYED ROLE OF AN EXPERT GUARANTOR AND A CHIEF LECTURER OF THE CHRISTIAN COACHING IN FAMILY GARDEN SINCE THE BEGINNING. IN HIS WORDS, THE FOCAL POINT OF CHRISTIAN COACHING IS JESUS, AS WELL AS A QUEST FOR WAYS TO FOLLOW HIM.

## **How has the Christian Coach Training Programme progressed over the years?**

Coaching is a dynamically developing profession worldwide. It requires a professional training and in addition, for Christian coaches is very important to continually grow spiritually. Several years of experiences with fine-tuning of the course itself resulted in a fixed course format guaranteeing a high-quality training both with regard to the expert and spiritual aspect. We're glad that the spiritual aspect is taken care of by priests that are also coaches themselves. Today, the combination of standard educational methods and opportunities offered by on-line education creates a compact whole resulting in a soundly educated coach who can find additional support in continuing education courses and in a professional life of the entire community of Christian coaches.

## **Why does a course run by a non-profit organisation cost several hundred euros?**

Ensuring that all these activities run smoothly is demanding, not only time-wise, but often in regard to finances, as well. Despite that, we try to make the basic course as much affordable as possible. Today, its price represents a fraction of what students pay for similar courses abroad or in the commercial sphere.

## **Who are the people enrolling in this course?**

It makes me happy that both the laity and clergy and religious people show interest in it. All those interested are led by their desire to be of service to others. Coaching represents a wonderful opportunity to plug in into the life of a parish or a family centre. It is a great solution for those who, for various reasons, are not able to work full-time. The religious benefit greatly from acquiring coaching abilities which might prove useful in spiritual accompanying of others, for example.





## **What has the year of 2017 brought that was new?**

To make the services of the Christian coaches accessible to the public, we created a list of Christian coaches. It contains names of qualified coaches who met the challenging criteria allowing them to be listed in said register. We consider it important to communicate the high level of readiness of Christian coaches to the public, because these days, there is a high number of educational courses available, the courses are of a varying quality, and it's not easy to know what sort of coaching a coach does and what are their qualifications.

**"TO MAKE THE SERVICES OF THE CHRISTIAN COACHES ACCESSIBLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, WE CREATED A LIST OF CHRISTIAN COACHES. IT CONTAINS NAMES OF QUALIFIED COACHES WHO MET THE CHALLENGING CRITERIA ALLOWING THEM TO BE LISTED IN THIS REGISTER."**

## **How has the life of the community of Christian coaches been evolving?**

Among the crucial activities bringing about further development are specialised workshops. In 2017, it was a continuing education training in coaching married couples. The second conference of Christian coaches brought several original contributions, as well as lectures presented by Christian experts. In the future, we'll try to bring here experts from abroad as well. We are creating conditions allowing the course graduates to gain coaching experience as soon as possible, and to further develop their abilities working with a mentor or participating in supervisory meetings. The Christian coach webpage provides opportunity for a reciprocal discussion between more than 120 Christian coaches active today. In addition, the webpage offers basic information about Christian coaching to the public in Slovakia.

IN 2017, 33 PARTICIPANTS WENT THROUGH THE COACHING TRAINING; SPECIFICALLY, 22 WOMEN AND 11 MEN. AMONG THEM, THERE WERE 2 MARRIED COUPLES, LAY PEOPLE LIVING IN A MARITAL RELATIONSHIP, SINGLE LAY PEOPLE, A PRIEST (OP), AS WELL AS A RELIGIOUS SISTER (CJ).



THEY TRAVELED TO BRATISLAVA FROM THE WHOLE OF SLOVAKIA, AS WELL AS THE NEIGHBOURING CZECH REPUBLIC, LED BY THEIR DESIRE TO BECOME CHRISTIAN COACHES. THREE OF THEM SPENT 12 NIGHTS ON A NIGHT EXPRESS TRAIN COMING FROM THE EAST, AND ANOTHER TWO CROSSED THE STATE LINE 16 TIMES. TOGETHER, THEY TRAVELED 42,386.4 KM TOTAL.



JUST AS IN THE PREVIOUS YEARS, THE TRAINING COURSE UNITED INDIVIDUALS WITH VARIOUS PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUNDS: THERE WERE SEVERAL IT SPECIALISTS, AS WELL AS SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, ONE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, A COUPLE OF EDUCATORS, A MEDICAL DOCTOR, PSYCHOLOGIST, AND A VETERINARIAN, AN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, A MASSAGE THERAPIST, A MUSEUM DIRECTOR, A SLOVAK RAILWAY WORKER, MEDIATOR, MANAGER, AND ECONOMIST.





## JURAJ PIGULA

HE IS THE SUPERIOR OF THE ORDER OF SAINT AUGUSTINE IN SLOVAKIA AND THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE MAGAZINE. HE SAID THE FOLLOWING WORDS ABOUT HIS DECISION TO JOIN THE AUGUSTINIAN ORDER FOR THE POSTOJ DAILY NEWSPAPER: "I WAS VERY ACTIVE: I USED TO PLAY SOCCER, ACT IN A THEATRE, AND BE A PART OF CHRISTIAN STUDENT COMMUNITY. DESPITE ALL OF THAT, I FELT LIKE MY LIFE WAS VERY SUPERFICIAL. IT WAS SAINT AUGUSTINE AND HIS TEACHINGS WHERE I FOUND THE PROFUNDITY I DESIRED." AS FOR US, WE'RE VERY GLAD HE BRINGS THIS DEPTH TO OUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH SEMINAR FOR CHRISTIAN COACHES.

**What led you to accept the offer to act as a spiritual guarantor of the Spiritual growth seminar for Christian coaches?**

My decision was based on circumstances such that in a certain moment, I saw it as God's will. Then once we started, we prepared for the seminar as a team – this helped with the knowledge that I'm not alone in this.

**What do you try to bring to these seminars?**

In my opinion, the seminar is about spending time with God. Subsequently, God talks to us through other people, the Scriptures, through life circumstances. I invited a few very fine people to speak. They were my friends who have given their life to service to God and other people. I knew they truly believed in what they said. That was the main reason why the first seminar was so successful.

**And why are you doing all this?**

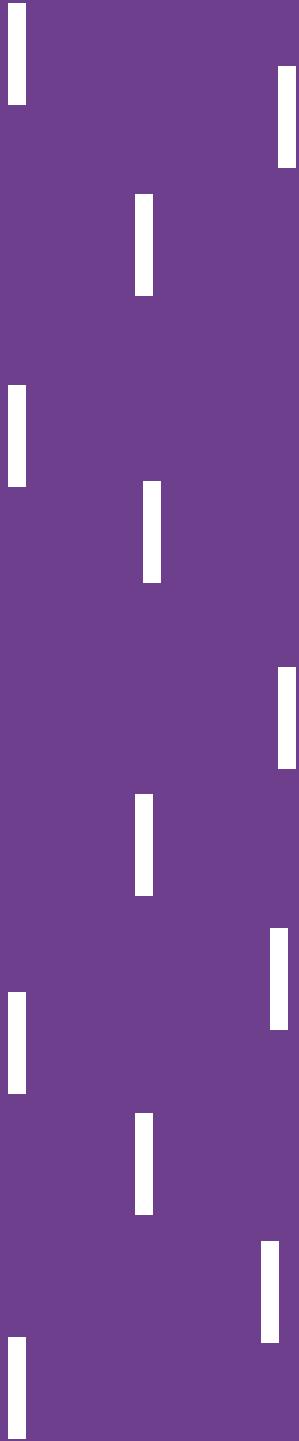
In the Augustinian emblem, there is a pierced heart placed on a Bible, and above it, there is a flame. I live my life with a passion caused by that heart pierced by the Word of God.

"IT GIVES A PERSON THE  
OPPORTUNITY TO STOP AND  
THINK ABOUT THEIR WORK  
AND FAMILY. I PERSONALLY  
FOUND IT VERY HELPFUL IN  
TRYING TO FIND MY FEET IN  
MY JOB."

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"I WAS VERY SURPRISED HOW  
OPEN I WAS ABLE TO BE  
IN TALKING ABOUT WHAT I  
FEEL AND HOW I PERCEIVE  
THINGS."

# CLIENTS



THE COACHES ARE HERE FOR ANYBODY WHO HAS SOME KIND OF A PROBLEM THEY FEEL UNABLE TO DEAL WITH THEMSELVES, OR THEY FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD BY THE PEOPLE AROUND. THEY MAY FACE THE DESIRE TO MAKE A RADICAL LIFE DECISION, TAKE AN IMPORTANT STEP, BUT THEY MAY BE NOT SURE WHAT STEP SHOULD IT BE AND IN WHICH DIRECTION.

Not every internal problem warrants a visit to a psychologist's office. Often, a session with a professionally educated coach may be enough; thanks to a structured dialogue, the coach is able to accompany the client in naming his problem and looking for a solution.

The clients of the Family Garden centre are not only married couples, but also individuals of varying ages, engaged couples, and young people facing diverse life situations. If you are interested in a coaching session, the best way to reach us is via e-mail: bratislava@familygarden.sk.

"AS AN EDUCATOR, I KNOW THAT TEACHERS TEND TO BURN OUT AFTER YEARS OF TEACHING WORK. HERE, A DIALOGUE WITH A CHRISTIAN COACH OFFERS US THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCOVER HOW CAN WE MITIGATE OR CHANGE SUCH SITUATION IN OURSELVES AND IN OUR WAY OF THINKING. IN BIG WORK TEAMS, VARIOUS DISCORDS AND DISAGREEMENTS MAY ARISE, AND HERE WE HAVE A CHANCE TO SEARCH DEEP INSIDE OURSELVES AND FIND WHERE EXACTLY LIES THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THINGS BETTER."

CLIENT

“I CAME TO FAMILY GARDEN TO SEE MRS. BAGINOVÁ IN A TIME WHEN I WAS GOING THROUGH AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT LIFE PERIOD. NOT ONLY HAD I BEEN SEPARATED FROM MY WIFE FOR OVER SIX MONTHS, BUT I SPENT THE SAME AMOUNT OF TIME LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB AFTER BEING IN A TOP MANAGEMENT POSITION FOR PAST SEVEN YEARS. I APPRECIATE THE HELP AND THE IMPULSE I RECEIVED IN COACHING SESSIONS WITH MRS. BAGINOVÁ. GRADUALLY, I WENT THROUGH AN INTERNAL CHANGE ALLOWING ME TO SEE MY RELATIONSHIP AND MY ROLE IN IT FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. I NOW BELIEVE THAT WE’LL BE ABLE TO SAVE OUR RELATIONSHIP THROUGH A SERIES OF GRADUAL STEPS. AND BY THE WAY, THANKS TO CHANGING MYSELF IN REGARD TO MY PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP, I WAS ABLE TO RESOLVE DIFFICULTIES WITH FINDING MY PROFESSIONAL DIRECTION, AS WELL.”

BOHDAN





“PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE LED BY A TEAM CONSISTING OF A PRIEST AND A MARRIED COUPLE IS WITHOUT A DOUBT A RICH SOURCE OF ENRICHMENT FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS. IT IS ALSO A TESTIMONY OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN PRIESTS AND LAY PEOPLE IN AN AREA EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR THE CHURCH.”

FR. JÁN KRUPA, SDB  
PRIEST

# MARRIAGE PREPARATION



## MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Premarital preparation is a prerequisite for entering the sacrament of marriage. However, far too often it is being narrowed to only a brief information about the Church position on marriage, even though its objective should be to prepare engaged couples for problems they may be facing and advise them on how to solve them correctly, or how to set right expectations regarding married life.

Family Garden offers engaged couples a well-planned marriage preparation led by experienced married couples in cooperation with a priest.

The preparation takes place every quarter in evening hours, and the sessions are run in groups. There are usually 9 sessions, and an instruction on the natural family planning, led by a physician, is a part of it.

Those interested in marriage preparation with couples from FAMILY GARDEN can register in person in the parish office of the Mary, help of Christians parish, Miletičova 7, or via e-mail: fara.mileticova@gmail.com.

**TOGETHER, THE MARRIED COUPLES LEADING THE MARRIAGE PREPARATION WERE WORKING WITH 42 ENGAGED COUPLES DIVIDED INTO 8 GROUPS. IN 33 SESSIONS TOTAL, THEY GAVE ENGAGED COUPLES MORE THAN 200 HOURS OF THEIR TIME.**



## PERSONAL MARRIED LIFE EXPERIENCES

MR. AND MRS. HORVÁTH DECIDED TO ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE OF LEADING OUR MARRIAGE PREPARATION. IN THEIR SESSIONS WITH ENGAGED COUPLES, THEY TRY TO PASS ON NOT ONLY THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE, BUT ALSO PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES FROM MARRIED LIFE.

"After being married for twelve years, we've been approached at our home parish with a question if we'd like to help with a marriage preparation of engaged couples. After completing the course offered in the family centre, we decided to accept the offer to serve in this way. In our opinion, the preparation of engaged couples is very important. During the preparation, the couples have the opportunity to talk through many issues, as well as realise that marriage is a sacrament. In our sessions, we try to pass on not only theoretical knowledge, but also our practical experiences from married life. The preparation of engaged couples is enriching for our own marriage as well."





## FR. JÁN KRUPA, SDB

PRIEST ACCOMPANYING ENGAGED COUPLES  
PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE

"Virtually from its establishment, the Family Garden centre has been cooperating with our parish in leading marriage preparation for engaged couples.

For me as a young priest, it's very enriching to be able to get to know the life of families leading the preparation in cooperation with a priest. The animator families pass on their experiences gained in their life together to the young engaged couples and testify to the fact that the sacrament of marriage can be lived as a faithful and joyful relationship experience. In this day and time, such form of testimony is priceless.

I'm glad that we're often able to organise the sessions in homes of the animator families, where our engaged couples have the opportunity to witness the everyday life of the couples and their families.

Without a doubt, a preparation for marriage led by a team consisting of a priest and a married couple is a rich source of enrichment for all participants. It is also a testimony of collaboration between priests and lay people in an area extremely important for the Church."





## JAKUB AND ANNA

### ENGAGED COUPLE

"We're very grateful for the opportunity to participate in a marriage preparation done this way. We found the extent and depth in which the priests and the married couples – cooperators worked with us to be very helpful.

The fact that the sessions took place also in the homes of the married couples – cooperators gave us the opportunity to see a more realistic picture of their life as a married couple and as a family. Thanks to their openness during our sessions, we were able to walk away with many pieces of advice and tips we'd like to put into practice in our marriage.

Whether it was the area of bringing up children, prayer life within a family, or marital life and communication, they presented us with many specific situations and gave us practical advice. They shared also their negative experiences and advised us what situations we should try to avoid in a marriage."



"THANK YOU FOR  
THE DIRECTION YOU  
PROVIDED ME, AS WELL  
AS THE TIME YOU SPENT  
LOOKING AT MY PROBLEM  
AND CONSULTING IT WITH  
YOUR WORK COLLEAGUES.  
THANKS TO YOU, I NOW  
HAVE ONE LESS CONFUSION  
TO DEAL WITH IN MY  
CURRENT SITUATION."

CLIENT OF THE FERTILITY  
AWARENESS CLINIC

# FERTILITY AWARENESS CLINIC



“I REALISE THAT WHATEVER THE REASON WHY A MARRIED OR ENGAGED COUPLE CONTACTED US MIGHT BE, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THEM KNOWING THEIR OWN PERSONAL FERTILITY.”





A PHYSICIAN, HISTOLOGIST, AND EMBRYOLOGIST MUDR. RENÁTA MIKUŠOVÁ IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RUNNING THE FERTILITY AWARENESS CLINIC IN FAMILY GARDEN. SHE IS A CERTIFIED TEACHER OF THE BILLINGS OVULATION METHOD AND HAS BEEN GIVING LECTURES ABOUT THE PHYSIOLOGY OF HUMAN FERTILITY AND NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING METHODS TO STUDENTS AND ADULTS ON VARIOUS PLATFORMS. TO THE QUESTION WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FERTILITY, SHE SAID, "PHYSIOLOGY OF FERTILITY IS A BEAUTIFUL GIFT THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO MARRIED COUPLES TO USE FOR THEIR OWN GOOD, AS WELL FOR THE GOOD OF THEIR CHILDREN, THE ENTIRE CHURCH, AND SOCIETY."

### **Who are clients coming to your fertility awareness clinic, and what can they find and learn here?**

The majority of clients coming to our fertility clinic are engaged and married couples looking for answers to various questions. The engaged couples primarily want to know how to reliably and in a Christian manner avoid pregnancy for a certain limited amount of time. Married couples are concerned with other questions related to their marital intimacy as well. However, it's becoming more and more frequent for me to meet with couples that have been dealing with infertility for three or more years. I realise that whatever the reason why a married or engaged couple contacted us might be, the most important thing is to make them understand the significance of them knowing their own personal fertility. That means we need to teach them how to understand the physiology of their fertility and how to discern it in practice. Based on this knowledge, they will be able to better understand their partner not only in the physical aspect, but also psychologically. Working together this way, they can gradually achieve the understanding of the great gift of sexuality they've been given.

#### **THE CLINIC OFFERS ITS SERVICES TO:**

##### **Girls and young women,**

- interested in learning to know their own fertility;
- interested in knowing a natural and reliable alternative to hormonal contraception;
- wanting to be prepared for marriage by being familiar with their fertility and natural family planning methods

##### **Married couples,**

- that experience their sexuality with a sense of fear of unwanted pregnancy;
- that suffer because they haven't been able to conceive.

##### **Women that have recently given birth or to nursing mothers,**

- that would like to understand their fertility during this challenging time.

"FAMILY GARDEN IS  
A PROJECT OF THE SALESIAN  
FAMILY AND SALESIAN  
COOPERATORS. WE BELIEVE  
IN THIS EFFORT, CAN  
CLEARLY SEE THE FRUIT  
IT BEARS AND WHEN WE  
WERE PRESENTED WITH  
AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP,  
WE BOTH TOOK IT."

LUCIA AND JOHNNY

# VOLUNTEERS



In our endeavour, we partner with a number of volunteers as well. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without them. Some are distributing flyers with information about our lectures to various parishes (Marta Pospíšilová – parish on Mamateyova St., Silvia Fábryová – parish in the Vrakuňa city district, Jana Urbánková – the Daliborko parish, Martin Linhart – the University pastoral centre, Katarína Nagyová – parish in the Trnávka city district and Vincentian community, Pavol Rehák – parish in the Dlhé Diely city district and the suburban town of Senec, Elena Štofírová – parish in the Rača city district, Miriam Némcová – parish in the Lúky city district). Others take care of the lectures (Katarína & Kamil Bagin – planning and moderating the discussions), Patrik Goboňa – sound system, Mária Ondrušová – setting up chairs in the lecture hall, Martin Ondruš – photography). Jana Gavalda and Mr. and Mrs. Ján and Lucia Mrázek help us with graphic editing of our printed materials. Pavla Lenyiová keeps our webpage and Facebook page up and running, and Róbert Némec works on our new website. Roman Jakubec has been actively participating in organising the visit of the boys from the Pokrov orphanage.

There are many others who were helping us with our move, cleaning our new premises or carrying and setting up furniture. They all deserve our big thanks.

ONCE A YEAR, WE TRY TO ORGANISE A GET-TOGETHER WITH ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS. THIS YEAR IN MAY, WE MET ONCE AGAIN, AND HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE WITH THEM, AND PRESENT THEM WITH SMALL GIFTS. MOST IMPORTANTLY, HOWEVER, WE COULD EXPRESS OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE FOR THEIR LONG-TERM SELFLESS HELP AND SUPPORT THEY'VE BEEN SHOWING TO OUR CENTRE.



## **MARKA ONDRUŠOVÁ**

SHE IS A SALESIAN CO-OPERATOR, PLAYS GUITAR IN A CHILDREN'S CHOIR, AND IS ALSO A SKI ALPINIST - STILL A BEGINNER, BUT A VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ONE. SHE IS AN AVID AND EXPERIENCED PHYSIOTHERAPIST AS WELL. IN ADDITION TO ALL OF THAT, SHE ALSO ORGANISES A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO WILL SET UP THE LECTURE ROOM BEFORE EVERY FAMILY GARDEN LECTURE.

**You've "found yourself" as a physiotherapist. What do you enjoy the most about your job?**

I'm very grateful for this opportunity to work with people. I consider my job a vocation I've been given from above. Time and time again, I'm able to see that I truly enjoy working with others, even though it's not an easy road. I realise how important it is to continually grow professionally as well. The amount of time and energy one puts into working on themselves and growing gets reflected in the satisfaction of patients, as well. When I see that a patient is cooperating, we can achieve the results faster. That makes me even more enthusiastic about my job, because I know that what I do has meaning.

**What appeals to you the most about the Family Garden project?**

Primarily, it is the up-to-dateness and consistency of the project. I like the idea of a preventive system able to help young people, engaged couples, and married couples here and now. In today's world, a "family" is becoming a foreign concept. I feel like sometimes, we are missing that right, traditional view of a family. Often, the strong egocentric tendencies win, and that destroys the rudiments of family. I, personally, am very glad that I have the opportunity to listen to the experiences of married couples, and maybe gain some wisdom.

**You attend the lectures in the Family Garden centre as well. Which one was the most interesting for you and why?**

Without a doubt, the experiences shared by married couples made the biggest impression on me. I will mention two things from these talks: The importance of communication and creating room for regularly spending time together, and the awareness of the differences in the nature of men and women.

"I, PERSONALLY, AM VERY GLAD THAT I CAN SOMETIMES LISTEN TO THE EXPERIENCES OF MARRIED COUPLES, AND MAYBE GAIN SOME WISDOM."



**"AND WHEN SAMKO (SAMMY) FALLS ASLEEP,  
WE CAN WORK ON OUR OWN THINGS  
WHICH INCLUDE OUR WORK FOR  
FAMILY GARDEN."**



## MR. AND MRS. LUCIA AND JÁN MRÁZKO

GRAPHIC DESIGN FOR ONLINE MATERIALS

THEY'RE BOTH SALESIAN COOPERATORS, LEADING A STUDENT CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP GROUP AND HELPING THE CENTRE ON MILETIČOVA STREET WITH ITS GRAPHIC DESIGN NEEDS. JOHNNY IS A 3D GRAPHIC DESIGNER WORKING ON VISUALISATIONS AND LUCIA PURSUES GRAPHICS AND SPECIALISES IN WEDDING DÉCOR. IN THE FAMILY GARDEN CENTRE, THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR DESIGNING LECTURE INVITATIONS OR POSTERS.

Lucia answers for both her husband and herself:

### **How do you divide the work for Family Garden between yourselves?**

At the beginning, the majority of the graphics-related work was done by my husband. Now, we switched, but I show him everything I create, and when I'm not sure how to do something, he often helps me. It all depends on who has more time.

### **Why have you decided to volunteer for Family Garden?**

Family Garden is a project of the Salesian family and Salesian cooperators. We believe in this effort, can clearly see the fruit it bears and when we were presented with an opportunity to help, we both took it.

### **You are parents to 1-year old Samko (Sammy). How do you manage to do find time for volunteering while taking care of your little one?**

Since Samko (Sammy) is great, he gives us space for self-realisation as well. Johnny works from home, and not having to travel for work saves him a lot of time. And when Samko falls asleep, we can work on our own things which include our work for Family Garden. But there are times when he doesn't feel like going to sleep, so we don't always manage to meet the deadlines :)



# PAVLA LÉNYIOVÁ

SHE WORKS AS A RADIO EDITOR, LIKES TO SPEND TIME IN A CLIMBING HALL AND RELAXES BY HOEING THE COMPOST PILE. SHE RUNS THE FB PAGE AND WEBPAGE FOR FAMILY GARDEN AND HAS BEEN HELPING WITH THIS ANNUAL REPORT AS WELL. SHE DECIDED TO VOLUNTEER FOR FAMILY GARDEN, BECAUSE SHE FELT TROUBLED BY MARITAL BREAK-UPS AROUND HER AND IN HER OPINION, FAMILY GARDEN HELPS TO KEEP FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS STANDING ON SOLID RUDIMENTS.

## FRUIT OF ONE LECTURE

I confess that I attended only one lecture in the Family Garden centre last year. However, the consequences of that were far-reaching: it resulted in a surgery for a baby that will now have a chance for a better life.

It was a lecture presented by MUDr. Marek Dráb, a gynaecologist, about how some medical problems can be treated even before the baby is born (He also talked about how to find peace when there is nothing that can be done for the baby). In the lecture hall, there was also a mom with her newborn. As it turned out, the mom, Gabika, was a client of Dr. Marek. During her pregnancy, her doctors found out that the little girl she was carrying had spina bifida/spinal cord bifida. In these children, there is a risk of paralysis, incontinence, and impotence.

The doctors recommended abortion to Gabika, but Marek Dráb advised her to see František Horn, a neurosurgeon who knew about the possibility of a foetal surgery (surgery in utero) in Switzerland. When the problem is treated this early, these kids have much better prospects in life, as they are born with less damage. For example, thanks to the surgery, a child who would otherwise end up in a wheelchair, may not need it. The important thing is to act fast – there is not much time between the moment of the diagnosis and the moment by which it still makes sense to do the surgery. That little girl was only the second child from Slovakia to undergo the surgery in Switzerland and after being born, her prospects look hopeful.

I made an interview with Gabika for the Rádio Slovensko radio station; however, we were given only three minutes of air time. Since there are about ten children per year born with this diagnosis in Slovakia, I wanted to spread that information as much as possible, so that listeners who face that problem would hear it. Unexpectedly, the air time of another radio broadcast freed up and I was able to make my programme longer. It was





a broadcasting time with a high listening rate (approx. 165,000 listeners), offering a series of reports on one topic. The other happy coincidence that fit in perfectly was the fact that the other Slovak boy that underwent the foetal surgery lives in a village located right next to the place I'm from. And even though the doctors were originally recommending abortion to this boy's parents, his mother thankfully came across Dr. Horn, and from that moment on, she's been in good hands. Dr. Marek Dráb and Dr. František Horn were also able to set aside time for doing an interview with me.

After the broadcast, I received an exceptionally high number of positive responses. However, for me, the most encouraging moment was when I learned that the radio reports made their way to a family who had just received such a diagnosis for their baby. Later, the mom wrote to me, saying that the radio reports helped them to find the courage to undergo the surgery in Switzerland. I just hope that, given the circumstances, the baby will be doing as well as possible after he/she is born.

I wish there were more Dr. Drábs and Dr. Horns in our health-care system!

# MAŤO ONDRUŠ

SELFLESS PHOTOGRAPHER AND VIDEO-MAKER

HE STUDIES JOURNALISM, IS INVOLVED IN ORGANISING THE LUMEN AND GODZONE FESTIVALS, AND WORKS FOR A PORTAL ABOUT INNOVATIVE SLOVAK BUSINESSES AND START-UP COMPANIES. BESIDES THAT, HE'S BEEN HELPING FAMILY GARDEN WITH TAKING PICTURES DURING OUR LECTURES AND FROM TIME TO TIME, HE'LL MAKE US A VIDEO AS WELL.

## **When is it easiest for you to take pictures at the lectures?**

To tell the truth, taking photos during lectures is sometimes rather tough, since the whole lecture hall is badly lighted. That can make my job as a photographer quite difficult. Despite that, I try to take as good pictures as possible, refining the images with the help of post-processing, for example.

## **Taking pictures requires you to not only be present at a lecture; later, you need to process the images and ensure they're publishable. How do you find time for all that?**

I must confess that this is probably my biggest issue. I'm the type who needs to have everything marked on a calendar; if it's not there, I forget to do it. Since I'm involved in several Christian projects, I don't have much time left for post-processing and posting pictures. I often try to delegate this work to others to make sure the pictures show up online faster.

## **Did you have previous experience with photography?**

I've been pursuing photography and video making for more than four years. During that time, I've received a lot of advice and gained experience. Thanks to both, I can continually grow. Along with Simi, who also volunteers at the Family Garden centre, I've completed a media school course offered by the Laura and Domka groups. Part of the course curriculum was devoted to photography. I've also completed a media school course organised by the .tyždeň magazine, where we talked about journalistic photography. In general, I've been engaging in photography for a long time. When I received a single-lens reflex camera for Christmas, I was finally able to devote myself to it fully. However, video making is close to my heart as well.





"I'VE BEEN PURSUING PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO MAKING FOR MORE THAN FOUR YEARS. DURING THAT TIME, I'VE RECEIVED A LOT OF ADVICE AND GAINED EXPERIENCE. THANKS TO BOTH, I CAN CONTINUALLY GROW."

**"IN MY OPINION, THE GREATEST  
CONTRIBUTION OF THE FAMILY GARDEN  
CENTRE LIES IN THE FACT THAT IT OFFERS  
SUSTAINABLE VIEWS ON INTERPERSONAL  
RELATIONSHIPS."**



## JANA GAVALDA BELLANOVÁ

SHE GETS UP AT 5 A.M. FIRST, SHE PRAYS, AND THEN SHE GOES FOR A RUN OR A SWIM, BECAUSE SHE THINKS THAT PURSUING SPORTS IS THE BEST INVESTMENT FOR RETIREMENT. JANKA WORKS AS A GRAPHIC DESIGNER AND IN FAMILY GARDEN, SHE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR EDITING THE PUBLICATION YOU'RE HOLDING RIGHT NOW.

### **Why did you decide to work for Family Garden?**

I accepted your offer without hesitation, because I consider the Family Garden project meaningful and important. I have a lot of respect for the people involved in its formation and I'm glad to be able to contribute a little to its running.

### **What do you consider to be the greatest merit of Family Garden?**

I like that Family Garden helps people in solving their relationship crises and shows them a way to overcome them and remedy the situation. In my opinion, the greatest contribution of the Family Garden centre lies in the fact that it offers sustainable views on interpersonal relationships. If there goes something wrong in interpersonal relationships, we don't need to immediately 'throw them away'; we should try to make things right. Doing that takes more effort, of course, but it is worth it.

### **You are a mom to a pre-schooler, Matúš. How does your ideal day spent with your family look like?**

All three of us like to spend our leisure time outside. But what we like the best is to spend time in our garden, and that's what we end up doing most often. Beginning in January, we watch the young plants at our windowsill and look forward to planting them outside. Spending time either in the garden or working on some DIY project in the workroom is the best relax for us. At night, we're coming home messy, tired, and happy!



ONCE AGAIN, THIS YEAR,  
WE'LL BE PRAYING FOR YOU  
AND ASKING GOD TO BLESS  
EFFORTS OF YOUR CENTRE  
AIMED TO HELP FAMILIES.

WE PLEDGE TO DO THAT  
BECAUSE WE'RE AWARE OF  
THE GREAT, IRREPLACEABLE,  
AND SACRED VALUE GOD  
PLACED ON FAMILY.”

SISTER KLÁRA, OSSCAP



**LOOK FROM  
THE OUTSIDE**





## JÁN MIHÁLIK

PROJECT MANAGER, LECTURER, INSTRUCTOR  
SALESIAN PROVINCE OF SLOVAKIA

**As a so to speak 'sidewise observer', how do you perceive the establishment and development of the Family Garden centre, and how do you view the fact that we're still here, even though the beginnings have been difficult?**

In my opinion, Family Garden was coming into existence as a tangible answer to "reading the signs of the times". That period was distinguished by escalation and polarization of the discussion about family and its nature within the Slovak society. A lot of what was written, said, and promoted back then was putting up barricades, dividing people, and making the family life the subject of a fiery dispute about values. That conflict has not died down to this day; it hasn't been solved, hasn't changed in its core. It just changed over to a temporary, "quieter" phase. I remember sometimes catching myself feeling very uncomfortable in these times, feeling very annoyed, disappointed, angry, and sad... It doesn't matter if we do have or don't

have such and such exclamation about marriage and family in our constitution; people still had specific questions about their life, relationships, raising children, and sex. They were trying to figure out what helps them and what harms them, what brings them joy and what makes them sad. A simplistic answer or a statutory norm wasn't cutting it. They needed space in which they'd have the internal freedom to discuss and search, to ask questions, receive unsatisfactory answers, and then to ask again posing the question in a different way. They needed to find out and experience for themselves what helps them, what moves them forward, and what makes sense to them.

## "IN MY OPINION, FAMILY GARDEN WAS COMING INTO EXISTENCE AS A TANGIBLE ANSWER TO READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Family Garden offered all of that, without anybody being completely sure how to do it. It was born and continues to grow as a typically Salesian answer:

- We don't have a perfect answer for everything, don't have an ideal plan to "design" a solution. We're searching on the go, step by step – pondering, trying, learning.
- We don't weep over our world. We love the world and consider it a gift and a place where God reveals himself to us, where we can meet Him in the most unexpected places and the most absurd situations.
- We don't stand on barricades, combat-ready and pumped with revolutionary adrenaline. First of all, we try to see the person, not abstract ideas.
- We don't push. We're offering what we ourselves are receiving, looking for ways how to be there for those that need it.
- We are not afraid to look for inspiration in what we see around us. We're employing various tools and methods that might help. At the same time, we're aware that none of them is the universal "cure for everything". That's why we try to get to know them and guard the boundaries of their use and think about when, for what, and for whom they're appropriate.

**In your opinion, how we are different from other centres, and what factors determine our "otherness"?**

An interesting (and to me, a very strong) aspect of the Family Garden centre is a certain "ambivalence" that can be seen here (I can't think of a better word). The centre is grounded in a structure of the Church (Salesians) and clearly claims allegiance to it. However, as a standard citizens' association, it possesses a great deal of autonomy. It reaches for practical tools – even business-like simplifying ones, but on the other hand, it continually examines conditions and boundaries of their use, constantly searching for its identity that isn't bound to any simplifying method.

**What do you think we should do differently, do better, so that we would be here even ten years from now?**

You should take care to avoid joining either the ranks of similarly cut educational companies offering their products on the market, or religious church initiatives that basically do the same, only using a different language and having a different motivation and different clientele. I think that Family Garden will always stand on the boundary line between different worlds and its stability will hinge on the right balance standing on both sides:

With one foot, standing in the business world (where there are many people needing and looking for a different kind of support this world offers); with the other, in the world of a dedicated non-profit organisation driven by conviction instead of a profit and loss statement.

With one foot, standing in the Church, helping with marriage preparation – understanding and speaking the language anchored in faith and theological knowledge; with the other, in a secular world – understanding the thinking and experience of a religiously unanchored person of today's time, and being able to suitably offer something that's understandable and usable to them.





## EVA RUŠINOVÁ

SALESIAN SISTER, FMA

### **What was the first impulse that led you to enrol in the Christian Coach training course?**

It was an offer from the provincialate to enrol in this programme. The offer coincided with my desire to accompany others in their journey in a competent and right way, exactly when I needed a re-start, I needed to move forward.

### **What were your expectations? Which ones have been met and which ones haven't?**

My attitude was very simple. It could've been summed up in one word: openness. I haven't formulated any expectations to myself. I like receiving gifts and I suspected I'd receive one, I'd just have to be patient in unwrapping it. To be honest, I needed to fight the initial internal feeling of displeasure, but I get that even when I'm starting to read a new book, for example. When

that happens, I employ my internal self-trainer that teaches me patience and know that in time, the thing will show me its beauty. And that's exactly what happened.

### **How do you use the skills you acquired?**

The beginnings were more difficult – I felt like a first-grader making their first strokes with a pencil. Until I “warmed up”, there were materials I could use to refresh my memory before a session, lists of questions written beforehand, my own coaching dialogues I’ve done before. I found all of this very helpful. Last year, I led about 50 dialogues. The overwhelming majority of my clients were young people. Not all the conversations were “coaching dialogues” per se, but if you adopt a coaching style, you can’t take it out anymore. It’s there and I keep using it.

**“LAST YEAR, I LED ABOUT 50 DIALOGUES. THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF MY CLIENTS WERE YOUNG PEOPLE.”**

### **Why shouldn't religious people be afraid to enrol in such programme, even though the term “coaching” might sound foreign to them?**

I don't like to pose counter questions, but one just came to my mind: Why should they be afraid? The approach of our founder, Don Bosco, was that we should use all possible means to do good and to help young people. Speaking of the name of the programme, maybe it would be helpful to try to look for some other equivalent, so that one wouldn't need to wrestle with it and would know exactly what it is right away; however, it's not easy to find a Slovak term encompassing everything that coaching is. I understand it as accompanying – it is a client who is leading themselves to where the root of their problem, pain, or unclarity is. In my internal openness toward the Holy Spirit, I walk with them, listen attentively, and lead a dialogue with them.

### **Have your acquired coaching skills brought something new into your personal life and into your life in a community?**

To me, the difference and “added value” of coaching lies

primarily in switching the conversation focus from the need to "find the right answer" to the desire to "pose the right question". That's the key I appreciate the most. Thinking this way is extremely liberating and wonderful. So far, each and every dialogue enriched me in some way and provided me with an opportunity to practice trust, believing that God will give me his light when I fall into microsleep, when I find myself in a fog. In that fog, He's at work.

The goal of my community is an apostolic work, in which I've been given certain responsibilities tied to a large extent to working with young people. Thus, coaching hasn't brought me something new with regard to quantity but has enriched me quality-wise. It gave me tools to accompany young people and communicate with them.

**What would you recommend we could do better and do differently, so that in ten years, we would be able to look back and say we've done a good job educating others and the Lord has been with us?**

Coaching is about people and their life which they want to live in peace. Often, they need help identifying what is it what's happening in their life. I think it's very similar to medicine in terms of diagnostics and subsequent treatment; however, in this case, it is the client who makes the treatment plan with the help of the coach. I consider continuing education and certification in this area to be very important. We need to "catch" the things in which our times are moving forward and how they affect a person. I'm very grateful that the Family Garden centre provides such "roof" for Christian coaching and from what I've seen from the entire training system and its set-up, I get the impression that it's a very efficient tool that can be used in parishes or any other Christian communities.





ACTIVITIES  
DURING  
THE YEAR  
OF 2017

## JANUARY

### 19. – 22. TALK GIVEN BY MR. AND MRS. BAGIN DURING THE 35TH SALESIAN FAMILY SPIRITUALITY DAYS IN ROME

Katka and Kamil Bagin accepted an invitation to the worldwide get-together of the Salesian family that took place in the Italian metropolis. Here, they talked about their life, marriage, and family, their journey that led them to the Association of Salesian Cooperators (ASC), their children's folklore group (Kremienok), as well as about the Family Garden centre.

"It was our first experience with this event and being there, we realised not only how huge the Salesian family is (with regard to its many constituents), but also how cosmopolitan it is (with regard to countries and continents represented). 280 participants coming from 5 continents represented a true picture of its 31 components. What's remarkable is that all of these people are united under one name – Don Bosco. First, the original one, whose message resonated all around through quotes, documents, printed materials, songs, etc., but also the current one – don Angel Artimo. We had the opportunity to personally feel his "paternal" presence and openness toward all participants. It was apparent not only from his willingness to take pictures with anybody who asked, but above all, from his open heart and ears willing to share. The event impressed us with its great organisation as well. This year's motto – "We are one family" – touches us deeply. Not only because we ourselves live in a family, but primarily because we devote our time to families through the Family Garden family counselling centre which has been operating in Bratislava since 2014."

More info: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=6&v=Bl9yMeIHVmI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=Bl9yMeIHVmI)



### 27. FEEDBACK FROM THE STAFF OF THE FIT CAMP FITNESS CENTRE

"The whole idea came to life quite simply. Last Christmas, we said to ourselves that we'd like to bring some joy to someone who hasn't been as lucky as us. We were looking for the right recipient and then we thought why not to get in touch with the boys from the Ukrainian orphanage again, since we've known them since 2016 (they came to work out at our centre). Afterwards, everything went smoothly and fast. The only problem was that the festive days are different in Ukraine – since its people are of the Orthodox faith, they celebrate holidays differently than we



do. They share gifts on the Feast of St. Nicholas, which is celebrated on 19/12 over there, and celebrate Christmas on 7/1, but don't share gifts on that day. Thankfully, we were able to find a solution. Don Maník loved our idea, they collected the wishes from the boys, and Mrs. Ema who served as a connection between us and Ukraine translated them for us and brought us the original notes from the boys as well. We decorated our tree with Christmas decorations and the boys' wishes and the project had an unexpected success – after only 3 days, there were only 14 wishes left on the tree out of the original 60. The project really resonated with our clients. Tomorrow, they celebrate the feast of Don Bosco in Ukrainian Pokrov and that's when the boys will be unwrapping their presents." K. Foróová

#### 29. OPEN DAY IN THE MOMMA MARGHERITA FAMILY CENTRE

Open day took place in the Momma Margherita family centre. All interested were able to come to see the interior of our building even before its official opening. Many individuals took the advantage of the presence of people responsible for specific departments who happily answered their many questions about the future operation of the centre and its offerings.



#### 30. FAMILY GARDEN ON THE LUX TV

Momma Margherita was gentle, devout, yet practical, and had a natural wisdom. She was changing the Oratory, founded by her son, into a family. A day before the feast of Don Bosco, the LUX TV editors were talking with Mr. and Mrs. Bagin about the new family centre devoted to Don Bosco's mother, which is located in Bratislava – Trnávka city district. They talked about how this centre is different from others, how it is similar and what it will bring into the life of families and individuals living in Bratislava and beyond.

More info: <https://www.tvlux.sk/archiv/play/11560>

## FEBRUARY

### 28. FIRST DAY OF MOVING OUR FURNITURE TO THE TRNÁVKA CITY DISTRICT

At the end of February, we started to gradually move our furniture into the new premises of the Momma Margherita family centre in the Trnávka city district. As usual, with a lot of help from our volunteers, of course.



## MARCH

### 7. HANDING IN THE PROCEEDS FROM THE "PILGRIMAGE OF LOVE-BIRDS" IN ŠAŠTÍN

At the beginning of March, the organisers of the "Pilgrimage of love-birds" came to see us. The reason for their visit was to hand us financial proceeds from this event. They shared they decided to do that because they think the Family Garden centre does many meaningful events for young people – on one hand, there are events aimed at prevention (various lectures and testimonies), on the other hand, it is also involved in marriage preparation of engaged couples. Our guests also mentioned that we're teaching them to volunteer, which is a huge rarity these days.

### 10. COACHING EXAMS AT THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL TRAINING EVENT IN TRENČÍN

On 10 March 2017, our lecturers travelled to Trenčín, where a group of budding Christian coaches was having their exams after a several months long preparation and study period. It makes us happy that thanks to our centre, fifteen lay people with various professional background completed their educational training and are now ready and willing to offer their Christian coach service at the Family Centre in Trenčín.



## 22. – 24. FIRST MODULE OF THE SPRING SESSION OF THE CHRISTIAN COACH EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

At the end of March, the 7th in the sequence of the Christian coach trainings began. 18 lay people from the entire Slovakia came to our centre. They all were of various professional backgrounds – from educators, medical doctors, school principals, journalists, administrative workers, and technicians to social workers and mothers – homemakers.

## APRIL

### 1. MOVING TO THE TRNÁVKA CITY DISTRICT

1 April was the day when the Family Garden centre definitely moved into the new premises of the Momma Margherita family house on Pavlovičova 3 in Bratislava-Trnávka. You can find us on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.



### 1. LUMEN RADIO STATION – THE OD UCHA K DUCHU (FROM THE EAR TO THE SPIRIT) BROADCAST

Mr. and Mrs. Katka and Kamil Bagin received an invitation from the Lumen radio station, along with Mons. Stanislav Zvolenský, and father Peter Mášik, pastor of the Petřžalka parish. They were guests of the "Od ucha k duchu (From the ear to the spirit) broadcast where they discussed various topics, such as marriage as a sacrament or current state of society and families. First and foremost, they were talking about the current situation in the area of marriage preparation for engaged couples and its expanded form as a strong factor influencing the quality of a future marriage relationship.

More info at: <http://www.lumen.sk/relacie/moderovane-relacie/od-ucha-k-duchu.html?page=10#archiv>

## 20. – 23. SPIRITUAL GROWTH SEMINAR FOR CHRISTIAN COACHES IN MARIÁNKA

Right after Easter, coaches from both the past and current Family Garden courses flocked to the spiritual retreat house located in the monastery of Brothers Consolers in Mariánka. They came from all regions of Slovakia to attend the 1st Spiritual growth seminar for Christian coaches in history. At the retreat, outstanding lecturers ready to talk about deep topics awaited them – Fr. Pavol Boka, SBD: Introduction to spiritual life; father Juraj Pigula, OSA: Mysteries and Christian initiation; Fr. Juraj Gendiar, SchP: False images of God; Dr. Lucia Hidvéghyová: A glimpse into the beauty of rabbinical literature; Dr. Lucia Hidvéghyová, assoc. prof. Bohdan Hroboň: A spiritual growth in the Bible, Psalms.



## MAY

### 5. – 8. VISIT TO THE POKROV ORPHANAGE IN UKRAINE

After a long preparation, we travelled to Ukraine in May. Father Mychajlo, Salesian priest, invited Mr. and Mrs. Bagin and their children to the Pokrov orphanage in Lviv. The 17-years old Žofka Baginová writes: "The boys being who they were was a far bigger gift for us than any gift we could give them." More in her article: <http://www.familygarden.sk/chlapci-z-ukrajinskeho-sirotinc.../>

#### **19. VISIT OF SALESIAN ASPIRANTS AND FR. VILHAN**

On 19 May, Fr. Dušan Vilhan, responsible for vocational pastoral care, and young men that accepted the invitation to discern their vocational calling visited the Family Garden centre. During their discernment journey, the young men are offered all the options the Lord has for them, including a sacramental married life. As in previous years, Mr. and Mrs. Katarína and Kamil Bagin offered them their testimony about the married life and answered their questions as well.



#### **21. GET-TOGETHER WITH OUR VOLUNTEERS**

Once a year, we try to organise a get-together with all our volunteers. This year in May, we met once again, and had the opportunity to share with them, and present them with small gifts. Most importantly, however, we could express our sincere gratitude for their long-term selfless help and support they've been showing to our centre.

## **JUNE**



#### **4. FINANCIAL GIFT FROM THE ORGANISERS OF THE BOX TOURNAMENT**

We were pleasantly surprised when organisers of the well-known box tournament taking place in the Ružinov city district decided to gift the proceeds from their event to our centre. They said, "Healthy families give our young athletes the foundations they need, and that was one of the reasons why we decided to show you our support."

## **15. – 16. 4<sup>TH</sup> MODULE OF THE SPRING RUN OF THE CHRISTIAN COACH**

### **EDUCATIONAL TRAINING WITH EXAMS**

Once again, we are handing out certificates of completion. After a several-month-long effort, the Christian coach community has 18 new members. We'd like to congratulate them on their success and wish them a lot of strength in their very challenging, but also incredibly important task.

## **23. – 24. COACHING OF MARRIED COUPLES**

At the end of May, a continuing education module of the Christian coach training, entitled How to coach married couples, took place at the Family Garden centre.

Under the guidance of Mr. and Mrs. Marián and Margita Kubeš, fifteen course participants had the opportunity to learn how to work with married couples through the means of a coaching dialogue. They had the opportunity to try leading such type of a dialogue, coaching one of the remaining couples present, including the lecturing one.

## **AUGUST**

### **19. – 20. "COACHIADE" GET-TOGETHER IN ČASTÁ**

Our Christian coaches didn't waste any time during the summer, either. Mr. and Mrs. Kubeš organised for all interested an interesting educational and recreational programme that took place in their home. They called it the "Coachiade in Častá".

### **25. – 27. VISIT OF THE BOYS FROM UKRAINE**

Once again, the boys from the Salesian orphanage in Lviv came to visit us In August. Even though it was a vacation season and the weather was very hot, we still decided to organise a collection of school supplies, non-perishable food items, and clothing for them. We were very surprised at people's reaction. Just after a few days, our premises were overflowing with what was needed. It was heart-warming to see little kids giving up their new school bags and bringing them to us in person. We were sorting the donations and loading them up into vans, together with the few boys coming from Pokrov to bring the donated items over. Former students from Slovakia were actively involved in organising the collection as well.



## SEPTEMBER

### 12. MEETING OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ORGANISATIONS RESIDING IN THE MOMMA MARGHERITA FAMILY HOUSE

Despite the late-night hour and an exciting soccer match broadcast on TV, representatives of all the organisations residing in the Momma Margherita family house got together to discuss how to best set our future cooperation in the building.

### 23. OPENING OF THE SALESIAN MISSION IN THE TRNÁVKA CITY DISTRICT

On the next-to-last Saturday of the month, we celebrated the opening of the entire Salesian mission in Trnávka. It consists of four branches: The Momma Margherita family house, local parish, the Domino children/youth community, and the Dominic Savio oratory. Each of the four constituents, including us, had an info booth set up to give people an opportunity to stop by and inquire what it has to offer.

### 25. – 27. 1<sup>ST</sup> MODULE OF THE FALL RUN OF THE CHRISTIAN COACH EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

We opened our eighth Christian coach educational training. Fifteen course participants came to Family Garden from the entire Slovakia to begin their 4-month-long journey to acquire (not only) coaching abilities.

## OCTOBER

### 27. – 28. 2<sup>ND</sup> CHRISTIAN COACH CONFERENCE IN TRENČÍN

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Christian Coach Conference took place in the noble historic premises of the Piarist grammar school refectory with 60 coaches from the entire Slovakia participating. They listened to 12 inspiring talks which briefed them about Christian coaching practice in the individual Slovak regions, as well as new plans and visions for Christian coaching. The participants attended several discussions and actively participated in creating the Christian coach memorandum. The main guest of the event, PhDr. Dáša Spillerová, ACC, enriched the conference with her talk titled "Coaching as a meeting of two personalities". More info at: <http://www.tvlux.sk/archiv/play/12957> <http://www.cprtrencin.sk/.../2-konferencia-krestanskych-kouc.../>



## NOVEMBER

### 6. - 7. START OF THE PERSONAL GROWTH PROJECT: "LET'S WALK TOGETHER"

#### ON THE ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL IN ŽILINA

Igor Pecha, a coadjutor and the principal of the St. Joseph the worker vocational school in Žilina says, "I've got the idea about a year and a half ago. I wanted to support the people in leading positions at our school expected to stay here long-term and help them to be in a good form; to live their lives in harmony in all personality aspects. With time, this idea took on a more specific shape and I felt it could be helpful to create a personal growth project that would help us to unite our personal mission as individuals with the mission of the school. I presented my vision to my co-workers on our first meeting: I talked about what our personal growth project could be about and what it could entail. Into said topic, we were led by Peter Lukáčik, SDB. To the second meeting that took place a month later, I invited Fr. Pavol Degro, SDB who briefed us on how such project could look like and how to go about creating it. And afterwards, we had four in-person meetings, each a month apart, with Christian coaches Katka Baginová and Mirka Němcová. Thanks to them, each participant had an opportunity to take advantage of being accompanied by a coach and subsequently move forward in creating their personal growth project and integrating it into their lives. At the end, we evaluated the course and its personal significance."

### 27.11. - 2.12. SALESIAN CONGRESS ON YOUTH AND FAMILY PASTORAL CARE IN MADRID

At the end of November, we got the opportunity to once again talk about our centre abroad. This time, it was the Salesian congress on youth and family pastoral care in Madrid, where Mr. and Mrs. Bagin were invited to speak about the Family Garden centre. More than 300 representatives of the world-wide Salesian family got together to reflect on the connection between pastoral care and families. The Salesian Rector Major, Fr. Angel Fernandez Artime, some members of the General Council, the cardinal of Madrid Carlos Osoro, and the archbishop Bruno Forte all took part in the congress. The main objective of the congress was three-fold: to get to know the family of today's times; to bring a spiritual view as well as the Church view of the family; and to include youth and families in the pastoral work and give them more attention. Along with the Bagins, Slovakia was represented by Salesians Pavol Boka and Dominik Vinš.



## DECEMBER

### 10. CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SALESIAN COOPERATORS ON MILETIČOVÁ STREET

As every year, the yearly Conference of the Salesian cooperators active in the Miletíčova street centre took place before the end of the year. Through their presentation, the management of Family Garden informed the guests in detail about the all-through-the-year activities of the centre as well as its future plans. At the same time, the conference was also a general meeting of the Family Garden citizens' association.



### 14. – 15. CLOSING MODULE OF THE FALL RUN OF THE CHRISTIAN COACH

#### EDUCATIONAL TRAINING WITH EXAMS

We finished the Christian coach educational training. Training participants managed to successfully pass both written and oral test and accepted the certificate of completion from the main lecturer Marián Kubeš to be able to embark on the journey of service as Christian coaches.

More info at: <https://youtu.be/DT7xqOQq5UE>

### 18. COOKING THE CHRISTMAS SAUERKRAUT SOUP

#### FOR THE MOMMA MARGHERITA FAMILY HOUSE EMPLOYEES

Salesian Brothers cooked the pre-Christmas sauerkraut soup and created an opportunity for the 32 employees of the Momma Margherita family house to get together in the Family Garden premises and get to know each other better. Reminiscing about the beginnings of the reconstruction of the centre building and tour of its entire premises were also part of the get-together.



# HOW WE'VE MANAGED OUR RESOURCES IN 2016

## EXPENSES

Administration	3 681,76
Christian coach educational training	14 333,77
Printed materials & marketing	4 136,24
Operation	7 180,25
Purchasing of furnishings & equipment	4 327,31
Wages	6 098,82
Education	6 990,00
Gift for the orphanage in Ukraine	2 230,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>48 978,15</b>

Note: The expenses don't include the salary of the director of the centre which was covered from the budget of the Salesian province in Slovakia in 2017.

## INCOME

Gifts and contributions	16 595,30
Christian coach educational training	21 765,00
Grants	5 508,00
Income from the 2% tax contribution	2 325,00
Collection for the Ukrainian boys	2 230,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>48 423,30</b>

## ECONOMIC RESULT

**-554,85**

## GIFTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Gifts and contributions	9 720,30
Gifts through the ĽudiaĽuďom.sk project	805,00
Gifts from businesses	6 070,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>16 595,30</b>

## OPERATIONS

Rent	6 465,60
Petrol – business travel	523,25
Telephone	56,00
Toner	53,40
Cleaning/Cleaning supplies	82,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>7 180,25</b>

# WHAT IS IN STORE FOR 2017

- Once a month, we will be offering interesting testimonies and expert lectures on current topics related to the needs of families
- We will be inviting additional married couples, especially from the ranks of the ASC, to help us lead the marriage preparation courses for engaged couples, as the interest for this kind of preparation is constantly on the rise
- We plan to organise two runs of the Christian coach educational training with the start dates in March and September 2018
- We plan to complete the Register of Christian coaches offering a list educated Christian coaches active throughout Slovakia. These people are ready and willing to offer their services to the public. In addition, we'd like to create a reliable source of information about coaches willing to offer their consultations to parish administrators, deans, or family centres regarding selection process of new pastoral care staff members.
- Once again, we are organising the spiritual growth seminar for Christian coaches which will take place in Čičmany this year and will be led by the Augustinian superior, Juraj Pigula.
- At the end of 2018, we plan to organise a conference with the participation of all the Christian coaches active in Slovakia whose number should reach more than 160 at that time.
- In the next year, Christian coaches will once again offer their services to married couples and individuals of various ages and facing various life situations. They will be there for those who have a problem they feel unable to deal with themselves, who feel misunderstood by the people around, who face the desire to make a radical life decision and important life step.
- We will try to do our best to inform the public about our activities. That's why in 2018, we plan to re-do our website and give it a new look. The information will be better arranged and linked up more closely with social media. Our goal is to enhance its informational value and emphasise search optimisation.
- In the course of the next year, an important task will be to secure financial means required for activities of this effort, because we feel it is really worth it.



I-C-A

