

MESSAGE OF THE YOUNG BROTHERS INVITED TO THE XXII GENERAL CHAPTER



We, the invited young Brothers, want to take this special opportunity to address the Chapter Assembly. Indeed, our message is of gratitude, and an expression of our lived experiences as well as some concerns.

We and so many young brothers of the Institute were surprised by the bold initiative taken by Br. Emili and his Council to invite Young Brothers to the XXII General Chapter. We highly appreciate this unprecedented gesture that reveals a big openness to the voice of the youngest and sensitivity towards the future of the Congregation.

We feel that our presence was welcomed by everyone and we have fully enjoyed the warmth and fraternal support of all, the Capitulants. We were offered a number of opportunities to freely express ourselves in the working group discussions, fraternity sharing, plenaries and even in one-on-one conversations with many of you. We are grateful to you for all these wonderful moments that have enriched us a great deal.

We have witnessed mature and fraternal deliberations about important issues facing our big Family and have many good things to share with our fellow younger brothers upon our return.

With your permission, we want to take this chance to finally use the color cards we are given.

Brothers, we show with great joy the **green card**...

- ... for the fantastic atmosphere of fraternity which was expressed in thousands of ways in the simplicity in relationships, in the warm welcome, in daily meetings, in celebrations... what a joy to be brothers, simply brothers!
- ... for the contemplative mood of the chapter process and to the deep desire to constitute ourselves as a faith community actively listening to the Spirit. Also to the depth and variety of the liturgies and times of prayer.
- ... for the freedom that allows you to suggest and adopt new ways of doing things, that are more simple and vital.
- ... for an authentic effort to listen to the world so as to grasp and respond to the emerging needs of people, especially children and young people.
- ... for a mature and fraternal way the election processes were lived, seeking the common good and without indulging in political games.
- ... for the courage to create a space for young people and lay Marist to share their expectations about Marist life.
- ... for an increasing awareness that we are a Global Body and that we are called to come together and to walk in communion, as a response to a world so many times shattered.

But we will also use the **yellow card**, to highlight some concerns and some questions we have.

- Have we been able to overcome our prejudices so as to engage in truly contemplative dialogues?
- Have we sought spaces that have allowed us to know in depth what is being experienced and what is happening in other parts of our Institute and of the world?
- Have we given careful thought to the formation of Brothers? Is it possible to dream about a new beginning without a radical renewal of our formative processes?
- What about vocation ministry? Have we really asked ourselves, with courage, what can we do so more young men will embrace our life choice? Or we are happy with our wishful thinking, or are just waiting to die?

Finally, we also have to raise the **red card**, to show alarm and disappointment.

- We remain very concerned about the accompaniment of young brothers beyond initial formation. We would like to find communities that would compel us to grow as humans, as Christians and as brothers, but this does not always happen.
- In this regard, we would like an investigation to be done and some reflection given as to why so many young brothers are leaving the Institute in some parts of the world.
- We believe we need to confront our lives and question ourselves about the way we are living and nurturing our vocation as brothers. We cannot be complacent about these inconsistencies under the excuse of "respect for the other". Maybe our hesitation to face issues like vocational ministry is ultimately due to the fear of being pushed into a radical rethinking of our personal and community lifestyle.
- It is our belief that, as an Institute, we put too much trust in ourselves, the way we do things and our past successes. Although good, has it limited us to properly discern and make decisions with a sense of audacity and in light of the Gospel?
- In reference to the Chapter itself, we show the red card protesting the silence that was felt around some controversial issues that we consider needed to be addressed through a more mature and open dialogue.

In conclusion, we want to restate that we have felt like brothers among brothers with the assurance that we are not the future, but part of the present of the Institute. That is why we commit ourselves to keep walking together, undertaking all the necessary changes to suppress the red cards, give a response to the yellow and build a future with more green ones. We take this opportunity to congratulate Br. Ernesto and the new General Council and to assure you with confidence: you can count on us!



We place ourselves under the patronage of our Good Mother and St. Marcellin Champagnat.

Brendan, Júnior, Fábio, Eric, Nelson y Omar