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Updates

24/07/2008: International experience of joint formation and charismatic vitality (2)

23/07/2008: Sydney - The International Marist Festival comes to an end

22/07/2008: India Celebrates the Founder's Day

22/07/2008: Sydney - Marist International Festival - Third day

21/07/2008: Photo gallery: World Youth Day - Sydney 2008

21/07/2008: Photo gallery: Remodeling work at the Hermitage - 16

21/07/2008: Worldwide presence - Photo gallery number 188

20/07/2008: Philippines - The Notre Dame Kidapawan College Retreat

18/07/2008: Sydney - Marist International Festival - Second day

18/07/2008: Calendar of the Superior General and his Council

17/07/2008: Spain - El escorial - Horizons course

16/07/2008: Sydney - Marist International Festival - First day (July 10th)

16/7/2008: Deceased Brother: Georges Morange (L'Hermitage)

Year of Spirituality

Marist School in Manila, Philippines



On June 16, 2008, during celebrations for the 60th anniversary of the Marist Brothers presence in the Philippines, at the Marist school in Manila, there was an initial session for teachers on the book *Water from the Rock* (WfR). The following day there were two sessions for older students.

There were 160 teachers at the gathering. Given that the session was relatively lengthy, it was decided to work mainly in groups. After Brother Teófilo gave a brief presentation on the history of the document, the teachers were asked to focus on the writing Commission's wish expressed in the last paragraph of the text (cf. WfR, page 19). The document is intended to: 1) enrich prayer; 2) provoke reflection; and 3) inspire action. What took place at this School in Manila and what the Brothers and Lay Marists experienced in the 12 days that followed throughout the country was an answer to the Commission's hopes and

desire. The 17 presentations in the different Marist places of Philippines were solid initiatives inspired by *Water from the Rock*. The session in Manila began with a prayer based on the text. The exercise done during the two-and-a-half-hour session, and especially the work done in groups provided time for reflection.

The teachers were divided into 15 groups of 11 people. Each group was asked to read approximately 10 articles in WfR. Reading the book took about half an hour. Each group paid attention to three tasks: 1) writing down the important ideas and the theological and religious intuitions discovered during the reading; 2) using these intuitions as a basis for writing a small article for the web page; 3) and when sharing back in the large group, not to report on everything reflected on - each group was to share just one, and only one fundamental idea found in Marist Spirituality.

A new generation of 22 Marist researchers

A course on Marist patrimony, in English General House

June 21 saw the closure of the "Course on Marist patrimony", which had lasted for six months, organized in Rome for the English-speaking Brothers. With a Eucharistic service, which demonstrated the cultural diversity of the Institute and its internationality, Brother Seán Sammon, the Superior General and Brothers Michel Green and Aureliano Brambila who directed the course, presented the diplomas to the new researchers of Marist patrimony.

The course came about, in the first place, with the purpose of promoting a new group of Marists to study in depth the spiritual patrimony of the Institute, so that these Brothers in turn can help others to deepen their knowledge of Marist history and spirituality, in different places around the world. Secondly, to undertake new researches which will enrich the body of existing research. And, finally, to identify new researchers who can take the place of the previous generation of writers, animators and researchers.

The group consisted of 22 Brothers from 18 countries and 16 different Marist provinces. The age-range of the participants was very wide; the youngest was 27 years old and the oldest was 75. Among them there were two Brothers with temporary vows who, at the end of the course began the month retreat in preparation for their perpetual profession. All of this diversity has come together through the Marist charism.



The methodology used during 19 weeks was a mixture of conferences and personal research. 17 lecturers took part in the conferences: Brothers Kieran Fenn (Sacred Scripture), Neville Solomon (French Context), Edward Clisby (Passive letters of Champagnat and the lesser testimonies), Pau Fornells (Lay Marists), Alain Delorme (First Brothers), Peter Rodney (Water from the Rock), Carlos Martínez (Marist Educational Mission), Dominick Pujia (Marist Solidarity), Giovanni Bigotto (Marist Saints), Ernesto Sánchez (Vocational Pastoral), Pedro Herreros (Rules of 1837) and André Lanfrey (Origins and evolution of Marist spirituality). Taking part on behalf of the Marist Family were P. Alois Greiler (Society of Mary), and Sisters Vivienne Golstein (The Marist Sisters), and Margaret Ryan (The Marist Missionary Sisters).

The personal research started from common sources for all the participants in the course, such as the Marist origins and the Founder's letters. On concluding the course all the participants presented a work of personal research on a chosen topic. During the course, the Brothers were able to make a pilgrimage to the Marist places where they spent two weeks.

The evaluation of the course has been very satisfactory in all its aspects, highlighting in a particular way the facilities that can be offered by the General House especially for access to the files of the Institute. Little by little the Brothers have joyfully returned to their places of origin, happy to have been able to take part in this excellent initiative.

On the road to the XXI General Chapter

A General Chapter is a priceless grace in the life of an Institute



21st General Chapter
**new hearts
for a new world**

This gathering, at which delegates from all over the world come together, never fails to arouse a spirit of hope, which abounds when something new is about to begin. A Chapter offers the opportunity to look once more at the basic elements of our life and mission, so as to express them in new ways which are understandable at the present moment in our history.

The work of the last five General Chapters has been of great significance in regard to the life and mission of the Institute. For example, the Chapter that was convoked as an outcome of Vatican II showed us a path to renewal that we are still travelling. Nine years later, the Chapter delegates dedicated their their work to such important matters as prayer, apostolate and community. Out of

a desire to share their hopes and dreams in a more personal way, they also wrote a letter entitled "Marist Brothers Today", which was sent to each member of the Institute.

The main job of the delegates to the September 1985 Chapter was the editing of the new Constitutions and Statutes. Ten weeks later they had a draft of the document that today is our rule of life. Eight years later, the next Chapter concentrated on solidarity, in the same way that the most recent, in 2001, had as its main issue Marist apostolic spirituality.

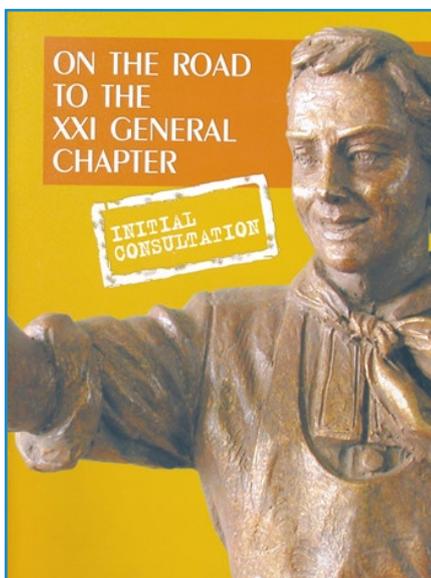
Considering the effort involved in organizing a General Chapter in all its details, and the work of animation that needs to be carried out among the members of an Institute such as ours during the time preceding the opening of the Chapter, the General Council named a preparatory commission for the XXI General Chapter during their plenary sessions in the summer of 2007. The commission members are: Maurice Berquet (General Councillor), João Carlos do Prado (South-Central Brazil), Graham Neist (Sydney), Albert Nzabonaliba (East-Central Africa), Seán Sammon (Superior General), Lindley Sionosa (East Asia), Luis García Sobrado (Vicar General), Josep Maria Soteras Pons (Hermitage), Carlos Vélez Cacho (Central America) and Teodoro Grageda (México Occidental). We have already had three meetings, one at the end of November 2007, another in mid-February

2008, and the last one at the end of April. We have come to know one another better, we have had consultations with the General Council and with Father Ricardo Tonelli, SDB, an expert with considerable experience and knowledge in youth evangelization, and we have also outlined a plan of work.

This message that we are sending you has three objectives. First, to introduce ourselves. Then to inform you about the work we have done so far; and finally, to invite each of you to participate in the plan we will follow on the way to the Chapter.

We are convinced that the preparation for the Chapter is as important as what is accomplished at the Chapter itself. This is because the Chapter gets its energy and drive through its participation in the time of preparation. The upcoming Chapter, besides the work it will carry out, will be for each of us an excellent opportunity to renew the original dream that attracted us to this way of life. A Chapter is a time of conversion, of change of heart, the right moment to make bold, even unexpected, decisions, in the search for what God wants for us and for the Institute.

From
*On the road to the XXI General Chapter
Initial Consultation
Pages 4-5*



A Marist School caring for the children of refugees

South Africa - Sacred Heart College, Observatory, Johannesburg

Currently there are thousands of unschooled refugee children in Johannesburg with the official asylum seeker permits who have been refused access to state schools. Legally these children are entitled to an education in South Africa. However, the schooling situation in South Africa is not yet ideal, and equal opportunities are, unfortunately, not afforded to all refugee children, especially those who have limited financial resources and who are trying to attend under-resourced state schools. Many of these children are refused access to state schools due to insufficient resources at state schools, inability to pay fees, and language difficulties.

In an effort and in response to a re-

quest from Bishop Paul Verryn of the Central Methodist Church to help at least some of these refugee children, especially those in the neighbouring communities of Yeoville, Berea and Hillbrow, Sacred Heart College (SHC), an independent Catholic school in Observatory (Johannesburg), formed a voluntary steering committee comprising representatives from the Refugee Ministries, the Coordinating Body of Refugee Communities (CBRC), Sacred Heart College and other outside volunteers with time and the expertise to help in bringing about interim schooling for the unschooled refugee learners. It was decided to start an afternoon school, based at Sacred Heart College for primary school children from the neighbouring refugee communi-

ties in Yeoville, Berea and Hillbrow. The children will attend the school until they have gained access to state schooling. It is thus an interim measure to address the problem of these children not having access to schooling.



Joint formation and charismatic vitality

Ecuador - International experience

Our experience of joint formation in the Hispanic-Portuguese linguistic area (14 administrative units being present) continues. After the first week dedicated to organization, integration and motivation, the 21 participants, brothers and lay people, have now entered more deeply into our processes of faith and specific vocation.

Monday 7 was dedicated entirely to personal retreat: Identifying my current process in following Jesus (My salvation history). Silence, looking back at my life, depth, God and me, view of my weaknesses, efforts, achievements...

Tuesday 8 had as its slogan: Remove your shoes... this ground is sacred! Time to share our salvation history with the brothers and sisters of our small communities. Throughout Wednesday and Thursday, we wanted to study more deeply what the key elements were (contents, approaches, methodology...) for the development of our processes of faith, the most significant elements required to develop our common Marist spirituality and the elements that help us, the complementarity of brothers and lay people, to live our faith more profoundly within Marist spirituality.

On Friday 11 we highlighted what made us pulsate most during these days of

sharing our personal faith and our common Marist spirituality. On Saturday and Sunday we began the deepening of our vocational processes, from our specific identities as brothers and lay people. It was very beautiful to share the experiences configuring our vocational conscience and our firm and resolute response, as well as the special moments of vocational reaffirmation. We looked for those elements that identify our vocation to the religious life and the lay life. Then, the lay people shared with the brothers what they thought should be the essence of the brother's religious life today. The brothers made the own contribution to the lay people concerning their specific identity.

