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## Updates

**06/08/2008:** Spain - First communion in solidarity

**06/08/2008:** New Marist link: Portal Marista Uberlândia e Patos de Minas (Brazil)

**05/08/2008:** New Marist link: Fraternidad Hno. Gregorio Pastor (Chile)

**05/08/2008:** Photo gallery: Year of Spirituality - General Santos City

**05/08/2008:** Marist spirituality in Philippines

**04/08/2008:** Photo gallery: Remodeling work at the Hermitage - 19

**04/08/2008:** Worldwide presence - Photo gallery number 190

**04/08/2008:** Marist presence at World Youth Day

**01/08/2008:** Photo gallery: Remodeling work at the Hermitage - 18

**01/08/2008:** Marist Calendar - August 2008

**01/08/2008:** Argentina - Meeting of the community leaders of Cruz del Sur

**31/07/2008:** Photo gallery: Province of North Central Brazil

**31/07/2008:** Marist News 11

**31/07/2008:** Marist Educators in South Africa enthused by Champagnat's Charism

## Preparation for the Chapter



21<sup>st</sup> General Chapter  
**new hearts  
for a new world**

There are two stages in our plan to prepare for the Chapter, and each includes a consultation process. We invite you to participate fully in both of them. In order for each stage be carried out smoothly, we have requested Brother Superior General to contact each provincial and district superior, directing him to appoint someone in his administrative unit to be the coordinator of the work of preparing for the Chapter. Once the Preparatory Commission has the list of all the coordinators, we will give them guidelines for their work.

The first stage of preparation (June-October 2008) will include all the Brothers of the Institute and any other persons they wish to be part of the work. We

recommend that you carry out this first stage on the community and provincial levels. Of course, each province and district is free to adapt the process to their local customs and their own calendars. In the same way, we trust that in implementing this adaptation they will take advantage of the structures already in place, for example, meetings of local superiors, regional assemblies, meetings of lay Marists, youth encounters, etc.

During the second stage (January-May 2009), the members of the Preparatory Commission will deal in a more direct fashion with the Chapter delegates. These, in turn, will stay in contact with the members of their province or district on whom they will depend for the preparation of the work of the Chapter, or other persons they have contacted for this purpose. During this second stage we will consider the results of the initial consultation, which we will use as a means to deepen our reflection. By this means we hope to gather together many of the dreams and hopes, as well as the concerns and fears that we all have today regarding our Marist life and mission.

*Preparatory Commission  
Initial Consultation*

The personnel of the Communications Office will be on vacation during the last two weeks of August. The publication of Marist News and the regular updating of the web page will begin again at the end of the month.

### MARIST NEWS

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# Marist Educators in South Africa and the Champagnat's Charism

## The fifth Sharing Our Call workshop

The fifth Sharing Our Call workshop South African Marist educators took place at the Good Shepherd Centre on April. Forty-three participants came from the five Marist Schools in South Africa. The animation team included Adrienne Egbers (member of the Marist Schools Council), Brother Joe Walton (Councillor for South Africa and Vice-Provincial of the Southern African Marist Province), and Neil Mitchell (Marist educator currently working for the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office for Johannesburg-Pretoria) led by Brother Mario Colussi and Mike Greeff (Head of St David's Marist College, Inanda, Johannesburg).

Opening prayers and ice-breakers were followed by presentations dealing with vocation beginning with a personal reflection on one's own life's journey, followed by reflections on the vocation of Marcelin Champagnat and the Blessed Virgin.

The presentations on the five key aspects of Marist education selected by the authors of *In the Footsteps of Champagnat* – Presence, Simplicity, Family Spirit, Passion for Work and In the Way of Mary – were allocated to one school each. In the last part of the presentation on Mary, the Rosary was explained and each school was given materials to make an extra-large sized rosary for the school. One teacher with a Calvinist church background that she had had no idea what a rosary was for but that she would get one for herself after the workshop. The same presentation included a professional produced video on the new Chapel of Mary at the school including comments from both primary and high school learners on the meaning of Mary for them. Another presentation highlighted the care and attention being given to a particular learner with special needs.

Adrienne Egbers spoke on last year's Marist Mission colloquium in

Mendes (Brazil) which she attended as an official delegate of the Marist Province.

On the last morning, Mike Greeff spoke freely and feelingly on the impact of the Marist Pilgrimage to Rome and Champagnat Country that he took part in last year. Then Neil Mitchell gave a presentation on the vision of the human person underlying the ministry of Catholic education and outlined the overall situation of Catholic schools today.

The conclusion included an overview and synthesis followed by a time of evaluation and a final commissioning ceremony in which Father Chaka anointed the two Brothers for their mission and they, in turn, anointed each of the other participants.

The overwhelming reaction to the three-day event was very positive. One long-serving teacher remarked that it provided her with the deepest enrichment and understanding of her entire career in education.



# Year of Marist Spirituality

## Water from the Rock

### Reflections of the 2nd year Scholastics, Bogotá

Brother Teófilo presents the book *Water from the Rock* as a solid source of "Marcellinian" spirituality which he invites us to continue to nourish throughout our journey as Brothers of Mary. We greatly appreciate his passion, his way of expressing and sharing what it is to be Marist, through his work that spreads not only the text of such a greatly appreciated book but also, by his example in sharing the life of that spirituality with those who have opted for the religious life, following Jesus and his gospel.

We are called to grow as people and especially as Brothers, taking to heart the challenges implied in following Jesus. This gives us strength and tells us that yes, it is possible to direct our journey to those places where others would prefer not to go, to enter into the suffering there, like Mary at the foot of the Cross and to be a presence and service that remains faithful, despite its risks. (*Water from the Rock*, 149). And this same paragraph finishes very clearly: When our mission is concluded, we move on to new places that require our presence. Here we are in the presence of an itinerant spirituality, an original expression that we heard for the first time; we are told that it is nothing but the missionary dimension of our spirituality, presented in a very explicit way in paragraph 150 when speaking of the dimension of our spirituality that has inspired thousands of Marists to generously answer the call of the Mission Ad Gentes. We are also called today to look at Mary's example (cf. 27), the Mother who shows us our road with simplicity: like her we are invited to be pilgrims in the faith (cf. 29), to welcome our consecration and to live our mission with enthusiasm "to

make Jesus Christ known and loved."

This missionary dimension of our spirituality was highlighted as being an integral and fundamental part of our apostolic life. We feel that it helps us to continue with hope and with hearts full of zeal in Jesus' project, imitating Champagnat.

We are also challenged (cf. 42) to give witness to the world, rejecting the values that are contrary to Jesus' message, to live our spirituality in this way. And we know that if we are able to give witness in our daily lives to the vitality of this others... will be attracted and invited to adopt it as their characteristic way of becoming living water (42). This invitation to give witness is fundamental. It is like a sacramental dimension of our spirituality: we drink in the rivers of living water and others see us as rivers of living water for them. In fact this is what paragraph 14 summarises in a very simple and real way: In living our spirituality, we find our thirst quenched in the rivers of 'living water'. In turn, we become 'living water' for others.

We have realised, once again, the importance of the Marian dimension of our spirituality. Mary is, probably, the topic most present in the whole book. This is not surprising, we being Brothers of Mary. Our Good Mother teaches us to be model listeners, to feel love for



the poor, and to be open to the word of God. Her way of living the word of God moves us to avoid keeping what we say and think within ourselves, but rather to live in an attitude of visiting. (cf. 75, 131, 134 and 151).

What we find in every word of this book is an immense desire to revive the fire that completely consumed Father Champagnat, and which is still present in each one of us. We greatly appreciate the effort of each one of the brothers to encourage us to continue studying more deeply, rescuing and valuing our sources. Today we still hear that: "to be a brother is to be a saint", and to be so in everyday things, through simplicity of life, like our father founder. It is he who invites us now, not only to be aware of the motives of Marist spirituality, but to discover it in our own way, to experience it, to put it into practice, to live it. To summarise, the road is already mapped out, but to know it we have to move ourselves to drink of the water of Marist spirituality that springs from the tradition of Marcellin Champagnat.

# Prayer for the XXI General Chapter

We praise you,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

You inspired Marcellin Champagnat  
to labor for your Kingdom  
and to make Jesus known and loved  
in the circumstances  
of the people of his time,  
especially the poor.

You gave him Mary  
as his ordinary resource  
and model of unbounded "yes"  
in responding to your call  
with courage and strong resolve.

You bestowed  
upon the many generations  
of brothers and lay men and women  
the same zeal to work  
in bringing Christ-life to birth  
in this constantly changing world.

We give you thanks  
for your abundant blessings  
on our Institute  
in the many aspects  
of its life and mission.

We are grateful that the Marist charism  
has grown to be ever  
more relevant with the passage of time.

We rejoice in the numerous men and women

who continue to share  
and keep alive Marcellin's dream  
of bringing young people  
closer to Jesus and Mary.

As modern-day Champagnats,  
We recognize the challenges  
you set before us  
in the realities of the world  
and of the young.

Endow us with the wisdom  
to see clearly the way  
in which you are leading us  
so that we may continue  
to be signs of your loving  
presence today.

Give to the delegates  
of our 21st General Chapter  
the openness of mind  
and the generosity of heart  
to listen to the signs of the times.  
Inspire them to truly discern  
your will for our Institute.

As we move in faith,  
hope and love  
to two hundred years  
of Marist presence,  
create in us new hearts  
for a new world.

Amen

