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## "Energy" in El Escorial!

80 groups have passed through this center of spirituality

### Spain

The course SENDEROS (paths), which is already underway at El Escorial, consists of the presence of Brothers Cruz Alberdi Sesma and Edmundo Baltazar Muro Samanamud (S. María de los Andes), Arturo Buet Costa (Cruz del Sur), Tomás Martínez Sancho (Norandina), Adolfo Cermeño Giraldo (América Central) whose arrival was delayed for 25 days because of a tumor in one of his eyes. After a surgical procedure he has now become part of the group and is showing good signs of improvement; Brothers Rosendo Corona Torres -"Chendo" (México Occidental), Josep Castillo Vidal (l'Hermitage), Javier Cotorro Llanera y Victoriano Hernando García - "Viti" (Ibérica). Brothers José Javier Espinosa Marticorena (América Central) and Afonso Levis (Brasil Centro-Sur) are the course coordinators. Accompanying and supporting are Brothers from Ibérica: Alfredo Villanueva Sainz, Andrés Florentino Núñez -"Floro"-, Eleuterio Sánchez Díaz -"Lute"-; Father Guillermo Rubio Maroto, chaplain, an Augustinian from the Monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial; Pedro Pérez y Dori García, de León, staff in the kitchen and laundry.

The group is smaller than expected. More Brothers were supposed to participate. However, the strict application of the immigration laws in Spain made their inclusion in our course impossible.

We have already reached the halfway point. The good understanding and the fraternal relationships; the happiness and



the family spirit; the climate of openness and the frankness in the sharing; the personal and communal effort; the simplicity, the good humor and the relaxed atmosphere are quite noticeable. We feel that there is both personal and communal growth. The pilgrimage to our places of Marist origin strengthened the affective ties, among us and with our confreres of some of the communities in Spain and in France, whom we met on the journey. They were meaningful and fruitful moments.

We feel that with our group, the 80th, The Marist Center of Spirituality of San Lorenzo de El Escorial shows its "energy." In analogy with what verse 10 of Psalm 90 (89) says in one of the translations: The sum of our years is seventy "or eighty if we are strong." The center reaches a biblical number, of consistent duration, of strength in its existential course, of energetic life... It will experience some changes, at the beginning of next year. We predict that it will continue to enrich... to revitalize people.

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# Child Rights and the Millennium Development Goals

The UN' commitment to reduce extreme poverty and the implementation of children's rights

## Child Rights Information Network

On the 2nd October the CRIN (Child Rights Information Network) issued a special edition dedicated to the Millennium Development Goals.

What are the Millennium Development Goals?

The MDGs are the time-bound targets of a global partnership the world leaders committed their nations to in order to reduce extreme poverty. The United Nations Millennium Declaration was signed by leaders of 189 countries on 8th September 2000 at the United Nations Headquarter in New York.

The MDGs, should they be achieved successfully, will bring benefit to the world population including children, but in some cases directly refer to children:

**Goal 1:** Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

**Goal 2:** Achieve universal primary education (and ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling)

**Goal 3:** Promote gender equality and empower women (and eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education)

**Goal 4:** Reduce child mortality (and in particular: reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five)

**Goal 5:** Improve maternal health

**Goal 6:** Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (spread knowledge and promote prevention among young people, increase the ratio of school attendance of orphans, allow children access to proper medical treatments)

**Goal 7:** Ensure environmental sustainability

**Goal 8:** Promote a Global Partnership for Development

According to the UN "the goals are achievable, they have timelines and deadlines; they are locally defined and measurable. For the first time, there is an agreed global compact in which rich and poor countries recognize that they share the responsibility to end poverty and its root causes".

The CRIN article intends to broaden the understanding of the MDGs and highlights their correspondence with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It also reports comments, evaluations and criticisms about the real impact the MDGs have had so far on the condition of children, quoting international experts, civil society organizations and official reports.



# The Bible Live

## Italy

The longest TV transmission ever conducted live on a public broadcast recently took place when the complete Bible, Old and New Testaments, was read on the Rai Italian television station over seven days and six nights, October 5 to 11. The readers included leading figures from the world of religion, politics, theatre and movies, along with hundreds of other well known people. The first two readers were Pope Benedict XVI and Hilario Alfeev, representing Orthodox Patriarch Alejo II.

The Rai Uno station ran the first and last hours of the undertaking which with good reason was entitled "The Bible Day and Night." After the first hour of transmission, the presentation went over to the satellite frequencies of the educational channel, Rai Edu2. At the Basilica Santa Croce in Jerusalem, for twenty-four hours a day with neither interruption nor commentary (except for musical interludes), around two thousand people proclaimed 1144 segments of the Bible: i.e., 800,000 words, averaging around 4700 words per hour. The two thousand people, including readers (1250) and support personnel, came from thirty-seven countries. An occurrence of this kind is striking not merely in view of the number of people involved, but also because of its ecumenical character. So numerous a participation has confirmed the Bible's character as a force for unity among different religions.

At the lectern all appeared in their turn: thirty representatives of the Reformation Churches, six Moslems, sixteen Jews, and those from the Orthodox Churches. Among the Catholics were Cardinal Vallini and forty participants from the Synod on the Word of God. The Jewish readers proclaimed some of their texts in Hebrew followed by translation, the same method used



by the Orthodox Archbishop Gennadios reading Greek and Syrian Patriarch Gregorio III Laham using Arabic. Among others who read were to be found newspaper editors such as Dino Boffo (Avvenire) and Giovanni Maria Vian (L'Osservatore Romano), along with various political figures, among whom were three former Presidents of Italy: Scalfaro, Cossiga and Ciampi. In addition, three weak-sighted readers used a Braille text, and one person mute and deaf was assisted by an interpreter. As representative of the Marist Brothers, Brother Onorino Rota, Superior of the Generalate community, read an excerpt from the Prophet Isaiah.

Giuseppe De Carli, director of Rai-Vatican who along with Elena Balestri created the Bible-reading project, explained the interrupted structure of the reading this way. "We made the decision to structure the reading without interruptions after seeing Roberto Benigni's recitation of Dante's Divine Comedy on Rai Uno. If it was possible to create such an appealing show out of a literary classic, all the more were we ready to try the same sort of thing with the Bible." The feedback has revealed the success of the idea. From the moment the chance arose of signing up via email for reading the biblical segments, the internet site "The Bible Day and Night" received more than 183,000 applications.



## The Marist colleges undergo a technological renewal

### Brazil

The Centre-North Brazilian Province aims at making the classrooms of the Marist colleges more dynamic, and even more attractive, vibrant and interactive. That is why it has created "CONECTE Marista", a technological tool for pedagogical development aiming at creating a place of learning and formation for professors and spreading a more modern culture among the Marist school community.

The potential uses of this tool are numerous and they all increase the students' role in the teaching-learning relationship. They include the following: "ConecteMude", which enables professors to change and adapt the contents; "ConecteActividades", to develop further curricular, remedial or evaluation activities; "ConecteCrie", which facilitates the development of works using resources such as videos, texts and pictures; "ConecteVirtual", a file of activities and studies for the students.

Some colleges are already making use of it. These centres are extremely satisfied with the instrument and together with the students they are developing activities that make the school more dynamic and interesting.

In the words of Patricia Dantas, the person in charge of the laboratory at the Marist College of Taguatinga and a user of CONECTE: "One of the goals of the use of the computer in teaching is to make it an agent of the transformation of education. By using the "CONECTE Marista" platform, one can learn by playing, which from the student's point of view is the most enjoyable way to learn". And she adds: "In this context, the student becomes more receptive and motivated to absorb the knowledge he or she is offered, in order to develop his or her intelligence more rapidly as well as his or her learning skills."

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# Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family - Iberia Province

## Fifth Meetings of the Fraternities

### Spain

**A**s has become customary in our Province at the beginning of the school year, we once again held a meeting of the MCHFM fraternities. The Lardero house (La Rioja), was the site of this year's meeting, and about ninety of us gathered, including our youngest members.

The meeting gave us the chance to organize our plans for the year in regard to formation activities, commitments, etc. In addition the meeting provided an excellent family-type occasion to share the experience which we are having as fraternities. Over so many years - some fraternities having taken part in these meetings for almost twenty years - we really feel ourselves to be brothers and sisters to one another, and so coming together is a real celebration. Even it sometimes we have been saddened by the "farewell" of one of our members, we feel sure that the person continues to accompany us from heaven.

The principal goal of our meeting was to get a better sense of the book, "Water from the Rock." Several of us had already started to do so, and thanks to the help of Mayte Ballaz and Brother F. Ernesto Tendero, members of the Province's Spirituality Team, we managed more effectively to uncover all its richness. Some of us have been specially chosen to make a communal study of the book this year.

The best part of the meeting was the workshops which took place on Saturday afternoon. The goal was to see how the Marist charism and Champagnat spirituality is brought to life in our everyday world, especially in places different from the school the environment with which



we are most familiar. To attain such an objective, we profited from hearing about: (1) the witness of a young couple who have worked together for a year - in education and in health service - at the Marist Brothers' apostolate in Chad; (2) the experience of group of volunteers who during the summer worked at the street-children's center in Romania; (3) the FMS work called "The Spiral" which aims at offering some hope for the future to young people who don't fit into the regular school system; (4) the experience of one of our fraternity families whose members shared with us, in a homespun but profound way, their manner of "being a family in Marcellin's fashion." The youngest members of the fraternity charmed us with their little play and its inspirational message.

On Sunday, Brother Ambrosio, Vice-Provincial, spoke about "the pilgrimage to the General Chapter," inviting us to participate in the Chapter and to make a contribution to this important event in the life of the Institute. In addition, time

was spent discussing the joint formation experience held at Quito and the charismatic vibrancy which accompanied it, Ana Sarrate and Brother Ernesto Tendero having taken part. Then, we learned about other activities carried out by the leaders of MCHFM in the Iberia Province and the new function which the Provincial Chapter has approved: a "Province link with MCHFM" (Mrs. Pilar Moreno). Having such a link with the Province is going to allow for a good number of activities which will help spread and revitalize the Move-ment in the Province.

A special feature of the meeting, felt as a great enrichment, was the presence of a new fraternity now recognized by the Provincial Council. In addition there was the presence of a full group of young people who are searching a way into the future now that their catechumenate has been completed. Their youthfulness and their contribution to the meeting brought us great hope, which is a help for our own renewal.

