

[www.champagnat.org](http://www.champagnat.org)

## Updates

**11/12/2008:** 7th Meeting of the Team of Marist Mission in America

**10/12/2008:** Pastoral Forum with Young People

**08/12/2008:** Diocesan tribunal's work on our nineteen martyrs

**09/12/2008:** Formative Experiences in Italy

**09/12/2008:** Deceased Brother: José Sedano Gutiérrez (Compostela)

**09/12/2008:** Deceased Brother: Henri Maurice Castelain (Europe Centre-Ouest - West Central Europe)

**05/12/2008:** Photo gallery: Remodeling work at the Hermitage - 32 (December 3rd)

**05/12/2008:** Worldwide presence - Photo gallery number 205

**05/12/2008:** Matola Noviciate - Eight day retreat lead by Brother Christopher

**05/12/2008:** Marist News 27

**05/12/2008:** Retirement Survey Report

**04/12/2008:** News from Davao

**04/12/2008:** New Marist link: Parroquia San Marcelino Champagnat (Colombia)

## We have seen the Lord

### News from Davao

### Philippines

Time moves on as we make our Mission ad Gentes formation program. As the course has unfolded, we have had important experiences along the path of discernment. The discernment helps us attend closely to God's word in the events of life and the experiences with are brought home to us in such events. Now we have taken a further step. We have gone to encounter God in the midst of His people. As a part of this process, our most recent activity was an insertion experience. For two weeks we lived and shared life with some needy local people and their families. We, the Ad Gentes Brothers were sent to three parts of the countryside. Emmanuel went to Buda, a rural area of Davao; Juan and Doroteo to the local montagnard people of Don Marcelino; Cesar and myself to the people who live in the poor areas of Butuan City.

The experience brought back to mind a story that Brother Benito shared with us some years ago in his Circular, "Walk Peacefully, Yet with a Sense of Urgency." He relates a legend from the Americas, a story concerning a tribe which from time immemorial had lived at the foot of a great mountain.

The tribal chief, seriously ill, called his three sons to him. He said, "Go up the sacred mountain. The one who brings back to me the most beautiful gift will succeed me as the chief." One of the sons returned with a beautiful, rare flower. Another son brought him an exquisite, colored stone. The third son said to his father, "I have brought you nothing. From the top of the mountain I could see in the distance resplendent verdant fields



and a crystalline lake. I was so dazzled that I could bring you nothing, but I am beset with the idea that the distant sight is a new place on which our tribe can settle." And the old chief replied, "You will be the chief, because you have brought as your gift the vision of a better future for our people."

Such has been the experience of the recent days for me: to have a vision of our future missionary presence in Asia, sharing a simple life, sharing the reality, the work, the joys and the sufferings in the midst of very poor people in the countries to which we will be sent. It has been an experience of discovering God in the midst of His people, His poor ones, in their poverty, simplicity, generosity, hospitality; discovering His countenance and His presence upon the faces and in the names of real people who shared with us, who received us in their houses and communities during these days as a part of their families. The experience has also provided the chance to share our brotherly lives in simplicity and brotherhood and to let us be touched by our God Incarnate who once again compels us to commit our lives to the poorest.

#### MARIST NEWS

N.º 28 - Year I - December 11th, 2008

#### Director:

Br. AMEstaún

#### Production:

Br. Onorino Rota

Mr. Luiz da Rosa

#### Redaction and Administration:

Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat, 2

C.P. 10250 - 00144 ROMA

Tel.: (39) 06 54 51 71

Fax: (39) 06 54 517 217

E-mail: [publica@fms.it](mailto:publica@fms.it)

web: [www.champagnat.org](http://www.champagnat.org)

#### Edit:

Marist Brother's Institute  
General House - Rome

# Retirement Survey Report

## Senior Brothers Committee

### United States

In the spring of 2007, the Senior Brothers Committee surveyed all the Brothers of the U.S. province to assess how prepared Brothers are for the transition to active, healthy retirement. While the survey was not intended as a vote or sondage on retirement policy, it was very helpful and informative in shaping future retirement policy. A comparison of the responses of Brothers in each age group with the level of preparation known to characterize those who successfully transition to retirement suggests some helpful steps for the province leadership and individuals.

Many Brothers envision retiring in the same place they now live and doing the same work, though at a reduced rate. However, this may reflect the historical model of retirement rather than a more open-ended exploration of options.

That historic model may no longer be the best approach because the number of retired Brothers will exceed the number of opportunities for reduced schedules or other niches that a school can reasonably provide. More significantly, the traditional approach defines retirement as diminishment rather than as a transition to new ways of ministry (paid or unpaid) and new ways of living community life.

The province strategic plan noted the need to explore creative options for retirement. The lived experience of some Marist Brothers and other religious makes clear that good choices lead to good outcomes, while poor choices (or no choices at all) do not.

In the past, there was an expectation that every Brother would continue to work as long as he was physically able. Consequently, retirement was seen negatively – a reluctant admission that one was no longer healthy. Clinging to their school-based or other ministries often became more and more draining, leaving little psychic or physical energy for learning new skills or exploring new ministries.

Many of the survey responses seem to reflect a perception that one is either working or one is ill and in need of medical care. There is a rewarding time between those two life stages – active retirement. Preparing for a successful transition to active, healthy retirement is a process that has physical, mental, spiritual and financial aspects. This process takes time.

Successful transitions typically begin in one's fifties, with planning and preparation. Attending workshops, reading about retirement, acquiring new skills, and discussing the possibilities with friends, a professional consultant and one's peers are all appropriate steps in this stage.



The early sixties are a time to begin the transition itself. It is a time to reduce one's work load to part-time paid work, not because you are unable to do full-time work, but because you need to invest some time and energy retooling, trying new ministries and exploring new places to live.

Marist Brothers value good community life, so it is important for Brothers similar in age to discuss the possibilities for living together as they transition to retirement. The early sixties is the time to gather Brothers in the same age range to plan a new community, perhaps in a new location. Climate, cost of living, opportunities for part-time ministry are among the factors to consider. The surveys surfaced a number of possibilities: North Carolina, Arizona, Texas, Florida and New Mexico among them.

By the mid to late sixties, the transition to active retirement is often complete. Active retirement means an opportunity to get involved in parish or hospital work, try one's hand at writing, music, art or cooking, or to deepen one's prayer in a less hurried life. Without appropriate and thoughtful planning in the earlier stages, however, retirement can devolve into idleness instead of leisure and boredom instead of creativity.

The surveys confirm that some – perhaps many – Brothers need help to prepare for a fulfilling retirement. Among the tasks that the Senior Brothers Committee and the Province leadership need to consider are:

\* supporting gatherings of Broth-

ers to discuss creative options and plan new active retirement communities.

\* providing ongoing education on successful retirement for the Brothers.

\* funding training for new ministries and avocations.

\* hosting a province-wide assembly to discuss creative retirement planning.

\* facilitating regional gatherings to provide opportunities for Brothers to assess their own preparedness for the transition to retirement.

\* exploring what other congregatio-

ns of religious brothers have done to provide active retirement communities distinct from infirmaries or assisted living facilities.

Richard Van Houten, John Malich, Jim Adams



# Personal and Communitarian Ways of Renewal

## Formative Experiences in Italy

On October 18 and 19th, two formative experiences that had been offered to interested Brothers of Italy, got underway at the Generalate. There the participants were warmly received by the Brothers with authentic family spirit. There too we found all the necessary facilities for conducting the experience.

The experiences are called "itineraries," and the first, entitled "Religious life – personal and communitarian path to renewal," was led by Br. Onorino on the morning of October 19th. The second one, entitled "Human growth and Spirituality" was conducted by Marina Stremfelj from the Aletti center in Rome, and was held on two days: all day on Saturday, the 18th, and then on the morning of Sunday the 19th.

When both groups had finished their sessions, they celebrated the Eucharist together in the Chapel "of the Superiors" which is rich in Marist memories and symbols. Br. Emili Turú, General Counselor, was there too. His presence helped us to feel united to the Marist world and assured us that the hearts of



our Superiors are one with the hearts of all the Brothers. After Mass we shared the meal with the Brothers of the General House, an occasion that helped us experience in a real way the richness of our brotherhood.

The path has been opened; the objectives have been outlined; the time for each Brother's personal work has been established by the program. Thank you, Onorino, and thanks, Marina, for

your help, and for the wonderful way in which you supported and guided us throughout the first sessions. We will meet again within a few months after having worked and reflected on the documents you will send us. We hope that we will be able to do so with great enthusiasm based on the new background of ideas and experiences we have and will want to share.



# Forum with Young

## Walking in the heights

### Spain

Bearing the motto "Walking in the heights" the Pastoral Forum for Young People took place in the Palacio de Congresos in Madrid from 7 to 9 November. This event came about following a suggestion by the Scapularists on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of their magazine on youth pastoral. However the expectations of its promoters were soon exceeded because they found themselves involved with almost the entire youth pastoral in Spain. The Forum had as its objectives that of acknowledging the road travelled till now in our youth pastoral, knowing and sharing the current situation and putting in place future plans for the task of the Church in the youth world. And all this networked, in communion, because we need to meet each other, know each other and begin to work together in the youth environment.

These aspirations were channelled through the diocesan Delegations to demonstrate that we can only build together in the framework of the local Church. The experience of the Forum was founded on this and it was welcomed in the Archdiocese of Madrid, where it connected with a sensibility



similar to that which had been growing little by little among the groups and movements which work with young people and which could be summarized in the statement given as the title to a previous working document of the Forum: "Communion is the heart of the mission."

Diocesan participation in the event included the attendance of 24 animators and priests from the youth, pastoral, vocational and university Delegations of Salesians, Marists, Redemptorists, Missionary Claretians, Holy Angel, MJAC, JEC and from the parishes of Jerez, Villanueva de la Serena y Monesterio. There was a significant representation from the areas in which people are working today with the young in our local Church. We also participated by contributing our experience of coordinated action carried out, for several years, among the Christian schools of Badajoz and described as "Giving colour to life here in Badajoz", as well as the exhibition "Going down South" carried out by the JEC.

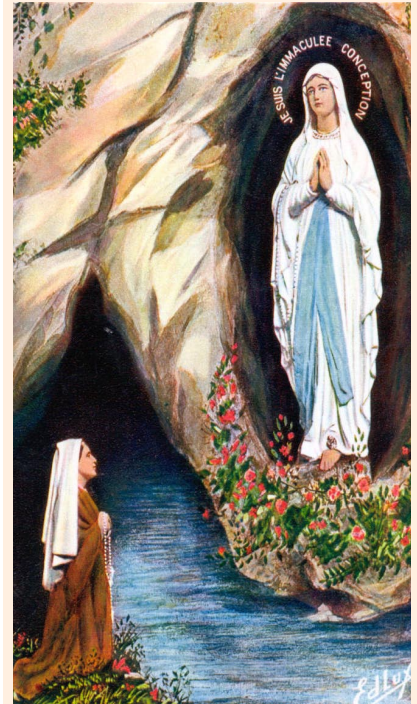
Carrying with them their own dreams, two thousand participants came from all corners of Spain to the Forum in Madrid.

From the experience of the Forum we can say that it is possible to regard with hope the action of the Church in the world of the young people, as long as it is carried out through communion. The preparation and the attendance at the Forum provided, for all those who participated from the Archdiocese, a great experience of Church and encouragement to network. From this experience we can say that it is possible to look with hope on the pastoral action in the world of youth if it is carried out through communion.



## Imaculate

### The Virgin of Lourdes



Full of grace", are you, Mary, which, welcoming with your "yes" to the Creator's plan, opened to us the path of salvation. Teach us also at your school to say our "yes" to the Lord's will. Let it be a "yes" that joins with your own "yes", without reservations or shadows, a "yes" that the Heavenly Father willed to have need of in order to beget the new Man, Christ, the one Saviour of the world and of history.

Give us the courage to say "no" to the deceptions of power, money, pleasure; to dishonest earnings, corruption and hypocrisy, to selfishness and violence; "no" to the Evil One, the deceitful prince of this world; to say "yes" to Christ, who destroys the power of evil with the omnipotence of love. We know that only hearts converted to Love, which is God, can build a better future for all.

Pope Benedict XVI  
December 8th, 2009

