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Marist Province of *Brasil Centro-Sul*

Provincial Chapter

The Province of «Central-South Brazil» held its provincial chapter on 5 and 6 December 2008, at Curitiba, PR, in the locations of the PUC and of the Marist Centre Marcellin Champagnat (CMMC). The opening took place in the CMMC, with the approval of the order of the day and the constitution of the central commission. The capitulants numbered 37 : 35 elected delegates (26 perpetually professed and 9 temporary) and two delegates by right. Br. Antonio Ramalho, Counsellor General, came especially from Rome to express the support of the Br Superior General and his Council.



transfer of authority was made concrete by the handing over to Br. Davide, by Br. Tercílio, of an icon of the Holy Family which he had received himself at the beginning of his first term in 2002. The Eucharistic celebration was followed by a festive meal in one of the restaurants of the PUC, in which the brothers and some invited lay people took part.

At 10h30 the festal Mass began in the chapel of the university parish of the PUC, to mark the transfer of power to Br. Davide Pedri, the new Provincial. Those who took part in the Eucharist were the brother capitulants, other brothers invited, and numerous lay collaborators. The celebrants were Mgr João Carlos Seneme, auxiliary bishop ; Mgr Pedro Fedalto, bishop emeritus, and the Marist Fathers José Roberto and José María. At the time of the homily, Brs. Tercílio Sevegnani and Davide Pedri said a few words. The act of

From the afternoon of 5 December and for the whole day of the 6th, the activities of the provincial chapter followed their usual course in the premises of the CMMC, with the evaluation of the report for the three years 2006-2008 and the election of the new provincial council. The members are the following : Brs. Délcio Afonso Balestrin, Antônio Benedito de Oliveira, Adriano Brollo, Joaquim Spe-randio, Jorge Gaio y Dario Bortolini. NM

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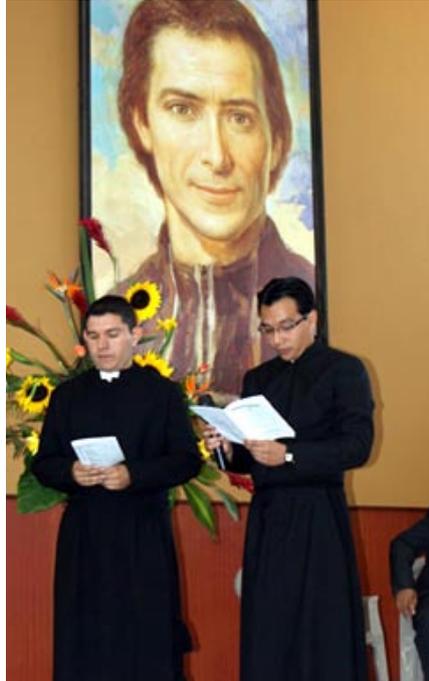
Marist Brother's Institute
 General House - Rome

Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ

Guatemala

Good news came to the Marist Brothers of Central America on November 30, the first Sunday of Advent, in the form of the perpetual profession of two Brothers: Juan Carlos Bolaños Viscarra, twenty-nine years of age, from El Salvador, and Omar Alfredo Peñas Jacobo, twenty-seven years old, from Guatemala.

Good news for the Marist Brothers and for the Church, because the two Brothers have wished to make clear in their lives that neither any thing nor any person can separate them from the love of God. The love has been seen in their manner of living, in their families, in the testimony of many Brothers and in the initial formation program which they have followed. The love of God was manifested as well in the life of Brother Alberto Olano who, having been a com-



panion of the two Brothers during their formation, was murdered in Guatemala a year and a half ago, his memory keenly felt on the profession day.

Good news as well, conveyed through the celebration, the brotherly encounter, the joyful and simple witness in Marist Brothers' fashion. The celebration took place in Guatemala City at the chapel of the Marist Brothers' School. Many Province Brothers attended, along with the Marist Champagnat Sisters, family, friends, students and colleagues engaged with the Marist Brother apostolates in Guatemala.

The definitive « yes » given by Brothers Juan Carlos and Omar both stimulates and energizes the Marist presence in Central America. 

First Religious Profession

North Central Brazil Marist Province

Vocation supposes: choice, consecration and call. If one is chosen, drawn from among people, it is not for some personal benefit or privilege; election is accorded for the service of the Kingdom, for which one should spend one's life.

On the 8th of December 2008, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the Marist novitiate of Our Lady of the Assumption, at Maranguape, Ceará (« Central North Brazil »), rejoiced in the Yes given by the young brothers José Rogério da Silva, Maicon Donizete Andrade Silva, Márcio Henrique Ferreira da Costa, René Ramon Ferreira et Rogério de Medeiros Silva, on the occasion of their first religious profession in the Institute of the Marist Brothers. Following Mary's exam-

ple, they said: « Let it be done to me according to Your will », and placed their lives in God's hands, thus allowing the Lord to carry on his work.

Through the profession of the evangelical counsels, religious life is a stable way of life which merits our confidence. We follow Christ more closely, under the action of the Holy Spirit, consecrating ourselves totally to God for the service of others. By the religious vows, these young men have professed the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and,



by the charity to which these lead, they have united themselves in a special way to the Church and its ministry.

After the celebration, the feast continued in the novitiate community, with the presence of many brothers. 

"Senderos" Program

San Lorenzo de El Escorial

The program entitled «Senderos» which was held in San Lorenzo Escorial at the Marist Center of Spirituality, came to an end a few days before Christmas in an atmosphere of fraternity, joy and hope for the future. At the Center, the course concluded in excellent fashion just prior to the changes that will be made to the site in the course of the year 2009. Let's leave it to the participants themselves to say briefly «what they hold in their hearts» at the end of their five month experience.



« I thank God and I thank my confreres for this period of grace at Escorial. A time that has abounded in the spirit of brotherhood, providing the chance better to know one another and oneself, offering the opportunity to savor the joy of being brothers . . . » (Br. Baltazar Muro)

« I thank God, our Institute, the Brothers and other people who have made this course possible. It was a wonderful occasion to grow as a person, as a Christian and as a religious. Prayer, reflection, fraternal life, service, study, rest and all the other experiences have assisted me in my personal journey, one which has not been free of mistakes or difficulties. May Mary and Marcellin continue to support our wish to work together in building the Kingdom of God.» (Br. Rosendo Corona)

« This time has helped to make me more conscious of the ways in which God has been present in my personal history. The program has strengthened the perception of how brother-hood is one of the elements of my proper identity. The course broadened my perceptions of the mediations through which the charism may grow. And so . . . I sense an invitation to contribute my energy to the energy of all those who draw the meaning of their lives from the Kingdom. On the other hand, I feel a greater appreciation of brotherhood, as I reflect upon the people who made the experience possible by their willingness to

direct such a solid program and make it a really vibrant experience. An example: those who, almost without willing it, had to take upon their shoulders the duties of someone obliged to be absent.» (Br. Cruz Alberdi)

« From the moment I got here, overwhelmed by my busy life, I felt a calming effect which eventuated in a sense of both peace and joy. I accomplished more than I had expected in living out the varied aspects of my human life. I felt the present-day value of the charism and a new desire to live my celibacy more freely. I have discovered a greater sense of Jesus' nearness, and a greater confidence in Mary» (Br. Arturo Buet)

« God loves me. He is faithful. He is patient towards me, awaiting me with open arms. He invites me to continue along the way, to continue to become simple in the everyday circumstances of my life. To be his presence in the midst of the people with whom I come in contact, primarily the poorest children and young people. To be one who sows seeds of enthusiasm and hope. To engender life. To be a good Marist Brothers like so many others who have been an example to me.» (F. Adolfo Cermeño)

« For me the experience has been life-giving and restorative. It has helped me become more reflective about my

life, my faith experience, my experience as a religious, about compassion and about service to others. I thank the Lord for having given me this occasion, and I ask to be granted the grace by which he may become LIFE in my life, so that it may in turn become a life-giving stimulus among my confreres.» (Br. Javier Cotorro)

« The sense of community that we developed was a very positive element in being able to accomplish the course objectives. We got to see the Marist places, and I liked the in-depth study of Marcellin's letters. The perspectives on religious life which were offered by Pepa Torres struck me as especially good. Also very interesting, the solidarity experience. In the course of the week dedicated to vitality, I enjoyed learning about the contemporary situation in our Marist Provinces, situations which I could not have imagined. They made me feel optimistic.» (Br. Victoriano Hermandado)

« My initial worries dissipated. Yet the graces received have become demands, invitations, appeals to make commitments, to change, to be more consistent. I look forward to the way in which the questions which have arisen will bring their practicable responses, not remaining mere pipe dreams.» (Br. Josep Castillo)

Retreat on Water from the Rock

Marist Province of Cruz del Sur

For four days during the last week of December, twenty-five Brothers of Province Cruz del Sur Province reflected, prayed and deepened our Marist Spirituality. It was the time of our annual retreat. Though necessarily a short period of time, the retreat was experienced in quite an intense way, based as it was upon WATER FROM THE ROCK, the new document that deals with our spirituality.

Wisely planned and presented by the retreat director, the four days unfolded in a dynamic manner. The director's enthusiasm, evident in both word and action, made us conscious that certain valuable ideas that he wished to share with us went beyond the inevitable limitations of "Portuñal" (mixture of Portuguese and Spanish).

The retreat was held amidst the beautiful mountains of Córdoba (Argentina), in the town of Alta Gracia, a very significant name for the Argentinians.

Thirty-nine to ninety-one years of age, the Brothers making the retreat came from fourteen communities, representing not only the wide range of ages but a vast amount of experience as well. And all of us, young and old, recognized that the retreat was a very special and spiritual grace for us.

We had the chance to make the retreat during the liturgical time of the Christmas Octave during which we celebrated the Feast of the Holy Family. This feast was an excellent and timely reminder to our minds and our hearts of an important pillar of our



Marcellinian spirituality and our community life: family spirit.

Over the four days, we quite explicitly reflected and prayed over each of the document's four chapters. In addition, we were given very precise and significant information regarding the evolution of the versions which eventually led to the final text.



Retreat and Provincial Assembly

Marist Province Central-South Brazil

The 2nd provincial retreat was held at Floiranoópolis, SC, at the « Recanto Champagnat », from the 14 to the 20 December 2008, with 49 brothers taking part. The central theme was our spirituality (Water from the Rock). The meditations and reflections were directed by a team of brothers of the Province. At the end of the retreat 20 brothers renewed their temporary vows. Three other brothers in temporary vows will renew their vows at the end of January in Davao (Philippines), seeing that they form part of the ad Gentes project.

Once the retreat was finished, the Provincial Assembly was held in the same place on the 21 and 22 December 2008. 91 brothers and 32 Marist lay collaborators took part. It was the first time that a provincial Assembly was held with lay people taking an active part in the sessions, both in the plenary and in working in groups. There were lay people

represented on the Provincial Sectors on Religious Life and on the Laity, on the Pastoral, Social Assistance, Economy, Communication, and Image of the Institution, as well as representatives of the MChFM, of the affiliates, and of the Publishing House FTD.

In the course of the Assembly were presented the reports of the « Mantenedoras » (those juridically responsible for the establishments). The participants made suggestions to the Provincial Council for the next three years, giving priority to the contributions in the Sectors of Religious Life and the Laity. During the Mass of closure, homage was paid to the 15 brothers who, in 2008, celebrated their jubilees of consecrated life : one with 70 years of religious life, five with 65 years, four with 60 years, one with 55 years, and four with 50 years, respectively.

