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Updates

26/02/2009: In the school setting Board of Education of Quebec City

25/02/2009: Australia - Marist Bushfire Assistance Fund

24/02/2009: Forum - Expectations for the General Chapter

24/02/2009: Philippines - Brother Juan Castro's experience - Mission ad Gentes

24/02/2009: Marist life experience - Héctor Gerardo Flores Mancera (Prov. México Central)

24/02/2009: Worldwide presence - Photo gallery number 211

23/02/2009: Deceased Brother: Luis Puebla Centeno (Ibérica)

20/02/2009: World Social Justice Day

20/02/2009: Sixth Meeting of the Preparatory Commission of the General Chapter

19/02/2009: Meeting on Mission and management will take place in Guatemala

18/02/2009: Brazil - The Marist World Social Forum

17/02/2009: "15 days of prayer with Henri Vergès"

16/02/2009: Mozambique - First profession of the Sisters of Calvary and the novices in Matola

Sixth Meeting of the Preparatory Commission of the General Chapter

Infrastructures for the Celebration of the Chapter



The Preparatory Commission for the Chapter met in Rome from February 9-14, 2009 to settle some key points of a tight agenda. This meeting of the Commission is the continuation of the one held from November 28 to December 3, 2008 in which they detailed the "Orientations for Reflection Prior to the XXI General Chapter". This text, which gathers together a synthesis of the contributions from the Brothers and of other people received by the Commission, has been distributed to the whole Institute for its study during the second week of February. This text can be found on the web in three formats (Word, PDF A3 and PDF A4).

The two principles themes on the agenda during the meeting in February have been the support that the Commission has had to offer to the Brothers in the second phase of preparation and the proper fulfillment of the Chapter. The second phase of preparation already has started with the

publication on the web page of the document: "Orientations for Reflection Prior to the XXI Chapter". This document is a guide for stir dialogue and the interchange of ideas about the most sensible themes that the Preparatory Commission has gathered during the previous sondage. The methodology planned for this step sees the possibility of the chapter Delegates getting to know each other as Brothers, laypersons and youth with the purpose of listening to each other and getting to know the Marist reality. In this way they will be able to echo the thoughts of their Province or Region in order to make them resonate in the Chapter Hall.

The second theme has been the reflection over this particular General Chapter, its dynamic and the procedures to be put in place. The Commission tried to anticipate or foresee some of the preparation needed for the first days of the meeting, until the Chapter elects the Central Com- ➔

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mission that will be in charge of directing the work of the assembly. These proposals and the date of the closing will be briefly presented to the capitulants so that they can make known their opinions. In order to do this, information services and the web page dedicated to the General Chapter will be used. Also, the use of the web site is seen as a way to organize forums for discussion, space for mutual knowledge by the capitulants, the interchange of materials for reflection and animation, etc.

This meeting of the Preparatory Commission also had the foresight to

make some practical decisions which had to be resolved relative to the infrastructure of the General House. They had to organize space, structures and services which will have to be put at the disposal of the capitulants. During the past months these needs have been studied, proposals have been made and soon some work will be initiated. The lighting system and the sound system of the Chapel will be improved. The Chapter Hall, in use since the 1967 Chapter, is going through an important remodeling. Existing stairs will be eliminated in order to create one flat surface. We hope to accommodate it, not only for the requirements of the Chapter, but

we have also thought about making it possible to use it for other purposes after the Chapter. Spaces for meetings, gatherings and receptions have also been studied. In the pavilion of the old International College new furniture and household goods are ready, rooms are being fixed and renovated with an artistic touch. The calendar is running and everything has to be ready for the beginning of September.

The members of the Commission will return for a meeting in Rome from May 31 to June 5, 2009 to continue organizing all that needs to be done for the Chapter Sessions.



Meeting on Mission and management will take place in Guatemala

Preparations advance

General House

From January 27-29, 2009, a smaller number of experts was reunited in Rome to prepare for the meeting on Mission and management which will take place in Guatemala from April 10 to 15, 2009. This team of experts, under the coordination of Brother Juan Miguel Anaya, Secretary of the Commission on Mission, together with Maureen Cleary (Australia), Manuel Portero (Spain) and Fernando de Barros Barreto (Brazil), has set some norms in order to organize this meeting in Guatemala.

This Guatemala meeting has as its purpose the continuation of what took place in Campinas, Brazil from November 16-18 of

2006, in which all of the Provinces of America and four of Europe, developed the theme "The study and proposed models of manage-

ment for the assembled Marist Educational Institutions of one (a) Province". After the meeting in Campinas, the Mission Commission of the General Council named a sub-commission, composed of Brothers: Juan Miguel Anaya (Rome), Wellington Medeiros (Brazil Centro-Norte), Michael Green (Australia), Juan Ignacio Poyatos (Mediterranea), Luis C. Gutierrez (Central America), and Carlos A. Huidobro (Cruz del Sur), to prepare the convocation of a second meeting on the theme, possibly in the first months of 2009, in such a way that they could make contributions at the XXI General Chapter, if they considered it advantageous to participate in the meeting.



Letters of Marist missionaries in Oceania 1836-1854

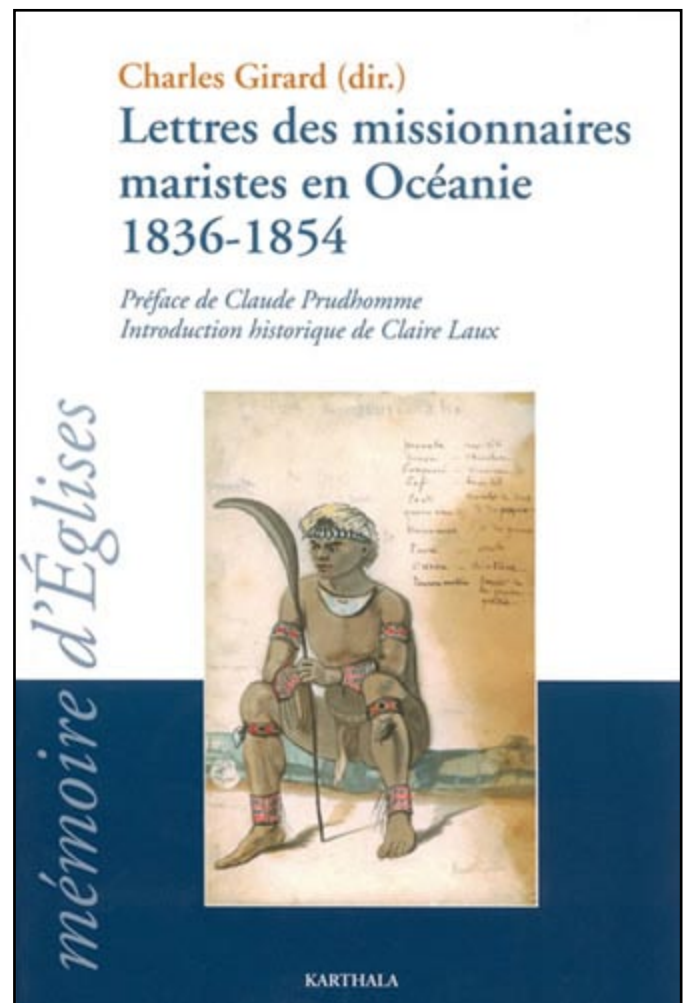
A work which casts light on the history of our origins and the history of Oceania

The Marist Fathers have just published this book which we have presented, in November 2008. The work in question is a volume of 750 pages which brings together some of the most significant letters of the Marist missionaries (sm) to their General Administration, during the mandate of Fr. Jean Claude Colin. They are presented in the original language, French. So it is a matter of an anthology which precedes the complete publication of all the letters sent by the Marist missionaries from Oceania and preserved in the Archives of the Society of Mary. This complete edition foresees 10 volumes, of about 8 thousand pages, with the integral edition of 1,365 letters, and will be available from March 2009.

Fr. Charles Girard sm has been responsible for the overall work. As he himself points out in the presentation, various criteria of selection were employed for this anthology : a variety of subjects (ethnography, geography, politics, missions and religion) ; a classification by place of origin (the diverse island groups which make up Oceania) ; a chronological sequence ; and a diversity of authors (relatives, brothers, missionaries, natives, etc.). This work will help in getting rid of the stereotypes about the inhabitants of Oceania, as well as the caricatures of missionaries who went to meet them carrying the good news of the Gospel. Having been brought into contact with the original document, the reader is allowed to form « his own idea of the life of this well defined group in contact with other groups that it, in its turn, will attempt to define ».

For his part, Br. André Lanfrey, commenting on this work, points out « that it is proper to underline the importance of this double publication for all Marists. It illustrates powerfully, on the one hand, the history of our origins, since Champagnat and Colin sent Fathers and Brothers to Oceania in common accord, and, on the other hand, the history of Oceania ».

The present Superior General of the Society of Mary, Fr Jan Hulshof sm, in presenting this work, states: « In opening its archives and presenting this edition, the Society of Mary wishes to offer some first hand sources. The historian, the ethnologist, and each reader,



whether it be in Oceania, Europe, or elsewhere, will find material for research which will allow him or her to understand the sense of mission which animated these men departing for the other end of the world, as well as the realities which they found. In this way, the work will attain its objective if it permits the progress of dialogue between cultures and civilisations ».

A copy of the anthology has been sent to the French-, Spanish-, and Portugese-speaking Provinces. (the same will be done for the English-speaking Provinces when the version in that language is available). Other copies are available for communities or for houses of formation.

Guidelines for reflection prior to the XXI General Chapter

A document which brings together the voices of the Marist world

During the second week of February 2009, the second document proposed by the General Chapter Preparatory Commission to realize a collective preparation for this upcoming Institutional event was made available to the Marist world. Its subject is the "Guidelines for reflection prior to the XXI General Chapter" which is a collection of the contributions sent to the Preparatory Commission from throughout the Marist world. On these pages the writings from nearly 6,000 people who have welcomed the invitation to participate in the process of discernment have been synthesized. Among this group are 2,500 brothers, 2,100 laymen and women, 550 people who work in Marist organizations and 820 young people. These numbers demonstrate the interest aroused by the next General Chapter on everyone's part. The collection of documents which have arrived from

each province, which are the results of a local synthesis, represent a report of almost 400 pages.

The document "Guidelines for reflection prior to the XXI General Chapter," together with the circular of Brother Seán, "New Hearts for a New World" and the "Report from the General Council to the Chapter," is one of the three documents proposed as instruments of reflection for the second preparatory phase prior to the Chapter.

The first part of the present document contains a synthesis of the answers given by the Marist world in the Initial Consultation of May 2008. The second part offers suggestions for deepening reflection and initiating dialog from the ideas that appear in the synthesis. The third part presents a plan of action for the development of the second phase, which will last from February 2009 until

the beginning of the General Chapter.

The initial consultation invited participation in reflection through a process of group discernment and synthesis on the province level. In the second phase we have the Brother Capitulants who have a specific duty: to listen to everyone in the name of the Institute. To accomplish this process each province will freely organize itself, in agreement with the regional coordinator, who is a member of the Preparatory Commission.

With the publication of the results of the initial consultation and the election of the Chapter delegates, the whole Institute has entered into the dynamic of the General Chapter.

You can download the text at the site of the XXI General Chapter:

<http://21.champagnat.org>



Forum: Expectations for the Chapter

Give your opinion at <http://21.champagnat.org>

The General Chapter of the Marist Brothers is an Assembly, representative of the whole Institute, which takes place every eight years. It is an expression of the participation of all the Brothers in the life and mission of the Institute, and their co-responsibility in it's government. The Chapter elects the Superior General and other members of the Council, and concerns itself with the renewal and adaptation of the Institute.

The Chapter is an important spiritual journey for every Marist Brother and it can be so for friends and colleagues willing to accompany us. It becomes a pilgrimage in faith, reflecting and praying together. Listening and discerning hearts are so important when we are bombarded and alienated by so much in many of our modern societies. These days, advanced means of communication will enable us to follow more closely what is actually happening at the Chapter in Rome and provide extra stimulus for our reflections and prayers.

What are your expectations for the Chapter, which begins this September?

