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Marist Brothers - General House - Rome

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Administration and management of Marist brothers' educational works

Meeting on Mission and management in Guatemala



The meeting that had been announced on February, and treated the topic, « Management at the Service of Mission Now and in the Future,» drew to a close recently (March 11th to 19th). Held in Guatemala at the Provincial House of the Central American Province, the meeting addressed the same theme that had been treated earlier (November 2006) in Campinas, Brazil. At the Guatemala meeting, all the Provinces of the Americas took part along with four Provinces of Europe. The subject matter was, "Studies and Proposals regarding Management Models for all Educational Works of a Single Province."

The participants numbered seventy-five and represented nineteen Administrative Units of Africa, the Americas, Europe and Oceania. The group comprised fifty-nine Brothers and sixteen lay people. Representing the General Council were Brothers Pedro Herreros and Emili Turú.

The goals of the meeting were the following:

- To analyze the management models presently used by our Administrative Units

for the generality of educational works found in each of the Units. From the analysis, to consider which of the models each Province or District might use as the model that suits the Province/District best: "suits best" in view of greater vitality, dynamism, and creative sustainability in carrying out an efficacious mission.

- If judged opportune, to offer to the upcoming General Chapter a proposal about changing our proper law, in order to adapt it to the contemporary realities in which we attempting best to carry out the mission of the Institute.

The first three days were dedicated to the first goal, while the last day was given over to discussing the second goal.

Those at the meeting could see clearly that a significant path has been traveled since the Campinas meeting, both in regard to (a) researching the models best adapted to the ways in which our present-day educational works are administered and (b) identifying the most efficacious means of implementing such successful forms of administration. Fully aware that no universally paradigm exists, 

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the delegates from the Administrative Unites were able, nonetheless, to hear each other out, to get a good grasp on the real situation of each Unit, and to work at determining the administrative model that best suits each one.

The meeting wrapped up with a list of

proposals re: changes in our Statutes. The proposals will be sent to the Preparatory Commission of the XXI General Chapter.

A very hearty "Thank you" goes out to the committee that prepared the meeting: Brothers Juan Miguel Anaya

(Rome), Wellington Medeiros (Brazil Centro-Norte), Michael Green (Sydney), Juan Ignacio Poyatos (Mediterranea) and Carlos A. Huidobro (Cruz del Sur). A similar "Thank you" is extended to the Central America Province which offered such a wonderful welcome to the participants.



Marcellin is present

Ten years after the canonization - April 18th, 1999

Yes, already! And all those who were on St. Peter's Square, April 18, 1999, can say: "It was like yesterday, the great celebration, the tremendous explosion of joy, the pride of being a Marist! We all suddenly became young again and full of dreams."

The approach of the canonization of our Founder, Saint Marcellin Champagnat had the Marist world bubbling with excitement. Brother Benito Arbués, Superior General, sent the brothers and Marist laity two circulars back to back: The Canonization Approaches, October 24, 1998 and A Letter before the Canonization, April 7, 1999.



Then articles began to multiply in our magazines, a new portrait of Marcellin, the young Founder, began to circulate, then some images and icons, a few of which appeared on t-shirts much to the joy of the young Marists. Very quickly, the portrait of the young Marcellin took on an aura of joyous youth, for Marcellin became more meaningful to young people. Once again books about Saint Marcellin appeared: A Heart that Knew No Bounds, by Brother Seán Sammon, and the one with the same title in Spanish by Alberto Arrieta Garcia, then again Marcellin Champagnat, A Heart without bounds, by Brother Edouard Blondeel. From Rome came A Man for Our Times, and

Five Minutes with Marcellin. Robert Masson, on his part, offered us: The Unlikely Ones of God: a major work with a new and profound look at our Founder. The writings of former Superior Generals were revisited: The Founder Challenges His Brothers by Brother Charles Howard and The Calls of the Founder by Brother Basilio Rueda. Three issues of FMS Message, numbers 26, 27, 28, gave up to date information on the event. We were newly inspired by our Founder.

A reflection on the time said: "As the canonization approached there was feverish activity in the Institute. It showed how many brothers are attached to Marcellin, how he is

present in their hearts, discretely perhaps, but strongly: admired, looked upon as a model, and loved as a father. If there's someone of whom we are proud and who we can hold up to the whole world as a model of humanity and sanctity, it's our Founder, Marcellin Champagnat." (Five Minutes with Marcellin Champagnat, p. 11). Marcellin is a saint, so current, so close; he's kept all his youth and his strength and his attractiveness.

Yes. A great joy ran through the thoroughfares of the life, prayer and activity of the Marist world.

Br. Giovanni Bigotto



Session on Water from the Rock

Pakistan

Pakistan! The country which seems to be quite dangerous for the International world, a place of extremists and terrorists, the country which seems to be quite unsafe for those for whom life is very dear, but heaven for those who are daring, for those ready to find God in the unrest and challenges of each day.



We have just spent a few days with a Water from the Rock facilitator, Br. Teofilo Minga, who took a very brave step to come to Pakistan, when there is so much of tension and unrest in the whole country. We the Brothers in Pakistan appreciate, from the core of our hearts, his coming to give us his reflections on the very important document, Water from the Rock.

We feel grateful to Br. Sunanda Alwais, for making arrangements, and feel very happy and privileged to have the right person to talk about the book. We wish to extend our thanks to the Religious Life Commission, especially Br. Peter Rodney for making the facilitator available for Pakistan.

Although many of us had read the book, had even a retreat on it, listening to the facilitator was excellent for each one of us. The Brothers had the following to say:

Br. Remigious felt that he had not taken this important book seriously

enough. He felt that this document needed to be read over and over for deeper insights and make it alive in his life. He is determined to do something about it. It is an opening for him to go deeper into the document since he has really understood well what Marist Spirituality is all about.

The presentations were excellent, with very good material, pictures and so forth, but they will remain just pictures and just material, unless it is really put into practice. The time with the facilitator has opened Br. Noel Forsaka to new vistas. He feels that the document needs to be lived, and incorporated into our personal and community prayers.

It has been an experience of finding God through these presentations, in the stories shared by the facilitator, in the presence and sharings of each Brother, in the midst of the turmoil's of the country.

Paul S. Bhatti, FMS
13th & 14th March, 2009.



What does dialogue with the modern world mean

International Union of Superiors General - Rome

On Monday, March 2nd, Brother Seán Sammon was invited to give a presentation to a gathering of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG); his topic: Consecrated life: today and tomorrow. This group, which meets on the first Monday of every month, had invited Sean over a year ago to be with them for this event. More than 100 were in attendance.

The program consisted of two presentations, some group discussion, and an open forum for questions.

Several areas were covered in the presentation: a brief history of renewal since Vatican II, with attention paid to the fact that the modern world that the Council anticipated had ceased to exist within five years of the close of that historic meeting. Student demonstrations in Europe, North America, and other parts of the world, the sexual revolution, Humanae Vitae, the independence movement that swept across Africa, the birth and rapid expansion of information technology, etc. brought into existence a world that the Council did not and could not have anticipated.

This question was posed: what does dialogue with the modern world mean within this new context? Issues such as modernity and post-modernity were discussed in light of the work of renewal that faces us today. Other topics included charism and leadership, understanding the evangelical counsels in a new way, and the need for the virtue of hope as we move into the future.

This presentation was part of a year-long series offered by the USIG to its members. The group invited Sean for a follow-up session that may take place later this year.



Bringing Dreams to Life

The Expanded Secretariat for the Laity holds meeting in Central America

The Expanded Secretariat for the Laity, consisting of Tony Clark (Sydney), Linda Corbeil (Canada) and Ana Sarrate (Ibérica), and Brothers Afonso Murad (Brasil Centro Norte) and Pau Fornells (Director of the Secretariat), held their annual meeting at which they planned all the activities for the rest of the year. This year the meeting took place the first week of March in Guatemala.

During our stay in this beautiful country, we had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the lay people of the province. It was an exchange of experiences, concerns and hopes, and was very helpful to all involved as we, laity and Brothers, continue our journey together. We were impressed by the quality of the formation processes that have blossomed in different areas of the province and by the involvement of the lay men and women in their development: well-structured processes with a view to the future, and a creative and committed Marist laity who closely identify with the charism.

As the Expanded Secretariat for the Laity, we evaluated what has happened during the past year and the challenges that lie ahead. We realize the breadth of our objectives, but we also see that, little by little, many of the projects we dreamed of are being implemented.

We especially value the experiences of joint formation and vitality of the charism held in July 2008 in Quito, in January 2009 in Chosica and the one scheduled for May of this year in France for the Anglo-French provinces, and which is now in the final stages of preparation. In addition, there is the workshop on Spirituality and Marist Laity that will be held for all of Marist Africa in Nairobi (Kenya), jointly with the Secretariat for Religious Life. We have a sense that these experiences have become new and vital steps along the

path of recreating our Marist charism; such is the opinion of the Brothers and lay men and women who have participated in them. After the international event at St. Paul Trois-Châteaux, there will be a full evaluation of the experiences, in order to determine some common threads.

We've also collaborated with the editorial committee working on the document "The Vocation of the Lay Marist", by our contributions and suggestions regarding its distribution. This is one of our next goals: to set the stage for the document's being welcomed and reflected on throughout the Institute.

In addition, the General Council has asked us to think about and offer proposals on the subject of ways for our Marist laity's association with or belonging to the Institute. This topic has led to many hours of study and dialogue. So far, there has been little reflection in the Institute on this subject, despite the interest among both Brothers and laity and its prime importance for the future vitality of the charism. We decided to develop a consultation on it, together with the Procurator General's office, and present the results to the next General Chapter.

There will also be, for the first time, collaboration in the animation of some province retreats, based on the theme "A Church of Communion/Brothers and Lay Marists Journeying Together".

In summary, our most important objectives for 2009-2010 will be:

- to suggest methods for Institute-wide reflection on the new document on Marist laity,
- to support and implement joint formation experiences on provincial and regional levels,
- to gather materials and resources for retreats and meetings on the



collaborative efforts of Brothers and laity,

- to maintain regular contact with lay Marist activities and to keep people informed of them,
- to give attention to the needs and ways of expressing the CMMF,
- to set in motion the contact network of the laity for the provinces,
- and to reflect on the forms of association and belonging of Marist laity to the Institute or the charism.

In addition to the work accomplished during our stay, we enjoyed some leisure time visiting the city of Guatemala, learning its history in Antigua, and the daily rhythm of life in the streets and markets.

Some of the experiences that left a lasting impression were getting to know some of the Marist ministries in the province.

The five of us who comprise this Secretariat feel we form a small community that not only shares the work, but also our lives, concerns and hopes. The language difference is not an obstacle to our feeling this unity (although we are very grateful for the work of the translators at the meetings) and we offer inspiration to one another with accounts of what is happening in our various provinces or regions. Marcellin's dream is very much alive in our family, and Our Good Mother continues to do everything for us.

Ana Sarrate Adot

