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Updates

08/04/2009: The World Appeal to a New Mobilization for Childhood

08/04/2009: Ten years on from the Canonization (IV)

07/04/2009: Korea Sector of the East Asia Province

07/04/2009: Prayer services for the Tenth Anniversary of Canonization of Marcellin

07/04/2009: Deceased Brothers: Maximiliano Boada Carazo (Mediterránea); Nery Eduardo Ernst (Cruz del Sur), Jacinto Cueva Franco (Ibérica)

07/04/2009: Ten years on from the Canonization (III)

06/04/2009: Brazil - Meeting of the animators of the preparation process of preparation for the XXIst General Chapter

03/04/2009: Marist blog: Walking the road together, Brothers and Lay Marists, in confidence! Balance-sheet of the annual meeting of the Extended Bureau of the Laity (Br. Pau Fornells)

03/04/2009: New Marist link: Marist Korea (Korea)

03/04/2009: The General Council invites 2 brothers and 10 laypeople to the Chapter

02/04/2009: Report of the General Council to the XXI General Chapter

The General Council invites 2 brothers and 10 laypeople to the Chapter

The Brother Superior General and his Council may invite various people to the Chapter, their number not exceeding 15% of the total number of Brother capitulants. In dialogue with the Preparatory Commission, the Brother Superior General and his Council will define the nature and time period of the participation of the persons invited. The right to vote in Chapter decisions remains reserved to capitulants (Statutes of the General Chapter, 12).

The General Council, during its last plenary session, made the decision to invite 12 people to the XXI General Chapter: 2 brothers y 10 laypeople, in accordance with the authority given to it by the Statutes of the General Chapter.

Two brothers have been invited due to their current function in the Institute: Br. Víctor Preciado (Econome General) and Br. Michael de Waas (Superior of the Ad Gentes sector in Asia). The brothers have been invited for the entire period of the General Chapter.

The 10 laypeople have been invited for a period of two weeks (beginning on the 8th of September), so that among themselves, they can respond to the following objectives:

- * To study in depth, together with the Brother capitulants, the major areas in which the laypeople are most implicated, especially Mission and Laity.
- * To help the members of the XXI General Chapter to continue addressing the themes that were proposed in the last General Chapter and in whose completion the laypeople have been greatly involved: the document on the formation of the Marist laity, the joint formation of brothers and



laity; the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family...

* To contribute to the reflection and the experience of the Marist International Mission Assembly from the perspective of the laity, and to study in depth, together with the Brother capitulants, the lines of action proposed in the final phase of the assembly in Mendes 2007.

* To listen to laypeople who are representatives of significant groups in the Institute, at the same time expressing the diversity that exists among them.

In the selection of the laypeople the Council has taken into account, besides the above-mentioned objectives, the criterion of proportional representation, similar to what was used for the election of the Brother delegates to the Chapter.

The invited laypeople are: Ms. Agnes Reyes (Philippines), Ms. Angela Sestrini (L'Hermitage), Mr. Arturo Morales (Mediterránea), Mr. Chema Pérez Soba (Ibérica), Ms. Dilma Alves (Brasil Centro-Norte), Ms. Erica Pegorer (Melbourne), Mr. Fernando Larrambeberé (Cruz del Sur), Ms. Irma Zamarripa (México Occidental), Ms. Linda Corbeil (Canada), Mr. Rufus Chimezie Ozoh (Nigeria).



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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

web: www.champagnat.org

Edit:

Marist Brother's Institute
General House - Rome

Institute's new General Secretary

General House

Dear Brothers, please join me in welcoming Brother John Klein, FMS, who serves presently as Provincial of the Province of the United States, as the Institute's new General Secretary effective March 2010. The members of the General Council and I are grateful to John for his willingness to take on this new responsibility and know that his presence and expertise will be a blessing for the administration that begins its mandate later this year.

John brings to the work a strong academic background and long history of creative and effective leadership in the area of administration as well as a love of our way of life and mission. As mentioned just above, he serves currently as the Provincial of the Province of the United States and was for six years previously the Provincial of the former Province of Esopus. Under his leadership challenging programs of strategic planning were undertaken resulting in new administrative structures as well as novel and realistic approaches to age old administrative tasks.

Prior to his work in Province administration, John served as president and chief administrator of schools in the Province of Esopus. The populations served by each of these institutions varied and in each instance John was able to adapt himself and the school's programs to meet the needs of the young people who made up the student population of each institution. At the same time he worked effectively with staff encouraging new thinking and the implementation of creative ideas.

John also served as President of the Conference of Major Superiors of

Men in the US and in that capacity participated as an observer in Synods and meetings of the National Conference of Catholic bishops, and as a member in sessions of the Tri-Conference and other groups related to the Conference. He holds a doctoral degree in history from Fordham University as well as degrees in educational administration and supervision.

Perhaps most important, however, is John's zeal of our Marist mission and his commitment to the principles of our way of life. These elements have been evident not only during his years of Institute leadership but also in his life in community and apostolic efforts throughout his religious life. He will bring these gifts to his new work as well as an eye for innovative and effective organization and management of what has become in recent years a fast growing department within the General Administration. Many thanks, John, for your willingness to take on this new ministry.

As we welcome John, I also want to offer a word of thanks to Brother Jean Ronzon, who has served as General Secretary for the last several years and will continue to do so until early 2010. Jean brought to his work not only an enthusiasm and capacity for hard work but also an attention to detail, an ability to organize well, a keen interest in the heritage of our Institute.

During his tenure the department underwent a major reorganization in response to a study carried out on behalf of the General Administration, introduced a new system for cataloguing Institute archives, and



moved ahead in the use of information technology to improve communication. In each of these efforts, Jean played an important role of leadership and worked hard to ensure that all of these programs were brought to completion.

Having had the privilege of living in community with Jean over the past several years, I can attest to the fact that a spirit of brotherhood marks all that he does as well as to the quality of his Marist life and love of our charism and Marist heritage. Many thanks, Jean, for all your efforts on behalf of our Institute and mission.

May the Lord continue to bless both John and Jean and may Mary and Marcellin be their constant companions during these days and the days of transition that lie ahead.

Blessings and affection,

Brother Seán D. Sammon, FMS
Superior General
25th March 2009



Meeting of the animators of the process of preparation for the Chapter

Brazil and Southern Cone

On 27 and 28 March 2009, at the « Centro Marista Marcelino Champagnat » in Curitiba (Brazil) was held the meeting of the animators of the process of preparation for the XXIst General Chapter. Its purpose was to move forward the process of preparation and the planning of each Administrative Unit (AU) up to the holding of the General Chapter, and to prepare for the regional meetings of Brazil and the Southern Cone with the brother capitulants and those invited. These meetings will take place in Buenos Aires (Argentina), from 30 April to 3 May 2009, and in Curitiba (Brazil), from 6 to 9 May 2009.

The meeting developed in an excellent atmosphere of fraternal friendship. Those who took part were Brothers Rafael Kongfook (Santa María de Los Andes), Ignacio Pruna (District of Paraguay), Valdicer Fachi (Rio Grande do Sul), Francisco Chagas (Brasil Centro-Norte), Anacleto Peruzzo (Brasil

Centro-Sul) and João Carlos do Prado, of the Preparatory Commission for the XXIst General Chapter.

The sharing about the preparation process which is taking place in the AU was very rich. It is necessary to raise anew the great enthusiasm, the strong participation and commitment of brothers, laity and youth in the discernment proceedings proposed by the Preparatory Commission. The methods of getting people involved are very varied, for they have to respond to the characteristics and the possibilities of each of the AU. The participation of the brother capitulants has been opened and it contributes to the acquiring of a fresh view of the AU and the Institute.

The animators returned to their AU with renewed enthusiasm, conscious that the step undertaken goes beyond the frontiers of each region to include the whole Institute. The zeal shown



in preparing the regional meetings for Brazil and the Southern Cone already provides a foretaste of the spirit of discernment and openness to the Spirit which will doubtless be found again once they take place.

The participants offer sincere thanks to the brothers and laity of the « Brasil Centro-Sul » Province, and especially the « Centro Marista Marcelino Champagnat », for their warm hospitality and for their unfailing support during the meeting.



The First Profession

Korea Sector of the East Asia Province

Anthony Choi, Gabriel Son, and Stefano Kim, having concluded their Novitiate in the Korea Sector of the East Asia Province, made their First Religious Profession on 28 February, 2009, at Gamgol parish church in Ansan.

In the presence of family members, friends, neighbors, and the Brothers, they committed their lives to God as Marist Brothers for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Our Provincial, Brother Manuel De Leon received

their Vows on behalf of Brother Superior General.

We're deeply grateful to Fr. Paul Bae, parish priest, and the parishioners who prepared the floral arrangements, food, and venue; to Fr. Dennis, SVD, and Fr. Joseph, Guadalupe Missionary, friends of the Brothers, who presided at the Mass; to the Choir making the event so meaningful and joyful; and to all who were present to bless Anthony, Gabriel, and Stefano. Our special thanks to Veronica Choi for her prayerfulness

and generosity in making the Religious habits for the newly professed Brothers, and to Susana Gil for knitting the Religious cords.

We enjoyed a day filled with praise and thanksgiving for all the blessings that God has given to the Brothers of the Korea Sector and the entire Institute. May God continue to bless and inspire these newly professed Brothers to persevere in their efforts to be wonderful disciples of Champagnat and follow Christ as Mary did.



First Profession in Cuba

Interview with Brother Jesus Bayo

Recently, for the first time since the Marist Brothers returned to Cuba, a profession of first vows has taken place. In connection with the profession, we interviewed Brother Jesus Bayo who was Novice Master to Yoandy Gonzalez, the newly professed.



Marist News (hereafter MN): Brother Jesus, what significance does this first profession by a Cuban have for the Marist Brothers as religious congregation?

Brother Jesus (hereafter BJ): It means that God has offered us a gift. The gift opens us to a new sense of Church, to greater universality and to intercultural realities; to plurality and to greater diversity in our lives as Marist Brothers.

NM: Was it kind of difficult for you to be the Novice Master for a Cuban, in view of your not being from his country?

JB: I must say quite frankly that it turned out to be easy enough, because from the start Yoandy proved to be an open person who was well disposed to make a truly good novitiate. In the course of the entire process, yes, we also went through some difficult moments. Yet the issues that arose were resolved well enough. The most important element is to establish clearly the priority of "following Christ as Mary and Champagnat did. What's important for Marist Brothers is that we be brothers in Christ, and that we be available to work in any diocese in the world. Geography, space and time, culture and race: such things are incidentals in contrast to the following of Jesus Christ in whom we have become sons of the heavenly Father.

NM: What country are you from, and how did you come to be assigned to Cuba?

JB: I was born in Spain, but I have dual citizenship, Chilean and Spanish. The dual citizenship is the consequence of the twenty-eight years I spent in Chile prior to my coming to Cuba. I belong to the Province of Santa Maria de los Andes, but I was on the list of Brothers who volunteered for Mission ad Gentes. Brother Superior General asked me to come to Cuba where I arrived on February 2, 2007.

NM: Where you aware that you would be Master of Novices to Yoandy?

JB: Yoandy and Brother Efraín went to the airport to pick me up when I arrived in Cuba, but I was not aware of the novitiate assignment nor did I know anything about Yoandy's formation program. Brother Luis Garcia Sobrado had told me that I might work in Cuba as a collaborator in the formation of our novices and in a Havana-based formation center for religious. That's about all I knew. I was convinced that I would not be Novice Master. When I got to Cuba, however, things changed.

NM: Do you have any regrets about having taken on the assignment?

JB: Quite the opposite. I am grateful to God; I am grateful to the Superior General who gave me the assignment, and to Yoandy as well who made my task of being his guide quite easy.

NM: Where will Yoandy go now, so as to continue his studies and his formation?

JB: At the end of April, he'll head to Guatemala to start his scholasticate.

The move to Guatemala reflects the fact that the General Council has terminated its responsibility for the mission of FMS Cuba which has now gone over to the Central American Province.

NM: So, you are going to cease being members of the FMS Provinces to which you originally belonged?

JB: No. For the time being, we will continue to be members of our original FMS Provinces. A discernment that will take place at a later date could, however, result in our changing Provinces.

NM: Who are the Brothers presently in Cuba and what Provinces were they in, upon assignment to Cuba?

JB: At the present time, we have two communities in Cuba. One is in the city of Cienfuegos; the other is in Havana. In the Cienfuegos community are two Brothers from Mexico, Brothers Carlos Martinez and Hector Avalos, along with Brother Salvador Salinas from Central Americana. In Havana are Brothers Efraim Martin from Central America, Carlos Scotta from the Amazonia District, and Jesus Bayo from Santa Maria de los Andes. Living with the Brothers in the Cienfuegos community are two young men who are "pre-novices" in vocational discernment.

NM: Since Yoandy's profession, you no longer have any novices in Havana. What purpose will the community serve in the future?

JB: We are hoping that soon enough other novices may be coming. In addition, our community is open to other pastoral service in the context of parish and diocese. NM