



Marist News

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Marist Brothers - General House - Rome

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Updates

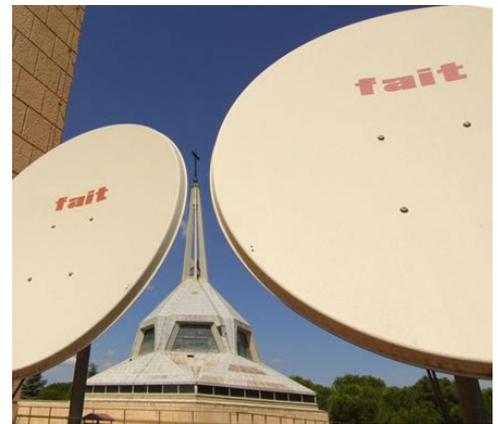
- 08/09/2009:** Photo gallery: Opening of the General Chapter
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XXI General Chapter

The service of communications during the Chapter

The information service offered by the Direction of Communications for the duration of the General Chapter will extend in various directions. First, the web page will provide a daily chronicle of what is happening in the chapter hall, with corresponding photographic accompaniment. This information will be completed by the editing and publishing of a two minute daily video reflecting the events in the life of the Chapter. The MN service, which at present is reaching our readers each Thursday, will redouble its coverage in news which will be sent every Tuesday and Friday, in principle with the same number of pages to which we are accustomed.

The web page presents, on the first page, a new entrance, which leads to the area dedicated to the Chapter, where one can read the news of the day and, in addition, a row of arrows referring to the subsections contained in this area. The contents of the chapter page have been restructured to include them in a more coherent structure, thus facilitating location. New items in-



roduced on this page are a history of the General Chapters, photographs and names of the General Councils coming from each Chapter, and a reference to the Popes in office when each Chapter was held.

During the Chapter, Brothers Felú Martín and Toni Torrelles will shoot sequences of the most significant moments in the Chapter, and put together, at the end of the Chapter sessions, a video of about 30 minutes duration giving a record of them.



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The hidden way of interior preparation

History of the General Chapters

In reading the accounts of the history of the General Chapters held in the Institute, it can be observed that in the Chapters before Vatican Council II, much importance was given to the calling of the Chapter for the election of the superiors. In contrast, in the last Chapters the priorities have changed, and the Chapter is seen and lived as a reunion of Brothers to animate the life and mission of the institute. Preparation for the 21st Chapter has been marked by this spirit of animation.

The Initial Consultation organized by the Preparatory Commission to promote a process of personal and community discernment, with the aim of orienting the spirit and procedures of the consultation, was the point of departure for a collective process of preparation for the Chapter.

The whole preparation process has been oriented by a slogan proposing the basic attitudes for attaining vital

goals: "New hearts for a new world".

A study of the contributions made by the Marist world in response to the initial consultation gave rise to a new document of reflection, entitled "Guidelines for Reflection," drawn up by the Preparatory Commission. Four main themes were proposed in this document for the brothers' reflection: 1. Identity of the Brother. 2. The Lay Marist. 3. Marist Mission. 4. Marist Spirituality. At the same time, a new dynamic was proposed to study them and share reflection.

During the last months of 2009, reflection centred on the Circular of Convocation of the Chapter, the "guidelines" issued by the Preparatory Commission and the "Report" drawn up by the General Council for presentation to the Chapter. A second phase of the reflection process on these three documents consisted of mutual listening in order to gather reactions and feelings from

the members of the administrative units of each region. A third consisted of the members of the Chapter writing to the Brothers of each region a letter identifying the problems and the priorities for action. The Preparatory Commission, in its turn, gathered all these regional letters, by means of which the Chapter will be able to feel the pulse of the Institute at world level.

In the meantime, the capitulants, from the time they were elected, have been able to maintain a close contact through the web page dedicated to the General Chapter. By means of this instrument of communication, the Preparatory Commission has sent 9 letters to the capitulants, offering them guidelines for work in common. The entire process has seen the forging of a deep sense of fraternity and communion. The celebration of the Chapter announces days of resurrection and new life for a new world.



The Committee to verify credentials

On 25 June 2009, Brother Sean Sammon, Superior General, named Brothers Juan Miguel Anaya, Nicolás García Martínez, Pedro Vilmar Ost and Patrick McNamara as members of the Committee to verify the credentials of the capitulants.

The authority of the members of the Committee is vested in Chapter Statute No. 26: "A Committee to verify the proper election of each delegate informs the capitulants of the details of the minutes of the election of the del-

egates. The Committee is composed of capitulants previously named by the Brother Superior General and his Council (cf C 137.4,8).

If these minutes show some irregularities, or if, in some way, certain procedures have made an election not quite regular, the Chapter will discuss the matter and make a decision about it. If necessary it may name a Commission to make a more complete study. The Commission will make its report and then the capitulants will make their



decision.

After the verification is complete and the minutes approved, the Brother Superior General declares the General Chapter regularly constituted".



The General House welcomes the Chapter

Places for Meetings and Contacts

We set aside a small section to explain how the General House is accommodating the needs of the General Chapter. On their arrival at Rome, the participants in the Chapter are met at the airport by one of the Brothers from the General Administration community. Once at the house reception area, they receive their keys and are shown to their rooms.

The three major sections that the house is divided into have been given names of Marist places. The first of these is the hotel, "Villa EUR" which has been named "La Valla". The second is the area of the General House community, which has been designated "Roma". And finally, with the name "Hermitage",

is the building that in the past has served as the International College.

The "Champagnat Room" will be a space for gatherings, breaks, newspapers, coffee, celebrating, etc. The areas adjacent to the central staircase of the house have four rooms to be used for meetings of groups and commissions. These rooms are named for Brothers Francesco, Lorenzo, Silvestre and Estanislao. Brothers Vergés and Basilio give their names to two rooms off the corridor of the superiors general.

An informative pamphlet has been published in each of the four languages and one is given to each participant on his or her arrival. It contains practical



points, such as the use of keys, times of meals, laundry schedule, use of the telephone, mail, currency exchange, etc.... how the various services are organized and who are the persons responsible for them.



"In her arms or in her heart"

Mary, our source of renewal

As Marcellin's brothers we remember Mary because she never forgets us. When we fail to recall that we are sons and daughters of God, she reminds us of our true identity.

Likewise, the mother of Jesus enabled the Founder to embrace fully the mission given to him. It was her work, not his own, that he carried out.

Today, we need to imitate his reliance on the mother of Jesus and once again entrust our Institute and its mission and members to her. Should we be willing to do so, she will show us the way forward. She did for Marcellin; what makes us think she would not do the

same for us today?

I have no doubt that she would, first of all, help us to see a number of items in a new light, not the least of which is our apostolic identity. You and I are meant to be proclaimers of God's Word, men for whom the virtue of zeal is central.

Mary was the first missionary, the first messenger of the gospel, the first person to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to another. And she did it simply by carrying the Lord within her. Mary reminds us that mission has little to do with delivering a message in words, and everything to do with making a journey towards another person with Jesus in



your heart.

Br. Seán Sammon - Superior General
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A Meeting Place and Workspace

The Chapter Hall

The Chapter Hall where the 21st General Chapter meets is the same one used for all the Chapters since 1967. The floor has been leveled from its previous gallery-type platforms, and is now one large, flat surface. To the main hall, on the same level, another space has been opened up on the side. This will serve as an entryway and for distribution of materials. From the previous structure, the platform and the translation booths have been retained.

The room has been rejuvenated with tones of smooth green paint, a metallic structure holding the lighting, video and sound systems and a framework of fabrics to minimize echoes. Improved cooling and heating systems allow better regulation of the temperature when necessary.

Division and seating of the participants

The Chapter Hall is furnished with ten circular tables, each seating ten people, a presider's table seating seven, a podium, the president's table and the secretaries' tables with seating for four, one for each official language, plus a secretary who will keep track electronically of the various speakers. The four booths for simultaneous translation have two places each. In a central space between the booths is the control room for audio, video and lighting.



Four large screens, two on each side wall, allow all the participants to see the face of whoever has the floor as well as any projections that are shown.

The receivers for simultaneous translation are stored in the previously-mentioned distribution area at the side of the hall.

The Chapter network

All the participants at the Chapter have access to an internal computer network, developed ex profeso, to maintain communications up-to-date.

Delegate and other participants can follow on their computer screens, in one of the four official languages, the texts that are being discussed, can request a place on the speakers queue, listing the topic they wish to address, vote (with single or multiple options), see the voting results, consult the timetables for going to the airport, see the photos and videos that are published, automatically translate short texts, listen to music, check the weather in Rome, or see a wide selection of documents.

There is also the capability of having a video conference with someone outside the assembly, with the image being projected on the four screens, hearing the voice and interacting via live questions and answers.

It is hoped that the working papers will be distributed in digital format so as to use the least amount of paper.

Those doing simultaneous translation can see, on a small screen located next to their microphones, the person who is speaking or the documents being projected on the four large screens.

