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Updates

28/10/2009: Advent and Marist Solidarity 2009 - Reflexions on a New World

28/10/2009: "Horizons": 22 Portuguese and Spanish speaking Brothers

28/10/2009: Deceased Brothers: Cornelius Russell (United States); Pierre Poncet (L'Hermitage)

27/10/2009: Fms vocation week-end-nurturing (Australia)

27/10/2009: Photo gallery: Statue of Marcellin Champagnat in Vatican (September 20th, 2000)

27/10/2009: Photo gallery: Marcellin Champagnat in Issenheim, France

27/10/2009: RSS: our news on your site

27/10/2009: Brothers and laity at Boa Vista, Brazil

26/10/2009: Members of the African Synod visit the General House

26/10/2009: Photo gallery: Final Profession of Br. Mark William Iwu (Nigeria)

23/10/2009: New Marist link: Marist Brothers East-Asia Province

23/10/2009: Words of Br. Emili Turú SG at the close of the XXI General Chapter

23/10/2009: Letter of the XXI General Chapter in Italian, German and Dutch

General Council

Most important dates in the calendar of the General Council - November 2009 - April 2010



November

- 03 - Regular Council meeting
- 6 - 10 - Assembly and Chapter Cruz del Sur: Emili
- 12 - 15 - Provincial Chapter USA: Emili

December

- 04 - Regular Council meeting
- 07 - 11 - Provincial Chapter Rio Grande do Sul: Joe
- 07 - 14 - Provincial Chapter and retreat Brasil Centro - Norte: Emili
- 11 - 16 - Provincial Chapter Norandina: Joe
- 19 - 21 - Provincial Chapter México Central: Joe
- 23 - 24 - Provincial Chapter México Occidental: Joe
- 26 - 30 - Provincial Chapter Ibérica: Antonio Ramalho
- 27 - 30 - Provincial Chapter Mediterránea: Emili
- 28 - 31 - Provincial Chapter East Central Africa: Joe

January

- 2 - 5 - Provincial Chapter Compostela: Emili
- 05 - Regular Council meeting
- 24 - Marist European Conference: Joe

February

- 08 - Regular Council meeting
- 12 - 17 - Provincial Chapter West Central Europe: Emili

March

- 16 - Regular Council meeting
- 17 - 20 - Council Project of Community Life
- 22 - 27 - Plenary session
- March 28 - April 3 - Holy Week

April

- 05 - 30 - Plenary session
- 25 April - 01 May - Session with new provincials

MARIST NEWS

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Director:

Br. AMEstaún

Production:

Br. Onorino Rota
Mr. Luiz da Rosa

Redaction and Administration:

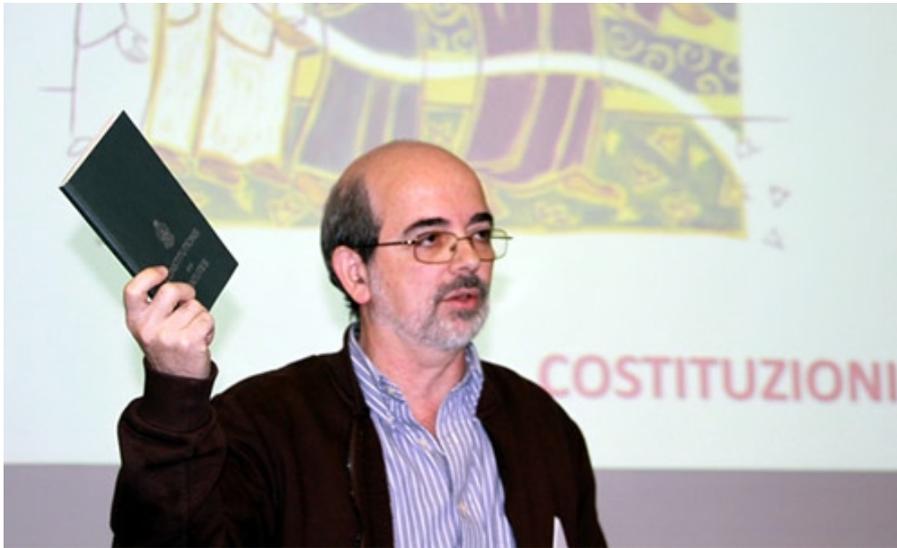
Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat, 2
C.P. 10250 - 00144 ROMA
Tel.: (39) 06 54 51 71
Fax: (39) 06 54 517 217
E-mail: publica@fms.it
web: www.champagnat.org

Edit:

Marist Brother's Institute
General House - Rome

Hail and farewell

Meeting of the General Council with General Administration Staff



had been painted as inspiration for the spirit of the Chapter. The images speak of an attitude and life style which the Chapter has proposed for the Institute for the next eight years. Brother Antonio Ramalho invited those present to sing the "Sub tuum praesidium" to ask for Mary's protection. Then there was a viewing of the DVD produced during the Chapter by Brothers Toni Torrelles and Felú Martín. This documentary, edited in the four languages, gathers together the most significant moments of the Chapter and a message from the new Superior General. Brother Ernesto Sánchez explained the methodology of dialogue and consensus used by the capitulants. And Brother Eugéne Kabanguka closed the round of interventions by giving a global view of the contents of the work of the Chapter.

With the General Chapter over, the Brother capitulants have returned to their Provinces, leaving behind the memory of a period of extraordinary community and encounter. Those in Rome have returned to their customary occupations. A period has ended which has left a lasting mark on the lives of all.

The General Council did not give themselves a rest from work. Once the chapter sessions were finished, Brother Superior General called the old and new Councillors together for a week and they made a summary of the topics that require immediate attending to. They worked on the final draft of the Letter which the Chapter has addressed to the Brothers and Marist laity and youth of the world. They prepared

the calendar of visits up to March 2010. They also spent a day with Mr. Bruce Irvine, reflecting on the experiences of the Chapter and the consequences for their work of animation and government.

A brief report on activities

After these intense work sessions, on 16 October 2009, the Superior General and his Council, following the pattern set by the previous General Council, met with the staff of the General Administration, Brothers and laity, to inform them about certain matters treated in these first sessions of the new Council.

Brother Emili Turú opened the meeting with a presentation on the images of Mary and Marcellin, which

New General Councillor

Brother Emili informed the members of the General Administration that, in the Council sessions just completed, they had decided to use the powers accorded to them by the Constitutions, to appoint one more General Councillor. Brother Víctor Preciado, appointed Economy General before the Chapter, will from now on also be a member of the General Council. In Br. Emili's words, "we believe that the human and spiritual qualities of Br. Víctor will enrich the Council, as well as his recognized abilities in the fields of administration and finance, particularly valuable for this time in the history of the Institute".

At the same time, Br. Emili announced that Br. José María Ferre would become his personal secretary.



Brothers of the "third age"

Course entitled "Amanecer" for Portuguese and Spanish speaking Brothers of the "third age".

The General House in Rome has opened its doors to a group of Portuguese and Spanish speaking veteran Brothers. In the coming days another group of English speaking Brothers is expected to arrive. Since the termination of the General Chapter plenty of rooms and space are now available in the house. With the departure of the Chapter delegates to their own provinces the hush and bustle and dynamic brotherhood of the Chapter have also gone. But the rooms of the general house are starting to fill up once again. This time with senior Brothers who have been long journeying in the mission fields.



On Tuesday, the 20th of October, the course entitled "Amanecer" began for Portuguese and Spanish speaking Brothers of the "third age". They total 22, including 3 animators. Among them are 5 Brothers from the Provinces of Brazil, 8 from Latin America, and 6 from Spain. Also with the group are 3 Marianists.

At the start of the program the voice of the prophet was heard, which rang out during the Eucharist: "Arise, eat and drink, because you are still on

the journey; strengthen your spirit, lift up your souls and regain your vigor, because you must continue to be my messenger in the midst of my people."

From the start of the program, the Brothers have taken to heart its objectives and they realize that they will dedicate many hours of careful listening to each other. From the very start the path to God is being felt and sensed through the long lives of

these 65-81 year olds. The "Dawn" program opens wide its large windows to let in the gentle breeze of the Holy Spirit, may it allow the Spirit to penetrate what is most hidden in each one of us.

Being interested in this project and the fully supporting it are: Our Good Mother, Marcellin Champagnat and William J. Chaminade. It cannot fail with the Spirit of Jesus in our midst.



Members of the African Synod visit the General House

On the evening of October 21, 2009, the members of the General Administration community shared supper with three Bishops and one priest. These four clerics from South Africa are presently participating in the African Synod in Rome.

Monsignor Buti Tihagale, OMI, is the Archbishop of Johannesburg and is president of the Catholic Bishops of South Africa. Monsignor Louis Ndlovu, OSM, is Bishop of Mancini, and Monsignor Barry Wood, OMI, is auxiliary Bishop of Durban. Father Sean O'Leary, M. Afr, is the Director of the

Institute for Peace in Hurley.

This courtesy visit was a gesture of gratitude and friendship of Bro. Jude Piterse to these church authorities for the years he was Secretary of the Episcopal Conference of South Africa.



Gathered Around the Same Table

The Vocation of Champagnat's Marist Laity

The most recent work published by the General Administration of the Marist Brothers is *Gathered Around the Same Table – The vocation of Champagnat's Marist Laity* Rome, 2009.

The theme of the work is summed up in the sub-title – the vocation of laypersons as Marists in the spirit of Marcellin Champagnat. The book deals with persons living very different forms of life – married, single, priests – who choose to live their lives according to Marist spirituality because they feel called by God to this vocation.

Even though the purpose of this article is to outline of the structure of the book, it is of value to underline one of its important themes: that of call. Some people experience a specific call to live their Christian faith following, the "foundational charism" (p. 17), that is to say, the spirit of a particular religious consecration, practising its spirituality and its mission in so far as they are able.

At the launching of this work on the 6 June 2009, Br Seán Sammon spoke of laypersons receiving a "specific call" (p.8) during the course of their lives, and commented: "As they sought to clarify their identity during the years subsequent to the Council, more than a few lay persons found that the charism of one or another religious congregation came to feel like a home port" (p. 9). The book repeats this idea many times, and offers a definition of the lay Marist: "A third group of persons exist who, after a personal journey of discernment, have decided to live their Christian spirituality and mission in the manner of Mary, following the insight of Marcellin Champagnat. That's us, the Lay Marists" (#11).

The structure of the book is relatively simple. After the Presentation and the

Introduction, it has six chapters followed by an Open Letter to a wide audience: "Dear Brothers and Sisters" (p. 101). The work ends after the Open Letter with a Study Guide comprising a series of questions for each chapter.

The chapter titles are self-explanatory.

1. The first chapter (§1 - §35) defines and explains THE VOCATION OF THE LAY MARIST. We have already referred to the brief definition to be found in §11. Another paragraph refers to the lay Marist vocation underlining the idea of a complete call: "[The lay Marist vocation] is a personal call to a specific way of being disciples of Jesus" (§13). Clearly, in this instance, the specific way is the following of Jesus in the Marist way as Champagnat did (cf. §§33, 34; Open Letter p.102), as Mary did (cf. §§11, 67, 79, 111).

2. The next three chapters are introduced by the last sections of the first chapter (§§ 34, 35) that mention three fundamental dimensions: MISSION (Ch.2 §§36-64); SHARED LIFE (Ch 3. §§65-99); and SPIRITUALITY (Ch. 4 §§100-123). These three aspects appear often, and at times their inter-relationship is highlighted. Typically: "Our life becomes unified around Christ in the three dimensions of the charism: spirituality sends us to the mission and it engenders shared life; communion strengthens us in the mission and deepens spirituality; the mission discovers for us new facets of spirituality and makes us experience brotherhood" (§123; cf. §34).

3. Chapter 5 (§§ 124-148) expands on FORMS OF RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MARIST CHARISM. This chapter is of great importance, answering as it does to the many questions raised about various levels of belonging and linkage to the Institute of the Marist

Brothers. In this regard, the text is very open and refers to almost every kind of group related to the Marist Institute, from Associations of Former Students to other lay Marist groups (cf. §§ 135-139). The same openness applies to forms of linkage to the Marist Institute. The range includes links formally recognised by the Brother Provincial to informal relationships not requiring any form of recognition (cf. §§140-143).

4. Chapter 6 (§§ 149-169) offers useful ideas for discovering and living WAYS OF GROWTH IN VOCATION. Every vocation needs nourishment by processes of formation and assimilation as life proceeds. Otherwise the sense of call is weakened and even dies. The book lays great emphasis on the importance of ongoing formation (§§ 163-169), whether of laypersons alone or of laypersons together with brothers. Such formation either at provincial or international level "make[s] us look beyond our groups and discover new horizons for our faith" (§164).

The OPEN LETTER brings the work to an appropriate ending. In the familiar and friendly form of a letter, laypersons speak of the lay Marist vocation as a gift of God. Their dream includes Marist mission directed to needy children and young people. They affirm their desire to live in the Spirit but in a Marist way, walking with the Brothers to give new life to the Marist charism. It takes up themes already mentioned in the Presentation and Introduction and that re-appear in the chapters from time to time. It speaks of vocation as a call or as a gift; of three fundamentals of the lay Marist vocation – mission, shared life and spirituality; vocation as a journey; a spiritual journey; an apostolic journey; a journey to be undertaken jointly by Brothers and Layperson; a vocation touched by Champagnat and with a Marian aspect.

