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13/01/2010: The Commission on the Religious Life and archivum

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Monastery of les Avellanes

100 years of Marist presence



On the 2nd of January, the Marist family of Catalonia gathered, as they traditionally do, in the house of les Avellanes to celebrate with the older Brothers the anniversary of the foundation of the Institute.

This year, the date coincided with the beginning of the celebrations for the centenary of the Marist presence in the Monastery. September 2010 marks the centenary of the arrival of the Brothers in this house of les Avellanes to convert it into a novitiate.

The monastery of Santa María de Bellpuig de les Avellanes was founded by Premonstratensian monks at the end of the XII century. The property and the monastery passed through various hands until it was acquired by the Marist Brothers in 1910. With their coming, the Monastery went through several phases of restoration and was filled with life. Numerous generations

of Brothers, who did their juniorate, novitiate, or scholasticate there, have spread its name around the whole world as Marist religious and apostles of children and youth.

Today, the house accomodates a community of retired or infirm Brothers, and a community of hospitality and spiritual direction for those seeking a place of silence and interior peace. This place of spirituality is a fount of new life which is palpable not only to those who live in the house but also to those who have found it a reference point for their human and spiritual journey. Among them are many young people who, in the celebration of Easter, in work camps, or in live-in experiences, have discovered valid reference points for their life projects. New life which today expresses itself in a house of "open doors" which welcomes any person in search of rest, peace, silence, nature, and experience of transcendence. New life which makes us

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feel universal in our ideals, at the same time as rooted in and committed to our land.

The celebrations of the centenary will be held throughout the year, beginning on 2 January 2010 and concluding on 2 January 2011. The central act of this joyful celebration is fixed for the 10th of September, anniversary date of the arrival of the

Brothers in the house. The days preceding, 8 and 9 September, there will be a Marist gathering for those who lived in this house during their years of formation.

Among the activities inaugurating the centenary was the blessing on 2 January of the new image of the Virgin Mary which has been placed in the remodelled community cemetery.

Dear Brother and friend, you too can take a leading part in this centenary!

We invite you to live with us, giving thanks for the life and the new life which this house has generated and is generating.

Happy centenary of the Marist presence in el Monasterio de les Avellanes!



III Provincial Chapter of the Iberica province

Major themes for the new governance team

The Iberica province celebrated its third provincial chapter December 27-29, 2009 in Lardero (La Rioja). There were 37 brothers capitulants present, along with councilor general Br. Antonio Ramalho, delegate of Brother Superior General, and six invited lay people. At the beginning of the sessions the Chapter installed the new provincial, Brother Ambrosio Alonso.

The chapter work itself was carried out in two morning sessions and another two in the afternoon, with half-hour breaks between each. Since the beginning of December, the capitulants had made use of a 90-page booklet carefully compiled by the preparatory commission. It contained the results of the surveys carried out in different sectors of the province, and the reports of the commissions and provincial teams. This document briefly explained a number of themes for possible consideration by the Chapter with a view to setting forth major themes; it detailed the work plan for the Chapter; and it summarized the documents arising from the XXI General Chapter.

The methodology used in the proceedings was that of "see, judge, act". The first day consisted in a perception



exercise and listening to the various feelings and voices from around the Province, in a retrospective of the past three years, using the results of the surveys conducted by the preparatory commission, as well as five reports developed by certain commissions or teams: province priorities, the expanded council, the Mission Commission, the educational works commission and the commission on spirituality. At another point other reports were considered: that of the Technical Team of Brothers, vocation ministry, publications service and the commission on finances.

The second stage was devoted to throw-

ing light on the realities described in the documents and judging them from the viewpoint of Marist identity and the calls of the Institute, the Church and society, to begin a discussion of each theme with respect, a listening heart and from various points of focus. Six themes were considered, namely: 1) a deeper understanding of the vocation of the Marist Brother of Champagnat; 2) Marist mission in a "new land"; 3) Brothers and lay Marists "gathered around the same table"; 4) structures of animation and government; 5) encouraging vocation ministry; 6) the progress of restructuring. An attempt was made to seek new overviews that will guide the province in the coming years.

The final day was dedicated almost entirely to the development of the major themes for action that the provincial chapter suggests to the provincial leadership for the next three years. Doing this is to return to the original fount so that its life-giving water can satisfy the thirst of today's Marists or, paradoxically, increase it.

At the first session of this final day the work was done in six groups, gathering together the personal work on the theme done at the end of the previous day. Each group was to reach consensus on three or four major themes. In the second session, everyone listened

to and saw projected the various major themes presented by each of the groups. Then a long period of time was devoted to an exchange of reactions on what had been presented.

There was clear agreement on the major themes, with a variety of shades of meaning and insistencias in the method of directing their content. In both cases the inspiration of the calls of the XXI General Chapter was obvious.

Three major themes were put forth, having practically universal support.

a) A consecrated and community life

that promotes a new model of being a Brother;
b) Brothers and lay people gathered around the same table;
c) Marist mission in a new world.

Brother Ambrosio Alonso, new provincial of Iberica, will be accompanied in the application of these major themes and in his service of animation and governance by Brothers Abel Muñoz, Alberto Oribe, Alfonso Fernández, Carlos Martín, Ernesto Tendero, Moisés Alonso and Samuel Holguín, who constitute the new provincial council, elected by the provincial chapter.



III Provincial Chapter of Mediterranea Province

Br. Antonio Giménez, new Provincial

The third Provincial Chapter of Mediterranea Province began on December 26, 2009 at Guardamar, in the presence of the participating Brothers and lay people. In addition, Superior General, Brother Emili Turu, came from Rome to join us for the Chapter days. The meeting got under way with a word of welcome from Brother Manuel Jorques, who expressed his thanks to the Brothers and other collaborators who had supported him over his six years as Provincial. "The Province was born," he said, "on August 6, 2003 under the theme 'Venturing into the Future.' Since that time we have sailed together on a marvelous journey, even if we did strike the occasional reef that slowed our advance. 'We have not everything,' and thus we leave to the new administration some stimulating tasks to accomplish."

Brother Jorques then gave a brief overview of Province realities and pointed out a few issues that will demand particular attention. To conclude, he emphasized how pleased he has been



with the mission outreach and the Province solidarity that has been generated by the Province's commitments in the East Africa District, and the marvelous welcome that the District has given to so many volunteers over the six years.

Brother Emili Turu pointed out the great efforts that were entailed on the part of Brother Jorques in exercising Province leadership over twelve years, first as Provincial of Levante Province

and then of Mediterranea. In his remarks, Brother Emili particularly underscored the challenges that arose over restructuring.

Afterwards, there was the reading of the official General Council decision of June 25, 2009 appointing Brother Antonio Gimenez Provincial of Mediterranea Province for a three-year term. Thereupon Brother Antonio expressed his gratitude to the Superior General and the General Council for the confidence shown in ap-

pointing him Provincial. He went on to speak of his principal hopes for the Province and his confidence that there will be an ever greater collaborative effort on the part of all. He gave special attention to trusting in God, using the following image: "Provided that God is directing the orchestra, it doesn't matter who is waving the baton."

In order to fix the Province priorities for the coming three years, the

Chapter then moved on to study the reports presented by the committees and Province teams.

The evening of the 29th was given over to fixing the number of Provincial Councilors and their election. The decision was to have six Councilors, five of whom would be elected by the Chapter and one to be selected by Provincial Council. The new Provincial Council is made of Brothers Juan Ignacio Poyatos,

Onorino Rota, Juan Carlos Fuertes, Fernando Ales and Damiano Forlani. The just-named Brothers were voted by the Chapter, while Brother Aureliano Garcia Manzanal was selected by the Provincial Council.

The morning session on December 30 dealt with the Province Norms and various suggestions for their modification. The Chapter concluded with a Mass of thanksgiving.



Mexico Central's XIV Provincial Chapter

Washing the feet of one another

With the official appointment of Brother Ricardo Reynoso Ramirez as Provincial, the Mexico Central's XIV Provincial Chapter began on December 19, 2009. Brother Ricardo has begun a three-year term running from December 2009 to December 2012. The formal appointment was made by Brother Joseph McKee, Vicar General, who took part fully in the Chapter's first session. One of the Chapter sessions was briefly interrupted in order to congratulate Brother Ricardo and to thank Brother Fernando Mejia Perez for the service he carried out as Provincial from 2002 to 2009.

The election of the Provincial Councilors took place at the end of the first Chapter session. The election was preceded by a process which established several criteria that will give vitality to the Province. The criteria took form on the basis of views that had already been shared within the Chapter. The election took place in a positive and respectful manner, and once the voting was concluded, those present had the chance to congratulate and encourage the new Provincial Councilors.

Marcellin was inspired to give his life for



children and young people, those who were the most poor and marginalized. In the same spirit, and in the name of the Mexico Central Province, the Institute and the Church, we wish wholeheartedly to thank Brother Fernando Mejia, Provincial; and, for their service of Province leadership during the recently concluded period of service, the Provincial Councilors: Brothers Roberto Laurencio Carrillo Garcia, Ricardo Reynoso Ramirez, Ignacio Sanchez Guillen, Francisco Javier Salcedo Camarena, Marco Antonio Soto Sanchez and Miguel Angel Espinosa.

Urged on by the XXI General Chapter to go with Mary to a new land, we offer our congratulations and our support to Brothers Ricardo Reynoso and Miguel Angel Espinosa, who continue on as Provincial Councilors, and to Brothers Joaquin Flores Segura, Jorge Arturo Carbajal Garcia, Gerardo Torres Estrada and Jose Sanchez Bravo who join the Province leadership team as new Councilors. May their administration help us to be generous and wholehearted in the choice we have made of living for the Kingdom.

