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Activities over two months

As you know, the new community at the Hermitage got underway on 8 December with a special celebration, in which each received a staff symbolizing their walking together but each in his/her own rhythm.

That makes two months we have been living community life, at la Neylière in the house of the Marist Fathers. At the beginning of January, we welcomed the Argentinian couple, Norma and Ernesto. The activities of the two months have essentially involved learning to know one another better. We are doing this in different ways, either among ourselves or with the help of people from outside.

Thus, from 14 to 18 December, two lay people from the ESDAC group (Spiritual Exercises for Apostolic Community Discernment), working according to Ignatian pedagogy, helped us begin our community building in a spirit of faith and a process of prayer.

« If the Lord does not build the house, the builders labour in vain... ». At the end of this process, we were able to establish our first community life chart.

The same way, in order to get to know one another better, we decided to share about different topics, relating to our personal life, country, family, vocation story. We are en route; this takes time but it is important.

This knowledge is also gained at times of prayer, animated in small groups, in turn and according to the sensibilities of each, through leisure time, outings in common, and personal encounters.

To prepare us more directly for the work of animation to be done at the Hermitage, with the different groups hosted, we have already profited twice from two days work with Brother André Lanfrey, on the historic context of Marcellin's life at Marlies and La Valla, and on the spirituality.



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At the beginning of January, we spent a week with a facilitator from Canada, a lay person trained at IFHIM (the Institute of Integral Human Formation of Montréal). This is a programme inviting each one to make life choices for him/herself starting from free and responsible decisions and also from the forces each has within him/herself and which need to be learned and put to use. We followed this very personal process all together according to an interactive method; it thus allowed us to come to know one another better.

For our personal journey, we are being helped by two Brothers: Albert André, from Belgium, in the name of the general council, and Maurice Gout-

agny, in the name of the Province of l'Hermitage. They join us for two days a month and are at our service.

For community accompaniment, such as it is, there are two persons from ESDAC who come for two days each month up to next April.

At the end of January, we welcomed Br. Joe McKee, Vicar General. He helped us see more clearly the mission which the Institute has entrusted to the community in its multicultural dimension.

For personal commitments for animation, Father John Craddock returned to New Zealand at the end of January and will come back at the end of April. For

his part, Brother Benito is recovering well from his knee operation; we will be seeing him again at Las Avellanas.

From 8 to 20 February, we are fortunate to be at this house of hospitality and spirituality of the Province to discover its life style and animation activities. We will also benefit during the stay from the input of Brother Alain Delorme on the first Brothers and that of Brother Fernando Hinojal on the Letters of M. Champagnat.

We are counting on the prayers of each of you for the progress of our community, so that it may respond to the wish of God for ourselves and the Institute.



Barcelona's Gótico Neighborhood

"Gabella" coordinates three projects

Many transformations have occurred in Barcelona's Gótico district over recent years. Real estate speculation caused the departure of many long-time neighborhood families, leaving an elderly population behind. Pockets of poverty have taken root, and serious problems have sprung up due to drugs, prostitution, violence, delinquent behavior. In addition, large numbers of immigrants have moved into the area: North Africans, Pakistanis, Latin Americans, Chinese, Romanians.

To respond to the resulting problems, a civic association known as "Gabella" came into existence in 1986 with links to the Marist Brothers. At the present time, Gabella coordinates three social-help programs.

First is the "Centro Abierto Compar-tir," which is open every day and provides an environment where young people can find help in doing their school assignments and make up for class lessons which they have missed. In addition, the Center aims at helping the children acquire rela-

tional and social skills, and develop proper eating habits.

The second program is Club Fútbol Sala, which serves about fifty young people aged ten to twenty-one. Through its sporting activities, the program endeavors to foster values such initiative, team work, social integration, and the skills needed to overcome personal difficulties. In January 2009, the Club Fútbol Sala was featured in a program on TV3. In the show, one of the volunteers told of his experiences working at the center.

Centro Juvenil, the third program, is located just adjacent to the Gótico neighborhood and looks after a dozen adolescents twelve to sixteen years of age. The Center's goal is to be a place where young people can meet up with one other and receive some kind of practical formation. Activities develop around the concerns and interests of the young people themselves. The activities encourage value formation, tolerance and dialogue. In addition, the qualities of



good sportsmanship are promoted: teamwork, fair play, solidarity, the proper spirit of competition.

During the day, four Marist Brothers work at the center, teaming up with three social workers. Together, they carry out educational services in conjunction with the neighborhood's social services and with nearby schools. Centro Juvenil is very committed to a "pedagogy of prevention." Recently the Center set up an initiative to assist the young people in finding jobs. To that end a training course was offered that focused on the skills needed to become a waiter in restaurants or similar establishments.



Norandina's Third Provincial Chapter

New Provincial - Brother Libardo Garzon



Fusagasuga was the site of Norandina's third Provincial Chapter, held at the De la Salle center near Bogota, from December 12-16, 2009. The Chapter marked the start of the Provincialship of Brother Jose Libardo Garzon Duque, whom the General Council had appointed on June 3, 2009.

Brother Libardo was born on February 7, 1963 in Filadelfia Caldas, Colombia. After being a member of the Remar Movement, he made his aspirancy

program in Manizales. Then came postulancy and novitiate in Medellin where he made first profession in 1985. Perpetual profession followed in 1989.

Brother Libardo's degree in Philosophy and Religious Studies was awarded by Universidad Santo Tomás in 1990-1991, he took part in the novice masters' course which Brother Basilio Rueda directed in Castalgandolfo. Later Brother Libardo received a Licentiate in Psychology from the Gregorian University.

He has also taken courses in Systems Management and School Administration.

First the Provincial Chapter focused its attention on reports from various Province groups: the Laity Teams, the Secretariat for Solidarity, the Committee for Children/ Young People, the Vocation Team. In addition a financial report of the past three years was presented. The second part of the Chapter centered upon the question: What are we Brothers and Lay People being called to do in the coming three years? The Chapter also discussed strategies for the day-to-day life of each Brother and Lay Person, for each community, each educational project of the Province. That is, what practical strategies can we adopt in order to go forward in the most effective apostolic way?

The Chapter delegates elected the following Brothers as Provincial Councilors: Antidio Bolivar Enriquez Oviedo (Colombian), Wilson Alcivar Torres Eras (Ecuadorian), Francisco Javier Perez Paris (Spanish), Ismar Gildardo Portilla Benavides (Colombian), Andres Alirio Miranda Acosta (Colombian), and Jose Luis Sebastian Martinez (Spanish).



16 young men in the postulancy of Manizales, Colombia

On Thursday 28 January 2010, with the celebration of the Eucharist, eleven young men began their postulancy, and another five commenced their second year of Marist formation. They are accompanied by three Brothers: Miguel Ángel Grisales, Javier Echeverry and Geovanni Velasco.

The candidates begin this period of

Marist formation after living a term of aspirancy in Pasto. The first year group is made up of a good group of young men coming from the department of Nariño: Juan Pablo Muñoz Martínez (Las Mesas, Nariño), Eduardo Giovanni Ordóñez Bolaños (Las Mesas, Nariño), Fredy Andrés Villota Ánama (Pasto, Nariño), Iván Gabriel Bastidas Tarapuzé (Ipiiales, Nariño), Efrén Salgado de la Vega (De Sahagún, Córdoba). The other

part of the group making up the Postulancy come from the vocations ministry carried out in the department of Quindío. They are: Juan David Páez Rivera (Armenia), Julián Alcaraz Quiróz (Urrao, Antioquia), Cristian Camilo Galindi Pulido (Armenia), José Fabián Franco Patiño (Filandia, Quindío), Luis Fernando Arias Mazo (Filandia, Quindío), Jorge Leonardo Pulido Pulido (Libano, Tolima).

1st National Marist Youth Ministry Congress

Brazil

The 1st National Congress of Marist Youth Ministry (PJM), held in Curitiba from 25 to 29 January, at the Marist school of « Santa Maria », has left the participants with one certainty: the motto of the gathering, « Hearts connected », reflects all the realities of the world of Marist youth and their proper way of performing a role in the forefront. After the numerous successes achieved during the Marist Youth Ministry's five years of activity, « Hearts connected » constitutes an horizon dreamed of among the youth who make up the PJM.

During the Congress – the initiative of the National Evangelisation Commission of the Marist Union of Brasil (Umbrasil) – representatives of the PJM from all over the country shared their doubts, experiences and ideas, giving evidence of a great capacity for reflection and for mobilising in favour of evangelisation and social causes. This capacity reflects the spirituality – also called the « Mystique of the PJM » - which unites the members of the Marist Youth Ministry, who live in different regions of Brasil and confront the many challenges in their communities. Such plurality was already emphasized in the opening ceremony on 25/01, as much in the dance and music productions as in the reading of the letters reflecting the situation of the Marist Youth Ministry in the three Brazilian Provinces (Brasil Centro-Norte, Brasil Centro-Sul, Rio Grande do Sul) and of the District of Amazonie, with regard to the daily life of young people.

Thanks to the dialogue raised among the participants meeting in five workshops – Ecology, Ecclesial Community, Vocation, Solidarity, and Political and Social Roles – proposals for action formulated by the young people themselves were able to come up for



debate. There was also a survey of the history of the PJM, its progress and perspectives, and two interactive connections, via web, between those taking part in the Congress and guests from outside. One of these was with the youth representing the social institutions of the World Social Forum, held at Porto Alegre, and the other with the Superior General of the Marist Institute, Br. Emili Turú. According to Tiago Alves, one of the participants, Br. Emili placed in relief the spirituality of the heart: « he showed us that we all have the desire to be in contact with someone, whether it be family, friends, or work companions, in forming part of a great network » he said.

Other periods of dialogue with the participants were encouraged by two thematic workshops. The first, conducted by Br. Wagner Cruz, touched on topics relating to the political question, to social relativism, to work in the Church and to vocation to the religious life. The second, co-ordinated by Br. Adriano Brollo, contributed testimonies on the experience of some members of the hip-hop movement and the Young Students Ministry, both on the national

level. Cultural activities such as dance and music productions performed by representatives of the PJM from many parts of Brasil, the spectacle with the band of Curitiba Chico Mano, the walking tour of Curitiba and the dynamic of music, poetry and reflection promoted by the Group « Voluntários da Patria », all helped facilitate the integration, living together and involvement of the youth in action for social transformation.

By way of a synthesis of the works, the participants in the Congress drew up an open letter to inform the Marist Institute about the goals pursued in the future course of the PJM in Brasil, as well as their expectations of the support of Marist educators so that the goals can be achieved. The spirit of togetherness, dialogue, reflection, and of promotion of the role of youth which has animated the 1st National Congress of Marist Youth Ministry may be summarised as much by this letter as by the testimony of young Gabriel Bernardo da Silva: « I have encountered peculiar accents, and different cultures, but a single heart and a single will to make this world a better place. »