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## Updates

**20/01/2011:** 7th Provincial Chapter of the Province of Nigeria

**18/01/2011:** Deceased Brother: Marco Aurelio Ospina López (Rodrigo Tomás) - Norandina

**19/01/2011:** Meeting of four Marist General Councils

**18/01/2011:** Province of América Central

**17/01/2011:** Deceased Brother: Raúl Coral Burbano (Br. Azael) - Norandina

**17/01/2011:** The Virgin Mary in the life of the Marist Brother

**15/01/2011:** The Brothers at the Tuscolana station in Rome

**14/01/2011:** Deceased Brothers: Walter Godofredo Ude (Prov. Brasil Centro-Norte); Marcel Merlin (L'Hermitage); Clement Okere (Nigeria)

**14/01/2011:** Haiti a year after the earthquake

**13/01/2011:** The paths of the General Chapter

**12/01/2011:** New books received: Prayers for Teachers (Marist Brothers Schools Southern Africa); Pastoral Pedagogical Principles of Marcellin Champagnat as Paradigm for Youth Education in Abakaliki Diocesen (Chima Boniface Onwujuru, FMS); Suffering (Ifeanyi Mbaegbu, FMS)

## Marist Family

### Meeting of four Marist General Councils at Manziana



The annual meeting of the four Marist General Councils has become an established tradition. There is a sense of engagement, and also the satisfaction of being together in a simple and fraternal setting, to celebrate and share what is common and the differences emerging from the same original intuition.

This year, the meeting took place from 13 to 15 January, in Manziana. We were warmly welcomed by Brothers Barry Burns and Antoine Kasindu. Those taking part from the four Councils numbered 19, including the Superior Generals: Sisters Georgeanne Marie Donovan smsm and Jane O'Carroll sm, Father John Hannan sm and Brother Emili Turú fms. The topic for reflection was « The Marial face of the Church », inspired by a presentation of Br. Emili. The group

had the opportunity to review two important reference texts of 2001, on the occasion of the simultaneous holding of the four Marist General Chapters in Rome: the talk of Pope John-Paul during the audience with the Institutes of the Marist Family, and the conference of Father Craig Larkin sm given to the assembly of the capitulants of the four branches on the theme « How can the intuition of the first Marists be a source of vitality for all of us today? »

The richness of the reflection led the participants to exchange about their specific contributions to the service of the Church and also the forms of collaboration among the four Institutes. After a welcome evening of relaxation, there was a good time on the last day for information on the progress of each of the congregations and on

#### MARIST NEWS

N.º 138 – Year III – January 20th 2011

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# Coming close

## The Brothers at the Tuscolana station in Rome

Pietro was sitting on his suitcase placed flat on the ground, with three other bags full of all sorts of things near him. He had the salt and pepper beard typical of tramps. We approached him, three young women and I. It was 9 o'clock on the night of the Tuesday before Christmas 2010 inside the Tuscolana station in Rome.

We asked him:

- Where are you going to spend the night?
- Here, in the station.
- On the floor? But it is cold and the station doors are open.
- I have a good blanket, and in this corner it isn't so cold. I am used to it.
- But don't you have any family?
- Yes, I have sisters, but it's more than thirty years since I've seen them!

Pietro was spontaneous and as if surprised that these strangers were concerned for him. His eyes were those of a child.

Then one of the girls, the youngest, hardly out of adolescence, crouched down next to him, took one hand and rubbed it vigorously between her two hands, and bending closer, gave him a long kiss on his right jaws. The tramp smiled and received the kiss as normal. I admired this feminine genius for knowing how to create deeply human gestures and I thought of the woman who covered the feet of Jesus with kisses. This adolescent had come as close as possible to this solitary man, whose heart spoke of his hunger for affection.

Every Tuesday evening, the community of the General House prepares a supper for the immigrants waiting outside the Tuscolana station. A group then takes the supper to about a hundred people, many young, coming from the countries of East Europe in search of work and fortune, and experiencing difficult times before finding an occupation. There are also elderly Italians to whom life has not been kind.

On this Tuesday, we found a group of girls associated with the



Community of Sant'Egidio. They came from the city of Pavia, 400 kilometres from Rome. Their visit to the Eternal City included an experience of meeting some poor people, so they had joined members of the Sant'Egidio Community and come to Tuscolana. That is where we found them.

A gentleman who had brought abundant bowls of rice had come before us, so when we arrived with warm portions of pasta and coffee, we found it difficult to dispose of them. A good thirty little containers of pasta were left over. When the girls saw this, they took the box containing them and began to advertise among the refugees. They did so well that all the containers were distributed very quickly. They did not forget Pietro and this provided a new chance to speak to him.

I admired this group of girls, come to Rome not just to see the historical monuments, the art treasures, but also to meet the poor and live their vocation as disciples of the Lord.

I had felt a like emotion on Christmas day in the basilica of Saint Mary in Trastevere. Here the Community of Sant'Egidio

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certain specific points: the inter-Marist spirituality session held in 2010, the use of our web sites and the Marist Spiritual Patrimony, the World Youth Day of 2011 and the

Marist programming for this event.

The plan and the dynamic of the meeting were assured by a team of four: Sisters Pauline Gresham smsm

and Rita Raikuna sm, Father Lote Raiwalui sm, and Brother Antonio Ramalho fms. Another team will soon be appointed for the next meeting, set for January 2012.

has the custom at Christmas of inviting to dinner nearly 400 persons living in poverty. Next Christmas will be the 30th time the meal is held in the basilica. Many volunteers offered their services, among them three Brothers from the General House. We took out all the seats from the church, set up the tables, put out chairs, laid a place for each person, and during the meal carried them the different courses and served them.

The atmosphere was one of joy and friendships quickly developed between the people at table and those serving them. The impression was of a large family and great humanity: Christ served and Christ serving, the suffering Church and the servant Church; all brothers and sisters in the Lord on Christmas Day.

Two things characterise the service of the poor: bread, nourishment, sometimes clothing and blankets; but still more, the

sharing of friendship, the exchange of words which allows a more human, deeper approach, the shaking of hands, the welcoming smile. We distributed coffee and a kind word, pasta and quick conversation. Bread and Word together: service complete, a true hand extended to our brothers in difficulty. To provide Bread and Word, one has to come close.

*\* The Community of Sant'Egidio is a movement in the Church characterised by service of the poor; initiatives in favour of people in need are multiple: points for the distribution of food, clothing, reception houses, places to wash, doctors ready to tend to the poor, lawyers to defend their causes, places for learning Italian, letters written to condemned prisoners, drawings of handicapped children sold and the money sent to buy medicines in Africa, visiting prisoners, personal house to house contact with people in need... The Community of Sant'Egidio is formed above all by lay Christians, the founder Andrea Riccardi, being himself a layman.*



# Province of América Central

## XIII Provincial Chapter

The province of América Central held its XIII Provincial Chapter in Guatemala from 16 to 21 December 2010. The first stage consisted of a review and study of the provincial reports on the activities of the Province. The first to present his report was Br. Hipólito Pérez, Provincial. In it he referred to the life situation of the brothers, the different elements composing it (community, spirituality, consecration, mission), the animation of the Provincial Council, the Provincial Pastoral Team and other Commissions, provincial priorities (vocations ministry, spirituality and shared mission), the process of provincial reorganization, solidarity and Fundamar. For each of these points, he emphasized the achievements as well as the challenges still to be faced, and he concluded with an invitation to live the future with audacity, creativity and hope.



For his part, Br. Fernando Rodríguez, Provincial Administrator, presented the work of the administration associated with the strategic planning for the three years. He offered the capitulants financial information on the different accounting scenarios: Province, Associations, Corporations, Centres... The brothers were

able to express their reactions to the financial report of the province through the working groups.

Br. Balbino Juárez, in charge of Catechetical Ministry, presented his report on the departmentalisation of the religion class, the hiring and formation of suitable personnel, as well as the development of

the provincial religion currículum and the opening of new processes of initiation to Christian life, among other challenges.

Br. José Antonio Alonso, animator of Solidarity and Fundamar, explained the situation of this provincial area, and emphasised the co-ordination achieved with the other sectors of ministry; the

management, initiating and evaluation of the projects carried out during the term (around 140 projects or microprojects); the provincial volunteers plan; the performance of the Social Funds Committees, and the inter-institutional relationships which allowed the visualizing of broader horizons of solidarity for the future.

Br. Roberto Linares presented the report on Vocations Ministry. He referred to the reflection of the committee on youth and vocations ministry with respect to the viability of the project Contágate de Vida, formation for accompaniment, the endeavour of maintaining the aspirants in Guatemala and El Salvador, and the introduction in some centres of the pedagogical programme proposed in the provincial Vocations Ministry project.

In his report on Youth Ministry, Br. Nicéforo Garrán placed emphasis on the formation of the pastoral agents, the work performed to set in place a new model of integral ministry and the effort to consolidate the structures of pastoral animation, particularly at the local level.

Br. Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, who expertly co-ordinates the Educational Ministry, outlined in his report the development of the areas of strategic planning, the projects being carried out (Meetings of Marist Educators, FORMAR, diploma and licentiate courses in educational innovation, etc.), the accompaniment and evaluation of educational personnel, and the implanting and renewal of the PEC.

The reports of the Provincial Committees

of Spirituality, Life of the Brothers, Laity and Initial Formation, were presented to the capitulants by means of interest groups. A member of each committee presented a report to the capitulants interested in the subject.

At the conclusion of the Chapter, the election of the Provincial Councillors was held. The Council accompanying Brother Hipólito for the next three years is composed of Brothers Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, Balbino Juárez, Gregorio Linacero, Fernando Rodríguez, Juan Antonio Sandoval and Carlos Vélez.

A thanksgiving Eucharist for the action of God during these days and to celebrate shared life and process brought this meeting to an end.



# Province of Nigeria

## VII Provincial Chapter

From 5 to 8 January 2011 took place the 7th Provincial Chapter of the Marist Province of Nigeria began. The venue was the Marist Formation Centre, in Orlu. The Bishop of Orlu, Rev. Dr. Augustine Okwuoma presided the opening Eucharistic celebration.

The new Provincial, Br. Joachim Ezetulugo was installed at the Eucharistic celebration in a simple but symbolic celebration. During his homily, the Bishop commended the Brothers. He observed that the Brothers represent what the priests do not. Therefore, he urged the Brothers to remain faithful to their charism and not be carried away by the prevailing tendencies of our contemporary culture.

Br. Joachim in his maiden address to the Brothers and Lay Marists thanked God for the gift of our vocation. He



thanked the Brothers whose mandate he has. He asked for their cooperation as he promised to discharge his duties giving his all unreservedly.

There was a group photograph at the end of the Eucharistic celebration with the presiding Bishop.

The new government of the Province is:

Provincial: Joachim Ezetulugo | Councillors Provincial: Celestine Okoye, Paul Angulu, Mark Omede, Mathew Ogudu and Chima Onwujuru.

