

www.champagnat.org

Updates

24/02/2011: Meeting of provincial animation teams

23/02/2011: « Senderos » at the Escorial

22/02/2011: A meditation incarnate

22/02/2011: Opening of new residence for girl students in Uturu

21/02/2011: A bulletin for members of the Marist Schools of Australia

21/02/2011: New e-newsletter for the U.S Province!

19/02/2011: Celebration on the occasion of the 25 years of the ChMMF

18/02/2011: Death is a moment of sorrow, not of sadness

18/02/2011: New version

17/02/2011: Marist News N. 143

15/02/2011: Deceased Brother: Declan Murray

17/02/2011: Guidelines for reflection on apostolic religious life

16/02/2011: Member of the West Central Europe Province

ChMMF

« Brasil Centro-Norte »

Celebration of the 25 years



Imagine the joy of a family gathering! To be able to be with your parents and friends, but also to meet numerous relatives and distant friends, from many towns, some hardly known, but whom you have heard spoken about... which makes the impatience grow greater. And now! Such a meeting between generations has taken place!

The Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family of the Province of « Brasil Centro-Norte » organised a grand festive gathering on the l'occasion of the 25 years of the ChMMF, from 13 to 15 November last, in the country house Divino Paraíso, near Brasília, DF. The gathering brought together representatives of 33 of the 36 Fraternities, coming from 15 different States.

Among the 200 persons present were some Brothers who, together with the lay people of the Movement, have shared the dreams and experiences, lived the moments of spirituality and, without a doubt, celebrated the 25 years of the ChMMF. The Meeting, on the theme of « With Mary, in MOVEMENT to a new land », was enriched by the presence and challenges laid down of Br. Pau Fornells, who animated a day of work, reflection and prayer on the vocation of the lay Marist.

After the opening of the Meeting, Br. Emili Turú, Superior General, and Br. Antônio Ramahlo, Councillor General, addressed the participants by videoconference. The Provincial, Br. Wellington Medeiros, opened the meeting, accompanied by Brothers tak-

MARIST NEWS

N.º 144 – Year III – February 23th, 2011

Director:
Br. AMEstaún

Production:
Mr. Luiz da Rosa

Redaction and Administration:

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

Edit:

Marist Brother's Institute
General House – Rome

ing part in the celebration. As in any family gathering, union and joy were manifest at all times.

In the course of the meeting, there was a sharing of the activities carried out by some Fraternities. It was also the opportunity to present the Marial Year organized by UMBRASIL (2011), and the Laity Animation Team in the Province. Fathers Miguel and André took part and presided over the celebration of the two Masses.

The CHMMF jubilee was celebrated fittingly with a cake, congratulations, and

plenty of music, in a climate of relaxed fraternisation. On the last day, the Fraternities reflected on the future of the Movement with regard to their local situations, exchanging about concrete actions for the next few years.

The lay people took part in the Meeting, but they were also the ones responsible for it. It was the Provincial Team for Co-ordination of the Movement which organised the gathering, while the Fraternities were engaged in selling commemorative bibles for the 25 years of the CHMMF, with a special inset containing information on the

Institute, Saint Marcellin Champagnat and the Movement. Thanks to the funds obtained, it was possible to pay the costs of lodging, voyages and materials used.

As with any gathering, there came also the time for farewell. The Fraternities went away accompanied by an image of our Good Mother, conscious of the importance of lay leadership and of their role in the Church, ready to live out their specific vocation, in partnership with the Brothers.



Helen or the daughter of the Syrophoenician woman

A meditation incarnate

The Gospel proposed for today is one of those passages which has always struck me: the healing of the daughter of the Syrophoenician woman (Mk 7:24-31).

The scene is a moving one: Jesus wants to pass unnoticed through a region where the people, of a culture totally different from his own, would probably be unable to understand his message... But the simple people of the place have heard that there is a prophet powerful in deeds and words living in the next country; He is capable of bringing health, peace and hope, and, what is more, this prophet has come to visit them!

Among these people, there is a woman in despair because of the sufferings of her little girl, « inhabited by an unclean spirit ». Driven by need and despair, this woman dares to approach the prophet and beg him to do something for her daughter. It's her last chance, her only hope...

The prophet, using the criteria learned in his own culture, tells her that it is not fair to give to « the other », the one who is « different », what is supposedly

the exclusive patrimony of « one's own people », the « equals ». What reasonable parent would be capable of giving the house dogs the children's food?

But the woman's despair prompts her to reply in an astonishingly intelligent way, in taking up the prophet's own words: « Ah yes, sir! But the house dogs under the table can eat the children's scraps! »

Faced with this marvellous reply, the prophet discovers meaning and light. This poor desperate woman has shown him a new dimension of his mission: the Bread of the Father, his unconditional Love, has to be distributed to all: the « house dogs » are also now the CHILDREN invited to the table of the Banquet! The Evangeliser by antonomasia has been evangelised by a simple foreign woman moved by love and driven by need.

When the woman returns home, she finds her hope realised: her beloved little girl is lying on the bed, free from now on of the unclean spirit.

This touching story made me think all day of Helen, one of the girls belonging to the « Little Sprouts » project run

by the Maryknoll Sisters, Fathers and lay missionaries, present in Cambodia for almost twenty years (they were among the first groups of missionaries admitted into the country). The project, catering for VIH positive boys and girls whose parents have died of AIDS, guarantees them all the conditions for being able to lead a worthy life: lodging, food, education, clothes, leisure, the medicines necessary for them to overcome their sickness, and, what is most important, the warmth of a home and the hope of a possible future.

Helen started with this project in 2002, when her mother died in a hospital in Phnom Penh leaving her alone in the world. She was 8 years old at the time, but resembled rather a girl of 3, given her state of malnutrition and lack of proper medication.

I came to know Helen last year when Agustín and I served as volunteers giving English classes to a group of boys and girls with learning difficulties, for whom the Maryknoll missionary team had created a special programme.

Like any other adolescent, Helen seemed unsettled and sometimes even

haughty. She is an intelligent girl but easily loses concentration and interest in « academic » things. Some days she would come to class displaying very bad humour; she would sit in a corner and complain endlessly, and refuse absolutely to do anything at all. But little by little, through love and patience, and thanks to the good strategies thought up by the group of woman teachers directing the programme, Helen changed her behavior and showed a different attitude and a real desire to take part and learn.

Today, Helen is studying dressmaking in one of the centres created by Maryknoll in Anlong Kngan, a little village in the suburbs of Phnom Penh. She is living there with a family who take care of her and continue to give her


the support she needs to grow up and be happy. Helen is so proud when she goes out in to the street wearing one of the dresses she has made herself!

In Helen I have been able to see at work the power of Grace, not as something « magical » but as the consequence of the power of the Gospel operating in persons: in Helen herself and in all those who have worked so that she « may have LIFE in abundance ».

The « unclean spirit » which hovered above her and threatened her with death has been driven away by the gift and love of those who have consecrated their lives, in the name of Jesus, to the service of these least ones: it has been driven away thanks to the hard work of personnel who see to the good outcome of the objectives of the

projects; it has been driven away by the great generosity of numerous people throughout the world who have contributed resources to support the work of Maryknoll. The Father's Bread has been put on the table of his beloved daughter Helen!

May the Prophet of Nazareth make of us, Little Brothers of Mary, instruments to render the Kingdom of God present in our times and, in imitation of the Syrophoenician woman, may we also be « shrewd » enough to act so that the « Bread of the Father » may arrive on the table of many other children and young people, here in Cambodia and everywhere in the world.

Br. Diego L. Zawadzky Z., fms
Phnom Penh, 10 February 2011. 

Province of United States

American Marist new e-newsletter

This year 2011 marks the 125th anniversary of the presence of the Marist Brothers in the United States. The pioneering history of the Marist Brothers in the US includes a number of giants. Marist history knows their names well: Cesidius, Zephyriny, Ptolemeus, Heribert, Felix-Eugene.

Their hard work, spirit of risk-taking and pragmatism, and often tested simple but profound faith were the means that brought the Gospel to many young people in small parish schools, first in the predominately French-Canadian areas of New England, and eventually as far south as New York City. On October 9th, we will be marking that historic event with a celebration at St. Jean Baptiste Church in Manhattan - so save the date!

American Marist, as well as our new Facebook page and video, are part of a communications effort to share the good news about the work of the Marist Brothers. God is calling us to spread his love throughout the world. Take a few minutes to forward this e-newsletter to a friend. Or "like us" on Facebook and then tell your friends. If each of us does one of those simple acts, think of how many more people we will reach with this wonderful news!

Be assured of my good wishes and prayers for each of you.

Sincerely,
Brother Ben Consigli, F.M.S.
U.S. Provincial



Province of « Norandina »

Meeting of provincial animation teams

On 10, 11 and 12 February 2011, the provincial animation teams of the Province of « Norandina » met in Quito, Ecuador, under the coordination of Brother Libardo Garzón, Provincial, and his Council. The participants were members of the Spirituality Network, the Bureaus of Solidarity and Formation of Brothers and Laity, and the Commissions of initial and ongoing formation of the brothers, ministry to children and youth, vocations, education, laity and administration. The gathering consisted of 31 persons (27 men and 4 women). Of the brothers, 6 came from Venezuela, 5 from Ecuador and 12 from Colombia, while of the lay people, 2 were from Venezuela, 3 from Ecuador and 3 from Colombia. The main reason for the meeting was the evaluation, initiation and programming of activities of animation established and put in operation during the first year of exercise corresponding to the 3rd Provincial Chapter and oriented towards realizing the pastoral objectives it had adopted. We worked in a pleasant atmosphere of fraternity and dialogue. With all working on the same objectives concerning the Marist life and mission, the meeting facilitated the deepening of provincial unity among the participants.

Mgr Gonzalo opened the period of prayer and work with an account of his experience of apostolic activity for 40 years in Ecuador, a good part of it as Bishop of Sucumbíos, directing his efforts towards integrating lay people into the ecclesiastical task of evangelisation and human development. After serenely sharing with us his joy for the mission and for the fruits harvested, as well as his pain at the sad way in which they had put an end to his mission, he transmitted to us a single fundamental idea and certainty: Jesus alone and his Gospel are the *raison d'être* for everything we may do. The rest, simple variations of relative value. We hope



that prayer and the eucharist will help us to always have present in mind the centrality of Jesus and his Gospel, for the good of humanity and especially for those excluded from the human community.

The plan of work and respective methodology presented (the search for consensus through dialogue), we evaluated the performances and successes of the activities and the ends proposed; we also suggested some alternatives for improvement during the year begun. Thanks to the team work first, then in the general assembly, the objectives of the first working day were achieved. When we shared the evaluation in the assembly, we were reminded once more of the immense amount of information to be assimilated. On the one hand, this expresses, in the words of Br. Libardo, the life bubbling in the Province, but on the other, it allows us to grasp the difficulty there is in co-ordinating so many activities and the cost that represents, as much from the personal as from the work and economic points of view. We asked ourselves whether all this activity is, as it should be, productive from the economic, human and evangelical points of view.

The morning and a good part of Friday 11 were devoted to programming the animation of the year underway. This was done at the level of the teams

(Bureaus, Network and Commissions). About 4 pm we had a brief sharing in assembly of the new Action Plan for each team. The participants were then able to ask questions and request clarifications. It would appear we have learned to simplify the planning somewhat... Some wanted to end the day with a visit to the beautiful historical centre of Quito – cultural patrimony of Humanity -, bathed in the charm of night lighting.

The first part of the morning of Saturday 12 was consecrated to rearranging the Action Plan of all the animation teams. Particular attention was given to important activities involving travel and meetings, in order to avoid clashes. Then materials on solidarity (Volunteer Plan) and spirituality (aid material) were presented, with insistence on the need to adjust our institutional and personal expenses as far as possible, but without giving up what needed to be done. Br Libardo's words of encouragement, then the fraternal repast, taken in the spirit of the meals of Jesus, put the final point on this agreeable, and we hope, efficacious meeting. Thanks to Brothers Wilson and Andrés for hosting us with such kindness.

Br. Alfonso López