

CHAMPAGNAT MARISTS, BROTHERS AND LAY

Oceania Shared Formation Experience

We, a group of Champagnat Marists, Brothers and Lay, from Timor Leste, The Solomon Islands, Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Fiji, Australia and New Zealand gathered at The Hermitage Mittagong from 22 to 27 November, 2011 to explore Marist life and mission. We appreciated the presence and participation of Agnes Reyes from the Ad Gentes community in Bangkok and Fr Bob Barber SM, Vice-Provincial of the Marist Fathers of Australia. Coming together from diverse cultures as Brothers and Lay, we listened to one another, shared our faith journeys and were enriched by the experience of Marist life, of the Spirit alive in us.

As we interacted we discovered that the Spirit has called us to a deeper personal relationship with God and



one another. This also means sticking with it, though it may seem a struggle at times. Forgiveness and acceptance are important parts

of this journey together. We found we all have a place at this table in equality of presence, accep-

THE MISSION AND ITS PATHS

Almost all the members of the General Council celebrated Christmas at home. There was a solemn Mass, and fiesta with presents, songs and music after supper. After the celebrations, they departed for Nairobi. They have invited the Provincial Councils of Africa and Madagascar to hold an Enlarged General Council. Víctor, Ernesto and Antonio were unable to be in Rome because they had gone ahead to prepare things. They celebrated Christmas in Nairobi.

The families of Brother John Klein and Father John Jairo shared in the Christmas festivities with the communities of the General House. As did Father Gilberto, who will be taking Father John Jairo's place. Several Brothers from the house at Manziana also passed through the General House. On Christmas Day, a group of Brothers from the General Administration helped the Community of Saint Egidio in serving at table at one of the 23 Christmas banquets this community provides for the poor in churches of Rome converted into dining halls.

tance and service.

Recognizing the diversity of experience, and drawing together the wisdom of all participants, provided a particular challenge. We are called to cherish the giftedness of one another and to enrich each others' calls; we are called to trust in the Spirit and Mary's influence in our lives.

We are called by God to God, through our relationships with each other and the young, by following the invitation to live in the apostolic way based on the Marist spirituality of Marcellin Champagnat. This invitation challenges us to explore Marist spirituality at this time, and to deepen our faith in communion with others. We are called and challenged to bring Christ's life to birth

in the lives of the young and each other.

This experience has affirmed our commitment that meaningful relationships are central to the past, present and future expression of Marist life and mission. We are together on this journey building our Marist community through meaningful relationships. It is in creating and nurturing shared space for relationships with God, ourselves and each other that we grow together in spirituality, shared life and mission.

Responding to the needs of marginalized young people is our Marist mission. "Montagne" is not an isolated incident. We Champagnat Marists are urged to seek out our "Montagnes" not just where we expect to find them, but

in unexpected places also.

The Oceania Shared Formation Experience 2011 has confirmed that a vocational Marist life is a gift from God and open to all. It has confirmed that our inspiration for Marist life has, and continues to come from, the lived reality of our communal relationships.

It has provided us with a space for creative options for experimenting with the diverse possibilities of Marist life in the future.

We respect highly the interdependence and complementarity of all Marists across the region, and look forward in hope to supporting one another with confidence and energy.



SEVEN NEW MARISTS AT MATOLA NOVITIATE

A willing response from the Lord in freedom

There are seven new Marists at Matola Novitiate, Southern Africa Province. The Entrance ceremony started with the Holy Mass. We had seven priests who concelebrated and a wide range of consecrated men and women sandwiched by friends and well wishers. All was done at Saint Gabriel Parish. The Provincial reminded the newly professed that their commitment is not a sentence but a willing response from the Lord in freedom. Then a cup of water was held at our Novitiate community spiced by heart touching unresisting music by



Elias. Professor Dora had Yellow TShirts done for them with the picture of them on it. Thanks our teacher and mother

for your moral support. After a good meal we had a free sharing in groups of proximity. Afterwards all our invited guests left at their own time.

The new novices are:

- * Dias Gemusse (Mozambique)
- * Peter Justen (Malawi)
- * Carlos Catole (Mozambique)
- * Francis Ndapisha (Zambia)
- * Daniel Jariosse (Mozambique)
- * Dominic Nyoni (Malawi)
- * Emmanuel Mwenya (Zambia)



DIFFUSION OF THE NEW DATA BASE SYSTEM OF THE INSTITUTE

Mexico - Training session for the Provincial Secretaries of America



The Secretary General has concluded the third meeting for introducing the new data base system for the Institute, in this case in Mexico City, in the Provincial House of México Central (Quinta Soledad). The meeting took place from 28 November to 2 December 2011, with all the Provincial Secretaries of America except for Canada, which took part in the meeting in Lyon. Those present were: Br Balbino Juárez (América Central); Mr Wilson Pereira (Brasil Centro-Norte); Mrs Rosangela Graczkowski, Br Ivo Strobino (Brasil Centro-Sul); Br Eduardo Gatti (Cruz del Sur); Br Gerardo Torres (México Central); Brs Javier López and Carlos Toral, Mrs Liliana Columba Torres (México Occidental); Brs Hernán Gómez and Hernán Velasco (Norandina); Mrs Elaine Strapasson, Br Romidio Siveris (Rio Grande do Sul); Br Melchor Díez, Mrs Silvia Alejandra Rodríguez (Santa María de los Andes); Mrs Doris Reischach, Br Richard Vanhouten

(United States); and Brothers Pedro Sánchez de León, Secretary General and Marcelo De Brito, programmer, from the General Administration.

The objectives and reasons for these formation courses have been made clear in previous articles on the meetings of the Provincial Secretaries in Spain and France described on Champsagnat.org. The present article is intended to say something about the group taking part, the place, the welcome, contact with the culture of the country, and to pass on the comments of some of the participants.

For the group, one can say that it manifested a variety of cultures, and a capacity for adaptation and collaboration proper to people who are well imbued with the sense of brotherhood and the spirit of work.

Quinta Soledad, the Provincial House

of México Central, was the place which hosted the group. The spirit of work and the experience of Marist simplicity and family spirit were evident from the first moment. They were days dedicated to learning the new system and sharing experiences of the 10 Marist Provinces present. It must be said that the welcome on the part of the Province of México Central, in the person of Br Gerardo Torres, was exceptional, very much one of brother to brothers. This point was emphasized in the final evaluation, where it was expressed that "we felt at home, we had a taste of Mexico".

Br Balbino Juárez (América Central) made the following comment:

"On the organization of the course, I consider that the directions sent prior to the Meeting by Br Secretary General in relation to the data relating to the houses and persons of the Administrative Unit, which we had to bring to Mexico, were well-timed. They saved us a good amount of time and helped us move ahead in learning the new system."

The methodology followed in the meeting allowed us progressively to realize the importance, projection and possibilities the implementation of this computer system offers for the life of the Institute. I underline the importance of counting at any moment on the availability and patience of Br Marcelo De Brito, who not only explained the form for introducing information but also took interest in welcoming difficulties and suggestions.

Br. Pedro Sánchez de León, Secretary General



FORMER MARIST STUDENTS OF THE PROVINCE OF "MEDITERRÁNEA"

Constitution of the Associations of Former Marist Students

The Governing Council of 'ADEMAR Mediterránea' met for the first time on 3 December, at the Marist Centre of Guardamar del Segura in Alicante, Spain.

The Federation of Associations of Former Marist Students of the Province of "Mediterránea" was 'officially' born in September, after a gestation period of several years, on the occasion of the Constituent Assembly held at Málaga, during which its Statutes were approved and its first president elected, Mr Fernando Orellana Ramos.

The meeting opened with a prayer to Our Good Mother, followed by a reflection based on art. 88 of our Constitutions: We keep in close contact with former students by friendship and prayer. We willingly accept their co-operation in the progress of the school. At appropriate times we help them with advice, and encourage them to devote themselves to serving the Church and people. We also referred to a text from the Strategic Plan of the Province : To improve our relations with those around us, paying particular attention to unity with the former students and to presence within other civil and religious structures: to outline a structure of union with former students in our establishments ; to organize periodic meetings of former students in each school; to revive the Associations of Former Students in the establishments; to designate a provincial co-ordinator to accompany and encourage activities with the former students of the establishments and organise provincial meetings with the Governing Boards of the Associations of Former Students (OE. 12).

Those taking part in the meeting were representatives or delegations of ADEMAR from: Algemesí, Alicante, Badajoz, Cartagena, Còrdoba, Denia, Huelva, Jaén, La Mina, Malaga, Murcia and Seville.

Before the meeting, Brothers Aureliano García, Ignacio Poyatos and José María Rius, members of the Provincial Council, offered us a cordial greeting. The constitution proceedings for the Associations of Former Marist Students in Giugliano, Italy, and Champville, Lebanon, seemed very positive. The objective remains the integration of all the establishments of the Province.

Some aspects relative to the organisation were studied: the share (with dispensation for Associations in the course of creation or having operating problems), maintenance of the web site www.ademarmediiterranea.org, date of the next meeting (Saturday 11 February 2012, in Madrid, co-inciding with the Assembly of the Spanish Federation of Former Marist Students) and short term objectives: revitalise the local Associations and encourage their reformation or their foundation where they do not exist; offer support and accompaniment from 'ADEMAR Mediterránea'; see that each Association has its Brother Advisor and accompanier; consider organizing an ADEMAR meeting of the whole Province based on the sport practiced in the Associations (day or championship); to present proposals to the Madrid meeting.



Finally, some interesting reflections to share with you: It's a good idea but difficult to implement (Br José Alonso). It's a true "volunteer service" (Br Pencho). We must be aware that even without the "label" of former students, the Marist presence through them, in society (for transforming it into a better world), in the Marist establishments and works, is very important (Alberto Payá). Every group of former students has its motivations and it is necessary to see "what we can offer them"

(Br Pencho). The «personal and human relationship» is fundamental; it is necessary to promote meetings between local associations so that they get to know one another better (Ildefonso Pérez).

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