

## MIC, 25 YEARS

### Closure of the silver jubilee

A number of factors had to come together to ensure the launching of the Marist International Centre of Nairobi (MIC) 25 years ago. They included the felt need to give our young African Brothers a solid formation, the vision of the future of a superior general (Charles Howard) and the Marist superiors of the continent, and the courage and hope of a pioneering group (formators and young Brothers) who translated the dream into reality.

It all began at the end of 1986, on a just purchased property on the outskirts of Nairobi, in an old house there. Everything had to be done to prepare a formation project, a plan of studies, to begin constructing residences, the academic section, common services such as the refectory, meeting rooms and chapel. And, above all, to create a vital and enthusiastic community. It was the beginning of a dream.



« Those who sow in tears, sing during the harvesting », (Ps 125-126). Today, 10 February, 25 years after those humble beginnings, the whole of MIC is celebrating its Silver Jubilee. And the figures speak louder than words: the 27 Brothers of the first

## GENERAL HOUSE

From 6 to 9 February, Br Emili Turú, Superior General, took part in a Symposium organized by the Pontifical Gregorian University on the subject of the abuse of minors.

Last Saturday, the mother of Br Josep Maria Soterias, Councillor General, died in Igualada, Spain. Br Emili accompanied Br Josep Maria to the funeral to express the fraternal solidarity of the Council and all the Brothers.

Br Pedro Sánchez, Secretary General, and Br Marcelo De Brito, have been meeting in Manila with the provincial secretaries of the sectors of Asia and Oceania, to present the new data base system.

Br Eugène Kabanguka was in Nairobi on 10 February, representing the Superior General at the closure of the 25th anniversary of MIC.

Also in Nairobi, Br Joe Mc Kee, Vicar General, took part in the meeting of the Board of Governors of MIUC on 13 and 14 February, while Br Eugène will participate in the Conference of Superiors of the African Continent from the 15th to 17th.

community have become today 104, coming from 17 countries of the continent. They are distributed among 7 residences, called Fraternities. Their formation programme lasts 4 years. The staffing is assured by a team of 17 African Brothers who have taken up the responsibility of transmitting the charisma and incarnating the Marist mission in our continent.



The academic section has also grown and developed new infrastructures. The few external students who shared the plan of studies from the origins, have become now the great majority of the student body: they are 700, 70 of them Sisters from a dozen congregations. Only the brothers follow the full four year programme. Most of the external students follow courses of different durations.

MIC, which obtained affiliation to the Urbanium University of Rome, has become a Constituent Colledgependant on the Catholic University of East Africa (CUEA). Since September 2010, the academic section of MIC has been called the Marist International University College (MIUC).

In over one year of Pre-university Studies, MIUC offers formation in

four fields: Education, Religious Formation, Business and Social Studies, and Business and Information Technology.

In the course of 25 years of existence, MIC has become a reference point for Marist life in Africa. Hundreds of Brothers have passed through the Centre during this period. They compose the majority of the Administrative Units of Africa and a good number of them occupy posts of responsibility, animation and government on the continent. They are 402 brothers who have graduated from the MIC.

To look at the past is an encouragement for dreaming the future and moving in that direction with faith and courage, taking up the challenges before us. Happy anniversary, MIC!




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# WORLD YOUTH DAY 2013

## Launching of official logo of youth meeting in Rio de Janeiro

The official logo for the next World Youth Day, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in July 2013, was launched on 7 February. The winner of the competition is Gustavo Huguenin, 25, from the city of Cantagalo. The chosen logo has bright colours; it represents the colours of Brasil and, at the same time, one of its best known symbols, Christ the Redeemer. One detail of the logo attracts attention: the heart, referring immediately to the heart of Christ, welcoming and disinterested, simple and direct.



The World Youth Day will be held in Rio de Janeiro, from 23 to 28 July 2013. As with Sydney and Madrid, the International Marist Youth Meeting will take place before the WYD, from 17 to 22 July. The organizing commission for the meeting has just met for the second time these recent days.  
Site: <http://www.rio2013.com>



# CHAMPAGNAT LAY MARISTS

## Venezuela - IV National Meeting

Gathered at Los Teques, on 27, 28 and 29 January 2012, we, the laity and brothers of the different Marist presences of Venezuela, met to reflect and share on the personal and group journeying of the Marist laity, our life experiences, hopes and projects for the future. During these days, we have renewed our commitment to Jesus who, one day, called us to live the charism inherited from Father Champagnat as disciples and lay people. Like Mary, we respond anew: Yes, Lord! Here we are to follow you as lay Marists, in sharing life and mission, at the side of the Little Brothers of Mary, with the desire to realize one of the calls of the XXI General Chapter: to live a new relationship, in a new spirit of communion.



We discover and welcome the lay movement of today as a new call from Jesus, in the Marist way. This new call places in front of us the challenge to reflect on our identity and our future; we wish, in this way, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to lay down solid foundations for assuring the durability of the Champagnat lay Marist movement in Venezuela.

The proposal of the laity aims at transformation: something new is in train of being born. All change involves conflict and tension. At present, it is urgent to break with the schemes and models we have become attached to, in order to open the door to new ways of being and living as lay Marists, more in harmony with the realities of each presence, for one cannot pour new wine into old wineskins. Lay people and brothers equally, we are called to be co-responsible for acting in such a

way that this new relationship aimed at revitalizing the Marist charism in Venezuela, becomes a reality. This journey, with its lights and shadows, we take on as a reality which we have to respond to, strong in knowing ourselves called to a specific vocation, in order to hatch

a new way of living the Marist life as lay people.

Joyful at meeting our brothers of the road and from the reflection emerging from the sharing of our respective situations, in the light of the Word of God and the documents on the Marist laity, we perceive some intuitions and some calls:

Our being and our activities take shape as a MOVEMENT, in the dynamism of daily life and processes, in the novelty of consciously assuming our vocation as laity, in a wide range of responses to the mission, which is opening up more

and more to places and situations different from those of the past (new presences, incorporation in the local Church), but also in the diversity of the different expressions and experiences as laity, by the way in which we have come to know and join the Marist spir-

it, by the multiple forms of service and apostolate, by the close relationship we establish with the brothers and with the mission which we share.

We also feel the need to ACCOMPANY THESE PROCESSES coming to birth in the different Marist presences in Venezuela. The pedagogy of Jesus suggests to us a road to travel in the company of others: (a) in a multitude of disciples who follow his

teachings and (b) in the community of disciples living intimacy with Jesus, with whom he establishes closer rapports. We feel the call to promote experiences in view of being communities, more than work teams, after the fashion of the first Christian communities. Such an experience can reorient our journey, with structures of animation which create support networks. Formation is an essential aspect of this accompaniment. We are thinking of a formation shared in community, which envisages aspects of one's own life, which is integral and which embraces many dimensions (human, Christian, Marist, social).

### Interprovincial novitiate of Passo Fundo

On 8 December, in the chapel of the college of Marite Conceição, Passo Fundo, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil, 9 Brothers made their first profession. It was the first religious profession ceremony at the Interprovincial Novitiated of Passo Fundo, opened on 2 February 2011.

The newly professed thanked those who had supported them on this journey, especially their formators.



According to these intuitions we have observed:

Being a lay Marist is a choice of life, a PERSONAL CALL OF GOD FROM THE MARIST CHARISM. It is this call that we want to share, nourish, and give witness to in our LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

We who feel this call of God FIND IN IT THE MEANING OF OUR LIFE AND OUR ACTION, WHICH CAN TAKE DIFFERENT WAYS AND HAVE MULTIPLE FACES: the professor, the teacher, the animator of youth groups, the former student, the university student, the neighbour, the catechist, the parish priest, the bishop, the young worker, the betrothed couple, the parents with their children... Thus is formed a range of expressions which are based, like the colours of the rainbow, on a single ray of light.

From the beginning, we, the lay Marists of Venezuela, have accepted and lived diversity in our works and presences.

We see it as an approach still incomplete. It is a movement which is adapted and readjusted according to personal and local situations. Thus at this IV National Meeting, IT SEEMS TO US NECESSARY TO DISCERN THE MANNER OF LIVING THIS VOCATION IN THE MARIST LAY COMMUNITIES, in adapting to our lay reality what Marcellin wanted to construct in the first community at La Valla.

Here are some tasks and challenges we have to take up at this time, as lay Marists in Venezuela :

1. Study and reflection which allow us to make more precise the identity of the movement, composed of the animation communities of the different works.
2. Creation of formation programmes on the Marist lay vocation, in which the vocation of the lay Marist is promoted on the basis of personal and local life and situations.

We invite to live as lay Marists all those who feel called by God to walk in the footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat. This is a unique opportunity, a sign of the times which urges us to live and share the Marist charism with audacity. Strong with the participation of the lay people of the various works, we will be able to give life to the Lay Marist Movement of Venezuela. We thank all the persons who have fostered the initiatives from the National Team of the Laity; thanks for their service and devotion which have helped us move forward. A sincere thanks also to those who have given us support from the Marist works and presences.

Lay Marists of Champagnat – men and women – we involve ourselves with the brothers in this challenge: to help the dawning of a new Marist life being born and strengthen the current Marist life, making it more creative, faithful, dynamic and prophetic. There is the future of a revitalized Marist Venezuela.



# FMSI

## Child Rights training workshop for the 'link persons'

Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI), Geneva office, has developed a ten-day child rights training workshop. The workshop will be held mainly in Rome, at the General Administration's headquarters, from the 21st of May to the 2nd of June. The intended participants are key personnel from the Marist Brothers' Provinces around the world. These people, called 'link persons', are the contact people for FMSI in their Provinces and have a significant role in promoting the rights of children through advocacy efforts and conducting workshops within their own region. This workshop is intended to introduce them to the mechanisms of the United Nations, especially treaty monitoring bodies and the Universal Periodic Review and how to use these mechanisms to promote the rights of children and defend their rights in their own countries. The skills learnt

in this workshop will equip the participants with the skills to conduct similar workshops in their region, as well as promote a rights-based approach for province organizations who work with children.

The program will embrace lectures, visits to the UN (in Geneva, Switzerland) for some UPR sessions, listen to guest speakers from permanent missions, UN agencies and other NGOs on how to engage in advocacy and establish support networks in this field of work. They will develop a Personal Action Plan for advocacy and child protection and equip them to lead child rights advocacy and training in their own Province.

The course starts on the 21st of May and finishes at lunchtime on Saturday 2nd June. Read more in [www.fmsi-onlus.org](http://www.fmsi-onlus.org)



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