

REGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN MARIST ASIA

Inauguration of the Marist Asia Conference

Regional co-operation in Marist Asia has taken a significant step forward with the inauguration of the Marist Asia Conference. For many years the leaders of Asia have met, shared experiences and exchanged resources. Now this co-operation has been formalised through the Marist Conference of Asia which had its first meeting in Bangkok 26 – 27 February.

It was the Extended General Council meeting for Asia held in July last year that was the catalyst for the organisation of this formal structure by the Superiors of Asia – the leaders of the Provinces of East and South Asia, and the Asian Mission ad Gentes Sector. The members of MAC at its first meeting were the two Provincials (Manny de Leon and Shanthi Liyanage) their deputies (Robert Teoh and Mervyn Perera), the Superior of the AMAG Sector (Luis Sobrado) and his deputy (Juan Castro), and the Rector of MAPAC (Peter Rodney). Since one key goal of the Confer-



ence is co-ordination of the regional relationship with the General Council, Mike de Waas was also present at the meeting. Much of the organisation of the meeting was efficiently done by Agnes Reyes on behalf of the host Administrative Unit – AMAG. Before its next meeting the membership of AMAG will be expanded with the appointment of two Asian Lay Marists.

Being its first formal meeting, much time was devoted to articulating the vision within the group for the Conference and how it might work. It was clear that the Conference exists to develop Marist Life and Mission in Asia – in an Asian way. The Conference is committed to improving the quality of initial and ongoing formation; developing regional ways of enhancing Marist spirituality among Brothers and Lay Marists; promoting the vocation of both the Lay Marist and Brother; developing a strong Marist

GENERAL HOUSE

The General Council, the Directors of the Secretariats, the Br Provincial and a delegate of each Province, are taking part in an institutional workshop on the protection of the rights of children and young people, entitled: "From denial to recognition...from policy to practice."

In the days preceding this important workshop (21-28 March), the General House has been welcoming the participants with open arms.

Youth Ministry at the service of the Church in Asia; and, promoting new ministries in the midst of poor young people. Collaboration in a sustainable financial functioning of the Administrative Units is also within the vision of the Conference.

So, areas of co-operation that were identified at the Extended General

Council meeting were discussed in more detail. Co-operative plans were made for areas such as: formation, prayer and spirituality, mission, and community life. The meeting was careful to ensure that its plans are realistic and achievable - within the capacities of the Asian Administrative Units.

The inaugural meeting concluded with

the election of office bearers: Chair – Shanthi Liyanage; Deputy Chair – Luis Sobrado; Secretary – Peter Rodney. These Brothers have responsibility for implementing the planning agreed to at this inaugural meeting. The next meeting of the Conference will be hosted by the Province of South Asia in 2013.



PROVINCE "BRASIL CENTRO-NORTE"

Provincial Communication Plan: dialogue, transparency, ethics and solidarity

A strategic communication characterised by dialogue, transparency, ethics and solidarity: such is orientation of the Communication Plan of the Province of « Brasil Centro-Norte » launched by the Provincial, Br Wellington Medeiros and the Communication team (Ascom) on 7 March. Through video-conference, it was presented to administrators, brothers, representatives of the school and social establishments, the Marist Provinces and other partners. « The document will reinforce our identity and help us to be more present in the life of children, adolescents and young people », the Provincial said.

Fruit of a year's work, the Plan appears as a document-guide for the creation and consolidation of the culture of provincial communication, on the basis of institutional policies, in view of unity in the province. Starting with study, research and reflection, the Plan defines the strategic points, institutional messages of priority, mission and values of the communica-

tion which will be assimilated thanks to all the persons who contribute to the vitality of the Province. Among its objectives, the following points are to be noted: reinforce the Marist label and internal communication, make the activities of the Province more visible



and second the Provincial Council in what concerns the theme. « We hope to incorporate communication into management. To replace an operational vision (focused on the immediate present) with a professional and systematic

approach to actions, », said Br Paulo Martins, co-ordinator of the Bureau of Communication.

Each establishment has received a copy of the Communication Plan and a video with the main points of the document, on CD, towards a common work between brothers, managers, collaborators and educators. In April, the team of the Bureau will send a study guide of the Plan to the establishments, for that month is the meeting of the Delegate-Animators for the Communication of the Province, in Brasília (DF)

The representative of the Provincial Council, Br José Wagner, finished the video-conference by inviting the teams to study the

Plan : « It is an instrument which will help us improve our internal dialogues and reflect on our identity – who we are –, on the way we perform and set up rapport with others ».



"FINDING A PLACE AT THE TABLE"

Giugliano, Naples - The La Valla experience

In the Marist school of Giugliano in Campania (Naples, Italy) many things are happening: not only meetings and class reunions. The Marist community itself in these days of intense activity "on territory" has also experienced a special time, by opening its doors to some young animators of the school's youth ministry, particularly close to the Marist spirit.

For one week, from 14 to 19 February 2012, 4 young people (3 from university and one in the last year of high school) lived in community with the Brothers, sharing their timetable, especially the opening and closing times of the days, from rising to the evening rest, joining in the community gatherings for prayer and the Eucharistic celebrations. They had their meals together, the times of recreation, rest, conversation, tv and games.

This experience has already been proposed in different years and in response to the requests of numerous young animators, we already have other persons on the waiting list, who will join us in the first week of Lent. The experience is open to boys and girls who wish to experience a style of life very different from that of the family: that of a religious community committed to the field of education.

At the end of the experience, the community met with the young people to do an evaluation together and hear the reactions of the youth. The first group expressed its satisfaction with a letter delivered to each of the Brothers present. Here are the impressions of Angelica, a university student of 20:

"To live the La Valla experience is something deep which has made me feel changed within... you feel the com-



munity as your family and learn to appreciate and understand everyone's diversity, to be sharing in a unique great charism, the Marist one, which is always so strong whatever the age or stage of our life... To begin the day with prayer and to finish it with the Mass makes you feel strongly the presence of Jesus, and to know and love him more :)... You become curious and you want to follow him more closely... Now I feel I have an even tighter bond with my companions in the adventure and with the whole community... Thanks to all of you for making me always feel at home :D" (Angelica).



Meeting of the Animation Teams of Uruguay

The Meeting of the Animation Teams of Marist Uruguay took place on Saturday 3 March in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Director Generals, Directors of Sections, Administrators, Pastoral Coordinators and members of the Volunteer Service, inspired by two Gospel texts telling the story of Jesus meeting his first disciples (Lk 3 :21-32 and Jn 1:35-40), began by reflecting on their reality and situation: signs of the time pointing to the presence of Jesus... the capacity for enthusiasm they produce...

In a second session, grouped according to their specific task, the participants tried to trace the main features of the course travelled. Then they considered projects for the year, fixing activities and the dates planned for them.

During the sharing in common, the participants outlined the « Horizon » of the Marist life and mission they would like to encourage in Uruguay.

The meeting concluded with a succulent « asado » (barbecue) in honour of Br Emeterio Pérez Mayor who was celebrating his birthday.



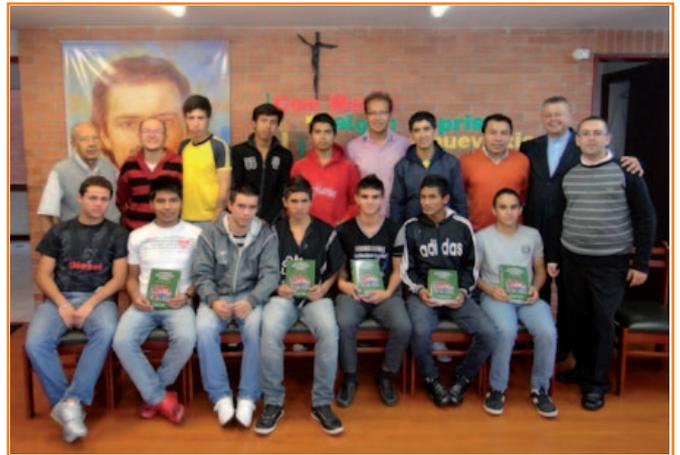
ENTRY OF NEW POSTULANTS AT MANIZALES

Province Norandina

On 23 January this year, 12 postulants, 3 second year and 9 first, entered the house of formation. The first weeks were for induction and knowing the community, a work done in conjunction with the Brother formators. We completed this first step with a live-in, which allowed us to become better acquainted with one another and to begin community building.

As is normal in processes of adaptation, some young men experienced situations of difficulty, since undertaking a new life style has its quota of sacrifices. Some saw at this time that the Lord was calling them to another style of life; so three of them decided to take new routes.

A month after entering this stage, we had our first retreat. A space of meeting with the Lord in silence, contemplation and meditation.



MEETING FOR ANIMATORS OF VOCATIONS

Province "Brasil Centro-Sul"

From 27 February to 2 March, brothers and laity of the Province of « Brasil Centro-Sul » gathered in Curitiba to discuss the Animation of Vocations, especially the Happy-Life Programme. This is a programme aimed at pupils of the public education system aged from 13 to 17. Its objective is to « set in motion, with the young people, processes of listening, dialogue, formation and accompaniment, by creating spaces and resources which contribute to the construction of their life project. »

A good part of the week was devoted to the presentation of the projects which make up the Programme, in particular « Bridges » and « Tent ». The first develops activities in the classroom. Two videos and a maga-

zine have been produced for this purpose, dealing with topics important for the lives of adolescents and young people. On the basis of this material, the teachers will be able to carry on a dialogue with them, in order to involve them in the proceedings, making constant reference to the life project, the transversal axis of the whole Programme. It was an intense week of formation, of launching material and discussions about the situation of young people.

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