

CALENDAR OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

April – June 2012

18 March – 13 May: Visit to the Province of Southern Africa – Antonio Ramalho, Ernesto Sánchez

1-29 April: visit to the Province of Melbourne – John Klein, Michael De Waas

3-5 April: Commission of New Models of Animation, Management and Government of the Marist works – John Klein, Víctor Preciado and João Carlos do Prado

4-25 April: Visit to the Province of Canada – Eugène Kabankuga and Josep Maria Soteras

9 April: Regular Council Meeting
15-22 April: Retreat in Korea – Joe Mc Kee

24-25 April: European Mission Team, Lyon - João Carlos do Prado

25-26 April: European Marist Conference - CEM, Barcelona

26 April – 23 June: 2nd Session Community Animators, Spanish and Portuguese languages, El Escorial - Secretariat Brothers today

26 April – 23 June: 2nd Session Community Animators, English language, Manziana, Secretariat Brothers today



30 April – 04 May: Council meets Community Animators in Manziana and the Escorial

6-8 May: MYM Conference, Australia – João Carlos do Prado

9 May: Regional Meeting of Oceania on the International MYM doc. Australia – João Carlos do Prado

9-10 May: European Vocations Team Meeting, Rome, General House - César Rojas

17-21 May: Meeting with new provincials, Campinas – Brasil – Emili Turú, Joe Mc Kee, Eugène Kabanguka, Josep Maria Soteras

21 May – 2 June: Workshop on the Rights of the Child for "contact persons" – FMSI

22 May: Regular Council Meeting

GENERAL HOUSE

Brother Superior General, various members of his Council, some Directors of the Secretariats, together with Provincials and delegates from every Province took part here in the General House in the workshop on the Defence of the Rights of the Child: "From denial to recognition...from policy to practice", which finished on Wednesday 28.

In addition, last week, General Councillors Ernesto Sanchez and Antonio Ramalho departed for South Africa where they begin a two month visit of the Province of Southern Africa, which also includes Malawi, Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

23-26 May: Enlarged General Council, Cono Sur y Brasil, Campinas - Brasil
29 May – 6 June: Enlarged Secretariat of the Laity, Canada - Javier Espinosa
31 May – 7 June: Session Community Animators (both groups), L'Hermitage - Secretariat Brothers today
31 May – 1 June: General Conference Commission: Joe Mc Kee, Ernesto Sánchez, Michael De Waas, Emili Turú,

Óscar Martín Vicario
1-30 June: Plenary Session, Rome
7-9 June: Visit to the community of the General House – Josep Maria Soteras, Eugène Kabanguka, Michael De Waas and Emili Turú
7-9 June: Leadership programme - Antonio Ramalho, Ernesto Sánchez, Joe Mc Kee, John Klein

16-19 June: Meeting of Secretariats
18-22 June: International Patrimony Commission – Eugène Kabanguka, César Rojas
21-24 June: Provincial Chapter United States
 25-29 June: Commission for International Marist Mission Assembly - João Carlos do Prado, Javier Espinosa, César Rojas



COMMUNITY ANIMATORS

El Escorial - 05 - 16 March 2012

The days spent at El Escorial have been for us a time of Marist Spiritual Patrimony. First of all, a two day workshop animated by Br Patricio, a member of the group; then an experience of pilgrimage to the Marist Places around the Hermitage, in the company of the group of Community Animators from Manziana, near Rome.

The aim of the workshop was to allow us to discover, or re-discover, some features of the Marist charism. To do this, we made use especially of the 70 letters The Founder wrote to the Brothers, the original Marist legislation, and resolutions and other writings of the Founder's time.

The workshop also envisaged offering us the possibility of coming to know the Places of Encounter with Marcellin Champagnat and a simple method of pursuing interiorisation and discernment at the sources of the charism.

It was a period of intense work around eight questions relative to a concept of charism based on three complementary aspects: mission, spirituality and community. The final synthesis reflected a Marcellin face alive, attractive, full of tenderness, patience, and assurance. A Champagnat Father and Mother, face of Mary, in whom he trusted completely and to whom he always had recourse. Thus we prepared our hearts for the pilgrimage we undertook on Wednesday 7, in the direction of Lyon.

The first important moment was waiting for the group from Manziana and the meeting with these English-speaking Brothers. The welcome, the journey, and the arrival at the Hermitage were an interesting experience: were we in 'Babel' or 'the Cénacle'? The testimony shared by Br Justin reassured us, for we had made majority choice of living the

experience as a Cenacle, around Mary, and with the power of the Spirit. Justin underlined the effort we had agreed on to speak and understand the language of the other, in all senses of the term.

Our international community took shape gradually: the 30 coming from Manziana and the Escorial, plus the 8 Brothers and Colette, of the host community of the Hermitage, Renée, a Mexican lay man who had animated a workshop at the house, The Marist chaplain at the Hermitage and two Brothers of the General Administration: Eugène Kabanguka, C.G. and César Rojas. Many languages and nationalities, as many ways of incarnating a charism, of numerous gifts and limitations. Most of the Brothers knew the Hermitage already.

We made an 'exterior' pilgrimage: visit of the house and its surroundings, guided by the local community. At this stage, we were invited to look for the treasure of our roots in this house, a treasure we then shared at the eucharist, the table and during recreation.

Marlhes and le Rosey marked a second step of our tour. The walk from the parish to le Rosey, through a snowy countryside, helped us become aware of the way travelled by Marcellin and his family so often and in all weather. Here he spent 16 years of his life; here his personality was forged. After the eucharist and the meal, a video helped understand this stage of his life. The Manziana group animated this moment when we were invited to share our family backgrounds. Return via Saint-Sauveur-en-Rue where Marcellin did his preparation for the seminary; the Bourg-Argental, which recalled the visit made by Marcellin and Br Stanislas to the sick Br Jean-Baptiste. From there we climbed to the Donnet house, now in ruins, but which was without doubt

light-filled and welcoming that night, in the middle of the snowstorm... The Memorare came from our hearts... Our day's experience concluded on the site of Marcellin's meeting with the young Montagne: Les Palais du Bessat. We thought of our 'Montagnes' of today.

A day at home allowed us to open ourselves to the reality of our first Brothers, aided by Br Alain Delorme. We were able to see the charism under construction, with living stones, in a collective enterprise encouraged by our Founder, but inspired by the Spirit of God and sustained by the hand of Mary. Apart from Br Alain's presentation, a work in languages on the features of Champagnat which we discovered in the testimony of Br Laurent, helped us interiorize this stage of our journey.

Our pilgrimage continued in climbing up to Maisonnettes and La Valla. After a group sharing in the house of Br François, we walked to La Valla, in the footsteps of Marcellin and the first Brothers, who longed so ardently to make Jesus Christ known and loved by the country people. At La Valla, a warm welcome at the place of foundation from the local community. Celebration around the same table that Marcellin and his Brothers had made for us. Then, the shared meal and a walk to N.D. de Pitié, where we pressed Mary for Marist vocations for today – brothers and lay people. We had an affectionate thought for the young men in our houses of formation or for those in search. At the foot of the Croix Rousse, we turned our eyes towards our current missions and prayed that the Lord would bless them.

On Monday we were invited to consider the incarnation of our charism from another perspective. We travelled to Geneva in Switzerland to learn about a current project of incarnation of the Marist mission: FMSI and its office, near the UNO, so as to be present, at the world level, in efforts of promoting and defending the rights of children and adolescents. The local community welcomed us; we had a meal with the Brothers, who explained their activities; then a guided visit of the UNO. We discovered a complex world of international forums working for the promotion and defense of human rights, as well as for development and progress. Mercedès, our guide, accompanied us and helped us to see the two sides of the coin. On leaving the place,

we paid a quick visit to the office FMSI shares with another organisation. The end of the visit was marked by a tour of the historic centre of the city and around the famous lake.

Next day, Br André Lanfrey introduced us to the vast world of the Society of Mary. He helped understand the long and slow road travelled by our congregation – within the Society of Mary – to mature, and the founding intuition and concrete response given, at the time. This is not without instruction for us with regard to the road we are in train of travelling today, in thinking about the renewal of the charism in our Institute. Early in the afternoon, we made a pilgrimage to la Neylière, in its time mother house of the Marist Fathers, and the place where Fr Colin drew up the Rule and spent the last years of his earthly life. We also visited the museums of the Fathers and the museum of Oceania. We celebrated the eucharist near Fr Colin's tomb. On the return, we stopped at Valfleury, place of pilgrimage for Br François and for Marcellin...



The high point of our pilgrimage was Fourvière, Marial sanctuary of the Church of Lyon and France, and place of the promise of the Society of Mary. We celebrated the eucharist there and toured the different places of Marist and cultural interest,

among them the cathedral where Marcellin was ordained; near this is the Episcopal place he had to visit often enough... We were also taken by the Saint Nizier Orphanage, where Marcellin and the first Brothers took charge of a home for orphans...

The experience –pilgrimage ended with a morning retreat, Marial prayer at noon, around the graves of our first Brothers, and group sharing to help us reread the experience of these days and project it on to our places of life and mission. Before the final eucharist, each had the opportunity to express what he had in his heart. The celebration allowed us to give thanks and offer ourselves, with the sacrifice of Christ. It was near the relics of Champagnat that we received the final benediction.

And there is what concerns the exterior... But each of us also lived an interior pilgrimage..., proceedings and connections woven together, like a net of the Spirit which catches all sorts of fish, or the journeying of Mary, inviting us to go in haste.

MEETING OF MARIST HOUSES OF PUBLICATION

General House, 17 March

El On 17 March, the General House hosted the first meeting of the Executive Committee of the Marist Houses of Publication. Those taking part were: for the Edelvives Group – Spain: Br Julián Sanz Faices, Director Général and President of the executive Committee, Alberto Pazos Arranz, Director of Organisation and Development, Javier Cendoya Irezábal, Director of Management and Operations; for « Editorial Progreso » - Mexico: Br José Joaquín Flores Segura, Director General and Mr Francisco Flores, External Consultant; for « Gram Editora » - Argentine: Br Augustin Martínez, Provincial Econome and responsible for Gram Editora; for Editora FTD S.A. - Brasil: Br Délcio Afonso Balestrin, Director President, Antonio Luis Rios da Silva, Director Superintendant. The other participants were Brs John Klein, Councillor General, and João Carlos do Prado, Director of the Secretariat of Mission.

The meeting was a follow-up to the International Meeting of Marist Publishing Houses held in São Paulo, Brasil, in 2011, which had drawn up a list of items of common interest and formed the Executive Committee to put the planned projects into effect.

At the start, Br Emili Turú greeted the committee members and, through them, all their collaborators in Marist publishing. He emphasized the fine witness of the Publishing Houses in response to the 21st General Chapter, in searching for a work better integrated



and taking account of the international dimension of the Institute. They are important means for the Marist mission and have to take up the challenge to be close to poor children and young people.

Those taking part did further study on the topics treated after the São Paulo Meeting and defined the strategies for implementing them: exchange of experiences, possible fields of collaboration, putting to profit synergies, new technologies, new business in common, creation

of an International entity and a common label. Apart from the topics mentioned, they also spoke about basic ideas for constructing, and the documentation necessary for defining the identity, principles and mission of this new Marist network. The day finished with a tour of Rome and a convivial meal.

The meeting was judged very profitable and the concrete decisions will help put into practice the agreements adopted by the Committee.

On 18, 19 and 20 March, the members of the Committee went to Bologna in order to take part in the International Book Fair. They also planned a visit to the Edelvives House of Publications in Spain.

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