

INTERNATIONAL MISSION COMMISSION

First meeting was held in Rome

The International Mission Commission was established in 2011 by the General Council to support the Secretariat of Mission in planning, reflection on and accompaniment of the Marist mission at the level of the Institute. Its members are: Mrs Angélica Alegría – Mexico Occidental and Br José de Assis Elias de Brito – Brasil Centro-Norte (America); Br Ifeanyi Mbaegbu – Nigeria (Africa); Br Aureliano Garcia Manzanal – Mediterránea (Europe); Br Mervyn Perera - South Asia (Asia); Mr Peter McNamara – Sydney (Oceania); Br John Klein – Councillor General, Council liaison with the Secretariat of Mission and Br João Carlos do Prado – Director of the Secretariat of Mission.



Commission to place its passion and experience at the service of the Institute and the Kingdom of God.

The first meeting was held in Rome, from 7 to 10 March. Its objective was the best way of promoting, at the various levels of the Institute, reflection and discernment on our work, in the light of the 21st General Chapter, with special regard to the needs of our world. Br Emili Turú, Superior General, was present and invited the

We desire to continue to develop the mission as part of our identity, and to nourish our spirituality, especially from the three aspects emphasized by the General Chapter: a more visible presence among poor children and young people, evangelisation, and the defence of the rights of children and youth. In the light of what has just been said, the suggestion was made to revise the document "Marist Educational Mission", calling on the participation and collaboration of all. Finally, we wish to promote the Marist Youth Ministry (MYM), especially by implementing the document "Evangelizers in the midst of youth".

GENERAL HOUSE

General Councillors Antonio Ramalho and Ernesto Sanchez continue their visit to the Province of Southern Africa.

General Councillors Eugene Kabanguka, Michael de Wass and Victor Preciado met from 3 to 5 April with the Director of the Secretariat of Mission, Br Joao Carlos do Prado, and the members of the Commission for New Models of Animation and Government of the Marist works.

NOTRE DAME L'HERMITAGE EXPERIENCE

Community Animators Course in English



"I rejoiced when I heard them say, let us go to God's house and at last our feet are standing within your gates, Oh Jerusalem" These echoes from the psalmist could be heard from the heart beats of the Manziana group of Community Animators as we were arriving at Notre Dame l'Hermitage. For the psalmist Jerusalem had great and significance to his faith. "It is there that the tribes of Israel go." It was the centre of the Jewish faith. Thus l'Hermitage for us is central to our Marist foundation and spirituality.

The first eye catching glimpse of the solidity of the rocks and the buildings reflect our solid foundations both spiritually and physically. Founded on a deep solid structure like the rock of L'Hermitage. These rocks, walls and river Gier had stories to tell us in the days which followed. All the words from St. Marcellin came to life by looking at the Hermitage upon our arrival. "Unless the Lord builds the house, in vain do the builders labour..."

Our experience of this deep and profound pilgrimage was going to be very good and fruitful. In spite of differences in languages and culture, we created our own tower of babel and Marist Brotherhood overcame this challenge. Apart from the scorial group, Brothers Today secretariat represented by Bros. Cesar and Eugene accompanied us in all the activities and we really felt supported and encouraged by the Institute.

The pilgrimage covered areas like the tour of the house, looking for the treasure, a pilgrimage to Marhles, a walk to Le Rosey, sharing in groups, the memorare in the snow and Montagne experiences. On one of the days we had a very rich shar-

ing on the lives of our early Brothers by Bro. Alain Delorme. We also visited Maisonnete and walked to La Valla, prayed at Our Lady of Pity and walked back to L'Hermitage. In response to our last Chapter's message we went to Genève, Switzerland to visit our Brothers, to see the work they are doing for the protection of Children's Rights and also toured the UN and lastly visited the Lake.

Among the topics covered was the one on Marist Family led by Bro. Andre Lanfrey. After the sharing we went to visit La Neyliere where there is the Museums of Colin and Oceania and in the evening we had a meeting with L'Hermitage community. We also had a chance to visit Fourviere in Lyons, where Fr. Champagnat and the other Marist Priests were ordained and made a pledge to form the Society of Mary at the foot of Our Lady of Fourviere. We had the Eucharist there and also made our pledge as a group to live the charism of the Marist Brothers.

When all had been said and done we had a day set aside for the retreat and had prayers in the cemetery and the chapel in the woods. In brief this is what the pilgrimage covered. All of us came back feeling impelled to spread and share the spirit of Hermitage with all our Brothers. Everyone felt Champagnat's spirit alive flowing from the river Gier to the rest of the Marist world and incarnating itself in all the Marists of Champagnat worldwide today.

Like the psalmist in psalm 122 and for the love of our Brothers and Lay Marists of Champagnat we will say, "Peace be upon you L'Hermitage!" For the love of the Institute we will pray for your well-being.

AUSTRALIAN MARIST PRINCIPALS MEET

The young people in the contemporary Catholic school

The Principals of the 53 Marist schools from all over Australia met on 14-15 March at The Hermitage, Mittagong, south of Sydney, to discuss the challenges and opportunities for evangelisation of young people in the contemporary Catholic school.

The theme of the conference was sourced in the call of the last General Chapter for Marists to be known as experts in youth evangelisation in their local situations. It was given extra impetus by the General Synod on the New Evangelisation to be held in Rome later this year.

On the first day, the Principals' discussions were animated by a panel of people who brought different perspectives on evangelisation: the Directors of Evangelisation from two metropolitan archdioceses, a young person involved in pastoral planning for another urban diocese, a priest, and two 18 year-old members of the Remar Australia youth ministry team. Later in the day, eight Principals made presentations on various strategies in evangelisation that seemed to be engaging the young people in their schools, covering areas



including liturgy, solidarity, approaches to religious education, Remar, retreats, and other programmes. The day ended with a wonderfully celebrated Eucharist.

Among the aspects of the Marist way of evangelisation that the Principals identified were: the importance of closeness to young people and to their life experience; the need for personal encounter with Jesus; a respect for the goodness of each person; being a Marian expression of Church; and drawing deeply on the "narrative of holiness" that is our Marist story.

The second day was devoted to planning and discussing a range of projects, programmes and policies for the new Province of Australia: the growing number formation courses in Marist spirituality and mission; solidarity initiatives; fostering the Lay Marist vocation; the growth of Remar as a way of doing Marist youth ministry; opportunities for leaders to have spiritual accompaniment; the various conferences and gatherings for teachers and students; means for communication; and the principles underpinning "Marist Schools Australia" which is the new way for supporting and associating Marist school communities. 

MARIST PRESENCE IN JBAIL BYBLOS, LEBANON

The School of "Notre Dame de Lourdes"

The first Brothers to Lebanon came in 1868 at the request of the Jesuits: 5 to Ghazir and 3 to Beirut for seven years. Brother Louis-Marie, the Superior General who sent them, recalled them in 1875.

A second group came twenty years later, in 1895, sent by Brother Théophane, the 4th Superior General, concerned to open places of refuge for the Brothers the anticlerical government in France was driving out of the schools.

That year, five Brothers arrived in Antoura for the Lazarists, and 5 others in 1896, for the Jesuits at Beirut; and so each year up to 1903, when there were about forty. This doubled suddenly in 1903, with the Brothers distributed through the seminaries of the Armenians of Bzommar, the Maronites of Kfarhay, the Capuchins of Tartous, the Carmelites of Alexandrette, the Jesuits of Cairo and Alexandria in Egypt, the Franciscans at Alep in Syria, and the Carmelites at Baghdad in Iraq.

At the same time, the Brothers opened their own schools in Lebanon: Jounieh in 1899; Achkout and Amchit in 1900; Saïda, Batroun, Deir el Qamar and Zahlé in 1904. With the numbers and success, the Near East "sector" became a "Province" in 1908 and founded the future Province of Madagascar in 1911. In 1914, the Marist Province of Lebanon numbered 123 Brothers educating Frères 2,400 pupils.

The «Notre Dame de Lourdes» School at Jbail - Byblos

The Province founded the school of Jbail in 1908, right in the centre of the Christian sector. This school, damaged and ruined by the Turks during the first world war, resumed life and activity in 1919 and has continued uninterrupted up to today, when it counts 1,916 pupils from infants to school leavers, preparing for the two baccalaureats, French and Lebanese, and 151 teachers, all Catholic Maronites.

Among the students, there are 92 Moslems (4.8%) and 113 Orthodox.

The school has a very good reputation and it is not easy to accept more pupils despite the many requests. 90% of our pupils, among Moslems as well as Christians, have parents who studied in our schools.

The Marist community numbers 6 Brothers (2 French, 2 Lebanese, 1 Syrian, and one Colombian). Three work in the college as cat-

Interest and challenges for the future of our presence in Lebanon

As the bishops of the Near Eastern Synod and Brother Superior General, during the Provincial Chapter of the Province of "Méditerranéa", have remarked, the presence of Christian institutions in this region of the world is of very great importance. The Catholic school, in particular, is a place of inter-religious encounter and of dialogue of cultures for peace.



The political and religious climate of the Near East is very complex and requires on the part of all appropriate attention and action, a necessary education in living in harmony and mutual respect, concentrating on the values that unite us and not on those which di-

vide or differentiate. The Christian presence is absolutely necessary for the future of religious peace in the Near East, and our Marist establishments are of great efficacy for the maintenance or return of Christians to their ancestral lands.

Teaching is given in French, Arabic and English and prepares for Baccalaureats in Science, Mathematics, Economics and Sociology.

And we need Brothers to respond to this great challenge of political and religious history.

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