

SECRETARIAT OF THE LAITY

Meeting in Quebec, Canada

Diego Torres is the one singing The colour of hope, a beautiful song. At my window in the Provincial House in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec, several words of the text resonate in me: I know that one can open the windows, change the air, that depends on you. The window lets me look at the broad Richelieu river, the enormous trees on its banks, the vast fields of green grass. The murmur of water

provides accompaniment to the vision. It was in this natural context of spring that we held our annual meeting of the Enlarged Secretariat of the Laity, beginning 28 May.

The eight days programme helped us grow in fraternity and communion. Tony made us aware of the processes of the laity of the Pacific, as Agnes of the new ways of the Provinces



GENERAL HOUSE

This week the Preparatory Commission for the Mission Assembly is being held. Apart from the Directors of the Secretariats: Br João Carlos do Prado (Mission), Br Javier Espinosa (Laity) and Br César de Rojas (Brothers today), there are brothers and lay people from the 5 continents.

The community of the General Administration also has a new member, Br Cezar Cavanus, from the Province of Brasil Centro Sul, who will be studying at the Pontifical Salesian University.

of Asia. Sylvain recalled the challenges of the Secretariat in Africa, and Ana described the accents of each of the European Provinces. Thanks to the mediation of Paty, Fabiano and Raúl, we made contact with the American regions. In the measure that we learned of the regional processes relative to responding to the the new relationship between brothers and laity, we discovered that between hesitations and successes, doubts and searching, it is better to go astray than never to embark, it is better to put oneself to the test rather than never attempt anything, although it is never easy to begin, as the Argentinian sings. We were encouraged by the new projects which, in dodging the difficulties, wager on the vitality of the charism and on the search for the new land.

Our meeting was also an encounter with the Marist life of Quebec. Brothers and laity showered us with attentions, marks of affection and fraternity. We felt the deep family spirit in sharing exchanges, table, prayer, visits. We were able to have discussions with the Marist Movement of Quebec, the Champagnat Movement, the provincial animation

team, the young volunteers, the association of former brothers, the teams of Camp Mariste and Vallée Jeunesse 3 ... their eyes alight, they radiated the fire of the heart, the force of creativity and imagination, the look of hope. Their gestures and their joy showed that age has no importance when there is reason to live. Brothers and laity showed that the Marist charism will continue in Canada. Br Bernard, at the head of the provincial choir, seemed to change the words of Alouette into those of Diego Torres: to know that one can, to desire that it be possible, to cast away fears, put them outside, to paint one's face with the 'colours of hope', to test the future by falling in love. Their faces, like their projects have the colour of hope. And they are the faces and projects of brothers and laity.

Surrounded by the green of Spring and the green of hope of the provincial journey of Quebec, we finished our meeting by better identifying our challenges, giving better bases to our journey of communion and in polishing up the strategies of our Action Plan. We finished more convinced than ever of the necessity to continue a harmo-

nious dialogue at all levels, unite our forces and work in harmony with the other Secretariats. We were encouraged by the projects of the continental subcommissions as the inculturated expression of the new relationship. We felt that it was opportune to experiment, to search and to try. We insist on the need of formation processes which foster charismatic leadership among laity. The desire to promote together a new epoch for the Marist charism was strong among us.

In the chapel of the Provincial House, there is a beautiful stained glass window which reflects something of what we lived during this meeting. One sees the river, the trees, the green pastures, the birds flying. Br Bernard told us that the birds were flying to the new land. Besides this very suggestive window, here is a verse from the song of Torres, by way of a summary of the experience : I know that one can achieve the impossible, you will feel that the soul is flying away because it has been able to sing once more.

Br Javier Espinosa - Secretariat of the Laity



II INTERNATIONAL MARIST MISSION ASSEMBLY

On the road towards September 2014

At its meeting of 22 May 2012, the General Council appointed the Preparatory Commission for the II International Marist Mission Assembly to be held in September 2014. The members of the Commission are: Br João Carlos do Prado (Secretariat of Mission, co-ordinator) ; Br Javier Espinosa (Secretariat of the Laity) ; Br César Rojas (Secretariat Brothers today) ; Br Paul Bhatti (South Asia) ; Mr Manuel Gómez Cid (Mediterránea) ; Mrs Mónica Linares (Cruz del Sur) ; Mr Frank Malloy (Sydney) ; Mrs Alice Miesnik (USA) and Br Mark Omede (Nigeria).

The task of the Commission is to prepare and hold the II International Marist Mission Assembly : proposal of date and place ; work out and set in motion the preparatory process (local, provincial and regional phases) ; holding of the Assembly ; evaluation and implementation of decisions. The first meeting will take place in Rome from 25 to 29 June 2012.

The first International Marist Mission Assembly, held at Mendes, Brasil, from 3 to 12 September 2007, had as motto

« one heart, one mission ». It was considered a great success for the life and history of the Institute. At the end of the Assembly, the participants said: « As representatives of all the Provinces and Districts of the Marist world, we have gathered, brothers and laity, in Mendes, Brasil, to take part in the I International Marist Mission Assembly. We have listened to the Lord, we have heard the voices of the children, and we have listened to one another. We have shared in depth our desire of working together to refine our dreams. At their centre, Jesus reveals himself to us as son of Mary and risen Lord. »

At the close of the Assembly, five calls were addressed to the Institute:

- 1. A revolution of the heart: to be open to the breath of the spirit.
- 2. Marists of Champagnat In shared mission.
- 3. Marist Presence in the evangelisation

- 4. Marist education: new challenges.
- 5. Defense and promotion of the rights of children and youth: to give the word to the voiceless.



The II Marist Mission Assembly is a mandate received from the 21st General Chapter which asked us to « organise a new International Marist Mission Assembly, in the spirit of Mendes ». It will contribute greatly to respond to the calls that God made to the Institute during the General Chapter.

We invite the whole Institute to prepare for this great event. Children, young people, laity and Brothers, all subjects of the Marist mission, we are invited by God to realize « the Marist mission in a new world », a new

land. May Mary, Marcellin and our predecessors give us light and courage and hope in the quest for a new dawn for the Marist Institute.



PROVINCE OF RIO GRANDE DO SUL

Appointment of Provincial: Br. Inacio Etges



The General Council has just announced the appointment of Br Inácio Etges as Provincial Superior of the Province of « Rio Grande do Sul » for a second term of three years. He will take possession on 12 December 2012, during the 4th Provincial Chapter at Veranópolis. All the Brothers of the Province indicate the name and qualities of the man for this mission and the results are sent to Rome for the choice of the General Council.

Br Inácio Etges was born in Santa Cruz do Sul on 27 March 1948 and entered the congregation in 1960 at Bom Princípio. He entered the novitiate at Viamão and took the habit in 1969. He made perpetual profession in 1979.

With diplomas in Theology and Mathematics from PUCRS, he attended studies in Psychology (Religious Life) at the Gregorian University in Rome. He taught in the Marist schools « Rosário » and « São João Batista » in Montenegro. He has worked for many years in ministry and the formation of the brothers at different stages:

juniorate, novitiate and scholasticate. He is part of the School for Formators in São Paulo, and has taken part in many advanced courses in Europe and Latin America.

With his vast experience in the accompaniment of vocations, Br Inácio was the first co-ordinator of the

former Commission of Consecrated Life and Laity, now known as the Co-ordination of VCL, which is the umbrella for several sections : Animation of Vocations, Initial and Ongoing Formation, Marist Apostolic Spirituality, Spiritual Patrimony, and the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family.

In the leadership of the Province of « Rio Grande do Sul », he has been Councillor, and vice-Provincial. He has been at the head of the government since 2010 and is currently a member of the Directing Committee of the Conference of the Religious of Brasil (CRB).



BRINGING THE CHAMPAGNAT MOVEMENT OF THE INSTITUTE UP TO DATE

The Champagnat Movement to a new land

The fraternities of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family wish to respond to the last General Chapter's challenge to set out for a new land.

Over a long and rich history of 25 years, the Champagnat Movement has been growing and we can say that we are at a moment of great interest and great possibilities, seeing that we are more aware of what we have experienced, what has urged us on and what we are lacking on the way... We believe we are at the time which Brother Charles foresaw in presenting the Project of Life of this Movement: "We are all conscious that the 'final' document will be a living word coming from your own hearts, from your own faith, from your own experience, from your living of Champagnat's spirituality. We see this modest document as the first step in a process which you will complete in the years ahead. By living this project you will gradually deepen and broaden the intuition which lies at its origin, and the Brothers will be enriched in our understanding of the Founder's charism by your insights and experience".



For this reason, a group of representatives of the Champagnat Movement, composed of Agnes Reyes (Asia), Patricia Ríos (Mexico), Edison Carlos de Oliveira (Brasil), Réal Sauvageau (Canada), Javier Espinosa (Secretariat of the Laity) and Ana

Sarrate (Spain), met in Montreal, Canada, from 26 to 28 May for the purpose of beginning a process of discernment. This process seeks to reread what has been lived in those years through studying our personal and collective histories, discovering the richness of the charism as it has been lived out in our lay state, and potentializing the gift of community that helps us grow as persons and believers. We put a basic question to ourselves: What new contribution have we brought to the gift received by Marcellin?

Subsequently, with this proposed process, we want to go on discovering the calls that God is making today to each of the members of the fraternities to respond to the conversion the Spirit is inviting us to make together with the whole Institute. Brother Emili, in his last circular, asks us very clearly: What has to die in me in order that the newness of the Spirit can flourish?

In the next few weeks, you will receive some motivation material as well as other aids for this first reflection.

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