

## IN THE AFTERNOON OF LIFE OUR LOVE WILL BE EXAMINED

### Manziana - Third Age Course

We give thanks to God, to the Institute, and to our provinces and communities for allowing us to live this moment of grace, the Third Age course. We are twenty-four Brothers from eleven provinces: Compostela, Mediterránea, Ibérica, the Hermitage, Cruz del Sur, Norandina, Central America, Canada, Santa María de los Andes, Río Grande do Sul, and Marianist Spain. Our animation team consists of Brothers Inocencio Martínez, José Feix and Anthony Hunt. The large house in Manziana provided comfortable accommodations and welcoming green zones. The age range is from 66 to 81.

The course began on Sunday, August 8, and it finished on Sunday, October 7. Previous to the start of the course we received three communications that prepared our spirit with practical information and motivating reflections that helped us to arrive with an open heart.

From my experience I can say that the subject matter has been benefi-



cial, the rhythm calm, the prayer alive, the liturgies rich, the speakers prepared, the outings attractive and numerous, the climate benign, the group marvelous ... what more could we ask for?!

Here a synthesis of the main themes that we have undertaken. Third Age: psychology and anthropology of the older Brother, health issues, the elders in the Bible. Religious Life: prayer, following Christ, my personal history of salvation. Marist Spirituality: with Mary go out to new lands, laity and Brothers living the same charism, Water from the Rock.

## GENERAL HOUSE

This week General Councillors Joe Mc Kee, Antonio Ramalho and Ernesto Sanchez left for Kenya to visit MIC, the Marist International Center, in Nairobi. With them went César Rojas, director of the Secretariat Brothers today. The visitation lasts from 19 October to 2 November.

Sunday mornings are dedicated to discussing life in our Provinces, and we end with a festive fraternal sharing. How gratifying it is to feel stimulated by the quality of Marist vitality in other parts of the world and confronted by other apostolic initiatives and ways of life!

The papal audience was an opportunity to experience the universality of the Church gathered in St. Peter's Square to listen to the words of the Pope. Our meeting with Br. Superior General and three general councilors stimulated us

and updated our view of the Institute. A moment particularly striking was the week we spent at the Hermitage recovering our historic memory and traveling through the places where our Institute was born. How generous the Spirit was by giving us Marcellin and our first Brothers as founders!

It has been a magnificent opportunity to contemplate the footprints of God in our history, to thank him for his loving providence, to take on constructively stumblings and vulnerabilities, to listen to new calls. We know our

limitations, but even so we desire to go along with the responses of creative fidelity that new times demand. We wish to continue the search for the face of our good Father, we want to live the few or the many years that still remain following the call of the rainbow. We ask Mary and Marcellin to give us the gift to approach the Omega point, that of the great encounter that will transform time into eternity, with eyes full of the future.

Br. Carlos Martínez Lavín



# SEMINAR ON THE IDENTITY AND MISSION OF THE RELIGIOUS BROTHER

## Open letter

Brothers from 8 congregations met in Rome from 2 to 29 September to live together and reflect on their identity and mission in the Church. From our congregation, 8 brothers from different parts of the Marist world took part. Following is the open letter written by the participants to all brothers and persons desirous of working for a more fraternal world.

### **Open letter to all our brothers, partners and associates to all the people who work for a safer fraternal world**

"Religious Brothers, belonging to eight religious Institutes dedicated to educational ministry in service to the youth of this world, gathered in Rome for the month of September. Together, we have formed a mosaic of Brothers from five continents, bringing with us our personal histories and rich cultural and institutional traditions. We gathered around the table of fraternity, in a spirit of service, as sons of the same Father, called to be messengers of light and hope.

The objectives of the meeting were ambitious:

- to update the identity and mission of the Brother educator in the Church and the world of today;
- to increase mutual understanding



among the members of different Institutes of Brothers;

- to live an inter-congregational experience of reflection, prayer and the common life at this important time in our history;
- to share a common formative experience that would encourage future meetings and subsequent exchanges;
- to encourage our Religious Institutes to meet and pursue a similar level of thinking at the local community level, as well as in the districts and religious provinces;
- to develop materials that would help in prayer and reflection for similar sharing of life experience.

During this conference, we broke the barriers that separated us. We thus shared our rich heritage with ease. We rediscovered the common treasure of brotherhood.

We recognized our unity in diversity; a brotherhood that comes from afar and invites us to live in unity; a brotherhood which wonders about the meaning and relevance of our identity and mission, always open to changes within a newly emerging spirituality. This is the great gift that we wish to share with the Church and the world today. Our challenge is to continue to be a "dangerous memory" of the prophetic Jesus,

reminding the Church of its authentic vocation and mission. Due to the horizontal dimension of our vocation as a secular entity, we travel as companions on the journey with the people of God.

We shared our dreams for our Religious Institutes: Brothers, who hear the cry of the poor, respond to specific situations and adapt to the signs of the times; Brothers who bear the Good News of Jesus of Nazareth to all; Brothers who make their communities places of freedom, relationships, deep spirituality, shared mission, and celebration; Brothers who recognize the present faces of God in the Church and in the world, among believers and non-believers.

From Rome, we send you this invitation to dream, to discover the treasure of brotherhood among yourselves and to live it and share it with others. For now, our challenge is to help others live this time of grace that we are experiencing.

We believe that a renewed and authentic brotherhood is possible!

During our days in Rome, we felt accompanied by the Brothers of our Institutes from all parts of the world who followed the course of our session. You have supported our work by your

prayers and messages of affection. Thank you for the interest you have shown and your signs of fraternity in our regard.

We also wish to thank the Superiors' General of our Institutes, their councilors and the members of their Coordination Teams for being the initiators of this conference and accompanying us through the process. It enabled us to live days of profound brotherhood, rediscovering that we are all brothers who have only one Teacher. (Mt 23, 8)

Finally, we return the gift received and the mission entrusted to us into the hands of God the Father, who sent his Son, the unequivocal sign of brotherhood. With the power of the Holy Spirit and the example of Mary, model of listening and openness, we desire to be responsive to the new calls of our time. In response to our Founders, we wish to be faithful to the vocation and the mission that we have received.

Participants at the meeting "ALL BROTHERS": Edmund Rice Christian Brothers, Brothers of the Christian Schools - La Salle, Brothers of Christian Instruction, Marist Brothers, Brothers of Our Lady of Mercy, Brothers of the Sacred Heart, Brothers of the Holy Family, Brothers of Saint Gabriel



# EVANGELIZERS IN THE MIDST OF YOUTH

## European Meeting of Marist Youth Ministry

The European Meeting of Marist Youth Ministry was held at N.D. de L'Hermitage from 23 to 28 September. Brothers, laity and young people from the five provinces of Europe shared and had an experience of communion around the document "Evangelizers in the midst of youth". The meeting was for those taking part a privileged time for coming to know the document, for sharing to develop strategies for its application on the provincial and regional levels, and an experience of fraternity and Marist family in the house of Champagnat which helped us visualize the international character of the Marist Institute in Europe.

During the meeting, the journey of Jesus with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus served as a paradigm of approximation to the document and for sharing the situations of youth, strengths, challenges and dreams of the Youth Ministry in each of the Provinces, at the same time as making it possible to look together at the horizons and perspectives of Marist youth evangelization in Europe.

Br João Carlos Do Prado, Director of the Secretariat of Mission, accompanied the meeting and Br Joseph Mc Kee, Vicar General was also present for a time. Br Emili Turú addressed

a video message to the participants which enriched the process and made us feel in communion with the rest of the Institute, especially with the meetings on Marist Youth Ministry and the document "Evangelizers in the midst of youth" which have been held in the regions, with the conviction that we are journeying together with Mary towards a new land of our ministry.

Being at ND de L'Hermitage gave us the opportunity of having an experience of fraternity in the Marist places and the warm welcome from the Hermitage community helped us in this.

The meeting's conclusions and the work of the round tables [has been recorded on a blog](#).

At the end, the participants stressed the shared life and the feeling that the Marist charism is valid and actual for the youth of today in Europe and drew up a manifesto that we now share with you:

Reunited at ND de L'Hermitage, our common home, the place where was forged the dream of Marcellin Champagnat for children and young people, the participants in the European Meeting of Marist Youth Ministry have shared an experience of communion around our evangelizing mission among youth. As the fruit of this rich shared experience, we declare that:

We believe in youth. They are for us the place where we meet the God of life. We wish to be attentive to their needs and be challenged by them.

We believe in the God of Jesus, a God passionate for the human being and loving us unconditionally.

**We feel called to evangelize**, that is to say:

- \* Help children and young people find meaning in their lives
- \* Accompany their growth as persons
- \* Point to the person of Jesus



as the reference for life and happiness

To respond to this call to the evangelization of youth, we consider essential:

To love them as they are, giving preference to the most needy, like Champagnat.

A significant presence of laity and brothers, authentic companions for reference, contemplative, capable of listening with an open heart, and aware of the need to cultivate their own interior way.

That the youth themselves be the protagonists of the MYM. That they can be evangelizers for other young people.

To let ourselves be evangelized by them.

**With our youth ministry we wish:**

To generate living space so that young people can grow in identity, feel themselves accompanied like the disciples of Emmaus, so that they can live fraternity and community

mediating life in a group.

To promote experiences so that youth can grow in interiority and foster their spiritual development.

To help them make choices of commitment to their reality and become transformers of society.

We believe in formation and accompaniment as key elements in the growth process of each young person.

We believe in an organized and structured MYM. Complete with the presence and proximity to the youth.

At this meeting with them we announce the Good News of the gospel of Jesus and we promote the growth in community of the Church.

We feel the call to internationality and we see it necessary to promote networking and joint projects among the provinces of Europe.

We find in Mary the model and the reference point to follow in accompanying the young people in the MYM.

We dream, like Champagnat, of the new land of the MYM, a significant MYM, incarnated in reality, creative, critical, and in solidarity with society which favours the building of the Kingdom, and is capable of showing the Marian face of the Church.

**MARIST NEWS**  
N.° 229 – Year V – 4 October 2012

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