

SECRETARIAT OF THE LAITY

Our communication space improved

One desire of those who make up the Secretariat of the Laity is to be able to share the life surging up in all Marists. We have made several attempts to foster participation via the website of the Institute of the Marist Brothers, and now we offer as well a page on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/MChFM>). It can be accessed through this link or directly from the domain of the Secretariat of the Laity on our WEB by clicking on the logo "Follow us on Facebook".

On this new page we will find links on the initiatives of the Secretariat; we will also be able to share our experiences and



our activities with our friends and all the people who wish to know us. To follow us on this page and receive the communications, it is necessary to enrol on Facebook and click on the button "I like".

We invite you to make the page 'alive': communicate to us the meetings and experiences taking place where you are; send us images to help us give a face to the Marist family which we form; send us links to be consulted, interesting reflections... in brief, anything that can help us to be enthusiastic and proud about the great family we make up.

Secretariat of the Laity



GENERAL HOUSE

Brothers Superior General Emili Turu and Vicar General Joe Mc Kee are in the USA, at Indianapolis, taking part in the "Systems Thinking Conference" from 12 to 14 November.

General Councillors Brothers Ernesto Sanchez and Antonio Ramalho are carrying out a visitation of the Hermitage Province from 11 November to 2 December.

Brs César Rojas and Chris Wills, of the Secretariats of Brothers today and Collaboration for Mission International, are visiting Mindanao, in the Province of East Asia, from 12 to 15 November.

General Councillors John Klein and Victor Preciado are meeting with Br João Carlos do Prado and the members of the Commission of New Models of Animation, Administration and Government in the General House from the 12th to the 15th.

General Councillors Eugène Kabanguka and Josep Maria Soteras will be present at the Provincial Assembly of the Province of Cruz del Sur from the 16th to the 21st.

Brs João Carlos do Prado and Mario Meuti will take part in the Seminar on Education of the Unions of Superiors General here in the General House on 16 and 17 November.

"THE NEW EVANGELIZATION FOR THE TRANSMISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

Interview with Br Emili Turú on his attendance at the Synod

This interview was conducted by José Manuel Vidal and published on 29 October 2012 on periodistadigital.com, in Spanish. In it Br Emili talks about his participation as auditor in the Synod of Bishops. The Synod was held in the Vatican from 7 to 28 October 2012 and had as theme "The new evangelization for the transmission of the Christian faith".

José Manuel Vidal: What did you feel at this Synod, which was like a mini-Council?

Emili Turú: I believe it is a grace to have been able to take part in such an event. For one thing, the experience of internationalism is very rich, even though it is not new for me: I have spent 11 years in the General Government of an Institute present in 80 countries on the five continents. For another thing, the Synod offers a unique ecclesial experience: you can feel the wealth of diversity contributed by bishops coming from so many lands. The same with the priests and representatives of consecrated life or of the laity. In addition, we had a very important ecumenical presence through the 13 "fraternal delegates", one of them a woman bishop, vice-president of the World Methodist Council. The Pope, in words pronounced spontaneously at the end of the Synod, called this Assembly a "mirror of the Church universal", and I believe many of us felt this.

What is the role of the auditors?

The auditors are persons invited to the Synod but, not being bishops, they take part in a different way. They are invited to express from their own experience of life and, as such, they contribute to the reflection from another view, perhaps from other points of view or perspectives. As is normal, not being bishops, they do not vote on the decisions taken by the Synod.

Notice was taken of the scarce presence of women in the synod hall

In this case, too, the Synod has been "mirror of the Church universal", in the sense that it reflected what happens at local or diocesan level... In the synod hall there was talk of the very important role women play in the life of the Church, when they are a majority, but I think we are all aware that the structural reality we have today limits their participation.

Also surprising (in a positive way) the freedom with which the synod fathers expressed themselves

The configuration of the synod hall itself, in strict hierarchic

order, is very imposing, and makes one think seriously about whether to speak or not... For this very reason, the freedom with which some expressed themselves, as much in the synod hall as in the language groups, is to be valued.

What was the intervention that struck you most?

So, as I recall,... for example, that of the Archbishop of Athens, exactly for its freedom of spirit. Or that of the Archbishop of Manila, for its invitation to humility... In brief, a fair few could be emphasized for different reasons. But I underline in a special way the intervention of the Primate of the Anglican Church, who made a lengthy intervention, not limited to the five minutes available to the synod fathers, and which I consider an excellent program of the new evangelization. A profound proposal, in touch with the sensibility of the men and women of today, and also very realistic.

What use are these meetings or are they unable to be measured by the criteria of utility?

My impression is that the organization of the Synod is focused on a reality: it has to end up with a series of documents drawn up. This is a matter of the "relatio", and above all the message and the proposals that are passed on to the Pope for the drawing up of the corresponding Apostolic Exhortation. Everything, then, is directed towards coming to the end of the Synod with this work achieved, and this is a lot, taking into consideration that they are working in different languages. I recognize that the work of organization and secretaryship is formidable.

The methodology is conditioned by this aim, I believe, and this means that the topics are treated in a very general manner, without the possibility of being studied in any real depth.

What has been the use of this Synod?

In the first place, it must be said that it succeeded in producing the expected documents... but, above all, it seems to me that it confirmed that the great majority of the epis-



copate are in tune with the master lines traced by Vatican II: a hopeful vision of the world; openness to dialogue; the Church as a "Samaritan" community; the primacy of the excluded; the need to begin evangelization by first working at our own conversion, etc. Given the present time of the Church, I believe that this first message is already positive in itself. Some voices which sound like "prophets of doom" are not in the majority, although they are heard a lot.

I think that the fruits of a meeting of this kind are very much connected with the process followed and, as I said, in this case everything stays on a very general level.

Something more was hoped for in the "Message to the People of God" on the remarriage of the divorced. Is this theme not yet ripe?

This is a very clear case of one of those aspects that needed to be studied in depth, given that it was clearly seen as a problematic case. The methodology meant that it was dealt with quite rapidly and, therefore, what is said is very general.

What attitudes do you think we need to go forward in the new evangelization?

Some persons criticize the very title of the Synod, especially that part of "transmitting the faith", since it appears to them that it excludes the dimension of dialogue. To me, on the other hand, it seems a suggestive title, because it appears to me that evangelization is achieved principally through "contagion"... To evangelize with life and, if need be, with words. For this reason, I believe that the first thing is to allow oneself to be evangelized by the Holy Spirit...

For another thing, an attitude mentioned by many synod fathers was humility, which is translated into the capacity for silence and attentive listening, fundamentals for genuine dialogue. Moreover, to accept our own weaknesses and be capable of recognizing our errors.

The need for creativity would also need to be emphasized. It is interesting that in the *Instrumentum laboris* the word creativity never appeared... treating of an evangelization which must be called NEW! Such a universal and diverse assembly

could not give formulas valid for the whole world, and so I believe creativity must be fostered at the local level.

In the West, are the Catholic schools becoming the only place where the young generations come in contact with the faith and religious practice?

Bishop Drennan, of New Zealand, said in the synod hall that in secularised countries that rely on a network of Catholic educational institutions, these have become the "primary faith community". He said that it was there that the majority of the baptized encounter for the first time, in a systematic way, the person of Jesus, prayer, the liturgy and the sacramental life of the Church. And he added: "teachers, more than fathers, have become in many cases the first formators of our young people in the faith".

The same bishop uttered a phrase which was later picked up in one of the propositions: "Catholic schools are not the products but the agents of the Church's mission".

In fact, many families may never approach a parish, for various reasons, but on the other hand they confide to us the education of their children, generally full of goodwill and with an attitude of openness. This is a great responsibility and, of course, an enormous challenge.

What are your "recipes" for connecting once more with younger people?

The image with which the Message of the Synod opens is excellent: the dialogue of Jesus with the Samaritan woman. From this it seems to me follows a series of fundamental attitudes: feeling oneself beside, which means spending time with them; listening with real interest, in a dialogue based on real life; unconditional acceptance, without judging or condemning; inviting them to face up to their own life and reflect on what they are doing with it, without offering readymade responses...

Jesus meets a person marginalized for being a woman, a public sinner and a Samaritan, and his unconditional acceptance means that she becomes an "evangelizer", that she goes back to announce the news of Jesus to her townsfolk.

The fact that the Marists, whom you direct, are brothers, can make them more capable of relating to people?

During the Synod, each time someone was named a title was used, such as "Eminence", "Excellency", "Reverend"... but it delighted me that for the "brothers" nothing else was used: this was the case with the prior of Taizé, and Br Alvaro, Superior General of the la Salles, and with me.

The word "brother" indicates a horizontal relationship between equals. This appears to me prophetic, as much in our society as in the Church, where at times a certain clericalism reigns, as some of the synod fathers recognised.

In our case, as Marists, we feel called to contribute towards forming the "Marian face of the Church", which emphasizes that we contribute to the life of the Church not only by what we do but, above all, by what we are.



BR. BRENDAN GARY

Provincial of the Province of West Central Europe

Br. Emili Turú and his Council, after studying the results of the sondage held in the province, have decided to appoint Br. Brendan Geary, as provincial of West Central Europe for another three-year term, which will begin during the holding of the next Provincial Chapter.

Br. Superior General and his Council are grateful for Br. Brendan's openness and readiness to continue his service to the Institute in the mission of Provincial. They declare that the results of the sondage show clearly that he enjoys broad support among the Brothers of the Province. And they congratulate all the Brothers for their active participation in the survey, and their generosity and dedication in the service of the Province of West Central Europe.



Some brief data about Brother Brendan: he has been especially concerned for Marist life in the provincial government, and possesses ample experience of Marist religious life in Great

Britain, the Cameroons and the United States. His apostolic work with the staff and seminarians of Ushaw College, Durham, has allowed him to acquire a wide range of experience in teamwork.

He is part of the CEM (European Marist Conference), taking an active part in meetings and in the activities it promotes.

The General Council in its session of 4 December 2009, appointed him Provincial Superior of the Province of West Central Europe for three years, beginning on 13 February 2010. Brother Brendan replaced Br. Joe Mc Kee, who had been elected Vicar General by the 21st General Chapter.



Haiti: Marist Postulancy of Jérémie

After a week of integration and in a family atmosphere, the Marist Postulancy of Jérémie had its official beginning on Saturday, 29 September. From very early, the families of the first year postulants began to arrive, together with the brothers of the communities of Dame Marie and Latibolière.

First of all, the second year postulants and Brothers Luis Enrique and Frisnel, presented the Postulancy's reason for being. What it is and what we aiming at. Then, in a simple ceremony, the first year postulants received as a symbol of their entry into

the postulancy a little wooden cross engraved with the Marist M. The brothers who provided their accompaniment were entrusted with investing them with the cross. And to finish, in a very Marist style, we went on to share the bread (in this case, a delicious fry-up) and the wine of the feast (which was not wine but Pres-

tige, the national beer).

These are the postulants who are beginning this year to seek to give life to Marcellin's dream: In 2nd year, Dimmy Frederic, Mayliko Livette, from Dame Marie, and Louis Oscar Paul, from Jérémie; in 1st year, Philippe Mackinson Sylvestre and Vilaire Sejour, both born in Dame Marie, but coming from Puerto Príncipe and Jérémie, respectively.

The team accompanying them is formed of Brothers Luis Enrique Rodríguez, Gilles Lacasse, Rafael Álvarez and Frisnel Walter.



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