

MARIST EDUCATION: CHALLENGES IN A NEW WORLD

Formation of Directors in the Marist Schools of Africa

The first meeting of the Working Group for the composition of a Formation Programme for the Marist schools of all the Administrative Units of Africa was held from 14 to 16 December in the House of the District of West Africa in Accra, Ghana.

The Programme is one of the three main objectives of the Strategic Plan of the African Mission Commission for the period 2011-2017. It responds to the strategic objective "Marist education: challenges in a new world. We feel urged without delay to find new creative ways of educating, evangelizing, promoting children's rights and being in solidarity with poor children and youth." The other objectives are concerned with Marist Youth Ministry and partnership between Brothers



GENERAL HOUSE

From 21 to 24 December, Br Eugène Kabanguka took part in the Provincial Assembly of "Mexico Occidental", followed by the Provincial Chapter, in which Br Victor Preciado also took part.

The Superior General, Br Emili Turu, is attending the Provincial Chapter of "Ibérica" from 26-30 December.

Br Antonio Ramalho is taking part in the Provincial Chapter of Central East Africa on the same dates, and will then go on to "Compostella" for their Provincial Chapter from 2 to 5 January 2013.

From 27 to 30 December, Br Ernesto Sanchez is attending the "Mediterranea" Provincial Chapter.

This year Rome is hosting the European gathering organized by the Taizé community. More than 35,000 young people are attending from 28 December to 2 January. The General House community will accommodate some 200 of them.

and laity. Those taking part in the meeting were M. Gary Norton (South Africa) and Brs John Kusi Mensah (co-ordinator of the Group and a member of the District of West Africa), Michel Maminaiaina Razafimandimby (Madagascar), João Carlos do Prado (Secretariat of Mission), and as a guest, M. Ricardo Tescarolo (PUCPR – Brasil). The adviser of the Commission was Br David Hall, of the

Province of Australia, who through his vast experience in the field and excellent proposal of methodology, contributed greatly to the meeting's success.

The Programme is still in the embryonic stage. The next meeting of the Working Group will be held from 22 to May in Nairobi, Kenya. In conformity with the time limits set by the Strategic Plan, it has to be presented to the African

Conference of Provincials for approval at the beginning of 2014 ; it will be implemented in each Province from July 2014.

The Working Group is happy to report the excellent welcome offered by the Marist community of Accra. Apart from the periods of work, we were able to enjoy a great experience of fraternity.



THE CHILD JESUS DISPLACED

Democratic Republic of the Congo

We publish a letter received from the Marist community of Bobandana describing the situation of the families and children displaced in the zone of Minova, South Kivu Region, Democratic Republic of the Congo. FMSI supports the program that the Brothers are going to develop for them.

Once again, part of our world where Christmas is contradicted by the threat to children's lives. Once again, the decision of the Marist Brothers to intervene in this situation as a sign of hope and life at the side of these children and their families.

Dear brothers and sisters, greetings.

As you know, for some months now the East of the Dem. Rep. of the Congo has been plunged in a war causing many innocent victims. Unfortunately, the situation does not seem to be improving, despite the efforts of those working for peace . It is a very complex situation, but we are always relying on your prayers and help to support this people who endure the multiple consequences of unjust wars. We continue to believe that God is with us in our apostolate among the people. God will not deceive us.



message in the midst of this people constitutes not only a sign of hope but also an eloquent witness of being among the poor and needy. We believe that the restoration of a lasting peace is still possible in this region which, for more than a decade, has only been a territory of battles, killings, robberies and rapes. Even today, security does not exist in our milieu ; every night there are reports of robberies, systematic pillage and the rape of girls and women by armed people who cannot be clearly identified. The war as such has not yet arrived at our place but our village of Minova has become a place of refuge for all those displaced by wars in the city of Goma, Sake,

We Marist Brothers of the community of Bobandana live the situation directly together with our students, our boarders and our teachers. We continue our apostolate with the young because we still constitute a sign of hope and encouragement for so many young people. Our

and many other villages on the plateau like Karuba, Bufamando, Masisi, Bishange, Bitonga, or the whole group of Muvunyi shanga in general. More than 9000 displaced families have ended up in the refugee camps in Minova

in lamentably deplorable conditions. This means that the humanitarian situation is complicated, despite the efforts of some NGOs trying to help.

The situation of the children in these camps is most deplorable. Many children are abandoned and cannot find their parents. The poverty and misery in the field expose them to sicknesses. Most of these children beg or spend their day collecting little objects from the garbage bins to sell. Our community and school being in the middle of the village of Minova, we are at each moment in contact with these hundreds of poor and uneducated children who spend their days wandering around the school and the community.

The presence of these children almost abandoned to their sad fate is a strong appeal for us Marist Brothers. Strongly affected by their deplorable situation, our community is thinking of gathering these children and looking after them so as to give them training to save their lives.

There is no school in the refugee

camps and the children are scattered wandering around the camps. All the primary schools of the villages they come from have been destroyed or closed because of lack of security and the flight of the population. This is the case of the Ecole Primaire Kinci of the village of Bufamando whose whole population is presently in the refugee camp in Minova. Most of the students and teachers from this school are in the camps. Many of the displaced parents from Bufamando have expressed to us their concern for the training of these children or assuring the continuation of their education. So our community has thought of organising, with the teachers of the EP Kinci, a training centre for the displaced children in order to carry on their education. The School will be able to operate in the afternoon in the building and infrastructures of our school, Institut Saint Charles Lwanga. Working with the displaced teachers of the EP Kinci, the Marist Brothers' community of Bobandana can thus bring together all the uneducated children of the camps, giving them the same

educational framework enjoyed by the other children of our school.

Minova being our field of apostolate, we Brothers of Bobandana cannot remain indifferent to this misfortune which strongly affects families and children. Thus we feel called to act directly for this population of the displaced in the area of training the numerous displaced and despairing children. The training of the young people and children living in the refugee camps requires of us a quite urgent response. So we ask all persons of good will to be willing to support us in coming to the aid of these innocent children who are suffering and abandoned to their sad fate.

We send you our deepest thanks in advance for the support it pleases you to grant to these poor and innocent children.

On behalf of the Community of the Marist Brothers of Bobandana
Brother Richard Kabwika, Community Econome.



PROVINCE OF "NORANDINA"

IV Provincial Chapter

Twenty-eight Marist Brothers from the three countries making up the Province of Norandina came together at Fusagasugá in Colombia from 11 to 13 December to hold their IV Provincial Chapter.

On the second day of work, during the Eucharist, Br José Libardo Garzón Duque entered on his second term as Provincial. The Councillors who will assist him on the Provincial Council are: Carlos Alberto Rojas, Laurentino Albalá M., Francisco Javier Pérez P., Wilson Torres, Crescenciano González and Pau Fornells.



Much of the work was done in groups. It involved sharing the personal work done on the basis of the documents worked on by the communities of the Province and the Brother Provincial's report. The fruit of this work of sharing

has been the "calls" or proposals made by this Chapter.

The capitulants are pleased to emphasize the work and sharing in depth, as well as the good participation of the

lay people invited.

On the site consecrated to the Chapter, you can find other details on this gathering.



PROVINCE OF "RIO GRANDE DO SUL"

IV Provincial Chapter

The IV Provincial Chapter of "Rio Grande do Sul" was held from 10 to 14 December, at the "Recanto Marista Medianeira". It was an occasion for sharing the principal successes of the Province and its Management Units over the course of the last three years and, at the same time, to approve the priorities and recommendations for the next three years.

Br Inácio Etges, reappointed Provincial by the General Council for a second term, recalled that "the Brothers ought to be a sign and that the laity wish to see in us signs. To be the conscience and the memory of the spirit, intentions and values of our founder."

The Chapter also elected the new Provincial Chapter, formed by Brothers: Claudiano Tiecher, Devis Alexandre Fischer, Evilázio Francisco Borges Teixeira, Lauri Heck, Odilmar José Civa Fachi and Sandro André Bobrzyk.

Br Josep M. Soteras, representing the General Council, reminded the participants that it is necessary to incarnate and make the charism known in the common space of the mission, "where we are at the side of the laity. It is necessary to live in depth the fact of being sign, and rethinking, refounding the way of being Brother and being Marist."

Eight lay people took part in the Chapter. They were elected to represent the teachers, collaborators, young people and administrative staff of all the Province's fields of activity. The result of their reflections on their mission in the Institute, their wishes and expectations have been summarised in a text.

life, especially of spiritual and community life, of continuing accompaniment, in promoting his growth as "consecrated".

2. Formation of leaders – Brothers and laity – in the Marist charism.

The following text has been defined as the guiding message for the whole



The Chapter approved two priorities considered urgent for the period 2013-2015:

1. Concern for the Brother's quality of

Province, in giving orientation to the Institution's decisions and directions over the next few years:

"We are called to take care of our lives, centred on Jesus Christ, in the way of living, in a relation of communion between Brothers and Laity, as a sign of hope for children, young people and adults."

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<p>Director Br. Alberto Ricica</p> <p>Production Mr. Luiz da Rosa</p>	<p>Redaction and Administration Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat, 2 C.P. 10250 – 00144 ROMA E-mail: publica@fms.it web: www.champagnat.org</p>
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Edit
Marist Brother's Institute - General House – Rome

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