

## THE LA VALLA WORKSITE

### The state of work - end April 2013

The last article gave an account of the state of work at the beginning of February. Three months have passed and here is where the worksite is now. A series of photos will let you get a better idea of the work accomplished.

#### The visible work

« There is a time to demolish and a time to rebuild » the sage of Ecclesiastes tells us (Qoh. 3: 3). These three months have been above all time for rebuilding.

It is still the team of masons who have had to do enormous work to allow the other bodies of craftsmen to begin theirs. Everyone knows that the roof needs to be made in order to place a building « beyond the water ». The demolition of the roofing and its structure was done twice : first of all, the building of 1822 constructed by Champagnat and then the Bonner house, cradle of the Institute. Work began on the upper floors and then descended. Quite a spectacular operation to remove the main beam of the 1822 building. A long and delicate operation, that of constructing a new concrete cornice on which the new framework will rest. How many calculations required to rectify the more or less curved walls, the floors more or less level.

A very professional work also that of the carpenter to install the gutters, the zinc, the tiles, to assure the



watertightness. Once waterproof, this part could be taken over by the electricians and the heating specialist plumbers, followed by the plasterers (installation of plaster boards over the metallic posts for putting up the interior walls). At the moment, the apartment of the 2nd floor, comprising 2 little rooms, a bathroom and a kitchenette, is almost finished, as well as the little meeting room below, on the first floor.

During this time, the masons continued their work of demolition on the roofing and structure of the Bonner house. How much rubble and dust (dating from Fr Champagnat, accumulated in the attic!) Since mid-April, the structure and roofing of the Bonner house have been finished. Masons and carpenters have had to suffer cold, wind, snow, rain. Fortunately, they have been able to take advantage of some fine Spring days.

On the first floor of the Bonner house, we have at present one large room on a double floor. As described above, various groups of tradesmen are at work. It is no longer the Bonner house with 4 walls, floors and some chimneys ! Water, electricity, heating, ventilation, insulation, have been added to the old building. That means a work of coordination between the different teams of workers. That is going well.

At present, a start is being made on the ground floor : all the floors have been concreted. To achieve this, it proved a headache to establish the various networks : water, electricity, heating, but especially those draining the rainwater and waste water. The rock outcropped in many places ; it is necessary to use the pneumatic drill, to channel the water... To make the floors waterproof, the concrete was poured over a layer of gravel, and then over a thick insulation. It is certainly solid !

The future large room for meetings and picnics on the ground floor, as well as the toilets, are beginning to take shape.

As regards the Champagnat room, it has not yet been « touched », except for the placing of two concrete slabs for the floor and the ceiling. They will be « dressed »

to give the room a rustic aspect. This Champagnat room kept a lovely surprise for us : the discovery of 2 ancient roughcast layers bearing the trace of sentences existing at the time of Fr Champagnat ; such as this one : (Jesus, all my love, Jesus, all my happiness) «With your heavenly fire, set my whole heart ablaze ». The ones we know were redone towards the end of the 19th century. During the renovation of this room, care will be taken to conserve the trace of this story of the origins.

**The hidden work**

All through these weeks of work, there have also been the weekly meetings of the worksite : architects, company directors, owner, endeavouring to make work on the site move forward. Adjustments always need to be made, such and such a technical question resolved, a decision made about whether or not to keep some « mural recess » discovered by chance following a demolition... Fine team work carried out in an ambiance serious and relaxed at

the same time. For my part, I am struck by the concern of the architects and the companies to respond to the questions and desiderata of the « owner » represented by Brothers Héribert Pujolas and me.

For its part, the little local team associated with the worksite continues its work of reflection : on the scenography of the various spaces, the furniture for the rooms, the ancient elements to preserve and highlight...

In principle, the work should be completed in time for the General Conference in September. The essential work will be completed, but doubtless there will be all the « finishing off » : in particular, all that concerns the arrangements planned for the different spaces. To paraphrase Quohelet, could we not say «There is a time to make haste and a time to take time » ?

**Transformation from within**

Would Marcellin Champagnat and the

first Brothers recognize « their » house?

Yes and no. Without doubt, in part, the exterior ; but for the interior, they would need to call on their memory. A house is like a person, a living organism called to transform itself and especially from within.

If the cradle of La Valla preserves some material traces of the past (this is a dimension of incarnation), let it continue to be for every Marist, with these important renovations, an invitation to return to the sources. One of these appears to me to be this spirit of humility and simplicity, so present in our origins, and of which Pope Francis himself sets an example by his gestures and his words.

May St Marcellin come to our aid.

Br Michel Morel  
community of La Valla en Gier




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# ON THE WAY TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE - 5

## Objectives and Methodology

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In his Letter to the Provincials of April 2012, Br Emili presents the objectives of the General Conference of September 2013 and also offers some guidelines for methodology.

**The General Conference, three weeks to:**

- \* "Strengthen the unity of the Institute, and to enable the Superiors to have direct contact with the Brother Superior General and the members of his Council" (C 137.11.1)
- \* Exercise our co-responsibility in the animation and government of the Institute, considered as a whole, beyond the boundaries of our administrative units.



\* Provide mutual support and encouragement, with the aim of strengthening our leadership in the Institute, for the good of our mission

\* Become aware of where we are now, as an Institute, in relation to the calls of the XXI General Chapter

\* Promote an intense and significant experience for the participants, especially for the Br Provincials and members of the General Council, in the mystical and prophetic key. We animate ourselves "from within" in order to be able to animate.

\* Work out a common vision of the future that we desire for the different regions of the Institute; formulate and explain "the promise" of more life we are hoping for, so that it impels and drives us onwards.

**For this reason:**

\* We live the Conference in an attitude of discernment and as a time for deepening and sharing the living of the faith

and the mystical dimension of our lives

\* We realize the visits prior to the Conference, from January to September 2013, as an experience of insertion in another province / region of the Institute, from the hand of the host provincial or District superior (in order to know and share not so much the houses or works, as his personal experience, from day to day)

\* We recognize the "signs of the dawn" or sources of energy that there are in each one of us and in the Institute

\* We look for some "points of support" that are going to help us to "move" the whole Institute

\* We take note of our fears and our resistance to change

\* We study possible scenarios for Marist life and mission in each region of the Institute, and we choose what we feel as the call of God, to commit ourselves to bring it to reality.

**General Conference**  
Notre Dame de l'Hermitage  
8-29 September 2013

[Read more about the General Conference](#)



# BR. ROBERT TEOH

## Nomination of Provincial of the Province of East Asia



vince of «East Asia», for a period of three years, as from the holding of the Provincial Chapter in December 2013.

In his letter, Br Emili underlined that the results of the recent sondage made among the Brothers of the different countries which compose the Province show clearly the support and respect Br Robert Teoh enjoys.

Br Emili also thanked Br Manny De Leon, the present Provincial, for his availability and service to the Province and the Institute since April 2003.

Finally, the Superior General thanked the Brothers of the Province for the

help received through the sondage and offered his support and prayers.

Br. Robert Teoh, born in Penang, Malaysia. Entered St. Joseph Juniorate in Petaling Jaya in 1976. Make his Postulancy in Petaling Jaya before proceed to the Marist Novitiae at Tamontaka, Philippines in 1984. In 1986 he professed first vows and continue his study in University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. After graduation he taught in Sam Tet School, Ipoh until 1996. His ministries ranging from teaching, running youth camps, vocation recruitment and pastoral care for the Brothers.



**B**r. Emili Turú has communicated the nomination of Br Robert Teoh as Provincial of the Pro-

# A NEW FACE OF BROTHER TO HELP BRING THE DAWN TO BIRTH

## Meeting of Brothers of the Cono Sur region younger than 55 years of age

**A**t Villa Marista in the city of Mar del Plata, Argentina, 34 perpetually professed Brothers from the Provinces of Santa María de los Andes (Bolivia, Peru and Chile) and Cruz del Sur (Uruguay and Argentina) and from the District of Paraguay, along with their Provincials and Brothers Eugene Kabanguka and Josep Maria Soterias, delegates of the General Council for America and the animators of the meeting, met from the 24th to the 27th of April.

The following Brothers participated in the meeting:

From **Santa María de los Andes**: Alonso Beraún, Álvaro Sepúlveda, Antonio Peralta, Baltazar Muro, Gregorio Delgado, Horacio Mena, Isidro Azpeleta, Juan Manuel García, Luis Cornejo, Luis Sanz, Oscar Montenegro and Reinaldo Becerra.

From the **District of Paraguay**: César Borja, Clementino Benítez, Francisco Romero, José María Custodi, Luis Vega and Rubén Velázquez.

From **Cruz del Sur**: Ángel Duples, Damián Provencs, Daniel de la Fuente, Gerardo Accastello, Guillermo Mautino, Horacio Bustos, Jorge Arraztoa, Jorge Walder, José Kuhm, Marcelo De Brito, Pablo Sánchez, Raúl Schönfeld, Rubén Seipel and Sergio Jacob.

In a climate of brotherhood significant experiences were shared from their own lives in reference to the three horizons presented by the 21st General Chapter: "to



go out towards a new land", "a new communion among brothers and lay people" and "a new face of Brother". The richness of the personal reflection and the one-on-one and group sharing, was seen reflected in the sharing in open forum.

All this hard work was only interrupted by a stroll through the beautiful city of Mar del Plata on the afternoon of the second day.

They were four days of reflection and experience that, by means of a wise methodology, were leading to a greater awareness of the centrality of God, the search for what is essen-

tial, the need for a more caring and brotherly community life, the identification with the icon of the community of Bethany, accompaniment of personal and institutional fragility, the call to heal the wounds of children and youth, the need to make brave and faithful decisions with an eye to the future, the gaze supported in faith and hope in the new dawn... "God's Time" every afternoon united us in a prolonged silence and in sharing the Eucharist.

In the evaluation of the meeting, looking towards the future, it was seen to be good to maintain this space as a necessary and opportune means of group accompaniment at the level of Cono Sur. There was a strong sense of the need to help and accompany one another in living the challenge of the "new face of Brother" that we need in order to be faithful to the Gospel and to the charism of Saint Marcellin.

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