

7 SEPTEMBER

Day of fasting and prayer for peace in Syria

We wish to invite Marists all over the world to respond to the appeal made by Pope Francis on Sunday, 1 September, when he called on the whole Church to hold a Day of fasting and prayer on 7 September, first vespers of the Birth of Mary, Queen of Peace, for peace in Syria, the Middle East and the entire world.

Let us keep in mind especially the "Marist Blues", who are witnessing to the Marist ideal in Aleppo in Syria.

Below we reproduce the Pope's text, pronounced at the Angelus of Sunday 1 September.

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Hello!*

Today, dear brothers and sisters, I



wish to make add my voice to the cry which rises up with increasing anguish from every part of the world, from every people, from the heart of each person, from the one great family which is humanity: it is the cry for peace! It is a cry which declares with force: we want a peaceful world, we want to be men and women of peace, and we want in our society, torn apart by divisions and conflict, that peace break out!

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Brothers Emili Turu and Antonio Ramalho attended the European Meeting of Young Brothers held at the Hermitage from 11 to 17 August.

Br. Chris Wills, Secretariat of Collaboration for Mission International, visited the Solidarity project in South Sudan from 15 to 29 August.

Br. Michael De Waas visited the formation house in East Timor from 17 to 20 August and took part in the Provincial Council of East Asia from 25 to 28.

From 18 to 24 August, Br. Eugène Kabanguka was visiting our communities in Haiti.

Br John Klein accompanied the work of the Provincial Chapter of South Asia 19 to 23 August.

Brothers Ernesto Sanchez, Eugène Kabanguka, Josep Maria Soteras, General Councillors, and César Rojas of the Secretariat of Brothers Today met in the General House with the Brothers in charge of ongoing formation at Manziana and El Escorial from 36 to 31 August to plan the course for formators next year and courses for the following years.

Brothers Joao Carlos do Prado, Chris Wills and Jim Jolley were involved in the activities of the African Mission Commission in Ghana between 29 August and 5 September.

War never again! Never again war! Peace is a precious gift, which must be promoted and protected.

There are so many conflicts in this world which cause me great suffering and worry, but in these days my heart is deeply wounded in particular by what is happening in Syria and anguished by the dramatic developments which are looming.

I appeal strongly for peace, an appeal which arises from the deep within me. How much suffering, how much devastation, how much pain has the use of arms carried in its wake in that martyred country, especially among civilians and the unarmed! I think of many children will not see the light of the future! With utmost firmness I condemn the use of chemical weapons: I tell you that those terrible images from recent days are burned into my mind and heart. There is a judgment of God and of history upon our actions which are inescapable! Never has the use of violence brought peace in its wake. War begets war, violence begets violence.

With all my strength, I ask each party in this conflict to listen to the voice of their own conscience, not to close themselves in solely on their own interests, but rather to look at each other as brothers and decisively and courageously to follow the path of encounter and negotiation, and so overcome blind conflict. With similar vigour I exhort the international community to make every effort to promote clear proposals for peace in that country without further delay, a peace based on dialogue and ne-

gotiation, for the good of the entire Syrian people.

May no effort be spared in guaranteeing humanitarian assistance to those wounded by this terrible conflict, in particular those forced to flee and the many refugees in nearby countries. May humanitarian workers, charged with the task of alleviating the sufferings of these people, be granted access so as to provide the necessary aid.

What can we do to make peace in the world? As Pope John said, it pertains to each individual to establish new relationships in human society under the mastery and guidance of justice and love (cf. John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, [11 April 1963]: AAS 55, [1963], 301-302).

All men and women of good will are bound by the task of pursuing peace. I make a forceful and urgent call to the entire Catholic Church, and also to every Christian of other confessions, as well as to followers of every religion and to those brothers and sisters who do not believe: peace is a good which overcomes every barrier, because it belongs all of humanity!

I repeat forcefully: it is neither a culture of confrontation nor a culture of conflict which builds harmony within and between peoples, but rather a culture of encounter and a culture of dialogue; this is the only way to peace.

May the plea for peace rise up and touch the heart of everyone so that they may lay down their weapons and

be let themselves be led by the desire for peace.

To this end, brothers and sisters, I have decided to proclaim for the whole Church on 7 September next, the vigil of the birth of Mary, Queen of Peace, a day of fasting and prayer for peace in Syria, the Middle East, and throughout the world, and I also invite each person, including our fellow Christians, followers of other religions and all men of good will, to participate, in whatever way they can, in this initiative.

On 7 September, in Saint Peter's Square, here, from 19:00 until 24:00, we will gather in prayer and in a spirit of penance, invoking God's great gift of peace upon the beloved nation of Syria and upon each situation of conflict and violence around the world. Humanity needs to see these gestures of peace and to hear words of hope and peace! I ask all the local churches, in addition to fasting, that they gather to pray for this intention.

Let us ask Mary to help us to respond to violence, to conflict and to war, with the power of dialogue, reconciliation and love. She is our mother: may she help us to find peace; all of us are her children! Help us, Mary, to overcome this most difficult moment and to dedicate ourselves each day to building in every situation an authentic culture of encounter and peace. Mat, Queen of Peace, pray for us!

POPE FRANCIS - ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square - Sunday, 1st September 2013



Latest deceased Brothers

03/09/2013: Juan Manuel Tomás Sánchez - Prov. Mediterránea
 30/08/2013: Joseph Duvivier - Prov. Europa Centro-Oeste
 4/08/2013: Manuel Villareal Castelazo - Prov. México Central
 14/08/2013: Rafael García Ortigosa - Prov. América Central
 12/08/2013: César de la Mata González - Prov. Compostela
 05/08/2013: Miguel Ángel Bimbela Alcrudo - Prov. Ibérica

02/08/2013: Roberto Juan Vigghetto - Prov. Cruz del Sur
 30/07/2013: Pierre Floribert N. Kabenge - Prov. East Central Africa
 29/07/2013: Angelo Antoniono - Prov. Brasil Centro-Norte
 28/07/2013: Kizito Blazio Bute - Prov. Southern Africa
 15/07/2013: Kieran Geaney - Prov. Australia
 02/07/2013: Antonio Pérez González - Prov. Mediterránea

GENERAL CONFERENCE 2013

Notre Dame de l'Hermitage, France
8-29 September 2013

The Marist Constitutions (137.11) describe it as follows:

The General Conference is a consultative assembly, made up of the Brother Superior General, the Brother Vicar General, the Councillors General, the Brothers Provincial and, if the Statutes of the Districts provide for it, the Superiors of Districts. The aim of the General Conference is,

- * to strengthen the unity of the Institute, and to enable the Superiors to have direct contact with the Brother Superior General, the members of his Council, and with one another,
- * to study questions of general concern.

The Brother Superior General convokes the General Conference in the period between two General Chapters. If he judges it opportune, he can invite other persons to attend.



PARTICIPANTS

01 - Emili Turú	Superior General	29 - Libardo Garzón	Norandina
02 - Joe Mc Kee	Vicar General	30 - Inácio Etges	Rio Grande do Sul
03 - Antonio Ramalho	Councillor General	31 - Antonio Peralta	Sta. María de los Andes
04 - Ernesto Sánchez	Councillor General	32 - Shanthi Liyanage	South Asia
05 - Eugène Kabanguka	Councillor General	33 - Ben Consigli	United States
06 - John Klein	Councillor General	34 - João Gutemberg	Amazonia
07 - Josep Maria Soteras	Councillor General	35 - Ken Mc Donald	Melanesia
08 - Michael de Waas	Councillor General	36 - José María Custodi	Paraguay
09 - Víctor M. Preciado	Councillor General	37 - Francis Lukong	West Africa
10 - Joseph Walton	Southern Africa	38 - Pere Ferrè, Vigario Prov.	Hermitage
11 - Valentin Djawu	East Central Africa	39 - Juan Castro	District of Asia
12 - Luis C. Gutiérrez Blanco	América Central	40 - Seán Sammon	Ex Superior General
13 - Wellington Medeiros	Brasil Centro-Norte	41 - César Rojas	Secret. Brothers Today
14 - Joaquim Sperandio	Brasil Centro-Sul	42 - Chris Wills	Secretariado CMI
15 - Bernard Beaudin	Canada	43 - Javier Espinosa	Secretariado Lay People
16 - Óscar Martín	Compostela	44 - João Carlos do Prado	Segretariado Mission
17 - Horacio Bustos	Cruz del Sur	45 - Jim Jolley	FMSI – Genebra
18 - Robert Teoh	East Asia	46 - Mario Meuti	FMSI – Rome
19 - Brendan Geary	West Central Europe	Chaplain and facilitator	
20 - Ambrosio Alonso	Ibérica	Michael French, FSC	Facilitator
21 - Maurice Berquet	Hermitage	Edmund Duffy, SM	Chaplain
22 - Thomas Randrianantenaina	Madagascar	Colaborators	
23 - Antonio Giménez	Mediterránea	Alberto Ricica	Comunications
24 - Jeffrey Crowe	Australia	Santiago Fernández	Secretary
25 - Ricardo Reynoso	México Central	Matías Espinosa	Decoration
26 - Eduardo Navarro	México Occidental	Carla Bertana	Translations
27 - David Mc Donald	New Zealand	Daniella Persia	Translations
28 - Joachim Ezetulugo	Nigeria	Francisco Castellanos	Translations

BROTHERS TODAY

Interview with Br. Peter Rodney

The International Commission Brothers Today met in Rome from 4 to 11 July. On this occasion, we spoke with some of its members. We present today a conversation with Br Peter Rodney, from the Province of Australia, originally from the city of Brisbane. His current ministry is leading the Scholasticate for the Asia – Pacific region (MAPAC) which is located in Manila, Philippines.



What does it mean for you to be a brother today?

There are many elements to this, so maybe only to identify a few of the more significant. For me it means being a Brother in a Marial-way. I am encouraged by all that Br.Emili has envisioned for us in his first circular: to be the Marian face of the Church. In practice I think it is about the prophetic witness that we live: the Champagnat characteristics of strength and gentleness, lived out with commitment and joy. It is about having a spirituality of discernment: experiencing God at work in everyday life (being a mystic). Finally, since we are an international congregation, it is about having the heart of a missionary.

Is the animation of initial formation an important mission for the Institute? How should we go about doing it, in your opinion?

I guess the answer is obvious to us all. Initial Formation is a fundamental mission. Upon its effectiveness rests the existence of the charism. But more than survival, it is about a vibrant, life-giving, dynamic, ever-adaptable charism. The future of the Institute is in shared mission. Without the vocations of both Lay Marists and Brother, both flourishing together, we shall be like a "sickly plant" – alive but well less what it could be.

books (including our Formation Guide) have been written on that question, so how to answer it simply? It is providing the best possible processes that accompany the discernment and development of the vocational identity of the individual person. The detail of these processes is quite comprehensive and integrated. Our Commission meeting stressed that solid accompaniment was essential at all stages. Suffice to stress that the heart of it all is a maturing personal relationship with Jesus.

Almost 200 years from the foundation of the Institute, what are the challenges for the brothers, today? Are the challenges taken on by Marcellin still relevant?

Sometimes I wonder whether some terms that are common to us have lost their vitality through overuse. I believe that familiar terms such as reading the signs of the times and the Montagne's of today still contain an essential message for us. Maybe the Montagne story captures all that is still very relevant for us: going to where young people are, encountering their 'poverty', responding to real needs with a

commitment to practical action that is creative and simple, carried out by a Marist community. And it is all discerned and sustained through the eyes of faith.

What particular experiences of the brothers of your region could be an example for Institute?

I can speak more for the experiences of the brothers of our large community here at MAPAC than for the region. Each of us has been challenged, stretched, and grown by being an international community. It requires of us a respect for differences, a willingness to put aside one's own ways and viewpoints, again and again to be open to others, to accept that mistakes get made and that we need to ask for and offer forgiveness, and to allow our own culture to be assessed by Gospel values. The future of Marist life and mission is clearly internationally interconnected and vibrantly cross-cultural. Maybe in our own small way: we are what the Institute will be.

How to go about it? Whole

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