

MARISTS OF ALEPPO

Are we heroes? No, we are only Marists

From Syria comes this beautiful text. It is the Message of the Marists of Aleppo to the Assembly of Province *Mediterránea*. People who are in parts of the world where no one wants to be, maintaining hope and offering love and solidarity among those who are suffering. Catholic teachers working so that more than 3 million Syrian children do not become a lost generation. We invite you to read about and pray for their work...and their lives.

"Peace and hope from Aleppo... We would like to be present among you at the Provincial Assembly... You have invited us to take part by means of Skype or Webex, but this has not been easy. Thanks to Pascal and Edouard who have transmitted very well our sentiments and our supplications through the prayer they prepared.

We do not wish the Assembly to finish without sending all a message of gratitude. Above all, to be Marist in Syria today is to carry with one a whole province and in reality the whole Marist world and all its charism. We can assure you that more than ever our presence as Marists is more than topical. First of all, for the theme of trust in God and the Good Mother.

We cannot the times when the Lord and the good Mother have supported us, have helped us to bear such a difficult situation and guided us in the reflection and the decisions we have to take... The strength

of the support we have received from Br Emili Turú, Br Antonio Giménez and all the brothers and laity of the world has helped us overcome despair in extremely difficult times.

Here we live being Marist, laity and brothers

horizons... staying on the frontiers.

Every day we hear this phrase... "Thanks because you are different..." and we ask ourselves how we are different... We are so by our way of being and helping and educating... We live it as Marists... When more than 3 million Syrian children need education, if they are not to become a lost generation, we Marists are committed to contributing a response which comes from our tradition and our charism... When more than half the population of Syria lives without aid, we Marists are committed to providing milk, food, clothing, medicines, hospitalization, accomodation and all the other services most needed... Your



together... Our vocation has been opened to Moslem lay people who share with us the missions of education and aid... This is an unforgettable experience... What we are developing responds to the call of the last General Chapter and Pope Francis... new

support, your prayers, your financial assistance and the help of so many friends and former students mean that the Project can be realized. More than 500 Christian and Moslem families make complete use of

the whole program (educational and supportive)...

The house is open... Moslem girls are living in the house... They need to sit university exams for a month and they cannot cross the passage between the two parts of the divided city every day... In our house they are welcome... Children and young people, Moslem and Christian, receive quality education... Women and youth take part in development activities... The house is open... Many of the activities of other organizations take place in our house... The latest to ask to have a training session using our rooms is the "Syrian Red Crescent"... It is a point of honour for the Marists of the world. Without any doubt, we experience every day the horror of the war... We mourn young people we have welcomed in the house and who have died... We hear with much sorrow of the suffering of people who have been hit by some bullet or bomb...

Horror, fear, mourning are our daily bread... We cannot hide from you that there are days when we lose expectation but not hope... There are days we pass without light, without water, with many bombs... days of cold and death... but the house of Marcellin and Mary remains a house



of welcome for the most needy... for those who need to take a bath, or wash their clothes or have a hot meal or only spend a night... Are we heroes? No, we are only Marists... and we feel, with you, we belong to a great family... We are sowing seeds... God grant that what we sow may be seeds of peace... We are sowing an education for peace, we are sowing a witness of peace, we are sowing a commitment to peace...

We have chosen to remain, as community, as laity... Many families and young people have left the country... It is a terrible moment when a fam-

ily or a young person comes to say goodbye to us... I am going or we are going tomorrow, to somewhere outside, far off, unknown many times... We have chosen to stay to serve and to educate... From Aleppo, once again, thanks, thanks and thanks... We need your prayers... Your love is a gift from Heaven for us... You are in our hearts as we know very well that we are in yours... Together we continue on the way mapped out for us by Marcellin.... SALAM"

Br. Georges



The Brothers Emili Turú, Antonio Ramalho and Michael De Waas with the Pope in the House "Santa Marta", Vatican, the 3rd February, after the holy mass celebrated by him.



PROVINCE "BRASIL CENTRO-NORTE"

Three Brothers make perpetual profession

Brothers Joilson de Souza Toledo, Paulo Henrique Martins de Jesus and Wesley Adenilton Ribeiro, of the Province of Brasil Centro-Norte, consecrated themselves in a definitive way to religious life in the Marist Institute on 18 January in Belo Horizonte. Br Wellington Medeiros, Provincial, received their vows. The celebration, presided over by Father Hilário Dick, was attended by numerous Brothers, family members, friends, counsellors and youth of the Youth Ministry as well as other collaborators of the Province.

From March to June 2013, the three Brothers were engaged in the programme of formation for perpetual profession in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Br Joilson comes from Duque de Caxias (Rio de Janeiro). He began taking part in activities in the church at 14 in catechetics, and worked with youth groups. It was from his experience in Youth Ministry that he came to know the Marist Brothers and that his vocation emerged.

Br Paulo is from Belo Horizonte. He took part in youth groups and it was as part of the co-ordination of Youth Ministry that he came to know the Marists.

Br Wesley was born in Carrancas (Minas Gerais). As an adolescent he joined a youth group of the community where he



came to know a Marist Brother, who attracted his attention by being a significant presence among them.



DISTRICT OF WEST AFRICA

Perpetual Profession

Between December 2013 and January 2014, the Marist District of West Africa witnessed with great joy the final profession of 6 young Brothers: Augustine Teye Naatey (Ghana) on the 21st of December, Anthony Doe Siryeh (Liberia) and Brendane Tombir (Cameroon) on the 28th of December.

On the 4th of January 2014, Brothers Nadji Frederic, Ngardoum Succès and

Ngaro Alfred, from Chad, made their final profession in the Institute of the Marist Brothers. The mass which began at 9am was presided over by Bishop Djitangar Edmond, Bishop of the diocese of Sarh, 20 priests and two deacons. The lay faithful turned out in their numbers and were about 2000 in number, in fact many people had nowhere to sit despite the fact that the ceremony was conducted outdoors. Two choirs beautifully animated the mass,

one in the local dialect and the other in French. As usual the various rites which accompany the final profession were performed during the mass. A brief history of the Marist Brothers was also read to the whole congregation.

In his homily, the Bishop first of all thanked the Brothers for their witness as well as the parents of the Brothers who had offered them voluntarily to the Church. He reminded the Brothers

and all present that God calls whom he wants, when he wants and how he wants. He who is called just has to accept and put himself at the services of God. He concluded his homily by challenging Brothers Fred, Succès and Alfred to be models of patience and courage to the youths; to teach them to have a place for Jesus in their lives and to always cling to Jesus in times of joys and sorrows.

After the homily the Brothers then made their final professions each in turns and received the Cross from the District Superior, Br Francis Lukong. Then came the bidding prayers and the offertory procession which lasted for more than 30 minutes. Strange enough, all the offertory collected as well as the gifts received were given to the Brothers community. Each Brother was given a pigeon during the offertory procession by the families which they immediately released to nature as a sign of peace.

Just before the end of the mass, the newly professed Brothers consecrated themselves to the Virgin Mary as is the tradition in the institute. A vote of thanks was given by Br Martin Sarobe



just before the final blessings. He thanked everyone present for their active participation during the mass; God, the families of the Brothers, Religious and civil authorities and finally the laity for turning out in their numbers.

After the mass, there was a reception at the parish for few invited guests while the remaining guests were attended to at the level of the family of the various Brothers. In conclusion the ceremony was very successful and we give thanks to God for the gifts of Brothers Frederic, Succès and Alfred to the institute of the Marist Brothers.



Sri Lanka: First Chapel dedicated to Marist Martyrs in Spain

The Province of South Asia has the joy of having a new formation house for the young men interested in our way of life, who study at St. Joseph's College, Nugagoda, Sri Lanka. There are five Candidates at the moment and a few more are expected by the end of this month. The newly constructed house and beautiful chapel, which was blessed on the 10th of January 2014, becomes the first Chapel dedicated to the Marist Martyrs of Spain.

The formation community was

joined by Bishop Max, the Auxiliary Bishop of the Colombo Diocese, number of Marist Brothers, including the Provincial Br. Shanthi and his Council, many Religious, Marist Candidates, Lay Marist and the young people from the Marist Youth Ministry to celebrate the Eucharist and to witness the occasion.

The Chapel was blessed and first time Eucharist was celebrated.

The Chapel has the painting of the Marist Martyrs behind the Alter, which is painted by the art teacher at St. Joseph's College Nugagoda. Brother Chinthana and the community and the Province take great pride in dedicating the Chapel to our Marist Martyrs.

Pray that through the intercessions of the Marist Martyrs of Spain, we will have many more young people to offer their lives to Marist way of life.



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