

II MARIST INTERNATIONAL MISSION ASSEMBLY

Hashtag #nairobi2014

We are getting closer to the International Stage of the II Marist International Mission Assembly, to be held next September in Nairobi, Kenya. During these months several Provinces will organize their own assembly, after the local meetings that have been held since April last year.

Many ideas on Marist mission have been discussed in different areas of the Institute. We want everyone to participate in this discussion. Besides the website created especially for this event (www.champagnat.org/nairobi/), we are also suggesting the use other modern means of communication, like the #nairobi2014 hashtag, which acts like an anchor for the II MIMA contents uploaded to the internet.



#Nairobi2014



GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Br Chris Wills of the Secretariat of Collaboration for Mission International returned to Rome on 15 May and is recovering from a bad fall he had in New York.

Br Joao do Prado is on a visit to the Province of South Asia from 10 to 22 May.

Br Javier Espinosa, of the Secretariat of the Laity, attended the meeting of Leaders of the Champagnat Movement in Bello Horizonte, Brasil, from 14 to 19 May. From there he goes to direct the Retreat for the Laity to be held in Lima, Peru, from 23 to 25 May.

Br Miguel Angel Espinosa, subdirector of the Secretariat of Mission, has a meeting with the European Mission Team in Bucharest, Romania, on 21 and 22 May.

Br Emili Turu is taking part in the Seminar of SEDOS (Service of Documentation and Studies) in Nemi, Italy, from 20 to 24 May.

Br Tony Leon, subdirector of the Secretariat Brothers Today, is attending the Meeting of Marist Youth at Mt St Mary's College in Newburgh, USA, from 23 to 26 May.

Br Josep Maria Soteras will be taking part in the Retreat in Canada from 23 to 28 May.

The hashtag is the combination of the hash symbol (#) and a key-word. Thanks to this feature, a certain topic is explicitly indexed by the social networks (Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Instagram, etc.), and by search engines like Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc. So, for example, if you search for #nairobi2014 in any of the social networks, you will find all the messages it contains regarding the Assembly.

To put into practice this suggestion, every time you post content regarding an activity and/or an idea about the Marist mission, include the expression #nairobi2014 in your message.

We rely on your cooperation to spread this idea through the network. Follow the example of our Superior General: we suggest you print the image we are attaching here, take a picture of it, and post it on the internet.

Site: www.champagnat.org/nairobi/

FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/nairobi2014>



INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Meeting at the General House (April 30 - May 2, 2014)

The International Economic Affairs Council (IEAC) – integrated by Víctor Preciado (Economie General), Alfonso Fernández (Ibérica), Rex Cambrey (Australia), Nicholas Banda (Southern Africa), Mario Meuti (FM-SI), Delcio Balestrin (Brasil Centro Sul) and Paulo Roberto Girardello Franco (PUCRS) – met in Rome at the General House from April 30th to May 2nd to study the following topics:

Evaluation of the Provincial Economies' Meeting

It was the first Provincial Economies' Meeting at the Institute level, and it brought about mutual understanding and a sense of internationality, besides sensitizing the participants to a wide variety of situations, and allowing an intercultural experience.

All this was possible thanks to the reports from the Provinces, the information provided by the General Ad-

ministration, and the reflection about the "spirituality of management". And finally, the welcoming and hospitable attitude prevailing in the house, and the fraternal atmosphere in the group, motivated the participants to ask for a periodical meeting of this kind.

There were a couple of suggestions for future meetings: offering more dialogue to get to know each other better, and implementing the necessary means to facilitate communication (presentations in two languages; improve the quality of simultaneous translation and the Internet service).

Presentation of the GA Financial Report 2013

This topic included several areas, which were studied in order to determine what information should be presented to the Provinces and in what way: Income-Expenditure, Investments, Cost of Animation and Government, Sol-

idity, and Expenses of the General House.

The economic issue of Villa EUR - Associazione Marcellino was attentively examined, especially regarding the administrative cost due to management change, which implied reclassifying it as a Hotel, instead of falling in the category of Casa Per Ferie (guest house), under the responsibility of a company specialized in hotel management.

There was finally a presentation about how the GA Funds are being managed with the help of a number of Provinces collaborating in this sense, and the support of the Bedford Fund, a religious nonprofit corporation under Canadian regulations.

Financial Information from the Provinces to the GA

This has been one of the most demanding tasks for the International

Economic Affairs Council in the last 5 years, in keeping with what the Constitutions indicate: "Each year the Brother Econome General presents (...) information concerning the financial position of Provinces and Districts to the Brother Superior General".

Through the Marist Financial Information System (Marist - FIS), a website explicitly designed to receive data from the Provinces, we collected the financial information regarding the Provinces' economic activity in 2012. While most AUs have used it, we are concerned about the objectivity and transparency of the information provided.

The IEAC was presented with the updates of a new version of the Marist - FIS, which will facilitate the work for those who have a poor internet connection. The group also requested a review of the accounting glossary's content and translations.

ing the per capita system – was a task of the present IEAC requiring planning and lobbying, which began in 2010 and was implemented in 2013. Considering that it received the GC's approval for a period of three years (2013 - 2015), we agreed on writing a report for the GC regarding the model's operation, and decided to carry out an assessment



in our meeting of October this year, taking into account the comments we have received regarding the issue.

We emphasized the importance of publicizing the new measures taken by the GA regarding the usage of resources received from the Provinces, and the

need for transparent reporting, especially concerning the rationale and symbolic value of investing in certain extraordinary events having to do with the animation of the Institute.

Participation of Br. Joe Mckee, Vicar General

We appreciated the Vicar General's presence at the end of the meeting in order to listen to a summary of the work we had done, and we emphasized the need for the GC's support and participation regarding the Institute's Economy, especially at this stage of deep changes, marked by the new financing model, and the New Models of Animation and Management Project.

Brother Vicar General thanked the IEAC for its work on behalf of the Institute, ensured the GC's support, and committed to giving enough time to discuss administrative issues during the plenary sessions.

Víctor Preciado, Consejero y Ecónomo General



Analysis of the financing model
The new GA's financing model – replac-



MARISTES BLUES, SYRIA

War crimes and crimes against humanity in Aleppo

The 3 Million civilian inhabitants of Aleppo are, independent of their confession or political opinion..., taken hostage since 2 years, and they are victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity:

- 1.Total blockade of people and goods, several times, the longest taking over 6 weeks, always resulting in severe shortages of essential supplies like vegetables, fruits, fuel, heating oil, medications, meet, etc.
- 2.Cutting of electric power supply over several days and up to 11 [consecutive] days,
- 3.Shutting down of the drinking water system over 2 and up

- to 11 [consecutive] days,
- 4.Repeatedly disconnecting local and international telephone and internet connections over 2 and up to 20 consecutive days,
- 5.Daily bombardment of civilian areas using bombs or mortars, resulting in numerous dead and wounded,
- 6.Snipers shooting at innocent civilians,
- 7.Systematic destruction of the archeological and cultural heritage.

The International Human Rights, based on the 4 Geneva conventions of 1949, the 2 additional protocols of 1977,

and on the Rome Statute of 2002 for establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC) define war crimes and crimes against humanity. Article 8, 2(a)(iii) and (b)(ix) of the ICC qualifies as war crime "willfully causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or health" and "intentionally directing attacks against buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals"; and Article 7, 1(k) qualifies as crime against humanity "inhumane acts ... intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health".

As the inhabitants of Aleppo are not allowed to leave the city, as they are imprisoned there, as they are hungry, as they are thirsty, as they become sick caused by the lack of sanitation and medications, as they are prevented from communicating with the world, as they are targeted by mortar shells and snipers, all these acts, do they not represent great suffering and serious injury to body and health? Are these not war crimes and crimes against humanity as defined in the conventions cited above?

I ACCUSE the media, the Western and Arab governments, international organizations like the UNO, UNICEF, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of complicity in war crimes and crimes against humanity.

I DEMAND from all men and women of the world who care for freedom and justice, faced with such acts:

1. to raise attention to them,
2. to denounce them,
3. to condemn them,
4. to demand from their governments to put pressure on those who command and those who carry out
5. to prosecute the ones responsible before the ICC.



The taking hostage of the civil population of Aleppo must end.

Write to the media, to the members of parliament, senators, ministers, presidents, and international organizations. Tell them that the inhabitants of Aleppo are the target of terrorist acts that qualify as crimes. Tell them about the suffering of the people, explain them about the destruction of the country and of our beloved city, remind them that the "Arab Spring" in Syria is nothing but a freezing winter and a futile chaos.

As of now, the water blockade is over. It followed other blockades in the past and there will possibly be more to come in future if you don't move.

HELP US

Nabil Antaki
Aleppo, May 17, 2014



REATREAT IN KIRIBATI

The Champagnat Marists in Kiribati (9 Brothers and 12 Lay) recently participated in the annual retreat. The retreat was based on Water from the Rock. The participants reflected on the implications of Champagnat Marist Spirituality for personal, communal living and for mission.



Kiribati is an island nation composed of 32 coral atolls and one raised coral is-

land, dispersed over 3.5 million square kilometers. Kiribati has a population of

about 100,000. The Brothers began their mission in 1984. The Brothers teach at St Louis High School, a coeducational secondary school of approximately 920 students and have a formation centre at Bikenibeu. They would be happy to receive any Champagnat Marist volunteers who may be interested in working in the Marist mission.



MARIST ASIA CONFERENCE

3rd Annual Meeting

The leaders of Asia recently gathered at the end of April for their 3rd Annual Meeting. The gathering was in Bangkok hosted by the Marist District of Asia (MDA). The Marist Asia Conference (MCA) is an arrangement whereby the leaders of Asia can meet regularly to plan regional initiatives together and co-ordinate the sharing of resources.

This meeting was the first to be attended by Ms. Agnes Reyes, who has joined the Conference as a full member. Br. Mike de Waas, the General Council's link to Asia, was also able to attend, thereby assisting the Conference to remain linked to the priorities and directions of Br. Emili and the Council.

The meeting was also joined by Mr. Marco Blanco, who is regional co-ordinator in Asia for FMSI. Marco has just completed his first year, and what a full year it has been! His attention has been devoted to two significant priorities: the implementation of Child Advocacy and Protection policies, as well as being the focal point for sourcing funding for projects in the region. Each priority is a considerable task in its own right. Mike de Waas is also the chair of FMSI, thus giving the meeting an excellent opportunity to ensure clear communication between MAC, FMSI-Rome, FMSI-Geneva, FMSI-Asia; and to set clear priorities for Marist Asia.

This being the 3rd Annual meeting, much time was also given to reviewing progress in other areas that have been priorities of the Conference since its inception. Regional co-operation in Initial Formation continues to be a focus, especially in light of the re-opening of the International

Novitiate at Tudella, Sri Lanka this month. The leaders would also like to see in place a regional program of preparation for Perpetual Profession. Co-ordinating program dates with the differing school holidays around the region is the challenge.

Much progress is being made in the area of Partnership in Mission. The region's Laity Commission has been very active, and is a clear example of the fundamental approach of the Conference: sharing of programs, resources, combined formation activities – with one area assisting others needing support - in ways that are appropriate for Asia – shaped by the limitation of resources within the region.

Similarly in the area of community development. Under the guidance of the respective Administrative Unit (AU) Councils, the regional graduates of the Community Animators program in Manziana, are using their skills and training within their AUs. The Conference is keeping an eye on how to keep these Brothers networked and exchanging experience around the region.



From left to right: Br. Chinna Devadoss (South Asia), Br. Peter Rodney (MAPAC), Mr. Marco Blanco (FMSI – Asia), Br. Mike de Waas (General Council), Br. Pat Corpus (East Asia), Br. Juan Castro (MDA), Br. Robert Teoh (East Asia), Ms. Agnes Reyes, Br. Shanthi Liyanage (South Asia), and Br. Michael Potter (MDA).

Another area of great importance and significant potential is the development of Asian Marist Spirituality. This 3rd Annual meeting re-affirmed the commitment made to the Institute at the General Conference last September: that the leaders of Asia will devote attention to the articulation of Marist Spirituality shaped by Asian culture and experience, for the benefit of Marist life and mission in Asia, and the enrichment of the whole Institute.

Overall, the meeting concluded with a mix of feelings. It is pleasing that the Conference is developing its own style and culture. The manner of meeting is developing. Conversation is increasingly frank and honestly expressive of regional realities. Despite the limitations of the region, especially in the restrictions of personnel available as resource people, and of finance which limits face-to-face contact, there is much satisfaction with the steady progress that is being made in regional co-operation.

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