

6 JUNE

Marcellin Champagnat. Passion and compassion

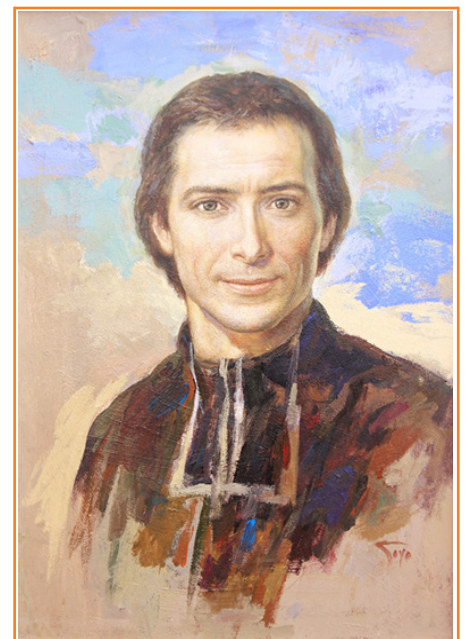
The story of the Marist Brothers is a story of passion and compassion. Marcellin Champagnat perceived us in the eyes of Jean-Baptiste Montagne, a dying youth who was leaving this world without knowing how much God loved him. From this was born the Marist Brothers.

The life of Champagnat is a history of passion for God and compassion for the most neglected children and young people. He said: "I cannot see a child without feeling the desire to tell him how much Jesus Christ loves him".



When Marcellin felt that God was calling him to be something greater than himself, he was without doubt like the boy in the photo. A country lad, who had dropped out of school and spent his days looking after the family livestock. It is astonishing how in a rural environment cut off from the world geographically and culturally, God could place in his heart such a breadth of vision. So much so that many considered he was not in his right mind when he said that "all the dioceses in the world enter into our considerations". And yet, today, almost 3,500 Marist Brothers, his sons, are in 80 countries of the world.

In my own situation, living in a corner of the world as rural and lacking in horizons as the one in which Champagnat lived, I tell myself often that one of my missions consists in convincing these youngsters that they have something great to do in the world, to open their minds, eyes and hearts. Who knows how many Champagnats there are hidden in the boys who pasture their buffalos,



harvest the rice, pick tea leaves or drive a rickshaw...

When Fr Champagnat was on his deathbed, a Brother came to his bedside, took him by the hand and begged him:

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The General Council this week begins its plenary session, which will end on 8 July. For the first few days, they will share their most significant experiences of the three months since the last plenary, and do some community planning. The first topics on their agenda are Communications, the Financial Report, FMSI, other administrative matters and the appointments of personnel to the General Administration.

Br César Rojas, Director of the Secretariat Brothers Today is accompanying the first stage of the joint session for the groups of formators from the Escorial and Manzianna being held at the Hermitage to 24 June.

Brothers Ernesto Sanchez of the General Council and Joao Carlos do Prado of the Secretariat of Mission are attending the Education Conference of the Province of West Central Europe being held in Guardamar, Spain, from 6 to 9 June.

"Father, don't forget us when you go to heaven". Marcellin replied simply: "Forget you? It is impossible". How could a father forget his sons; it is impossible. Today, at vespers of the feast of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, from this remote corner of the Institute where I live and work, I also dare to beg him not to forget us, even though knowing that is impossible.

Father Champagnat, do not forget your Brothers struggling for the defence of human rights in Syria, nor the Brothers suffering enormous difficulties in Pakistan, Haiti, Cuba, Central Africa or Lebanon, the Brothers who live hidden and unknown in other countries I must not

mention here, the Brothers who give up their lives each day in classrooms or offices, in the marginal districts of cities, in prestigious middle class schools or in remote country areas, the Brothers who teach in universities or in little primary schools, the Brothers who attempt to sow our charism in America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania. Do not forget our leaders, your successors, who try to be your living image.

And do not forget the legion of lay people, as Marist as the Brothers, who work, live and pray with us, who hold fixed in their souls and bodies the Marist spirit, and who do not cease growing daily as a sign of the times.

"Father, do not forget us..." Good Mother, do not forget us.

I feel proud to belong to this tradition of passion and compassion, I feel proud and grateful to feel within me too this urgency to let the children and young people know how much God loves them, to make them feel that God is good, that he is Father.

Br. Eugenio Sanz, Bangladesh
[Diario de un misionero en Asia](#)
[Religión Digital](#)



MARIST EUROPEAN MISSION TEAM

Meeting in Bucharest

The European Mission Team met in Bucharest, Rumania, from 19 to 21 May. In addition to our ordinary agenda, we are trying to visit significant projects in different parts of Marist Europe.

In Bucharest, there are at present two communities, each composed of four Brothers. Today the Brothers, aided by lay collaborators, both voluntary and salaried, run a day centre with school support for children, and a reception centre where about thirty children and young people between 4 and 18 live in four houses.



in its provincial and its European phases. The local meetings held by numerous groups as well as the provincial assemblies have been considered very rich in reflection and in life shared between brothers and laity

pening at the level of the Institute.

- We reviewed and brought up to date the objectives of our team, according to the orientations of the European Marist Conference (C.E.M.).
- We also reviewed in detail the programme of formation intended for Marist leaders, brothers and lay, which will begin in October 2014. It is proposed that 4 or 5 persons per province follow a programme extending over two years, in order to help them take on the animation, management and planning of the mission in our provinces.
- Finally, we programmed our meetings for next year.

On the programme of our meetings :

- We made a point about preparing for the 2nd International Mission Assembly (Nairobi, September 2014),

involved in the mission.

- Through Brother Miguel Angel, of the Secretariat of Mission, from Rome, we were able to obtain some information about what is currently hap-

We are very grateful to our confrères in Bucharest for their warm welcome and we carry in our prayers their mission among the young.



MARIST BLUES OF ALEPPO

"Civilian War Wounded" Project

On Sunday 1 June, there was a meeting of the doctors involved in the Project "Civilian War Wounded" at the Marist's house in Aleppo. We evaluated the work accomplished over 18 months and took resolutions to continue the project.

The "Civilian War Wounded" project is the only one in Aleppo to take freely in charge into a private hospital (l'Hôpital Saint Louis) the civilians with serious war wounds who have no means to pay for treatment. It is open to the whole population of Aleppo and has saved in 18 months dozens of persons who would have died. It involves three partners :

1- The doctors and surgeons who offer their services without payment ;

2- The Sisters of the Saint Louis Hospital who grant a substantial reduction on the price of rooms, laboratory,



radio, intensive care and pharmacy ;

3- The Marists who provide the financing and the administrative direction.



SECRETARIAT BROTHERS TODAY

Second meeting of the International Commission

The International Commission for the Secretariat Brothers Today had its second meeting at the General House from 8th May to 14th May 2014. The group is composed by Br. César Augusto Rojas (Colombia, Director of the Secretariat), Br. Tony Leon (Australia, Assistant Director of the Secretariat), and Br. Ernesto Sánchez (General Councilor). Seven other members of the Team were present: Br. James Pinheiro Dos Santos (Brazil), Br. Juan Carlos Fuertes (Spain), Br. Norbert Mwila (Zambia), Br. Peter Rodney (Australia), Br. Jean Marie Batick (Melanesia), Br. Dan O' Riordan (USA), Br. Albert Nzabonaliba (Rwanda). However, for various reasons Br. Saul Placious

(India), Br. Hipólito Pérez (Central America) and Br. Eugène Kabanguka (GC) could not attend the meeting. We accepted their apologies.



On one hand, in light of the last General Conference, of the Year of Consecrated Life, and of the preparations towards the Marist Bicentenary (2017), the Secretariat believes in a "new beginning." And Vocation Ministry is the key that subsequently implies a good Initial Formation. With these convictions, the overall meeting reflected upon some practicalities that the Secretariat Brothers Today can put in place for the coming years. Among aspects that require our attention today, one particular

one aspect focused our attention: the exploration of the possibilities of organizing an "International Colloquium on Initial Formation." This comes especially as the Church is dedicating 2015 as the Year for Consecrated Life. Nonetheless, prior to this important event, we feel called to engage in some dynamics of reflections on Vocation Ministry and Initial Formation programs, for both Brothers and Lay Marists. On the other hand, some Guest

Speakers presented a variety of topics related to the Vocation Ministry and Identity of Religious Brothers today. To mention just few here, Br. René Stockman, Superior General of the Brothers of Charity was all that impressive and convincing with regard to the Vocation and Mission of religious Brothers today. Br. Javier Espinosa spoke to us about this new era for the Marist Charism: Marist Future in Communion. All in all, and from now on, some key words seem to enter in our vocabu-

lary: awakening the dawn, fostering the birth of a new epoch for the Charism, and new beginning. To undertake this journey into new beginning, wrote Fr. David Ranson in his article, "The Role Played by Vocations Directors in presenting the face of Religious and Clergy to the World (2010)": there are in fact three questions that Jesus puts to us in the adventure of discipleship of him: 1. "What do you want / what are you looking for?" 2. "Who do you say I am?" and 3. "Do you love me?"



What burned in Father Champagnat's heart as he made his way back to La Valla after encountering the young Montagne? What energy pulsed through him, leading him to found the Institute just a few months later? We might ask, are we not called to travel this same road again, allowing ourselves to be deeply challenged by the situation of the young Montagnes of today?

[From the Message of Br Emili Turú, for the feast of Saint Marcellin Champagnat](#)

PROVINCE OF WEST CENTRAL EUROPE

Netherlands: A project for adolescent boys at risk

For a number of years the Brothers in the Netherlands have been exploring the possibility in Nijmegen of establishing a project for adolescent boys at risk. The Dominican Sisters of Neerbosch (a congregation in Nijmegen) have joined the Brothers for this project.

Its goal is to provide preventative shelter and accompaniment for boys aged 12 – 17. The house will be run by "care parents" who will live and stay in the house with the young people. As a result of several meetings with the

City of Nijmegen, the City considers the house as a pilot project with a preventative mission. The City has agreed to provide significant financial support.

On 15th April 2014, the 14th an-

niversary of the foundation of the Province of West Central Europe, the Brothers and Dominican Sisters were given the keys to the house which will be used for the project. It is an ideal property with space for the young people, an apartment for the house parents, a garden and a garage which can be used for recreation. The "House To Be" is a necessary and exciting new project, which is consistent with the desire of the General Chapter for a significant presence among poor and vulnerable children.



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