

EXTENDED SECRETARIAT OF LAITY

Lima, Peru: 26 May - 2 June

The annual meeting of the Extended Secretariat of Laity is held in the different Regions of the Institute in order to get directly in touch with local situations, generating a close and stimulating exchange.

The Secretariat meeting, which represented the seven Marist regions, was attended for the first time by Pep Buetas (Codirector, Europe), and João Luis Fedel (Brazil), new member of the Expanded Secretariat. The other members are: Brother Javier Espinosa (Director), Tony Clarke (Codirector, Australia), Agnes Reyes (Asia), Patricia Ríos (Arco Norte), Brother Sylvain Ramandimbarisoa (Africa), and Raúl Amaya (Cono Sur).

The meeting dealt with the monitoring of the Secretariat's projects and lines of action stated by the three-year plan, trying to discern the path



to follow and the best way to move forward.

The topics covered include:

- Reflection on the recommendations regarding bonding and belonging coming from the international meeting held in Rome last March. We realized the need for further

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

After a community weekend away, the General Council continues its plenary session. The main topics concern the Secretariats of the Laity and Brothers Today, some financial management issues and the General Conference of 2013.

Br Eugène Kabanguka C.G. attends a meeting of the Preparatory Commission for the Bicentenary of the Fourvière Promise to be held in 2016. The four Marist branches are represented by Jane Frances O'Carroll, Marist Sisters, Margaret Ryan, Marist Missionary Sisters, Tony Corcoran, Marist Fathers, and Eugène Kabanguka, Marist Brothers.

Brs Joao Carlos do Prado and Miguel Angel Espinosa of the Secretariat of Mission took part in the meeting of the Project Team for New Models from 14-17 June. The topic will be treated again by the International Commission on Saturday 21 in view of further reflection by the General Council.

Brs Eugène Kabanguka C.G. and César Rojas, of the Secretariat of Brothers today, are accompanying the annual meeting of the Patrimony Commission in the General House from 16 to 20 June.

discussion so as to move on with the discernment process underway at the Institute level.

- The present state of the Champagnat Movement Revitalization Process, whose importance we underlined, in agreement with the developments the Institute is undertaking.
- The animation and accompaniment of the communion process between brothers and laity through the Continental Commissions of the laity in the different Regions of the Institute. We realized the gradual integration of this process in the life of the Administrative Units, and the need to strengthen the Commissions' role and resources. Among other initiatives, we have projected a meeting of the Continental Commissions in view of the bicentennial and the next General Chapter.
- The need to promote joint-formation

experiences, which are already bearing fruit, and becoming essential for the lay vocation processes, as well as helping to configure a new way of being brothers.

- Formation of the laity in order to strengthen their leadership and facilitation skills. With this purpose we have planned an international course for lay formators to be held in May 2015.

An important activity was the meeting with the lay and mixed communities of Peru, who shared with us the experiences of vocational itinerary and communion process they are following, which are similar in the three Sectors of the Province (Bolivia, Chile and Peru), under the coordination of the Provincial Spirituality and Laity Commission of Santa María de los Andes.

We witnessed the richness of their project and its connection with the

experience of other Provinces, such as Norandina, Compostela, L'Hermitage, Australia, Ibérica, and even with the Champagnat Movement Revitalization Process.

The exchange with the lay and mixed communities in Peru was an experience that spoke to us about joy, the hope for a Marist future, and the new relationship to which the XXI General Chapter is calling us. Their testimonies inspired us, especially when we saw some senior brothers committed to this journey together with the lay Marists, a journey that enriches both specific vocations and strengthens the single vocation we share.

A word of thanks to all the people who welcomed and looked after us, making our work possible. May the laity and brothers of Santa María de los Andes find love and shelter in our Good Mother's hands.



BROTHERS FORMATORS FOR A NEW WORLD

Feast of Saint Marcellin Champagnat at the Hermitage

During the month of June, the groups of brothers taking part in the course "Brothers formators for a new world" at El Escorial, Spain, and at Manziana, Italy, have been meeting at the Hermitage to visit together the Marist places and imbibe the spirit of our origins. Along with the international community of N. D. de l'Hermitage and other brothers who have joined our pilgrimage, we celebrated the feast of the Founder on 6 June.

Together with Saint Marcellin and our

first Brothers, we remembered and prayed for the brothers, laity and youth of the Institute.

Two significant moments have been especially memorable:

- The Eucharist of 6 June in the main chapel of the house, with the reliquary of Fr Champagnat, and the presence of brothers from the 5 continents and lay Marists of the area. The universal vision that Marcellin had of the mission extended as far as our countries. We have made it a reality today in each Marist

work and mission of Central America.

- During the visit to La Valla on Sunday 8 June, we went to pray at the chapel of Our Lady of Pity outside the town. According to Marist tradition, Fr Champagnat visited this chapel to petition Mary for new vocations for the Institute. Here we presented to the Good Mother the names of our young men in formation and young brothers, and we prayed for the Vocations Ministry: "Mary, this is your work. If you do not aid us, we will be extinguished like a lamp without oil..."



PROVINCE OF UNITED STATES

Marist Youth Gathering



This past May 23-26, 2014, Memorial Day Weekend in the USA, over 230 Marist youth and their school youth ministers assembled at Mount St. Mary College, Newburgh, New York, for the Marist Youth Gathering. This four-day youth festival and leadership-building conference is a biennial event and brings together young people from Marist schools in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The Marist Youth Gathering is sponsored by the Province of the USA and organized by the Office of Evangelization.

Young people and adults participating in the Marist Youth Gathering develop a wider understanding of their Marist identity, charism, and mission beyond their immediate school identity. The activities include presentations and workshops, interactive games and initiatives, discussion and reflection groups, prayer and worship experiences, social and community building events—these are meant to transmit a sense of Marist heritage, family spirit and spirituality, while inspiring, motivating, and building confidence in youth willing to take up leadership roles in their schools and in the local Church. This year's theme was "To Jesus Thru Mary."

Br. Tony Leon, co-director of the secretariat for Brothers Today, was the

Gathering's main presenter. He facilitated three presentations focusing on the stories of Fr. Champagnat and how the stories of each youth in attendance form the Marist story today; a Marial spirituality for young people today; and finally, how each is responsible to be Marist today. Te Deum Ministries offered a multi-media, multi-dimensional program called "Array of Hope." It included Christian rock and rap music, witness presentations, prayer and worship experiences, and a reflective visual presentation on the life of St. Marcellin Champagnat. As part of the program, Luis Ramos, a Marist Young Adult, and leader of the province's Marist Young Adult Advisory Committee offered a personal witness on how his commitment to Christ has grown through his involvement in Marist Youth Ministry.

Workshop presentations included, among others, a session of the upcoming International Mission Assembly in Nairobi, the use of the Labyrinth and Mandala as tools of prayer for young people, Ways of being Marist, and how adventure games and challenges can build family spirit. One youth group offered a workshop on how they include teachers, school administrators, families and friends in their Marist youth program. A skills-based, formation focused workshop was held for adult youth ministers on

effective ways of listening and interacting with youth.

Student groups from different schools planned morning and evening prayers. Eighteen university-age young adults participated in the conference assisting as group leaders. Mr. Larry Kupferman, campus minister from St. Mary High School, Manhasset was the conference's music minister and Mr. Brian Klimas, a Math teacher at Archbishop Molly High School, Briarwood was the conference emcee. Fr. Richard LaMorte, Chaplain at Marist College, Poughkeepsie and an affiliate of the province, led the conference Sunday liturgy. Following the Mass on Sunday evening, the participants enjoyed an outdoor BBQ and a dance. The evening ended with a Taize prayer experience led by Br. Dan O'Riordan, a member of the province's vocation team.

The conference closed on Monday (Memorial Day), May 26 with a solidarity event which remembered our Marist brothers and lay colleagues now suffering in Aleppo, Syria. From all accounts, this year's Marist Youth Gathering was a successful event. The organizers are hopeful that much good will flow from the conference in the coming year.

Br Dominick Pujia



MARIST NOTEBOOKS 32

In the latest issue of the Marist Notebooks (32, May 2014) we have attempted to give priority to a central subject: spirituality. The articles in this issue have the advantage of treating Marist spirituality from different and complementary angles: mystical, institutional, historical, patrimonial, educational. For "spirituality" is not a static concept, even if our Constitutions have defined the main axes.

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MARIST SISTERS OF CHAMPAGNAT

Perpetual profession in Guatemala

On 31 May, feast of the Visitation of Mary, we had the opportunity to celebrate in Guatemala a significant occasion in our vocational journey as Marist Sisters of Champagnat: our perpetual profession.

At the origin of the invitation to take this step we find above all the loving fidelity of the Lord, manifested throughout these years of journey; the patience and tenderness with which he has guided us, and the deep joy he has gifted us in feeling ourselves Sisters sharing the charism of Saint Marcellin Champagnat. The phrase "Yes, I wish to be all for You", taken from the document in which we have recognised the roots of our identity, expresses the sincere desire of our hearts in the face of the call we have experienced.

Our vows are of a "private" character, in the sense that they were not received by an officially constituted authority. But we were accompanied and welcomed in our commitment by a very significant group of persons, formed by various family members from El Salvador and Costa Rica, most of the Brothers in Guatemala, the Brother Provincial of América Central, friends, young people engaged in the vocations process and some

priests involved in our process. All these persons acted as witnesses of our commitment to follow Jesus for the rest of our lives, having the Good Mother as model of the disciple.

Following, we share something of the reasons we expressed for taking the vows:

"With this step of perpetual expression I desire to express that I am happy being a Sister, with all the depth and implications of this word, that this is how I find my way of being church and of serving the Kingdom, and that living in this way helps me to make a small return for all the life, love, tenderness and fidelity that the Lord has lavished on me". (Sr María Laura)

"With perpetual profession I wish to gather up all the personal experience of these years of journey as a Sister, in which the Good God has manifested to me his faithful love, feeling grateful to Him because, without deserving it,



he has called me through his Son and given me the gift of listening to him and following him; following him with all that implies... How not to love one who has loved me so much, one who has given meaning to my existence? For this reason, I continue placing my trust in God and in gratitude for the gift for my life of being a Marist Sister of Champagnat, I say once again I wish to be all for You!" (Sr Daisy)

We finish by thanking the witness of so many brothers and Marist laymen and women who continue encouraging us on the journey, as well as the gestures of communion we have received. Thanks for the joy of being able to share the rich charism we have inherited from Champagnat. May Mary of the Visitation continue accompanying us.

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