

TOWARDS A NEW BEGINNING

Meeting of the Secretariat of the Laity

Between 13 and 18 October, an international team met in Barcelona to lay the foundations of a global Marist framework for lay Marist processes. This project was born of the proposal made by the General Council to the Secretariat of the Laity to follow up on the process of discernment on lay association and belonging at the March meeting in Rome, equally an initiative of the General Council. Some seventy lay men and women and brothers, from almost all the provinces of the Institute, took part in this meeting, which made recommendations for the General Government and for the Administrative Units.

The working group is composed of lay people from Provinces which have set in motion lay processes of charismatic formation and vocational discernment. Taking part were Joe McCarthy (Australia), Eder D'Artagnan (Brasil Centro Norte), Nohemy Pinto (América Central), Ana Sarrate (Ibérica and the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family),



Raúl Amaya (Santa María de los Andes), and, representing the Secretariat, Pep Bue-tas and Br Javier Espinosa.

In agreement with the General Council's proposal, the principal objectives touched on were:

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

From 2 to 31 November, Bro. Tony Leon, Secretary of Brothers Today, will be in Munich, to accompany the meeting on spirituality for lay people and brothers of the Province of Europe Centre-Ouest.

On November 2, concluded the course for formators held in Manziana and El Escorial. Bro. Joe McKee was present at the closing ceremony, which was held at the Hermitage.

From 2 to 17 November, the co-directors of the Secretariat of laity will be having a meeting in Seoul, South Korea.

From 5 to 8 November, Brothers Tony Leon, Mario Meuti and Chris Wills will attend the meeting of the Inter-American Conference of Provinces (CIAP) which is held in Colombia.

- To draw up the basis for a global framework of Marist vocational process for lay men and women, which offers common criteria for both vocational discernment and for lay association and belonging to the charism a/o the Institute.
- To define and specify courses for the fundamental elements of such a framework:
 - Fundamental criteria of vocational process or personal journey as a Marist.
 - an itinerary of charismatic formation,
 - the possible forms of association and belonging,
 - possibilities of organization of the laity linked to the charism.

The General Council considers that the final result of the process will be the presentation of a reference framework for the identity of the Marist lay person who feels called to live the Marist charism in the midst of the world. It will involve a recognition of such an identity within some form of association, and in communion with the Brothers. It will have a character of internationality, but taking into account cultural and regional diversity.

On the basis of the discussions held in Barcelona, a process of participation of other groups and commissions has been initiated. This process seeks to be enriched by the experiences in this respect already existing in the Institute as well as the new experiences which may be born in other Administrative

Units within the same search for an identity of the lay Marist, in some form of association.

The result of the work was rich and intense from the experience contributed, the sensitivity in the listening, and the fire in the hearts of those forming the group. The help of Mariella and Br Paco Castellanos (Compostela) in the translation, and that of Raúl Cabús (L'Hermitage) in the secretariat were very important in facilitating the reflection. It is necessary to highlight and give thanks for the hospitality of the community of Casal in Barcelona, living sign of a Marist life made up of details and simplicity.

Pep Buetas – Co-director Secretariat of the Laity



YEAR MONTAGNE

District of the Pacific

The District of the Pacific, being the first place in the world to see the sun, launched the first of the preparations for the bicentennial of the Institute with a liturgy to mark the start of the Montagne Year. We are conscious of the legacy of the first Brothers sent by St Marcellin Champagnat to the Pacific in 1836. The gathering, of Champagnat Marists, Brothers and Lay, was held at Te Kai Hii Marist Learning Centre, Auckland (which was also celebrating its 15th anniversary).

The participants were invited to reflect on a Montagne encounter in their own lives and how this encourages the growth of Marcellin's charism in the Pacific. In the words of one of the hymns used in the liturgy: 'We strive to be Christ's PRESENCE with LOVE OF WORK each day. We hear the founder's message, "Do this in MARY'S WAY". SIMPLICITY our virtue as in La Valla's home, we live a FAMILY SPIRIT to make Him loved and know. We daily hear the call to be God's love in our world.



2014|2015
Montagne

That encounter with the young Montagne was an event that profoundly marked Father Champagnat's life, and clearly brought about the birth of the Marist Institute. This first icon will accompany us until July 2015. It will be a reminder of the importance and urgency of our mission, as relevant today as it was in Father Champagnat's time. Inspired by our Founder, who walked for several hours from La Valla to this place, we feel the same call to get going and meet the new Montagnes of today, wherever they may be.

The insistent call of Pope Francis to leave our own comfort zone in order to reach all the "peripheries" in need of the light of the Gospel (EG 20) echoes in our ears.



PACKING ONE'S BAGS

St Marcellin Champagnat Centre, Bucharest, Romania

It is 18 years since the Marist brothers arrived in Bucarest, Romania. The St Marcellin Champagnat Centre is the space they created to return dignity and hope to many children and young people without family or home. At present, 32 are accommodated in the Centre. The following account expresses the feelings of Stefania, a young Romanian just recently turned 18, with a past full of experiences of rejection and abandonment, who today, having reached her majority, is leaving the Centre.

"I have spent more than 8 years since July 2006. From then until now, the Centre has been my home. From tomorrow, my home will be elsewhere. Or more accurately, my home will continue to be the Saint Marcellin Champagnat Centre, but I will be starting a new life in another place. I know that I can count on the support of my teachers, that Juan Carlos has told me many times that they are not going to abandon me, including insisting that I pass by the Centre once a week. All that is certain, but today, packing my suitcases, I feel a contradiction within me.

On one hand, I want to keep on growing, I know that that is the best option I have now and for the future. But on the other hand, I have a fear that you cannot imagine. These last days I told Juan Carlos how I felt the fear, situated in my stomach... "my stomach has been hurting, I've had days when I have not eaten". Yesterday, when they told me that on Sunday they expected me in the new home, I felt better, but I was afraid that they would not admit me, that they would tell me my place was taken. On telling me they expected me Sunday, another fear arose in me: "And if I do not adapt, if my new companions don't accept me, if I don't like it when I go?..." I am afraid of leaving my friends at the Centre, leaving my teachers, leaving the Brothers. They have all been my family in the more than 8



years I have spent at the Centre.

I know that the Centre will open its doors every time I come and the teachers will always accept me; this I have seen in the young people who have left the Centre and now live in their own homes, with their work, their family... They have always come when they wanted, always been welcomed, always been able to have a chat. I hope to continue maintaining very good relations and, truly, I trust that they continue helping: I need them.

My objective this year is to finish secondary studies and obtain the B.A.C. in order to enter university. Starting from today, I will have to buy my own food, wash my clothes, look after myself. I know that this is something I need to learn. As they keep on telling me, now

I begin living by myself. I count on the support and help of the teachers and the Brothers: everyone presents it to me as an opportunity. They also tell me, because they know me, that anything new is costly and scary.

I desire to be happy and to feel good about myself. I am grateful to those who, in those 8 long years, have helped me, all those marvelous persons who have passed through the centre during that time, especially to the volunteers who have come from outside Romania; in the summers I felt good with you, and I assure you that I will remember you and carry you in my heart.

Many thanks and good luck to everyone.

Stefania (Fanuta)



How do you feel at the threshold of the Marist bicentennial celebration? How do you stand in front of the challenges we are called to address? (Br. Emili Turú - Letter "Just a Tent as the Heart of our Future")

The Marists in Uruguay receives the Syrian refugees

On 9 October, the first families of Syrian refugees from Lebanon arrived at the *Casa San José* of the Marists in Montevideo. The initiative of the Presidency of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay has become a reality with the arrival of five families, all with adults for reference and mainly children and young people; 42 persons in total. This first group will be accommodated for two to three months in the *Casa San José* until a first evaluation of the process is carried out.

COLLABORATION FOR MISSION, INTERNATIONAL [CMI]

Br. Pedro Chimeno to assist with the CMI as a collaborator.

Brother Pedro Chimeno from Argentina is a member of the Marist District of Asia, presently on leave to complete his studies in his province of origin, Cruz del Sur. He has been appointed by the General Council to assist with the Secretariat of Collaboration for mission, international [Cmi] as a collaborator.

Br Pedro will strengthen the Cmi network with particular attention to the administrative units which have Spanish as their language. He will facilitate the international collaborative work of these provinces, districts and their associated regional conferences and be a point of reference and administration for them as we move towards the creation of "International Communities for a New Beginning".

Born in Balcarce, Buenos Aires, on the 2nd of September 1981. When he was 3 years old, his family moved to San Rafael in the province of Mendoza, where he attended the local Marist School. There he met the Marist Brothers and, moved by their life style, decided to join in the adventure of living as a brother. After 4 years of formation he took first vows in 2004. In 2005 he was appointed to his first community in Nogoya, Entre Rios. In 2006 he moved to a community in Morón, Buenos Aires, where he began studying Social Work at the University.

In 2008 he joined the Missio ad Gentes project going to USA for English courses and to the Philippines for a preparation time to go to Asia. In 2009 he made the final vows in Buenos Aires wishing to be "a living sign of the Father's tenderness". That year he was assigned to Cambodia and joined



a community in Phnom Penh to study Khmer language, and immerse in the culture. He collaborated with the Marists in setting up new community projects.

In December 2013 he returned back to Argentina to continue his University studies. Nowadays brother Pedro lives in Buenos Aires studying and doing different jobs in his province of Cruz del Sur. After completion of studies it is his hope to return to the Marist District of Asia.

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