

WHAT IS BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE?

International Commission of Brothers Today

One possible answer is 'Grey', the many tints of grey. Another answer can be 'Colour', the spectrum of colours, which exists within the visual range from Violet to Red. A perspective, which offers a new way of seeing.

The International Commission of Brothers Today, who met at the General House from the 3rd to the 7th February, represents the international spectrum of regions and cultures as well as the various stages of formation within our Institute. In this photo, the space between the black and the white soutanes!

The members of the Commission are (From the Photo left – right) :

Back: Br Dan O Riordan – Vocation Director (USA), Br Jean Marie Batick – District Superior (Melanesia), Br James Pinheiro - Provincial Administration - Vocation Ministry (Brazil), Br Norbert Mwila – Novice Director – Matola (Mozambique), Br Teofilo Minga – Translator (Portugal), Br Hipólito Perez –Brothers Today Secretariat (Guatemala - Rome), Br Peter Rodney – Director of MAPAC



(Philippines), Br Eugene Kabanguka – General Councillor (Rwanda – Rome) and Br Tony Leon - Brothers Today Secretariat (Australia – Rome)

Front: Br Albert Nzabonaliba – Postulant Director – Mwanza (Tanzania), Br Juan Carlos Fuertes – Assistant Provin-

cial - Mediterraneo (Spain), Br Ernesto Sanchez – General Councillor (Mexico - Rome), Br Saul Placious – Pre Postulancy Coordinator (India).

It was symbolic that the Commission, arriving in Rome on the afternoon of the 2nd February, attended mass with

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

From 9 to 11 February, Brothers Joe McKee (Vicar General), Ernesto Sánchez, (General Councillor), and Libardo Garzón (Econome General), attended the meeting of the Africa Conference of Provincials in Nairobi.

The plenary meeting of the General Council has advanced some themes, such as the evaluation of the Second Marist International Mission Assembly, the future plans of the Mission Secretariat and Brothers Today Secretariat, and the New International Communities Project.

From 13 to 14 February, the Brothers Today of Europe team, will meet in Lisbon, with the participation of Brothers Tony Leon and Hipólito Pérez.

Pope Francis at St Peter’s Basilica to celebrate the International day of Consecrated Life. This was a most appropriate way to start to the work of the following days.

Having worked together as a Commission in the past two years, this group has established strong rapport in sharing understanding of religious

life formation as well as articulating their passion for being brothers today. This has helped the Commission to assemble an exciting outline for the International Colloquium on Initial Formation, which will be held at our cradle House of Formation, L’Hermitage, from 5th to the 14th October this year. More details about this gathering will be soon available.

Marist Life in the 21st century is not monochrome but involves the full spectrum of colours, which can be found in Internationality, Laity, Mysticism and Prophecy. It is the hope of this Colloquium where we can learn to paint a fresh portrait of the Marist Brother with an extended palette.



MARIST PRESENCE IN BRAZIL

The Interprovincial novitiate welcomes the formators and new novices

On February 2, the three Marist provinces of Brazil welcomed the four new candidates to the Interprovincial novitiate, which this year will be at Florianópolis. Three of the novices belong to the province of Brasil Centro - Norte (Deyvid Santos Vasconcelos, Julian-derson André Ramos da Silva, Pierre Pinheiro da Silva) and one to the Province of Brasil Centro-Sul (Mailson Adriano Bezerra Chamorro). The 4 novices will live together with the two second year novices (Carlos Eurípides and Leonardo de Faria).

The admission ceremony was attended by the three Marist provincials of Brazil. At the same time, the new formators were introduced: Br Joaci Pinheiro (master), Br Otalivio Sarturi and Br Lodovino Marin.



Survey of the FMSI Advent Booklet

The FMSI's Advent Booklet has circulated for over 15 years. It was first published by BIS (Bureau of International Solidarity of the Marist Brothers Institute), and FMSI took over the publication in 2007. The goal was to offer some clues for reflection in preparation for Christmas to the Marist brothers and laity. During the first years, it focused on solidarity and the needs of people, especially

those from the southern hemisphere. More recently, it became a tool to "look at the world through the eyes of poor children and young people" by using the narrative of their simple experiences and life stories. The central topic each year has been one of the rights of the child from the UN Convention signed by 193 countries. Children, assisted by their teachers and educators, have freely told their stories and experi-

ences regarding the topic in question: non-discrimination, attention to hand-icapped persons, the rights of migrant children, the right to participation, etc. Please answer our questionnaire, even if you are not acquainted with the FMSI Advent Booklet and you have never used it! Every contribution will be im-portant in assessing the booklet's up-take, content, and usefulness: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VP9YHXL>



BROTHER ALESSANDRO DI PIETRO'S 'VITAL SPACE'

Theater play in honor of a Marist Brother

Lebensraum/Vital Space is a play written and performed by the students of San Leone Magno Institute in Rome to revisit the story of Brother Alessandro Di Pietro, Righteous Among the Nations. He was Director of this school during World War II. When the tragic roundups of Jews took place across the city, he assumed the heavy responsibility of hosting and hiding around twenty Jewish children and a number of adults.

Vital Space – said Brother Daniele Pardo, current Director of San Leone Magno, as he introduced the show – is the place where a person lives, moves, reflects, freely loves, communicates, gives him or herself to others, and learns by interacting with them, a space that the Nazi madness deliberately contracted and abolished for millions of Jews, a madness that is still writing new tragic pages of our history.

Fortunately, there are men and women who committed their lives, often putting them at risk, so that others could recover or increase their "living space". One of them is certainly

Brother Alessandro Di Pietro, remembered by the Marist Brothers as the long-standing Postulator General to whom they owe, among other things, the beatification of Marcellin Champagnat in 1955.

Between 1943 and 1944, Brother Alessandro, risking his own life and that of the Brothers in his community, took the responsibility of accommodating and hiding a number of Jewish teenagers and adults in the premises of San Leone Magno Institute, which was then located in Via Montebello, near Termini Central Station.

One of the Jewish boys later remembered our brother, and thanks to him, the Israeli Government proclaimed Brother Alessandro Di Pietro Righteous Among the Nations in a ceremony held on July 16, 2001. Today his name is written in the Garden of the Righteous in Yad Vashem Park, Jerusalem.

Lebensraum was a very original show, well written (by Andrea Castagnetta, a young former student) and very well performed by the theatrical group led by Letizia Gorga, a renowned



actress, and also a former student of San Leone. It was an opportunity to honor Brother Alessandro and the Marist Brothers who, in that occasion and many other times, have proven to be not only good teachers, but true educators, fathers and mothers for many children in need. The date chosen for the performance was also meaningful: January 27, International Holocaust Remembrance Day, celebrated by the Italian Republic with the purpose of preventing Italian citizens from forgetting the madness of war and the horror of the Shoah.



Young people from the District of Paraguay

On January, Saturday 24 and Sunday 25, the city of Coronel Oviedo hosted a retreat for the members of the Marist Youth Ministry of the District of Paraguay, which has five Pastoral reference centers, located in the cities of Limpio, Horqueta,

Caaguazú, Coronel Oviedo and Asunción. The animators who attended the retreat were from different movements: Navegar (14-18 years), EDA (12-13 years), Semar (9-11 years), and members of PROVIMAR (Universitarians,

over 18 years of age). During the retreat, a necessary space of silence and reflection, they shared personal experiences and moments of community prayer. The theme was: "Know more about Jesus and learn to walk with him".



MEETING IN OPENNESS

Meeting of representatives of the Marist Works of the Mediterranean Province

The Council of the Marist Educational Works of the Mediterranean Province organized in Guardamar, from 22 to 24 January, a meeting which brought together more than 120 people, representatives of different schools and social work of the Province. They came from everywhere: Spain, Italy, Lebanon and Syria.

Being in the Montagne year, the meeting was held to review the Montagne experience and to promote the Marist mission towards the "New Beginning". Br Provincial, Antonio Giménez, addressing the participants emphasized: "For Marcellin the Montagne experience was a challenge just as the confrontation with the social realities of



the present moment is a challenge for all of us".

The complete chronicle of the meeting is available in <http://www.champagnat.org/400.php?a=6&n=3504>



AWAKENING THE DAWN

Venezuela - Seventh National Assembly of the Laity

From January 15 to 17, 2015, the VII National Assembly of the Laity in Venezuela gathered 35 lay people and 8 brothers in the Marist formation house of Los Teques.

As part of the Assembly process, we identified two specific calls in our Marist path, which stem from our local realities and faith experience:

1. We feel the call to shape up the lay vocational itineraries. We want to

promote processes allowing the la-



ity to discover the calls from God in their lives, leading them to answer

as Lay Marists of Champagnat.

2. We feel the call to organize new experiences and spaces to share life between laity and brothers, providing meaningful opportunities to encounter God.

In the present phase of renewal of the Institute, we lay Marists also need to renew ourselves, sharing responsibility regarding our mission, spirituality and life, and joining efforts to awaken the dawn.

