

HEART IN HAND

Preparation for Perpetual Profession

From February 21 to June 19, a group of 15 temporary professed brothers, accompanied by 3 formators, are getting ready for perpetual profession in Cochabamba, Bolivia. They come from 9 Administrative Units and 6 different countries. The following account aims at sharing the beginning of this formation experience leading to the final commitment in our religious consecration.

Arrival

The corridors at the Youth House, located a few kilometers from Cochabamba (Bolivia), echoed with the voice of the brothers as they arrived on February 19. The warm initial greetings in Portuguese, Spanish and Italian showed there are no borders when fraternity is our language.

The participants are Brothers Diego and Ismael (Santa María de los Andes); João Paulo (Amazonia District); José Augusto, José Rogério, and Paulo Henrique (Brasil Centro Norte); Tiago (Brasil Centro Sul); Antonio and Adán (Central Mexico), Valentín (Western Mexico); Juan Pablo, Hugo, and Yan (Norandina); René (Central America); and Stefano (Mediterránea). Three brothers are with them as leading team: Rodrigo (Central America), Romidio (Rio Grande do Sul) and Anacleto (Brasil Centro Sul). All of them are willing to live a wonderful



journey together in this essential land of the Bolivian Andes.

The journey begins

We celebrated the beginning of our journey on the morning of Saturday 21st

with a meaningful Eucharist presided over by Father Francisco, enjoying the participation of our brothers from the Interprovincial novitiate community of Santa Maria de los Andes and Cruz del Sur. The readings were very suggestive regarding the process we were begin-

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

General Councilors Brothers Antonio Ramalho and Ernesto Sánchez, began their visit to the province of Compostela March 7th. The visit will end 1st May.

Brother Javier Espinosa, Director of the Secretariat of Laity, met in Mexico, with the Commission of Laity of the two Mexican provinces.

Today, March 12, in the General House, Brothers Tony Leon and Hipólito Pérez, Director and Assistant Director of the Secretariat "Brothers Today", participated in a meeting with the "All Brothers" group, representatives of other Congregations of Brothers. Brother Chris Wills, Director of Cmi also attended.

ning. First, a letter of Father Champagnat invited the brothers to come to the Hermitage. Then the proclamation of Psalm 127 reminded us that we should let the Lord build our house. Finally, in Mark's Gospel Jesus invited his disciples to a lonely place all by themselves to rest for a while (cf. Mc 6:31).

The first steps

Later on, we rushed to the streets of Cochabamba for a full immersion in the music, dance, color, and playfulness of the carnival tradition, which represents an intangible heritage of our Latin American region. It was a perfect opportunity to get a glimpse of the town, stroll through the streets, take some photos, and start weaving ties of friendship and fraternity within the group.

Next to Mary

At 3:00 p.m. on February 22, all of us were ready at the house entrance to set out under a radiant sunshine. Eighteen men got under way, the Little Brothers of Mary, heading to our destination, and discovering this unknown land in an atmosphere of glad conversation, laughter, expectation, and

weariness. All of a sudden, we were before the shrine of Our Lady of Urcupiña, a place of pilgrimage surrounded by vegetation and rocks, overlooking the region from a hill as a symbol



of divine protection for the faithful. Standing next to the image of Mary, we sang the Salve Regina, placing in her hands the journey we were beginning.

Following the tradition, we broke a rock into pieces; each of us took a small piece and brought it back home, with the promise of returning to the shrine and putting it back in its place when Mary grants us the favor we requested.

Being natural

On February 23, Brothers Rodrigo, Romidio and Anacleto, the leading team, presented the program of our journey. There was time for questions, comments, and suggestions. Our eyes, ears, and voices were attentive, and somehow we were holding our personal history in our hands, ready to embark on this time of opportunity, and take responsibility for our own process. We appreciated the richness of our diversity, and dreamt about generating fraternity among us.

Trust, transparency, passion and patience will be the key elements we will need to enjoy this day-to-day encounter with Jesus, in order to refine our loving answer to his call, without forgetting that

"by being natural we discover the deepest rhythm of life and learn to hope, carrying out what needs to be done every day in a simple and thorough way".

Until June 19, the program will include workshops, meetings, trips, celebrations, and much fraternal conviviality. "Living this journey heart in hand, to renew the gift of our consecration" is our great desire. We invite you to come along with us!



MARISTS IN EUROPE

Meeting of the European Team of "Brothers Today"

On 13th and 14th February we held a meeting of the Team in Lisbon. Present as members of the Team were Brothers Juan Carlos Fuertes (Mediterránea) - Michel Morel (L`Hermitage) - Carlos Garcia (Iberica) - Antonio Leal (Compostela) and myself. We were joined by Brothers Hipolito Perez and Tony Leon from the Secretariat in Rome.

During Friday, we looked into Pope Francis` document "Witnesses of Joy" looking at the three main themes:

gratitude, communion and hope. Then we looked at the expectations of CEM: permanent formation through articles and sharing experiences, the journey towards 2017 etc. - the interprovincial plans for activities for the Brothers - reflection on the mission of older Brothers (a meeting will take place in Valladolid next April) - and support of the Network of communities (the second meeting of the Network will take place next August in El Escorial-Madrid).

Friday evening was spent with the Community of Carcavelos in a school of 1500 pupils where the Spirit of Champagnat is still very obvious. We shared a very convivial meal there.

On Saturday morning we took time to consider the projects envisaged for the next three years. Meetings of small groups will be arranged with a view to preparing for the programme of events for this year. Then we took some time to listen to reports from our different Provinces. The two Brothers from Rome also had the opportunity to speak about the work of the Secretariat.

On Saturday afternoon, in spite of the humid and cold weather, we took advantage of the opportunity to make a brief pilgrimage to Fatima: Marial prayer, a visit to the house of the three child visionaries and the Eucharist in the great Basilica. A good moment to entrust all our different projects to Mary.

With grateful thanks for the welcome received from the Marist Community in Lisbon, we all set off on our jour-



neys home during Sunday.

Brother Albert André



BR HIPÓLITO PÉREZ GÓMEZ

Assistant Director of the Brothers Today Secretariat

The General Council appointed Brother Hipólito Pérez Gómez, from the Province of Central America, as Assistant Director of the Brothers Today Secretariat. At the beginning of the year, Brother Hipólito joined the Secretariat team, which includes Brother Tony Leon as Director, and brothers Eugène Kabanguka and Ernesto Sánchez from the General Council. The Secretariat also consist of an international team of collaborators, which met for the second time in February.

Brother Hipólito Pérez Gómez was born on November 24, 1965, in Dueñas (Palencia), Spain. He belongs to the Marist Province of Central America.

He joined the brothers at the Marist minor seminary of Fuente Caliente (Miranda de Ebro), where he also did his postulancy in 1982. Then he was sent to the interprovincial novitiate of Venta de Baños, where he took the first vows in 1984. That same year he went to the scholasticate in Guatema-

la, where he did his theological and professional training.

He has served several missions. From 1988 to 1992, he was a formator in the minor seminary and postulancy of Carrión de los Condes. In 1990, he made his perpetual profession in this same place. Other positions followed: pastoral ministry coordinator in the Marist School of Alajuela, Costa Rica (1992-1996); Marist Formators Program in Lyon (1996-1998); novice director in El Salvador (1998-



2003); pastoral ministry coordinator at Champagnat School in El Salvador (2004); formator and novice director at the interprovincial novitiate of Medellín (2004-2007); and Provincial of Central America (2008-2013).





2014|2015
Montagne

The Spirit speaks God's love ever afresh into our world. Like Champagnat we desire to be continually open to its movement and urgings. The dying Jean-Baptiste Montagne* impelled Marcellin to begin his project of having Brothers to teach the deprived children of the rural areas. Who are our Montagnes? Who today compels in us an apostolic response? These are leading questions in our ongoing discernment.

Water from the Rock, 148

YOUNG PEOPLE BUILDING A BETTER WORLD FOR EVERYONE

Mexico: First International Marist Youth Leaders Camp

The First International Marist Youth Leaders Camp took place from February 19 to 23 in Tapalpa, Jalisco (Province of Western Mexico), with the participation of the United States, Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil and both Marist Provinces of Mexico. It involved young people between 16 and 20 years of age, who have somehow "made a difference" in their schools and hometowns, and also their advisors, a group of adults who believe in young people and are willing to encourage the process of youth empowerment, participation, and leadership in the Marist works.



The Camp included different formation activities: workshops offering useful tools aimed at helping the young participants grow as Marist leaders; challenges bringing out the best of themselves to place it at the service of others; solidarity work experiences as a glimpse on the Mexican reality, in order to become aware of the struggle for daily bread, and learn to appreciate what they have; presentation of the projects underway in the Marist works

aimed at encouraging youth participation; a beautiful cultural exhibition with elements from the participants' hometowns; and a celebration of life and Marist identity, inviting them to a deeper *I-am-Marist* experience.

We organized communication and collaboration networks among the participants to continue building something new together as young Marists. The Camp helped them dream, and gave

them tools to make their dreams come true.

We are sure that this arena of youth ministry is helping young people build a better world for everyone, and motivating them to involve many more friends in this project. Thank you for being ready to believe in young people, work with them, and bring forth their leadership.

