

THE "FRATELLI" PROJECT

Marist Brothers and De La Salle Brothers

Dear Brothers and Partners of the De La Salle and Marist Congregations,

Greetings. Towards the end of 2014 both our congregations discussed how we might best respond to the increasing crises among displaced people in cross border situations in different parts of the world today. The discussions were within the context of calls from both of our last General Chapters exhorting us to go to "..... new lands" (FMS) and ".....beyond the borders" (FSC). We know that this language is not just a geographical reference but also challenges us to go to the peripheries of personal, cultural, congregational and structural constraints.

Like many of you, we have been inspired by the Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis to all Consecrated People (November, 2014) urging us to consider the prophetic witness of congregations working together. As two collaborating families of Brothers we have the opportunity to ".....find ways to create 'alternate spaces', where the Gospel approach to self-giving fraternity, embracing differences, and love of one another can thrive." Follow-



ing a fact-finding visit to the borders of Lebanon and Syria carried out by Brothers from our two Congregations, and discussions with Brothers on the ground there, and inspired by our Brothers and Partners in Aleppo, Beirut and Amman, we write to inform you of a joint educational mission venture to that area approved by our two General Councils.

This joint venture proposes two lines

of action: First, following suggestions from our local Brothers we will initiate a project that creates spaces to cater for displaced children. This pilot project can guide us to design viable future works both in the Middle East and other parts of the world. Second, we will establish an international co-ordination office in Lebanon. This is necessary in order to coordinate ready response activities. This office will rely on the direct assistance of lo-

At the foot of the Cross

At the foot of the Cross, we are in awe of a **God who loves us without reserve**. We find a God who shares the physical and psychological suffering, betrayal, abandonment and violence experienced by humanity, and transforms these experiences. There we enter the mystery of redemptive suffering and learn **humble fidelity in love**. The crucified Christ is the sign and deepest expression of a God who is love (Water from the Rock, 22).

cal administrative units acting as our Principal Local Partners. Their expertise in the local language, culture, civil and legal matters is essential.

Following the initiation of these two activities, we will be in a better position to decide on an expansion of operations to respond to the needs of alienated youth. The target group, children and youth, is in accordance with both charisms and is within the framework of our core competencies – education and youth ministry. We are calling this joint venture, The Fratelli Project.

We will make known the Fratelli project in all the administrative units of both congregations as a new in-

ternational and inter-congregational collaboration open to Brothers and Partners. It will operate under the direction of the two General Councils who will establish a board to assist, in the first instance, on the partnership of the local administrative units and, more widely, on the regional units or conferences to which they belong.

Ultimately the vision of our two General Councils concerns the global reality of displaced persons, especially children and young people, and not simply the immediate refugee crisis in the Middle East. For example children and young people living on the edges of society such as the US-Mexican border and regions of

Central Africa are also in our purview.

In all of this we also are open to the possibility of other Brother Congregations joining us.

Let us put this initiative on behalf of vulnerable children and young people in the hands of our Blessed Mother.

Fraternally,

Brother Robert Schieler, FSC - Superior General

Brother Emili Turú, FMS - Superior General



NEW HORIZONS

Ordinary General Assembly UMBRASIL

The same charism, the same mission, 25 Marist Brothers of Brazil met with a common goal: to promote the action of the Institution in one of the regions of the Marist Institute. Three provinces and one district, with a great spirit of family, participated in the 11th AGO (Ordinary General Assembly) of UMBRASIL, held on 16 and 17 in Brasilia. The appointments of new Directors, the Audit Committee and the Chairman of the Council were among the different issues that were addressed.



On the eve of the end of 10 years UMBRASIL articulates, empowers and represents the Marist Brothers in the country, were the words of Br Inácio Etges, leaving the post of Chairman of the Board, "ensuring a strong unit and becoming a great network".

On the first day, a training pathway contributed to the animation of debates and to the agenda's other points. Already on the second day, Br Wellington

Mousinho de Medeiros, Provincial of North Central Brazil, assumed the presidency of the Board.

In addition to the Chairman, the following took up the posts of directors: Br Claudiano Tiecher, in the province of Rio Grande do Sul, as Executive Director; Br Vanderlei Siqueira dos Santos, of Brazil Center-South took up the post of Director-Secretary; Br Umberto Gondim, in the province of North Central Brazil

will act as Director-Treasurer. For the Fiscal Council, the following took up management roles: Br Lauro Francisco Hochscheidt (Rio Grande do Sul), José Wagner Rodrigues da Cruz (North Central Brazil) and Jorge Gaio (Brazil Center-South); The following will act as substitute advisors: Br José Nilton Dourado da Silva (North Central Brazil), Lino Alfonso Jungbluth (Brazil Center-South) y Jair Heck (Rio Grande do Sul).



APRIL - MAY 2015

Calendar of the General Council and Secretariat directors

We present the calendar of the General Council and the directors of the Secretariats of the Institute for the months of April and May of this year.

April 1 - 10: leadership new age program – Fiji / Pacific District: Michael de Waas

April 6 - 11: preparation to final vows - Cochabamba, Bolivia - Emili Turú

April 8 - 10: community leaders of Asia District - Sri Lanka - Chris Wills

April 8 - 14: spirituality network - Brasilia - Javier Espinosa

April 11-15: Commission for mission - Asia, Sri Lanka - João Carlos do Prado, Chris Wills

April 13-16: European Assembly of Mission - Hermitage - Antonio Ramalho, Ernesto Sánchez, Mario Meuti

April 14-14: Central Mexico provincial Council - Josep M. Soteras

April 15-18: Commission for consecrated life and laity - Brazil, Curitiba - Javier Espinosa

April 17-18: new models Project Team - General House - Miguel Angel Espinosa and João Carlos do Prado

April 17-19: FMSI evaluation - General House - Michael De Waas, Mario Meuti, Chris Wills

April 18: regular meeting of the General Council

April 19-21: Commission for consecrated life and laity - Brazil, Porto Alegre - Javier Espinosa

April 20-24: International Commission for mission - Roma - Miguel Angel Espinosa, Josep María Soteras, João Carlos do Prado and Chris Wills

April 21-30: FMSI visit to Nigeria - Mario Meuti, Angela Petenzi

April 22-25: Cono Sur meeting of perpetual vows brothers under 57 years - Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia - Hipólito Pérez

April 23-24: Board of Directors 'Bedford Fund' annual Assembly - Canada: Victor Preciado

April 24-28: Asia District Council - Bangkok - Joe Mc Kee

April 24-29: Lebanon visit - Javier Espinosa

April 28-29: Marist publishers meeting - Buenos Aires - Miguel Angel Espinosa and João Carlos do Prado

April 30: end of visit to the Compostela province - Antonio Ramalho and Ernesto Sánchez

April 30-May 1: Marist Asia Conference - Bangkok - Joe Mc Kee

April 30 - May 3: Brazil Centro-Norte provincial Council - Josep M. Soteras



May 4-6: International Council for Economic Affairs (CIAE) session at the General House - Víctor Preciado, Libardo Grazón, Mario Meuti

May 5-8: training program leaders - Buenos Aires - Miguel Angel Espinosa and João Carlos do Prado

May 10-14: Marist European Conference - Lebanon - Antonio Ramalho, Ernesto Sánchez, Emili Turú

May 11-14: Preparation for final vows - Cochabamba, Bolivia - Eugène Kabanguaka and Josep M. Soteras

May 13-15: CMI training of coordinators - Buenos Aires - Chris Wills

May 17-21: Mission - Porto Alegre - inter-American Commission - Miguel Angel Espinosa, Chris Wills

May 19 - June 2: course for lay animators - Rome - Javier Espinosa

May 20: regular meeting of the General Council

May 25 - 27: Europe Vocational and Pastoral youth team - Hipólito Pérez and Tony Leon

May 27-29: Union of superiors General, Rome - Emili Turú

May 17-29: evaluation of FMSI - General House - Michael De Waas, Mario Meuti, Chris Wills

May 30 - June 3: General Council Community retreat

An affectionate greeting and may the **peace** that **Easter** gives to hearts illuminate each day of our life.
Happy Easter!

THE IDENTITY OF THE LAY MARIST

Proposal by the General Council

The General Conference in the Hermitage allowed Brother Emili Turú, the Superior General, to deepen the theme of Linking and Lay Membership through an international meeting held in Rome in March 2014. Various suggestions were offered at this meeting to the General Council. These materialized in a Proposal that the Council itself established in June of the same year, and transmitted to the Secretariat of the Laity to implement it.

The General Council understands that the end result of the process will be presenting a framework for the identity of the lay Marist who feels called to live the Marist charisma in the midst of the world.

It will involve a recognition of this identity in some form of association, and in communion with the brothers. It will be of an international nature, but taking into account the cultural and regional diversity.

The Council wants to offer the 22nd General Chapter this overall framework, taking into account over the coming years the different experiences the Institute has had. With the clear criteria of basing itself on the experiences the Institute has already made, the Secretariat of the Laity summoned several lay people who could elaborate a roadmap for

the Council's Proposal. This team was made up of the coordinators Pep Buetes (the Secretariat's co-director) and Ana Sarrate (Iberian and Champagnat Movement), as well as Joe McCarthy (Australia), Nohemy Pinto (Central America), Raúl Amaya (Santa María de los Andes), Eder



D'Artagnan (North Central Brazil) and Javier Espinosa of the Secretariat of the Laity.

The elaborated document titled "Basic elements for the design of a Global Framework of the Marist vocational discernment for laity" collects clues and criteria for working in deepening the Proposal of the Council. The Secretariat wants to involve other groups and commissions in reflecting on those years prior to the Chapter, especially those who have introduced experiences on the subject and those who want to initi-

ate them.

The process seeks to be fundamentally lay and experiential. The document's introduction points it out: "By offering this proposal, we, as lay Marists, gather the feelings of many lay Marists who, from all over the world, want to live the Christian spirituality and mission as Mary did, following the insight of Marcellin Champagnat. We feel like Marists with them. We share with them the call to a specific way of being disciples of Jesus. We feel the same Marist heart beat with them. Our desire is to express all this experience as a journey of growth and training, which helps others have the same experience."

This project might be the most ambitious and significant ahead of a future of communion regarding Marist charisma. The proposal reflects much of the thinking taken in recent years; it is a way of responding to what was expressed in the Chapter of 2001; It seeks to move from good intentions to concretions on the specific form of living the Marist charisma with lay identity. These are good news for many brothers who, for years, sensed that this would happen and who rejoice to see the gift of God to Champagnat and to the Church shared with other Marists.

