

## 2017 CHAPTER WILL BE HELD IN COLOMBIA

Exactly on September 8, 2017, the XXII General Chapter will begin. The preparation of this important event for the life of the Institute has been entrusted to a Commission, which will begin to function within a few months.

This Commission includes Brothers Josep McKee (coordinator); Eugène Kabanguka (General Council); Carlos Huidobro (General Administration); Pau Fornells (Norandina, Commission's secretary); João

Gutemberg (Amazonia); Álvaro Sepúlveda (Sta. María de los Andes); Ben Consigli (USA); Juan Carlos Fuertes (Mediterránea); Vincent de Paul Kouassi (West Africa); Darren Burge (Australia); Rajakumar Susai Manickam (South Asia).

The General Council has decided the XXII General Chapter will be celebrated in Ri-onegro (Colombia), approximately 40 km from Medellín.

It will be the first time in our history that a General Chapter will be celebrated outside of the See of the General Government.

In the following interview, Br Emili Turú, Superior General, talks about the next chapter and mainly about the chosen place for his celebration.

**We are dreaming of a new beginning for the Institute. What contribution can this ideal give to the next Chapter?**

The coincidence of the General Chapter with the celebration of the Bicentenary, invites us to contemplate the Chapter as an entrance door into the new Marist centenary; to live it as a new beginning.

At this moment we have four great processes, which correspond to the three years of preparation for the Bicentenary:

The first two General Chapters were celebrated in ND de l'Hermitage; 8 in Saint-Genis-Laval (France); 5 in Grugliasco (Italy) and 6 in Rome.



## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The international committee of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family is gathering at the general house from 24 to 31 July. Brother Antonio Ramalho, general councillor, and Brother Javier Espinosa, director of the secretariat of the laity, are participating in the meeting.

Brother Joe McKee, vicar general, and Brother Michael De Waas, general councillor, are visiting communities in Bangladesh.

Brother Hipólito Perez, assistant director of the secretariat Brothers Today is encouraging the withdrawal of brothers and lay people in Miraflores, in the Ibérica Province, from 1 to 7 August.

Brother Chris Wills is participating in the meeting with the project leaders of Solidarity with South Sudan in Juba until Aug.8.

Brother João Carlos do Prado is in Nairobi, involved in the first of three programmes for the entire Marist Africa: "New Horizons - true leaders and transformers for a new Africa."

The meeting of July 27 to August 8 is aimed at the leaders of the provinces of Madagascar and PACE.

the Revision of the Constitutions; New international communities for a new beginning; lay Marist association and belonging; new models of animation, management and governance.

All those processes, in addition to others lived at regional or provincial level, indicate directions for the future for the Marist Charism; help us to concretize the new beginning that we desire.

Therefore, the XXII General Chapter comes at a very opportune moment in our history!

**Why was it decided to celebrate the Chapter outside the headquarters of the General Government?**

We have reached this decision after a year and a half of study and discernment. Almost from the beginning, we have clearly seen that it was convenient to displace ourselves as a sign of a new beginning, but what was difficult was to choose the concrete place for the celebration of the Chapter. In studying the different alternatives, we wanted to combine several fundamental aspects, among others:

- The symbolical character of the place;
- To have available a minimum of conditions for the work of a numerous group during several weeks;
- To have the possibility of support on the part of the Marist community of the country.

We believe that the place chosen fulfills well these three requirements.

**What is the symbolic character that Colombia has for the mission of the Church and of the Institute?**

The name of Medellin has a powerful symbolism in the history of the Church. In 2017 the 50th anniversary of the convocation of the II Latin American Episcopal General Conference will be celebrated, the conclusions of which profoundly marked not only the Church of the continent but also the universal Church. Let us remember that in this Conference very well known Bishops intervened, such as Mons. Pironio, Mons. Samuel Ruiz, Mons. Leonidas Proaño and Mons. Helder Camara. Medellin represents the effort to concretize the spirit of Vatican II in Latin America, offering three essential elements of the identity of the Church in that continent: the option for the poor, the theology of liberation and the Basic Ecclesial Communities.

I stress the symbolism of the Colombian Amazonia, described by the Pope in *Laudato Si'* as the lung of the planet full with biodiversity, and extremely important for the totality of the planet and for the future of humanity (48). In that context it will be easier to listen to the urgent appeal for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all (14).

**Are there also other elements that have supported your decision to**

**choose Colombia as the headquarters of the next Chapter?**

We know that Colombia was the first country in Latin America to have a Marist presence and that at present more than half of the Marist mission of the whole world is concentrated in the American continent.

On the other hand, we can say that Colombia is a country of contrasts that will facilitate that the members of the Chapter can experience the going out to the peripheries. Colombia, which possesses a multicultural and multi-ethnic population, is characterized by the cordiality of the people and their great welcoming spirit; at the same time, it lives an internal armed conflict since 1960. The country has great richness in natural resources, but it is the 14th country with the greatest inequality according to the 134 observers in the Program of the United Nations for Development; in the last years the quality of education has increased, but almost half a million minors have no schooling, and approximately 30,000 are street children...

**Can we count on the support from the local community and an adequate infrastructure?**

Yes, without a doubt, I believe that they will be well attended to by the house of the Brothers of the Christian Schools where the Chapter is going to be celebrated (<http://delasalle.com.co/>) as well as by the Marist communities in Colom-



## Aleppo has water again, confirms Syrian Marist

The city of Aleppo has water again after the rebels cut it off for 31 days, according to a Marist brother in Syria.

Brother Georges Sabe made his comments in French on his Facebook page at 8am local time on July 28. "To all our friends... The water has returned... Electricity has been restored

(1 hour a day). Thank you to all those who shared our suffering... Your support, your solidarity, your generosity has touched our hearts. THANK YOU," he wrote.

Since the conflict began in spring of 2011, the rebels have cut Aleppo’s water several times – the latest was in July.

An Italian non-profit organization called ‘Aiutiamo la Siria!’ (Let’s help Syria!) is involved in several projects to help the country with aid.

One of the projects is called ‘Acqua per Aleppo!’ (Water for Aleppo!), which is ongoing, alongside its other four projects titled: Emergency Homs, Help to Study, Beyond the Obstacles and Italian Hospital in Damascus.

The Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI) sent the organization 3,000 Euros to help Aleppo with water on July 28.

For further contributions, email [info@aiulas.org](mailto:info@aiulas.org), or donate directly to:



Aiutiamo la Siria! - Onlus (AIULAS)

Tax identification number:

97797420581

Bank: Banca Etica

IBAN: IT85 H050 1803 2000 0000 0177

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## Directors of 53 Marist schools of Australia

School principals and leaders of Australia’s 53 Marist schools are gathering in a conference in Melbourne to meet and pray together for three days.

“It is very important for Marist leaders to gather so that they get to know one another, learn from one another, have a significant formation experience together, and also to pray together,” said Brother Michael Green, the national director of Marist Schools Australia on July 21.

“We have many courses, programmes, and formation opportunities each year, but the biennial Marist Schools conference is the biggest

event we hold,” he told the general house press office based in Rome.



The Marist Schools Australia is holding the gathering at the Catholic Leadership Centre from July 26-29.

The first of its kind was held 20 years ago and it continues to be held every two years in a different city.

“The Conference is a major event for Marist schools in Australia,” said Br Michael, who also works as executive director of Marist Ministries. “About 180 Marists will take part, almost all of whom will be lay.”

Br Michael noted that each school can also bring a younger teacher whom they have identified as a potential Marist leader for the future.

The conference will touch on subjects including the prologue of the gospel according to Saint John, the marriage feast of Cana, the theology of temple, being born again and "drawing us into a new creation in the household of God."

"We hope to help our Marist leaders come to a deeper personal appreciation of the Scriptures that are a key source of Marist spirituality, so that

they themselves can be enriched as Marists and can, in their turn, help to enrich the Marist schools they lead," Br Michael remarked.

"It is very important that Marist leaders don't think that being Marist is all about Saint Marcellin," he added. "It is not, it is about Jesus."

He underscored that "the Scriptures of John give us a window into how St

Marcellin came to know the love of God in Jesus."

"The French school of spirituality, from which Marist spirituality drew on, has a strong emphasis on John's Gospel and letters," added Br Michael. "These were very influential for St Marcellin."



## New provincial of Cruz del Sur expresses a 'heartfelt' thanks

The new provincial superior of Cruz del Sur expressed gratitude after the announcement made by the general superior.

"A heartfelt 'thanks' arises in me for the trust and affection they place in me," said Brother Alberto Aparicio, the new provincial.

"It will not be easy task, but I have the support of my brothers and a chain of prayers, which so many friends that life has given me have committed to," he told the general house press office in an interview on July 21.

The superior general, Brother Emili Turú, made the announcement in a letter written on July 20.

The new superior of the province Cruz del Sur, a province of the Marist brothers which includes the two Latin American countries, Argen-

tina and Uruguay, and the District of Paraguay, will replace Brother Horacio Bustos on Nov. 1 during a jubilee cele-

and that we can hopefully carry out as a single body," affirmed Br Alberto.



In his letter, Br Emili expressed his sincere thanks to Br Horacio "who, for the last six years, has given the best of himself in the animation and government of the Province."

According to Br Alberto, "the challenges will be, without a doubt, accompanying the brothers, listening to them, accompanying them to live and enjoy the gift of consecration."

"And from the stance of the Marist mission - with so many committed lay people - this will mean enjoying the richness of the mission taking place in Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay," he remarked.

bration of brothers in Luján, Argentina. "It (the celebration) will be a nice testimony that will strengthen this journey

