

PROCESS OF CONVERSION AND RENEWAL OF OUR RELIGIOUS LIFE

Course for elderly Spanish and Portuguese speaking Brothers ends

A commission for the revision of the Constitutions will meet at the general house from Nov. 2 – 14. It is formed by Brothers Josep María Soterias (General councillor coordinator), Tony Clark (Australia), Eduardo Navarro de la Torre (México Occidental), Albert Nzabonaliba (East Central Africa), António Leal (Compostela) and Antonio Peralta (Santa María de los Andes).

The last general chapter, when speaking about the Constitutions, affirmed a need for a conversion of heart and stated "a thorough revision of the Constitutions and Statutes, with the full participation of the Brothers, can help to revitalise our vocation."

To do this, they recommended that a committee be created to prepare the text to be presented at the XXII general

chapter.

The first commission was formed by Brothers Emili Turú (superior general), Joe McKee (vicar general), John Hazelman

Ignacio Fuentes (Cruz del Sur), António Leal (Compostela) and Nicholas Fernando (South Asia).



The group's work culminated in the production of the book *Stories of the Journey, told around the Fire*, a means that allowed the Institute to take the first steps in the process of revising the Constitutions, sharing the experience as a brother.

The goal was to elaborate a text based on life and not simply to present a text. During the first months of the year, the administrative unites worked on the proposals presented by the book. The document invited the Brothers to think about their own life and mission, following the recommendation of the chapter of renewing religious life. They collected and sent

(Pacific), Adnan Fischer (Rio Grande do Sul), Diogène Musine (East Central Africa), Patrick McNamara (United States), Juan

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GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

- From Nov. 1 – 3 the Province Cruz del Sur celebrated its fifth provincial chapter.
- Brothers Víctor Preciado and Eugène Kabanguka, from the general council, participated.
- The gathering of the Commission responsible for the process of revision of the Constitutions began on Nov. 2, coordinated by Brother Josep Maria Soterias, general councillor. They will be meeting in the general house until 14 Nov.
- Today in Johannesburg, South Africa, the encounter of the International Council of Economic Affairs ended, in which Brothers Libardo Garzón, economo general and Mario Meuti, director of FMSI.
- Until Nov. 10, Brother Javier Espinosa, director of the secretariat of the laity will be participating in a retreat of brothers and laity in Veranópolis, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil.
- From Nov. 5 – 10, the encounter of brothers of the Province África Centro-Este (PACE) is taking place in Tanzania with the participation of general councillors Antonio Ramalho and Ernesto Sánchez

all of the reflections to Rome. The commission, which is gathering these days in the general house, is looking at this material and will prepare a first draft of the revision of the Constitutions by February next year based on it and send it to the Provinces. The Brothers, following

the organization that each administrative unit will set, will dedicate six months until August 2016 to study this first project. Considerations and suggestions that arise will again be sent to Rome and the commission will prepare the second draft, which will be presented to

the Chapter members in February 2017. During the XXII general chapter in September 2017, the chapter members will work on the second draft and conclude it with the approval of the final text of the Constitutions.



BUILDING NETWORKS, BUILDING THE FUTURE

Meeting of the CEM in Athens

The Marist European Conference, also known as the CEM, met in Athens from Oct. 26 – 28. Five provincials, a provincial councillor of each province and the secretary of the CEM participated.

This was the topic of reflection of the CEM in Athens. Due to its importance, the reflection was made in conjunction with the European Mission Team. The tone set a good dialogue on the issue. There is the feeling that it is inevitable

feel that this is a good time to continue taking steps toward a common mode of action, taking into account the experience of other regions and other bodies or congregations who have done similar experiences.

A Brother who collaborated in the translation also took part. Brothers Ernesto Sánchez and Antonio Ramalho, the two councillors who serve as links to Europe, attended.



Two elected Provincials, who do not belong to the CEM, were invited on this occasion.

2. Network of European communities and new international communities

The Conference also covered the topic of the new international communities and another issue somewhat related to this, the Network of European Communities.

On one morning, they worked with the European Mission Team and the Secretariat of Mission from Rome, who held their meetings at the same time during those days in Athens.

Regarding this aspect, the existence of this network is seen as something very positive.

The group got to know the various Marist works of Athens (two schools and social work), plus some significant places of Greek history and culture. The days of the meeting included fraternal generosity in the welcoming offered by the Brothers and the laity of Athens.

nowadays to work as a NETWORK. There is an initial consensus and will to move in this direction in Europe. We will all benefit from building a NETWORK. The effort is worthwhile to develop it, respecting the pace of each participant. In the future, one can think not only about a network of Marist schools, but also about a network of Marist social works. The CEM asked the European Mission Team to take on responsibility of writing a first draft to be presented at the meeting of the CEM in Lisbon in May 2016. We

After hearing the Brothers Today team responsible for that network, the minutes of the meeting in Athens state the following:

"This is not to set up a new structure, but to find ways to encourage and maintain the fire in those communities. How can we shore more at a spiritual level? The presence of the laity was something new in this encounter (of Escorial from Aug. 8 – 12, 2015). Following up these communities and continue to maintain links

1. A network of Marist European schools

between them. In this second meeting of communities, there was a greater sense of Institute and more openness to realities beyond their own province.”

In the same way, the new communities should ask themselves how they can have a strong Marist spirituality and how it can and should influence its mission together with the most vulnerable. A mission to carry out with the Marist laity, with members of other congregations and with people of good will who want to live this future mission in communion: a joint mission to make the merciful face of God and the Marian face of the Church present among those most in need. There is a common component in all projects that have been reflected

upon: to be close to immigrant and displaced children and youth, who have serious deficiencies at different levels. These projects will be sent to the general council to form part of the Institute’s project “International Communities for a New Beginning.”

3. Child immigrants and displaced people; the bicentenary celebration; other topics

The provinces presented a long list of actions they are doing to respond to the call of Pope Francis and the superior general.

The future will consolidate many of those actions.

In the same way, there was a lot of time

given to reflect on the celebration of the bicentenary.

They reflected in a special way on the international encounter of Marist youth (of the four branches) in Lyon as well as the day in which the promise of Fourvière will be celebrated, 23 July 2016. The teams of the CEM will pass the information to the provinces so that the participation in these events can be well prepared, deep and effective.

Finally, completing the agenda items, the CEM shared on the various activities of the European teams and organisational matters.



Calendar of the General Council and Directors of Secretariats: Nov and Dec 2015

Nov. 01 – 03: chapter of Cruz del Sur Province in Buenos Aires: Joe Mc Kee, Víctor Preciado and Eugène Kabanguka

Nov. 02 – 13: the commission for the revision of the constitutions at the general house: Josep Maria Soteras

Nov. 03 – 06: international council of economic affairs in Johannesburg, South Africa: Libardo Garzón, Mario Meuti

Nov. 03 – 10: retreat for Brothers and laity in Veranópolis, Brazil: Javier Espinosa

Nov. 04 – Dec. 11: visit to Sul-Amazônia province, Brazil: Víctor Preciado

Nov. 05 – 10: encounter of superiors of East Central Africa province in Mwanza, Tanzania: Ernesto Sánchez and Antonio Ramalho

Nov. 09 – 10: visit to the Marist communities of India: Joe McKee and Michael De Waas

Nov. 11 – 12: New Models commission at the general house: Libardo Garzón, Miguel Ángel Espinosa and João Carlos do Prado

Nov. 15 – 17: ordinary general assembly of OIEC in Roma: Miguel Ángel Espinosa, João Carlos do Prado

Nov. 15 – 18: chapter of México Central province: Emili Turú and Josep Maria Soteras

Nov. 16 – 19: encounter with the community of Notre Dame de l’Hermitage, France: Javier Espinosa

Nov. 18 – 21: world congress for Catholic education: João Carlos do Prado, Miguel Ángel Espinosa

Nov. 22 – 27: preparatory commission of the general chapter at the general house: Joe McKee, Eugène Kabanguka, Pau Fornells

Nov. 23 – 25: assembly of representatives of the Marist Conference of Spain in Madrid, Spain: Ernesto Sánchez

Nov. 24: regular general council

Nov. 24 – 26: formation team for directors of Africa in South Africa: João Carlos do Prado and Miguel Ángel Espinosa

Nov. 24 – 27: encounter of the formation team for the international communities for a new beginning at the general house: Jeff Crowe, Angel Medina

Nov. 25 – 27: assembly of the Union of Superiors General in Rome: Emili Turú

Nov. 27 – 30: African Commission of Mission in South Africa:

Nov. 30 – Dec. 2: committee meeting of the planning and development of the international communities for a new beginning at the general house: Joe McKee, Chris Wills, Libardo Garzón, Tony Leon, Jeff Crowe, Ángel Medina

Dec. 01 – 10: “New Era” programme for leaders of the Pacific district in Sri Lanka: Michael De Waas

Dec. 02 – 06: assembly of the Brasil Centro-Norte province: Josep Maria Soteras

Dec. 05 – 08: assembly of the Mediterránea province in Guardamar, Spain: Ernesto Sánchez, Javier Espinosa, João Carlos do Prado, Mario Meuti

Dec. 07 – 11: chapter of the Brasil Sul-Amazônia province in Veranópolis: Emili Turú and Víctor Preciado

Dec. 07 – 11: chapter of the Brasil Centro-Norte province: Joe McKee, Josep Maria Soteras

Dec. 12 – 16: Asian Mission Assembly in Negombo, Sri Lanka: Michael De Waas, João Carlos do Prado, Chris Wills

Dec. 12 – 18: retreat of the Sul-Amazônia province in Ver-

anópolis, Brazil: Josep Maria Soterias and Víctor Preciado
Dec. 16 – 22: retreat with the Brothers of the Paraguay district: Hipólito Pérez
Dec. 21: regular general council
Dec. 21 – 24: chapter of the México Occidental province in Guadalajara: Víctor Preciado
Dec. 26 – 30: chapter of the Ibérica province in Lardero,

Spain: Ernesto Sánchez
Dec. 27 – 30: chapter of the Compostela province: Joe McKee
Dec. 27 – 31: chapter of the East Central Africa in Nairobi, Kenya: Emili Turú and Antonio Ramalho
Dec. 27 – Jan. 02: retreat with the Brothers of the México Central province: Hipólito Pérez



Meeting of the Commission for the sustainability of the Mission in Africa and Asia

A second meeting of the Commission for the Sustainability of the Marist mission in Africa and Asia was held on Oct 21 – 23 at Antsirabe, Madagascar.

It took place after a first meeting was held in Rome (in Nov. 2014) to meet, to talk and to understand a working methodology, proposed by the professor June Allison Westarb Cruz at Marist Curitiba (PUCPR) in Brazil.

We have not yet started working at the various Marist administrative units in African and Asian countries.

But the mere fact of having come to Madagascar to see up close the real life in the Marist works of one of the many countries that need organisational and managerial accompanying as well as financial, has served to further clarify the method of work and make it 'fit' better in reality.

Three members of the general administration were present: coordinator of the working team and general councillor brother Víctor Preciado, economo general brother Libardo Garzón and FMSI director brother Mario Meuti. There were representatives of some of the provinces of Africa and Asia: brothers Kiko Baeza of the PACE province, Celestine Okoye

from Nigeria, Michel Maminiania of Madagascar and Mervin Pereira of the South Asia province.



June Allison Westarb Cruz and Rony Ahlfeldt of tje PUCPR guided the work during the three days. Jude Pieterse of the Southern Africa province, John Bwanali of the MIC and Tata Oliver of the West Africa district were not able to take part in this encounter.

Brother Sylvain, the Provincial of Madagascar, greeted the participants, stressing the need that his Province and Africa in general has of this accompanying programme.

Brother Víctor recalled briefly the history of this Commission's work, which was desired by the XXI General Chapter and which has passed through various stages.

These stages included a meeting in Malwai, with the members of the International Council of Economic Affairs (Oct. 2011) in which the economes provincial of Africa were invited, a revision by the general council, the appointment of the new "ad hoc" commission with members from Asia, and finally a clear working programme, which began its meeting in Nov. 2014 in Rome.

On that occasion, Professor June Allison proposed a methodology based on the involvement of all the vital forces

of an administrative unit, to direct toward clear objectives and share all the human and economic resources available, together with any external resources, if necessary.

All members of the Commission were put to work, to have direct experience of the proposed method.

They first made a "SWOT ANALYSIS," then a subsequent "BLUE MATRIX" to highlight the elements considered most effective and productive.

Finally, they arranged the methodology around a "final matrix," ready to be proposed to the General Council for approval and then to the local TEAM

for their training, with the aim of course to apply the process to the respective administrative units. During its plenary session in January 2015, the general council approved the methodological process and chose three provinces to start it: Madagascar, the province PACE and South Asia. The meeting in Madagascar, as mentioned, was not done to begin the process yet, but it has been very useful for the Commission to check many details of the method, carefully studying each stage and especially being physically in touch with certain aspects of the Marist works in Africa, which is difficult to see out of the real context.

It served as well to study how to properly and effectively inform the administrative units involved in this process and to ensure the involvement of each of their leaders.

Among the decisions, which arose, there is, in fact, a detailed communications strategy, including a technical document

of the process, a disclosure document to facilitate the understanding and the interest of many, a video and other benefits..., not forgetting, of course, a formal letter of presentation by Brother Víctor, coordinator of the Commission.

Significant suggestions also emerged from the meeting for the composition and preparation of the local TEAMS.

Each group will have a formation period of four weeks, of which the first and the last will have proposals for work at a distance, while the two main ones in person.

The scientific responsibility of the programme is entrusted to a team of the PUCPR, coordinated by prof. June Allison Werstab Cruz.

The time and place of the meetings in person were established: Feb. 15 – 20, 2016, in Nairobi with the teams chosen from Madagascar, Nigeria and PACE and

representatives of Southern Africa and the West Africa district.

From Feb. 22 – 26, the group of Madagascar will return to continue working in their own country to accompany the start of work of this administrative unit and the participants of PACE and Nigeria, Southern Africa and West Africa District, will continue their work in Nairobi.

The work "in person" at the South Asia province will be from March 7 – 25, 2016, meeting with local teams for different countries: Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan.

It is important to mention and give thanks for the support that this commission receives from the provincial superior, brother Joaquim Sperandio, the economo of PMBCS, brother Jorge Gaio, in allowing that at least six people of the province actively participate in the project.



Pictures of the week



South Africa: International council of economic affairs in Johannesburg



Argentina: New Provincial Council of Cruz del Sur



East Timor: First stage of the school reconstruction in the remote district of Abafala



Brazil: Final Profession of Brother Geandir Wermann, Rio Grande do Sul



Italy: Marist community in Genoa



Solomon Islands: Directors of the Secretariat of the laity