



EXTENDED GENERAL COUNCIL FOR THE NEW REGION: AMÉRICA SUR FIVE DAYS IN FLORIANOPOLIS, BRAZIL



The general council and the provincial councils of the Region América Sur

The Extended General Council meeting of the Brazil and Cono Sur regions began on March 1.

It was held under the theme "Being a bridge towards a new beginning," in Recanto Champagnat, in Florianopolis, Brazil.

There were 40 brothers who took part, which included the General Council in Rome.

They also included the Provincial Council of the Brazil region: Brasil Sul-Amazônia, Brasil Centro-Norte and Brasil Centro-Sul.

The Provincial Council of the Cono Sur region - Santa Maria de los Andes, Cruz del Sur and the District of Paraguay - also took part.

Superior general Brother Emili Turú gave the welcoming speech, lead a moment of prayer, introduced the participants and explained the goals of the gathering.

Then, Brother Ernesto Sánchez gave a presentation of the new Vatican document titled "Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church."

It was the leitmotif of the dialogue throughout the encounter, which ran until Saturday, March 5.

The day's activities ended in the evening with a Eucharistic celebration at the St Marcellin Champagnat Chapel.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

From March 8 – 11 a meeting of the Extended General Council is taking place in Quito, Ecuador. All of the members of the provincial councils of the six administrative unites of the Arco Norte region and the general council are taking part.

Br João Carlos do Prado and Luca Olivari, of the Secretariat of Mission, took part in the meeting of the provincial councils of the new "América Sur" region to accompany the implementation of the New Models Project in Florianopolis on March 6 – 7.

The following day they met in the same place with the Council of the Cruz del Sur Province.

On March 9 – 10 they met with the Council of the Brasil Centro-Norte Province in Brasilia.

THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS OF THE EXTENDED GENERAL COUNCIL



The second day of the Extended General Council, Wednesday, March 2, began with a prayer on the theme of fraternity, a gift that we offer, led by Br. Victor Preciado.

The activities began with a presentation by Brother Josep Maria Soteras of statistics and history of religious life in the world. A group discussion then followed on perspectives, experiences and lessons of religious life within the Institute.

In the evening, the prayer theme included questions such as 'when is it a time

for change? For whom do we want to change? For whom do we want to face certain challenges? How far can we go?

Br Josep Maria Soteras presented the perspectives of the New Models of Animation, Governance and Management, underscoring everyone's responsibility in the Institute's common mission.

Finally, before the Eucharistic celebration, Br Wagner Cruz presented the process carried out by the team in charge of elaborating initiatives geared towards integrating Brazil and the Cono Sur region.

Thursday, March 3

The aim of the prayer and the dialogue, animated by Br Antonio Ramalho on March 3, was fraternity, the gift that we share.

Referring to the Vatican's document 'Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church,' Br Antonio proposed two questions:

What do you offer to the life of your community, Council, and Institute? What are we jointly capable of creating for ourselves?

The topic of the relationship between Brothers and laity was also covered, in a spirit of reciprocity and the process that is being experienced in the preparation of the document 'Global Framework of a Marist Vocational Process for the Laity.'

Vicar general Brother Joe McKee presented the proposal of the XXII General Chapter, which will take place in Colombia and in the afternoon he presented the Lavalla200 Project on new international communities.

The Eucharistic celebration was animated by the Cruz del Sur province and each group offered God a gift.

THE LAST TWO DAYS OF THE EXTENDED GENERAL COUNCIL

The fourth day, Friday March 4, was animated by Brother Ernesto Sánchez, and was a day of intense sharing between the brothers of the provincial councils of Brazil and Cono Sur.

It was also a day of personal reflection on the theme: mystery – fraternity, a gift that we receive.

The whole morning was centred in interiority and spirituality, with its strengths and challenges.

In the evening, Brother Ernesto presented the echoes of the Marist International Colloquium on Initial Formation that took place in Hermitage from Oct. 4 – 14 with the participation of 75 brothers that spoke about how to rethink and improve the formation process of young brothers.

The brothers who were present in Florianopolis discussed several of the recommendations and offered their own reflections.

At the end of the day, the group welcomed the young brothers of the Brasil Centro-Sul province, the community of the interprovincial novitiate of Brazil and the members of other Marist communities nearby to share life experiences and to celebrate Mass.

At the end of the last day, Saturday, March 5, Brother Libardo, the economer general, animated the prayer.

Workshops of animated dialogue between each of the members of the general council then followed with the following

NEWS IN BRIEF

MÉXICO OCCIDENTAL

A regional meeting of the group MarCha was held under the theme "Contigo las virtudes Maristas:" a proposal for growing that invites youths to plan their life based on the virtues of Champagnat.

IBÉRICA PROVINCE

On March 5, a team of accompanists for the itinerary of the lay Marist bonding met in Miraflores to continue outlining the accompaniment guides and share echoes of different accompaniments they have been doing.

PUERTO RICO

Marist educators of Puerto Rico held a meeting from 26 to 28 February in Bayamon. Sixty-five teachers from the Marist schools of Guaynabo and Manati took part.

BRAZIL CENTRO-NORTE

The Province reported that the annual initiative "Solidarity Marist Mission, made 83 experiences in the past three years in different cities, with the participation of 36 educational units and about 4,600 missionaries.



The participants in Florianopolis, Brazil

subjects: regionalisation and provinces with districts; revision of the constitutions; the general chapter; La Valla200; new international communities; bonding and belonging; colloquium of initial formation; promotion of internationalism.

An intense moment of reflection and dialogue, as well as the plenary session of exchanging opinions and evaluating the encounter then followed.

Brother Emili, in his final message, expressed his gratitude for the prevailing communion and fraternity in the encounter and for the great contribution of these provinces to the whole Institute.

He invited the brothers to not lose the ability of dreaming, to stay rooted in love and to keep the future vision alive that helps us move forward.

The Extended General Council closed with a Eucharistic celebration and a fraternal lunch.

In the evening, the brothers took the opportunity to visit the city of Florianopolis, a social work and the interprovincial novitiate of Brazil,

The Cono Sur and Brazil region continued to meet on March 6 and 7, discussing the New Models of Animation, Government and Management and took some organisational decisions.

MARIST CALENDAR

11 March: The Vatican recognised the Marist Fathers as an international order (1836), 1st Marist foundation in Algeria (1891), Beatification of Francesc Castelló Aléu (2001)

12 March: Brother François (Gabriel Rivat), 1st Superior General, was born in Maisonnettes, France (1808)

16 March: the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints recognised the validity of the diocese of Burgos process relative to Brother Bernardo (1990)

SOUTHERN AFRICA'S NEW PROVINCIAL:

BROTHER NORBERT MWILA

The Institute's general council has appointed Brother Norbert Mwila of Zambia as provincial of Southern Africa for a first three-year term.

"I hope and wish to share my acquired knowledge, understanding and experience of life as a Marist formator into my new ministry and leadership role, trusting in the Lord as the Master builder, our good Mother Mary and St Marcellin for their inspirational guidance and

wisdom of experience," he told the general house press office on March 3.

Superior general Brother Emili Turú made the announcement in a letter to the Brothers of the province of Southern Africa dated Feb. 19 after "a moment of fraternal dialogue" with Br Norbert.

In the letter, he thanked the previous provincial, Brother Joseph Wal-

MARIST WORLD



Bangladesh:
Mymensingh



Chile: Meeting of the Inter-American
Solidarity Sub-commission



Brazil: Pastoral Week,
Province Brasil Centro-Norte



Kenya: The Via Sacra in the
Marist International Centre, Nairobi



Ecuador: Extended General Council,
Arco Norte



Spain: Course in the Marist Spanish
Conference about solidarity



Brother Norbert Mwila,
new provincial of Southern Africa

ton, for his “generosity and commitment to the animation and government of the Province over the past six years.”

Br Norbert will begin his term on Aug. 23 during the beginning of the provincial chapter. He first came across the Marist Brothers as a teenager, when he met Brother José

Grande.

After graduating from high school, Br Norbert became a postulant at St Paul’s community in Kabwe in 1991.

He became a novice later that year at Kutama, Zimbabwe, and made his first profession in 1993. He then continued his formation at the Marist International Centre, or the MIC, in Nairobi until 1996.

Br Norbert went on to teach primary and secondary school at St Paul’s and was appointed as head teacher of a new primary school in the same community in 1998, where he served for seven years.

He recalls his mother, who passed away a year before his final profession in 2000, as being “among the most significant and encouraging figures” in his Marist vocation.

In 2001, Br Norbert was appointed community superior of St Paul’s, did an 11 month course for formators in Nairobi in 2005 and in 2006 he served as Master of postulants at Mtendere, a large village in Malawi, for 3 months.

In 2007, he was appointed novice master at Matola Novitiate in Mozambique and in 2013, he was appointed member of the International Commission for Brothers Today.

SPAIN'S TVE TO BROADCAST MARIST WORK IN LEBANON ON SUNDAY, 11:30 AM

One of the national television channels of Spain is airing a programme to show the war in Syria and the work of the Marist Brothers there.

RTVE's La 2 will broadcast the programme 'Pueblo de Dios,' or People of God, on March 13 at 11:30am.

Under the title 'Syria, Life in Hell,' it will also show the lives of thousands of refugees in neighbouring Lebanon and the Fratelli Project, a project run by the Marist Brothers and the Lasallian Brothers that helps displaced children in the country.

Sunday's show will further include a testimony of Brother Georges Sabe, a 'Blue Marist' who lives in Aleppo, Syria.

This is the first of four shows that RTVE's La 2 will run after a team of the Non-Governmental Organization



SED travelled to Beirut in February with journalists of Pueblo de Dios.

To watch live online, visit: <http://www.rtve.es/directo/la-2/>.

EAST TIMOR FOCUSES ON IMPROVING EDUCATION : 46 GRADUATES



While East Timor continues to prioritise education, 46 teachers graduated from the training college for teachers on Feb. 20 in Baucau, East Timor.

The students were the eleventh group to graduate from the 'Baucau College – Instituto Católico para a Formação de Professores,' – the first group grad-

uated in 2006.

"You have studied for three years to become good teachers who help your students of the future to become good students, who love learning," the Institute's director, Brother Peter Corr, told the graduates.

"In this way, you also help develop

this nation and bring more hope to its future."

"With your skills you can also help your families by supporting your children and give them a similar focus on their own education," he added.

Br Peter went on to thank their parents for their support and sacrifices that have enabled their children to study and live in Baucau.

During the event, Australian Catholic University emeritus professor Brother Tony d'Arbon presented three of the College's staff with their Masters in Education, a course done through distance and led by Brother Michael McManus.

The Marist Brothers founded the College, which is accredited through the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne, at the request of the Bishop of Baucau in 2001.

It is the only internationally organised provider of primary teacher education in East Timor.

Deolindo da Cruz, president of the

National Institute for Training of Teachers and Education Professionals, spoke on behalf of the Minister of Education.

Two teachers of East Timor travel to Brazil to learn Portuguese

Meanwhile, two Marist educators of East Timor are in Porto Alegre, Brazil, from Feb. 17 – May 4 to learn Portuguese.

Crisogno Freitas Soares Pereira and Mariano dos Santos are part of a programme of professional development, coordinated by the Australia province and with the support of Brasil-Sul Amazônia province and the Collaboration for

Mission, International.

Although it is one of the official languages of East Timor, along with Tetum, Portuguese is not very common in schools.

Crisogno Freitas Soares Pereira has been working at the Catholic Institute for Teacher Training at the Diocese of Baucau in East Timor for seven years.

Mariano dos Santos teaches psychology at the Institute, where he has been working since 2007.

To help increase standards of education in East Timor, visit <http://www.australianmaristsolidarity.net.au>.

MEETING OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE LAITY: A BIFOCAL GLANCE



The Secretariat of the Laity in the General House in Rome.

Brother Emili's invitation normally gathers us in Rome, in February, as well as the co-directors of the Secretariat and various groups of the general administration. They are integration days. It meant for us a beautiful experience of dialoguing and encountering the General Council and various commissions. In our dialogue with the Council, we perceived that our Institute can have a new evangelizing and charismatic identification which is more broad than the life of the Brothers. We realized that the Constitutions allow us to offer a new vocational profile of the Brothers where the charism (spirituality, fraternity and mission) is shared with the laity. When speaking with Brothers Today, we concluded that there are common spaces for formative processes. We realised that the witness of the life of the Brothers and laity has a place within the proposal of the New Models of Governance. We found the same spirit of Champagnat when we looked at the different

Marist expressions in the Institute's regions. I try to look at the experience of Rome with a bifocal gaze, which allows one to look from a far and from up close. Which stops itself to look at what is small, but also contemplates in the same way what is global. Which integrates. It is the look towards a new beginning, which leads towards unity, integration, harmony and communion. The bifocal attitude that Jesus gives us. He incarnates the human and the Divine. He integrates sin with grace, what is temporary with what is eternal. The bifocal gaze integrates utopias and realism, fidelity and creativity, continuity and rupture.

Through a "bifocal attitude" we can integrate physical aging with charismatic rejuvenation, the unsuspected and unpredictable with what is planned and anticipated, a future of hope with a difficult moment in history, the courage to change with the rhythms of the Institute that are sometimes slow. The meeting in Rome was full of content and inspiration. Brothers and laity who continue to opt for Jesus and his Gospel.

A rich mosaic of proposals and projects for the forthcoming General Chapter. It is a call to integrate the immediacy with the global, the partial with the whole, the provincial with the international, in a horizon of transcendence, which is God's promise. With Him, it is possible to overcome our dichotomies, divisions, disparate views. He teaches us to look far to see wide horizons, bearers of grace and life. With Him, we will know how to read his loving Word come true, that has made history, in every Brother, in every layperson, in each work, in each project in each community of the Institute. The intense days of meeting with Pep, Tony and the different committees awakened in me this glance.

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