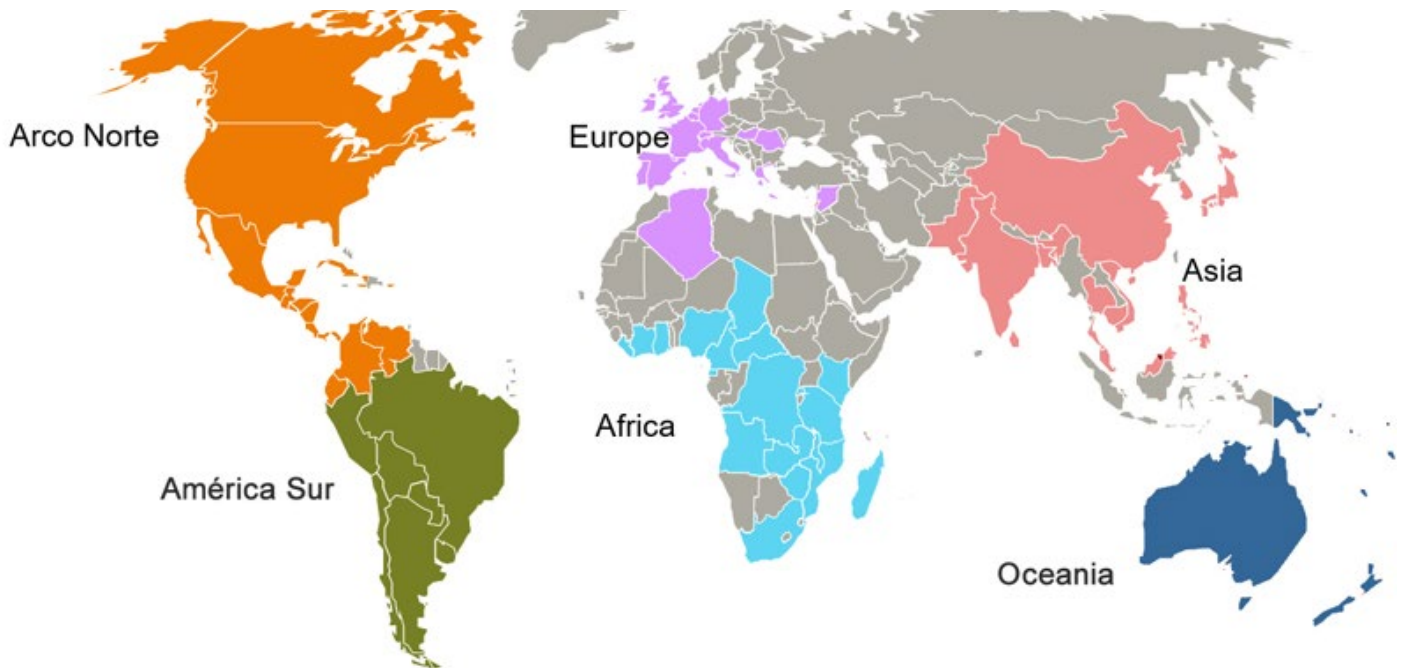




IMPLEMENTATION OF MISSION ORGANIZATION

NEW MODELS PROJECT



In its February 2016 Plenary session, the General Council agreed on the general direction and methodology concerning the implementation of Mission approach at general, regional and administrative levels (AU).

The global vision of the New Models Project had already been presented in July 2015 at the Assembly in Rome with all Provincials, Superiors of Districts and link persons responsible for the implementation of the Project at AU level.

The New Models Project proposes principles, guidelines and proposals of processes for a better organization of the Mission at all the levels of the Institute.

Now in the implementation phase, the proposal is being adapted in accordance with reality, needs, opportunities and common interests of each region and Administrative Unit (AU).

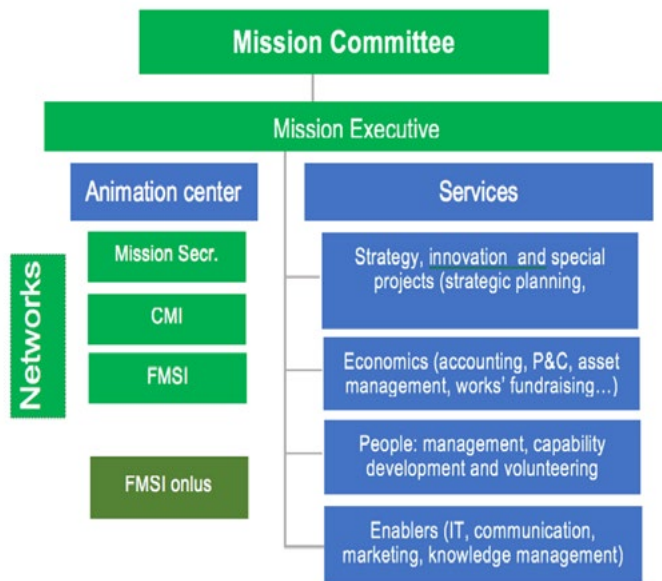
America Sur and Arco Norte regions constituted working groups, which have developed proposals for the region, worked with and approved by the Provincial councils of each region after the extended meetings of the General Council. In the same way, Asia has created a working group that will begin to reflect on the theme during the provincial Conference of Asia, in the next month of April.

Africa has entrusted to the African Commission of Mission that role. Among other initiatives, Europe and Oceania are developing proposals for the creation of networks of educational works or mission at the regional level. Insofar as the reflections move forward regionally, the reflections

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Br. Joe McKee, Vicar General, participated in the V Chapter of the Compostela Province in Spain, from March 20 - 22.

Brothers Josep Maria Soterias and João Carlos do Prado are visiting the East Asia Province from March 22 - 25.



as a "global body", always looking for solidarity and stewardship in all areas at all levels of the mission.

The proposals of the New Model Project go beyond organizational matters.

In tune with the other processes of the General Council and Secretariats, in particular with Today's Brothers, Laity and International communities, so as with the revision of its constitutions the intent is to promote a new mentality for the Marist Mission and its agents.

For this reason, it was launched this process of co-creation in view of the new Marist centenary to be celebrated in 2017.

At the level of the General Government, it was agreed about the progressive implementation of the new mission structure.

Thus, it is expected the creation of a Mission Committee operational in 2017 which could evolve to a Mission Council after the General Chapter XXII. The Mission Committee will be of support to the General Council concerning the reflection and the coordination of the Marist Mission at a general level.

At operational level, the FMSI Children Rights, the CMI and the Mission Secretariat will work in a more integrated way in consideration that the last two will be working under the Mission Committee.

For the first phase of the implementation, the General Council has appointed two internal Teams and two Working Groups in order to support the creation of structures and processes.

The scope of appointing the two internal Teams and the two Working Groups is to ensure consistency, coherence, alignment and compliance of the new Mission structure with the legal and canonical structures of the Institute at Global, Intermediate and Local levels.

about the adequacy of each administrative unit deepen in order to respond and connect with the regional level and the general one in order to avoid duplications of structures and processes.

There is a big concern about the process and about the focus of the project, with those involved in the Mission.

The expectations are that: this initiative achieve to promote greater vitality to the Marist Mission and to contribute to the clarity of the roles and responsibilities of Brothers and Lay; that it achieve to make possible better training for both and achieve a greater proximity to children and young people.

It is expected that the new proposal prepare all of us as an Institute to ensure innovation and creativity within the presence and vitality of the charism, in places where the presence of Brothers has mostly declined. Finally yet importantly, it is expected that this initiative encourage the vision of the Institute and of the Marist Mission

CONFER PUBLISHES FULL SPEECH OF SUPERIOR GENERAL

AUTHORITY IN THE SERVICE OF COMMUNION AND MISSION

The magazine of CONFER, the Spanish Conference of Religious, has published the speech of superior general Brother Emili Turú during its 22nd general assembly. Br Emili spoke about "Authority in the service of communion and mission"

during the assembly, held Nov. 10 – 12 in Madrid, Spain.

His full speech is now available on pages 61 – 75 of the 55th volume, number 209, of the Jan. – March 2016 issue.

For the full text, visit:

<http://www.champagnat.org/400.php?a=6&n=3908>.



LETTER FROM ALEPPO, NUMBER 25

WHAT IS THAT HOPE THAT YOU PROCLAIM?

Nabil Antaki - for the Blue Marists

It is beautiful this Sunday morning of March, a blue sky, a radiant sun which warms; the cease-fire which entered into force two weeks ago urged people to be optimistic. The first days, it was respected. The noise of the birds when waking up in the morning replaced the noise of the bombs.

Electricity and water came back during two days after a total interruption of several months. The people of Aleppo spent white nights washing, taking a bath, filling the reservoirs with water being afraid that the provisioning of water and electricity would be only temporary as it was the case on several occasions in the past.

Unfortunately, this short bright interval lasted only some days. Then the snipers began again their dirty work killing innocent civilians. Then the shells of the mortars began again to fall on certain neighborhoods, the terrorist group holding the best part. The east of the town was not concerned about the truce.

The provisioning of water and electricity was once again interrupted. Even if it was reestablished, the people from Aleppo knew that the regime of rationing was going to begin again, water, one day a week and electricity two hours a day. In spite of everything, this morning, everybody has a smile on the lips and hope in the heart.

These last times the events have succeeded one another: the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Syrians towards Europe causing tensions among the European countries and among the inhabitants of the same country; The offensive of the Syrian army on the governorate of Aleppo to liberate our city besieged since three years and a half ago by the terrorist group Al Nosra.

The cease-fire proclaimed, not always respected, in force since 15 days ago; It concerns the Syrian State and about one-hundred groups of rebels but not the two principal ones unanimously considered as terrorists. The blocking of the only road (attacked by the armed groups) that joins Aleppo with the rest of the country, during 8 days with the consequent interruption of the provision of essential products to the city, and this only a few days before the sad 5th anniversary of the beginning of the war in Syria.

Is this the beginning of the end of the nightmare? The cease-fire is it the prelude of a political solution coming soon? The Western countries submerged or overwhelmed by the millions of refugees, have they decided to hasten the political solution in order to stop the migratory flow? Finally, are they going to let us live in peace again among us, the Syrians as we have done during centuries? Is it necessary to be optimistic

+ 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 into 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

and hope or realistic and remain expecting? These questions, at present without any response, the Syrians in general and the people from Aleppo in particular ask themselves throughout the day.

In waiting, we, the Blue Marists, continue our solidarity work with the displaced families and/or without resources. Rami one of our volunteers, asked me the other day: "Why do you insist in saying that we are an association of solidarity and not a humanitarian organism?"

The response is evident. For us, Blue Marists, the "beneficiaries" are not numbers on the lists; they are not virtual beings to feed, to lodge and to take care of; they have a name. Behind each name, there is a face; there is a human person with his past history, sometimes unfortunate, plunged into mourning, his dramas, sufferings, his broken dreams, his future mortgaged; but also, a person who has desires and projects. We want to establish with them a relationship that will allow them, in spite of everything, to keep their dignity, their humanity and a certain hope.

MARIST WORLD



Singapore:
Marist mission



Argentina: Province Cruz del Sur
Assembly in Luján



Spain: Chapter of the
Province Compostela



Bolivia: Postulants of Cochabamba
organise the Way of the Cross



Brazil: Marist School
in Teresina



India: Marist primary school
in Trichy

The family of S.B. is not a number. A month ago, it received a shell in its apartment: Soubhi B. had a fracture on the skull and the arm and lost his nose. His wife Gina B. lost her eyes and eye lids and all the bones in her face; that is only magma of burnt flesh; and their son was killed with the shell. The Family H. R. is not only a "beneficiary". It has a painful, sorrowful past, an extremely difficult present and an uncertain future. The mother, Lina and her 9 children, displaced and refugees in the carcass of a building, in one room without walls and without toilets are human persons.

The husband disappeared several months ago. In order to survive the older children collect the plastic and cardboard to sell it for recycling and the younger children collect the bread from the garbage bins to dry it and sell it as food for the animals.

M.K., widow, mother of 5 children, displaced two times, the husband was killed by a sniper at the beginning of the war, one of her two daughters died a year ago after the explosion of a shell, a son student of medicine trying to study which is very difficult in the cave where they live. M. or her daughter come walking every day to our house (two hours to come and to return) to get a hot meal for the family. Is it that M. is only a number on the list of beneficiaries of the noon meal? Does she not need that we look at her with love, that we listen to her with respect and that we accompany her with discretion?

These are some examples, among numerous others, of dramas lived by the displaced families and/or without resources and who are taken care of by the Blue Marists.

Our different projects continue and develop

We have created a new "Basket" for 224 new families that we have accepted to take asked by an association which no longer has the means to continue its activity. So the total number now is 800 displaced families who receive help every month. A basket of substantial food, a complete medical basket, and recently the price of a monthly subscription of "1 ampere" for the private generators which have filled the city everywhere to supply the "official" electricity which is not furnished. For Easter every family is going to receive a bonus to buy 1 kilo of meat, foodstuff which has become very expensive that our families cannot pay for it.

"The Blue Marists for the lodging or accommodation of the displaced" continue their help to lodge the families in small apartments. 150 families have already been helped, some of them after three years.

Clothing, mattresses, blankets, cans of water and kitchen utensils are furnished when they ask for them or need them. A hot meal is distributed every day at noon to 550 persons.

The total interruption of the provision of water has obliged us to buy a 4th van or truck, equipped with a reservoir, a small generator, a pump, and a pipe, the families fill their reservoirs of water from hundreds of wells perforated or drilled all over the city, then they ploughed the city to fill the reservoirs from 250 to 500 liters of water that we fur-



nished to our families. This project "I am Thirsty" is greatly appreciated by the families.

Unemployment, the excessive increase of the cost of life and displacement are the cause that the majority of the people of Aleppo no longer have the means to take care of themselves. With the "medical project of the Blue Marists", we help the families to pay for a prescription, to pay for an X-Ray or for tests in the laboratory, to pay for hospitalization for some treatment or for a surgical operation. Hundreds of medical acts are financed each year by us.

Our program "Civilians wounded in war" continues, thanks to the benevolent help of doctors and surgeons and the cooperation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition, to take care, free of charge, in the Hospital St. Louis, of the civilians wounded during the war. Our Project "Drop of Milk" distributes every month powdered milk to 2700 children from 1 to 10 years of age and milk for infants, to 275 babies of less than a year of age who are not nursed by their mothers.

Very soon we are going to begin a new project "The Blue Marists for the eradication of illiteracy". In fact, we have seen and verified that the adults in numerous displaced families do not know how to read or write. This project will allow them to profit during this period of war, of unemployment, of emptiness, to develop themselves.

"Learn to Grow" for children from 3 to 6 years of age; "I want to Learn" for children from 6 to 13 years of age and the Skill School for the adolescents all continue receiving more and more petitions of registration on the part of the parents and of the young people.

Concerning our center of Formation, the M.I.T., its seminars are always occupied. Unfortunately, we can only accept 20 candidates on the 50 or 60 petitions of inscription for each workshop. We have two every month, one which lasts 3 days for young adults from 20 to 40 years of age to allow them to acquire knowledge in different subjects such as we have done recently, "how to make a Power Point", "how to use the program Excel", how to evaluate the yield or profit of a project", etc.

Our Directive team, our 50 volunteers, our employees, the

doctors, in one word, all the Blue Marists work steadily, without interruption in order that all these projects may be thought out, planned, directed and executed in the best possible way, in the Marist way. That is to say, know "the beneficiaries", always treat them with respect and love, and listen to them when they need it. We owe you very much, dear Friends, who support us by your messages of solidarity, your prayers and your gifts.

Very soon we will celebrate Easter, the feast of the Resurrection, the feast of Hope. Rami, again questioned me and said: What is that Hope that we proclaim when we have been living for 5 years in the most complete darkness?

I answered him: For us, the Blue Marists: "To Hope is to live fastened when everything trembles. It is to accept the risk when everything is assured. It is to propose a presence when everything is senseless. To Hope, is to live inhabited by love, nourished by tenderness, encouraged by peace to Hope, is to advance when everything seems to be blocked when everything seems to be finished when all is condemned.

It is to live at the limit, at the frontier, at the extreme of an essential choice: 'do not fear anything, I carry you in the palms of my hand, I make you my friend'. To hope, is to say Magnificat. You are in my life and I am in yours an eternal poem of Love.

It is Hope which helps us to exceed, to go beyond the gift and the sacrifice of self, to love more than one could imagine, to believe with all our heart and not only with all our reason. Hope means that Jesus, who was incarnate and died on the cross for us, has risen and He lives in us. After His Resurrection, Jesus sends someone to tell his disciples to wait for Him in Galilee. The disciples were sad and desperate since Jesus was dead. They had lost all Hope. Their appointment in Galilee, with Jesus who had risen, gave them Hope. They knew that after death, there is the resurrection, and that after darkness, there will be the light." Happy Easter.



The noise of the **birds** when waking up in the morning replaced the noise of the **bombs**.



MANZIANA AND EL ESCORIAL: ANIMATORS MEET FOR TWO MONTHS



Community animators are meeting in Spain and in Italy for two months as part of an initiative of the Brothers Today Secretariat.

“The purposes of this include: a personal renewal, an opportunity for professional development as well as a providing a sense of solidarity in their common role,” said Brother Tony Leon, director of the Secretariat.

“Sometimes, in more isolated countries, brothers wouldn’t have opportunities to bounce off ideas,” he told the general house press office on March 7.

Spanish and Portuguese-speaking brothers are meeting in El Escorial, Spain, while English-speaking brothers are meeting in Manziana, Italy, from Feb. 18 – April 21.

The programme will include presentations on community processes, communication skills and group

dynamics as well as a pilgrimage to France with a group of lay Marists from April 5 – 13.

“It’s a challenge for brothers to come together and listen with humility because how some may think you should run a community may not be applicable to other countries,” affirmed Br Tony.

“Some brothers live in first world countries, which are safe but with the challenges of ageing communities due to the lack of vocations,” he added. “Others come from anything but comfortable situations but with the blessings of many younger brothers.”

The logo of the encounter is the Rondanini Pietà to symbolize the call for community leaders to represent Jesus, as stated in paragraph 52 of the Constitutions and Statutes.

Br Tony noted he has “witnessed a sense of humility that the brothers

experience when they listen to the stories of other brothers.”

BRASIL CENTRO-SUL

The Marist province of Brasil Centro-Sul launched its website on Feb. 14.

The new platform allows users get to know the evangelizing mission of Marcellin Champagnat, and how it is taking shape in the Province.

This is done through activities in the fields of education, health, communication, solidarity and complementary activities.

The website presents information clearly and objectively, highlighting the areas dedicated to the mission and activities.

Relevant news on the apostolate and mission are also published.

To see the new website visit: www.grupomarista.org.br



Institute of the Marist Brothers - General House

Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat, 2 - Rome, Italy - comunica@fms.it

Our website: <http://www.champagnat.org>

YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/champagnatorg>

Follow us:

<https://www.facebook.com/fmschampagnat>

https://twitter.com/fms_champagnat