



FEBRUARY 8: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND AWARENESS AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

February 8 will mark the third year that Catholics worldwide observe as 'International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking.'

The initiative is promoted by the Pontifical Council of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the The Unions of Superiors and Superiors General of Religious Institutes.

During the First International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking, in 2015, Pope Francis noted that he encouraged "those who work helping the men, women and children who are enslaved, exploited, abused as instruments of work or pleasure, who are often tortured and mutilated."



"It is my hope that government leaders may work decisively to remove the causes of this disgraceful

scourge, it is a scourge unworthy of society," the pontiff continued. "May each one of us feel committed to being a voice for our brothers and sisters, who have been humiliated in their dignity."

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

This week's agenda of the General Council, that is currently meeting in its plenary session, includes studying topics related to the general house, the economic and financial policies of the Institute, the services provided by FMSI, the communications and the Postulator General.

From February 8 – 14, the International Commission Brothers Today met in Rome. The directors of the Secretariat, Brothers Tony Leon and Hipólito Pérez were among the participants.

Brothers Ángel Medina and Jeff Crowe, who are in charge of the formation of the participants in the Lavalla200> project, visited the five project members who are currently residing in Asia from Feb. 3 – 27.

Brother Javier Espinosa held a meeting from Feb. 4 – 5 in Alcalá de Henares, Spain, with Ana Sarrate, Alfredo García and Danilo Farneda to finish preparing a complementary document for the life project of the ChFM movement. The document is titled "Formation and organisation."

February 8 coincides with the Feast of Saint Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese slave, freed, who became a Canossian nun, and was declared a Saint in 2000.

Also known as 'Mother Moretta' (our Black Mother), she bore 144 physical scars throughout her life, which she received after being kidnapped at the age of nine and sold into slavery.

For more information on the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking, visit <http://preghieracontrotratta.org>.



II

Aside from educating, transmitting knowledge and culture, this school and all Marist schools transmit the meaning of life, the preparation for facing growth, the joys, sorrows and difficulties of life and it is something that remains unchanged

Sergio Mattarella
President of Italy

II

PRESIDENT OF ITALY THANKS MARISTS FOR “PREPARING ONE FOR LIFE”

During an Institute’s bicentenary celebration, promoted by former Italian Marist students that took place at the San Leone Magno Institute in Rome, Italian president Sergio Mattarella and ex-student of the same school thanked Marists for having helped him prepare for life.

“Aside from educating, transmitting knowledge and culture, this school and all Marist schools transmit the meaning of life, the preparation for facing growth, the joys, sorrows and difficulties of life and it is something that remains unchanged,” he told the other participants on January 29.

“With the time that passes by, with the seasons that change, there is something that remains intact, which goes beyond time and will continue to go beyond it (which is) the meaning of life, transmitted by the teaching of the Marists,” the president affirmed.

He thanked them for “for what they do, for these two hundred years of long itinerary” and for “what they are

doing in our country.”

Superior general Brother Emili Turú, general councillor Brother Antonio Ramalho were among the participants.

Guests from Mondovi, Carmagnola, Genoa, Milan, Viterbo, Manziana, Naples and Sicily also took part.

During the encounter, five former students of Marist schools from Rome, Taormina, Giugliano, Genoa and Cesano Maderno (MB) gave their testimony, explaining how Marist teachings had influenced their life choices.

Mass was then presided by Father Carlo Molari who has celebrated Sunday Mass at the school for many years.

The Institute's director, Brother Daniele Pardo, then invited the President to speak on the stage. To see a video of his full speech, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eGfOwFzk-PQ>.

NEWS IN BRIEF

RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

The Organization of the American States awarded the Marist Centre for the defense of children of the Brasil Centro-Sul province a certificate of excellence for its action in the fight against sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, which it carried out with the Campaign *Defenda-se*.

NOVIATIES IN LATIN AMERICA

On Feb. 2, the World Day for Consecrated Life, the two novitiates of Latin America welcomed the new novices. Eight novices made their official entry in Medellin. Two belong to the Mexico Central province and six to Norandina. The novitiate of the America Sur region, which has six novitiates from Brazil, Argentina and Peru, was officially inaugurated in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

CANDIDATES FOR MARIST LIFE

Around 14 youth gathered for a week in January to experience Marist life in the formation house of the Australia province in Baucau, East Timor. Some of them will start the postulant phase in March.



OVER 5,000 SEEK REFUGE IN SOLIDARITY WITH SOUTH SUDAN COMPOUND TO ESCAPE DEATH

Over 5,000 people have sought refuge in a compound of the Solidarity with South Sudan project, where Marist Brother Christian Mbam and three religious sisters of different congregations live in Riimenze, to escape the violence of both rebels and the government's army.

As of Jan. 26, there are 5,056 internally displaced people that have arrived to the camp with the hope of receiving shelter, food and health care as numbers continue to rise daily.

They began fleeing their homes after government soldiers burnt their houses and killed people along the road between Yambio and Riimenze on Jan. 1.

The soldiers had assumed they were sheltering or supporting the Sudan People's Liberation Army guerrilla since the guerilla had tried to recruit new members in 2016.

Executive director of the Solidarity with South Sudan project, De La Salle Brother Bill Firman, told the Marist Brothers communications office that "there is far too much fear in South Sudan."

"All these people want is to return to their simple homes and live in peace (and) we support that," he wrote on Jan.

29. "I suspect that what has happened in Riimenze has happened in other parts of South Sudan but it is not being reported."

He stressed that "all the Government has to do is allow the people to go back to their homes and to their subsistence agriculture and for the rebels to leave them alone."

Br Bill, based in Juba, affirms neither the rebels nor the government soldiers have threatened members of the project at the compound nor their large farm, which includes animals. It is believed neither of them will go inside the compound.

Solidarity with South Sudan (www.solidarityssudan.org) – a partnership with over 23 religious congregations – is located in Riimenze, Wau, Yambio and Juba. It was initially set up to train teachers, nurses, midwives, local farmers and community leaders, but is now having to feed and look after internally displaced people.

"It is not the mission we planned but it is the one that now confronts us," stated Br Bill, who knows many of the victims. "We pray that the local people may be allowed to go home before the wet season sets in."

MARIST CALENDAR

Feb. 8: Brother Lawrence, the third brother to join the Institute and a catechist in Bessat, died at the Hermitage (1851)

Feb.11: Our Lady of Lourdes; World Day of the Sick

Feb. 12: The first brothers left for the Republic of South Africa (1867)

MARIST WORLD



Italy: Br Vasco Santi wins honorific Italian prize for outstanding social work



Spain: Meeting of communities and fraternities of Bilbao (Iberica Province)



Samoa: Bicentennial celebration on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord



New Zealand: Auckland



Brazil: Moment of prayer at the Centro Marista Divino Pai Eterno - CEMADIPE



Puerto Rico: Vocational animation meeting - Marist School of Guaynabo

Project members have set up a temporary clinic with a nurse, a midwife and two helpers.

The “tukuls,” which are traditional kitchens, are now used for the mothers and babies after delivering or for those who are very sick needing drips.

They have also built 16 bathrooms with cemented floor and iron sheets around, as well as four toilets. Drinking water has

been provided every day in plastic containers as much as possible and Médecins Sans Frontières is visiting to hand out powder to purify the water and vaccinations, and other NGOs are getting involved.

A visitor told Br Bill that “there is still lot of fear as rebels and soldiers sometimes come or pass the camp and every evening smoke is blowing to every corner in and outside the camp like light clouds.”

THE POPE TO RELIGIOUS: “NO TO THE CULTURE OF THE PROVISIONAL”

THE SUPERIOR GENERAL PARTICIPATES IN AN ENCOUNTER AT THE VATICAN



Superior general Brother Emili Turú took part in the plenary session of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life on Jan. 27 and 28.

The plenary is formed by 18 cardinals, 15 bishops and seven general superiors. The Congregation invited seven superiors of female religious congregations to also take part in this encounter. Pope Francis appointed Brother Emili as a member in February 2014.

On the first day, the group met with the Congregation of Bishops with the goal of increasing dialogue between the two Congregations, in the light of the document *Mutuae relations* that describes the relationship between bishops and religious within the Church. During the rest of their meeting, members studied the theme "Faithfulness and perseverance,"

whose reflections will be made public soon as "Orientations" of the Congregation.

On Saturday, Jan. 18, the Pope received the participants. He asked the religious to live the community life intensely, renouncing, prophetically, to the culture of the provisional.

MEXICO: HAVE YOU LIVED? HAVE YOU LOVED?

From Jan. 12 – 14, 29 people from different institutions participated in an experiential workshop of interiority took at the house of Chona at the Mexico Occidental Province. It was led by Cecilia Estrada, Armando Flores with the support of Gabriela Gutiérrez. The workshop was open to anyone who wanted to have this experience of being in touch with their inner life. One of the participants, Juan Carlos, shares his experience below in Spanish.

Ante el reto de elegir un nombre para la vivencia que nos propondrían y que, eventualmente, nos permitiría atisbar, -acaso intuir apenas-, la riqueza personal que a cada uno nos habita, los coordinadores de nuestro retiro optaron por el sencillo expediente de describirla antes que buscarle un título convencional: sería, sencillamente, una experiencia de interioridad.

Cada momento de nuestra estadía en La Chona, sintiendo en carne y huesos el frío propio de la mitad de enero, pero animados con cada actividad y en cada pausa, arropados ya por la generosidad de los demás, ya por su disposición para el encuentro, íbamos penetrando, sin prisa pero sin pausa, el insondable misterio que nuestro corazón alberga. Validábamos, en primera persona, la sabiduría indígena que ya desde el saludo se desvela: Yo soy otro tú, tú eres otro yo. Desaprender lo aprendido era la premisa que nos invitaba a enfocar la realidad con una mirada nueva y diferente. El itinerario propuesto era el largo camino que va desde afuera hacia nuestro mundo interior y que nunca terminará de completarse. El precio convenido del peaje era el silencio.

Reconciliarnos con nuestra corporeidad y tomar conciencia de esta realidad evidente que tantas veces dejamos de reconocer, caer en cuenta de que somos cuerpo, fue el primer paso de este viaje fascinante. Sentirlo, escucharlo, reconocerlo como un traje hecho a la medida de nuestra alma y nuestra mente, abrió la puerta para ir aún más lejos. Vendría después la conciencia de lo mucho que importan



-y nos aportan- las sensaciones, los sentimientos y las emociones. Traer al presente innumerables hechos de nuestra historia personal que creíamos archivados y olvidados confirmó lo que ya intuíamos: que quien olvida su historia la repite pero quien la integra cabal y valientemente a lo que es, retoma su camino aligerado.

En este punto del camino se hicieron patentes la autonomía, la responsabilidad y la libertad personales como frutos de nuestra interioridad. Somos hijos de nuestras decisiones. Elijamos, entonces, la verdad que nos libera. ¿Descubrimientos? ¡Muchos!

En el proceso de nuestra humanización, Dios se hace presente. Dice bien san Irineo: "La gloria de Dios es el hombre vivo", pleno, feliz...humano. La Gracia no destruye la naturaleza sino que la perfecciona. Y en este continuo ir y venir de afuera adentro, descubrimos que el verdadero encuentro entre personas se da sólo cuando una y otra se han encon-

trado a sí mismas previamente. La interioridad y la espiritualidad se traslapan y en ese espacio único surge la conciencia de que somos profundamente amados. En Él existimos, nos movemos y somos.

El Amor es la única posibilidad de redención para el Mundo. Dice Boff: Todo lo que trasciende sucede en el amor.

Hemos atestiguado que es posible tocar el corazón del otro, porque hemos dejado a los otros tocar el nuestro. De Tijuana a Mérida, la provincia entera ha iniciado esta travesía. Gracias Gaby, Ceci y Armando, convencidos promotores de estos mundos olvidados. Gracias, Padre: tu amor responde todas las preguntas.

Que amemos como amas y digamos con Pedro Casaldáliga: "Al final del camino me dirán: -¿Has vivido? ¿Has amado? Y yo, sin decir nada, abriré el corazón lleno de nombres".

Juan Carlos Balderas

PERPETUAL PROFESSIONS



Marists consecrate for life at the West Africa District and México Central Province

Brothers Celestine Tayu and Eric Kramo of the West Africa District made their professions in December, while Brother Pedro Cruz del Moral of the México Central Province made his on Jan. 29.

Brother Celestine Tayu made his vows on Dec. 28, in Cameroon, in Tatum.

Brother Eric Kramo made his in Accra, Ghana, and Brother Pedro's profession took place in Toluca, Mexico.

SALVE REGINA: MARISTS WORLDWIDE PARTICIPATE IN A SPECIAL VIDEO TO COMMEMORATE BICENTENARY

Brother Michael Herry, of Australia, promoted the recording of Salve Regina, sung by Marists of the five continents, as a way of celebrating the Bicentenary of the foundation of the Institute. The following is a text by Br Michael, which tells the story of the project, and also offers the opportunity to [download the recording and watch the video made with the song](#).

Early in 2016, Brother Greg McDonald invited me to view a beautiful hymn on YouTube commemorating the 500th anniversary of the founding of the Carmelite Sisters. The music was stunning, and immediately captivated me, a choir of Carmelite Sisters from all around the world singing individually from their own convents, and then a clever music producer somewhere had put all the voices together digitally and made it both sound and look beautiful. Greg suggested we Marists aim at something similar as an international way of celebrating our own Bi-Centenary.



As it happened I had been working on a couple of new settings of the Salve Regina which I was planning to upload to my website with the bi-centenary in mind, really just for visitors of

Marist Music. So I already had some musical ideas growing, and because the Salve Regina is so much part of our Marist DNA, it seemed appropri-

ate to use that text, even if some of the words reflect a medieval view of faith which many today no longer find helpful. I feel the hymn can and does

still speak to us in places of the heart, far beyond the confines of thoughts and words.

So I contacted Br Michael Akers and the Province Bi-Centenary Committee who also offered their interest and support.

The particular Salve Regina I chose to work on and complete was one based on an earlier composition of mine which I had written and recorded after my Camino in Spain in 2014. The musical form consisted of contrasting elements, the use of traditional Gregorian Chant, (a form of music I love and which particularly suits the male voice in choir) together with sections more contemporary in style, and finally at the end, a Taize chant – like mantra over the words 'O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.'

Next we needed someone with the musical and technical skills to bring all the elements together, and finally of course, a group of willing Marists to participate in learning and recording the music. The process was not all that difficult:

- In my simple studio I recorded the Salve with myself singing and playing the composition.

- This MP3 audio file was sent out to an international group of participant-singers via email.
- Each participant carefully listened to and learnt his part.
- Then, whilst listening to the accompaniment through ear phones, each singer recorded his voice onto his smart phone, whilst listening as closely as possible to the timing and feeling of the original.
- These sound files were then sent to our producer / arranger, Michael Cristiano in his own studio in Melbourne. Some harmony parts were added live by a small group of singers to enrich the musical texture and finally, Michael polished and blended each voice into a beautiful-sounding whole, adding his own orchestral arrangement together with some of his own fine guitar playing.

It only remains to thank all those who took part in this beautiful hymn of praise and love to Mary, our good Mother. May this Marist bi-centenary inspire us all in our ongoing and important work of making Jesus known and loved.

Br Michael Herry fms, Melbourne, Australia

SPANIARDS SPEND CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS WITH 2,300 REFUGEES

ELEONAS REFUGEE CAMP IN GREECE



Ten Marists of the Mediterraneo Province and seven from the Iberica Province gave up their Christmas vacation to help in a camp in the west of Athens that is home to 2,300 refugees, of which most are Syrian.

Teachers and catechists involved in the Marist Youth Ministry (Grupos de Vida Cristiana) in Mediterraneo travelled

from Huelva, Granada, Jaen, Cordoba and Alicante from Dec. 25 – Jan. 4.

Volunteers included Brother Javier Gragera Fernández-Salguero, the Provincial Pastoral Delegate and students of one of the two Greek Marist schools, Lycee Leonin Nea Smyrni. During the holidays, they worked in the refugee camp Ele-

onas collaborating with Project Elea, a non-governmental organisation. Although this experience was not linked to any Marist project, they were blessed to have received the hospitality of the Marist community of Athens.

Seven other Marist volunteers, two groups of animators of the Iberica Province, travelled from Madrid, Navalmoral, Guadalajara and Zaragoza. One group travelled to Greece from Dec. 25 - Jan. 1 while the other from Jan. 1 - 6.

According to Brother Mateos Levantinos, the Greek Marists have approached the government for permission to offer a home for refugees, but have not yet received an answer.

The Brothers have two social works and two schools in Athens, Lycee Leonin Patissia and Lycee Nea Smyrni.

Lycee Leonin Patissia already has nine refugee students, while Lycee Nea Smyrni is awaiting a response from the Ministry of Education to receive more refugees.

There are 45 refugee camps in Greece that have sprung to try to deal with the crisis.

In 2015, the number of refugees in Eleonas Camp was about 700. They come from countries affected by war including Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq.

There are a total of 12 Marist Brothers in Greece, all in Athens. Eight are in the community Aghia Kyriaki and four are in the community Acharnes. Of the four Brothers in Acharnes, one is French and another from Spain.

The Brothers in Athens also offer Greek lessons to elderly refugees and immigrants, and after school help to children. Aside from this, they regularly accompany students to take food, clothes or cultural animation to refugee camps.

Furthermore, they offer financial support to the Missionary Sisters of Charity for the distribution of food, and collect clothes and food for Caritas to distribute them.

SPAIN: FIRST ASSEMBLY OF THE MISSION COUNCILS OF MARIST EUROPE

The first meeting of all the councils of mission of Europe's provinces took place from Jan. 23 - 24 in Valladolid, Spain.

The Mission team of the European Marist Conference (CEM) received from this Conference the task of thinking about a future organization of a European network for the Marist mission.

The assembly of the European mission councils plays an important role in this new arrangement as it will be responsible for defining common lines of work in the field of the mission.

The first encounter was developed in a fraternal and respectful environment, with each one's diversity and identity.

These two days have allowed the councils to get to know each other better and become aware of the specifics of each one of them.



The dynamics proposed by the animation team allowed us to outline the joint work to be done.

The ideas arising from the assembly will be taken up by the future mission council of Europe, made up of the heads of each provincial mission council,

to establish plans of action to be carried out jointly at a regional level.

Brother João Carlos do Prado and Luca Olivari participated on behalf of the general administration.

Christophe Schietse

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