



MARIST NEWS

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Marist Brothers - General House - Rome

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

FIRST ASSEMBLY OF THE MARIST INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY NETWORK

Thirty laity and brothers will be at the General House from Jan. 15 – 19 to participate in the First Assembly of the Marist International Solidarity Network.

Seventy entities from 26 Administrative Units were contacted: 26 solidarity bodies that rely upon a Province; 24 NGO's or Foundations which work at a local level in a specific area; 13 NGO's or Foundations which work at a National level; and 7 NGO's or Foundations which act at an International level.

The Marist Solidarity International Network has the following goals:

- Advocacy for children's rights and vulnerable people.
- Promotion of a shared social conscience and education in solidarity.
- Promotion of programs of social transformation through fundraising, mobilization of human resources, sharing of good practices, etc.
- Prompt and effective response to emergencies

The objectives of the Assembly are to:



- Get a global understanding of mission, vision and activities of each entity.
- Define Standards and Mechanisms of Operation.

- Carry out the coordinating team election.
- Discuss the operating plan of this network in 2018.
- Training on different topics according our internal expertise.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

On Friday and Saturday, Jan. 12 and 13, the Brothers Today Secretariat met with the Manziana and El Escorial teams in El Escorial, Spain. Br Tony Leon of the Brothers Today secretariat and general councillor Br Óscar Martín took part.

This week, from Jan. 15 – 19, the first assembly of the Marist International Solidarity Network is being held at the general house in Rome, with FMSI.

From Jan. 15 – 17, the Assembly of the Mission Councils of Europe is taking place in Guardamar,

Spain, with Br Carlos Alberto Rojas of the Secretariat of Mission.

On Tuesday, Jan. 16, members of the general council are meeting to discuss several issues.

During the last few weeks, the former assistant director of the Brothers Today Secretariat, Br Hipólito Pérez, returned to his province of América Central to serve as provincial superior. The former director of the Secretariat of the Laity, Br Javier Espinosa, also returned to the same province. Raúl Amaya, a lay Marist, has replaced him as director.

WELCOMING, PROTECTING, PROMOTING AND INTEGRATING MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

On Jan. 14, the World Day of Migrants and Refugees was celebrated.. The General Chapter embraced this cause and said, in the IV call, in the spirit of prayer:

We search for you, Jesus, like Mary, in the caravans of life, in the tumult of our cities (Lk 2, 41-49), and in the masses of displaced people who are seeking a better future for their children.

We would like to offer, for this occasion, the reflection made by the Marist Community of Syracuse in Italy, fruit of the Lavalla200> Project, inserted in the context of the migrants who arrive in Europe in search of a better life.

On Jan. 14 the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees is celebrated and in his message, the Pope expressed his special concern for the sad situation of many migrants and refugees fleeing from wars, persecutions, natural disasters and poverty. From our experience, we want to comment on the Pope's message that begins with these words: "You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:34). (...) Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age (Matthew 25:35-43).

In this regard – says the Pope – I wish to reaffirm that our shared response may be articulated by four verbs: to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate.

To welcome

"Considering the current situation, welcoming means, above all, offering broader options for migrants and refugees to enter destination countries safely and legally" (Pope Francis).

The Italian Ministry of the Interior revealed the following information: from Jan. 1 – Nov. 24, 2017, 15,200 refugees disembarked at the port of Augusta, almost all of them males and the majority were unaccompanied minors.

How can we make ourselves present in such a delicate moment? A 15-day course organised by the CRI in Catania, a week in Naples, a training period and the preparation has been completed. On August 4, the first Marist started operating in the port of



Augusta. "After five months of torture and violence," commented a young man, "I saw a smiling face that was offering me his hand and that did not hit me." Visit: <https://goo.gl/9BKyhX>. It is not solved either by the expulsion sheet that the police gives to entire groups, which are then transported to the Augusta railway station. People who have just landed in Italy, deprived of everything, without money... not only do not know where to go and what to eat, but often in the stations have to pay to use the bathrooms...

Protecting

"The second verb may be understood as a series of steps intended to defend the rights and dignity of migrants and refugees, independent of their legal status. Such protection begins in the country of origin, and consists in offering reliable and verified information before departure, and in providing safety from illegal recruitment practices" (Pope Francis).

The overwhelming majority of the children we know have embarked on the trip that brought them to Italy without their parents, often in a group with other friends.

Almost everyone has a cell phone, but Google Maps only provides "virtual" indications: it does not indicate where the male traffickers are waiting, behind which hill the scammers are, in which country they will be forced to work 15 hours a day in exchange for a vague promise of helping them continue their journey... For some children this itinerary lasts a year and none of them forgets it, not because of its length, but because of the tragedies that have accompanied it.

One for all: Saliou remembers how he managed to save himself in a prison in Libya. When a new group arrived at the camp that wanted to go to Italy, the "introduction ritual" that the guards used was to give orders and, when someone was unsuccessful or too slow in carrying out the orders, a machine gun would burst leaving tens on the ground dead. Saliou remembers hearing shots and saving himself by falling to the ground and staying up until the night under the bodies of his dead comrades. Reading these six lines is dramatic, but listening to him while he tells the story is an experience that you face only because you know it is good for him. We told them that the trip is tremendously

NEWS IN BRIEF

LEBANON

French Brother Jean Baptiste de Lalande, better known as “Frère André” of the community of Jbeil in Lebanon, turned 100 years old on Jan. 14. Throughout his life as a Brother, he has taught history, literature, philosophy, and has been a supervisor or counsellor to thousands of Lebanese youth, first in Jounieh, then at Jbeil.

SOUTH AFRICA

Marist Mercy Care South Africa has released a video explaining the work it does: a joint effort between the Marist Brothers, Sisters of Mercy and Marist Alumni working together in the Sundays River Valley, Eastern Cape. They run soup kitchens, assist the sick and the dying, run the “addo township designs” and computer lessons for children and adults. To watch the video, visit <https://goo.gl/nK2MsX>.

SPAIN

On Saturday, January 13, a musical on Champagnat’s life titled “With you, Marcelline” was showed for the first time. Written by Br Toni Torrelles and directed by Albert López Vivancos, it is one of the activities organised by Maristes Catalunya to celebrate the Institute’s bicentenary. The bicentenary celebrations of Maristes Catalunya will continue throughout this course.

YOUNG BROTHERS AMÉRICA SUL

From Jan. 16 – 21, the Casa de Encontro Marista, in Coronel Oviedo, Paraguay, will receive Young Brothers from the América Sur Region with the objective of strengthening the experience of the religious vocation through a formative and celebratory itinerary to build the new.

long considering especially the final expectation. Do you know the Italian law that regulates the transport of animals? (Despite the indications, do not be afraid to open this file because it’s from the Ministry of Health). Take a look and you will find that pigs less than three weeks old cannot be transported because they are too young and calves over 10 days of age can be transported provided they are in individual positions with their mother. But the discoveries are not over: on p.25 you will read that the journey of poultry and rabbits cannot last more than 12 hours and that animals are entitled to one hour of rest to drink or eat.

Promoting

“Promoting essentially means a determined effort to ensure that all migrants and refugees – as well as the communities which welcome them – are empowered to achieve their potential as human beings, in all the dimensions which constitute the humanity intended by the Creator” (Pope Francis).

“My son, if you stay here you will surely die, if you leave, maybe you can survive.” This is the advice of Souleymane’s mother who feels impotent and unable to secure the life of her son: it is the second cut of the umbilical cord. For us Westerners accustomed to abortion and euthanasia, this news could be called “normal”, but for her it is not, not only because she is the mother, but because she is African. After several adventures, we were able to contact Souleymane’s moth-

er, who lives in Côte d’Ivoire and who speaks French discreetly. We told her that her son had arrived in Italy, that he lived in a “casa-famiglia” with seven other children and when we asked her if she wanted to talk to her son, we heard shouts of joy and then, after a brief moment of a three-way conversation in French, the conversation switched to Diula. About 10 months have passed and while before we went to visit the child to speak with him in French, now it is not necessary: he speaks Italian correctly with the typical Syracusan accent, attends middle school and everyone in his class loves him. But it is not like this for everyone. For months, for example, Amadou told us: “Why do people cover their nose when I get on the bus?”

To integrate

“Integration is not an assimilation that leads migrants to suppress or to forget their own cultural identity. Rather, contact with others leads to being open to them in order to welcome their valid aspects and thus contribute to knowing each one better” (Pope Francis).

For Europeans, this verb is the most difficult to reject. We have been (too) long the centre of the world, we have exported everything, including faith and we have imposed everything, the good and the bad. For many of us, the sun still revolves around the earth and, for this reason, it is difficult to understand that the other is not a threat, but a wealth, always!



MARIST WORLD



Lebanon: Br Juan Carlos Fuertes, Mediterránea's provincial, visits Champville, Dik-El-Mehdi



Nigeria: Provincial Chapter, Orlu



Spain: Network of marist communication teams in Spain



United States: The Marist Young Adult Advisory Committee



Bangladesh: St. Marcellin School, Giasnoger



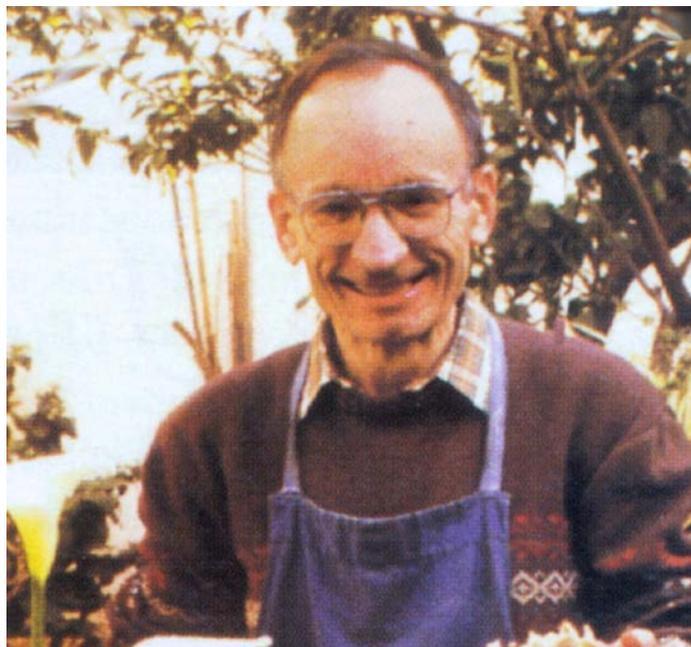
Philippines: Marist Formators from the Asia Region gathered at MAPAC

CAUSE OF BR HENRI VERGÈS

MEETING OF COMMISSION OF CARDINALS

On January 2, 2018, the news arrived that the beatification process of Brother Henri Vergès is coming to an end. On January 16, the meeting of the commission of cardinals will take place. This is the last step prior to the signing of

the beatification decree. Father Thomas Georgeon, Postulator of the cause of the martyrs of Algeria, which includes whom Marist Brother Henrie Vergès, communicated the news like this:



Dear friends: With the start of 2018, a year which I wish will be beautiful and holy for each of you, I want to inform you of the progress of the cause of our 19 brothers and sisters in Algeria. On January 16, the commission of the cardinals responsible for studying the Positio and pronouncing the verdict is meeting up. If this is positive (and we pray for it to be), the announcement of the beatification decree should be published around January 17 or mid-February.

I entrust these intentions to your prayer at the same time that I join in your thanksgiving for the journey that is now concluded and at the same time opens. My gratitude also to all those who worked, which are many, for the advancement of this cause.

*Fraternally,
Fr Thomás Georgeon, Postulator.*



PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF CANADA

“TOGETHER, WITNESSES OF THE MARIST CHARISM”



The general chapter ended on Oct. 20, the provincial assembly took place mid-November and the provincial chapter, from Dec. 15 – 17.

Three closely linked acts were held that boosted forces of the Marist province of Canada.

Despite the advanced age of the Brothers of the province, the themes discussed show an enthusiastic reality: the laity play an important role in the transmission of the Marist charism. Sixteen Brother delegates, elected from among the members of the province, eight lay delegates, elected by the Marist association of laity, four young guests, members of the pastoral animation commission, two lay members of the chapter's preparatory committee, met in Val -de-Paix (Rawdon) to reflect on the orientations for the second term of Brother Gérard Bachand.

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With their presence, Brothers Josep Maria Soteras, who had arrived a few days earlier, and Ernesto Sánchez were witnesses of the importance that the general council gives to the signs of vitality represented by the provincial chapters. Saying it more

prosaically, they could experience the cold and the snow of December in Canada...

The programme, well planned by the preparatory commission, made up of Brothers and laity, allowed for the sharing of ideas, where all the participants could present their own vision in relation to the priorities during the next three years, taking into account, together with the laity, the transmission of Champagnat's

charisma to the way they live. All had an active voice during the reflection and guidance on that topic.

The Brothers and laity of the Province of Canada thank Brothers Ernesto, superior general, and Josep Maria, general councillor, for their significant presence during the chapter; Brothers and Laity perceived a strong interest on their behalf in relation to life and the dynamics of the province, which aims to convey Champagnat's charisma in the local society.

PROVINCIAL COUNCILLORS

In light of the experience of recent years, the number of provincial councillors has increased from six to four. In fact, the table of the mission, which brings together the members of the council and the delegates of the Marist Association of Lay People, includes the entire apostolic life of the province.

In this way, the provincial council is free to focus on the aspects inherent in the life and animation of the Brothers, thus enabling a better distribution of responsibilities.

The new provincial council is formed by Brothers Gérard Bachand, provincial, Felix Roldán, Réal Cloutier, Richard Roy, vice provincial, and Bernard Beaudin. They are in the photo below in that same order, from left to right.



MADAGASCAR'S 15TH PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

BR MICHEL M. RAZAFIMANDIMBY STARTS AS NEW PROVINCIAL

Madagascar celebrated its fifteenth provincial chapter under the theme "Seeking a new La Valla in Madagascar" from Dec. 27 – Jan. 4.

"I hope this experience will help the Brothers and Lay marists in Madagascar to live a "New La Valla", that is updating the experience in La Valla 1817 to fit the (current) life in Madagascar," Br Sylvain Ramandimbarisoa told the general house press office on Jan. 9.

According to Br Sylvain, former provincial of Madagascar and current general councillor, lay Marists gave much insight regarding realities in the country that are unfamiliar to the Brothers.

Brother Michel M. Razafimandimby took up office as provincial superior, replacing Br Sylvain, during a Mass held on Jan. 2.

The participants included 15 capitulants, vicar general Brother Luis Carlos Gutiérrez on behalf of the general administration, three young brothers, and seven lay Marists representing seven schools in Madagascar who attended the first 3 days.



They discussed topics including shared life and mission with laity, presence and work with poor children, child rights protection, new fields of apostolate outside schools and improved interpersonal relationship.

PERPETUAL PROFESSION OF BR JOSÉ MANUEL BURMES RANGEL

VENEZUELA: FIRST BROTHER OF MACHIQUES DE PERIJÁ

Brother José Manuel Burmes Rangel celebrated his perpetual profession on Dec. 16 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Carmen in Machiques de Perijá (Venezuela).

"It was a very exciting event because he is the first Venezuelan brother of that population, Machiques de Perijá, to make his perpetual profession," said Brother César Augusto Rojas Carvajal, the provincial of Norandina.

"He met the brothers and was linked to a youth group which allowed him to know more about the Marist charism and start his vocational process," he added.

The Mass was celebrated by the bishop of Machiques, Bishop Jesús Alfonso Guerrero Contreras, and Brother César received his vows on behalf of the superior general.

During the ceremony, Brother Henry Araujo, a young brother who is doing his year of community experience as a scholastic brother in the city of Maracaibo, Venezuela, renewed his annual vows.



During the ceremony, the importance of the vocation of the Marists of Champagnat was discussed and participants were invited to look with hope at the difficult situation that the Venezuelan nation is going through.

Brothers from different communities of Venezuela participated, but especially the brothers from the community of Machiques and Maracaibo. The family members of Br José Manuel, teachers and collaborators of the Marist works, residents of the neighborhood where

he grew up, a group of students from the San Pablo school and members of the REMAR youth group also attended.

Also present were Brothers Hugo Tapia and Juan Pablo Marín, who were his companions in the formation stages and who travelled from Colombia.

Brother José Manuel is currently the pastoral coordinator of the Escuela Técnica Hermano Ildefonso Gutiérrez based in Maracaibo.

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