



## UNITED BY THE CHARISM AND OUR FOLLOWING OF CHRIST

### ENCOUNTER OF ENLARGED SECRETARIAT OF THE LAITY

The Enlarged Secretariat of the Laity held its session of the present year, from the 11 to 16 of October in the City of Mexico, in the Provincial House of Central Mexico. Our work and dialogue were inspired by the Calls of the XXII General Chapter, by the orientations given to us in the Strategic Planning of the General Administration, also in the experience of each one in sharing with different groups of Laity of their Regions.

Agnes Reyes (co-directress, Asia), Pep Buetas (co-director, Europe), Ana Saborío (Arco Norte), Carole Wark (Oceanía) and Joao Luis Fedel (South America), participated. Brother Elias Odinaka Iwu (Africa) could not be present. Besides, we had the active presence of two link Councilors, Brothers Sylvain Ramandimbarisoa and João Carlos do Prado; and the valuable help of Br. Teofilo Munga, who helped us with translation.



## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

- From November 28 to 30, the Council of the FMSI met in the General House, with the presence of Brother Ken McDonald, General Councilor and President of the Foundation, Brother Libardo Garzón, General Bursar and Marzia Ventimiglia, directress of the FMSI.
- From Monday to Wednesday, the Ad Hoc Committee met convoked to help to draw up the lines for the communication of the Institute. Among the participants are the General Councilors, Brothers: João Carlos do Prado and Sylvain Ramandimbarisoa, as

well as Luiz da Rosa, Director of the Department of Communication of the Institute, Carmem Murara (Southern Central Brazil) and José María Martín (Spanish Marist Conference).

- Between October 29 and November 1, the meeting of the Executive Council of the Network of Marist Universities will meet in Lima, Peru. Brothers Luis Carlos Gutierrez, Vicar General and Carlos Alberto Rojas Carvajal, Director of the Secretariat of Education and Evangelization will participate.
- Br. Josep Maria Soteras, General Councilor, from November 1 to 4, will

participate in the encounter with the Council of the Marist District of Asia.

- The Working Group on the responses to the crisis of sexual abuse of minors will meet in the General House from November 1 to 4. The General Councilors Ken McDonald and Ben Consigil will participate in the meeting.
- The Team of Permanent formation is in the General House for a meeting from November 1 to 9, with the presence of Brothers Oscar Martin Vicario, General Councilor and, Br. Ángel Medina, Assistant Director of the Secretariat, Brothers Today.

Our objectives were the following:

1. To constitute ourselves as an Enlarged Secretariat with a community, family sense, united by the Charism and our following of Christ;
2. To share experiences related with lay animation in each region and/or Administrative Units;
3. To re-read the Calls of the XXII Chapter;
4. To know the Plan of Action of the Secretariat and the Strategic Plan of the General Administration;
5. To review new concepts related with lay processes;
6. To know and share with Marist Laity of the Province of Central Mexico;
7. To know the advancement in the updating of the Constitutions and Rule of Life in what concerns the relationship, Brothers – Laity;
8. To advance in the reflection on linking and associative structure;
9. To reflect on and organize strategies of promotion, formation and accompaniment for each region and Institute, according to the new orientations;
10. To identify the areas of each region which need greater emphasis of the processes of animation in the next years;
11. To reflect on shared leadership and the role of each one, touching on practical themes;
12. To optimize the Plan of action of the Secretariat, in communion with the Strategic Plan of the General Administration.

In our meeting, we highlighted Saturday 13, as the day of the encounter with different groups of the Laity. In the morning, we met with the Commission of the Laity of Central Mexico, and with the basic Community animator of the experience FORM MYSELF. In the afternoon, we shared with a group of representatives of the MCH-FM of the Province. We could observe the development of the life of the Laity and of communion emerging, in many persons who have the desire to live as Marists and to share the charism of Champagnat with other



persons. We stress the gift of being participants of the family style lived in the Provincial House, sharing the table with Brothers, religious sisters, Laity, young Marist University students, who live in the house and animators who work in the Provincial Teams. For us it was a true experience of the Church of a Marian face, a table on which, the bread of fraternity is shared, in a simple manner and where everyone has a place. This is a great treasure that the Province of Central Mexico has, which inspires us to continue walking in greater communion, Brothers and Laity.

We are very grateful for the wonderful way in which the Provincial Superior, Br. José Sánchez and his Council took care of us, with whom we had permanent contact and whom we thank for their concern and their closeness and family style. A special thank you to Pedro Chinchilla, responsible of the Provincial Commission of the Laity, who was attentive to our needs and organized the logistics.

Raúl Amaya Rivera, Director of the Secretariat of the Laity

NEWS IN BRIEF

**EDUCATORS OF IBÉRICA**

Last Saturday all the educators of the Province of Ibérica met in Toledo and Logroño to reflect on the lived experience and conflict management in educational Works. In addition, the winning projects of the I Contest of good Educational practices were presented.

**SOLIDARITY FROM CANADA**

Marist Laity and Brothers from Canada mobilized and collected 5,000 dollars to send to the Norandine Province to help the migrants from Venezuela, accepted in the Marist Center 'A heart without frontiers' in Colombia.

**BRASIL SUL-AMAZONIA**

The Province has launched the document "Posicionamiento Infancias". The document consists in material, which serves as orientation and formation for the development of projects, actions and strategies that will contribute with the valuation and understanding of the children in all the spaces for acting of the Institution.

**ARCO NORTE**

The Regional Committee and the Provincials of the Region, beginning on Sunday will be in the Provincial House of Canada. The objective of this meeting celebrated every two years is to create harmony and promote a 'long walk' together among the five Provinces of the Northern area of the American continent.

**THANK YOU, ESTEFANÍA**

Estefanía Aguirre, during the past three years, was the journalist of the Department of Communication of the General Administration of the Institute. On October 31, she will finish her collaboration with the General House and returns to Spain. We wish her success in her life.

TRANSFORMATIVE SOLIDARITY

FORUM ON VOLUNTEERING CONDUCTED BY MARISTS IN BRAZIL



On the 23rd and 24th October, representatives of the three Marist Provinces of Brazil and other guests working on social projects met together in Port Alegre for this Forum.

Under the aegis of UMBRASIL, the purpose of the gathering was to provide participants with a significant occasion to share current practices in a variety of situations. According to Paulo Quermes, one of the coordinators of the forum, it was one way of coming up with strategies for the achievement of greater transformation through the solidarity activities of the Marist Provinces of Brazil. "The Forum will also make joint projects possible, involving all the Provinces given the recent creation of the Region of South America," he stated.

Br Valdicer Fachi, director of the Department of Collaboration for Mission, International (Cmi) within the General Administration, spoke to the participants about various experiences and possibilities concerning international and interprovincial

volunteering linked to the Marist Institute. Br Fachi commented that the Forum was a good example of how it is possible to be more efficient and proactive in both local and interprovincial volunteering: "I am happy to see that we have people who are available and willing to give of their time and talents to assist the most needy and, in this way, continue the desire of Marcellin Champagnat, 'all the dioceses of the world would come into our plans'."

The gathering provided a space for each of the three Provinces of Brazil to present what they are doing regarding volunteering. Some invited guests spoke of other projects and activities linked to volunteering and, in groups, the assembly studied possible future directions for more joint volunteering in Marist Brazil.

At the end of the process, each group presented its viewpoints to be studied further by the Evangelisation Commission of UMBRASIL and adopted as guidelines for this work.

## MARIST WORLD



France  
English speaking third age group at La Valla



Spain: Community of formation of the Provinces of Compostela and Mediterranea



Lebanon  
Groupe Champagnat Jabal el Saydeh



Philippines: Final vows: Brothers Jeffrey Guino-o, Adrian Manaay and Fred Salubre



Brazil: Marist Volunteer forum in Porto Alegre



Guatemala  
Campamento vocacional Marista 2018

## PROVINCE EAST CENTRAL AFRICA

### PREPARING THE VI PROVINCIAL CHAPTER IN PACE

The preparatory commission of the VIth Provincial Chapter of PACE (Province Afrique Centre-Est) has gathered in Kigali – Rwanda, to finalize the preparations for the coming Provincial Chapter (11 – 14 December 2018).

After the first gathering, the commission launched a survey among the brothers and communities of the Province, in order to get the current strengths and the challenges of the Province. This second meeting, the commission had time to work on the feedback from the communities and brothers, in order to highlight the work that the Chapter delegates need to address.

The logo chosen for this Chapter, was designed by a teacher from the Inst. Mobateli in Kinshasa, Dem. Rep. of Congo, Mr Chérubin Omba, and it represents our Province being carried by the hands of Jesus, and where the tree (our Province) has



its roots. United as one Province, brothers working in the Central Africa Republic, Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Rwanda, are the different branches of this tree, which is englobed in our mother earth, as part of one global family.

The theme for the Chapter was also selected as: “Marist Today, grow-

ing in communion”. And is it also accompanied by a quotation that challenges us, from the Gospel of St Matthew: “So by their fruits you will know them” (Mt 7:20).

Members of the preparatory commission: Brothers Albert Nzabonaliba, Adolphe Paluku, Jean Bosco Uwizeyimana, Teodoro Grageda and Masumbuko Mununguri.

## UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE UNITED NATIONS

### INFORMATION CONCERNING THE RIGHTS OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN MEXICO

From February 2018, thanks to the preparation and involvement of FMSI, twelve Mexican organizations and networks formed a working group to define the most important topics dealing with children's rights and to write a report dealing with problems such as, among others: migrant and indigenous children, national legislation, the rights of girls and women.

This report forms part of the process of the Universal Periodic Review (EPU), a mechanism of the United Nations to evaluate the present situation concerning human rights in the 193 countries involved.

During the months of August and September visits were carried out to the embassies of different countries in Mexico City to find out what had been arranged and to invite them to share the information with their counterparts in Geneva. María José Lazcano, the representative of the working group, was appointed as spokesman for the pre-session which organizes UPR Information.

The work in Geneva began on October 2. During the first week meetings were held with the permanent missions of Sweden, Brazil, Slovenia, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Chile and Norway, to offer recommendations to the Mexican State. Support



was provided by the event manager of BICE, Yao Agbetse, and Cassandra Schumacher, an Australian volunteer attached to FMSI, who collaborated in the preparation of each of these meetings. In general, these were well received and appreciated by these permanent missions involved in the Rights of Boys, Girls and Adolescents.

The pre-session took place on October 12 in the Headquarters of the United Nations. Among those present were the representatives of the permanent missions, civil organisations and delegates of the Mexican government. María

José Lazcano and the other speakers shared the contents of the reports and the recommendations suggested by their governments. The report presented by FMSI was the only one which dealt with issues of childhood.

Some actions to follow will be: the observance of EPU on November 7, the session of the Council of Human rights in February 2019, where the Mexican State will accept or take note of the recommendations already carried out by the missions and, of course, the follow up and monitoring by the organizations of the civil society on their progress.



#### The drama of the caravan of the people from Honduras marching toward the United States

"The native people from Honduras are human beings who are seeking for a better life. They search for it passionately to the point that they risk their own life trying to find a better one. This fact is much more serious than what they are living because it is showing how the human being is a project. A reality launched ahead with an uncontrollable, inextinguishable impulse. That is something beautiful within all this dramatic situation"

(Br. José Contreras Landeros, Jeremie Haiti).

## A HEART WITHOUT BOUNDS

### THE UN COLLABORATING WITH THE NORANDINA'S PROVINCE THAT WELCOMES VENEZUELAN REFUGEES

The House of welcome run by the Brothers and lay Marists in the neighbourhood of Teusaquillo, Bogotá (Colombia) to help Venezuelan children now has the backing of the United Nations.

The House called 'A heart without bounds' was opened on 6 June of this year to support families with children from 5 to 14 years who are in the process of immigrating to Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

The provincial of Norandina, Br. César Rojas, and the head of the United Nations Agency for Refugees (ACNUR) for Latin America, signed an agreement between the Marist Institute and the ACNUR at the beginning of July. The agreement provides support consisting of material donations, formation, accompaniment and everything else that can help to cut down on the violation of the rights of Venezuelan children.

Help is also provided by the social services and by the Scalabrinian Sisters who guarantee the welcome of the children in the Marist House to assure them of their rights and protection.

From July, 'A heart without bounds' has been receiving donations of clothes for children and babies.

In August, the ACNUR offered the volunteers of the House a session of training and formation.

In September, the children were provided with suitcases filled with school materials and this month a delivery of resources is expected consisting of teaching, recreational materials and games which will offer the children in the House strategies to build their self-esteem and resilience to cope with their migratory bereavement.



"I can share the joyful news that this project has received today through the help of a very well-known radio station which has donated dental treatment for the children of the House", Sandra Rodríguez, coordinator of the welcome and housing project in Heart Without Bounds, announced on 2 October.

"We are delighted because this allows us to demonstrate our credibility and our commitment to the children in guaranteeing their rights", she informed the department of communications of the General House.

On September 7, the Colombian newspaper El Tiempo published a [video](#) with the collaboration of ACNUR to publicise the House. The [video](#), entitled A home in Bogotá for Venezuelan children, publicised not only the support of ACNUR, but also the assistance offered by the House in taking active steps to care for the children so that their families can regularize their stay in Colombia.

#### Institute of the Marist Brothers - General House

Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat, 2 - Rome, Italy - [comunica@fms.it](mailto:comunica@fms.it)

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

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