



Year XII - Number 614 | 5 FEBRUARY 2020

MARIST NEWS

MARISTS OF CHAMPAGNAT | GENERAL HOUSE | ROME | WWW.CHAMPAGNAT.ORG

GENERAL HOUSE

FIRST MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARIST MISSION COMMISSION

The International Marist Mission Commission met in the General House, from 13 to 17 January 2020.

As a structure, the Commission brought together representatives of the General Council, the various Secretariats and Departments of the General Administration, the Economy General, and representatives from the Regions of the Institute and from the various Networks involved in our Marist mission.

The aim of this first meeting was to explore in-depth the different mission strategies, initiatives, and projects of the General Administration's Strategic Plan for Animation, Leadership, and Government, benefiting from the knowledge and work of the General Administration, the Regions, and the Networks already



occurring and to raise other suggestions or proposals which could assist in accomplishing the goals of the initiatives and projects.

Throughout the week, four key questions were used as guide as the Commission reflected on the various themes and initiatives of the Strategic Plan: within the

general administration

■ On 3rd February, the Plenary Session of the General Council began and will end on 28th February. The first days of the Council are dedicated to detailing some points about the Constitutions and Statutes, in order to respond to the observations received from the Vatican during the approval process. The preparation of the next meeting of the Provincials, to be held from 2nd to 7th March, is also in progress. From Wednesday afternoon until Saturday, the Council will be in Assisi making a retreat.

■ Brother Carlos Alberto Roja, Director of the Bureau of Education and Evangelisation, is participating in the meeting of the educational works of the Province of L'Hermitage, which is taking place from 4th to 7th of February at Notre Dame de l'Hermitage.

■ Next Saturday, after six years of service to the Secretar-

iat of Brothers Today, Brother Tony Leon will return to the Province of Australia. On Tuesday, during a time of celebration and fellowship, the General Council thanked Brother Tony for his dedication. Also on Thursday, the entire community of the General Administration, Brothers and Laity, will share a moment of farewell with Brother. The new director of the Secretariat will be Brother Angel Medina and the assistant director will be Brother Lindley Sionosa.

■ On the 2nd of February, Brothers Óscar Martín, General Councillor, and Valdicer Fachi, Director of Cmi, participated in the Council of the Fratelli Project, held at the General House.

■ From the 4th to the 8th February, Br. Valdicer visited Lebanon to follow the Fratelli Project closely.



Institute, the Regions, and the Networks, what needs to be Created? Accompanied? Strengthened? Interconnected?

Reflection on the Mission Strategies, Initiatives, and Projects

Networks: Bridge Building into the Future!

Promote the connection between the different networks and create new networks at the service of Marist life and mission.

The Commission reaffirmed the important role of the networks for the building of our “Global Body” and suggested strengthening their creation and development throughout the Institute. The Commission also recommended clarifying some terms and expression about the conceptual framework for the Networks and the operational definition and scope of some topics (such as Solidarity, Child Rights, etc.).

Agents of Change & Innovation

Promote innovation in Marist Education and evangelization

The Commission was reminded that the XXII General Chapter called us to open our hearts and minds to the light of creativity and innovation that the Lord

is offering us. In this context, we must ask ourselves: What is the future of the Marist Charism and how can we nourish it? One project outline in the Strategic Plan called for the review and updating of the Institute’s educational document: In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat. The Commission endorses this effort and will continue to look for ways in which this review and revision will be undertaken in the next couple of years. The Commission supported the Secretariat for Education & Evangelization in its efforts to review, organize, and present the various suggestions of the Commission concerning this project for endorsement by the General Council.

Marist Youth Ministry: How do we strengthen a “culture of encounter”?

Promote Marist Youth Ministry programs as a Global Family

Preeminent in understanding what children and young people are calling us to is providing them a space to talk about their lives and their dreams for a better future. The Commission reflected on what would be the necessary “spaces” or “platforms” that would need to be created or strengthened within the General Administration and the Regions.

One proposal called for the creation of Marist Youth Ministry programs within those regions where these programs don’t exist and to strengthen and accompany those MYM programs that are already up and running in the Regions.

While International Marist Youth Gatherings, such as the recent Weaving Life, were endorsed by the Commission, some members of the commission also believe local regional gatherings might also be a good way to engage many our Marist youth.

There was also strong support for the creation of a Marist Youth Ministry Network with the assistance of the regional and provincial representatives and for the creation of an “ad hoc” committee to move these initiatives forward.

The Commission also wholeheartedly supported the proposal for holding MIMA III in the near future.

“To Be” and “to Act” as a Global Body

Continue exploring ways of management, leadership and governance that allow us “to be” and “to feel” as a global body

MEDITERRÁNEA

On January 30th in Guardamar, the Province held a meeting focused on the protection of minors and highlighted that Marist institutions are a “safe environment”. On the occasion, the authors from Catalonia presented the book “Breaking the Silence”.

BRAZIL SOUTH-AMAZON

On February 2nd, the Marist community Boa Mãe was inaugurated in Sinop, Mato Grosso. The community of the Province of Brasil Sul-Amazônia will be responsible for education in the new Marist school of Santo Antônio.

BLUE MARISTS

The cutting and sewing course promoted by the Marists of Aleppo ended a few days ago with the presentation of diplomas to 20 women who followed the training for three months.

MIGRANTS IN MEXICO

The Marist Support Centre for Migrants (CAMMI), an initiative of the Marist University of Querétaro, has inaugurated new facilities. Since 2014, CAMMI has accompanied more than 5,000 people who have passed through the city.

FIRES IN AUSTRALIA

The province is promoting, on Friday 7 February, a day of solidarity to help the victims of the fires that have affected different areas of the country. The details of the call can be read at this link: <http://bit.ly/31mpkWj>

The Commission reflected on the General Administration’s efforts towards the on-going process of Regionalization which was called for by the most recent General Chapter and offered the following suggestions to the General Council for its reflection:

- To identify and to clarify existing structures and authority in all regions
- To identify and promote an international understanding of the difficulties in some parts of the Institute.
- To ensure that all Regions have a Mission Commission and a strategic plan for the Commission.
- To ensure that progress be made in the development of the Statutes of the Regions.
- To ensure that financial solutions be sought to facilitate regional processes that will be undertaken.

In Solidarity

Explore and facilitate our presence in places on the margins with children and young people in emerging realities and strengthen networking between the AU’s and other ecclesial and civil entities in the defense and promotion of the rights of children and in the care for our common home.

The Commission endorsed the continuing exploration of creating or strengthening alliances with other ecclesial and civil organizations in support of our efforts of solidarity, child rights, and ecological awareness.

Getting the Message of Our Marist Mission Out to the World

Develop better internal and external communication to cultivate a sense of belonging, to overcome geographical and existential borders, and to publicize the Marist Mission in the wider world.

The Commission supported the on-going efforts of the Institute’s communication office to reflect our vision of being a

global family and to develop and accompany new ways to raise awareness of our Marist mission at all levels, in particular within the regions.

Servant Leadership that closely accompanies Marist Mission—Forming Leaders for the Charism

Promote open and qualified servant leadership to address the emerging realities in our Institute and in our world.

Prophetic Servant Leadership is at the center of the style of government and animation recommended by the XXII General Chapter. This style of leadership invites us to consciously live our service, in any situation, with passion, vision, and purpose that our commitment to our Marist mission claims or demands within the reality of today’s world. In light of this belief, the Commission reflected on possible plans and programs of training and formation which are needed for forming “leaders of the charism” and to accompany and strengthen the best there is within each of us and to put those gifts at the service of the common good.

Commission’s commitment

In looking at our time together the members of the commission committed themselves to the calls of the Chapter and recognized that “... for the vitality and viability of the Marist life and mission, we are called to be a genuine global family. Interdependence, rather than isolation and independence, must become the new normal for us as Marists. We are called to be witnesses of unity and hope.

We know that plans and strategies are not sufficient. We are called to conversion, both personal and collective. As Marists, we must be true disciples, and our communities and our apostolic endeavors must be beacons of light and the Marian face of the Church in the midst of the world.”

MALAWI

NEW HORIZONS FOR A TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION MODEL



Despite great progress in the last few years, millions of African children are still denied their right to education. The project New Horizons, implemented in 21 local schools and communities in Malawi, Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Mozambique with 18.334 students, 790 teachers and 469 school staff, aims at increasing equal access to quality education for all children in order to promote equity, social justice and inclusion, pursuing improvement of school in terms of its capacity to become a place for the safeguarding and empowerment of children.

In the 6 countries where the project is operating, 3 main challenges have been identified:

Access to education marked by sharp disparities due to unequal distribution of resources, including public funding to socially excluded communities, low-income students and vulnerable children (orphans, refugees, children with disabilities) driving them into lower income generating activities. Quality of education in need to be improved, lack of flexible curricula designed to enable learners with widely varying needs to be included in the learning process – high dropout rates and and/or poor student performances, interpersonal-violence, including gender-based violence

Education systems in need to be strengthened to scale up inclusive literacy programs and address the challenges of equity, quality, and social justice

To respond to these challenges, the Marist African Mission Commission launched an initiative called New Horizons, which is now supported also by FMSI and Misesan Cara. The New Horizons II program will last 3 years (2019-2022) and it is based on 4 main components which will aim at the following results:

- 1) Increased access to quality education for children and girls from poor and marginalized families in 21 Marist schools in the 6 countries involved, involving local experts already trained in New Horizons 1
- 2) Strengthened capacity of Marist Schools to uproot violence and discrimination against children in school and community environments by adopting a child rights approach and inclusive teaching methods so to ensure children well-being
- 3) Increased capacity of school leaders and teachers to drive school improvement towards quality standards of education and sustainability

marist world

ECUADOR: 3 NEW POSTULANTS IN LOJA, PROVINCE NORANDINA



BRAZIL: NEW MARIS SCHOOL IN SINOP, MATO GROSSO – BRASIL SUL-AMAZÔNIA



BOLIVIA: BROTHERS AND NOVICES OF THE NOVITIATE OF COCHABAMBA



SPAIN: XAUDARÓ – ADVANCING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GLOBAL NETWORK OF MARIST SCHOOLS



PAKISTAN: BR. SYLVAIN RAMANDIMBIARISOA, COUNCILLOR GENERAL, IN SARGODHA



PORTUGAL: MARCHA, CARCAVELOS

4) Reinforced the Education system at institutional level in terms of its capacity to advocate children rights.

The Marist African Mission Commission Strategic plan for 2017-2022 and the Regional Vision and Principles for the African Continent aim at raise awareness and implement concrete proposals on Children’s rights and protection in the continent. New Horizons phase 1

had created an avenue for collaborating and networking among all school leaders, while this new phase aims to reach the goal of guarantying equal access to every child and making school a place where students are safe and respected, paying always special attention to individual needs of learners who are at risk of social exclusion and marginalization.

Under the program, one pilot phase in Malawi has been implemented in 2018-2019: 5 schools in Malawi been involved in training activities delivered to 104 school staff (teachers, staff

and directors). 2 schools have initiated the income generating projects selected by the project team and the UPR for Malawi has been sent with the first active participation of one Malawian school.

As expertise and contexts differ from school to school in the 6 different countries, all actions will be micro-designed to local

needs. The governance of the African Mission Commission will capitalize on this multi-country approach fostering cooperation among schools, setting up a shared approach and removing all obstacles in knowledge exchange at all levels.

New Horizons will also aim at extending outcomes to other non-Marist Schools in countries involved: through building effective partnerships, Marist schools are increasingly able to exert a positive influence on conditions beyond classrooms, improving support to learners and their families.



SPAIN

III WEEK OF FORMATION FOR THE COURSE OF MARIST LEADERS OF EUROPE



From the 20th to the 24th January, the 3rd formation week of the Marist European Leaders' Course took place at Alcalá de Henares – Madrid, organised by the Marist European Conference.



This week was the latest stage in the formation journey started at Notre-Dame de L'Hermitage (March 2019) where we explored in depth contents related to leadership, identity and mission rooted in Saint Marcellin Champagnat and, therefore, from a Marist perspective. The second week (October 2019) was an experience of solidarity and community life. During this second week, in small groups distributed by different social works and Marist communities throughout Europe, we learned about other ways of educating and making present today the spirit of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, not only in social work with children and young people, but also with adults who, in a situation of social exclusion and on the periphery of our society, try to improve their lives.

This third week, at Alcalá, was one of intense work on the different fields of management and leadership of people and groups. We dealt with topics such as the management of

economic and material resources, people, innovation, communication, social skills, and keys to the analysis of the social and youth reality. We were also able to share moments of prayer and life with the resident Marist community which enriched our personal experience.

The group that has been making this journey is made up of people from different socio-educational situations and countries (Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Greece and Lebanon). More and more united and committed to the reality that we are all #Marists. This feeling drives us to interiorise, develop, deepen, share with the children who are entrusted to us and the adults who collaborate with us and those who are called to serve in a perspective of leadership but above all of personal accompaniment, a true life project so that, in the end, we can all feel "true Christians and virtuous citizens".

SOUTH AFRICA

BETH CODE, AUSTRALIAN VOLUNTEER IN SOUTH AFRICA

Beth Code has completed her first year as a volunteer in South Africa. She is the coordinator of Marist Youth in which has a strong input in Marist Schools and mentors the international community at Marcellin House in Johannesburg. She also works for the Marist School Council (MSC) and Custodians, working very closely with Mike Greeff – MSC Director.

Beth, from Australia, participated in 2018 in the training for candidates for the International Communities for a New Beginning. And, through the Cmi Department, she was sent as a volunteer to the Province of Southern Africa.

As the year closed, Beth joined the 2020 school leaders from the five Marist schools of South Africa at Addo as they ran the summer holiday program for the children who live in this 'township', in the Marist Mercy

Care project, initiated in 2006 by Jason Grieve who was the 'Head Boy' at St Henry's College in Durban. He collaborated with two eighty-year-old brothers (Chris from South Africa and Claude from Canada) as they formed a partner-

ship with three Sisters of Mercy from UK. The summer program each year is joined by a new group of school leaders who are accompanied by past school leaders who have previously been part of the summer program.



Beth write:

“ I am feeling so humbled so have been able to work with the Sisters of Mercy, and young Marists from around South Africa at the December Annual Summer Camp. Over 400 children from disadvantaged areas in the Addo (South Africa) region attended.

As volunteers, we ran various activities such as sport, arts and crafts, dancing, reading, health education, career guidance, gender-based violence awareness, leadership, mentorship and personal development. In addition to the fantastic program, we were able to provide a small daily meal. Which for so many, is not guaranteed.

Each and every child that attended the camp, would greet us full of energy with a genuine need for love and attention from all of us. Offering love, care and a sincere interest in each child, was a simple gift that I could give, but one that is meaningful, cherished and valued.

It was truly a blessing to be able to spend so much time with the children of Addo and an emotional experience that I will carry with me always.

”

AUSTRALIA

GLOBAL CHARISMATIC FAMILY: ARGIE AND RODRIGO, A MEXICAN MISSIONARY COUPLE AMONG THE ABORIGINES AT MOUNT DRUITT

Argie Hernandez from the Province of Mexico Occidental is married to Rodrigo Gris. The couple has lived for three years in the Lavalla200 community at Mt Druitt in Australia. They took part in the preparation program in 2016 and were appointed to Australia. Later this year they will return to Mexico and Argie, in the text below, tells us of her experience of working with Aboriginal Australians.

The community in Mt Druitt in 2020 is made up of the Mexican couple and three Brothers, Fabricio Basso (Brazil Sul-Amazonia), Jonnel Sisneros (East Asia) and Lawrie McCane (Australia). The community runs the “Marist Learning Zone”, a centre working with children from the outskirts of Sydney who refuse to attend their normal schools.



“ **Whenever they meet a Marist**

As we prepare to depart Australia permanently, we are reflecting on the wonderful experiences and opportunities we have had in such a beautiful country. One of many stories is the one with our aboriginal friends from the Mount Druitt community. When we were sent to Mount Druitt, we couldn't imagine all the humbling mission experiences ahead.

When we arrived in Australia, one of the very first communities we visited was the aboriginal community in Mount Druitt. We were accepted and embraced with so much love that we were overwhelmed, and we could not imagine how much they have been through. The resilience this community has developed is just an example of forgiveness and fraternity.

Brother Lawrie has been a friend of Baabayn since very long time ago, he has been wonderful contact and support for the community. Following his example and our call to mission we began our commitment to support Baabayn in the areas they required.

Among the many opportunities to support there is the Kurung Homework Club where we are so privileged to be assisting kids

and teenagers with their school homework and other academic areas.

For two overseas volunteers, attending the Kurung tutoring program has been a great opportunity to develop and strengthen our understanding of the aboriginal culture. We believe the tutoring program is a marvellous opportunity for kids and tutors to develop strong relationships that ultimately ends in the excellent and love of learning.

The Kurung program is a great opportunity for kids to continue their education in personalised tutoring, it is a time when they can relax and ask as many questions as they want. The privilege of being one-on-one is that kids can absolutely feel confident about their learning.

The centre becomes a home, where everyone is welcomed and cared for. When kids arrive to the centre and they are provided with snacks and drinks, they are not just given food for the body but for their souls. It is so rewarding to see them enjoying and learning at the same time, they are like any other kids in the world, lovely, kind and curious.

We are treated as family by the adults working at the centre, we find support from them as well as all the practical tools for the session with the kids.

This homework club is a beautiful testimony of the adults looking after their children, providing better opportunities for them and creating an environment of family and friendship.

We are honoured to be invited to regular events, it means that we are not just volunteers, but we have become members of the “mob”, we no longer feel as volunteers but friends.

The homework club is not the only one thing we share with them, many times we provide transport or any other support for different important events, such as Christmas, end of the year, summer activities, etc.

We are grateful to Baabayn for letting us be part of their community, we have learnt that transport is not just taking a kid from one place to another but it is to have a nice conversation about school and kids’ adventures, we have learnt that in wrapping Christmas gifts we also wrap dreams

and hopes, we have learnt that we are not just volunteers but we are part of the Baabayn family, just like being part of the Marist family.

I have personally developed a great affinity with the women’s group as well, we spend some time learning new skills in arts and crafts and recently they have developed a fantastic circle of healing. It is heartbreaking to hear the struggles they have been through but it is also an opportunity to develop our strength as women, offering a shoulder or a hug is always a comforting way to let our sisters know that they matter and they are loved.

This opportunity to share time and activities with them is an opportunity for us as Marists to make Jesus known and loved in the gentle way of Mary. Every time we sit together or play together is a precious moment to let them know that we are Marists and they will know that whenever they meet a Marist they will be loved just as Jesus taught us.

In living our spirituality, we find our thirst quenched at the streams of “living water.” In turn we become “living water” for others (WFR, n14).

CÔTE D’IVOIRE

SENSITIZATION ON DRUG ABUSE AND NON-VIOLENCE FOR STUDENTS IN BOUAKÉ

Students of Forms three and four of Champagnat Bouaké, Ivory Coast (District West Africa), were sensitized on the risks involved in abusing drugs and depicting violent behaviors on their peers on Wednesday January 29th, 2020 by Miss Reine Kouamé a jurist who works in a judicial clinic in Bouaké. In her presentation she identified the various types of drugs as well as their effects on the youths. She equally explained to them the different types of violence such as verbal, physical, material, sexual, social and cyber violence. She encouraged students to always resolve conflicts amicably and use non-violent techniques as much as possible.

In addition, Miss Reine Kouamé cited the Ivorian penal code to explain the various risks involved in abusing drugs and inflicting harm on others. Some violent behaviors carry a sentence of up to five years’ imprisonment and a student who is guilty of violent behavior and drug abuse can become a school dropout and risk his future. At the end of the presentation, students were given a chance to ask questions for clarifications. Students then took the resolution to choose to remain sober and non-violent for their success as they were



the leaders of tomorrow.

This seminar was made possible thanks to the collaboration between Centre Scolaire St Marcellin Champagnat and the JEC (Catholic Youth Students) of St Paul de Gonfreville – Bouaké. We would like to thank SED through the Real Madrid Foundation which currently supports sports and extracurricular activities in Marist schools in Cote d’Ivoire.

PHILIPPINES

EAST ASIA PROVINCE TAKES A STRONG STAND ON CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

The statement from the 22nd General Chapter to the victims and survivors of abuse articulates a strong commitment to “provide training and awareness to prevent child abuse from happening again in our Marist institutions.” The East Asia Province responded to this call by organizing two groups for a seminar workshop on “Creating Safe and Sacred Spaces: Promoting Safeguarding for Healthy Ministry”. It was held on January 20-23, 2020 and January 24-26, 2020 at the Marist Asia Spirituality and Mission Center, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato. Earlier on, Br. Robert Teoh spearheaded the organization of a workshop on “Care for Self and Others in Ministry” in Malaysia. It was held on January 13-16, 2020 in Penang, Malaysia, with 60 participants of priests and religious including four (4) Bishops, coming from the Diocese of Penang, Melaka-Johor Diocese and the Archdiocese of Kutching.

In the Philippines, the first group had a total of 63 participants with fifty-five priests from the Diocese of Marbel, two from the Archdiocese of Cotabato and six priests from the Diocese of Kidapawan. Participants expressed their interest of knowing more about the practical steps in addressing emerging concerns about Child Protection, and the desire to have a similar experience, done locally, for their parish pastoral councils and parishioners.



The second group were all from Marist institutions and mission areas. A total of seventy attendees with 31 brothers, 2 religious sisters and 37 laity.

The competent resource persons for Malaysia and Philippines workshops were Rev. Fr. Barry O’Sullivan and Br. Brendan Geary, FMS. Both are experts in the field of child protection and safeguarding. The participants were given inputs and practical exercises that led them to reflect on the relevance of safeguarding as ministry.

Br. Jeff Rhey Antiquisa, the Coordinator of the East Asia Province Child and Youth Protection and Safeguarding Desk, looks forward to a more strengthened collaboration with Marist schools and ministries as he notes the action plans delineated

by the participants. The Provincial, Br. Dominador A. Santiago, together with his Provincial Council expressed that: “... concretizing our journey with the young and those on the fringes of society is our dream. Having a strong stand and fully supporting initiatives in safeguarding children and young people is at the heart of the leadership we will carry out in our Province and beyond”.

With a total of 133 trained participants in the Philippines and 60 in Penang, Malaysia, the Provincial leaders and the Children and Youth Protection and Safeguarding Desk now hope for strengthened collaborative initiatives to further the ministry of working for the best interests of children, young people, and adults in situations where they are vulnerable.



Institute of the Marist Brothers General House

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

Website

<http://www.champagnat.org>

YouTube



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

Facebook



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

Twitter



https://twitter.com/fms_champagnat