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MARIST NEWS

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

GENERAL HOUSE

MESSAGE OF BR. ERNESTO SÁNCHEZ ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF ST. MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

Dear Marists of Champagnat,

This year, June 6th promises to be a slightly different celebration in honor of our Founder, probably simpler and more private, but with no less depth and joy. Today, the realities caused by the Covid-19 pandemic challenges us to honor him from a more reflective perspective.



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WALKING TOGETHER,
TAKING THE BEST OF
OUR MARIST DNA WITH US

Message of Br. Ernesto Sánchez Barba, Superior General, on the occasion of the celebration of the feast of St. Marcellin Champagnat - Rome, 6 June 2020

general administration

■ The General Council has begun plenary sessions, which will take place from 1 to 26 June. This week they will reflect on the current pandemic in the world and its consequences. They are discussing the role of the General Council in the animation and government of the Institute in the face of this new situation, the ways forward, the readjustment of plans, solidarity ... It is the beginning of a reflection that will be intensified in the coming weeks and months.

■ On May 31st, Brother Rick Carey, from the Province of the United States, finished his service in the General Administration as Director of FMSI. He has been at the General House

since August 2017, working first on children's rights and advocacy and, since January of last year, as Director of the Foundation. Brother Rick will continue his Marist mission in Chicago. He will soon be appointed the new Director of the Foundation.

■ The feast of St. Marcellin in Rome will be celebrated more simply this year. On the 6th, the community of brothers of the General Administration will participate in a festive Mass in the chapel of the General House. The staff of the General Administration will not be present, but will remember in advance the life of Saint Marcellin on Thursday.

SAINT MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT DAY VIRTUAL PILGRIMAGE TO THE HERMITAGE

On June 6th we celebrate the day of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, founder of the Marist Brothers. The feast, according to Catholic tradition, coincides with the date of his death, 180 years ago.

On this special day, the Network of Marist Centres of Remembrance once again invites our Marist family worldwide to make a pilgrimage to the places connected with the Institute's foundation. Today we will visit two sacred places that inspire profound reflection: Marcellin's room at the Hermitage, where the words of his Spiritual Testament still echo, the scene of his last days and of his definitive gift to God; then we will go to the Hermitage House Chapel, where the relics of our holy founder rest, a place of veneration and of vocational discernment under the maternal gaze of the Virgin of the Silver Heart. These are special places of thanksgiving and communion for the whole Marist family. We are filled with gratitude for the legacy of his life and for his spiritual presence with each one of us. We ask, through the intercession of our Good Mother and Marcellin, that we be strengthened in our mission, becoming the hands and face of God's tender mercy in this world that lacks hope. Follow the instructions:

To participate using smart phones, tablets, VR glasses: point the camera at the QR code below. Open the link provided.

To take part using the computer: click on the links below. Depending on the type of web browser, you will need to enable "play / enable sound automatically".

- [Marcellin's room - http://q-r.to/bak69F](http://q-r.to/bak69F)
- [Chapel of L'Hermitage - http://q-r.to/bak63M](http://q-r.to/bak63M)

This arrangement is made available by the [Marist Memorial in Curitiba](#).



N. D. L'Hermitage - M. Champagnat – quarto * dormitorio * bedroom * chambre



Notre Dame de L'Hermitage – Chapelle * Chapel * Capilla * Capela



Notre Dame de L'Hermitage – Chapelle * Chapel * Capilla * Capela

marist world

GENERAL HOUSE: PLENARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

SPAIN: MARISTAS ZARAGOZA

GENERAL HOUSE: MEETING WITH THE PROVINCIALS OF ARCO NORTE REGION



INDIA: SOCIAL WORK OF OUR MARIST BROTHERS IN WEST BENGAL

EAST TIMOR: MARIST FORMATION HOUSE IN BAUCAU

NIGERIA: INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY TRAINING WORKSHOP – MARIST COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMY, UTURU

FRANCE

NEWS FROM THE HERMITAGE'S COMMUNITY

Since mid-March, the house of Notre-Dame de l'Hermitage has had to comply with containment measures to stop the Covid-19 epidemic. No more groups or individuals have been accommodated in the last two months.

For the community it has been a time of trial but also of deepening community life, especially with the arrival of three new brothers: Brother Manel CASTILLO and Brother Eladi GALLEGO from the Province of the Hermitage, Brother Maurice Paul RAZANANDRO from the Province of Madagascar. Diogène Musine (Province of East Central Africa) and Mrs. Heloisa Afonso de Almeida Sousa (Brasil Centro-Norte). The community is now made up of 7 brothers. We regret the absence of lay people in the Hermitage project, which has been the characteristic since its beginning in 2010.

At the moment we are preparing to receive the groups who have moved their reservations to more favourable dates.

In the photo – from left to right: Br Henri Catteau, Br Maurice Paul Razanandro, Br Eladi Gallego, Br Maurice Goutagny, Br Benito Arbués, Br Manel Castillo, Br Maurice Berquet.



CAMBODIA

THE SITUATION IN LAVALLA PRIMARY SCHOOL IN TAKHMAO DURING THE EMERGENCY BY COVID-19

Brother Tony Burrows reports the situation in Cambodia in that days of emergency caused by Covid-19. He speaks mainly about the Lavalla School, in Takhmao, that works with children and young people with physical disabilities.

Here in Cambodia, schools, Churches and entertainment places are still closed, but factories where people work in very crowded conditions, are still operating. Last month the Government announced that schools would remain closed until November. I have since heard, though, that this will be reviewed in June. While there is distance learning, and it is being hailed as a great solution for students, the fact is that over two million

students have no access to this, and most are finding working this way very difficult and probably it is not doing what it's meant to do.

Our teachers are coming to school here each day, they are in regular contact with their students. They are encouraging them to follow the lessons on TV and are sending out worksheets via various forms of social media. I'm not sure how effective this is but at least the students are doing some school work.

Last week a group of our staff visited as many of the families as they could around the Provinces.

We have brought back a small group of students to live here. Some of these are students who had major corrective surgery just before Christmas. They really need ongoing physiotherapy and medical attention which they were not able to get at home. So, all of our health staff are here each day giving these students intensive physiotherapy. We also have a few here whose family situations are such that they were not being cared for and having to fend for themselves.

During their travel, they also found some of our families who need medical assistance, so we have provided funds for them to see doctors and buy medicines.

As well we have here eight of our University students who have



no access to internet at home. They are following their courses on-line.

So, we also have staff here now to care for these students when they are not in class or having therapy – cooks, carers etc. Of course, the site needs to be maintained, so maintenance and grounds staff are working. Other staff come in as required. We continue to pay staff their full salary, as they would have nothing to live on.

We are all hopeful that the students will be able to return soon. While everyone here is busy with their tasks, the place is not the same without the students.

LaValla School is the only registered primary school in Cambodia for students with a physical disability. Founded in 1998 in a small house in Phnom Penh, it moved to a city on the edge of the capital called Takhmao 16 years ago to a purpose built school.

Today the school has almost 100 students and most are residential because their families have recognized that in their rural regions their children do not have access to education. The education programme provides an accelerated curriculum of six years primary being completed in three years. Read more about it: <https://www.maristcambodia.org/lavalla-school>

BR. BEN CONSIGLI

COURAGEOUS MARISTS

The consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic are – and will be – defined by choices. Myriad stories have already been told in print, audio, video, and photography. We've seen or heard of makeshift morgues in refrigerated trucks in New York City or ice rinks in Spain; selfless doctors and nurses struck down by the virus; and countless others on the front lines whose courage serves as an example of self-sacrifice for the whole. We are witnessing many acts of courage, generosity, compassion, and community that provide inspiration and underline the power of our humanity.

The weeks in “lock-down” got me to thinking about why people act courageously. I fell to pondering the biblical story of the widow’s mite. Jesus, who has traveled with his disciples to Jerusalem for the Passover, is watching those who come to make their

offerings to the temple treasury. He draws the disciples’ attention to a widow who has given two small coins, saying that while others gave out of their abundance, she gave “all that she had, even all her living.” How would he have known this? Perhaps she gave one coin, hesitated, and then, in defiance of circumstance, tossed the other after it. The meaning of the story is that an act of true generosity is an act of courage. A number of authors, including author Stacy Mitch, called this “courageous generosity.”¹ In both Mark and Luke, the point is made that the widow has not one but two coins, together equaling one mite. Since she is a poor widow, if she had given one coin and kept one, she’d have been generous by any ordinary standard. But she gave them both. And since there was nothing in her experience to encourage the expectation of any material reward for her gesture, I think it might be best to imagine a kind of pure gallantry in it, an act of loyalty to what she loved best, a gift made freely, and in many ways courageously, in contempt of circumstance. Just as we can only practice courage in the face of fear, we can only practice generosity in the face of need.

In our Marist history, we have many examples of our Brothers who acted generously and courageously, whether it was during the revolutionary years in France in the 1830’s and 1840’s, the Civil War in Spain during the 1930’s, or the Rwandan genocide and the Islamist revolutions in the African continent

in the 1990’s. But I found that not much was written about our Brothers during the Second World War.

Times of crisis generate extreme moral dilemmas: situations we cannot begin to imagine, unthinkable choices emerging between options that all seem bad, each with harms and negative outcomes. Generous courage means doing the right thing even at the risk of inconvenience, ridicule, punishment, loss of job or security, social status, and even death. This type of courage requires that a person rise above the apathy, complacency,

hatred, cynicism, and fear mongering in our political systems, socioeconomic divisions, and cultural/religious differences to do “what is right” in the midst of our common humanity.

Countless of professional articles have been written about courage. These articles

indicate that people who possess courage have certain characteristics which come to the forefront in times of trial or distress. Courageous people believe in themselves. They know who they are and what they stand for. They have strong values, recognize their personal capabilities, and are confident in meeting the challenges that lie before them. They are passionate and purposeful and know the difference between right and wrong. They do not just talk about honor; they live it every day. They are more likely to be trustworthy, objective, fair, and tolerant, and willing to stand up against injustice — backing their words with action. They also put other people’s needs ahead of their own and are not afraid of “swimming against the tide” or challenging the status quo. They stare adversity in the eye — running toward the problem rather than away from it. They know that saying “no” to one idea may enable them to say “yes” to another, and that old ways of doing things should not stand in the way of a better solution. Courageous people follow their intuition. If information required to make a good decision is not available, they usually follow their “gut”, their instincts, and given that, they know that it is not enough to talk about doing something — instead, they act. Courage is required to act even when one has doubts or fears about the consequences. It takes courage to make the difficult choices. Let us look at some of the actions of our Brothers during the second World War.

[Click here to read all the article, with pictures](#)



BRAZIL

MARISTS OF BRASIL CENTRO-NORTE PREPARE FOR CHAMPAGNAT FEAST 2020

On the eve of the feast of Saint Marcellin, on the 6th June, the Province of Brasil Centro-Norte is promoting Champagnat Week, which this year will take place from the 1st to the 6th June, in the 28 Socio-Educational Units, 9 social schools and 19 private schools, organised by the Co-ordination of Evangelisation.

This year's theme is Champagnat, Instrument of Change, and it is a call to cultivate an awareness of belonging and co-responsibility in the care of life on the planet.

Virtual Champagnat Week

Like most of the events held in 2020, the activities proposed for



Champagnat Week will be virtual, due to the social distance imposed by the pandemic caused by the coronavirus. The basic text presents several proposals for activities that can be developed in a virtual learning environment, through methodologies adapted to the new reality. Brother Maicon Donizete Andrade, representing the team organizing

Champagnat Week, explained the objective of this initiative: “by recognising Marcellin as an instrument of change in his historical time, we also want to strengthen our awareness of belonging and co-responsibility towards the planet. Taking care of life is part of our way of being Marist. We want to be instruments of change in our world. We know that we only have two hands, but our hearts carry the feelings and the hopes of all humanity”.

A STATEMENT FROM BR. PATRICK MCNAMARA AND THE USA PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

June 1, 2020

Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church

Dear Marists of Champagnat,

In the name of our Marist USA Provincial Council, we write to join our voices and hearts with those of so many in our great country who are angered and outraged by the brutal killing of George Floyd. His death follows countless other acts of lethal violence against people of color in our nation. Those who perpetrate these senseless atrocities must be brought to justice.

We join our prayers with those of his family, friends and our fellow citizens who mourn his tragic and unnecessary loss. But more than prayer is required here. As Catholics and Marists, we respect the sanctity of all life. We are all brothers and sisters. By the way we live and act, we must bear witness to this belief. We condemn any actions that are not in line with gospel values.

As educators and evangelizers, we are entrusted with the lives of generation after generation of young people. Let us teach them mutual respect, tolerance, and love. Let us also be an example to each of them as we journey together to build a better world.

As a Council, we stand in solidarity with all who rightfully protest the death of George Floyd and seek justice and reform. We pray that they may do so in a peaceful and constructive manner.



THE MARIST BROTHERS

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We join our hearts and actions with those of our fellow Marists, young and older, who are standing up for the dignity and rights of all our brothers and sisters. We cannot, however, support the violence occurring currently throughout our nation.

Let us also remember our civic elected leaders; may they be given the strength, vision and courage to lead our country through this time of crisis. We also recall in prayer those in law enforcement who are working justly to keep the peace.

Today is the feast of Mary, Mother of the Church. May we unite our hearts and minds with this woman of faith, Our Good Mother, who was so precious to St. Marcellin. May we as Marists of Champagnat continue to place the gospel at the center of our lives, thus making Jesus Christ known and loved throughout our world. Respectfully,

Brothers Patrick McNamara, Dan O’Riordan, Robert Clark, Hank Hammer, Owen Ormsby, Albert Rivera, and Sean Sammon

USA Marist Brothers Provincial Council

MEXICO

POSTGRADUATE COURSE IN LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT OPEN TO MARISTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

The Province of Central America, in conjunction with the Marist University of Guadalajara (Province of Western Mexico), will begin in August a new cohort for the Master's Degree in Leadership and Educational Management, aimed at all Marists who wish to train themselves to continue contributing in a co-responsible way to the mission of "making Jesus Christ known and loved" through innovative management and a deep sense of Marist identity.

The postgraduate course in the virtual synchronised modality lasts for two years (2020 – 2022) and is directed by Brother Nicéforo Garrán, Provincial Co-ordinator of Education of the Province of Central America and Ana Isabel Saborío Jenkins, co-ordinator of the programme. Experts from different countries such as Spain, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Chile and Puerto Rico are also part of the teaching staff.

Spanish-speaking Marist leaders, teachers, administrators and Marists from all over the world – whose countries are part of the Hague Convention (for the recognition of official documents of qualification) – can participate in Marist formation.

Background to the Master's Degree

The project of the Master's in Marist Educational Management was launched in the Province of América Central under the direction of Brother Luis Carlos Gutiérrez Blanco and the co-ordination of Ana Isabel Saborío. The initiative took place through a collaborative agreement between the Province of América Central and the Marcellin Champagnat University in Lima (Peru). At the same time, it was the Inter-American Commission of Marist Mission that accepted the proposal of the Sub-commission of Formation of Directors to initiate a process of formation to strengthen the capacities and to develop an integral leadership that will help education in each country and the educational work. The first master's degree (2013 – 2014) was held at the Marcellin Champagnat University in Lima and is currently being held at the Marist University of Guadalajara.

Specific objectives of the postgraduate course

1. To recognize the components and the commitment of ethical leadership of service in the educational administration of Marist centres.
2. To develop visions and skills in the organization and man-



agement of schools that allow for innovation in the micro and macro practices of the communities. To be aware of new possibilities concerning advice, coordination and follow-up of team work.

3. To promote sustained processes of personnel management, institutional climate and professional development that respond to a positive vision of institutional growth and to the dimensions proper to the Social Doctrine of the Church.
4. To promote systems and skills for planning centres based on shared visions and missions, respectful of institutional values, aware of their social responsibility, in a cooperative manner and with short, medium and long term projection.
5. To encourage a climate of positive institutional evaluation, through the understanding and adaptation of educational supervision skills and internal and external evaluation systems.
6. To promote and support the reworking and deepening of curricular and educational projects, of curricular leadership, in order to direct them towards innovation and social transformation, social responsibility, and attention to the most needy.
7. Identify and adapt innovative educational practices and class management actions that transfer the changes to the daily reality of the centres, and maintain the updating of methodology.

At the moment, a total of 30 people are finishing their thesis process to be graduated from the Marist University of Guadalajara with the title of Master in Leadership and Educational Management, of whom 24 are Chileans and 6 from the Province of Central America.

To find out more details, we have attached an infogram, and if you need more information you can write to this e-mail: coordinacion.maestriamarista@gmail.com

RWANDA

MARIST NOVITIATE, FIRST STEEP IN THE MARIST CONSECRATED LIFE

The novitiate is a privileged time when the novice is invited to open himself without fear to God's love. As he is initiated into religious life, he is led to personal growth and conversion of heart, while at the same time integrating the evangelical counsels and the Marist charism into his way of being and acting. The novitiate is the stage in which the novice learns to cherish silence and the interior life which will help him grow in intimacy with God and develop a deeper love for his brothers and sisters. It culminates, should the novice decide to welcome God's call to Marist life and the community agrees, in the profession of vows as a brother. (Based on "Wherever You Go" # 58)



The novitiates in the Marist Institute today

During the early days of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns in practically all parts of the world, the Brothers Today Secretariat thought of a way to connect the brothers, specifically those in the formation houses during this period of quarantine. For a start, the novitiates were invited to send videos about what they are doing during this time along with the initiatives that they may have developed in response to the situation.

To date, there are 9 (nine) Novitiates in the world of the Marists of Champagnat. In Africa, there are three: the Marist Brothers Interprovincial Novitiate of Save in Rwanda, the Marist Novitiate of Matola in Mozambique, and the Marist Novitiate of Kumasi in Ghana. In America Sur, there is the Champagnat Regional Novitiate in Cochabamba, Bolivia. In Arco Norte, there are two: the La Valla Interprovincial Novitiate in Medellin, Colombia and the Marist Novitiate in Jeremie, Haiti. In Asia, there are two: the Marist

International Novitiate in Tudella, Sri Lanka and the Immaculate Conception Novitiate in Tamontaka, Philippines. And in Oceania, there is the Marist Brothers Pacific Novitiate in Lomeri, Fiji.

At the moment, the Tamontaka Novitiate (Philippines) is closed and the lone novice from the East Asia Province was sent to Fiji for his formation. The lockdown because of the pandemic, left him stranded in Samoa and so he has to do part of his novitiate in the Mulvai Community. There are also two

novices undergoing formation in the Patos de Minas Community, in Gerais, Brasil. In Australia, there is a novice from East Timor, who, while attending to significant health issues, is doing the novitiate experience with the brothers of the Daceyville Community in Sydney. These three special arrangements were approved by Br. Ernesto.

While there is no operational novitiate house in Europe, we have actually one novice from Greece, who is doing his novitiate experience in Medellin, Colombia.

Interprovincial Novitiate of Save

The Marist Brothers Interprovincial Novitiate of Save is in the district of Gisagara, Rwanda. It receives novices from the Province of Africa Central East (PACE) and the Province of Madagascar. Currently, the community is composed of 9 second-year novices, 12 first-year novices and 2 formators. The novices come from 6 different countries: Madagascar, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Central African Republic, Kenya and Tanzania.



MADAGASCAR

THE CHAMPAGNAT SCHOOL OF ANTANANARIVO AND THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS



For our school, June 6th, the feast of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, is a day that allows the large Marist family, the students and their parents as well as the educators, to gather and celebrate the memory of our Founder. The feast begins with a Solemn Mass, bringing together all the students from the school to the parish, followed by two or three days of open-air performances by the students, educators and even parents in the courtyard of the establishment and also a fair. Also this event is an opportunity to raise funds for the school, to finance various projects such as the purchase of new books or the acquisition of certain teaching materials.

The coronavirus crisis

The school feast is usually a ceremony marking the end of the school year which begins in September and ends in June. But the calendar was only halfway through the second term when classes were stopped because of the coronavirus crisis. This year, in this particular context, it is impossible to organize the festive days as in previous years.

For the time being, only students in examination classes are allowed to attend classes in the morning. Those in the intermediate classes stay at home. Due to lack of means and resources, their parents come to the school to collect notes of lessons

and handouts. According to the school calendar, the end of the school year is approaching and everyone is wondering about the continuation of containment measures... Private schools are hard hit by this covid-19 crisis. The uncertainty and the many challenges caused by this pandemic will only aggravate the problems in relation to the education of children and young people across the country.

Marist Youth

Along with the Marist school, there are two other Catholic schools in the parish but these are far from being sufficient to accommodate all the applications. There are even those among the 2,200 students of Champagnat school who come from far away. For some, it takes more than an hour on foot to get to the school and the same for them to return home. Most come to school by bus.

The majority of the children are from Christian families and many of the students are Marist Youth of Madagascar (JMM). They are proud to be living the Marist spirit of Champagnat: periodic meetings, sharing of the Word, animation of the liturgy, commitment to the poorest in different areas of the capital, teaching catechesis in the parish are examples of activities in which they are actively involved.

Champagnat School

Champagnat School was founded in 1959 and is located in the heart of the city of Antananarivo in the popular district of Anatihazo Isotry. Despite all the challenges, parents continue to send their children to school because they believe in the value of educating their children.

Since the foundation of the school, the Brothers have been collaborating with the authorities of St. Joseph’s Parish of Anatihazo. They are actively involved in the parish committee, teaching catechesis and religion in the school and in the parish. As in all the Marist schools in the country, the Brothers are primarily responsible for the management and administration of the school and give classes to the students of the different stages. The school opened the second stage in 2015 with the second year classes. The result of the baccalaureate for the first group last year was satisfactory.

entirely paid by parents. The State does not grant any subsidies to private schools. In order to pay teachers, the school has to collect school fees from the students. Every year, the school has to make ends meet in order to be able to respond to needs such as rehabilitation and repair work, purchase of teaching materials as well as many educational activities. Although education is costly for families, they are increasingly concerned about the future and education of their children.

NGOs and Foundations, in collaboration with the school, pay school fees for groups of children. It is always thanks to the school’s partnerships with NGOs working in the social or educational field that it manages to offer lunch to a few poor students attending the school. All the extension work to have more classrooms is the result of external help, which supports the educational works given to the children, under the administration of the Brothers.

Help for education

As in all private schools in Madagascar, school fees are

Fr Ramarosandratana Camille

GENERAL HOUSE

VIDEO-CONFERENCE BY THE AD HOC TEAM OF THE MARIST SCHOOLS NETWORK

On 22 May 2020, the Ad Hoc Team of the Marist Schools Network held a session to evaluate some points such as: the future developments of the digital platform; the draft of the Official Document for the eventual Requests for Proposals (defined RFP by its meaning in English: Requests for Proposals); the definition of the main users of the future platform and final considerations, as a conclusion from the same meeting.

Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, Vicar General; Br. Ben Consigli, General Council Liaison; Brothers Carlos Rojas and Mark Omede, Directors of the Secretariat of Education and Evangelization together with their Secretary, Diugar E. Madera Buscarini; Br. Chano Guzmán, Province of Mediterranean; Frank Malloy, Province of Australia; Br. Henry Uzor, Province of Nigeria; Llorenç Claramunt, Province



of L’Hermitage; Montserrat Giménez, Province of Ibérica; Br. H. Nicéforo Garrán, Provincia de América Central; H. Natalino de Souza, UMBRASIL; Manuela Oliveira y Carolina Eichenberg (Provincia Sul-Amazônia).

The participants have been connected from different parts of the world and will try to carry out some reflections on the above-mentioned arguments, which will be discussed at the next meeting to be held on a date yet to be chosen.

GENERAL HOUSE

5 JUNE, WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Today, on the eve of the feast of St. Marcellin, we find ourselves celebrating World Environment Day. It is a day that has been celebrated since 1974, after the UN established it with the aim of helping to raise awareness of the need to turn our eyes towards the environment. To develop it, the United Nations presents a series of specific objectives. Since that date, more and more activities have been carried out and thousands of people around the world have been made aware of them.

We too, Marists of Champagnat, have been growing in ecological awareness. Personally, we allow ourselves to be touched by the reality of our world today. As communities and as an Institution, we also want to respond to the emerging needs, where the concern and the care of our common home are being assumed in all the corners of the world. Small actions and big projects are being developed, together with training and educational awareness activities. The XXII General Chapter of the Marist Brothers, in its third call, reminded us of the need to promote the culture of ecology, as well as inviting us to awaken an ecological awareness that commits us to the care of our common home. Since the creation of the Bureau of Solidarity last September 2019, the General Council wanted the care of our world to be also present among the priorities of the Institute, and so it decided to include a section on "Ecology" within this structure. We say that Solidarity speaks to us of the attention and care of those who are in need. And yes, our common home is also in need. In this way, the fact that the Marist Ecology Department



is within the Bureau of Solidarity makes complete sense. In this health crisis that we are experiencing in many countries of the world, we are discovering more clearly that the whole world is one, that life does not understand borders, that the human being is in close relationship with those around him and with what surrounds him. Moreover, we are all increasingly aware that caring for the world has a special impact on those who are most in need. This is what Pope Francis often repeats to us in his writings and homilies: "to what extent concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and inner peace are inseparable" (LS 10). Celebrating this "World Environment Day" reminds us of our commitment, as Marists of Champagnat, to nature and to the poor. Today, we also invite you, as a private person, and your community and family, to continue to commit yourself in this effort as a global family to be bridge builders. Bridges that bring us closer to those in need: people and nature.

Br. Ángel Diego - Director of the Secretariat of Solidarity

**Institute of the Marist Brothers General House**

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Website

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