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MARIST NEWS

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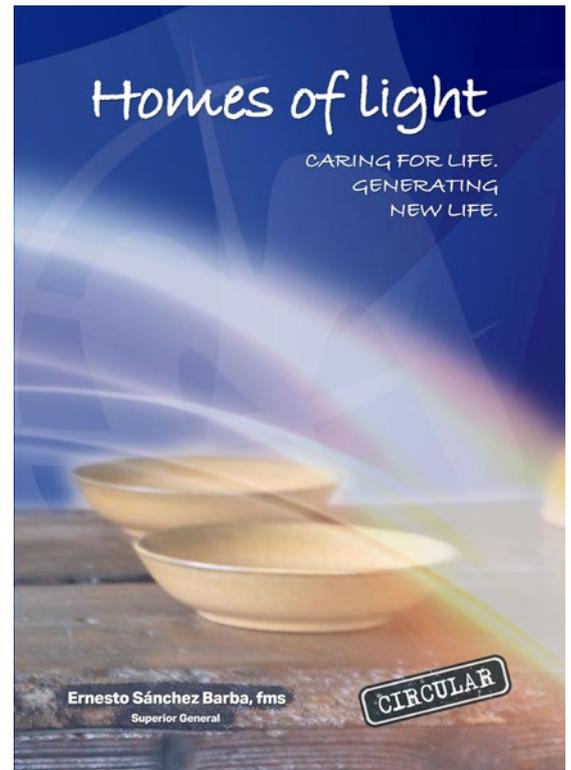
HOMES OF LIGHT

CIRCULAR OF BROTHER ERNESTO SÁNCHEZ BARBA, SUPERIOR GENERAL

"Homes of light. Caring for life. Generating new life", is the title of the first Circular of Brother Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General, published for the whole Institute on Tuesday, September 8, the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady. In his writing, Brother Ernesto reflects particularly on the care of life, of others, of spirituality and of vocational animation.

In relation to the present moment that we are living, Br. Ernesto expresses in the introduction: "I began to write this text a few months ago, and, along the way, the Covid-19 pandemic struck. We have been through this experience all over the world, and the crisis has impacted on virtually all the countries where we are present as an Institute. In each place, in each country, we have suffered the consequences in a very similar way. It seems to me that, in the current context, there is no better time than now to talk about building homes of light in the face of this situation of uncertainty that seems to be dragging on. We are being called to care for life and to generate new life in moments of great fragility and vulnerability in the world."

To facilitate the dissemination, the Circular is sent to the Institute electronically on this day, in PDF format. At the beginning of October, the printed version will be sent by mail to the Administrative Units.



PDF: [English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)

general administration

■ Collaborative week: meeting of the General Council with the directors of the secretariats and departments of the General Administration (from 7 to 11 September): how to present a renewed meaning to the service of animation of the Marist Institute



GENERAL HOUSE

BROTHER ERNESTO SÁNCHEZ PRESENTS CIRCULAR 420 OF THE MARIST INSTITUTE

“Since the time of Champagnat, this is Circular number 420”, stated Br. Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General, when presenting his first Circular “Homes of Light” in the General House, this September 8th, feast of the Nativity of Our Lady. In the ceremony that began with the words of Brother Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, Vicar General, all the brothers of the General Council, the Marist Community and the collaborators of the General Administration were present.

“Written in part during the pandemic, the circular – Homes of Light – takes on a new meaning for all of us and reminds us of the value of family life and the care of others, through small or large details. The foundation of this experience is our life in God and the richness of our deep spirituality in daily life,” said Brother Luis Carlos at the opening of the ceremony.

“I am delighted that today, on a Marial feast, the circular that I am sending with great pleasure and affection to the whole Marist Institute is being distributed. Throughout the years, since the time of Fr. Champagnat, the Superiors General have addressed the Institute by writing words of motivation, of animation, presenting important and current themes. Sometimes, to convoke a General Chapter, for example. Then, in my case, this is circular number 420”, said Brother Ernesto on presenting his circular and thanking all those present.

Echoing the anniversary of the opening of the XXII General Chapter – three years ago – the Superior General recalled that it “suggested to us that one of the ways of being beacons of hope was to build homes of light as Marists of Champagnat, involving ourselves passionately in the creation of a family life style, open to all”.

Speaking about how the inspiration for his circular came to him, Brother Ernesto recalled that “it was from the General Chapter that the idea of further developing this theme, concerning the homes of light, came to me. I remember that in the words that I spoke at the conclusion of the 22nd General Chapter, I referred to the table at La Valla, and one of the pillars was to form Homes that care for life and generate new life. There was the title of my circular. And of course La Valla was the first Marist Home of Light”.



Concerning the motivation for his circular, the Superior General assured us that “in the present context, never better than today, to speak of building Homes of Light, in the face of a situation of uncertainty, which seems to be prolonged. We are called to take care of life and to generate new Marist life, in these moments of great fragility and vulnerability”.

Speaking about the content of his circular (Homes of Light: We care for life and generate new life), Brother Ernesto affirmed: “I personally believe that our rebirth as an Institute and its future will have much to do with the concrete commitment of each one of us to take seriously the journey of our own interior and spiritual life. This with the commitment to encourage each other in this process and this effort, so that it becomes a joint search and not just an individual one. Homes of light that take care of life. To care for life is to care for the light of the house, the home so that it stays lit and burning. It is therefore a matter of personal care, of care for the people with whom we live, the community, the family, of care for those we welcome, of care for the earth which is our common home and ultimately of care for God”.

Before finishing his presentation, Brother Ernesto encouraged all Marists to be beacons of hope, to form homes of light in this turbulent world. And he concluded by saying “may Mary, our Good Mother, continue to encourage us to be true members of her family”.

PDF: [English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)
 Presentation's photo | [Video](#)

BROTHERS OF EUROPE

On Saturday 5 September, the European Team of Brothers Today held a meeting by video conference, from 10:00 a.m. to 13:30 p.m. Brothers Roberto de Troia, Aureliano García, Michel Morel, Antonio Leal and Ernesto Tendero participated. Also present were the directors of the Brothers Today Secretariat, Ángel Medina and Lindley Sionosa.

NIGERIA

The Central Finance Office of the Marist Province of Nigeria organized training for project and school bursars on the 4th September 2020 at Champagnat House, Iva valley, Enugu, Nigeria. The focus of the training was to keep the project and school bursars updated on current practices and to provide guidance to the newly appointed bursars.

UNITED STATES

Marist Youth Ministry in Australia, Marist Young Adults in the United States and other Marists from around the world will join in an International Zoom Exchange on September 13 at 5:00 a.m. (7:00 p.m. Australian time). It will be an opportunity to meet other Marists and reflect on the theme of well-being. Register here: <https://bit.ly/3jYaY6q>

BRAZIL SUL-AMAZON

The Province promotes the remembrance of Marist life by means of videos through the project "Stories of love and life". In its fourth edition, it presents the trajectory of the Brothers who served as missionaries in the Amazon. Some of them carried out a good part of their apostolate in these communities and continue, until today, to work in the states of the region. The videos are available in this playlist: <https://bit.ly/2DEMa3Y>

GENERAL HOUSE**NEW LAVALLA200> COMMUNITIES APPOINTED FOR 2020-21**

In mid-July, a group of 7 laypeople and one Brother completed 10 weeks of 'on-line' preparation and discernment for joining the Lavalla200> initiative. The Superior General worked closely with the Vicar General and Br Oscar Martin, General Councillor, to prepare a list of proposed appointments. This has now been confirmed with the respective Provincials and the new members themselves.

Atlantis, South Africa: Br. Tony Clark (Australia) / Mariana Morones (Mexico) / Denise Hernandez (Mexico) / Maria Liezel (Liz) Igoy (Philippines) / Br. Luke Fong (Fiji; has been in Tabatinga for 1 year) / Br. Nnodu Onwutalu (Nigeria, until April 2021)

Holguín, Cuba: Br. Jorge Gaio (Brazil, for one year more) / Br. Luis Sanz (Chile) / Rosa Schiaffino (Spain, having completed 2 years in Syracuse)

Moinesti, Romania: Br. Mario Meuti (Italy) / Br. Fabian Rubio (Spain; has been in Bucharest) / Qalista Dhony (Malaysia) / Esmeralda Caudel (Mexico)

Mount Druitt, Australia: Br. Lawrence McCane (Australia) / Br. Fabricio Basso (Brazil) / married couple, Ruben Galego and Silvia Martinez (Spain)

Siracusa, Italy: Regina Biasibetti (Brazil) / Br. Ricky Gomez (Venezuela) / Br. Giorgio Banaudi (Italy) / Enrique Munoz (volunteer from Spain)

Tabatinga, Brazil: Br. Paul Bhatti (Pakistan, for one more year) / Mario Araya (Chile) / Mayra Gutierrez (Mexico) / the possibility of a Brazilian Brother.

Brothers Valdicer Fachi and Jeff Crowe, responsible for Lavalla200> in the General Administration, said in the letter they sent communicating the new appointments: "We wish our new members God-speed in their

first steps of getting to their destinations. We have asked them to keep their current employments until possible travel dates are clear. Our thanks to Br Fabian Rubio (and the Provincial of Ibérica)

for his joining the community in Moinesti in the coming year. Likewise, to Enrique Munoz (and the Provincial of Mediterranea) for volunteering one year of his life in Syracuse. Their presence will enable these two communities to continue to flourish."

Some Members of the Project are finishing at the end of 2020:

Diogo Galline and Juliana Fontoura (Atlantis, Brazil Centro-Sul); Silvia Perez and Ricardo Mino (Holguín, Santa María de los Andes); Br. Jonnel Sisneros (Mt Druitt, East Asia). Martha Martinez (Tabatinga, México Occidental) has had to withdraw now for health reasons.



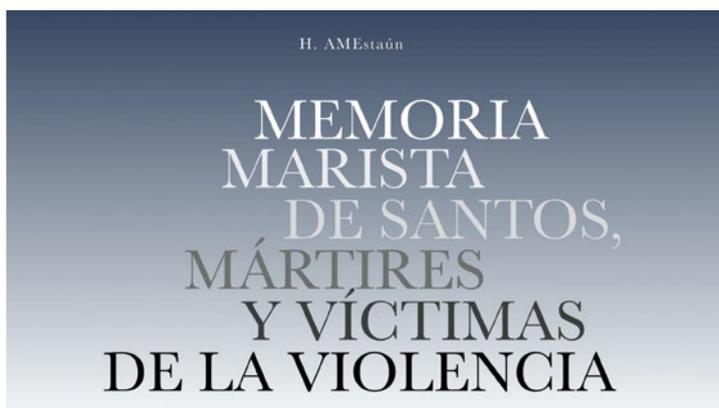
GENERAL HOUSE

MARIST MEMORIAL OF SAINTS, MARTYRS AND VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

Brother Antonio Estaún, Postulator General, has drawn up a traditional Marist religious calendar including the Marist Brothers who have died with a reputation for holiness through the exercise of virtues or because they were victims of violence as a result of their fidelity to the faith. Some copies of the book, available only in Spanish, were sent to the Administrative Units last June. If any volunteer would like to translate it into his or her own language, please contact the [Communications Office](#). Here is the introduction to this work, [available in PDF](#).

This document, entitled Marist Memorial of Saints, Martyrs and Victims of Violence, prepared by the General Postulation of the Marist Brothers, complements, from the date of its publication, the traditional Marist religious calendar by listing the names of the Marist Brothers who died with a reputation for sanctity through the exercise of the virtues or because they were victims of violence as a consequence of their fidelity to the faith. In this list, various groups of people stand out, taking into account as a classification criterion the state of the canonical process of their cause or, if this has not been initiated, the non-existence of the same. The canonical process begins with the official recognition of the public worship of the Servant of God first as Venerable, then as Blessed, and the process concludes with the official recognition of worship as a Saint. The canonical recognition of the holiness of a Christian implies the officialisation of a public liturgical cult and the inclusion of his name in the list of saints and in the liturgical calendar by dedicating a date to the celebration of his feast with its own office. In the first place, together with Champagnat, already canonised, a group of brothers who have acquired a reputation for sanctity in the Institute and whose process of beatification has been opened are Brothers François Rivat, Alfano Vaser and Basilio Rueda. The canonical process for the declaration of the reputation of sanctity, acquired by the practice of the Christian virtues of these brothers to a heroic degree, has gone through or is going through various stages which we will not indicate here.

The second group of this list is made up of the Brothers martyrs who died as victims of violence because of their fidelity to the faith. In this group we include the name of the 177 brothers and two laypeople who have been recorded in the Marist Martyrology of Spain (1909-1939). This list highlights the 113 Marist Brothers and 2 lay people recognised as martyrs when they were proclaimed Blessed, (47 in 2007 and 68 in 2013), and those who are recognised as Servants of God because the process of their cause of beatification has been started but has not yet been completed. This is the case of Brother Joché-Albert Ly, whose cause is being processed by the Lazarist Fathers together with other martyrs of China; that of Brother Lycarion, the first brother to die



violently in Spain during the Tragic Week of Barcelona, whose cause is being introduced in Rome; or that of Brother Eusebio and 58 companion martyrs who constitute the third group of Brothers from Spain whose cause is being processed in Rome and who were killed during the religious persecution that occurred in that country between the years 1936-1939 and who have not yet been beatified.

To this list must be added the cause of Brother Henri Vergès, who was beatified in Oran on December 8, 2018. This cause is known as that of "the martyrs of Algeria", and is headed by Mn. Pierre Claverie, of the Order of Friars Preachers, Bishop of Oran, and 18 fellow religious, killed through hatred of the faith, in Algeria, killed between 1994 and 1996 during the Algerian civil war.

The third group includes the names of Marist Brothers who have died victims of violence allegedly because they were faithful to their faith, even though their causes of beatification have not been initiated, but their heroic death is witnessed by the authority of the Institute. In this group of Brothers are Canisius Nyilinkindi, Christopher Mannion, Etienne Rwesa, Fabien Bisengimana, Gaspard Gatali and Joseph Rushigajiki, Moisés Cisneros, Miguel Ángel Isla, Servando Mayor, Julio Rodríguez, Fernando de la Fuente. Also the French brothers Jules Andre, Joseph Félicité, Joseph Marie Adon, Leon, Louis Maurice, Joseph Amphien, Prosper Victor, Marius who died in China. To these names we must add that of the Chinese postulant Pablo Chen, that of Brother Euloge (French, killed in New Zealand), and Hyacinthe (French), John William, Augustinus and Donatus Joseph (Australians killed

in the Solomon Islands) whose violent death is recorded through the authority of Brother Benito Arbués, Superior General of the Institute, in his circular Fidelity to the mission in situations of social crisis (1998). Also included are the names of Brothers Agustin Liu, Antoine Hsio, Marcellinus Yang, Ernest Chang, Marie Xavier Chang, and Emile Chang, who died in China from hunger, cold, or condemned to forced labour in labour camps. Brother Laurence Tung On, Provincial of China, testified to their silent martyrdom in a letter to Brother Basilio Rueda, Superior General, on September 8, 1979.

No mention is made of the names of the brothers who died on the battlefield, except those of the Servants of God, Brothers Fidencio and Valero Paulino, whose causes of beatification were introduced in Rome in 1998, and three Australian brothers who have disappeared. Nor are the names of the brothers who were victims of violence due to robbery, assault, theft or other reasons of social violence.

Each of the brothers is referred to by the name of his religion followed by his first name with the surname or surnames, the nation of origin, the year of birth, the place and the date of his death, when it has been possible to document it. The custom of changing the first name to the religious name was discontinued after the decision of the 15th General Chapter (1959), which is why some names appear only with the family name.

The names are preceded by the identification of their process, if it has been initiated, with the terms Blessed, Venerable or Servant of God. The other cases are preceded by H. for the brothers or M. for the laity.

The chronological criterion which organises the calendar successively refers to the day of the death of the protagonists (dies natalis) according to the Church's custom of celebrating the day from birth to the life of resurrection.

The liturgical calendar of the Church when it beatifies or canonizes a group of martyrs identifies the members of the group with the name of the most outstanding person in the group for his or

her leadership within the group followed by the expression "and fellow martyrs". This practice arises especially in the processes carried out to demonstrate the fame of sanctity or martyrdom both in its diocesan and Roman phase and is explained by the complexity involved in naming each of the protagonists every time the whole group is referred to. But with this custom there is a great danger that the members of the group will remain anonymous behind the expression "fellow martyrs". It is certain that, at least in the case of our brothers, the fact of dying together or victims of similar circumstances offers us a very valuable sign: they lived and, many of them, died together, in community. But there is a danger that by keeping the names in the collective, the value of the testimony of individuality is lost. For this reason, in this "Memorial", the circumstantial or pragmatic grouping, which was made for the beatification, has not been taken into account, but the date of death of the protagonists. This option does not imply nor does it intend any interference in the liturgical celebration of the members of the same group on the date indicated by the liturgical calendar of the universal Church.

Interspersed with the reference to the vicissitudes of the brothers are some significant news related to the processes of beatification and canonisation with the aim of maintaining the historical memory of the iter. In order to differentiate them from the rest of the text, the size of the letter is smaller. The sign * indicates the date of birth and the sign + alludes to that of death.

We offer this resource of animation for our communities of brothers and also for the lay Marists as a fruit of the celebration of the anniversary of the 200 years of the foundation of the Institute, in honour of those who preceded us with the gift of their life to the Lord and fidelity to the Marist charism, wishing that the knowledge and the appreciation of the marvellous companions who came before us in the house of the Father grow more and more each day.

Br. Antonio Martínez Estaún – Postulator General

PDF: [Marist Memorial of Saints, Martyrs and Victims of Violence](#)

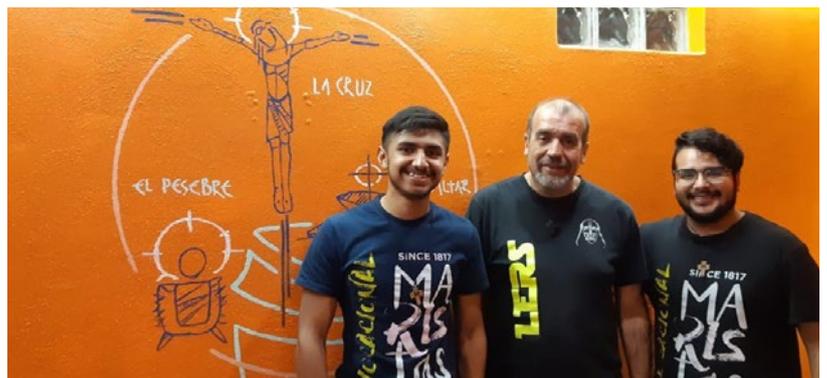
MEXICO

POSTULANCY IN THE PROVINCE OF MÉXICO OCCIDENTAL

On 23rd August the Postulancy was opened at the Provincial House of México Occidental with a Eucharistic celebration.

Andrés Morales, who, together with Victor Hugo Franco, in his second year, will follow the two years of postulancy in Morelia, began the formation process for Marist consecrated life.

They will be accompanied by Brothers Charly Vargas, Manuel Delgado and Luis Enrique Rodríguez.



OCEANIA REGION

MEETING OF THE OCEANIA COUNCIL AND COLLEGE OF LEADERS

As a result of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, the planned face-to-face meetings of the Oceania Council (OC) and Oceania College of Leaders (COL) have been replaced, for the foreseeable future, by Webex videoconference arrangements and other online initiatives.

The 17th August 2020 took place the Meeting of the Oceania Council and College of Leaders. Here you can read the executive summary of that meeting.

The unpredictable nature of the COVID19 virus and pandemic has caused a major interruption in what might have been considered normal operations and activities for our Marist endeavours in Oceania. At the same time with so many creative Marist minds at work, there are many good news stories and opportunities for creativity as well as realising and supporting one another and our projects in Oceania.

This week's meetings of OC and COL brought us in contact with this new reality and the need to develop stronger and more reliable communication platforms, particularly to our remote areas, and be able to operate with greater confidence. Not all venues have the same strength and reliability

of internet connections. We are presently exploring a number of options.

Time separation is a significant issue with participants in our meetings from Rome to Fiji and places in between – a time span of 12 hours.

Establishing a time structure for our meetings which is suitable for all participants is a challenge.

The Oceania participation in worldwide Marist activities and projects such as Global Schools Network, Brothers Today, La-valla200> Projects, continues and emphasises the range of our commitments to international projects and hence the significance and importance of reliable communication networks.

The Administrative Unit Leaders presented their reports and

important issues have been summarised and are listed below.

Developments

Since the April meeting of OC and COL there have been a number of significant and important changes in the structure and operation in the Region of Oceania

Reconfiguration

On 20 July, the District of Melanesia merged with the Province of Australia. An e-Gathering linked the event. The theme was

“Growing in Communion” and it provided the opportunity to look back then to the future. While the merger has been achieved, integration will occur over the next six months. In the meantime, Br Jean Marie will act as Transition Manager.



Financial Arrangements (FAN)

The merger has enabled for a rearrangement of the financial structures for Oceania. The Regional Trust Fund Board has been replaced by

the Financial Administrators Network involving the Directors of Business Services of Australia and the Pacific. Actions in progress for 2020 include:

aligning budget structures and reporting and submitting a consolidated Domus Report to Rome for the Province and the Region.

Oceania Partnership Commission (OPC)

With the membership of OPC and projects across Oceania from Australia to Kiribati, and plans for developing Marist Spirituality Programs to include Asia and Oceania, the importance of communication and limited for face-to-face meetings, planning is very important.

OPC has developed a Strategic Directions Project 2020-2021.

marist world

GENERAL HOUSE: CIRCULAR OF BROTHER ERNESTO SÁNCHEZ, SUPERIOR GENERAL



SOUTH AFRICA: 26 YOUNG BROTHERS FROM THE PROVINCE RENEW THEIR VOWS



SPAIN: PROVINCE IBÉRICA – PROVINCIAL TEAM MEETINGS



GUATEMALA: MARIST COMMUNITY



THAILAND: MARIST DISTRICT OF ASIA – FIR (FORMATION INSTITUTE FOR RELIGIOUS)



FRANCE: CENTRE D'ACCUEIL L'HERMITAGE

Included in the Project are:

Develop some pathways and some narratives to lead and sustain 'partnership in Marist life across the Region during upcoming completion and transition times for the Oceania Council. This is already active regarding Melanesia.

Participate significantly with other interested groups:

(Institute wise: Brothers Today Secretariat in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Laity; Regionally ... Young Professionals... Vocations in developing a Spirituality for the Region.)

Assist local Marists in 'creating spaces for meaningful conversations' and coordinate the development and distribution of resources to support such conversations.

Continuing to empower 'leadership in Marist life' at the local level.

Marist Oceania Education Network

Issues associated with the COVID19, particularly the lockdowns, closure of borders and quarantine restrictions have had significant impact on the ability to travel and implement and support educational programs.

The situation has been made more difficult with the destructive impact of Cyclone Harold in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu

with damage to the infrastructure including classrooms and dormitories. This was especially in one of the schools where the Marist Brothers live in Santo, Vanuatu.

The next phase of the Southern Stars program for the development of professional and formation for education leaders in the Pacific is under active consideration and a number of options are being considered. There are already positive outcomes from the first phase of the program.

There are now explorations how Marist Schools Australia and the Province of Australia could be able to support the schools in Melanesia.

Formation

This is an aspect of Marist life and mission which has been seriously disrupted by the virus. As international travel has effectively ceased, a number of options are being actively worked on to provide appropriate level and support for those engaged in or about to enter into formation as Champagnat Marists.

Next Meeting

As a result of the continuing uncertainties caused by the COVID19 virus, the next meeting of OC and COL will be held by videoconference on Monday 2 November 2020.

TANZANIA

DIEGO FERNANDO PÉREZ GONZÁLEZ, MEXICO: MARIST VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE IN MWANZA

Diego Fernando Pérez González, 20 years old, from Zapopan, Mexico (Province México Occidental) has been a volunteer since September 2019 at the Marist school of Nyakato in Mwanza, Tanzania (PACE Province), living in the local Marist community. He describes his experience both in the Marist school and the community before and during the pandemic. An intense experience in every way ... A personal journey which, with time, evolved to one of much sharing and brought me to the conclusion, for the first time in my life, that happiness is solid, lasting, and real only when shared ...



Adaptation

I tried to avoid imagining any specific scenario before arriving in the Marist community and school of Nyakato, Mwanza in Tanzania. I was aware that in the end it would be meaningless since the experience would probably be something completely different.

The day finally came – September 24, 2019. It was night when I arrived at the place that would be my home for what I expected at that time would be around 15 months. That night, I could only settle down and recover from the trip. The good things started the next day when I finally felt the significance of what I had come into. I remember very well finishing that day exhausted with so many introductions and hundreds of new faces ...

A key part of the adaptation process was culture shock. No matter how hard I tried, it was difficult at first to understand why people act as they act, think as they think, their motives and, above all, differentiate whether their intentions were good or not. The latter made me hesitant at first to move out of school and explore the city. For the first 3 months, my trips were few; I stayed within the school and community facilities all the time.

Two other great challenges that were present at the beginning were the emotional aspect and finding my place as a Marist volunteer. Regarding the first, I was continually thinking of my family, I missed them, I felt very alone. I realized that I had to

work on that part of affective maturity. By the second I mean that I struggled to find activities through which I could contribute to the school and my community. You can't expect to go on an adventure like this thinking that things will go smoothly and everything will be rosy.

Flow / find the rhythm

“There's no rush here in Africa” is something that several people there told me. It was also something that I could observe. Taking this phrase as a point of reference, I began to relax a little more, to be more patient with me and in general to enjoy more. All this, added to the practical knowledge that I was accumulating, helped me to find the rhythm of life there, to connect more with people. I began to get closer to the students of the school in a more natural and effective way, to take on more responsibilities and to contribute more. I had finally found my place within the community.

My Kiswahili was improving little by little. In turn, I began to go out on my own outside the school to explore, discover more of the culture, and enjoy myself. I found a balance between the time given to others and to myself.

Through all of this, I discovered what detachment from the ego implies. This helped dissipate a feeling of “being the center of attention” which set me apart from others. It also helped me to be more honest with myself and with others – if there was something I did not know how to do, I would ask, seek help, etc. In general and across many aspects, it helped me enjoy the experience more.

Quarantine

On March 18, 2020, the government announced that schools would close indefinitely. Everything went very quickly, overnight. That's how the Tanzanian government and many other African countries handle things. So the next day, closing day, was chaotic – calls to parents, them arriving for their children, students taking some of their things and leaving other things, cleaning and everything else. We were running from one place to another.

I was able to make the most of the situation: I restructured my schedule of activities; I began to live more with the postulants (they ended up being like brothers to me); I began to do things that I hadn't had time for when the school was in action. Above all, before the situation became too bad, I was going out a lot – those were the days when I was most immersed in African culture, in all simplicity.

Return to Mexico

Quite suddenly, one day at the end of May, the government announced the reopening of airports. Since no one had the slightest idea yet when the schools would reopen, I decided it better not to swim against the tide but go home to my family. I was able to say goodbye to the Brothers, the postulants and even the teachers. Unfortunately it was not the same case with the students; there were few that I could see, once the school closed.

I came back calm, content, happy and grateful to each of the members of the community, satisfied with what I had lived, experienced and learned in those lands.

Putting aside the current circumstances linked to the pandemic and the damage it has caused, I would recommend to anyone giving themselves the opportunity (without taking it lightly) to experience community life in Tanzania.

PHILIPPINES

EAST ASIA PROVINCE CELEBRATES THE “SEASON OF CREATION”

From September 1 to October 4, the Marist Family around the world joins in the annual ecumenical celebration “Season of Creation”. It is a Christian celebration of prayer and action for our common home.

The celebration takes place from 1 September – the World Day of Prayer for Creation – to 4 October – the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, and the Reflection on Pope Francis’ Encyclical, *Laudato Si’*, will be one of the highlights of this celebration. Pope Francis, in his encyclical *Laudato Si’*, challenge us “to provide an approach to ecology which respects our unique place as human beings in this world and our relationship to our surroundings” (*Laudato Si’*). Along the same lines, the XXII General Chapter of the Marist Brothers invite us to “awaken in ourselves and those around us an ecological awareness that engages us in caring for “our common home”.

This year, amid crises that have shaken our world, we’re awakened to the urgent need to heal our relationships with creation and each other. During the “Season of Creation” this year, we enter a time of restoration and hope, a “Jubilee for the Earth” – this year’s theme, that requires radically new ways of living with creation.

You can visit the site seasonofcreation.org to access all the materials for that celebration.



East Asia Province

In this context, the Marist Ecology Task Force of the Marist Brothers East Asia Province, in collaboration with CARES Eco-Spirituality Center of the Mercedarian Missionaries of Berriz, cordially invites all the Marist to celebrate the Season of Creation in prayer, community clean-ups and/or other actions.

As part of the activities, the Center will post a video each day with reflection-sharing by speakers from various religious traditions, i.e. Catholic, Buddhist, Taoist, Muslim, Indigenous People, and more. These speakers will be reflecting on a particular article from *Laudato Si’*.

You can find those resource in the facebook page “[CARES Eco-Spirituality Center of the Mercedarian Missionaries of Berriz](#)”, or in [Youtube’s channel](#)

GENERAL HOUSE

8 SEPTEMBER: INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

How, is it possible that there still an International Literacy Day? We are now in 2020, and for years literacy should be a concept studied only in history books, as a reality that existed in the past, but from which there is no longer any repercussion in our world. However, we know that we still have to work to make literacy a reality at all levels.

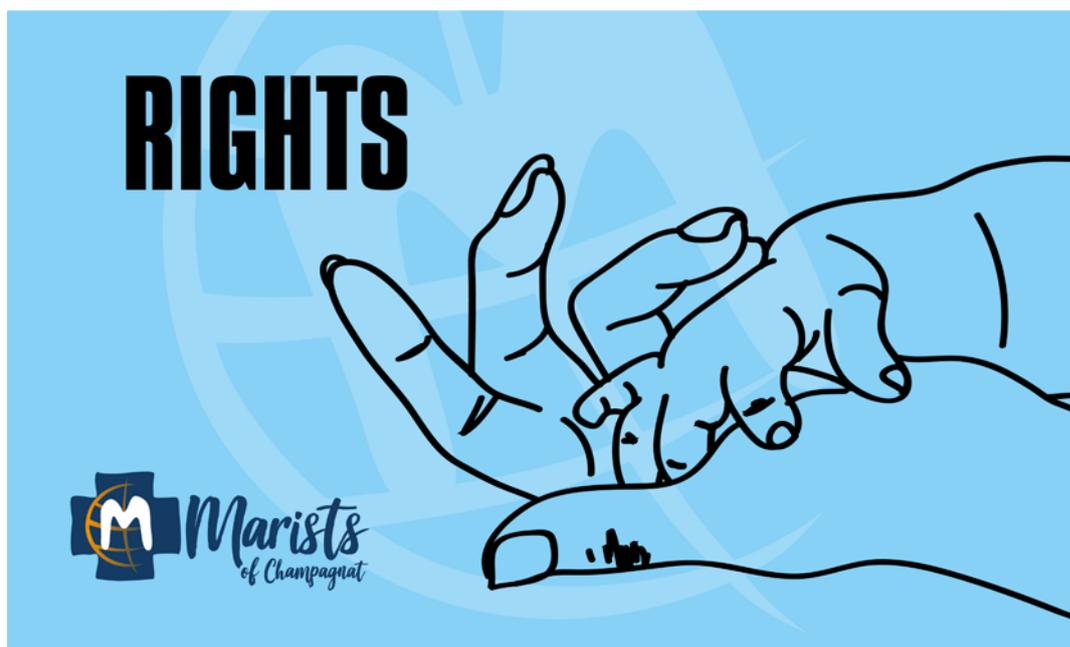
Some might understand the word “literacy” to mean the repetitive process by which a person knows the mechanics of reading and writing. Those of us in education know that literacy should go beyond mere exercises in identifying and reproducing words. We educators do want and must work so that people can make these mechanisms a tool for progress in their lives, enabling them to move forward, to take steps forward, to become more autonomous and self-sufficient, and thus to develop in a more holistic way. Literacy as the first, basic and necessary step towards a fully integrated education.

And we, as Marists of Champagnat, what can we do? It is not only what we can do, but also how much and how well we are already doing. We are specialists in education, and therefore also in literacy. Thousands of brothers and laypeople, throughout their lives, in our lives, have helped and encouraged a greater development of education and literacy.

In the crisis situation in so many parts of the world we are currently experiencing, as a consequences brought about by Covid-19, we must be very attentive so that the achievements made in our educational works are not lost. We will need to reinforce, as soon as possible, the basic processes of teaching-learning.

In remembering this commemoration of International Literacy Day, we also join with all of those bodies, both public and private, lay associations and religious groups... who devote their

time and efforts in advancing progress in the better training of people, especially the most vulnerable. We must not forget that this desire is closely linked to some of the Sustainable Development Goals, since a good education will help to eliminate inequalities and promote access to more resources. This commemoration is especially related to Objective 4, which talks about Quality Education.



It is curious to see how, in the Message of the XXII General Chapter, we are reminded of the invitation to “face the challenges of today”, always in search of “the dignity and fundamental equality of all God’s people”. In these times of crisis, mainly produced by the Covid, we are reminded that as Marists of Champagnat we are called to reduce inequalities. One good way is, without a doubt, the strengthening of education.

Every year the United Nations reminds us of an important aspect of literacy. We, specialists in education, in any of its aspects, are called to continue working and deepening from the reality that we have to live. And this is what we are doing, from so many educational centres, seeking access to education for thousands of children and young people. Access to quality education that allows for the integral development of girls, boys and young people.

Br. Ángel Diego – Director of the Secretariat of Solidarity

EAST TIMOR

POSTULANTS UNABLE TO BEGIN THE NOVITIATE PARTICIPATED IN A RECHARGE PROGRAM IN BAUCAU

The second-year Postulants from Timor Lest arrived home from Philippines in late February from their 18-month formation program in Davao. The intention was to spend three weeks with their families before travelling to Australia then onto Sri Lanka to commence their novitiate. In early March, COVID-19 arrived, and everything ground to a halt.

Having spent the last five months at home and with the country now enjoying a COVID-19 free environment, the Formation Committee decided to bring them together in Baucau to participate in a 3-week 'recharge' program.



The aims of the recharge program were:

- to reunite the Postulants and provide them with an interim experience of formation;
- to recharge their Marist spirit and vocational direction prior to commencing their novitiate;
- to provide them with an ongoing experience of Marist community; and
- to reaffirm the spirit of fraternity among them.

A comfortable house close to ICFP where the Postulants could live was provided. The use of classroom and technology facilities at ICFP for daily classes was made available. Each day the Postulants received a regular formation program including face-to-face classes covering topics including Scripture, Marist Spirituality, Youth Ministry, Study of the new Rule of Life, the Marist characteristics and Child safeguarding and protection.

The program also provided for ongoing spiritual formation including daily Eucharist, community prayer, accompaniment, and the usual cooking and house-keeping duties. The Aspirants at Teulale also welcomed the opportunity to try out their soccer skills on the newcomers.

Two significant gatherings of Marists occurred during the Postulants' time here; the first, to 'welcome them home', and the second, to celebrate the conclusion of the program during the Feast of the Assumption and Jubilee celebrations for Brothers Paul Gilchrist and Robert Speare.

The Postulants have now returned home for the moment. While COVID-19 continues to hinder international travel plans for the next step of their Marist journey, we hope that they will soon be able to resume their formation and discernment in other creative ways.



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