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MARIST NEWS

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10TH PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF NIGERIA: GIVING HOPE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

The Marist from the Province of Nigeria had their 10th Chapter in Orlu, from 11th to 16th January 2021. The reflection theme was “Giving Hope to Young People in Post Covid-19 Era” and the Slogan “Meet Young People on the Margins of Life”. General Councillors Óscar Martín and Ken McDonald, the General Council’s links with the Africa region, were present by means of a video message. During the meeting, Br. Vincent Abadom began his second mandate as Provincial. The new Provincial Council that will help the provincial now is composed by Brothers: Br. Lucky- Paul Ogwu, Br. Benedict Umoh, Br. Henry Uzor, Br. Ekene Osuji and Br. Clement Nwadike. Here down you can read the final message of the Capitulants.

We, the Capitulants of the 10th Provincial Chapter met at the Marist Retreat and Renewal Centre, Orlu from 11th to 16th January 2021. After having prayerfully reflected on the theme “Giving Hope to Young People in Post Covid-19 Era” and the Slogan “Meet Young People on the Margins of Life” put forth this message to all the Marists of Champagnat.

Currently, the Youth in Nigeria are being ravaged by poverty, armed robbery, kidnapping, drug abuse among other vices. It is the willingness of the Brothers to respond to these concerns of the youth.



general administration

- This week, several members of the General Administration, under the coordination of Br. Luis Carlos, Vicar General, are participating in the meeting of the International Mission Commission, which is being held online from Monday to Friday.
- Brother Gregorio Linacero, from the Province of Central America, began his service to the General Administration on Monday. He will be assistant to the General Treasurer and director of projects for the General Government’s Strategic Plan.
- On Monday, two new lay collaborators started their service in the General Administration: Chiara Ercini as communication assistant of the Communication Department and Marcello Romagnoli as the new Finance & Office Administrator of FMSI, replacing Natalia Surraco.

- The directors of the Bureau of the Laity, together with the liaison councillors, João Carlos and Sylvain, met on Tuesday with the facilitators of the International Forum of the Marist Lay Vocation. On Friday, the Bureau of the Laity will meet with the communication department to organise a communication plan for this event.
- On Tuesday, Brother Ernesto, Superior General, and Brother Jeff, who accompanies the LaValla200> communities, participated in a virtual meeting with the Brothers of the Province of East Asia.
- On Friday, Carole Wark, of the Extended Bureau of the Laity, and Agnes Reyes, assistant director of the Bureau, will participate in the meeting of the Asian Laity Commission and lay leaders of animation.

Community Life

The Brothers are making keen efforts to live healthy Community life. However, there is a need for improvement in our Community Life. In addition, regular studying of our Marist documents was emphasized. Furthermore, on-going formation of the Brothers should be intensified, including training of Community leaders.

Mission

There is a strong call to respond to the needs of the Youth in Nigeria during this Covid-19 era. This include skills acquisition and vocational training for the youth. In addition, there was a strong call to enhance collaboration with the Lay Marists, past pupils and students, and Lay People. The expansion of the Marist mission to Benue state was emphasized. Furthermore, frantic effort should be made to improve

students' population at the Marist Polytechnic. In addition, the relocation of the Marist Cottage Hospital mortuary should be explored.

Finance and Sustainability

The sustainability of our Marist mission cannot be overemphasized. Hence there is a need for investment into other viable ventures. Furthermore, our mission in the Province needs to be diversified.

The 10th Provincial Chapter was conducted in an atmosphere of serenity and with Marist family spirit. The Brothers are challenged through this chapter, to give hope to young people and to meet them on the margins of life in this post covid-19 pandemic era.

CELEBRATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROTHER BASILIO'S DEATH

The Marists are celebrating this 21st January, the 25th anniversary of the death of Br. Basilio Rueda Guzmán, Servant of God, whose cause is now introduced in Rome. Currently, the drafting of the Positio has begun in order to prove his heroic virtues and to have him declared "Venerable". Brother Basilio was one of the most listened to and balanced leaders of the years of the Conciliar Renewal, not only in the Institute of the Marist Brothers but in general, of all religious life.

"I have asked the Lord to do his holy will in me, asking nothing but that for me. And I have only begged Him that the gift of faith, the gift of hope, abandonment and the gift of love, may keep them very fresh and very alive", we read in a message sent by Brother Basilio to his friends, a month before his death. Born in Mexico, Jalisco, in 1924, the Marist Servant of God made his first vows in 1944. From 1967 to 1985, he served as Superior General of the Marist Brothers. In the 1980's, he was called to be an auditor for the Family Synod, where he met Mother Teresa several times. In 1995, the Vatican appointed him a consultant for the Congregation of the Institutes of Consecrated Life. During the course of his life, Brother Basilio put into practice



what he so desired: "To burn my life for Christ and for my Congregation". After a life of dedication to his brothers, to Mary, to Christ and to all the people around him, Brother Basilio returned to the Father's house on January 21, 1996. Eight years after his death, in 2004, the diocesan process for his cause was initiated in Guadalajara (Mexico) and concluded in 2019. After the decree of approval of the diocesan process, the Roman process was started in 2020 to demonstrate the heroic virtues of the Servant of God. More information about Brother Basilio Rueda: <http://bit.ly/2LCgekV>

GENERAL HOUSE

MARIST INTERNATIONAL MISSION COMMISSION: CREATE, ACCOMPANY, STRENGTHEN, INTERCONNECT



The Marist International Mission Commission (MIMC) is meeting virtually this week, from the 18th to the 22nd January, to address five key themes for the Marist mission: Leadership; Networks and Networking; New mission frontiers, new margins; Education and Schools; Sustainability of Marist's ministries.

Brother Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, Vicar General of the Institute, who, together with other Brothers of the General Administration, is closely following the work of this commission, underlined that "The end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021 continue to show us the importance of considering the major challenges facing our planet as prophets and servants". In inviting the participants to this week of meetings, he mentioned his wish that "the Spirit will grant us the gifts of discernment and courage we need to be beacons of hope, communion, and solidarity during 2021".

The meeting is an opportunity to present a photograph of the current situation of the mission in the Institute, where

the members will present an executive report on the regions, networks and secretariats of the General Administration; it will highlight the achievements of 2020 and indicate the objectives and initiatives planned for this new year.

Earlier, at the December meeting, the Commission undertook to reflect on the centrality of the Marist mission in today's world, and approved a message written by Brother Ben Consigli on behalf of all members, entitled "The Pandemic and our Marist Mission". Other messages will be published soon.

The members of the MIMC are: Benjamin Consigli, Kenneth McDonald, Angel Diego Garcia Otaola, Francis Lukong, Carlos Alberto Rojas Carvajal, José Libardo Garzón Duque, Gregorio Linacero, Okolo Mark Omede, Valdicer Fachi, Alberto G. Aparicio, Francis Jumbe, Frank Malloy, Rodrigo Espinosa, Manuir Mentges, Christophe Schietse, Chano Guzmán, María Bobillo, María del Socorro Álvarez, Farancis Rahmat and Kevin Wanden.

SOUTH AFRICA

JULIANA FONTOURA GALLINE, TWO YEARS IN THE COMMUNITY LAVALLA200> OF ATLANTIS

Juliana Maria Fontoura Galline belongs to the Province of Brazil Centro-Sul and joined the LaValla200> group in 2018. Together with her husband, Diogo Galline, she was in the international community of Atlantis, South Africa, for two years, from 10/03/2019 to 25/12/2020. Having now returned to the Province, she shares with us some thoughts of her experiences.



How did your Marist vocation originate and what motivated you to participate in the Lavalla200> programme?

I began my Marist life in 2013, when I started working in the area of communication in the Marist Province of Brazil Centro-Sul (PMBCS). Little by little, through my contact with the Marist historical and spiritual patrimony, with the life of Marcellin Champagnat, and through contact with the brothers and Marist laypeople, I fell in love with the Institute in such a way that today I lead a Marist life in which personal life and work/ministry are intertwined. I met my husband working in the Province. In 2017 we read the letter sent by Br. Emili Turú entitled “The Dance of Mission”, with its invitation to all Marists, brothers and lay, “to discern, before God, whether they feel the call to leave their country of origin to be part of an international community in another region of the world.” Diogo and I were newlyweds, with our whole lives organized (apartment, stable work...), but we felt that we were miss-

ing something to feel complete in our Marist life. We were missing an experience of committing ourselves to the Marist mission in a different way than we had lived until that moment. So we went through a time of discernment and decided to participate in the program. In Br. Emili’s letter there was a phrase that struck us deeply: “What would you do if you were not afraid?” We knew that it would mean a radical change in our life, yet we decided to take the risk.

What had the greatest impact on you during this experience?

I believe that my experience in the LaValla200> programme has enhanced my experience of fraternity. In the community of Atlantis we were 6 Marists who, above all, acknowledged a common vocation for life. Within this vocation we had chosen to live together, but allowing for our specific options of who we want to be and how we want to live in the world: as Marist Brothers (we had in the community a brother from Italy, one

from Australia and another from Nigeria); as a married couple (Diogo and myself, from Brazil) and as a lay Marist (Maria, from Spain). It was a very diverse community in terms of culture, age and life vocation. So together we had to learn to live as a family, recognising and accepting our differences and trying to discover what united us as Marists of Champagnat.

What was your role in the ministry of the Atlantis community? Our ministry also had a strong element of fraternity. I had the opportunity to work as an art teacher in a public school and, through this experience, I was able to participate in the lives of the children and understand the difficult circumstances of life that they faced. In our classroom, they could be themselves as children; a safe space where they could express themselves creatively, without fear. In the same way, I was able to work with Maria in St. Clare's Sanctuary for women who had suffered domestic violence and their children. They stayed there for 3 months until they could find a safe place to live away from the abuser. In our time with them we focussed on being a sisterly presence of acceptance and trust. We were able to do things to restore their femininity and strength to move forward. Both experiences taught me a lot and profoundly transformed my view of the world.

How would you summarize your experience?

Courage, trust in God, openness to what is different and resilience.

Was there any one thing that stood out for you in the experience?

I was very touched by the community and our meetings and ministry. In community life, God gave me two great gifts: Pietro Bettin and María Bobillo. As soon as I met them I felt that there was a meeting of souls between us. Little by little, both of them captivated a special place in my heart and today they are like family members for me.

Pietro is a very wise brother who always has something to teach and a loving word to say. He always made me feel important in the community and was always my great encourager when I was devising activities for the children. On many occasions he also displayed his talent for playing the accordion. We even created a band called "Joy to the world"! Pietro is a lover of nature. He taught me to see

beauty in the little things in life.

Maria was also a very special gift to me. As soon as I arrived in the community she trusted me to join her in her work at the sanctuary. Together we did really well, preparing activities and carrying them out with the women. We combined our skills and were complementary in our work there. Maria is a sister to me, someone I admire immensely for her sensitivity, commitment and dedication in everything she does.

In our community ministry what stands out for me is the chance I had to be among the children at school where we developed a special kind of communication between us. In the art classes I always brought a large envelope for the children to write me letters with suggestions for art activities. The idea was to imagine learning tasks together, to give the children a voice in determining what we did. This was my initial intention, but after some time I began to realize that our exchange of correspondence was becoming a way to give the attention, love and affection that perhaps they did not receive at home from family members. Through these letters, I got to know the children better and their life circumstances. This grew into an affective relationship, one that will last a lifetime.

What was your greatest learning?

In the Encyclical Fratelli Tutti, Pope Francis invites us to feel genuine love for our neighbour; a love that goes beyond the barriers of geography and space; a love that allows us to recognise, value and love all people regardless of their physical



If you are interested in dedicating a significant amount of time in a [Lavalla200](#) community, please contact your provincial or write to cmi@fms.it.

proximity, or whatever the place on earth where they were born or live. I believe that the greatest learning from this experience was to understand that, even with our differences in the LaValla200> community, we were able to carry out our ministry and live in harmony. We also managed to become integrated into the vulnerable community of Atlantis (also a diverse culture) and, with them, build bridges. I understood that it is not possible to walk alone. Today I am sure that community life gives the strength to look ahead. It is by dreaming together that we can achieve great things for the good of all. Maybe one day the time will come when everyone in the world, all people, of all nations, will recognize themselves as one body, one humanity. As the Encyclical says, “May we recognize one another as children of the same earth which is home to all of us, each with the richness of our faith and convictions, each with our own distinctive voice, but all of us, brothers and sisters.”

How have these two years helped you to mature in your Marist vocation?

I believe that the experience of LaValla200> has given me an opportunity to live my spirituality at depth. Br. Ernesto Sanchez, in his last circular, wrote that this experience must be carried out in a personal and community way. He says that it is necessary to embark on a spiritual journey, which begins by entering our inner depths, the dimension of interiority. He says, “Interiority prepares our hearts to be open to Mystery, thus making room for a spiritual experience ... In a spiritual experience, we are in touch with the depths of our humanity, to the point of glimpsing the divine, seeing ‘through a glass darkly’ realities that remain beyond our touch and reach.” I believe that throughout this experience of LaValla200> I have learned to take care of my inner, spiritual journey, and in this way I have also developed the capacity to establish healthy and lasting human relationships with others. I have learned to focus on caring for others.

What were the greatest challenges of this period?

I believe it was the development of tolerance and resilience. I believe that community life is made of lights and shadows. It was often difficult to live together; it was hard for me to



face my shortcomings and recognize my weaknesses in my relationship with others. It has been a tortuous path for me to accept what is different, with its strengths and limitations. I believe that I did better at this when I took time for myself and recognized a deep relationship with God. Only in this way was I able to change my way of thinking about others. I was then able to see them in a different way, with mercy, respecting them in all their humanity.

What would you say to someone who is interested in taking up this invitation?

I believe that to enter into the LaValla200> experience you have to be willing to live according to Mary’s heart. She overcame her fears, trusted in God and made herself available. So, if brothers and lay Marists feel called to go beyond the confines of their Province as international volunteers, have the courage to say “yes” to this invitation from the Institute. I would love for all of us to play our part towards fraternal, inclusive societies by following our lives in Mary’s way. I am sure that this is how we will be able to build new ‘homes of light’ together, one day at a time.

marist world

MALAYSIA: ST. JOSEPH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL IN KUCHING, SARAWAK

NIGERIA: NEW PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF NIGERIA

CANADA: LAVAL



BANGLADESH: SEMINARS FOR TEACHERS AT ST MARCELLIN SCHOOL, GIASNOGOR

BRAZIL: LAVALLA200> TABATINGA – FAREWELL TO PAUL BHATTI FROM

MEXICO: MERIDA – MEXICO OCCIDENTAL

SPAIN

SOME SCHOOLS IN IBERIA SUSPENDED CLASSES DUE TO SNOW

Several Marist communities and schools in the Province of Ibérica were forced to suspend classes for two or more days due to the snowstorm that covered a part of Spain during the second week of January.

In order to facilitate a return to normal classes, some teachers and workers from the Marist schools of Toledo and Guadalajara have come to clear the snow from the patios, facilitating the work of the snow ploughs.



The Marist Province has thanked all of them. "THANK YOU. The best gift after a crisis is without doubt the solidarity and

the affection of all the people who form part of our educational community and our institution", stated a communiqué from the communication office of the Marist Province of Ibérica.



BOLIVIA

BR. RUBENS JOSÉ FALQUETO, NEW MASTER OF THE REGIONAL NOVITIATE OF AMÉRICA SUR

Following the discernment of the Provincials of the Region of América Sur, Br. Rubens José Falqueto, of the Province of Brasil Centro-Norte, has been appointed Master of the Champagnat Novitiate of the Region of South America, in Cochabamba, Bolivia, for three years, beginning on February 2, 2021.

Br. Rubens will be the second Master of Novices after Br. Isidro Azpeleta, with whom he has been part of the formation community since 2017, together with Brothers Otalivio Sarturi (Brasil Centro-Sul) and Sebastião Ferrarini (Brasil Sul-Amazônia). This year, because the COVID-19 pandemic, the novitiate will begin on May 1st instead of February. It will have one novice in the second year and 10 novices in the first year.



Marist life and journey of Br. Rubens

“During the time spent in the houses of formation, either in formation or as a formator, I had the privilege of cultivating fraternity, experiencing the discipleship of Mary and feeling that I was a son of Champagnat”, mentions Br. Ruben.

Br. Rubens was born in the state of Espírito Santo, Brazil, in 1977. He started the Marist vocational accompaniment while finishing his studies, and after a period of discernment he entered the Marist training. In 1997, he lived with the Marist community of Silvânia, in Goes, where he worked with children and adolescents of the rural communities. In 1998, he made his postulancy in Belo Horizonte. Two years later, he professed

his first vows in 2000, the city of Campinas, in São Paulo. When he finished his initial formation, in 2002, he developed his apostolate, in São Vicente de Minas. And in 2007, he made his perpetual profession. In 2011, invited by the Brother Provincials, he established the formation community of the Marist Novitiate of Brazil, in Passo Fundo, in Rio Grande do Sul. During this period, he studied Theology of Religious Life. In 2014, he followed the course for Formators, at El Escorial, in Spain. Since 2017, Br. Rubens has been part of the Formation Community of the Regional Novitiate, where, until 2020, he has been active in the sector of Finance and has taught Pastoral Care and Mariology.



ARCO NORTE

RETREAT IN THE PROVINCES OF CENTRAL MEXICO AND WESTERN MEXICO

The Marists of México Occidental, based in Guadalajara, held a virtual retreat from 26 to 30 December. About 100 Brothers and about 20 lay people took part. During the retreat, encouraged by a number of Brothers, the main ideas of the Superior General's circular "Homes of Light" were developed. Br. Ernesto Sanchez was present through a message addressed to the participants, bellow, in Spanish.



The Marists of Central Mexico, based in Mexico City, made their retreat from the 2nd to the 5th January. The retreat began with the introduction of Br. José Sánchez, Provincial, and the Mass during which seven Brothers in temporary vows renewed their vows. The theme of the retreat was the Rule of Life, guided by Br. Aureliano Garcia, from the Province of Mediterránea, who participated in the Commission of writing the document. On the last day, the retired Brothers were celebrated. Whatch videos here.



22 JANUARY MEMORY OF BR. FRANCIS

“What is important is to be and to remain where God wants us to be, and to do the good that He wants, without worrying about the rest” (Br. Francis - Read more: <https://champagnat.org/en/to-be-marist/marist-saints-2/br-francois-rivat/>)

PHILIPPINES

ALMOST 150 LAY MARISTS FROM EAST ASIA PLEDGE TO FOLLOW CHAMPAGNAT

During the celebration of the 204th Foundation Anniversary of the Institute celebrated in the East Asia Province 128 members that make up the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family (CMMF) renewed their commitment of living the Marist life and 19 Friends of Marcellin where recognized and welcomed to the Marist family.

Br. Ador Santiago, Provincial, expressed in his message: “together with our brothers, we journey alongside with you, as hand in hand, we work towards our envisioned future of greater vitality of communion and co-responsibility for our charism.”

Due to confinement, a large part of the almost 150 lay Marist people participated virtually to the celebration on January 2 at the Lagao campus Chapel, in General Santos, Phillippines.



The 19 Friends of Marcellin where recognized and welcomed to the Marist family after the CMMF renewal of commitment. The Friends of Marcellin is an organized group composed of persons who want to know more the charism of St. Marcellin Champagnat and desire to live it, are in love with Mary, and have the apostolic Zeal to serve humanity. Across the Province of East Asia, these persons responded to the invitation of taking formation pathways towards discovering and deepening the richness of Marist Lay life.

CMMF Members who renewed their commitment:

- 38 members from Marbel Community
- 15 members from Cotabato Community
- 15 members from NDDU Community (Main and Lagao)
- 13 members from NDDU Espina Community
- 16 members from Marikina Community
- 28 members from Kidapawan Community
- 1 member from Doha, Qatar



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Website

<http://www.champagnat.org>

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