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MARIST NEWS

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INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCATION

WELCOMING, NURTURING, LIVING AND SHARING OUR VOCATION

“YOUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY” (JOEL 3, 1)

The General Administration, through the Extended Secretariat of the Laity, has chosen the 19th March to launch the process of the International Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation, coinciding with the feast of Saint Joseph, patron saint of Marists and also a beautiful model for laypeople, from whom we can learn so much.

The International Forum will be a beautiful four-year journey of reflection and shared discernment among laypeople, laywomen and brothers. The themes of the Forum are pertinent current and future issues related to the vitality of the charism and our journey of communion as a Global Charismatic Family.



INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCATION

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general administration

- Brother Ángel Diego, director of the Secretariat of Solidarity, on Monday took part in a meeting of the Laudato Si' Platform of Action, religious congregations branch. The first steps to be taken by the co-ordination team were presented.
- Brothers Joao Carlos and Ben, General Councillors, this week began a virtual visit to the Province of Compostela. They began on Tuesday with a meeting with the Provincial Team of Marist Life. On Saturday they will hold a meeting with the Provincial Council.
- The Extended Secretariat of the Laity met on-line with their Link Councillors, João Carlos and Sylvain, and the Directors (Raúl, Agnes and Manú) on Tuesday, together with the facilitators of the International Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation.
- On Tuesday, Brs. Luis Carlos, Vicar General, and Beto, Director of the Secretariat of Education and Evangelization, attended a meeting of the Executive Committee of the International Marist Network of Institutions of Higher Education.
- On Wednesday, Brs. Luis Carlos and Ben met with the

team from the Secretariat of Education and Evangelisation.

- On the same day, General Councillors Sylvain, Óscar, Ken and João Carlos, and the directors of the Brothers Today Secretariat, Brothers Angel and Lindley, attended a meeting of the Inter-American Network of Marist Spirituality.
- On Wednesday, Raúl Amaya, director of the Secretariat of Laity, attended a meeting of the Laity Team of the Arco Norte Region developing their regional plan for accompaniment and formation.
- Also on Wednesday, Br. Beto is participating in a gathering sponsored by the Province of Santa María de los Andes to promote the project “Stand up, Speak up & Act”.
- On Thursday, the first meeting of the Executive Committee of the Marist International Solidarity Network took place with the participation of the directors of the Secretariat of Solidarity, Brs Ángel Diego and Francis.
- On Friday, the directors of the Brothers Today Secretariat, Brs. Ángel and Lindley, will attend a meeting of the “Tutti Fratelli” group of Brothers’ congregations.

Objectives of the Forum

The objectives we want to achieve are:

- To deepen our understanding of the Marist vocation with particular emphasis on the lay Marist vocation.
- To review and offer formation and mentoring pathways for laypeople to grow in their vocation.
- To reflect on and propose possible ways of making a formal commitment to the Marist charism.
- To know, reflect, explore and propose possibilities of juridical structures (civil and canonical) for Marist laypeople.

This journey of reflection and discernment has several stages beginning in March 2021 and ending in November 2024. A dialogue process open to all at Province and international levels will be a feature. For Provinces, small group meetings for reflection are foreseen and, at the international level, a face-to-face Forum will be held in Rome from 4 to 11 November 2022 and a virtual one in November 2024. All Administrative Units will attend, with 3 representatives each (2 lay people and 1 brother).

Forum Stages:

- March to June 2021: (AU level) Launch of the Forum and getting organised within Administrative Units.
- July 2021 to June 2022: (AUs level) Local and Province reflection meetings (in person or virtual).
- November 4 to 11, 2022: (International level) International Forum in person, first part. Rome.
- December 2022 to June 2024: (International level) Reflection, analysis and discussion. International groups for further study and developing proposals.
- November 2024: (international level) Virtual International Forum, second part. Closing of the process and final document.

Participants

We would like participants to be people who are already committed to growing as Marists. To this end, we provide the following criteria:

- Lay men and women who identify with the Marist charism and who have chosen to discern, deepen and cultivate their vocation, valuing the diversity of its expression within the Province.
- Lay men and women who have made a formal commitment to the charism, those who are members of a Marist associ-



Message of Br. Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General, and Raúl Amaya, Director of the Secretariat of the Laity

ation, members of lay movements such as the MCHFM and similar movements.

- Lay men and women who are undertaking formation as Marists under the guidance of mentors appointed by the Province or District.
- Marist Brothers, especially those working with lay Marists in regard to discernment, mentoring and formation.

In those Provinces or Districts that do not yet have structures for helping lay people to grow in their Marist vocation, we suggest that you set up one or more groups of laypeople and brothers who want to discuss, reflect and discern together on the topic.

The relevant Province group for Marist laypeople, in dialogue with the Extended Secretariat of the Laity, will coordinate and organise the process and make arrangements that suit their own reality and possibilities.

Forum Guide

Soon, the **Forum** Guide will be sent to all Provinces with the information and criteria needed for organising the local phase and participating in the international phase. We are communicating this good news today for all of us to prepare our minds and hearts to welcome and participate in this wonderful consideration of the lay Marist vocation.

On the [website](#) and other social media of the Institute, as well as in other means of communication, you will be able to access all the information related to the International Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation (#MaristInternationalForum).

We place this Forum process in the hands of Mary, our Good Mother. She will accompany us on this journey and help us accept this new gift of the Spirit confidently.

Extended Secretariat of the Laity

GENERAL HOUSE

PROCESS OF DEFINING LEGAL STRUCTURES, AT A GLOBAL LEVEL, FOR THE MARIST LIFE AND MISSION



There is an important need in the Institute to update, adapt and direct the legal structures, both in the Administrative Units and in the different works of mission. To meet this need, the Superior General and his Council appointed the Legal Structures Committee in 2019 to design a process for the creation of legal structures, at the global level, that are at the service of Marist life and mission. At the end of the Committee's work, the General Council approved a series of recommendations which, among other things, direct the Administrative Units to take an active role in adapting and updating their legal structures. At present, Br Libardo Garzón and Br Luis Carlos Gutiérrez continue to develop this process. Progress is being made in the establishment and recognition of legal structures in the United States and Holland.

Creation of the legal structure in Holland

A year ago, with the visit of Brothers Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, Libardo Garzón, Xavi Giné and Robert Thunus to Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg, the process of searching, adapting the statutes and defining the organisation of the first Global Entity with its headquarters in Holland began.

Currently, with the assistance of civil and canon lawyers, the statutes have been drawn up and the corresponding procedures will be carried out with the authorities of the country.

This Entity of the Institute will serve to support and complement the Provinces and the Institute in the efforts of governance, management and animation of the mission, especially where it is necessary to focus on actions of sustainability and vitality.

Meeting of the Vicar General with the Province of West Central Europe

On 12 March 2021, Brothers Luis Carlos, Libardo Garzón and Ben Consigli met with Brothers Robert Thunus and Jacques Scholte to receive the documents from the lawyers in Holland with the documentary proposal.

On 18 March 2021, Br. Luis Carlos, at the request of the Provincial Council of West Central Europe, held a briefing on the progress of the Global Entities.

With the Provincial Council of the Province, the historical background of this project, its aims and purposes, its basic structure, the possibilities of its functioning, its establishment and the possible relationship with the Provinces or countries of the Marist world were discussed. The possible benefits for the Administrative Units and the recommendations approved by the General Council for the governance and management of the mission and assets of the Institute were also discussed. Then there was time for questions to the Vicar General to address the ideas of the Provincial Council.

GENERAL HOUSE

MARIST INSTITUTE 2020 STATISTICAL DATA PRESENTED TO THE VATICAN

The General Secretary of the Marist Institute has submitted the statistical report concerning the 31 December 2020 for the Vatican and the Institute, concerning all Administrative Units, communities, religious professions, deaths, departures, entries into the novitiate, fraternities and affiliates.

According to the data collected, on 31 December 2020 there were a total of 2,720 Brothers (2,450 Brothers in perpetual vows and 270 Brothers in temporary vows), 65 novices, 571 communities, 548 houses. In the year 2020, 42 first professions and 7 perpetual professions were recorded. In the same year, 9 Brothers in temporary profession left the Institute and 11 in perpetual profession. In 2020, 95 Brothers died.



The data provided are continuously updated by the statistics office, which is under the direct responsibility of the Secretary General of the Marist Institute.

EAST ASIA

PROVINCE LAUNCHES PROCESS OF INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCATION

Around 130 brothers and lay across the East Asia Province gathered for the launching of the process of the International Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation held last March 19. Joining the East Asia Champagnat Marists were brothers from Bangladesh, Vietnam, and Rome, as well as laity leaders from Madagascar and a CMMF member from Doha, Qatar. Part of the event was the sharing of Br. Sylvain, General Councilor, on Joseph as Patron of the Marists and how significant this day is in relation to the launching of the forum. Luiz da Rosa, Director of the Communications Department in Rome shared about communication links to foster global connections.



The International Forum with its theme “Welcoming, nurturing, living and sharing our vocation” with the subtitle “Your sons and daughters will prophesy” (Joel 3:2) aims at allowing the laity with its varied experience of Marist life to be in a process

of dialogue and discernment to seek answers to a series of questions being asked by lay Marists from different parts of the world. The results and the agreements or consensus will help the laity to take concrete steps to live the lay vocation in a more conscious and committed way during the coming years.

FIRST PROFESSIONS

On the feast of the Annunciation, 25th March, novices Adelino, Gaspar and Isac, from East Timor, and Tran Ngoc Gioan (Vietnam) will make their first religious profession in the Institute, in Tudella. Ten other brothers will renew their vows on this occasion. On the same date, the first-year novices will begin their second year (**Livestreaming of the 1st Profession and Renewal of Vows**)

The pandemic in Asia and Oceania has prevented candidates from following the normal formation plan, but the two regions have agreed on the creation of a common novitiate in Tudella. Currently, besides Tudella, some novices of the Australian Province are in Laumanasa (Solomon Islands), Baucau (East Timor) and others will go to Cotabato (Philippines).

UNITED STATES

Marist Youth and Young Adults promotes 'Marist Conversations', a series that happens monthly live, hosted by Brother Brian Poulin and Matt Fallon. Each episode broadcasts live from **Facebook** and the previous episode can be viewed on **Youtube channel**. The 3rd episode was broadcast March 23rd. It featured a special guest, Earline Tweedie, a lay Marist working at Central Catholic High School.

BRASIL SUL-AMAZÔNIA

From the 8th to the 12th March, the Province organised a week of formation meetings for people working in their Pastoral Service and in other sectors of the Marist works. About ninety people took part on-line.

**SOUTH AFRICA AND CUBA
MOVEMENT IN LAVALLA200>
MARCH 2021**



Two significant events have happened these days in the Lavalla200>, International Communities for a New Beginning.

On March 9, Br. Nnodu Onwutalu, from Nigeria, completed his three years in the Lavalla200> community at Atlantis, near Cape Town in South Africa. In a note to Br. Nnodu, the Superior General, Br. Ernesto wrote, "Our thanks ... You have had a wonderful experience of an international, intercultural community! ... You are a trail-blazer for all the brothers of the African continent ... you made a choice to be open to a wider understanding of our Marist vocation and to head off to the unknown in faith."

On this Wednesday, March 17, Rosa Schiaffino (Mediterránea) and Br. Luis Sanz (Santa María de los Andes) head to Cuba (Holguín) from Guatemala. It has been a long wait for the visas to come through but now they are on their way. Br Jorge Gaio in Holguín is overjoyed to welcome them. Br Ephraim from Central America has been staying with Jorge these past 3 months. Rosa and Br. Luis have prepared a short video to introduce themselves.

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.



BROTHER FRANÇOIS, FIRST SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE MARIST INSTITUTE

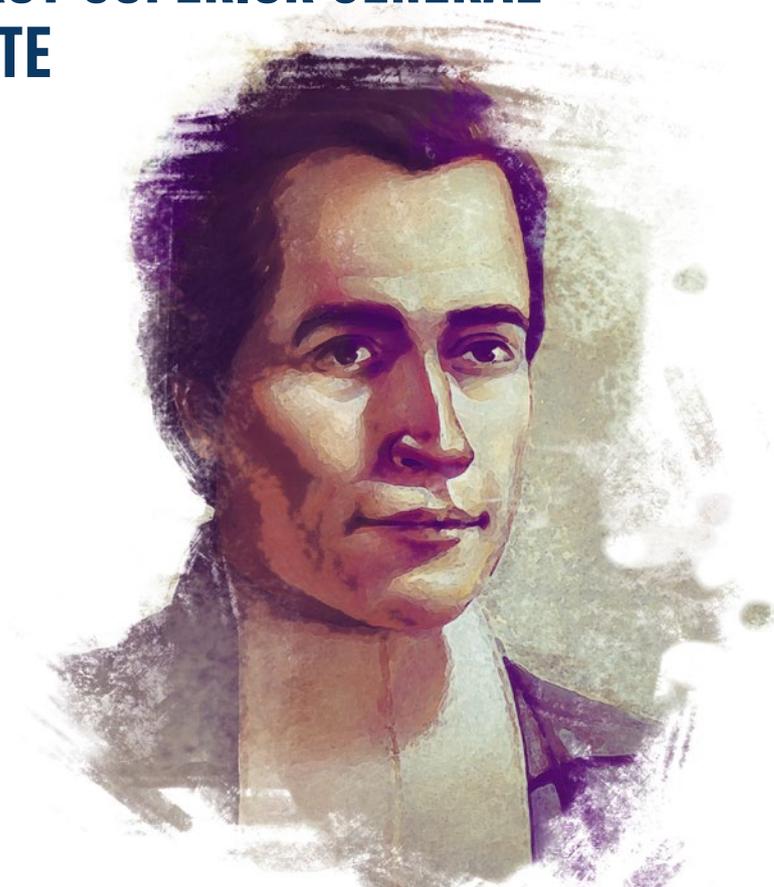
Today, in Marist News, we set out on a journey to get to know Brother François (Gabriel Rivat) better. Brother François, the first Superior General, was trained by Saint Marcellin Champagnat and produced the first synthesis of Marist Spirituality.

His cause for Beatification has been introduced in Rome and awaits a sign to move forward.

At the end of his work as Superior General, Brother François said: "I have had 20 years of preparation to be superior and 20 years to be one. Will I have another 20 years as reparation?"

That is why the number 60 has been chosen, 60 small texts, like "capsules", a biography in instalments to get to know Brother François.

May knowing more about Brother François allow us to bring the Marist charism up to date, and to invoke him in the expectation of his prompt beatification.



BROTHER FRANÇOIS 1/60 - BIRTH AND FAMILY

Gabriel Rivat (Br François) was born on Saturday 12 March 1808, in the hamlet of Maisonnettes, near La Valla-en-Gier (France). Maisonnettes is a hamlet of about 50 inhabitants. La Valla was an agricultural centre, surrounded by forests, producing some craftsmanship, mainly the manufacture of clogs (shoes).

His father, Jean-Baptiste, was born on 12 June 1762 and died on 18 September 1827, at the age of 65.

His mother, Françoise Boiron, was

born on 5 September 1765 and died on 15 December 1844, aged 79. They married in 1789. They had seven children: Jeanne-Marie, born in 1790; Jean-Claude in 1791; Jean-Antoine in 1793; Antoinette in 1796; Jeanne in 1798; Jean-Marie in 1805 and Gabriel in 1808.

The small farm had a stable with perhaps half a dozen cows, and a few sheep, goats or pigs. While not swimming in abundance, they never went hungry.

It was a Christian family, where the rosary was recited daily. Fasting and penance were observed. People who knocked on the door for food or water were looked after. Mass and catechism classes were attended weekly. Gabriel was baptised the day after his birth.



marist world

AUSTRALIA: MARIST ASSOCIATION OF ST MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT – HEIDELBERG WEST



FIJI: MULIVAI COMMUNITY AND THE ALUMNI OF MARIST BROTHERS' HIGH SCHOOL



ROMANIA: CASE ALE SPERANTEI



KIRIBATI: ST MARCELLIN PRE SCHOOL IN TEMAIKU, SOUTH TARAWA



COLOMBIA: MARIST NOVITIATE LA VALLA



AUSTRALIA: SOLIDARITY

BRAZIL

BRAZIL CENTRO-NORTE TAKES OVER THE SECRETARIAT OF A NATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Since February, the Province of Brazil Centro-Norte has been part of the new administration (2021-2023) of the Secretariat of the National Forum for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (FNDCA) in Brazil. The Province constitutes the new management of the body together with other national bodies, as well as religious institutions such as the De La Salles and the Salesians, in the defence of children and adolescents.

Br Vicente Sossai Falchetto, who lives in Silvânia, Goiás, will be the institution's representative on the body. He highlights two priorities for the management. "The first is to resume the activities of the National Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents, with elections of members. The second is to strengthen the state forums and, consequently, the state councils for children and adolescents.

The national secretariat will also direct its activities to mobilise



the population on urgent issues for children and adolescents, such as education, child labour, violence or sexual abuse. The Forum's mission is to guarantee the realisation of the rights of children and adolescents, through the proposal, articulation and monitoring of public policies and social mobilisation, for the construction of a just and supportive society.

AUSTRALIA

ONLINE SYMPOSIUM OF THE MARIST ASSOCIATION OF SAINT MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

On 2 March, 600 people gathered online for the Marist Association’s online Symposium with Father Timothy Radcliffe OP. Reflecting on the Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat theme for 2021: Breathe – the spirit of life (Romans 8:2) as stimulus, the symposium attracted Catholics from dioceses throughout Australia and overseas, including Vietnam, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and members of the Marist Brothers General House in Rome.

Father Timothy is well known to many as the former Master of the Dominican Order worldwide. His most recent book *Alive in God – A Christian Imagination* was a source of stimulus for the Marist Association theme, and his thought provoking comments and reflections on living the Christian life prompted a stimulating discussion during the symposium. The essence of Father Tim’s emphases was reflected in the assertion that “we are most likely to excite people with our faith if Christianity is grasped as the invitation to live fully”.

Speaking of the many challenges that young people face in Catholic schools, participants were reminded to

create space to allow the healing love of God in their lives. Drawing on the metaphor of gardening, Father Tim posited that the challenge for Christians is “to become gardeners of life, raising children who know the art of speaking healing words to others, who give freedom from failure and oxygen to live ... knowing when we share in that divine creativity we heal, we set free, we forgive, we make new”.

Brother Peter Carroll, Provincial of Australia, noted, “The number of participants and quality of engagement demonstrated once again in this holy season of Lent, the thirst among committed Catholics for spiritual thought, discourse and reflection. Seeing so many people in a diversity of contexts earnestly searching together was a graced experience.”



Institute of the Marist Brothers General House

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Website

<http://www.champagnat.org>

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