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MARIST NEWS

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GENERAL HOUSE

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE MARIST INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The Executive Committee of the Marist International Network of Higher Education Institutions met via Zoom on 23 March at 17:00 hours in Brasilia. Manuir José Mentges, Vice-Rector of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, President of the Committee; Br. David Hall, Dean of the Catholic University of Australia; and Br. Roberto Méndez Lopés, Rector of the Marist University of Querétaro. Also present as guests were Br Luis Carlos Gutiérrez Blanco, Vicar General of the Marist Institute, and Br Carlos Alberto Rojas Carvajal, Director of the Institute's Secretariat for Education and Evangelisation.

The aim of the meeting was to discuss the work plan for



**Marist
International
Network**
of Institutions
of Higher Education

the year 2021 and the next steps for the organisation of the Network Assembly, which was initially scheduled to be held in person at PUCRS (Brazil), from 18 to 22 May 2021. However, due to the pandemic situation, it will be held virtually on 18-19 May, .

general administration

- On Monday, Brothers Luis Carlos, Vicar General, Ben and Joao Carlos, General Councillors, and Br Goyo met with representatives of the Region of Europe to discuss the progress of regional development and the smooth articulation of the Region with the General Administration (secretariats and networks).
- On Tuesday, Brs. Óscar, General Councilor, and Valdicer Fachí, Director of the Cmi, attended the meeting of the Fratelli Project Council.
- On the same day, Brs. Beto and Mark, directors of the Secretariat of Education and Evangelisation, took part in a meeting of the Evangelisation Commission of the Arco Norte Region related to the launching of the Institute's Youth Ministry Network.
- Also on Tuesday, there was a meeting of the Laity Secretariat, with the participation of the link General Councillors, Brs. João and Sylvain.
- On Tuesday, there was a meeting of the "New Province

- Executive Committee" for the Region of Oceania, with Br Ben participating, to consider the work of the various committees.
- On Wednesday, the Cmi Department met with representatives of the De La Salle Brothers to continue working on establishing a new Fratelli Project in Maicao, Colombia.
 - On the same day, the Secretariat for Education and Evangelization, along with Luiz de Rosa, director of the Department of Communications, will meet with representatives of the Marist Publishing Network to work on preparations for the launch of the Marist Global Schools Network.
 - On Thursday, Cmi will hold a meeting with the Executive Board of the Network of Province Volunteer Co-ordinators to present a Guide for Marist Volunteering and to deal with the next steps of the Network.
 - On Friday the General Council meets for the "Regular Council".

Founded in 2004, the Network currently counts 26 institutions, acting in accordance with the premises of the General Administration of the Institute of the Marist Brothers in Rome. The Network is present in 12 countries and aims to strengthen networking, to produce knowledge in relation to the common themes of the universities and to promote exchanges of experiences between the institutions.



The Assembly, which will take place in May, will have as its main theme: Perspectives and challenges of Higher Education in the post-pandemic context. Its objective will be to

deepen, reflect and propose actions related to internationalisation and networking, and to validate the work proposal of the Executive Committee. The event will be addressed to the main leaders of the participating institutions.

SRI LANKA

FIRST PROFESSIONS IN TUDELLA



profession last year (Long, Phuc, Duy, Duc, Hai and Nghi), who due to the pandemic are still in Tudella. There they are pursuing their scholastic studies and mission experiences in the Marist centres in Sri Lanka, pandemic situation permitting.

The Formators

The Novice Master of the Tudella Novitiate is Br. Paco, who is still in the Philippines and coordinates virtually from the Novitiate in Tamontaka. The sub-Novice Master of the Novitiate is Br Real Sauvageau (Canada), and the formators are Br Rod Thomson from Australia and Br Chinthana Nonis (Sri Lanka). Other members of the community are: Br. Remigius Fernando and Br. Sales Fernando (Sri Lanka).

Four novices made their first religious profession at the **International Novitiate in Tudella** (Sri Lanka) on 25 March, the feast of the Annunciation. The new brothers are: Adelino Soares, Gaspar Teun, Isac de Jesus (East Timor) and Tran Ngoc Gioan (Vietnam).

Due to the pandemic, only a few Brothers from Sri Lanka and some family members participated in the ceremony. Because of COVID-19, the 4 confreres will probably stay in Sri Lanka until the borders are opened, in the meantime they will continue their scholastic studies on-line and carry out their apostolic activities wherever it is possible to do so.

Renewal of vows

On the same day as the profession of the 4 novices, there was also the renewal of vows of the 6 confreres who made their first

[Video](#) / [FaceBook](#) / [Newsletter](#)



7 APRIL

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF REFLECTION ON THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE

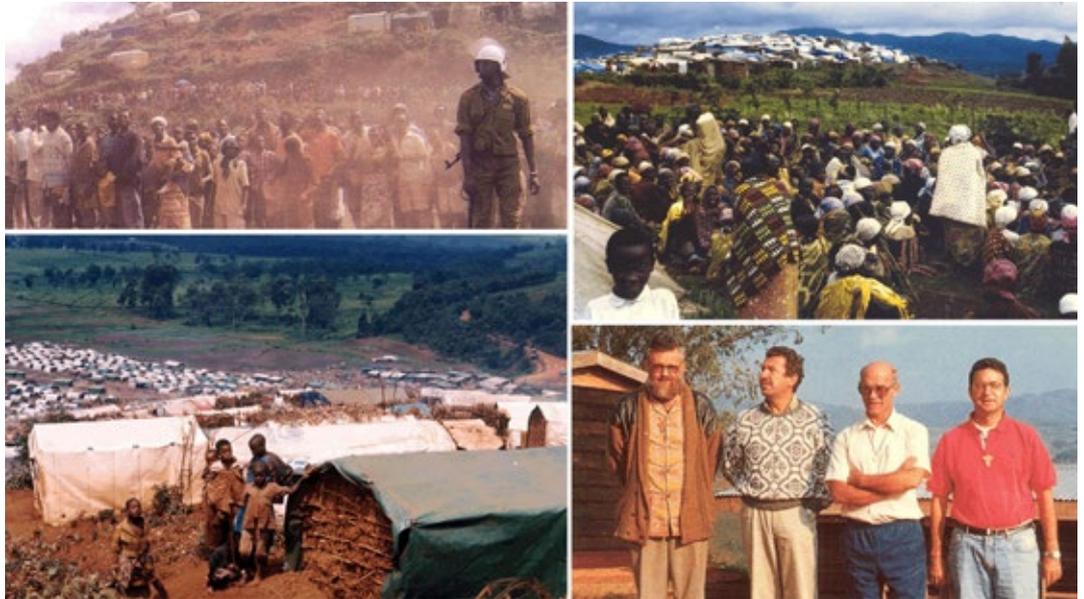
Every year on 7 April, the International Day of Reflection on the Rwandan Genocide, which took place mainly in 1994, is commemorated. A war conflict, a human drama, in which hundreds of thousands of people died. We do not want to go into the causes of this terrible event already sadly marked, and forever, in the calendar of history.

We want to commit ourselves, as Marists of Champagnat, to the struggle so that this type of situation will never happen again. We join in the efforts of UNESCO, and other groups, to make education a force for change, so that education reminds us of past events and prepares us to approach the future with peace, universal brotherhood, equal dignity of persons. We offer our educational works to be homes of light, which care for life and generate new life. We offer our centres so that never again will darkness take possession of the human being. We cannot offer great resolutions that will prevent existing conflicts, but we can sow small seeds of peace that will become, like the mustard seed of the Gospel, oases of universal brotherhood in the societies where we are present.

We all know that genocide refers to the “annihilation or extermination of a group of people because of any kind of differences”. Sadly, this is a fact that has been repeated throughout history, in different cultures, historical moments and societies.

In this sense, we want to join the speech made by António Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations, when he said: “Only by recognising that we are all one human family sharing the same planet can we rise to the many global challenges that await us, from coronavirus disease to climate change”.

A group of Marist Brothers wanted to respond to the call of the poorest, the excluded, those whose lives seemed to have



lost all value. First six Rwandan Brothers, then four Spanish Brothers. A group of brothers who gave their lives out of love (for God and for the poorest of the poor). We all know the names of the 4 brothers who came from abroad and stayed there: Miguel Ángel, Servando, Fernando and Julio. They left their lives there on 31 October 1996. They gave their lives there, until the end. Our 4 brothers took care of thousands of refugees who were living, passing through, fleeing the Rwandan genocide, and who settled in the camp of Nyamirangwe (Bugobe).

It is up to us today to continue caring for life, to continue generating life among the most vulnerable in this world. But it is also up to us to continue sowing seeds of hope, peace and love among the thousands of children we care for every day. Leonardo Boff, in a webinar on 16 March, told us that as educators we have a great responsibility, because “education does not change the world, but education changes the people who are going to change the world”.

We end our reflection with some words of Pope Francis (Fratelli Tutti 11), which invite us to continue working, every day, because “the good, as well as love, justice and solidarity, are not achieved once and for all; they have to be conquered every day”.

Br. Ángel Diego – Director of the Secretariat of Solidarity

GENERAL HOUSE

CONVOCACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCATION

The Extended Secretariat of the Laity has chosen 19th March to launch the process of the International Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation because it is the date on which we celebrate the feast of St Joseph, the patron saint of Marists. Marcellin was deeply devoted to St. Joseph: “Who, after Mary, could better express all that we feel than St. Joseph, that great saint! (Letter 238). It also coincides with Pope Francis’ words of praise for him in the apostolic letter “Patris corde” where he dedicated this year 2021 to his devotion. He describes him as “a beloved father, a tender and loving father, obedient and accepting; a father of creative courage, a worker, always in the shadows”. For Marists, St. Joseph is the self-sacrificing spouse, the father committed to his family, an exemplar of humility and absolute generosity, the educator of Jesus together with Mary. For us too, he is an attractive model for the laity from whom we can learn a lot.

The convocation of this International Forum is the result of a long lay Marist journey: from the first steps of the Champagnat Movement more than 35 years ago and the appearance of a number of subsequent expressions of the lay vocation; passing through the recognition of the vocation of lay Marists by the XXI General Chapter (2009); the valuable documents that continue to guide us on our journey and which are the fruit of the shared reflection of many laypeople and brothers: “Gathered around the same table” (2009) and “Being Lay Marist” (2017) and others specific to the CMMF such as the renewed “Project of Fraternity Life (2017); the organisation of various District, Provincial, regional and international meetings where we have reflected on the lay vocation; the creation of structures for the formation of laypeople in almost all the AUs and in the regions to create pathways for vocational growth; preparing lay leaders and formators to mentor others in their vocation in some Provinces; the current experience of some laypeople making formal commitments to the charism in some provinces; and examples of some kind of associative structure, as already exist in two provinces.



INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCATION

WELCOMING, NURTURING, LIVING AND SHARING OUR VOCATION.
“YOUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS WITH PROPHECY” (JOEL 3.1)

All the accumulated wealth of these years and the need to respond to the calls arising from the XXII General Chapter underscore the importance of engaging in a process of dialogue and discernment in the context of an International Forum. The Chapter stated that, “The future of the charism will be founded on a communion of fully committed Marists”, that “We need new structures and processes that recognize and support our distinctive vocational paths as Marists” and that “Each Administrative Unit develops a plan for promoting different forms of Marist life, including appropriate strategies for formation, accompaniment and belonging ...”, among other declarations and suggestions. Further, initiative 2. 1.5 of the General Administration’s Strategic Plan is: “To explore and consolidate forms of commitment, ways of belonging and charismatic associations, to share related reflections and experiences; to continue working with various groups and structures, such as the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family”.

The Forum has as its motto “Welcoming, nurturing, living and sharing our vocation”, made up of four actions characteristic of vocational growth in which the Spirit, each person and the community interact, dialogue and walk together in an ongoing process of discovery and development. It aims to show the importance of each moment and how they fit together in a gradual process of discipleship that impels us to be men and women for others, to go forth, to be brothers and sisters at the service of all. They also remind us of the words of Br. Ernesto Sanchez in his circular “Homes of Light” where he invites us to care for life and to generate new life. A biblical quotation is attached to the motto, taken from the book of Joel, “Your sons

marist world

GENERAL HOUSE: FRATELLI COUNCIL

BRAZIL: MARISTS IN ILHA GRANDE DOS MARINHEIROS

LEBANON: FRATELLI PROJECT



NICARAGUA: COLEGIO SAN FRANCISCO DE ESTELÍ - PASCUA JUVENIL REMAR

SPAIN: BILBAO

BRAZIL: COLÉGIO MARISTA ASA SUL, BRASÍLIA

and daughters will prophesy”, which reinforces the image of the future, of projection, of hope, of new generations who will continue Marcellin’s charism. It emphasises prophecy understood as announcing a better future in a visionary way, denouncing injustice and oppression, and committing oneself to be faithful to the love that comes from God.

The International Forum will be a process of dialogue and discernment to which all Administrative Units are invited, and which will run over four years. Our intention is to provide answers to a series of questions being asked by lay Marists in different parts of the world and which we have expressed in four major objectives. The results we arrive at and the agreements or consensus we reach will also be important, as they will help us to take concrete steps to live our lay vocation in a more conscious and committed way in the coming years.

The Brazilian Archbishop Hélder Câmara, was a person of reference for many Christians in the world, a fierce defender of Human Rights, a four-time candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize and someone whose life gave clear witness of a Christian committed to his people. He had a beautiful thought that he

often used and that can inspire us today for this journey that we are about to undertake together:

“When you dream alone, it is only a dream; When you dream with others, it begins to come true.”

Our invitation to you is to dream with others, in a spirit of communion, in dialogue, in listening to the Spirit and to each other. To dream together so that sharing our vision of the future may itself be the beginning of what God wants for us. May this dream shared by thousands of Marists, lay people and brothers, help us to be what the Spirit is encouraging us to be: a Global Charismatic Family, united in the service of the Church and of all people.

Our Good Mother, Marcellin and so many brothers and lay men and women who have gone before us will be with us, sharing this dream, companions on our journey.

Fraternally,
Agnes Reyes, Manuel Gómez and Raúl Amaya
Secretariat of the Laity

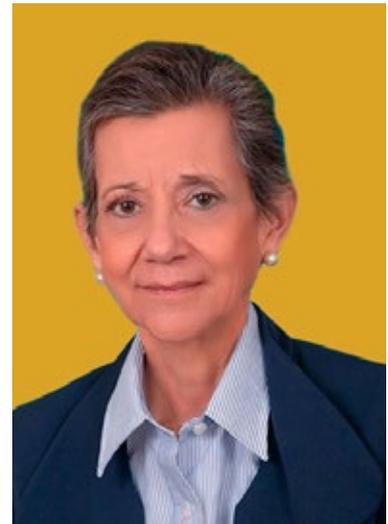


THROUGH THIS PROJECT, THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION IS ANSWERING TO THE CALL OF THE OF THE XXII GENERAL CHAPTER BY ASKING US, MARISTS OF CHAMPAGNAT:

- to grow in solidarity awareness as a Global Family, and
- to be involved in humanitarian projects, by means of fundraising for humanitarian emergencies of our time for basic needs including food, potable water, health/sanitation, and shelter.

Read more about the Fund here: <https://champagnat.org/en/fund/>

We deeply mourn the death of Paty Rios, from the Province of México Occidental. Paty lived her lay Marist vocation intensely, sharing her experience and witness also at the international level as a collaborator in the Secretariat of the Laity and in the development of the document "Around the Same Table". She was currently a professor at the Mexico Institute in Baja California. She belonged to the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family and for some years has been collaborating in the area of formation in the Province.



Br. François, first Superior General of the Marist Institute

3. CONSECRATION TO MARY AND DEVOTION TO HIS MOTHER

Brother François learned his devotion to Mary in his family. The rosary was recited daily in his home. When he was five years old, he accompanied his mother on a pilgrimage to Valfleury, at that time an important Marian centre. Her ancient image was saved from the iconoclastic revolutionaries. They probably walked the 20 km on foot. The mother prayed that her sons would return from the war soon and in good health. To achieve this, she promised a picture for the parish church and consecrated her youngest son to the service of the Virgin. It was Saturday 14 August 1813. A year later Napoleon was forced to abdicate and went into exile on the island of Elba. Gabriel's brothers Jean-Claude and Jean-Antoine were able to return to their family. At this time, Jean-Antoine has made a decision: he would become a priest and leave for the seminary.

At the end of 1815, Mme Rivat was able to place the promised painting in the parish church. It is a picture of Our Lady of the Rosary, with St. Dominic and St. Catherine of Siena. She will also do all she can to make her son Gabriel a fervent apostle of the rosary.

<https://champagnat.org/en/biography-of-br-francisco-in-instalments/>



CRUZ DEL SUR

The Province teams for solidarity and evangelisation have developed a proposal for their ministry with adolescents: “¡AMANECE!” (Wake up!) The initiative consists of three workshops centred on Marist experience and spirituality: “eyes, hearts and hands”. The first meeting will take place on 14 April.

CENTRAL-WESTERN EUROPE

The Provincial Council has developed a program for the Brothers and lay Marists of the Province to study together the Circular of Brother Ernesto Sánchez “Homes of Light”. The program will run over three months, from the beginning of March to the end of May and will include ideas for reading and sharing on each of the three chapters of the Circular.

BRAZIL CENTRO-SUL

On Holy Thursday, the young lay Marists of the Province met on-line to remember the institution of the Eucharist. During the celebration, they also recalled the steps taken by their group which will be 5 years old in 2021. They remembered the gestures of Jesus in washing the disciples’ feet and breaking bread with them. Together, they prayed for the end of the pandemic.

FORMATION GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Brs. Luis Daniel, Secretary General, and Goyo, assistant to the Economy General and manager of the Strategic Plan of the General Administration, have organized a formation program on Marist history and charism for our lay colleagues within the General Administration. The first session, with Br. Ernesto present, took place this week on April 6. Until the end of the year, monthly sessions will be held.

GUATEMALA

NEARLY 200 MARISTS GATHER TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SPIRITUALITY OF MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT



On 21 March, an average of 200 people, lay people and brothers from the Province of América Central, took part in the first meeting of this year’s Marist Oasis Formation Programme, which was held virtually, the theme being “The spiritual journey of Marcellin Champagnat”.

The meeting dealt with the origins of Champagnat: his family, his background, his first decisions and the circumstances in which the charism was developed. Brother Manuel Mesonero, PhD in “Spirituality of Marcellin Champagnat”, showed through different themes some little known aspects of the childhood and youth of Marcellin and the difficulties that the Marist founder encountered during this stage of his life.

In the three meetings of this year, the

OASIS formation space will have as a common theme: “The spiritual journey of Marcellin Champagnat”. The next two meetings will deal with the following themes: Existential crisis. The passage from asceticism to mysticism; Spiritual childhood as a way of living simplicity.

The activities of the first meeting were very enlightening for all the participants, who discovered quite interesting features of Champagnat’s psychology. Br. Rodrigo Cuesta, in charge of the formation programme, thanked all the participants and invited them to pursue the topics discussed during the meeting by reading and sharing the materials provided, either personally, or in their fraternities, communities or other groups.

The second meeting of this year’s Oasis Programme will take place in June.

BRAZIL

PUCPR VIRTUALLY INAUGURATES ITS WAY OF THE CROSS TO CELEBRATE EASTER IN 2021

Panels built on the University campus in Curitiba can be seen at the [interactive site](#) starting on March 30th. Catholic tradition has bequeathed us an exercise called “Way of the Cross,” a devotional practice that recalls the path that Jesus took from his condemnation to resurrection.

In 2019, fifteen 1.20 m x 2.40 m concrete panels were built and distributed throughout the PUCPR campus in Curitiba. With images of Jesus and messages imprinted on each of them, each Station’s message alternates between texts by Popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis, carefully selected from the Way of the Cross that took place in the Roman Coliseum on Good Friday.

These works were created by the visual artist Elvo Benito Damo, curated by the Institutional Identity at PUCPR.

Since the beginning of 2020, with the campus activities halted due to the pandemic, these works cannot be visited in person. Therefore, as a way of celebrating Easter in 2021, beginning March 30th, it will be possible to carry out a virtual and interactive tour of the PUCPR Way of the Cross with meditation moments for each of the Stations. The site can be accessed at <https://identidade.pucpr.br/viasacra>

“This project was only possible because it had full support from



the Congregation of Marist Brothers of the PMBCS. In particular, from Brother Clemente Ivo Juliatto, sponsor in its entirety; Brother Benê Oliveira, Provincial of the Marist Province of South-Central Brazil; Brother Rogério Renato Mateucci, Vice Provincial of the Marist Province of South-Central Brazil and Pro-Rector of Mission, Identity and Extension at PUCPR and Brother Délcio Afonso Balestrin, Marist Group President.” - said Fabiano Incerti, Director of PUCPR Institutional Identity.



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Website

<http://www.champagnat.org>

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