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MARIST NEWS

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CANADA

BR. GASTON ROBERT NAMED DISTRICT LEADER OF CANADA

Onesto Sánchez and the General Council appointed Brother Gaston Robert as the first Leader of the Marist District of Canada for a first mandate of three years, beginning in August 2021. Before the appointment, a sondage was taken among the elected delegates of the Province. The four Provincials of the Provinces involved in the transition from the Province of Canada to a new District (Canada, United States, Mexico Central and Mexico Occidental) were also consulted.

In his letter to the Brothers of the Province, Br Ernesto, Superior General, thanked Br. Gaston for having accepted the appointment: “Your international experience as a formator, as General Councillor, and more recently as community leader in communities for senior brothers, your capacity for listening and organisation, as well as your deep Marist spirituality ... will be of great help in carrying out your service as leader”.

At the same time, the Superior General thanked Br Gerard Bachand, Provincial of Canada since 2014, for his leader-



general administration

- On Tuesday, the second session of the meeting of the Marist Life Area of the General Administration took place, with the participation of the Secretariats of Laity and Brothers Today, as well as Cmi, together with the International Commission of Brothers Today and the enlarged Secretariat of Laity. The Link Councillors, Joao do Prado, Sylvain and Óscar, also took part.
- The general Councillors, Brothers Ken and João Carlos, on Tuesday took part in a meeting in preparation for the Provincial Chapter of America Central.
- Tuesday, Brothers Luis Carlos, Vicar General, and Ben met with the members of the Secretariat of Education & Evangelization to continue to discuss the progress of the various initiatives of the Secretariat.
- On Wednesday, the International Marist Mission Commission is to meet under the coordination of Brother Luis

Carlos. The team will discuss “fresh understandings of “good citizens and virtuous Christians” for Marist mission in the 21st century”.

- On Wednesday, the Secretariat of Education and Evangelization will meet the executive committee of the Network of Marist Institutions of Higher Learning and also the advisory team on Marist Youth Movement (MYM) to discuss the MYM survey.
- On Wednesday and Thursday, General Councillors João Carlos and Ben, together with Br. Goyo, will take part in a meeting of the Regional Council of the Marist Region of Europe.
- On Thursday, General Councillors Josep María and Sylvain will attend a meeting of the Council of the District of Asia.
- On Thursday, Secretariat of Education and Evangelization will meet the executive team of the Network of Marist Publishing Houses.

ship: "Many thanks, Gerard, for your closeness to people, for your dedication and availability to the Brothers and laypeople of the Province".
After consultation with the Provincials and Councils of the

Provinces of Canada, Central Mexico, Mexico Occidental and the United States, the General Council on 12 June 2020 decided that the Province of Canada, as from 15 August 2021, will become a District. [See here for further detail](#)

Br. Gaston Robert

Br Gaston was born in Waterloo, Quebec, on 4 November 1947. After primary and secondary studies in a school run by the Marist Brothers, he entered the postulancy at the age of 18. Once he had finished his training as a teacher, he practised his profession in a Marist college at Iberville for ten years. Then he studied at the Institute of Psychology of the Gregorian University for 4 years and in 1990 he was one of the four formators of the first course of formation for future Masters of Novices under the direction of Brother Basilio Rueda.
In 1993, at the 19th General Chapter, he was elected

General Councillor for a mandate of eight years. Returning to Canada in 2001, he worked in a spiritual accompaniment centre in Montreal, giving courses in spiritual anthropology. From 2004 to 2008, he animated French-speaking spirituality groups in Manizana and then in Rome.
Returning to Canada, he resumed his accompaniment and courses until 2011. That year, he was appointed leader of the community of elderly brothers at Château-Richer, situated near Quebec City.
He is currently in charge of the community of elderly brothers at "Les Trois Violettes" residence in Iberville, a position he assumed in 2019.

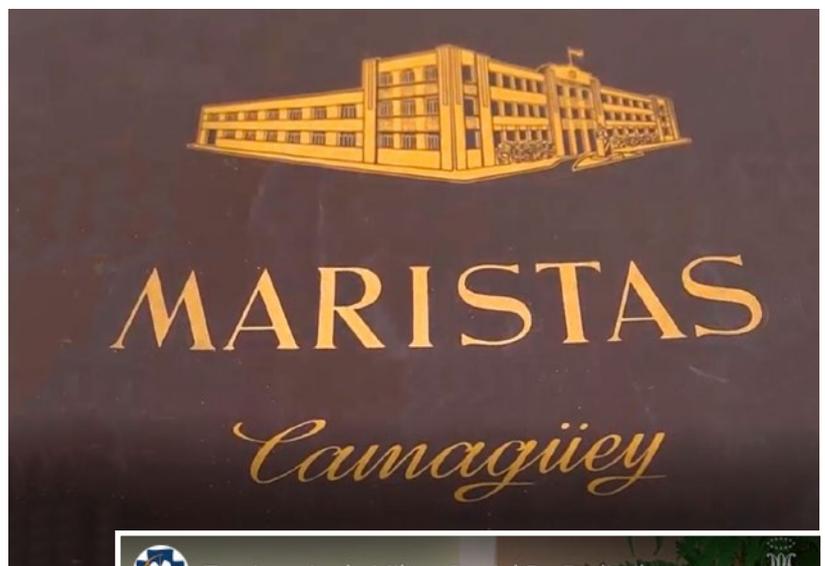
CUBA

TESTIMONY OF MILTON DANIEL DE BEDIA IBARRA, A FORMER MARIST STUDENT AT THE SCHOOL IN CAMAGÜEY

"My Marist roots are very strong and my devotion to Mary is very strong," says Milton Daniel, a former Marist student at Camagüey College in Cuba. He was in the school's last graduating class in 1959/60. "Those of us who were at the school for a number of years, that stays with us forever," he added. His testimony was recorded by Rosa Schiaffino (Mediterranea), a member of the Lavalla200> project. After 2 years in Syracuse, Rosa was assigned to Holguin. She and Br. Luis Sanz (Santa Maria de los Andes) have spent several weeks in the Cuban capital preparing the necessary documents for their stay on the island: "I am discovering the kindness and openness of the Cuban people and I love it". During her stay in Havana she met Milton De Bedia.

With an enviable memory and heartfelt affection, Milton recounted in great detail what life was like at the school where he grew up with 600 other students and a handful of much-admired Marist Brothers.

In the video below is the tribute made by Rosa and Br. Luis to Milton, to former Marist students of Cuba and to the Brothers who were there and who are still present in so many memories.



BRAZIL

The LaValla200> community of Tabatinga, Brazil, spent Holy Week in Ronda, a locality on the banks of the Amazon River, about 50 minutes by boat from the Colombian city of Leticia. A description of their experience can be [read in the bulletin sent out last week by the community](#).

CUBA

After several weeks in Havana, Rosa Schiaffino (Mediterránea) and Br. Luis (Santa María de los Andes) were finally able to travel to Holguin and were welcomed on 15 April by Br. Jorge Gaio (Brasil Centro-Sul), completing the LaValla200> community of the Arco Norte Region for 2021.

AUSTRALIA

During the month of May, the Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat is promoting a NEW Marist Formation Reflection Series: Hail Mary – Reflections on the Mysteries of the Rosary, written by Br Mark O'Connor. The seven-part series is offered by subscription only. Please [register here](#). To receive the first reflection on Wednesday 5 May 2021. [Details here](#)

INDIA

The Talit Community this academic year 2021 has 53 hostel boys from Class 6th to 11th only. 8 lay teachers are working with the Marists, helping hostel boys in their studies, taking classes every day for two hours. In a meeting some time ago, the centre's child protection policy and our Marist way of teaching the children were presented to the teachers.

NORANDINA PROVINCE
MARIST EASTER

The DNA of our hope

From March 31 to April 4, the [Province of Norandina](#) celebrated in the city of Ibagué the “Marist Easter 2021: the DNA of our Hope” where participants from the whole province (Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela) lived an encounter with Jesus through the experience of his Passion, Death and Resurrection.

The Champagnat School of Ibagué was witness of a Lenten journey that, during 40 days prior to Easter, the participants lived in order to assume in fullness the proposal of our Lord. It was an opportunity to live an experience of faith to facilitate for the Marists of Champagnat, moments of personal and community reflection where it was possible to meet the God of Life and at the same time to transmit a message of hope from the encounter with the Risen One.

Although in conditions of pandemic and confinement, there were about 256 people registered from the whole province: Brothers from the three countries, a good number of lay members of the different fraternities, and volunteers from the Marist children's and youth minis-

try; Marists of Champagnat who are in different parts of the world also participated, connected through the different platforms that were used.

Organized in 18 Easter communities, the participants were able to attend the catechesis of the Easter Triduum, guided by Brother José Miguel Caballero, Father Germán Medina and Father Carlos Iván Martínez, who proposed the different reflections around the guiding thread of the DNA of Jesus, as the one who invites us to live the service, the generous surrender on the cross and the experience of a new genetic code to assume the resurrection.

The central celebrations were transmitted live through the social networks of the Province, with more than two thousand views in the different events. It is worth mentioning the presence of 43 guests who, following all the bio security protocols, accompanied the celebrations every day from the place of origin of the transmission.

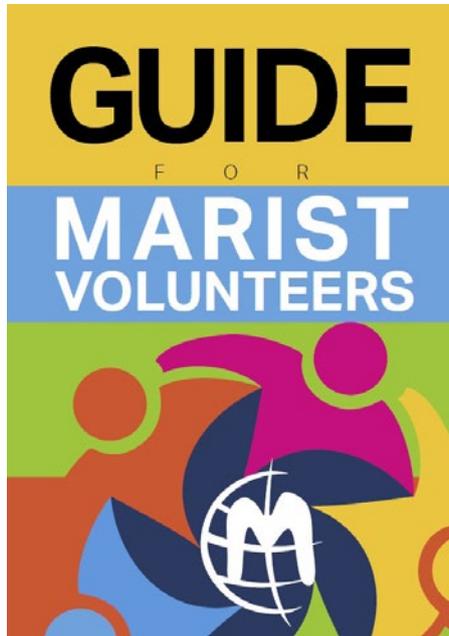
Days after the end of the Holy Days, the positive impact that this experience has had on those who took part in it is clear.

COLLABORATION FOR MISSION, INTERNATIONAL

CMI LAUNCHES THE MARIST VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

The Collaboration for Mission, International (CMI) of the General Administration has just launched the Marist Volunteer Handbook. It is an aid to understanding the Marist Institution in relation to Interprovincial Volunteering, provides basic information about the Volunteer’s journey and clarifies the conditions for becoming a Volunteer.

“The Guide is addressed to all Marists: brothers, lay people, collaborators, young people, students... To all of those who, in one way or another, have a connection with the Marist world,” said Br Valdicer Fachi, director of Cmi. “It is important that as many people as possible know and have access to this publication. Some will be distribute the information, others may even become volun-



teers, offering an important part of their lives to the service of others, especially the most needy children”.

Marist volunteering is an effective way of building a culture of encounter between nations and peoples; it is a powerful tool for sharing knowledge, skills and values, contributing significantly to poverty reduction. All parties involved (the sender, the receiver and the volunteer) are connected and guided by, well-defined roles and agreements.

If you are interested in Marist Interprovincial Volunteering, you can contact the Provincial Volunteer Coordinator (CPV) or directly with the Cmi (cmi@fms.it).

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Br. François, first Superior General of the Marist Institute

5. CHAMPAGNAT’S CATECHISM

The young Vicar Champagnat was especially concerned with catechism; he saw in the young the hope of the Church. At All Saints 1816, he announces its beginning. Jean-Marie, the third of the Rivat children, was 11 years old. He would not miss this formation which must have been started by the previous curate. After a few weeks, Fr. Champagnat wanted to increase the number of children attending catechism classes: “If you bring me a neighbour or a cousin, I will give you a prayer-card”. Well,” says Jean-Marie, “I can bring you my little brother, but he is only 8 years old. “Bring him to me. We’ll see if he can make his First Communion before the others”. And for two years, Gabriel carefully followed this preparation.

According to Sulpician principles, learned in the seminary, Champagnat taught catechism in surplice, in front of two groups of listeners: boys on one side and girls on the other. Gabriel listened attentively and made an effort to memorise for the recitation. Since he could already read, he would soon know the catechism by heart, as was required at the time. This was probably Gabriel Rivat’s first encounter with Marcellin Champagnat.



Read here the other episodes of the Br. François’ life: <https://champagnat.org/en/biography-of-br-francisco-in-in-stalments/>

marist world

CUBA: LAVALLA200> HOLGUÍN

MADAGASCAR: INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCATION

BRAZIL: LAVALLA200> TABATINGA



CÔTE D'IVOIRE: MARIST COMMUNITY BOUAKÉ

SPAIN: HUELVA, ANIMATORS

PHILIPPINES: PALAWAN – THE PUPILS WITH THEIR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

NEW FRONTIERS

EMERGING REALITIES: MESSAGE OF THE MARIST INTERNATIONAL MISSION COMMISSION

The Marist International Mission Commission, made up of brothers and lay people, has taken on the task of reflecting on the centrality of Marist mission in today's world. The messages already published are: "The Pandemic and our Marist mission", "Leadership and our Marist Mission", and "Innovative Marist Mission in our Educational Institutions". Today we present the 4th message: "New Frontiers – Emerging Realities".

The message written by Br Ken McDonald, on behalf of the International Commission, focuses on the Marist task in today's world, affirming that "transforming the lives of children and young people particularly those on the margins is foundational to Marists of Champagnat".



In this way, he stressed, "Marcellin's original intuition continues to be relevant in the world today". The message sent to the Institute on 20 April resonates well with Pope Francis' firm invitation to have compassion for the marginalised, especially in this time of pandemic, when so many people suffer increased exclusion, especially from education: "It is a time for free and disinterested missionary communities, which do not seek prominence and advantage, but rather walk the paths of the people of our time, stooping to tend to those on the margins. It is a time for communities that look disappointed young people in the eye, that welcome strangers and give hope to the disheartened."

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18TH APRIL 1999

CANONIZATION OF FATHER CHAMPAGNAT

A heart that knows no bounds

[Video](#) | [Photos in FaceBook](#)

On the 18th of April 1999, San Marcellin Champagnat, founder of the Institute of the Marist Brothers, was canonized in the Vatican. “Dear young people who have come to express your devotion to the spirit of education given by Fr Champagnat, I encourage you to remain faithful in the path to which you are called by God”, Pope John Paul II said, in his welcoming speech to the pilgrims of different parts of the world, assembling in Rome for the canonization of Father Champagnat. The Marist family experienced the canonization as a special occasion, under the slogan “A heart that knows no bounds”. For the Marists of Champagnat, the canonization of Father Champagnat was “the official recognition of the Church that our Founder was a Saint, raised up by the Holy Spirit to help all those following in his footsteps on the road to sanctity. Also, he can be recognised as a reference point for our own lives, as a sure intercessor with God”, just as Brother Gabriele Andreucci, General Postulator, mentioned at that time.



The miracle of Father Champagnat

The Marist Saint, raised to the altar after the recognition of a miracle: the inexplicable cure of Brother Heriberto Weber, whom the doctors, in May of 1976, diagnosed “with an early, unknown growth which was transferring to the lungs”, and which they declared incurable.

At that time, on hearing the news, the Brothers and students of the province of Uruguay – where the sick Brother resided – began a novena to ask for the intercession of Blessed Champagnat. When the devout Brothers and students finished their period of prayers, Brother Heriberto recovered and felt better. The miracle happened on 26th July 1976: the x-rays and medical analysis demonstrated that the illness had disappeared.

Before the miracle, Brothers Agustín Carazo postulated the cause in 1985. On 26th June 1997, the experts, medical members of the Consultation considered that Brother Heriberto’s illness

was due “to serious pulmonary affection characterized by bilateral nodular dissemination leading to marked insufficiency in breathing with serious consequences for his general health”, and they concluded that such a cure was scientifically inexplicable. One year later, on 20th February 1998, the Commission of Theologians of the Congregation for Holy Causes, recognized the cure

of Brother Heriberto Weber as something preternatural and it attributed it to the intercession of Blessed Marcellin Champagnat. The Ordinary Congregation of Eminent Cardinals and Bishops expressed unanimously, on 2nd June 1998, that it was an authentic miracle, and it was decreed as such, by the Pope John Paul II, on July 3rd 1998.

Months later, the Pontiff would determine 18th April 1999 as the date for the canonization of Marcellin Champagnat. The much sought-after day had arrived!

Pope John Paul II invites us to give thanks to God

“We can give thanks for the numerous disciples of Fr Champagnat who faithfully fulfilled their mission (...) I cordially grant my Apostolic Blessing to all the faithful here and to all the Marist Brothers of the world, to those who work with them in the educational field and to all the young people who benefit from their apostolate”, the Pope expressed, two decades ago, in St. Peter’s Square, when canonizing the father founder of the Marists: Blessed and Saint Marcellin Champagnat.

UNITED STATES

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF THE UNITED STATES

During the Provincial Chapter of the United States, held April 8-11, Br Dan O’Riordan took office as the new Provincial, replacing Br Patrick McNamara. The Chapter meeting also elected the new Vice-Provincial, Br Owen Ormsby and the other five Brothers members of the Provincial Council: Hank Hammer, Dominick Pujja, Todd Patenaude, Steve Schlitte and Seán Sammon.



Br Dan thanked Br Patrick, Provincial since 2015, for his work during his term of office. For his part, the Superior General, Br Ernesto Sanchez, sent a video message from Rome to all the Brothers of the Province and in a special way to Br Patrick: “Thank you for your continuous dedication to the Brothers and the laity of the Province, for your ability to be a team player, for your heart that knows no bounds”. “Thank you for your continuous dedication to the brothers and laics people in your province, for your ability to be a team builder, for your heart without borders”.

The Chapter participants defined the priorities of the new Provincial Council and also took into account the reports presented to the Chapter.

These are some of the topics discussed:

- The results and analysis of the Questionnaire on the challenges facing the U.S. Province were addressed. The topics addressed by the different groups, segmented by age, were as follows: mission, retirement and health, vocations, ongoing formation, laity and Marist charism, spirituality and prayer life of the brothers, evangelization, pastoral ministry, community life, northern arc and other points of interest, such as the evaluation of achievements and challenges in the light of covid-19, and new structures of governance to promote Marist life

and mission.

- A report was given on the work of the Laity Council which, despite Covid-19, has been meeting faithfully every 2 weeks. Among the achievements, in January 2021, 56 people started the formation programme and there are 22 brothers involved either as participants and/or mentors. More information on the US Council of the Laity can be found here.
- A report on “Relationships with Pastoral Institutions” was presented. Over the past six years, leaders, school board members, faculty and staff have been invited to participate in Marist professional development programmes. The Brothers also share the Marist charism of Champagnat in the schools where they are present. They also conduct workshops and invitations to participate in the Marist Youth and Young Adult Program.

• A report was also presented on the progress and challenges of the Marist Community of Welcome (Austin, Texas), which welcomes individuals and groups who wish to learn more about Marist life. More information about this community can be found here.

• The topic of vocation promotion was also on the agenda, highlighting the need to increase commitment and develop a vocation plan that embraces young people also outside the school environment. (See the document).



GENERAL HOUSE

ANDREA ROSSI, NEW DIRECTOR OF FMSI

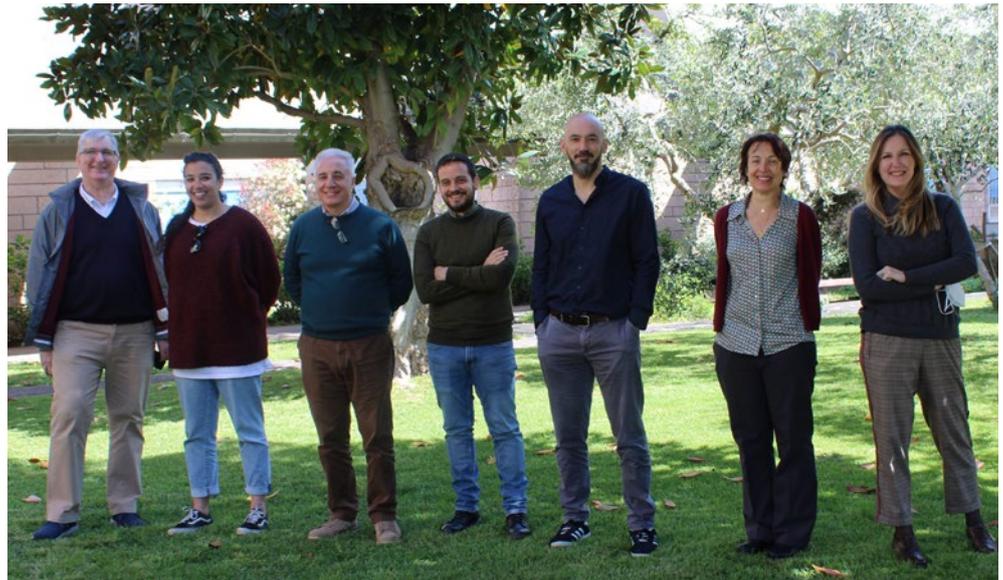
The new director of the Marist Foundation for International Solidarity (FMSI), Andrea Rossi, took office on 12 April. He was nominated by the Foundation's Board of Directors and appointed by the General Council. As part of the FMSI team, since 2019, he was responsible for projects and strategic partnerships with different entities (Director of Strategic Partnerships and Projects).

Andrea replaces Br Ángel Diego García Otaola, who was the operational director for the last year.

FMSI is a foundation created by the Institute to develop the potential of children through educational and solidarity projects. Recognised as an NGO by the Italian government, FMSI has had Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United

Nations since 2011.

The Foundation's work is focused on helping children and their communities, with the aim of improving the quality of life through social transformation and inclusive growth driven by long-term projects that seek to foster equitable access to education for marginalised children and youth.



Andrea Rossi

Andrea Rossi graduated from the Faculty of Languages and International Communication in 2006. The following year, he completed a Master's degree in Human Resources Management (HRM) organised by the European University of Rome and the Italian HRM Association.

At the beginning of his professional career, Andrea worked as an international project development manager in the training company of Telecom Italia. Subsequently, he worked on EU-funded projects, education and development cooperation projects, accumulating more than 15 years of experience in the fields of education, sustainable development and technical assistance in public administrations, foundations and non-profit organisations in Italy and abroad.

In the field of international project management, Andrea has coordinated teams working on more than 100 projects implemented all over the world.

Thanks to his work, Andrea has known more than 25 coun-

tries and has lived three years abroad (1 in Australia, 1 in Germany, 1 in Romania).

Her hobbies are music, astronomy, chess and paddle tennis.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

RENEWABLE ENERGY: THE WAY FORWARD TO SAVE THE CLIMATE**Reflexion from the Secretariat of Solidarity on the Sustainable Development Goals**

Renewable energy is often referred to as “clean energy” or “green power” because it is environment friendly. Its sources include solar, geothermal, wind, biomass, and hydropower energies. Renewable energy is considered the energy of the future because it does not cause pollution. The effort to harness and promote affordable and clean energy is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations’ (7: affordable and clean energy). This goal aims at ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. Through it, the UN targets universal access to modern energy; it aims to increase the global percentage of renewable energy and double the improvement in energy efficiency, to promote access to research, technology, and investments in clean energy, and to expand and upgrade energy services for developing countries.

Climate and energy experts have pointed out that even though global warming has been happening over the centuries, the pace of warming is accelerating and human activities, particularly the burning of coal, oil, and other fossil fuels, are a primary cause. Experts in the energy and environmental fields agree that the need for transition to alternative energy is urgent and that the best option to mitigate the potentially catastrophic consequences of climate change is to reduce the use of fossil fuels and speed up the transition to renewable forms of energy.

Although renewable energy is often thought of as a new technology, harnessing nature’s power has long been used in many ways. Wind energy has powered boats to sail the seas and windmills to grind grain. Now, wind energy turns turbine’s blades, powers electric generators, and produces electricity. Hydropower is used in many countries to generate electricity. Solar energy is used to heat homes and businesses, to warm water, or power devices. Solar cells made from silicon or other materials trans-



form sunlight directly into electricity. Solar systems are used to generate electricity either through rooftop panels or community projects that power entire neighbourhoods.

Advocating for renewable energy or using it in homes, can accelerate the transition toward a clean energy. A future powered by wind, solar and other renewable sustainable energy sources could save lives besides reducing energy bills. A greener future is attainable provided urgent action is taken by policymakers, business leaders and other stakeholders. Environmental and economic benefits of using renewable energy include generating energy that produces no greenhouse gas, diversifying energy supply as well as reducing dependence on imported fuels. Increasing the supply of renewable energy would replace carbon-intensive energy sources and significantly reduce global warming and climate change by investing in energy-efficient appliances.

In his encyclical, ‘Laudato Si’, Pope Francis urges people and businesses to reduce the use of fossil fuels and look for substitutes in renewable energy to help save the climate. He equally urges developed countries to help the poor countries in shifting to renewable energy. The considerable progress made by some countries in promoting renewable energy is far from constituting a significant proportion. Hence, here is an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced.

Br. Francis Lukong – Secretariat of Solidarity

BR. ÓSCAR MARTÍN VICARIO, GENERAL COUNCILLOR

KINTSUGI – HE SHOWED THEM HIS WOUNDS

Something I was not told when I started my time as Provincial, a few years ago, was that I would have to accompany many brothers in hospital, through their crises, in their moments of weakness, and even in preparing for death (I had to say goodbye to forty-eight brothers in six years). I must admit that it was a tough experience. More than once, to my surprise, I was filled with a feeling of powerlessness and tears flowed.

Yet, at the same time, it was a privilege and a grace. The names of many of those brothers will stay with me forever, especially those whose loss was most painful, such as Miguel, César, Antonio, Augustine, Carmelo... Sharing their pain and suffering, their fear and farewells was an exercise in presence, patience, compassion, listening and a lot of learning. I thank God today for the privilege of these encounters.

“He showed them his wounds”

These memories have come flooding back these days, as I read the beautiful post-Easter stories, in which the question of the identity of the risen one is repeatedly asked, and which underscore the desire of Jesus’ followers to demonstrate that the person they met face to face was really Jesus. One of the means used to describe their experience was that Jesus “showed them his wounds” (John 20:20), to dispel any disbelief.

The phrase, I admit, has made me wince when I meditated on it these days: “He showed them his wounds”. How beautiful is this paradox, speaking of the risen triumphant One! He did not first show them his miracles, or his strength, or his might. He did not summon them to a mystical and magical place, or to the temple, but to the everyday life of Galilee. He did not reveal his identity to them with rational arguments... He only “showed them his wounds”.

In times of bewilderment, of feeling vulnerable, this scene gets to me and raises questions. I, who am a person of strong character, with a tendency to be rather sure of myself and determined (at least “on the outside”), feel invited, at this stage of my life, to show my wounds, to let others see where and in what ways I am weak, to not hide my failures or hide my limits as I have sometimes done. It is there, more than in my pride or my arrogance, where I hide (and yet show) who I really am, my



real identity. To express our contemporary fragility, how inspiring and evocative is the image of a home or a house “without walls”, which is where I and all of us live these days (and about which an acquaintance from Valladolid, the biblical scholar Víctor Herrero, has recently written beautifully).

Yes, I have wounds. Yes, I have been afraid in the pandemic. Yes, my heart has been torn with the loss of people I know. Yes, I have been afraid of what would happen if I were infected. Yes, I live in worry for those I love. Yes, my faith is not strong enough to cope with all this. Yes, in this context, living in fraternity has become more difficult. Yes, I find it difficult to ask for help and say, “I’m in bad shape”, “I don’t understand”, “I’m in pain”... And, I must admit, I’m even surprised when I hear some people, in times like these, say “I’m very well”, “Everything’s fine for me”, “I’m doing great”. Well, I’m not.

Today I prefer the Jesus who “bares his wounds”: in him, human and bruised, I feel more understood. A few years ago, I heard Jon Sobrino, a Jesuit theologian based in El Salvador, say: “Let us not forget that the risen one is the crucified one... but also the other way round, that the crucified one is the risen one. And there is no other place of encounter with God than in each of the crucified, crushed, suffering people of the earth.”

That is why, as I have been ruminating over recent months, I identify more and more with the Champagnat who went crying to the chapel of Our Lady of Pity because he was fearful at the prospect of his foundation faltering without vocations; with the man who got up limply from his bed of illness to support his brothers; with the man who wondered, sitting by the Gier, if his lifework was the work of God or if it was better to give up; or with the man who fell down in the snow, his strength slipping away, and raised his eyes looking for a light (which he was only to find outside when faith kindled it from within).

I find it hard to let my feet be washed. And for others to see my poverty and limitations. But showing my wounds is the invitation of the Risen One. Because, as Pope Francis wisely said this last Palm Sunday, “God is with us in every wound, in every fear”.

Kintsugi

In this vein, I was fascinated by the message from a brother and friend telling me about “kinti”. I had no idea what it was, and maybe that makes me ignorant because it is a centuries-old art... But, with its Easter overtones, it sounded to me like something new and provocative: it is a Japanese technique for repairing broken vessels, which consists of joining the pieces together and refashioning the vessels from the various bits (including some precious ones), into an artistic whole, but with the cracks remaining visible. In this way, the flaws, blemishes, and fracture lines become the most beautiful features of the renovated vessel. Not only are they not hidden, they are embellished with gold.

A magnificent art, kintsugi. How I would like to learn to master it in my own life and in times of grief! To learn to look at everyone



with the eyes of those Japanese artisans who see brokenness as a grace and fractures as opportunities to mend.

At a recent symposium of the “St Marcellin Champagnat Association” of Australia, Dominican Timothy Radcliffe proposed the same thing when he made a surprising invitation to us to be “gardeners of life”, that is, to help to heal, to survive failures, to provide vital oxygen, as did the incarnate God, healer, and liberator, always close to the wounded and the poor.

My humble prayer this Easter: Teach me, Lord, to let my wounds be seen. I need to unashamedly dare to challenge propriety and be like those (Nicodemus, the haemorrhaging woman, Zacchaeus, the adulteress...) who came near you fearful and weak, trembling, yet ready to stand before you and before the people “showing their wounds”, their fears and their pain. Give me and give us, Lord, the strength of weakness. The smile of a sick child. The provocation of Sister Ann Un Twang who disarmed the Myanmar soldiers only by kneeling and crying. The wise theology of slowness, spoken of by Cardinal Tolentino. The prophecy of the small. The power of dung.

The Risen One showed them and shows us his wounds. “It’s Him!”, they said in recognition. That’s Who I want to be.
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Alleluia, brothers.
Kintsugi.

Br. Oscar Martín Vicario, General Councillor
Easter 2021

BRAZIL

CMMF AND UMBRASIL PROMOTE THE NOVENA OF ST. MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

UMBRASIL, together with the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family (CMMF), is promoting a novena in preparation for the feast of St. Marcellin Champagnat on June 6th. The first meeting was held on April 6th, with the theme love for the neighbour.

The novenas are held every Tuesday and will end on 1 June. Due to the pandemic, they are being held online. Each meeting has a different theme from the life of the founder; reflections on topics such as love and passion, patience and kindness, the heart of a father, love without measure, a heart without frontiers, education and love, strength and courage, and the global Marist family.

“It is a joy to be together in this novena. I want to pray especially for the Marist Brothers of the entire Institute. I want to pray also for those young people who are thinking of following in Champagnat’s footsteps, who are beginning their journey

in the stages of formation, and I also want to pray for all the members of the Champagnat movement of the Marist family,” said Brother Dario Bortolini, from the Province of Brasil Centro-Sul, during the first meeting.

To take part in the novena, follow this link: <https://lkt.bio/novena>



Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family

The CMMF was born at the General Chapter of 1985. Its fundamental unit is the “fraternity”. A fraternity is a small community whose members meet regularly, share faith and life in a family atmosphere, cultivate the Marist vocation and grow in their experience of God and in their commitment to the world. In the three Marist Provinces of Brazil, there are 89 fraternities of the Champagnat Movement.



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Website

<http://www.champagnat.org>

YouTube

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/champagnatorg>

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