



PROVINCE OF WEST AFRICA

BR CYPRIAN BANKAKUU GANDEEBO APPOINTED PROVINCIAL

On 19 April, Br Ernesto Sanchez and the General Council appointed Br Cyprian Bankakuu Gandeebo as the first Provincial of West Africa for a period of three years, starting on 9 August, which coincides with the beginning of the Provincial Chapter. This date marks the **change from District to Province** following a decision announced on 21 November 2020.

Before Brother Cyprian's appointment, a survey was carried out among the Brothers of the District and the Provincial Council of **Mediterránea**, which was involved in the process of setting up the new Province.

In the letter sent to the Brothers, Brother Ernesto, Superior General, thanked Brother Cyprian for his service as District Superior during the last three years and also thanked him for having accepted to be Provincial of the new Province: "It fills us



with enthusiasm and hope to be able to count on your energy, availability and dedication", said Brother Ernesto.

In the same letter, the Superior General also thanked the Province of **Mediterránea** and its various Provincials and Brothers who have accompanied the District, which is part of the Prov-

general administration

- On Monday, Br Angel Diego, from the Solidarity Secretariat, participated in the meeting of the sub-working group of the "Laudato Si' Action Platform" for religious congregations, composed of Jesuit, Salesian and Marist representatives.
- On Tuesday, the directors of the Secretariat for Education and Evangelisation, Brothers Beto and Mark, participated in the meeting of the evangelisation team of the Arco Norte region. On the same day, they met with Brothers Luis Carlos, Vicar General, and Ben, General Councillor, to discuss some issues of the secretariat.
- On Tuesday, there was a meeting of the Extended Secre-

tariat of the Laity, with link Councillors, Brs. João Carlos and Sylvain, present.

- On Thursday, a "regular" meeting of the General Council will take place.
- Also on Thursday, Brs. João Carlos and Ben, link Councillors for the Region of Europe, will meet with the leaders of the communities of France, Greece and Algeria of the Province of L'Hermitage. On the same day, they will participate in a webinar on leadership, organised by the Region.

ince: “We thank this Province for its attention and accompaniment of the development and growth of the District up to the present time when it is beginning as a Province”, emphasised the Superior General.

The District of West Africa is made up of Cameroon, Chad, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea and Liberia. The District house is in Accra, Ghana.

Br. Cyprian Bankakuu Gandeebo

Br. Cyprian was born in Jirapa, Ghana, and is the eldest of eight children. He entered the postulancy in Orlu (Nigeria) and then made his novitiate in Kumasi (Ghana). After making his first profession in 1997, at the age of 36, he went to Nairobi for his scholasticate formation.

In 2000, he returned to Ghana and was appointed bursar of Marist Preparatory School. In 2001 he started working at St Marcellin Champagnat School. In the same year he was put in charge of vocation promotion. In 2007, he worked as formator at the Marist International Novitiate in Kumasi. A year later, in 2008, he was assigned to the Marist International Centre in Nairobi, Kenya. In 2018, Br Cyprian was appointed the new District Superior of the District of West Africa for a period of three years, a position he will hold until the middle of this year, 2021, when he will take up his new mandate as Provincial.



PROVINCE OF COMPOSTELA
IX ASSEMBLY OF SOCIAL WORKS

Educators, technicians and volunteers from the Marist centres and social projects of the Province of Compostela took part in the 9th Assembly of Social Works on the 10th April.

More than thirty people from the Champagnat Foundation, la Montagne Foundation and the Marist Lar of Ermesinde met to train, to exchange good practices and to feel united in the same mission.

Brothers Tomás Briongos, Provincial Superior, and Salvador Hidalgo, coordinator of the Mission Council, conveyed messages of thanks and encouragement to all of the participants.

In collaboration with members of the Education and Evangelisation Team – Eva M^a Matarranz, Carmen González and Eladio Díez – the keys to the Marist Educational Model in the Province were explained.

Educators from the socio-educational Centre Xuntos and the



Ecoludoteca of Cabeço de Mouro explained the first steps of these two recent social works in the Province.

During the assembly, the participants renewed their bold and creative educational commitment to children and young people in the most vulnerable situations. Through the Marist social works, the Province is also identifying the best ways to help people to be happy, competent and committed to their environment. More information in the interactive document “Marist Social Works, Compostela 2021”.

EAST ASIA

On May 1 the 4th Formation Session with the Friends of Marcellin took place. Br. Jonnel Sisneros from Lavalla200> Mount Druitt, Australia, facilitated the program. Around 20 attendees listened to the presentation on the theme of “Sharing Champagnat’s Mission Today.”

PROVINCE OF COMPOSTELA

25 participants from the various educational works of the Province attended another workshop on the theme: “Awaken to another way of life: ecology, from possession to gift”. This took place on April 24, and was also attended by Br Josep Maria Soteras, General Councillor, who spoke on creation according to Genesis.

GERMANY

The Marist Youth of Mindelheim have organized a week against racism. Under the motto “Stand up-Speak up-Act – A closer look at neo colonial structures”, Marist people from all around the world spoke last Monday about “a Closer Look at Neo-Colonial Structures”: Br. Fabien Bulaimu (Congo/Rwanda), Br. Tabunga (Kiribati), Br. Anitelea Fidow (Fiji/Samoa) y Angela Castro (Colombia). [Other info can be found on the link](#)

BRASIL CENTRO-SUL

On May 12 and 13, the Marist Historical and Spiritual Patrimony Workshop will offer a formation program on “The Superior Generals of the Marist Institute: Champagnat’s successors – their charisma, spirituality and management”. [You can register on this link](#)

COLOMBIA

ASSEMBLY OF THE MARIST MISSION OF THE NORANDINA PROVINCE



On 15 and 16 April, the first Provincial Assembly of the Marist **Mission of Norandina** (Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador) was held virtually. This Assembly was conceived as a forum for reflection and listening as part of the process of preparation for the VII Provincial Chapter to be held from 3 to 6 June 2021.

Brothers, lay people, coordinators of the different areas of animation, management teams of all our educational works and young leaders of Marist Youth Ministry gathered together to reflect on the social context of the places where the Marist mission is shared and lived in order to identify challenges, appeals, calls and finally to propose ways of acting.

On the 15th the participants were accompanied by Dr. Jaime Rendón, who presented practical elements for a critical reading of the reality of Latin America and, especially, of the three countries that make up our Province: Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador. Once he had finished his presentation, a reflection

session took place in groups of 10 people, in which they had the opportunity to go into greater depth on the subject presented, based on a discussion guide with two guiding questions.

On the 16th April, the participants shared with two brothers from the province who are currently serving the Institute and are part of the General House community in Rome, Brothers Libardo Garzón, Economy General, and Carlos Alberto Rojas (Beto), Director of the Secretariat of Education and Evangelisation. They shared with the participants their vision of the Marist mission from the global perspective and their knowledge of the Institute. Once they had finished their presentations, the work began in the reflection groups established on the first day.

The Assembly ended with a moving message of gratitude to all the Marists of Champagnat Norandino from Brother César Augusto Rojas Carvajal, who is coming to the end of his service in Provincial animation, a leadership he assumed in 2014.

GENERAL HOUSE

LOGO OF THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCATION

The logo for the process of the International Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation was created by the Communication Consultants of the Marist Province of Brazil Sul-Amazonia. The Extended Secretariat of the Laity is very grateful for their support, creativity and time dedicated to this challenge, as well as their contribution of helpful ideas to other initiatives.



INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON
**THE LAY MARIST
VOCATION**

WELCOMING, NURTURING, LIVING AND SHARING OUR VOCATION.
"YOUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS WILL PROPHESY" (JOEL 3,1)

The logo has three main elements, which can be used as a whole, separately or in a reduced combination. These elements are an image, the title of our process and a slogan that includes the biblical quote from the prophet Joel.

In the image we can find different symbols that refer to the experience we want to have in the next few years:

- The spiral shape evokes the wind of the Spirit who energises our lives and spurs us to live our vocation more intensely, in a movement that goes from the centre outwards, and from outside inwards, in a dynamic that is never-ending.
- In the centre there is fire, passion and creative love. They are symbolised in the warm colours chosen. It is another way of expressing the experience of the Spirit that we want to permeate the whole Forum process.
- Both the spiral and the typeface chosen for the expression "Lay Marist Vocation" suggest to us the idea of something done by hand, with time, with care. The image is thus humanised, revealing the imperfections of the human being.
- We can also discover an 'M' at the heart of this spiral. This M in movement identifies us with the gift of the Spirit which is the Marist charism. It connects us with our history as Marists of Champagnat, since it is inspired by the M in the logo that was created on the occasion of the canonisation of Saint Marcellin in 1999.
- In today's historical moment, we want to visualise in an increasingly significant way new expressions of the Marist charism, which speaks to us of the feminine

image of our God. It is not for nothing that the Hebrew term used in the Bible to indicate the presence of the Spirit is a word of feminine gender: "la ruah".

- The overall movement visualised in the image resembles an embrace that rejuvenates from within, spiralling outwards again, to continue caring and inviting. In this infinite embrace we perceive the silhouette of a diverse group of people hand in hand, as if they were gathered around the table of fraternity. This diverse group of people is made up of laypeople and brothers in communion, coming from our different states of life, seeking to creatively develop Champagnat's charism.
- The intertwining hands are like points of connection that also speak to us of the reality of the global pandemic that we are living through in our days: social distancing has generated new modes of communication and expressing closeness through virtual connections.
- The image also brings to mind a dance, the dance of mission, which impels us to be prophets in today's world, in the dynamic of being a "Church on the move", in a "permanent state of mission".
- All these elements and dimensions are unified in our call as lay Marists to engage with the ongoing process of "welcoming, nurturing, living and sharing our vocation".

The International Forum is a four-year journey (2021-2024) 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.

marist world

COLOMBIA: NOVICIADO MARISTA LA VALLA

BRAZIL: FRATERNIDADE NOSSA SENHORA DA CONCEIÇÃO DE BALSAS, MÁ

GREECE: LEONTIOS SCHOOL OF ATHENS



AUSTRALIA: MARIST YOUTH MINISTRY – SYDNEY

ECUADOR: MARISTAS DEPORTIVOS – LOJA

COLOMBIA: BIRTHDAY OF BROTHER CÉSAR ROJAS

ASIA AND OCEANIA

14 CANDIDATES ENTER MARIST RELIGIOUS LIFE AT TAMONTAKA NOVITIATE

Fourteen novices who are part of the first group of the inter-regional novitiate in Tamontaka (Philippines) formally began their novitiate on 19 April. Nine are from East Timor (Province of Australia), three are from Vietnam and two are from India (District of Asia).

The postulants arrived at the Tamontaka novitiate from Davao on 13

April and were welcomed by Br Pepito Mahong, who has been appointed novice master in mid-February 2021.

“I know we all wish these young men every blessing as they commence the serious study and rigorous discernment that is central to this phase of their formation”, said Br Peter Carrol, Provincial of Australia, in his message sent to the Brothers of the Province (Australia, Cambodia, East Timor, Vanuatu, Papua Guinea, Solomon Islands). Br Dominador, Provincial of



East Asia, was present at the celebration and received the novices on behalf of the other superiors who could not be present. Brothers from the communities of Lagao, Dadiangas, Malutok, Kidapawan, Cotabato and Fourviere

were present.

In May 2020, in anticipation of the influx of candidates and the inability of the present novitiate in Tudella, Sri Lanka, to accommodate a large number of novices, the leaders of the Asia and Oceania regions decided to establish another inter-regional novitiate in Tamontaka. The idea is that Tudella and Tamontaka will receive the first year novices alternately. [More information about Marist novitiates around the world can be found here.](#)

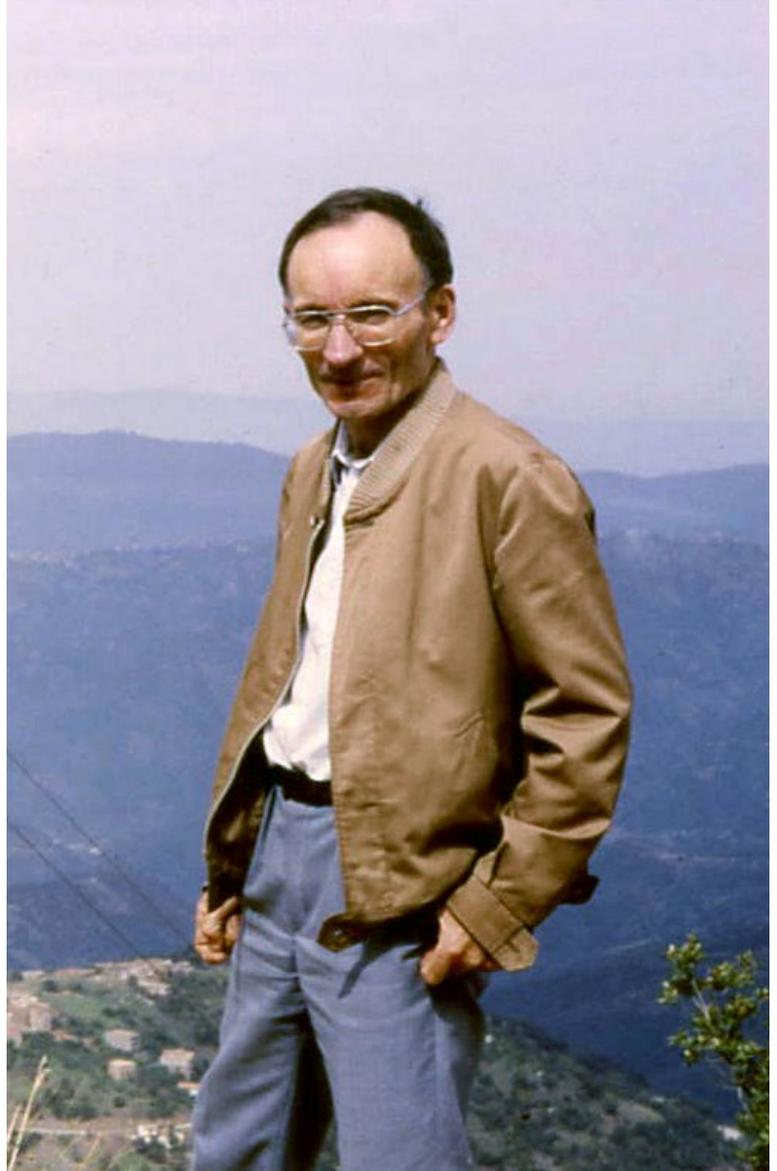
MAY 8, ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF BR. HENRI VERGÈS

Twenty-seven years ago, Sister Paul-Hélène and our Brother Henri Vergès were killed at their place of work, in the library on Ben Cheneb Street, in Algiers, in the Casbah district. It was a Sunday, the 8th May, in the early afternoon. The Church beatified them as part of the group of 19 martyrs of Algeria, on December 8, 2018, in Oran. Their feast day was set for May 8.

This year, the house of Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, where Henri began his Marist formation, is welcoming the bishop of Valence, Mgr Pierre-Yves MICHEL, to preside at the Eucharist. In December 2018, Pope Francis, addressing the Algerian authorities and people, wrote, "Through the beatification of our nineteen brothers and sisters, the Church wishes to bear witness to its desire to continue to work for dialogue, concord and friendship. We believe that this unprecedented event in your country will draw in the Algerian sky a great sign of brotherhood addressed to the whole world"

It so happens that the square near the sanctuary of Our Lady of Santa Cruz, the place of the beatification, has been named: "Esplanade of Living Together in Peace". Isn't this an anticipated reference to the encyclical "Fratelli tutti", published last October 3, on the theme of fraternity and social friendship? At the end of his letter, Pope Francis mentions his fraternal meeting with the Great Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, on 4 February 2019, in Abu Dhabi. He writes: "In this framework of reflection on universal brotherhood, I felt particularly stimulated by St Francis of Assisi, and also by others who are not Catholic: Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu, Mahatma Mohandas Gandhi and many others. Pope Francis ends by recalling Blessed Charles de Foucauld, who wanted to be "a brother to everyone all".

We know that Charles de Foucauld was a model for our brother Henri, as testified by one of his Muslim friends with whom he had many conversations on spiritual themes, especially during his years of solitude in Sour-El-Ghozlane, from 1978 to 1983. Another witness was an employee of the Saint-Bonaventure school where he had known Henri until 1975. This witness wrote, after the funeral Mass he attended at Notre-Dame d'Afrique: "Brother Henri was ahead of his time; he was a man of the 21st century; he was a great communicator... He was a unifier of men... Brother



Henri's death has shaken the planet."

Our Brother had already said it all in his last letter to his friend and spiritual father, Christian de Chergé, the prior of Notre-Dame de l'Atlas, at Tibhirine. On 4 February 1994, a few weeks before his death, he wrote to him: "In our daily relations, let us openly take the side of love, forgiveness and communion against hatred, vengeance and violence." Blessed martyrs of Algeria, help us to follow your path to become "brothers to everyone" in today's world!

Brother Alain Delorme, Saint-Paul-Trois châteaux, May 8, 2021

OCEANIA

OCEANIA COUNCIL AND COLLEGE OF LEADERS MEETINGS

Meetings of the College of Leaders of Oceania and the Oceania Council were held online on 29th March 2021. In previous Executive Summaries, the creation of Committees to prepare for the new Province to commence in 2023 has been reported. A number of these groups have commenced operations and the details of the membership structures and activities are now being regularly reported in communications to the Brothers.



Related to this issue, a new Report outlining the transition from the current Oceania Structures to those of the new Province has been received. Aware of the complexity of this process an overall summary of progress to date – as it affects the Oceania Council -, has been sent to the communities. Two phases have been identified.

Design Phase: February 2021 to August 2021 – the New Province Executive and Committees have been convened.

The new Province Design and local level planning and engagement process will be finalised by August and made available for feedback.

Implementation Phase: it will commence in November 2021 and the processes leading up the new Province and the First Chapter on 8 December 2022 will take place.

The manner in which the existing Oceania networks will metamorphose into the new Province structures is being actively considered. These networks include:

- Marist Oceania Education Network
- Financial Administrators Network
- Oceania Partnership Commission
- Vocations and Initial Formation (Australia, Pacific, and Asia)
- Health and Aged Care
- Safeguarding and Professional Standards
- Brothers Today
- Solidarity
- Communications Working Group
- At a later time, the present Oceania Council will shortly be phased out and be replaced by the New Province Implementation bodies.

In the meantime, other Oceania Activities are continuing.

Oceania Partnership Commission (OPC)

There has been preliminary planning by the OPC to continue with the organisation of a face-to-face formation Experience for Brothers and Lay Marists in the Oceania Region in 2021.

Education Network

The issue of the development of an efficient, effective and economical Education network across the present and future Province boundaries remains a priority.

Publications

The production of the Oceania Calendar is planned for 2022.

SHARING. NEW BULETTIN



With the aim of growing as a global family, specifically in the lay Marist vocation, the Bureau of the Laity launched the newsletter “Compartir” on 30 April. It is a monthly bulletin sent to the same recipients as the Marist News bulletin.

Here are the words of Raúl Amaya, director of the Secretariat, whose presentation was also published in the first issue, and can be read at this link.

BRASIL SUL-AMAZÔNIA.

PUC OF RIO GRANDE DO SUL PROMOTES ONLINE VOLUNTEERING



Contributing to the culture of solidarity in times of separation

Marist Volunteering is one of the main initiatives of the Pastoral and Solidarity Centre of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (PUCRS), a university linked to the Marist Province of Brasil Sul-Amazônia. The Pastoral and Solidarity Centre works on various projects with the aim of promoting evangelisation and guaranteeing Marist identity and values at PUCRS.

Since 2010, the PUCRS Volunteer Programme offers opportunities for volunteers to work in more than 50 institutions, in the areas of education, culture, health and social assistance. The focus is on children, people with disabilities, the elderly and families in situations of socio-economic vulnerability. Regardless of their level of education or personal skills, the programme is open to all students, teachers and collaborators who are willing to help, accompany and learn from others.

The challenge in the face of covid-19

The pandemic, however, brought great challenges to the project, given that all activities were carried out in person, with volunteers travelling to the institutions. It was necessary to rethink volunteering so that its important contribution to the community would not cease. The solution that was found was to propose that the activities be carried out virtually, with the volunteers acting online. As most institu-

tions did not have the structure to receive volunteers in this condition, ways were sought to help them through other initiatives.

In 2020, on a pilot basis, 24 volunteers worked in two partner institutions – Pão dos Pobres and Cesmar – and provided more than 500 services, such as school support, administrative services, literary fair and motivational support. In 2021, the goal is to expand the vacancies to 50 volunteers and establish partnerships with ten institutions, on different fronts of action, and to continue building a culture of solidarity.

Both face-to-face and virtual experiences can be considered a milestone and a differentiator for our students and collaborators who accept to participate in the challenge of contributing to the culture of solidarity through educational volunteering.

The great new development for 2021 is that, based on these work experiences and the guidelines of the Department of Collaboration for International Mission (CMI) of the Marist Institute and of the Marist Province of Brasil Sul-Amazônia, we have begun discussions to develop an interprovincial volunteering project for the university.

Do you want to know more about volunteering at PUCRS? Go to <https://www.pucrs.br/pastoral/>

THAILAND

COMMUNITY LEADERS MEETING OF THE DISTRICT OF ASIA

The Marist District of Asia's Community Leaders met virtually, on March 17, with Br. Maximiliano Meier to address the theme of leadership and learn more about the subject through brother Max's book: "Marist leadership", wrote in 2018.



These are some of the reflections to keep in mind:

- In some way we are and will always be leaders.
- Leadership is a role more of practice, rather than talks, listening and doing with the help of others.
- It is a pastoral work, a service.
- The bad leadership can destroy, and the example of good leadership can build, like Champagnat constructing L'Hermitage.
- We need to know our history and know the message of Champagnat.
- We have our unique Marist way of being leaders as brothers and lay.
- Each of us has different qualities and talents, they can be developed for the servant leadership.
- The Charism did not finish when our founder and leader Champagnat died, it was empowered by the Holy Spirit and it keeps growing.

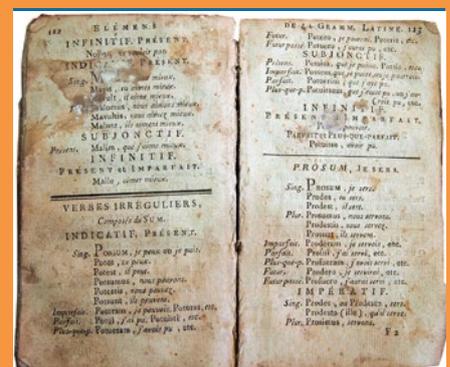
"Thank you, Br. Max, for sharing the richness of our history and tradition, Marist elements that inspires us to drink from our sources and encourages us in our mission", said Br. Canísio José Willrich, Superior of the District, during his participation.

Br. Max invitation remains open to those who would like to follow this seminar (there is no starting or ending day). Interested persons, brothers and lay Marists, can contact Br. Max by email: stiedlmax5@gmail.com

Fr. François, first Superior General of the Marist Institute

7. ADMISSION TO THE COMMUNITY OF LA VALLA, LATIN CLASSES

The young curate Champagnat had rented a house where he gathered several young men to form them as "brothers". The townfolk of La Valla wondered what "brothers" meant, since at that time they could be sacristans, cantors, church helpers or catechists. Although the curate also talked about catechist-educators. From 2 January 1817 Jean-Marie Granjon and Jean-Baptiste Audras lived in the rented house. Around March 1818, Gabriel began to frequent the house of the "brothers" to receive some Latin lessons from Father Champagnat. In May 1818, he went to live with the brothers as a boarder. Later he wrote: "Given by my mother to Mary at the foot of the altar of the chapel of the Rosary in the church of La Valla, I left the world on Wednesday 6th May 1818", he wrote at the beginning of his diary. From then on, Gabriel was less the son of Françoise and more the son of the Virgin Mary. Three months later, on 3 August 1818, Gabriel Rivat received the sacrament of confirmation in Saint-Chamond, in the church of Saint-Pierre, from Mgr Étienne-Martin Morel de Mons, bishop of Mende (Lozère) and administrator of Viviers (Ardèche). In addition to his studies, François was to help as a teacher in the classes of the school of La Valla. Other episodes in: <https://champagnat.org/en/biography-of-br-francisco-in-instalments/>



Grammar of the Latin language, probably used by Champagnat



GENERAL HOUSE

MEETING OF MASTERS AND ACCOMPAGNATEURS OF NOVICES

The Secretariat of Brothers Today called together the masters and accompagnateurs of Novices for an online meeting on April 28. It was aimed mainly at getting acquainted with each other and sharing experiences in the work of formation.

In attendance were Novice Masters Fabien Bulaimo (Save, Rwanda), Emmanuel Mwanalirenji (Matola, Mozambique), Yao Kouassi Kan Sylvain (Kumasi, Ghana), Rubens José Falcheto (Cochabamba, Bolivia), Alejandro Herrera (Medellin, Colombia), Sean Sammon (Poughkeepsie, USA), Francisco García (Tudella, Sri Lanka) and Pepito Mahong (Tamontaka, Philippines).

Also present were brothers designated to accompany novices who are in communities or who cannot be with their respective novice masters for now. These accompagnateurs are Reál Sauvegeau and Rod Thompson (Tudella), Vigilio Bwalya (Bangladesh), Anselmo Kim (Saigon, Vietnam) and Claudino Falchetto (Patos de Minas, Brasil).

The other members of the novitiate team of Kumasi participated as well. They are Taylor Daniel Blanyon, Ezugwu Eugene Ikenna and Osuagwu Obinna.

Brothers João Carlos do Prado and Óscar Martín, Link Councilors for Brothers Today, were also around to accompany the formators and give words of welcome, thanksgiving and



encouragement. Teofilo Minga served as the translator.

It was a historic moment for the Institute as it was the first time in recent memory that novice masters and brothers accompanying novices came together for wonderful experience of fraternity. Even though it took place under extraordinary circumstances, it nevertheless achieved its objectives.

We thank the Lord for the opportunity to deepen our sense of being one family under the protection of our Good Mother and the guidance of St. Marcellin.

Brothers Today Secretariat plans to host more of this meeting in the future, hoping that the other brothers who were not able to join for various reasons will be present. More information about the novitiates can be found on page 6 of the April 14, 2021 edition of the Marist News [in this link](#).



Institute of the Marist Brothers General House

Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat, 2 - Rome, Italy - comunica@fms.it

Website

<http://www.champagnat.org>

YouTube

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

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