



Marist Brothers East Asia



News Bits

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March 14, 2022

Dear Marists of Champagnat,

Greetings from Rome!

The General Conference officially commenced on March 8, 2022. There were 29 participants coming from all Administrative Units, 10 participants from the General Council, and 8 participants from various presentors.

The theme of the General Conference is: "Leaders at the Service of the Global Marist Family – Looking Beyond".

During Br. Ernesto's opening address, he challenged all of us to look beyond and to use 4 Gazes.


- A Sensitive Gaze – A Gaze that discovers the needs of your Brothers, our Brothers and the Province itself.
- A Prophetic Gaze – Invited as Leaders to look beyond, from the vantage point of the spirit, who seeks to read the signs of the times and to propose audacious and even radical responses.
- A Gaze that is Global – We are certainly here to support each other, and to give each other space for reflection and formation, to better exercise our service of leadership in our respective administrative units.
- A Hopeful Gaze – In these days, we would like to re-read the calls, principles and suggestions offered to us by the XXII General Chapter and seek ways to update them and to discover what other new things God is asking of us in our days.

Br. Ernesto also presented to us the aims and objectives of the conference as follows:

1. To re-read and evaluate the Calls of the XXII General Chapter, in the current context.
2. To review the 5 areas proposed by the General Chapter (Principles and Suggestions) and to share information on some institutional projects underway.
3. To reflect on our leadership at the service of the Global Marist Family, in new and challenging times.
4. To reflect on the current reality of the Institute, our journey as Administrative Units, Regions, Global Family and to look to the future.
5. To offer on-going formation in the area of Child protection: current situation, our experience, our responses, ways of action.
6. To evaluate the animation and accompaniment of the General Administration.

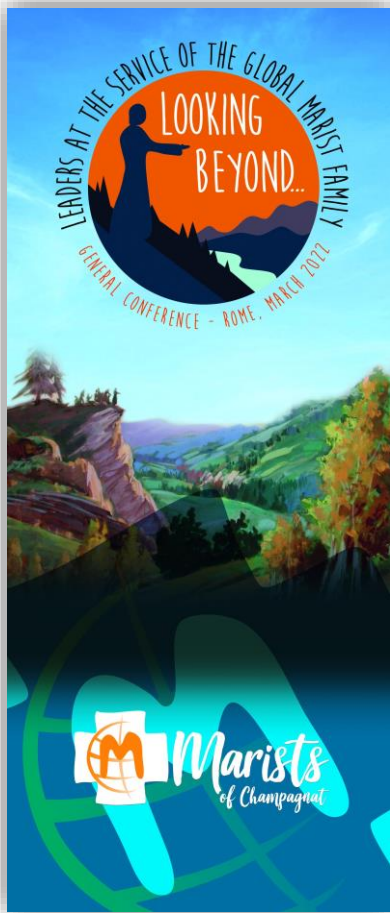
We close the opening day with a Eucharistic Celebration and a Ritual of Welcome to the New Provincials.

May I request everyone to please pray for the success of the General Conference and for all its participants.


Br. Dominador A. Santiago, FMS
Provincial

*Photos
during the
General
Conference*





UPDATES

NOTRE DAME OF KIDAPAWAN COLLEGE

Br. Demosthenes Calabria, FMS

The Notre Dame of Kidapawan College began the Season of Lent, with the Ash Wednesday Mass, attended by NDKC personnel and staff, some student representatives, retirees and other guests. Fr. Dante Barcelona, the OFM Animator for the Pastoral Care of Vocations who is assigned here in the Diocese of Kidapawan was the main presider. He says Mass at NDKC on Wednesdays, 1st Fridays and other important feasts and celebrations while we are waiting for our new school chaplain.



Fr. Arnel Cabrera, our former chaplain, who was Parish of St. John Mary Vianney in Apo Sandawa, Kidapawan is now assigned to Carmen, North Cotabato since February 2022. Fr. Armando Labora, former Parish Priest in Colombio, the Spiritual Director in Our Lady of Guadalupe Diocesan Seminary here in Balindog, Kidapawan, is the next school chaplain who will come in later this month. He is yet to visit the school for orientation by CM-RE Director.

The NDKC Personnel Sports and Socio-Cultural Program was launched on March 4, right after the 1st Friday Mass at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The personnel, including the Brothers, were divided into four Teams (*Colors Red, Green, Blue and White*). There are seven sports events to be played every Friday: basketball, volleyball, lawn tennis, table tennis, badminton, darts and chess. The teams will also compete in four socio-cultural events on May 6, 2022, the final day. On that day, the over-all champion will be proclaimed.



The Cotabato Private Schools Association (*COPRISA*) had the annual athletic meet on March 7-11, 2022. Some sports events were hosted by NDKC, among them, baseball, softball, taekwondo, mobile legends, chess, lawn tennis, table tennis, football, volleyball and basketball. NDKC won some of these events including the Men Lawn Tennis Singles A & B coached by Br. Dem (*a good start of building a Lawn Tennis Team at NDKC*). The rest of the sporting events were hosted by other schools and venues. The socio-cultural events were competed on the last day, March 11 at Notre Dame of Midsayap College.



MARIKINA COMMUNITY

Engel Freed Java

Greetings from Marikina Community!

Nearly two years after being placed under a hard lockdown, Metro Manila will be under Alert Level 1, the most lenient pandemic alert classification. The shift to Alert level 1 means there will be no restrictions in terms of indoor and outdoor capacities. Then, everyone can freely undertake intrazonal and interzonal travel, especially those, who are already vaccinated. Consequently, some brothers visited and stayed with us, such as Brs. Dean, Mark, Pat, and Arnel. Also, some teachers visited the community and invited us for a meal out.

*Birthday celebration
of Ma'am Mia*



While br. Allan is in Rome to participate in the General Conference, the principal is managing the school. In the meantime, Br. Engel is the acting treasurer of the community. Moreover, there is an ongoing renovation of the balcony of the brothers' residence. It started last February; hopefully, it will finish by the end of March.

Pictures of
the ongoing
renovation
of the
balcony.



MARIST BROTHERS KUTCHING, MALAYSIA

A full circus on the last day of school for the 1st term. Examination Mass, Fire Drill, bidding farewell to a student. Makan-makan with teachers as holiday kicks-off.



The LORD will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;
the LORD will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.

Psalm 121:7-8

THE ARCHIVIST'S CORNER

#73

Br. Romulo L. Porras, FMS



The following is a reprint of Chapter 15 of the book *Dawn of the Word in Silence, The Adventure of the Marist Brothers in China, pages 131-146*, published by New City Press Philippines (2017) by the responsible team composed of Mr. Spes Stanley Ku, Mr Ardiano Caballero, Ms. Nathalie A. Pasa (principal writer), Mr. Jonas B. Lardizabal and Mr. Romeo Pelayo Vital.

This is the third and last of the three parts.

FIDELITY IN TRIBULATION

A martyr of the faith

In the midst of the upheaval brought about by the change of government in China, many Chinese Christians stood up for their beliefs, but not without consequences. Here, we remember Bro. Joche-Albert Ly, the Director of the Marist Community in Sichang. In 1949, amidst the Marist community's decision for a total evacuation of the Brothers, Msgr. Stanislas-Gabriel-Henri Baudry, M.E.P., Bishop of Ningyuan (now Xichang), wanted the Brothers to Sichang to remain, as he was pleased to have finally secured their services. In 1950, the Communists arrived in Sichang. Bro. Joche-Albert, who had been formerly "re-educated" in 1945-1946 in Tsingtao, had come to his own conclusions about Communism and was not afraid to speak against it. He firmly condemned Communism and its atrocities, tenaciously opposing its errors, in the hope of preventing Christians from falling into its grasp and being won over to its ideologies.

Naturally, this put him in danger. In 1950, the new government had issued draconian orders to the effect that everyone suspected of being opposed to the Communist regime was to be executed without mercy. Bro. Joche-Albert was accused of atrocious calumnies, particularly that of inciting rebellion. He was testified against by "witnesses" who hardly knew him or didn't know him at all. In 1951, on the Feast of the Epiphany, he was arrested and taken to prison. In his three months in jail, he continued his apostolate with others who were detained with him, such that many asked to be baptized. He preached with his very being, a fact that many of his co-detainees attested to. Fr. Philippe Carriquiry, M.E.P., Vicar General of the Diocese of Sichang, recalls what some of the former prisoners reported about Bro. Joche-Albert:

Some of the former prisoners told us: "Brother Albert Ly is admirable in his charity. Of the meals you send him, he takes only a little rice and soup. All the little rest shares among the other prisoners. He does the same with clothes." "This pair of trousers and the jersey," said another, "I received from him while in prison."

Yet, who knows what interior trials he might have gone through inside the prison. He repeatedly asked for prayers, a request that he would write on the cardboard that came with lunch basket.

Needless to say, Masses, prayers and sacrifices were offered for him by the Brothers, the missionaries, the priests and the religious.

On the first Chinese New Year under the Communists, Fr. Carriquiry decided to take advantage of the festivities and risked his life for a Eucharistic adventure for the condemned Brother.

We knew he was [about] to die, but without being able to give the precise day [or] month. . . I decided to try a very bold stroke, at the risk of the most terrible consequences for myself. I went to the prison in the broad daylight, bearing the Most Holy Eucharist which hung against my chest in a little box or ciborium-case. I asked to speak to the director of the prisons who received me instantly and politely. After the introductory greetings and formalities, I expressed the purpose of brief interview with prisoner Ly Siu Fang, or Brother Albert: to give him some remedies he needed. The official did not object at all: he had Brother Albert brought into his office, accompanied by a sentry. He had him seated in his presence, allowing us to keep a five-minute conversation. I assured the Brother that we were all anxious about him, that we were praying for him, etc... Then I told him: "Make an act of contrition, for I am going to give you absolution." I saw how he recollected himself interiorly and I gave him the absolution. The prison Director understood nothing of what was happening....

Finally overcoming an instinctive fear of profanation, and not without commending myself with all my heart to the very Lord, I drew the little box out resolutely, opened it and directing myself to the director, showed him the little Host between my fingers.

The story continues:

The communist took it in his hands and asked:

- *What is this?*
- *The priest gave him the simplest of [answers], while the Divine Host was working silently:*
- *This is to be swallowed.*
- *Oh, so this is to be swallowed!....*
- *Yes, it is for Ly Siu Fang; for him to take, - the Vicar General still answering calmly. And the director himself gave the holy Viaticum to the martyr who, taking it in his hands without standing on ceremony but with the greatest respect, gave himself Holy Communion...*

Before leaving the office, the Brother said to the priest: "Every morning, at five thirty, I hear clearly the bells ringing the Angelus. Send me, at that precise moment a sacramental absolution. I shall unite myself in spirit." As for me, writes the missionary, I fulfilled my promise until the last day of his life....

Another event in which Bro. Joche-Albert was able to receive the Sacred Host is described here:

The Sisters managed a little time later to send him another consecrated Host through the intermediary of a pagan servant who brought him the meals. To his meal they added that day a little box of medicines, which was examined by the soldiers, but in which they saw only quinine tablets, etc. The jailers themselves handed the Brother the order they [had] been given. "There are rious medicines. But you must start with the one below which is the most important and the most powerful.

After several postponements, the judgment of the people and the execution of the “25 ringleaders of the anti-Communist revolution” was set to April 21. The day before his execution, Bro. Josche-Albert came down with a fever, and the Franciscan Sisters of Mary sent him milk, medicine and fruit. One of the Sisters thought of warning him of his imminent death, in case he was not aware of it. On a piece of cardboard, she wrote: “See you in heaven!”

On Saturday, April 21, 1951, Bro. Joche-Albert and 24 other prisoners were taken out from prison, paraded into the streets and brought to a square located in the suburbs, near the walls of the city. Bishop Baundry had previously asked Fr. Joseph Wu, an elderly Chinese priest, to mix with the crowd to give Bro. Joche-Albert a final absolution. As the melancholic procession passed, with Bro. Joche-Albert in the lead, Fr. Joseph Wu gave the soon-to-be martyr a final absolution.

The condemned 25 were executed at noon, just as the bells for the Angelus were rung. One cannot but think that Mary, Queen of Heaven came to take him in that precise moment to present him to Jesus, whom he had loved with all his heart.

The end of Marist works in China

In Beijing, Chala was invaded on June 9, 1954. Some of the Brothers were arrested, and others were put on house arrest.

Segregated from one another, each in a room or some nook or corner, doorway, they were... under continuous [surveillance] of a guard. For a slight stir, they had to raise their hand asking for permission and even that had to be limited in its frequency. A tribunal was set up in the big parlor at the extreme end [end of the] west-wing. For some, this kind of treatment lasted for five months, till October.... [For those who experienced it, it was harder to bear than a prison term. One after another, some of the Brothers were released and sent home; but they had to surrender their card of Beijing Residency and were obliged to remain where they were to find ways and means to earn a living. The novices who took their habit on 8th December, 1953 and a few juniors who stayed in Chala at the time, were also dispersed and most of them returned home. This marked the end of our work of formation in the Chinese Continent.

By October of that year, not a single Brother remained in the Provincial House.

By October, our Provincial House was emptied of its inhabitants and occupied... by the Community Authority.... [It was the same for] the neighboring regional Seminary. During this period, end of '55, life was hard materially for everybody because we were totally unprepared to face the stern reality of circumstances we found ourselves [in]. But little by little, things improved, each found his own work to do and adapted himself well enough. Materially speaking, the Brothers fared neither better nor worse than the rest of the general public... Many [consumer goods] were rationed, and to obtain ration coupons, one had to have a card of residence and one would forfeit it if one stayed away from his legal domicile for more than three months.

Between the years 1954 and 1958, the Brothers who had been expelled from China only had intermittent bits of news of the things happening in the Mainland. Some of these fragments of news came from letters written by Bro. Adon in Canton, who had continued to teach Catechism to children and prepare them to receive the Sacraments until he was arrested in 1955. In April

1958, Bro. Damien was able to secure an exit permit to accompany 80-year old Bro. Anthony-Joseph from Beijing to Hong Kong. Bro. Anthony-Joseph had been allowed by the Authority to join his sister. Bro. Damien was able to spend 10 days in Hong Kong, and was, therefore, able to give an account about the Brothers who had been left in Mainland China.

According to him, where the old cemeteries, our garden and vineyard and also the garden of the regional Seminary used to be, [there were now] buildings 5 to 6 storeys high; along with the former buildings, ours and those [that] belonged to the regional Seminary – now served as a Formation Center of Young Communists. Of all the institutions in and around Chala, nothing remained for religious use except the Parish church. The Government took into its hand our winemaking [enterprise], and made it into a corporation valued at 50,000 R.M.B (U.S \$25,000) sum [of] which they gave us ... 5% per annum. It was evident that [everything was] worth a lot more than this meager estimate. A few Brothers still worked in them...Bro. Agustin was in charge of the vineyard, another, Bro. Teoderic, responsible for manufacturing...

[As of] this date, April, 1958, there was no longer any Brother in prison so to speak; but eight of them still serve their Reform-labor-camp term, near Beijing or at the other side of Tientsin toward Manchuria, or in the province of Heilungking, near Amour River. We had lost trace of Bro. Pierre-Mathias. He had been in Shanghai till 1957...[Neither] his family nor we had any news of him ever since.

In the years from 1958 to 1962, news arrived in scant amounts. Some of the news talked of the death of one Brother or another; others gave heart-wrenching details of the food situation, the rationing and the scarcity of daily commodities.

On January 23, 1963, Bro. Damien wrote to a fellow Brother:

Have not written for a long time (since 1958) because I have been occupied and it is difficult for me to exchange letters with you. For feat that [I] might have caused you some worrying over me, be assured, I am in good health, and I have to move out later on; if this happens, I will let you know. As we are in [the] Chinese New Year season, I write especially to wish you Happy New Year. Remember me among all our mutual friends.

The account which talks of this letter remarks: “It is not hard to read between the lines... that Bro. Damien’s not being able to write for nearly five years might have other implications [than] just being busy.”

The letters that the remaining Brothers wrote from Communist China give an idea of the life that they lived in those times, at least materially. But what they could write explicitly about their overall conditions, their day-to-day experiences, and their interior and spiritual lives is undoubtedly far different from what they were actually going through.

It is hard to understand how a work so noble and so beautiful must come to an end. But did it really end? Or is it possible that just as a grain of wheat falls upon the ground to die in order to give life, this part of the Marist Mission needed to “die” in order to give life to a piece of work meant to be greater than itself...? # # #

The End of the Three Parts -

Birthday Greetings to:



March 21
Br. Noel T. Fernandez



March 21
Br. John Vianney Kim
(Chang-woon)



March 21
Br. Simon Hur
(Duck-Hyun)



Death Anniversaries:

- March 14, 1976 – Br. Louis Nicholas died in St. Genis-Laval.
March 17, 1984 – Br. Charles Raphael, 8th S.G. 1958-1967 died in Belgium.
March 18, 1981 – Br. Louis Lambert died in St. Genis-Laval.
March 19, 1928 – Br. Joseph Gabriel died in Beijing.
March 19, 1984 – Br. Subran died in Hong Kong.
March 20, 1941 – Br. Pierre died in Beijing.
March 20, 2020 – Mr. Paulo Kang Jeong Ho (Affiliated member) died in Suwon, Korea.
March 21, 1986 – Carlo Kim Heung Soo died in Seoul, Korea.



Let us pray...

- ✚ For the comfort of those who are sick and suffering.
- ✚ For the missionaries around the world.
- ✚ For all those affected by the war in Ukraine.
- ✚ For more vocation to the religious life.
- ✚ To end the war among nations.
- ✚ For the
- ✚ For the success of the General Conference of all the Marist Leaders in Rome.
- ✚ For all the birthday celebrants.