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MARIST NEWS

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DISTRICT OF THE PACIFIC

15 DECEMBER 2013 – 26 NOVEMBER 2022

On November 26, Marists from Fiji, New Zealand, Kiribati and Samoa came together online for a celebration that marked the District of the Pacific's transition to Star of the Sea Province, opening on December 8, spanning the District and Province of Australia. We can read those words in the "[District of the Pacific Update](#)", from 2nd December:

In 1917 the Province of New Zealand, then the District of the Pacific in 2013, developed an energy and dynamism that resulted in the establishment of schools and communities throughout New Zealand and the Pacific. That energy is called the Mauri (the life force) and has a similar role to a Foundation Stone in a new building.

Our past, present, and future is an ongoing journey of Marist life to wherever the Spirit of God will lead us. We look forward to our ongoing journey, in Mary's name, as we enter the new Star of the Sea Province on 8 December 2022 along with our sisters and brothers from PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Australia, Timor Leste and Cambodia.

As Champagnat Marists of the District of the Pacific, we give heartfelt thanks and gratitude to our two leaders over the last 9 years – Brother David (2013-2019) and Brother John (2019-2022).



general administration

- Brothers Ernesto, Superior General, Ben and Josep Maria, General Councillors, earlier this week visited some Marist communities in Australia, including the LaValla200> community in Mt Druitt.
- Monday and Tuesday, the General Council of the Marist Sisters held an ongoing formation meeting at the General House, led by Br Emili Turú, Secretary of the USG.
- On Monday, the directors of the Brothers Today Secretariat, Brothers Ángel Medina and Lindley, met with Brother Antoine Kazindu to organize the Regional Meeting of African Vocation Animators and Formators in July 2023.
- From Monday to Thursday, Brothers Jorge and Goyo, from the Econome General's Office, are participating in the meeting of the team that is working on the economic part of the new Administrative Guide that will replace the Vademecum.
- About 45 brothers from Europe are meeting at the General House until Saturday for a regional meeting of brothers under 60. Several brothers from the General House are collaborating and participating in the meeting.
- Brothers Luis Carlos, Vicar General, and Ken, General Councilor, are participating in the Chapter of the Province of Southern Africa, being held Wednesday through Sunday in Lusaka, Zambia.
- Brothers Ernesto, Ben and Josep Maria, from December 8th to 14th, will take part in the first Provincial Chapter of the new Star of the Sea Province in Mittagong, Australia.
- Beginning Thursday, Brother Valdicer, director of CMI, will make a follow-up visit to the LaValla200> community in Syracuse. The visit will end next Monday.

CAMBODIA

MARIST PRESENCE IN CAMBODIA

The Marist Brothers have worked in Cambodia since 1998 when Brothers Terry Heinrich and Brian Etherington, from the Province of Sydney, were appointed to Phnom Penh. They arrived to support Cambodians after the Cambodian–Vietnamese War which ended with the Paris agreement. After a period of discernment searching for those in greatest need, Br Terry Heinrich and other brothers (Claudius, Badior, Paul, etc) founded in Cambodia the La Valla School for physically disabled children and youth in 1998 in Phnom Penh.



In 2010, **Marist Solidarity Cambodia** (MSC) was formed as a non-government organization to integrate various programmes and sites into one entity, which we now call the “LaValla Project”, with its own Board of Directors under the aegis of **Marist Brothers Province of Australia**. MSC aims to promote empowerment and advocacy for disabled children and youth in Cambodia.



Currently there is just one Marist Community, and two Brothers comprise the current community at the **LaValla School in Takhmao**. The Brothers are involved in Administration, especially in support of the finances of the projects and they are also working with the Board of Marist Solidarity Cambodia. The brother’s house is situated on the campus of the LaValla School.

Marist life in Cambodia is intrinsic to the LaValla Project. The staff are predominantly Buddhist and are Khmer speakers. There is some English spoken, but not fluently. So, Marist life does not follow the same pattern as in locations with a larger Catholic population. That said, the staff and students join with the Brothers in celebrating Marist feasts and local celebrations with a Christian/Buddhist prayer service.

School Ministry

LaValla School, in Takhmao, is an accelerated primary school program to provide an opportunity for students to complete a

primary education in a shorter period than the government schools. Primary students in government schools only attend for half a day. At LaValla School the students have classes from 8.00am to 4.00pm. When the students have finished grade 6 at LaValla School,

they have the opportunity to go to the government high school in Takhmao and live in the LaValla Village Hostel adjacent to the LaValla School. Initially founded in 1998 in Phnom Penh, the school moved to its current location in 2000, and next year will celebrate 25 years of care for these children from poor, mostly rural families throughout Cambodia.

LaValla Hostel provides residential accommodation for up to students from poor, rural families who are presently deprived of a secondary education because of the remoteness of their villages. The project also supports around 70 disabled young people living with their families and attending their local rural school.

Background

Cambodia is a country on the Indochinese mainland of Southeast Asia. Cambodia is largely a land of plains and great rivers and lies amid important overland and river trade routes linking China to India and Southeast Asia. The influences of many Asian cultures, alongside those of France and the United States, can be seen in the capital, Phnom Penh, one of a handful of urban centres in the largely rural country.

NORANDINA

From November 25-27, in Machiques, Venezuela, about 30 young people gathered to participate in the vocation meeting organized by the Diocese, with the participation of several religious communities. Brother Orlando Escobar, Provincial, participated in representation of the Marist community.

CANADA & USA

As the Marist Brothers District of Canada investigates the possibility of joining its Archives to the USA Province's Archives, Mr. Eric Paquet (Canada) and Br. John Nash (USA) met to discuss possible problems and solutions. They also met representatives of the Marist College to get advice on future technology and possibilities.

AMÉRICA SUR

On November 23 and 24, the meeting of the communications team of the Region was held in Argentina. The participants were Lorena de Oliveira (UMBRASIL), Sebastián Ciampa (Cruz del Sur), Joaquín Meli (Santa María de los Andes), Irene Simões (Brasil Centro-Norte) and Daniela Cidade (Brasil Sul-Amazônia). In addition to the representatives of the five Regional Administrative Units, Br. Alberto Aparicio, from the Regional Committee, was also present.

FMSI

The Marist Foundation recently has acquired one million surgical masks, 400 kg of sanitizing material and eight lung ventilator machines. The surgical masks have already been redistributed through the Italian Red Cross to the communities in need since FMSI has a well-established relationship with such organization, while the lung ventilators and the hygienic material will be soon delivered to the Marist community located in Lebanon by a military aircraft earmarked for civil military operations.

BRASIL SUL-AMAZÔNIA**MARIST YOUTH MET IN CANELA**

More than 1,000 students from 27 Marist units of the Province of Brasil Sul-Amazônia met on November 26 at the Marist College Maria Imaculada, in Canela, to take part in the Marist Youth Meeting organized by the Provincial Team for Marist Youth Ministry together with the College.

The theme of the meeting, “Metamorphosis: cultivating new versions”, included workshops, moments of celebration and fraternisation among the participants.

At the opening of the meeting, Brother Devis Fischer, Provincial of Brasil Sul-Amazônia, emphasized that the theme of the meeting is an invitation to young people to reflect on the positive transformations they can bring to the world. “Transform is a capacity that was given to us. To transform is a possibility that we have. Let us be capable of seeking the civilization of love in our lives, in our relationships, and in the human community”, he emphasized.

The workshops held during the program of the event dealt with life projects, vocation,

integral development of the person, empathy, social transformation, among other topics. In addition, the Marist Brothers and postulants present in the meeting gave a workshop on the Year of Marist Vocations which is being celebrated throughout the Institute until June 2023.

For José Jair Ribeiro, coordinator of Pastoral Ministry of “Grupo Marista”, to bring the reflections on life project and integral development of the person in harmony with the Year of Marist Vocations is important to demonstrate how each one can hear the call of God in his or her life. “It is an opportunity for adolescents and young people to think about the meaning of their life, about their vocation, and also to contribute to demystifying this understanding of vocation. I like the statement that ‘I am a vocation’ and not ‘I have a vocation’. Every person has a vocation. What I need is to discover what gives and makes sense to my life. The workshops were this opportunity to stop and think about living with meaning,” Ribeiro says.

The next meeting, in 2023, will be held in Colégio Marista Ipanema, in Porto Alegre.

AMERICA SUR

6TH MEETING OF MEMORY CENTERS

From November 21 to 25, the Brasil Centro-Sul Province hosted the 6th Meeting of Centers of Marist Memory of the South America Region. During the event, workshops, conferences, and conversations were held, with the aim of supporting the development of the strategic planning of the Network of Memory Centers. Librarians, specialists, secretaries, archivists, translators, historians, scholars of Marist Spirituality and Marist Brothers were present as participants.



The first meeting of Marist Memory Centers of the Region was held in 2015. “To speak of memory is to speak of the preservation of the institution”, recalled Leonardo Soares, executive secretary of the South American Region, during the opening of the Meeting.

The Vicar General, Br. Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, participated virtually and highlighted in one of his interventions, that “a Memory Center, a library and an archive are antidotes against amnesia.”

The Meeting highlighted the importance of maintaining memory spaces and invited to take advantage of available technologies to create dynamic content and thus build an accessible memory, which interacts with the present to feed people’s curiosity.

The executive director of the host Province, José Leão da Cunha Filho, gave a conference on Marist Leadership where he spoke about the characteristics of various Superiors General and how their example has to do with the present and

with the role expected of a good Leader.

Among the reflections of the group, Ideas arose such as that all Memorials and Museums should contemplate a Marist spiritual formation for managers. In relation to this, Br. Joaquim Sperandio took the opportunity to add: “if we did not have a minimum of Marist spirit, we would become just any institution”. The director of the Marist Memorial of Curitiba (where the meeting was held), Dyogenes Philippsen Araújo said that the network of memorials “gives us inputs to think about the strategic planning of the Memory Center.”

Angelo Diniz, one of the Memorial researchers, spoke about his research on the origins of Marist spirituality.

The event was also attended by Br. Juan Moral who was archivist of the Marist Institute and the current General Archivist of Rome, Dorotea Cinanni, who presented the structure of the General Archive. She said that “the archives

serve to rethink and increase knowledge of the charism.” And she invited the participants to make a constructive critique of currently existing memorials and encouraged their dissemination at international academic events.

During the meeting, the importance of taking care of the archives, their conservation and, above all, the risks when transferring these documents was reinforced. The care of the existing archives is not the only concern of the professionals of the Network of Memory Centers, there is also the need to generate a collection for the future. In this sense, the Marist Memorial of Curitiba presented some of its projects:

- A Reliquary Project – a collection of biographical videos of living Marist Brothers, consisting of free testimonials with stories and experiences.
- Memory box – created from the need to identify people and images from the collection. It is where the brothers help the specialists in this

identification.

- Image Bank – PMBCS is creating a bank of images, both historical and recent, to support audio-visual and advertising productions. The collection is available to any Marist Province that needs it.

Showing his concern for the historical records of the present and the future, Brother Moral spoke about the need for the provinces to have studies and records on their origins. “There are very

few studies on the origins of the provinces, but recently, in this province, we did an excellent publication on the origins of the Marists in China,” he explained.

During the event, the official launch of the first edition of the File Management Manual of the Province of Brasil Centro-Sul was also held, which documents good practices for the conservation and control of our collections.

The last activity of this meeting was the

design of a strategic plan for the Network of Memory Centers, which was based on the most important points of the Strategic Plan for the South America Region, such as the strengthening of consecrated life and the laity, stop projects that overlap; and not interfere with local projects.

The result of this planning will be submitted for approval, so that, based on it, the Memory Centers can design their action strategies.

ECOLOGY

RE-USING OR RE-PURPOSING WHERE WE CAN

In line with the fifth call of the **XXII General Chapter**, which asks us to “awaken in ourselves and those around us an ecological awareness”, Br. Chris, from New Zealand, address below the issue of recycling.

Many countries like to boast about their progressive waste management and high recycling rates. Sweden, South Korea, and Germany are among them, and Germany is often celebrated as a world champion for recycling. However, the high recycling rates for plastic waste could be misleading. This number is taken from the volume of waste that arrives at the recycling plants, but not everything is recycled through material recovery. This number is the amount of waste at the beginning of the lengthy sorting process, at the end only a fraction of that waste is reused. What remains is incinerated, i.e., “recycled” through energy recovery.

Environmental organizations such as the **Friends of the Earth Germany** estimate that less than 16% of the recyclable waste earmarked for recycling in Germany can be reused. The biggest problem is caused by mixtures of recyclable materials in items such as a yogurt pot with a cardboard sleeve and aluminium lid. If these are not separated before arrival, there is a high probability it will be registered at the recycling plant but will still

end up being incinerated.

Small, very thin materials and some food packaging are difficult to recycle, as their reprocessing needs sophisticated technologies that are not easily available. The challenging recycling process is subsequently reflected in the price of secondary raw materials making these highly uncompetitive on the market.

So, even recycling isn’t as good as we are led to believe – we’ll have to look more towards re-using or re-purposing where we can, recognising that recycling is very limited! That’s a challenge, very suitable for young people (and even more mature ones) to offer ideas.

Br. Chris P. – Nueva Zelanda



TUTTI FRATELLI

VIII MEETING OF RELIGIOUS BROTHERS IN ROME

On the afternoon of November 26, about 90 Brothers from 17 Institutes gathered at the General House of the De La Salle Brothers in Rome. Twelve Superiors General of these Congregations also participated.

This was the VIII meeting organized by the Tutti Fratelli Group which is composed of Brothers from different Congregations present in Rome. This group meets monthly to “promote our vocation as religious Brothers and to reflect on our identity and mission in the Church and in the world, being visible signs of the gift of fraternity”.

For the formation aspect of the meeting, Fr. José Cristo Rey García Paredes, CMF, was invited to develop the theme “Accomplices of the Spirit: Brothers in Missio Dei”. With his distinctive ability to communicate, Fr. Cristo Rey encouraged reflection on the concept of mission. We can summarize the change in the concept of mission to which we are called in these expressions:

- We usually think of “mission” as a characteristic of the Church; as something that belongs to her and for which she is responsible and is the protagonist.
- “Mission” is a verb whose protagonist is the Triune God. It is, above all, “Missio Dei”, “Missio Jesu”, “Missio Spiritus”.
- The Church, the congregations, our communities, each one of us are mere accomplices – collaborators in this Mission of God.

After the input, the brothers formed small language groups to share feelings, ideas and reflections related to the exposition. Upon returning to the plenary, some groups gave feedback and posed questions to Fr. Paredes. At the conclusion, Fr. Paredes underlined the changes that we must make to assume this new way of understanding the mission. This new perspective tells us that the mission does not end when we retire from active life. From the session hall, the group moved to the main chapel, next to the tomb of St. John Baptist de La Salle, for a moment of prayer. The gathering was capped by a fraternal dinner hosted by the Superior General of the De La Salle Brothers, another sign of the fraternal welcome that the De La Salle Brothers always extend to us.

As in previous meetings, the “Gift of Fraternity” was manifested in an atmosphere of welcome, joy and commitment to make our lives living testimonies of fraternity.



CHAMPAGNAT GLOBAL

INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF THE GLOBAL MARIST SCHOOL NETWORK

From 28 November to 6 December 2022, a face-to-face meeting of members of the Marist Global Network of Schools took place in Mexico City. Representatives of the General Council, regional education structures and teams, representatives of the different mission networks of the Institute and representatives of each of the provinces or districts of the Institute, responsible for the leadership of the schools or potential active promoters of Champagnat Global participated.

marist world

AUSTRALIA: PROVINCIAL AND BROTHERS OF THE COUNCIL IN THE FIRST MARIST SCHOOL IN THE COUNTRY



BELGIUM: CHRISTMAS PREPARATION MEETING



EAST TIMOR: ASPIRANTS FINISH FORMATION BEFORE GOING ON TO THE POSTULANCY



VENEZUELA: BR. ORLANDO ESCOBAR AT THE VOCATIONAL MEETING ORGANIZED BY THE DIOCESE OF MACHIQUES



AUSTRALIA: MARIST YOUTH MINISTRY MELBOURNE



CHILE MEETING OF MANAGERS OF COLLEGIATE SOLIDARITY – 2022

GENERAL HOUSE

YEAR OF MARIST VOCATION: PRAYER RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITIES AND GROUPS

The Secretariat of Brothers Today invited Marists of Champagnat and particularly the different houses of formation in the Institute to compose prayers that could be used by communities and groups in their celebrations during the Year of Marist Vocations. A good number of contributions were received and are now available on the site of the Institute.

We would like to thank the brothers and the lay men and women who responded affirmatively to our invitation. We appreciate the effort and the dedication they have put into preparing these prayers. The invitation now is to make use of these prayers, in part or in full, in your prayer gatherings. Furthermore, please take note that each of these prayers were written in one particular language (as indicated in the document name). Much as we try to translate to the other languages commonly used in the Institute, we acknowledge that the translations at



times are not precise. Therefore, we also kindly ask that you make the adjustments to suit your respective contexts. Special thanks to Ms. Flaminia Filanci and Luiz da Rosa who helped us in putting all these together. To access the prayer, [click here](#)

AUSTRALIA

OUR LADY INSPIRES THE STAR OF THE SEA PROVINCE

After the presentation of the logo of the Star of the Sea Province, which will be inaugurated on December 8, an image that will help inspire its mission was also presented. It is an icon called “Mary, Star of the Sea”, designed by Ursula Betka, from Melbourne. Mary, Star of the Sea, tenderly holding her Son and presenting Him to the nations of the Province over which she casts her luminousness.

The icon itself is intended to offer a loving, heavenly gaze to the viewer. Look carefully at the Icon of ‘Mary, Star of the Sea’. What do you see? In technical terms, the faithful don’t look at an icon, they “read” it.

Icons serve as bridges to Christ, as links with Mary and the saints, as reminders of pivotal events in our faith journey. It is prayer to just look attentively at an icon and let God speak. The profound beauty of an icon is gentle. It does not force its way. It asks for time spent before it in stillness.... gazing.

“We are invited to enter into the icon and come closer to the Holy One portrayed”, says Br. Peter Carrol, future provincial of Star of the Sea province.



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Website

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