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# MARIST NEWS

MARISTS OF CHAMPAGNAT | GENERAL HOUSE | ROME | [WWW.CHAMPAGNAT.ORG](http://WWW.CHAMPAGNAT.ORG)

## GENERAL HOUSE

# MEETING OF PROVINCIALS AND DISTRICT SUPERIORS WITH THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The meeting of Provincials and District Superiors, which will take place at the General House from March 6th to 11th, focuses on intuitions for the future that emerged during the General Conference of 2022. The experiences of the Year of Marist Vocations in the Administrative Units will be shared, recalling the motto: “Caring for and generating Marist life”. And, during the meeting, the participants will deepen the Marist Spirituality, starting from our Constitutions and Rule of Life of the Institute.



These are the objectives of the meeting:

1. To take up the 5 intuitions for the future of the General Conference 2022, to share experiences in relation to them and to look for ways to put them into practice.
2. To share on the journey of the AU’s “caring for and generating Marist life” during the Year of Marist Vocations.
3. To dialogue about some current and future projects of the Secretariats, in relation to the intuitions for the future.
4. To share updated information on some topics (child protection, international mission...).

Together with the General Government, the directors of the Secretariats and Departments of the General Administration will participate at certain times. The meeting is an important moment in the animation of the Institute among the leaders who enliven the charisma of St. Marcellin Champagnat. In addition to the General Conference of 2022, this is the third meeting of Provincials and District Superiors that has been convened by Brother Superior General and His Council. The first was in 2019 and the second in 2020. One more is planned for 2024.

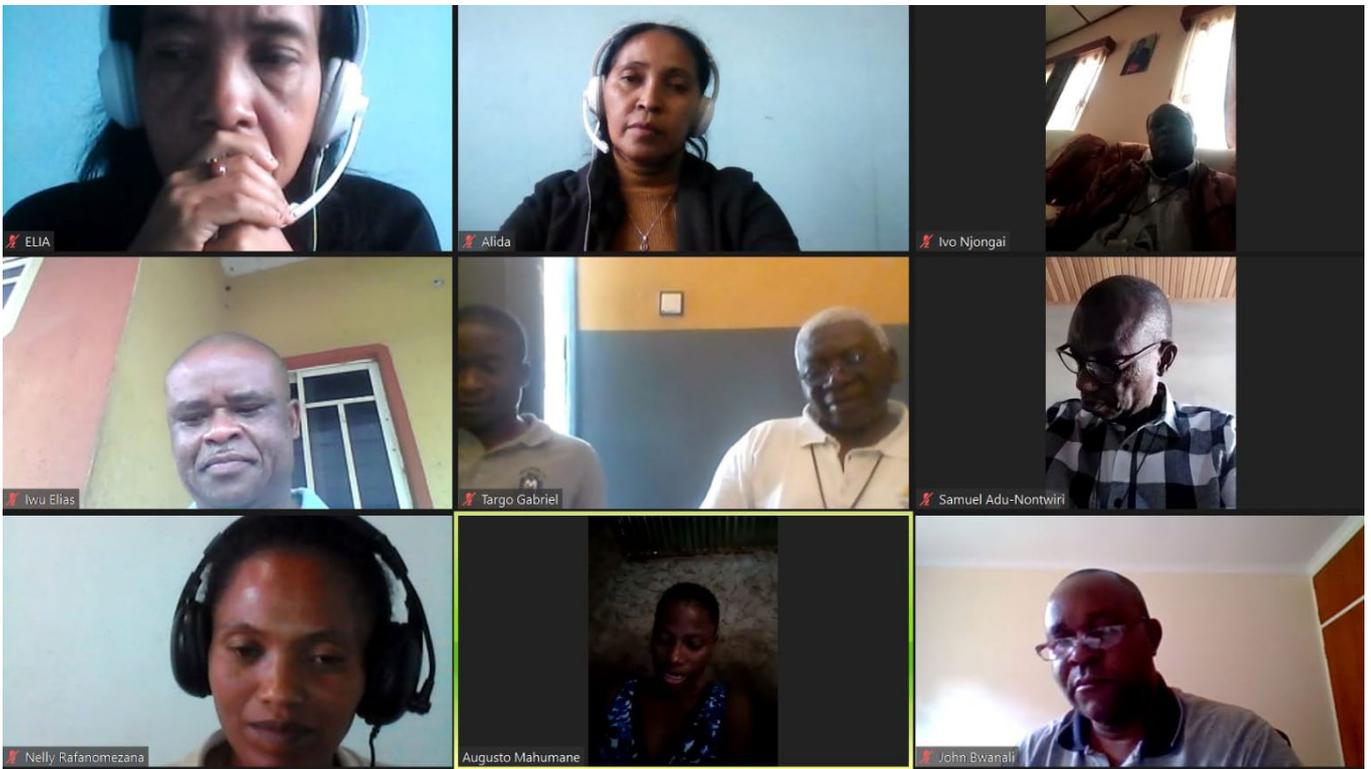
Fotos

## general administration

- From Monday to Saturday, the General Council meets with the Superiors of the Administrative Units at the General House.
- Rita and Pamela, from the FMSI team, visited earlier this week the Three2Six project in South Africa, which works with refugee and migrant children. Last week, together with Francesco, also from the Foundation team, they visited Malawi.

- Javier Llamas, Project manager of the Network of Schools, takes part in Curitiba, from Monday to Thursday, in the meeting of managers of the Marist Network Brazil.
- On Saturday, Brothers Óscar, General Councilor, and Valdicer, CMI director, participate in the Council Meeting of the Fratelli Project at the General House.

INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCATION  
**LAY MARISTS IN AFRICA**



On Tuesday 28th February 2023, the Representatives from Africa who participate in third phase, last November, of the International Forum on Lay Marist Vocation, met online. The objective of the meeting was to share experiences during and after the meeting in Rome. They also shared some guideline for the follow up of this important event. The sharing was based on what is priority in Africa, mainly Lay Marist Identity and formation. They discussed on how they can use their experiences and information from the forum to animate Lay Marists and all who are interested in Marist life and mission in the Continent. Each participant of the meeting will try to follow the guideline, and feedback shall be presented in the next meeting. The group plans to have 5 meetings at regional levels during this current year 2023. This includes meeting with the representatives in the Forum, meeting of the Africa Lay and Brothers Commission, meeting with the Provincial Superiors in Africa, and meeting with all the Lay Marists of the Region.

Note that all the meetings are online as the participants have limitation on the possibility of presential meeting. Communication in general is a challenge for the Marist in Africa, however they are making efforts to get in touch with each other in the region.



**International Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation**

The International Forum is four-year journey (2021-2024) of reflection and shared discernment among laypeople, laywomen and brothers. The themes of the Forum deal with the Marist vocation with emphasis on the lay Marist vocation, formation itineraries, accompaniment of vocational processes, bouding to the charism and possible juridical structures for the Marist laity. These are relevant current and future issues related to the vitality of the charism and the path of communion as a Global Charismatic Family.

A meeting in Rome last November brought together about 100 brothers and lay people. It was the third phase of this reflection process on the lay Marist vocation.

## AMÉRICA CENTRAL

# CELEBRATION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARIST PRESENCE

The Marist Brothers celebrated on February 18, in El Salvador, the 100 years of their presence in Central America with various activities that were attended by brothers, sisters and lay Marists, representatives of the 5 Marist provinces of the Arco Norte Region, in addition to Cardinal Gregorio Rosa Chávez, who presided over the Eucharistic celebration.

The event took place at the Instituto Católico de Oriente, in San Miguel, the first Marist school in Central America, where members of the Marist community gathered in an emotional celebration that included artistic and cultural presentations. Likewise, a solemn mass was held in the Cathedral Basilica of Queen of Peace.

In his homily, Cardinal Gregorio Rosa Chávez congratulated the Marist Brothers for their centenary work and gratefully remembered dozens of brothers who started the Marist path in this region. “The beginnings of great works are very simple and are marked by poverty”, stressed the Cardinal, highlighting the commitment and dedication of the Marist Brothers in the formation of priests in the seminary and the friendship and closeness with Saint Oscar Romero.

For his part, Br. Hipólito Pérez, Provincial of Central America, highlighted the audacity of the first 8 brothers from Colombia, who decided to embark with a single mission: to make Jesus Christ known and loved. “One hundred years later, we are witnesses of this small and fertile seed that soon multiplied and bore fruit in El Salvador and other Central American countries,” said the Provincial.



The Superior and the Vicar General sent a video message showing the proximity of the Institute to the Marist path in Central America. “We thank all the brothers and lay people for their generous and courageous dedication throughout these hundred years in Central America, surely facing some difficult moments, as

Saint Marcellin Champagnat also lived, but always with great confidence in Mary, Our Good Mother,” said Brother Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General.

Also Br. Luiz Carlos Gutiérrez, Vicar General, greeted the Marists of Central America: “These hundred years of history of the province are full of many small stories, of great Marists, Brothers and lay people who were capable of building the heritage that we receive today, and who were also capable of intuiting the fidelity that Champagnat had always wanted for each one of us in the lands of Central America and the Caribbean.”

The celebrations will extend for three years in the different cities where there are schools and Marist works.

BRASIL CENTRO-SUL

# PUCPR INAUGURATES EDUCATIONAL COMPACT OFFICE



The PUCPR Educational Pact Office was inaugurated on February 27 of this year. This is an interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral nucleus dedicated to promoting the implementation of the Global Education Pact in places where the university of the *Brasil Centro-Sul* Province has influence.

The inauguration took place online and was attended by various authorities, such as Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, Dom João Justino de Medeiros Silva, president of the Episcopal Pastoral Commission for Culture and Education for the CNBB, the rector of the PUCPR, Br. Rogério Renato Mateucci, and representatives of partner institutions, such as the State Secretariat of Education of Paraná, the Federal Technological University of Paraná (UTFPR), the pontifical organization Scholas Occurrentes, the Latin American Center for Service-Learning (CLAYSS) and the Libera Università Maria Santissima Assunta (LUMSA), in Rome.

During the inauguration, the participants highlighted the importance of education as a tool to promote a culture of encounter and a new humanism. The opening speech of the event recalled the words of Pope Francis when he mentioned that “Today’s world is constantly changing and faces a variety of crises. Never before has there been such need to unite our efforts in a broad educational alliance, to form mature individuals capable of overcoming division and antagonism, and to restore the fabric of relationships for the sake of a more fraternal humanity.” (Message of Pope Francis – Global Compact on Education)

The Office, made up of people from the different areas of the university, will be in charge of Prof. Dr. Rodrigo de Andrade and Prof. Dr. Ernesto L. Sienna, under the direction of Prof. Dr. Fabián Incerti, Rector of Mission, Identity and Extension.

This new PUCPR service has five lines of action, which include to map; to support and encourage the creation of university initiatives capable of responding to the seven commitments of the Global Compact on Education; to develop and support research in the Compact’s priority thematic areas; to monitor scenarios and trends of permanence policies in higher education; to compose and act in the international network of reference universities for the Educational Compact and to promote service-learning as a methodology for the development of university extension at PUCPR.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça highlighted that the Office will have a double mission, that of coordinating all the initiatives of the University’s Educational Compact and also making the global pact a local Compact; and the ad extra mission of “creating networks with other universities, energizing other educational realities and putting us in contact with multiple realities.”

The Office of the Educational Pact of the PUCPR is another important initiative in favor of a new global educational social contract, and that will undoubtedly contribute to the university becoming a space, increasingly committed to the training of people at the service of the common benefit.

[See the complete speech of Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça.](#)

**FMSI**

Last week, the Foundation's team traveled to Malawi for a monitoring visit of the project "Equity of access to quality education for girls and disadvantaged children in Malawi", supported by Miseen Cara. The project aims to ensure equal access to quality education, in an area where this is not guaranteed.

**SPAIN**

On March 3rd and 4th, the research team "child protection and positive development" from the Centro Universitario Cardenal Cisneros shared training on child sexual abuse with representatives from the 4 provinces with a presence in Spain.

**BRAZIL**

From March 6 to 9, the 1st Meeting of Managers of the Marist Network Brazil takes place in Curitiba, with representatives of the country's 3 Provinces. The proposed theme is: "Valuing memories, transforming the present and building the future".

**LEBANON AND SYRIA**

The Marist community of Lebanon has just bid farewell to Brother Esteban Ortega Martínez, from the Province of Ibérica, who, after three years of service in the Fratelli Project, has left for Syria where he will form a community with Brother Georges Sabe, with the Blue Marists of Aleppo.



NORANDINA

**PROVINCE DEFINED ACTION PLANS FOR 2023**



The city of Cali, Colombia, hosted the Provincial Assembly of Coordinators of Marist Life and Mission of the Province of Norandina from February 6 to 10.

The meeting began with formation in Marist Leadership. The theme was guided by Brothers Juan Sebastián Herrera and Alexnnys Flores, after their participation in the Diploma Course "Servant and Prophetic Leadership" promoted by the Institute and held at the PUCRS of Brazil in the year 2022.

Following this space, the 9 areas of animation (Solidarity, Education, Evangelization, Laity, Economic Affairs, Spirituality, Formation, Vocation and Communications) reflected in the light of the calls of the VII Provincial Chapter, which allowed to discern during the meeting the various operational plans of the provincial projects and subsequently define the annual schedule of provincial advocacy activities.

At the end of the meeting, the mission councils of the three countries that make up the province (Ecuador, Venezuela, Colombia) met to socialize what was planned and conclude the assembly with the general evaluation and the sending Eucharist.



AUSTRALIA

# ONE YEAR IN THE LAVALLA200> COMMUNITY OF MOUNT DRUITT!

We share below the testimony of Ruben Galego and Silvia Martinez, a couple from the Province of Compostela, who have been living in the LaValla200> International Community in Mount Druitt, Australia for a year. Joining them are Kimberly Camiring and Br Lawrie McCane. They live in an outer suburb of Sydney, regarded as among the most socially disadvantaged in Australia. Its main ministry is to support the operation of the Marist Learning Zone, a joint project of the Marists and Catholic Education. Their aim is to re-integrate students who are currently not attending school.



If you are interested in taking part in an International and Intercultural Communities, you may contact the Brother Provincial or District Superior, or the Superior General directly, introducing yourself and explaining your motivation and desire to commit yourself to one of the Institute’s Projects or initiatives. It is possible to contact CMI, in case of doubts, using the following e-mail address: [cmi@fms.it](mailto:cmi@fms.it)



Time seems to pass so quickly when you are enjoying things. Last February it was one year since we arrived in Australia to join the Lavalla200> community in Mount Druitt. A project that had been delayed due to the pandemic.

Now fully immersed in this experience, we see our beginnings here from a different perspective. Adapting to a country different from our own and to a project with a different way of working is always difficult, although now it seems easier. Helping students with learning difficulties or who miss a lot of school for various reasons is motivating and, at the same time, challenging. This year we have tried to do our best to make it easier for them to return to school in the most satisfactory way. The language has made this difficult at times, but we have always tried to get the job done and to collaborate in the different activities or projects.

The course at Marist Learning Zone has its ups and downs, with more or less students, as the numbers vary throughout the year, not all students are with us for the whole school year, it depends on each case. We are like the bridge that makes it easier for them to integrate back into the school. A few days

ago a student from last year came to visit us to tell us how happy she was in her new school. This is very gratifying and reinforces our work here.

We appreciate the fact that we have been able to get to know the Aboriginal community of the Baabayn centre and their history. We are very grateful to them for giving us the possibility to know more about their past and present, as well as to be part of the initiatives they carry out such as the “Homework Club” on Tuesday afternoons, in which we help young children to revise or reinforce what they have learnt at school as we told you some time ago (although there is always a little room for some games), the “Youth Group” on Thursday afternoons, also in the afternoon, which we have been going to since the middle of last year and any other activity they do in which we can be of help. In this Thursday group we spend 3 hours doing various fun activities with a few young people. We try to encourage them to belong to the community and to transmit the aboriginal culture to them.

On the other hand, community life has changed from when we arrived, as Brother Fabricio went back to Brazil at the end of his

3-year commitment to the project and now we have Kim, a teacher from the Philippines, who arrived in mid-January to join us.

It was a very pleasant surprise to know that we were going to have another person in the community, as we had not counted on it. She has adapted very well and in this time we have done a lot of things together to get to know each other better. We really enjoy the moments in community, whether it's simply getting together around the same table to chat, have dinner... or visiting the city or the mountains. It is always enriching to share moments, experiences, culture, ... to know little things about the life and countries of others.



From August to November Brother Lawrie went to Europe to do his "Third Age program". A time he enjoyed very much and which he shared with us by sending us photos and commenting on what he was doing almost every day, we here missed him at home and we were looking forward to his return. We were worried that it might be a time when he would think about remaining part of our community and take another direction in his life as a Marist Brother, but he is passionate

about this project, he loves it and feels privileged to live in such a community.

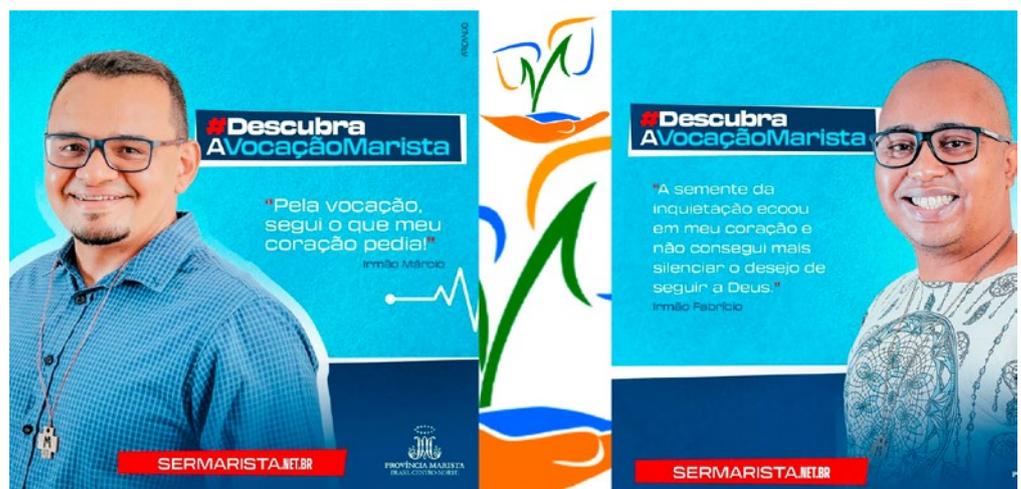
We will soon be going to Spain to be able to see our family and friends again, something we are looking forward to with great joy. It will also be a time to share all our experiences being part of an intercultural community Lavalla200>.

## BRAZIL CENTRO NORTE

# PROVINCE LAUNCHES A CAMPAIGN OF VOCATION ANIMATION

The Province of Brasil Centro-Norte, in the context of the Year of Marist Vocations, has launched a campaign of vocation animation. The challenge it proposes is to go out to meet young people and awaken them to their vocation. It is a communication campaign and represents an instrument that complements and provokes the commitment of Vocation Animation to reach new spaces, through new languages, to care for and generate new life and vocation for our Marist Institution, fostering the contact and communion of young people with God.

The protagonists of the campaign are Marist Brothers, who by their presence show the way of being Marist and looking at the world. Their testimonies are the content and the fruit of a profound experience of faith inspired by the founder, Saint



Marcellin Champagnat, with Jesus Christ.

In addition to the presence on social networks, a website has also been created to explain the vocational process of Marist consecrated life and to make available other content, such as testimonies of brothers.

## BRASIL SUL-AMAZÔNIA

# “A WANDERING ARAMEAN WAS MY FATHER” TWO MONTHS AT THE SIDE OF REFUGEES IN LEBANON

For two months, Brother Donavan Farias Machado, from the Province of [Brasil Sul-Amazônia](#), did an international volunteer experience in the [Fratelli Project in Lebanon](#), from December 15, 2022 to February 15, 2023. He is 32 years old and from Porto Alegre. Below, in interview form, is his testimony.



## What were your motivations for volunteering abroad?

Opening to knowledge and learning new social and cultural paradigms, as well as the challenge to live in a completely new and different context.

## What marked you most in your experience?

The period that I was in Lebanon was remarkable in many aspects: religious, cultural, social, etc. But the hospitality and welcome of the people that I had the pleasure to meet and live with was incredible. Starting with the Fratelli Community, where I was very well received, and which played a very important role in my personal and community development during the whole period. Another factor was the mission carried out with the children and young people of the region, most of whom are Syrian families that came to Lebanon fleeing the horrors of the civil war in their country.

## If you could define your volunteering in a few words, what are the expressions or concepts that sum up your experience?

“A wandering Aramean was my father”. This phrase found in Deuteronomy 26 refers to the figure of Abraham and, as the name of the Patriarch implies, “Father of all”, refers to the peoples who make up the religions of the books: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It is also the initial part of the so-called “credo-historical” of the People of Israel. I have lived with children and young people coming from families that for generations have been on the road in search of better living conditions. Expelled and fleeing from their lands because of wars, persecutions, hunger, and death, bearers of historical wounds

that never heal, they leave in search of survival, sometimes submitting themselves to dangerous and badly paid jobs, in the hope of ensuring the minimum subsistence for themselves and their families. They are the ones who seek the crumbs that fall from rich and sumptuous tables.

In the biblical story, Abram leaves with Sarai and her family for the land promised by God, “a land flowing with milk and honey”. This theological topos was where the Abrahamic family could pitch their tent, for in this place they found the possibility of life in abundance. The fear, hunger, violence, and misery that haunted them for so long were extinguished, and the dignity of the people was reestablished and consecrated as the predominant factor in the relationship between the divine and the human.

Our brothers and sisters continue their way in search of better living conditions. They have not yet reached the “promised land”, but in the middle of the road they have found safe harbors that allow them to experience what have been them denied: love and dignity. I believe that the Fratelli Project is an important haven for many families, both Syrian and Lebanese. There I was able to witness what Jesus of Nazareth made clear to all who followed him: “Love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 13:34).

## Is there a particular moment that marked your experience?

The joy and happiness stamped on the children’s faces as they arrived at school was something that really caught my attention. The “Sabah Al Khair!” (good morning in the Arabic language) was always accompanied by a big smile on their faces.

# marist world

BOLIVIA: ANIMATION DIRECTORS AND TEAMS MEETING



COLOMBIA: REMAR MOVEMENT ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



INDIA: LAY MARIST GATHERING IN TAMIL NADU



SPAIN: PROVINCE OF IBÉRICA – ACCIÓN FORMATIVA MARCELINO 3.0



EAST TIMOR: POSTULANCY FORMATION AT THE MARIST HOUSE TEULALE



VENEZUELA: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF MARIST LAITY

## What did you learn during this time?

It is always said that we should be open to the “different,” that this movement of openness to new cultures, to the “totally other” is essential for us to have a global vision of the world we live in. And this is right. It is evident that intercultural experiences are essential for our development as social beings, and extremely important for the deconstruction of many pre-established concepts in an erroneous and mistaken manner. However, what is interesting in this process is to realize that the one who was initially considered by you to be the “totally other” is not so “totally” as we thought. Along the way we discover many similarities that help to strengthen relationships. And the one who initially was “totally other” ends up becoming your brother and sister.

## Were there any challenges?

The language experience was something incredible and enriching. It was very common in a conversation circle to have people talking in Arabic, French, and English simultaneously. And everyone understood each other. For me, this possibility of learning (Arabic) and being able to express myself in both languages (English and French) was a challenge

and a learning experience. A challenge because I had to learn a new language (Arabic) and to really exercise the other two (French and English), but also to learn from this linguistic experience.

## As a Marist experience, what has this time meant for you?

I have realized that I am not only a Brother for my home Province, but a Brother of and for the Marist Institute. This allows us to look beyond the provincial boundaries and perceive the Marist mission in a global and intercultural way.

## What would you like to say to those who wish to become Marist volunteers outside their Province?

I once heard Brother Nilvo Favretto say: “Where the heart burns, the feet start to walk”. First of all, you need to have the will to set out on the road to have a profound and transforming experience. It is important wishing to listen, to learn and to respect. It is necessary to walk together with the people that you will also be part of. For you will learn to smile and cry with the new family that will welcome you. This is why the volunteer experience is unique and unrepeatable.

AMÉRICA CENTRAL

# ENCUENTRO DE HERMANOS MAYORES



Con el lema “Llamados a SER”, alrededor de 30 hermanos mayores de la Provincia de América Central se reunieron en Guatemala, del 21 al 23 de febrero, para reflexionar sobre la etapa de vida que están viviendo y tomar conciencia de que pueden seguir aportando a sus comunidades, de manera fecunda, a través de sus experiencias y capacidad de adaptación. El encuentro estuvo a cargo de Vicky Irigaray, laica española con amplia experiencia en acompañamiento de la vida consagrada.

Los objetivos propuestos fueron: reflexionar sobre qué entendemos por envejecimiento saludable; tomar conciencia de las actitudes que facilitan la adaptación a los cambios con ilusión, no con resignación; y retomar la llamada recibida que ha dado sentido a sus vidas.

Durante los tres días de reflexión, los hermanos meditaban sobre la oportunidad de mirar la propia vida desde otra

perspectiva. “Lo importante no debe cambiar, debe resituarse, recontextualizarse en su expresión”, mencionó Vicky Irigaray. Y resaltó tres ideas importantes:

- Envejecer es cambiar, prepararse para adaptarse a los cambios.
- No envejecen a la vez el cuerpo y la mente.
- Perder el interés de lo que nos rodea acelera el proceso de envejecimiento.

Los hermanos participantes concluyeron que tienen la necesidad de sentirse valorados y reconocidos: “Estamos llamados a ser fecundos y seguir generando vida. Nos comprometemos a ser especialistas en la escucha, unos para otros; a desarrollar la positividad, la caricia... Para ello, todos tenemos que seguir reconciliándonos con nuestra propia vida, cerrando heridas, sanando... Amar nuestra fragilidad y verla como aliada y no como enemiga”.



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