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## General Link Councillors'



## Visit to West Africa

Tchad, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Ghana

March-April 2023

### Bulletin Team

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Quiz for Marist Schools in Ghana



## LINK COUNCILORS' VISIT TO THE PROVINCE

The Link Councilors to Africa, Brothers Martin Vicario Oscar and McDonald Kenneth Charles from the General administration paid a canonical visitation to the Province in the months of March and April 2023. Every Brother in the Province was given the opportunity to talk and be listened to. The Councilors' sessions with the Communities conveyed fraternal greetings from Br. Ernesto Sanchez, Superior General, and offering words of encouragement to the Brothers, highlighting the importance of their individual vocations and collective perseverance as a vital sign for the Institute. In their canonical briefing, the Councilors emphasized three elements: Recalling the General Chapter and its calls, the General Conference, and a look at the Marist World. The calls focused on the need for the Brothers to journey together as a global family, be beacons of hope and hands of God's mercy, be bridge builders, responding to the emerging needs,

and be with the children of the margins. The brothers were encouraged to reflect on these calls and meditate on what God is calling them to do in this moment of their Marist history and what God is calling them to be. They were also asked to reflect on the building symbol and their contribution to the building of the province and the worldwide Marist mission.

The General Conference aimed to strengthen the unity of the Institute, and the Brothers were reminded of the need to work towards that goal. The briefings ended with an overview of ongoing projects in the Institute.

*Br Celestine Suinyuy, fms*



## CHAD

Brothers working in Chad welcomed the Councilors from Monday the 27th of March to Wednesday the 29th. The councilors spent two days touring the Cultural Center and school to observe the activities of the Brothers. They met with teachers, staff members, and Brothers who work in the school and acknowledged their hard work for the Marist mission in Chad. They encouraged the Brothers to continue their efforts in the same Marist family spirit. The visit ended with a community meeting on Wednesday at 6:30 pm and thereafter a shared meal.

*Br Alfred Samedi, fms*



## Cameroon

Upon their arrival in Cameroon on 31st of March 2023, the two Councillors had meetings with the individual Brothers and then held a plenary at the Yassa Community, where most of the Brothers were residing. On the 2nd of April, the Brothers of Cameroon except those from Bafut Community, visited the Manuel Jorgues community to encourage the pioneer Brothers of the community and witness the ongoing work in the new School. The visit ended with an outing to Kribi (a beach town) during which the two Councillors were presented the Cameroon traditional fabric (Torghu) as souvenirs of their visit and stay in the country.





### *Korhogo Community, Ivory Coast*

Br. Oscar Martin visited Korhogo from the 5th - 7th April 2023. This moment was a wonderful time of sharing, communion and fraternity. He thanked, encouraged and advised the Brothers on the importance of being Marist.

*Br Ken MacDonald with the Brothers in Liberia*



### *Bouake Community, Ivory Coast*



## Ghana

Br Oscar and Br Ken both returned from Ivory Coast and Liberia respectively to Ghana and on the 11th April 2023, visited the Provincial House. The visit lasted three days. They later moved to Ashalaja community for the same purpose and continued to Kumasi where they encouraged all the communities there: Kwadaso Community, Bukrom Community, the Novitiate and Postulancy formation Houses.



*A photo shot with the Provincial Council members before their departure*

## Marist Pedagogy: From a Psychological Lens (9)

In our bid to know Mary, the mother of Jesus, better, we continue our investigation about her. This time, we propose to look at her ratings on the personality trait of Conscientiousness. According to Macrae and Costa, this factor is essential in assessing human personality. People who measure high on this factor are considerate, orderly, hardworking, responsible, principled, prudent, conscientious, ambitious, punctual, and persevering. On the other hand, low conscientious people are negligent, lazy, disorganized, late, aimless, quitting, unethical and imprudent.

Let us glean from the literature available the degree to which the Blessed Virgin Mary possesses these characteristics. Among the litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary are “Mary, the most prudent”, “mother of good counsel”, “seat of wisdom”. It is evident that the Church fathers who lived in Mary’s era and had an in-depth knowledge of her personality recognized in her these fine attributes. Coupled with her intelligible initiative at Cana (requesting her son, Jesus, to aid the troubled wedding spouses), we can equally confirm that Mary was prudent, sensitive and considerate.

We kindly recall Mary’s two adorable Quranic titles- Siddiqah and Tahira, meaning ‘She who confirms the truth’ and ‘One who has been purified’, respectively. These titles unaffectedly agree with what the Church teaches -Virgin most faithful, virgin most pure and mother most chaste- about her. Happily, the Church's tradition and the teachings of Islam seem to speak, in unison, about the high conscientiousness of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She is simply impeccable in character and a unique model for humanity. No wonder St. Methodius says of her, “you possess more goodness and greater charity than all the other Saints”.

The writings of Br. Charles Howard (Marist Apostolic Spirituality) paints a fantastic portrait of a hardworking Mary. He refers to her as a woman with dust on her feet. This is a distinguished symbol of service and hard work. The spontaneous response of Mary to the Angels’ message that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant in her old age remarkably confirms her industriousness. Without much delay, the youthful Mary journeyed, possibly trekked, to Elizabeth’s house in the hill country. The scripture records that “Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.” It is worth noting that by common knowledge, it was three months of hard work; she waited on her aged, weak and pregnant cousin with agility, diligence and joy.

A similar hardworking disposition of the Blessed Virgin Mary is demonstrated in her involvement in her son’s apostolate. It takes such character to be in a company of an itinerant evangelist like Jesus. With the group, she trekked long distances to preach the gospel. She joined other women like Joana, Mary, the wife of Cleopas and Mary Magdalene, to wait upon Jesus and his large following.

We also dare to say that she was very responsible. Though a teen mother, she was exceptionally endowed with the grace to follow the spirit's promptings and the angel's leading to protect her child from several harm’s ways. Mary and her husband Joseph, with Jesus, flee to Egypt to protect the latter from the ferocity of King Herod. What about when Jesus was lost after a feast in Jerusalem? It is recorded that realizing Jesus’ absence in their company, the couple hurried back to Jerusalem and painstakingly searched for him. After three days, they found him at the Temple and returned with him to the countryside. Even in Jesus’ agony, Mary was responsible. She followed her to Calvary. She was a ray of hope in his utter loneliness. It was her token to show her faithfulness and responsibility to her son. Her presence was a strong statement – “though I can’t prevent your killing, I still care about you.”

Mary seems to rate very highly on the scale of conscientiousness. From the documents examined here, she measures favorable on this vital Macrae and Costa’s personality factor. She has demonstrated prudence, industry, responsibility, perseverance, sensitivity and excellent judgment. She is an incredible woman of valor.

*Br Eric Kramo, FMS*



## Workshop on Child Safeguarding



*At the request of the Provincial Superior, Br Cyprian Gandeebo, Br Ken MacDonald, General Councilor had accepted to facilitate a workshop on Child Safeguarding. It was a week long workshop that started on 20th March 2023. The aim was to help the Province develop its policy on protecting children as well as the Brothers and staff members in the different areas of ministry. It was attended in person by representatives from the different communities of the Province and every other Brother followed online.*





## Servant leadership in the Market Square: Advocating for Child rights

*In the Market Square, a leader stands  
Not to rule but to serve with hands  
To lift up children, oft forgot  
Your rights, their needs, their worth, he sought*

*No task too small, no child too young  
He listened close to every tongue  
Their hopes, their dreams, their pain  
He pledged to fight for them again*

*With gentle heart and steady voice  
He made the market his firm voice  
To spread the word, to rally all  
To heed the children's urgent call*

*He led by example, not by power  
His servant heart, a blooming flower  
To bring light to darkened days.  
To lift up those in dire straits*

*And so he served, with all his might  
To bring about a brighter sight  
To see a world, where children thrive  
Where servant leadership comes alive*

*Br Dr Francis Veye, fms*

# YEAR OF MARIST VOCATIONS

On Saturday 18th March 2023, Friar Eugene Antwi Boasiako, OFM Conv led the Brothers of the Province of West Africa in a reflection on deepening their vocation through a virtual Zoom Meeting. In his introductory remarks, he drew inspiration from Victor E Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning* and presented the theme in two parts: What religious life is all about and How it can be deepened in the 21st Century.

Drawing inspiration from Lumen Gentium 44, Magisterium on Religious life [No 5], Perfectae Caritatis (1 and 2), and Vita Consacrata, Friar Eugene emphasized that the religious life is an invitation to follow Christ with an undivided heart. He stressed that the ultimate goal of the religious life is to seek God and to find meaning in our existence through a life of prayer, fraternity, and service.

In the second part of his presentation, he offered four practical ways to deepen our vocation in the 21st century. Firstly, he stressed the importance of self-awareness and consciousness. He noted that society often makes us forget our identity because of the challenges we face, leading to a split personality. By finding time to pray like Jesus did, we can become more aware of our calling to be different and to live out our vocation with purpose and intention.

## Deepening our Religious Vocation

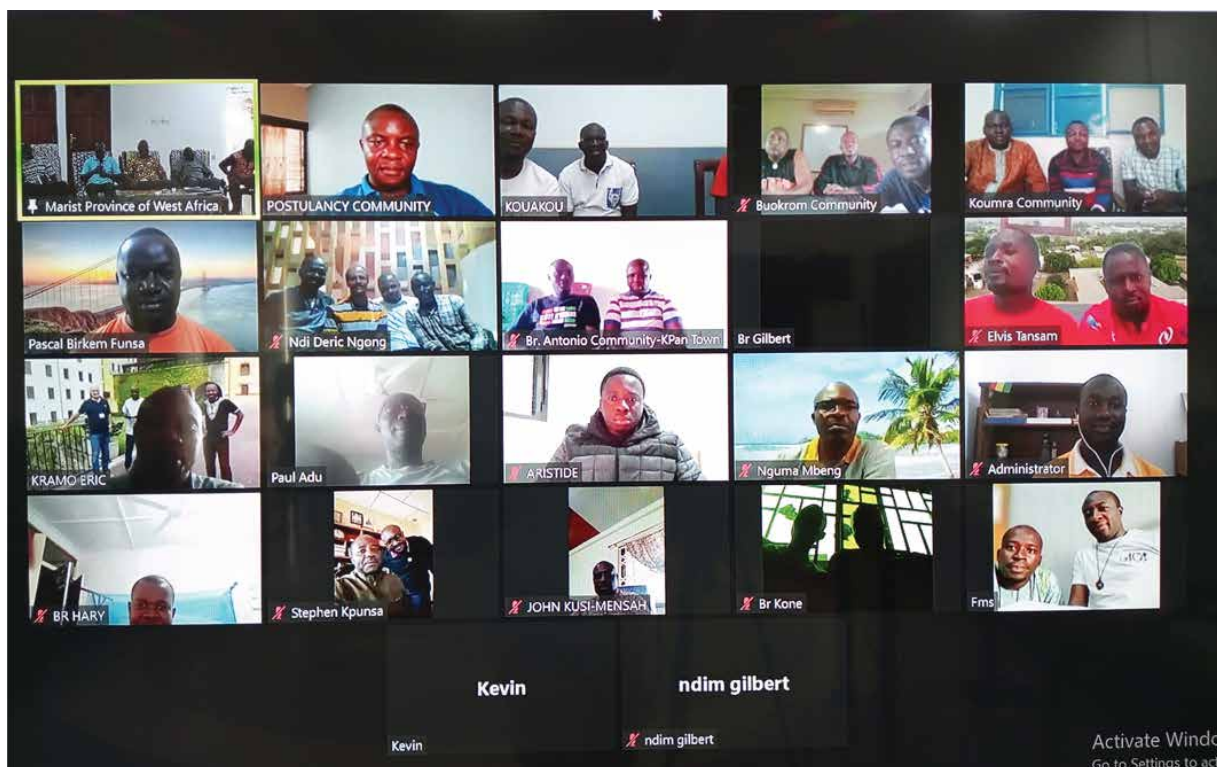
*Br Meyamui Valentine, fms*

Secondly, he urged the Brothers to practice and live out the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience. He underscored the need to make these values a part of our daily lives and culture. On another note, Friar Eugene encouraged the Brothers to uphold fraternal life in the community and to hold it in high esteem. He noted that the origin of fraternal life is in the doctrine of the Trinity, as God lives in eternal communion. Living in community, we can deepen our vocation and strengthen our commitment to serving others.

Finally, he urged the Brothers to protect the mission of the founder in the purview of their apostolate. He stressed the importance of not deviating from the charism of the founder in whatever they do, and of keeping their mission and purpose at the

forefront of their work.

Towards the end of the presentation the brothers in their various communities went for a plenary to chat out other ways of deepening their vocation in the 21st century.



# YEAR OF MARIST VOCATIONS

## Quiz for Marist Schools in Ghana

*Br Michael Telewa, fms*



On Friday, 28th April 2023 the Vocations office organized Marist Schools quiz competition among the three Marist schools in Ghana: Marist Preparatory/JHS, Our Good Mother School and St Marcellin Champagnat School, as part of the activities to celebrate the Year of Marist Vocations.

The event took place at Marist Prep/JHS Assembly Hall. The quiz questions were based on the life of St Marcellin Champagnat and the early Brothers alongside the history of Marist Brothers in Ghana. Br Eugene Ezugwu, a formator in the novitiate was invited to be the quiz master with three teachers from the schools to support him in officiating the quiz as time keeper and score master.

At the end of the competition, Our Good Mother School emerged the winner with 55 points, St Marcellin Champagnat School came second with 54 points and Marist Prep/JHS with 46 points. All the contestants were given medals for participation and the winning school took alongside a trophy.



# Priestly Ordination / Thanksgiving: Cameroon

*Br Cylas Yenwong, fms*

During the second week in the month of April 2023, two former students Rev Fr Patrick Waindim (Archdiocese of Bamenda) and Rev Fr Ignatius Ngeyen (Diocese of Kumbo) from St Albert Comprehensive College, Bafut and St Pius X Secondary School, Tatum respectively were ordained as priests. Their success is a testament to the quality of Catholic education and the commitment of these individuals to their faith. They each returned to their respective Institutions to render thanks to God.



Rev Fr Patrick Waindim and Staff of St Alberts, Bafut



Rev Fr Ignatius Ngeyen and Staff of St Pius X, Tatum



# Some Activities from Chad

*By Br Alfred Samedi, fms*

## Lay Marists

The Lay Marist community in Chad resumed their activities with a small number of members attending the first meeting of the year. The gathering provided an opportunity for each member to express their personal experiences and emotions after a period without meetings. The members expressed their happiness about the resumption of activities, as it allowed them to uphold and promote Marist values in their daily lives.



### *8th of March celebration by the students*



On March 8th, female students at Marie Ke Tal came together to celebrate International Women's Day. The day began with various activities, such as a women's march and the sale of articles. The festivities concluded with a shared lunch between the students and several staff members. The ceremony was vibrant and enjoyable, with plenty of entertainment and fun for all who attended.

### *Solidarity with the prisoners*

During the patronal feast, students and a some staff memberd from Marie Ke Tal took the opportunity to prepare sandwiches and purchase soap and sugar to share with the prisoners. Additionally, they provided words of encouragement to the inmates. The prisoners were delighted that the students had taken such a kind initiative towards them.



## Visit of the SDO: Korhogo

*By Br Derick Ndi, fms*

On April 3rd of this year, Champagnat Catholic College in Korhogo had the honor of receiving the highest authority in the region of Poro, located in the northern part of Côte d'Ivoire. The purpose of his visit was to foster a fraternal connection with the students and staff. Brother Étienne Balma, the Headmaster of the College, warmly welcomed the distinguished guest and delivered an impressive presentation, providing an in-depth overview of the School's foundation and purpose.

The Senior Divisional Officer commended the dedicated staff and administration of the college, acknowledging the remarkable work they are doing in

the country. He also encouraged the students to strive for excellence, emphasizing the importance of being responsible, obedient, and punctual in their endeavors. The authority's words resonated deeply, instilling a sense of motivation and purpose among the students.

This special visit served as a significant moment for Champagnat Catholic College, as it showcased the institution's commitment to education and its positive impact on the community. The event exemplified the collaborative efforts of the staff, students, and administration, all working together to create a nurturing and enriching environment for learning and personal growth.



## A Weeping Tree: A Eulogy for the Marist Brothers' Ticket

*"In Kumasi town where Marist Brothers reside,  
There stood a ticket with trees side by side,  
They welcomed all with hospitable air,  
And gave clean oxygen without any fare.*

*Brothers Sergio, Atta, Paul, and more,  
Planted them in '90, and they did adore,  
Their trees as faithful brothers and sisters,  
For 33 years they stood without any blisters.*

*But Antony, a neighbor with a power saw,  
Mercilessly destroyed them, leaving one in awe,  
The lone tree left standing, weeping for its kin,  
While all of God's creation cries out in chagrin.*

*This evil act intentionally caused by one,  
Who once lived in Holland, now in Ghana's sun,  
Antony listened not to the Holy Father's call,  
Nor Mother Earth's cry, as he made them fall.*

*The Marist Brothers and their ecology ministry,  
Saddened by this loss, as they cry for justice's victory,  
For these trees were exemplary, a project for good,  
But now they're gone, leaving the neighborhood subdued.*

*Let this poem be a soul-searching plea,  
For Antony to realize his wrong, and to be,  
A better steward of God's creation henceforth,  
So that such destruction may never again come forth.*

*By Br Dr Francis Verye fms.*



## THE ROLE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE SERVICE OF EVANGELIZATION (3)

*Br Augustine Teye Naatey, fms*

In the previous article, we discussed the Mission and Vision of Catholic Education. That article emphasized that catholic education goes beyond imparting knowledge and skills; it is also a tool for leading young people to true freedom – salvation expressed in social, economic, and spiritual terms. In this article, we shall explore Marist Education which is within the scope of Catholic education.

### Marist Education

The Institute of the Marist Brothers of the Schools, a religious institute, was founded over 200 years ago by St. Marcellin Champagnat and has developed a particular way of evangelizing – Marist Education. It is important to state that our approach to forming young people is founded on and expressed in our charism ‘to make Jesus known and loved’ (Const. Art 3). Our way of educating is clearly described in the document, *In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat: a vision for Marist Education Today*. The document, in the few lines below, highlights some principles of Marist Education.

**our approach to forming young people is founded on and expressed in our charism ‘to make Jesus known and loved’**

The core of Marcellin Champagnat’s vision of mission was “to make Jesus Christ known and loved”. This concept in the context of education invariably requires that our educational practice and approach present Jesus as the content of everything to be experienced by the students in our schools. This goes without stating that Mathematics, Science, Geography, and English are important and cannot be relegated in any way.

Marist educators must understand these elements as means of formation that have their end not in themselves but in a desirable personality – a good Christian and a virtuous citizen.

This, therefore, follows that the educational process must create the person of Christ whom the student can experience in their daily life. The person of Christ must be encountered and must challenge students. Then falling in love with him, the young person would desire to become like him. To achieve this aim, the totality of the learning environment including teachers, subjects and the school compound must be organized in such a way that

the young people are able to experience he who is to be known and loved. Inspired by the words of Marcellin, “I cannot see a child without wanting to teach him catechism, to make him realize how much Jesus Christ has loved him”, we present Jesus to the young as a real person they can come to know, love, and follow (Page 18).

The Marist institutions are described as centres of evangelization and hence wherever the Marists find themselves must endeavour to evangelise the young. In these educational spaces, we adopt a distinctive style of formation, the *Marist Pedagogy*. This approach requires us to cultivate constant presence and be available to our students. The Marist educators are expected to live a life of simplicity in their manner of dealing with the students. Also, they must appreciate a sense of family spirit and communal living. Our learners are encouraged to love work and see this as their participation in God’s act of bringing into being a brighter and better world. Above all, our students are guided to a lifestyle modelled after that of Mary the mother of Jesus (Pages 23-26).

Finally, it is worth stating that the approach to teaching and learning adopted by the Marists is a beautiful and effective way of forming young people. Our world cannot afford to lose this gift to the church. Sometimes, it appears that Marist institutions have lost the script and begun to operate as other learning organisations. It is not enough to have high grades and be described as first-class schools. While we pursue excellence, it is important to keep the values that make us disciples of Marcellin Champagnat. In keeping these ideals, develop new ways of applying them within the context of best educational practice.



## BUILDING BRIDGES OF HOPE:

A Heartwarming Visit to Kwadaso Kwenase Rehabilitation Centre"

*Br Harry Nyanti, fms*

### Marist Preparatory and Junior High School (MPS)

In collaboration with the school, the Pastoral Team successfully raised a sum of Ghc 2,857.80 through weekly worship offerings, termly Mass Celebrations, and personal contributions from select students. This achievement aligns with the Pastoral Commission's objectives for the Lenten Project.



As part of the team's commitment to this initiative, they organized a fraternal visit to the Kwadaso Kwenase Rehabilitation Centre on May 12, 2023. The Center provides care for physically challenged boys and girls, as well as young men and women, through the generous support of kind and generous individuals. Accompanying the Team on this visit were six students representing various academic levels, two teachers, and two Brothers. The collaborative efforts of the Pastoral Team and the school resulted in the presentation of food items to the center, alongside a monetary donation of Ghc 1,000.00, enclosed in an envelope. The visit to the Rehabilitation Center proved to be a deeply moving experience. The residents warmly received us, expressing their appreciation through beautiful singing, drumming, and dancing.



May devotion at Collège Champagnat, Bouaké



Palm Sunday at SACC, Bafut

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