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MARISTNEWS

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WEST CENTRAL EUROPE

ASSEMBLY IN FURTH INAUGURATES THE DISTRICT



Marists from Ireland, The United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany gathered together for the last time as the Province of West Central Europe in Furth, Germany, from 13th until 15th October – the place there the province began in April 2000. Brother Ben Consigli, C.G. one of the Councillors for Region of Europe, represented the General Council. Brothers and Marist lay people from the five countries of the Province managed to reach Furth to participate in the Assembly. Brother Gabriel Villa-Real, and Brother Xavier Giné, Provincial and Vicar Provincial of the Province of L'Hermitage, were present along with Brothers and lay Marists from France and Catalunya. Brother Robert Thunus, the outgoing Provincial,

opened the Assembly and handed over to Mr Rob Walsh, who had been the facilitator of the Province discernment process since April 2022.

The Province Assembly in Furth brought to an end a process that had its beginnings in a meeting of the Provincial Council of West Central Europe with Brother Emili's General Council in February 2017, when we were asked to make a presentation on the future of the Province. This work was taken up by the current General Council which initiated a discernment process that involved a range of meetings (via Zoom or in person) with Brothers and lay people, the Provincial Council and members of the General Council, larger meetings in Dublin (November



general administration

- On Monday, Br. Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General, and the Superior General of the De La Salle Brothers, met online with the Fratelli Project community in Lebanon to motivate them during the critical situation caused by the war.
- On Monday, the face-to-face phase of the second edition of the Formation Program on Servant and Prophetic Leadership for English and French speakers began at Notre Dame of Marbel University in the Philippines. Brothers Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, Vicar General, Ben Consigli, General Councillor, and Goyo Linacero, Project Manager of the

Strategic Plan, are participating on behalf of the General Administration.

- Br. Oscar Martin will continue his visit to the Province of Brasil Centro-Norte until November 12.

- Last week, Brother João Carlos do Prado, General Councillor, began his visit to the Province of Central America, which will last until November 19.

- The Assembly of the Synod of Bishops ends next Sunday in the Vatican. Br. Ernesto is participating as a delegate of the Union of Superiors General.

2021), Furth (November 2022), and Freising (April 2023), as well as meetings between the Provincial Councils of West Central Europe and L'Hermitage. The outcome of this process was the transition to becoming a District of the Province of L'Hermitage. When the participants were asked about what they were looking forward to, the key ideas were about opportunity, more lay involvement, engagement with the larger world of Marist Europe, and ways of continuing contact and support for Marist schools and projects. The twenty-three-year history of the Province of West Central Europe provides confidence that these hopes can be realized.

Assembly in Furth

During the first evening Rob invited us to participate in paired conversations with other people. This helped to create a relaxed atmosphere while enabling participants to introduce themselves to each other and to create a good foundation for the working sessions that were planned for Saturday, 14th October, especially as many people were meeting each other for the first time.

During Saturday, 14th October there were video recordings from the former Provincials who spoke personally about their time as Provincial; the joys, challenges and difficulties, and positive developments. There were also video presentations from each of the five countries, with reflections on how each country had responded to participation in the Province of West Central Europe, with an emphasis on positive and significant experiences during these past twenty-three years.

Testimonials

There were also "Vox Pop" video clips from lay Marists of the Province who each spoke about how their Marist life began, the most important chapter in their Marist life, things they were grateful for, and how they imagined their future Marist involvement as we become members of the new District attached to the Province of the Hermitage. It was moving to hear these experiences and they each demonstrated the extraordinary achievements of the Province of West Central Europe and the significant personal investment of so many Marists.

Rob Walsh asked each of the participants to share a photo in a small group that evoked a personal story of the province journey for them. These photos were then posted below the large Marist (and West Central Europe) Time-Line which covered one of the walls of the Conference Hall, reminding everyone of our rich Marist history and the developments of the five countries of our Province since the beginning of the Province of West Central Europe in 2000.

The last session on Saturday, 14th October, was devoted to a video presentation where we remembered all of the Brothers who had died since the beginning of the Province. Brother



Andreas Krupp, community leader in Furth, accompanied this 15-minute power point presentation on the guitar.

The last session ended with a ritual where Brother Robert Thunus thanked the members of the outgoing Provincial Council (Brothers Ronnie McEwan, Roberto di Troia, Michael Schmalzl and Nicholas Smith), as well as Mr Gerry Devlin, outgoing Assistant Bursar, and Brother Alois Engel, Province Secretary, and introduced the new leadership group (Brothers Brendan Geary and Michael Schmalzl), as well as Mr Robert Vastmans, who will take up the role as Assistant Provincial Bursar.

When Brother Jacques Scholte became the first Provincial of West Central Europe in 2000, the Brothers in Ireland gave him a replica of an ancient Celtic Cross which has since become the symbol of Province leadership which was passed on to new Provincials when they assumed office. Brother Nicholas Smith handed this Celtic Cross to Brother Robert Thunus as he begins his mandate as the first Leader of the District of West Central Europe. At that point the transition from Province to District was complete.

Later that evening the participants gathered Furth for a celebratory meal where Brother Robert Thunus gave gifts to the Committee that organised the Assembly, as well as to those who had supported the Assembly in a range of ways. The Furth Brass Band offered musical accompaniment during the evening. Brother Andreas is a member of the band, as well as Mr Andreas Horsche, the Mayor of Furth, who joined the participants for the occasion.

Conny Stuart from the Netherlands led two reflective meditations during the assembly and Fr David Formella from Recklinghausen, a good friend of the Brothers, presided over the well-prepared liturgy on Sunday, 15th October.

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GENERAL HOUSE

PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE XXIII GENERAL CHAPTER HAS BEEN APPOINTED

During the September plenary session, the Superior General and his Council appointed the Preparatory Commission for the XXIII General Chapter. It is made up of the following Brothers: Ken McDonald, Coordinator – General Councilor; John Hazelman, Star of the Sea; Jaime Comabella Callizo, Ibérica; Fortune Chakasara, Southern Africa; Anselmo Kim, East Asia (in the MDA); Brian Poulin, United States; Rogerio Mateucci, Brasil Centro-Sul; Juan Carlos Fuertes Mari, Secretary – Mediterránea; Luis Carlos Gutiérrez Blanco, Vicar General; Ernesto Sánchez Barba, Superior General.



The Statutes of the General Chapter, approved by the XXII General Chapter on October 19, 2017, describes the roll of the Commission:

Two years before the opening of an ordinary General Chapter, the Brother Superior General, with his Council, appoints a Preparatory Commission. This Commission sees to all that is necessary for the Chapter to achieve its responsibilities in regard to C. 102-107. The Commission collaborates with the General Administration in regard to personnel and material needs. It may request the General Council to set up pre-Chap-

ter groups on topics. After consulting the Administrative Units and capitulants, the Commission draws up a global plan for the work and the process of the Chapter, including a proposed closing date. The plan will be submitted to the Chapter Assembly for discussion and approval during the first days of the General Chapter (Acts of the XXII General Chapter, page 101)

The first meeting of the Commission will take place at the General House from November 27 to December 2, 2023. The XXIII General Chapter will be held in 2025.

FRANCE

PERPETUAL PROFESSION OF BROTHER THAN HUA

On October 21st, Brother Than Hua, from the Province of L'Hermitage, made his perpetual profession as a religious Brother in the Marist Institute. The profession was celebrated in Saint Genis Laval, France, and the vows were received by the Provincial, Brother Gabriel Villa-Real, on behalf of the Superior General.

Born in Vietnam, Brother Than arrived in France as an immigrant. He then studied engineering, specializing in wind energy. When he showed an interest in religious life, he was

guided by Brother Bonaventure Tran Cong-Lao, also from Vietnam, who lives in St-Genis-Laval.

He began his Marist formation in France. He did his postulancy at Notre-Dame de l'Hermitage and then his novitiate in Seville. He currently works in youth ministry in France and his great desire is to dedicate himself to refugees.



Photos in FaceBook

KHALAS, ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! LETTER FROM ALEPPO Nº 47



Dear friends,
You are receiving this letter at an absolutely critical time for the Middle East region. For the past two weeks, we have been witnessing an incredible outbreak of violence, a violence that threatens to spread. Many of our friends abroad are asking us: "What is the impact of this war on your daily life in Aleppo?" What can we say? Once again, at dawn today, Aleppo airport and Damascus airport were bombed for the nth time. Enough is enough! Haven't we been attacked, threatened and terrified enough? How long will all this go on for? This week, at the invitation of the Latin Patriarch, we held a day of prayer and fasting for peace. We, the Blue Marists, took part in this day by leading moments of reflection and prayer. During one of these gatherings to discuss the situation we are living through at the moment and the repercussions of the events in Gaza on our lives, a primary-school teacher said: "I seriously wonder why we have children if we are going to put them through what we are going through today". Several others expressed their fatigue. Khalas Enough!
Khalas is a way of saying enough is enough, Basta! we've had enough, we don't want to listen to the news any more, we don't want to watch any more scenes of violence, blood, death,

explosions and destruction! We can't take it anymore! The media rarely report situations truthfully and objectively! Another teacher gave an answer that revealed her state of mind: "I want there to be a world war and for it to be over. And for me to die if I have to!"
On the question of how what we're going through might affect a decision to emigrate, the unanimous response was a resounding yes. "We want to get out of the whole region!"
This picture gives a sample of the feelings of the entire population, which has lived through the war, Covid 19, economic sanctions, the earthquake and, in the last few days, this escalation of violence. At the moment, we are in a state of waiting and watching closely to see what happens in our region and in the country as a whole.
If we dwell on the regional situation, it is because it is not just regional; it touches on universal values and the most basic human rights. The world continues to have double standards. The victim is transformed into an executioner to be annihilated, wiped off the face of the earth, burnt in the hell of the bombs, displaced on a massive scale...
How can we sow Hope in a shattered society, a society that is becoming even poorer, a society that is struggling to survive, a society that no longer has the strength to stand up?

marist world

CHILE: PROVINCIAL LIFE COMMISSION MEETING



USA: MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF CANADA



FRANCE: MARIST CENTER DIRECTORS AT THE HERMITAGE



SPAIN: VOCATIONS MINISTRY TEAMS FROM THE IBERIAN PROVINCE MEET IN LARDERO



BRAZIL: BR. ÓSCAR MARTÍN MEETS THE FORMATORS OF BRASIL CENTRO-NORTE



PARAGUAY: MARIST YOUTH MINISTRY, LIMPIO

On 15 September I wrote in my logbook:

"It's 6am...

I don't know why but I couldn't sleep well that night. A lot of images were running through my mind: the people and situations I've encountered since we resumed operations on 4 September.

My thoughts went out to the elderly who, again that night, were suffering the effects of a heatwave without any means of cooling down... There is no electricity. Barely 2 hours a day... Sanctions are in place... WE ARE BEING PUNISHED... As if the climate wasn't enough, these sanctions are weighing heavily on our daily lives... We are being forced to cope with the galloping devaluation of our local currency... Everything is getting more expensive by the day...

I am thinking of all the parents whose children are starting the new school year. Supplies and school fees are so expensive that, for a single child, they represent more than half the parents' annual salary.

My thoughts also go out to the young people. Yes, all those young people who have only one idea in their heads: to get out of the country and go anywhere, anyhow, the sooner the better. Hope and anxiety are the two dominant feelings... On the one hand, to study to get ahead in life and obtain a diploma, and on the other, to do what next? Try to leave the country or do compulsory military service.

Many young people say they are "lost". They need psychological support to make a definitive decision... What to do? What advice should they be given? Where can they find the economic resources they need to emigrate or launch their own business? Youth in crisis, lost, looking for a future far away from war and misery... It's not at all easy. It is hard enough to get a passport, to say nothing of a visa?

In recent days, the media have shown us images of the flood of migrants arriving in Lampedusa. In one night, more than 7,000 people arrived on the shores of this island. Are we aware of this humanitarian emergency? The media held up the image of a policeman trying to reassure a little girl as a symbol of humanitarian solidarity.

How can we tell the "leaders" of this world that we are living on another planet? The planet of sanctions! It is inhuman, unforgivable and outrageous! We do not accept for the world to be indifferent. We refuse to be treated like wretched people. We want our dignity back as men and women living in this twenty-first century. We want to be reintegrated into the international community.

The Blue Marists

We Blue Marists are not giving up. We are doing everything we can to support the most disadvantaged.

This year, we welcomed more than 40 new children to our "I





Want to Learn” educational project. The 120 children in the project come from underprivileged backgrounds and poverty verging on destitution.

The teachers and aides benefited from several teacher training sessions during September. Since 2 October, the children's voices, smiles and joy have filled the classrooms and play-ground.

Seeds, our psychological support project, has expanded, taking in more young children in the “Bamboo” programme and more women in the “Ghosn = Branch” programme, which is specially designed to provide psychological support for women.

The “Shared Bread” project provides more than 250 elderly people with a hot meal every day. The number of beneficiaries over the age of 80 is growing all the time. As electricity is only available for two or three hours a day, we have installed batteries, LED lights and an inverter for all these elderly people so that they are not left in the dark after sunset and so that television can break their solitude. For bedridden and shut-in elderly people, we distribute a good supply of nappies. Recently, we organised an outing for all Shared Bread beneficiaries who could travel. It was an unforgettable day, filled with traditional songs, dances and memories. The kitchen volunteers had prepared a traditional meal (Hrissé). Before leaving, someone said: “Today, I was able to eat with a lot of joy because I wasn't the only one eating”.

In our last letter, we wrote about the “Zelzal”, with its trail of destruction and fear, but the other side of the earthquake was the great generosity of friends and international organisations.

Their help has enabled us to continue distributing a substantial Food Basket to 1100 families every month.

Following the earthquake, we launched a new aid project to purchase and distribute furniture and electrical appliances to families who had lost theirs in the earthquake. When she received her ‘basket’, one lady broke into tears: she explained that she hadn't had a drop of olive oil in the house for several days. It should be noted that the price of olive oil (essential for orientals) has risen so much that it is no longer affordable for many families. As the days go by, we see the extreme poverty in which so many families find themselves. How long will we be able to meet the needs of a population 82% of whom live below the poverty line?

As modules 1 and 2 of the Vocational Training project come to an end, we are preparing to launch 2 new modules at the same time. In each module, 20 young apprentices will spend 2 years learning a trade by working alongside a professional.

We also continue to help young adults launch their own businesses through a Micro-Project scheme. As with the vocational training, they receive guidance and support.

The MIT training sessions are very popular. For a course with 24 students, we have a list of over 130 candidates.

The “Women's Development” programme offers 60 women in two groups two training sessions a week. Here too, as with all our projects, the waiting list is very long.

“Tailoring and Sewing” held an Open Day celebration for all the women who have attended its sessions since the project began

in 2017. More than a hundred ladies accepted the invitation and spent half a day together with fun competitions and moments of sharing.

The Medical Aid project is highly appreciated and valued in these difficult times. Every day, dozens of people receive support for dressings, surgery or medication. This help is becoming increasingly necessary in view of the staggering rise in the cost of medical care and medicines.

We were able to distribute nappies for children. How many parents have asked us to help them with their older children who have returned to night-time incontinence following the earthquake?

"A Drop of Milk" remains a very important project for children under the age of 8. For newborns, their monthly need for 6-8 cans of special infant milk costs more than their parents' monthly salary.

Heartmade is continuing and developing its business activities, increasing the number of its products in order to become self-financing. Twenty women have found work there, making women's clothes from leftover fabrics.

"Hope" continues to attract many people looking to learn English. All the beneficiaries show a great interest in studying English and in mastering the 3 levels offered by the project to improve their CVs.

The "Rent" project continues to support families who are finding it very difficult to pay their rent in view of the skyrocketing rates.

The "School Support" project helps the parents of children and young people to pay for schooling or sessions in specialised centres. A twelve-year-old boy, accompanied by his mother, came to ask for help to resume his studies, explaining that one day he had had to drop out of school to go to work and help his family, when his father became seriously ill. We believe that so many others like him deserve a better future.

Pope Francis

To conclude, let's reflect together on the words of the Holy

Father during his visit to Marseilles on 23 September:

"Indeed, the real social evil is not so much the increase of problems, but the decrease of care. Who nowadays becomes a neighbour to the young people left to themselves, who are easy prey for crime and prostitution? Who is taking care of them? Who is close to people enslaved by work that should make them freer? Who cares for the frightened families, afraid of the future and of bringing children into the world? Who listens to the groaning of our isolated elderly brothers and sisters, who, instead of being appreciated, are pushed aside, under the false pretences of a supposedly dignified and "sweet" death that is more "salty" than the waters of the sea? Who thinks of the unborn children, rejected in the name of a false right to progress, which is instead a retreat into the selfish needs of the individual? Today we see the tragedy of confusing children for animals. My secretary told me that as he passed through Saint Peter's Square he saw some women carrying children in prams... but they were not children, they were dogs! This confusion tells us something ominous. Who looks with compassion beyond their own shores to hear the cry of pain rising from North Africa and the Middle East? How many people live immersed in violence and endure situations of injustice and persecution!"

Dear friends,

With you, women and men of goodwill, we do not want to just throw up our hands and give up.

You are our voice!

You speak out for us!

You are our hope!

We are counting on you so that together we can change the world to make it more just, more dignified and more humane.

Sunday 22 October 2023

Brother Georges Sabé



LAVALLA200>

INTERVIEW WITH ENRIQUE MUÑOZ BECERRA FROM THE COMMUNITY OF SYRACUSE

Enrique Muñoz Becerra, from the Mediterránea Province, 31 years old, is a member of the Syracuse Marist International LaValla200> Community (Italy) since September 2020. He is a former student of the Nuestra Señora de la Victoria Marist school in Málaga, he has been a catechist and animator of the school's Christian Life Groups.

In the interview we publish below, Enrique (Kike) talks about what motivated him to follow the Marist charism, his experience of life in an international Marist community and what he has learned in his experience in Syracuse.



Kike, how did you find out about the Marist institution?

I am from Malaga. My father was a former student of the Marist school and I also studied for 12 years at the same center. For my father it was important that I study with the Marists. But, where I really met the Marists, where I began to be passionate about Marist things, is through the “Grupos de Vida Cristiana” (Christian Life Groups). In the Mediterranean Province we have these groups since the sixth grade of primary school. Between the ages of 17-18 I started as animator, and that's when I really started to experience it as something of my own. This is how the Marists come to me.

How did you have the opportunity to become part of the Syracuse community?

In 2020 I worked in a law firm, and I felt a little burned out at work. But, first of all, I have to talk about the experience I had before as a volunteer in two SED Mission Fields. I spent two summers in Peru, in 2016 and 2018, the first time was for a month and the second for two months.

In 2020 I began a process of discernment and accompaniment with the Marist community of Granada, a mixed community. We began to have a series of dialogues that stopped a bit due to Covid. I was considering life in a mixed community, and in July 2020, Brother Juan Pablo told me that he had to talk to me. And that's when he suggested I go to Syracuse.

Was it difficult for you to leave your job?

Let's see, the security part was difficult for me, because I already had a permanent contract, and it was a secure job. But I knew I was going to feel more fulfilled here (Lavalla). I knew that God was calling me more towards what I live now, to live a shared mission with those most in need. Here I also have a lot of administrative work and I accompany people to offices, but it is not the same: I am accompanying a brother, a person who comes to me and who needs help. And although there are difficult days, because there is a lot of paperwork, a lot of

procedures, and I don't get to everything, I feel that every day I have to give thanks for this mission.

When did you first consider participating in a social project, before Siracusa? I am referring to what you talked about, the ONGD SED

At school, the first year of high school, we lived a volunteer experience within what is called Social Education Plan. Later, I was also a companion of that plan for other boys. And with the GVX, in the 2nd year of high school, during the summer, we lived the Service Camp, which was also a quite strong experience.

I was on two more occasions as a catechist in this Field. And then with SED. I had two friends who had already gone to Bolivia through SED. This had always caught my attention, and they passed on their enthusiasm to me.

What were your first sensations upon arriving in Syracuse?

At the CIAO (Intercultural Center for Help and Orientation), which is the social work that the Marist institution has in Syracuse, I found a reality that I loved. At that time, not speaking Italian yet, I felt a little limited in interacting with the boys, but I immediately began to take care of the door. Basically, it consists of receiving and welcoming everyone who arrives, writing down names, showing people to Domenico's office, a lawyer who comes as a volunteer to offer legal advice, etc.

And a key day for me was the day of Rosa's farewell, October 10, which is also my birthday. There was a farewell celebration, and at first, I was very nervous, with 20 people at home, having to speak Italian. But I felt like I did it and that's when I said: “this is going to be good, let's move on.”

In your daily life, do you have to work a lot with Italian?

All in Italian. And the language of the community is Italian too. Because we are a mixed and intercultural community. At the moment [July 2023] we are two Spanish people, an Italian and a Venezuelan. But our mission is in Italian and we all have to speak the language.

What does your work consist of?

We have two realities. The CIAO center, where we respond to the needs of the people who knock on our door. In the morning there are Italian classes for migrants, and in the afternoons, we have the “Dopo Scuola” (after school), which would be school reinforcement for children, especially second-generation migrants. In addition, there is legal assistance two days a week. And, later, apart from these activities that are organized, other needs also arise that we must attend to.

And the other reality, which I am passionate about, are apartments. We have 3 apartments, which are similar to the emancipation housing in Spain, for young migrants, who carry out an integration process with us from 6 months to 1 year.

If you had to choose a moment that was very important to you, during these three years in Syracuse, which would you choose?

For me, an important moment was, and I have also remembered it several times, accompanying two young boys who found themselves in a very difficult situation, with an expulsion decree from Italy, as soon as they arrived in the country. They didn't understand things at the border, and well, they signed a document in which they rejected international protection. So, we began a process with the lawyer to be able to offer the children supportive care and notify the police that we were giving them supportive care because they were on the street. Accompanying them in that process was a moment of great stress, accompanying two fragile people in a moment of difficulty, but now it is a great joy to see how the situation has changed.

Speaking of feeling like a family, Kike, I'm sure you have many anecdotes about what community life means, in these 3 years that you've been living here.

Yes, I think so... The moments for me, personally, of sharing,

living together and getting to know the community, and feeling more and more part of it, these have been the moments that we have lived outside the house: in community retreats, or like last year, when we went to celebrate Christmas in Giuliano, in Naples, with the Marist community that lives there. Or last Christmas, we spent a week in a house that the Marists have in Los Alpes. Of course, the day-to-day moments of working together and fighting for this mission to continue have been important, but always in community.

What would you say to a person who is thinking about living a community experience like this?

Well, on the one hand, he/she will be able to live the mission 100%, because the community is involved in the mission, it is our daily life. Although sometimes it is difficult, because it is difficult for you to disconnect, you live in a different way than if you were with your family or in a different living environment. And it is very beautiful, because it is a time of dedication to others, and we take this experience with us for our later life. This helps you lay the foundation for your future.

What place will Syracuse have in your future?

It will always remain there in my heart, and I think it will occupy an important place because, as I said, I have already changed with this experience. I would like to be able to visit the community again sometime, which I hope will continue for many years. Syracuse is the place where “my Marist being” has grown the most.

*This interview is a summary of the interview conducted by Anabel Abad, head of communications of [Maristas Ibérica](#), as a volunteer of [SED](#), in July 2023, in Siracusa, Italy. [Read the full interview in Spanish.](#)

CANADA

BR. FÉLIX ROLDAN NEW SUPERIOR OF THE DISTRICT

Last September, Br. Gaston Robert ended his service as District Superior of the District of Canada. Brother Félix Roldan replaced him from October 1, 2023. He will be in charge until August 2024, when the triennium ends, and the District Assembly will be held.

In a letter sent to the Marists of Canada, Br. Ernesto Sánchez thanked Br. Gaston for his commitment and dedication as District leader, and, at the same time thanked Br. Félix “for his acceptance of this invitation from the Governance Council to be the District Superior in this time of transition”.

This District of Canada depends canonically on the Province of the United States and is led by the Council of Governance, made up of the Provincials of Central Mexico, Western Mexico and the United States, and the Superior of the District of Canada.



OTHER MARIST VOICES 9 AND 10

MARISTS AND THE MISSION / A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The publication of “Other Marist Voices” continues, messages inspired by the book “Marist Voices” related to the development of servant and prophetic leadership in the Marist mission.

Other Marist Voices 9 was written by Br. Umoh Benedict, Educator, Children’s Rights (volunteer), Vice Provincial of Nigeria, who addresses the theme “Marist Leaders and the mission” ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#) The message refers to chapter 16 of Marist Voices (Biblical Pointers on Fraternity for Leadership Oriented Towards Service), written by Br. Josep Maria Soteras.

Other Marist Voices 10 was written by Ricardo Mariz, Director of Socio-education, and Evangelization of Brasil Marista at Province of Brasil Centro-Sul, who deals with the theme



“Servant leadership: a learning experience” ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#). The message refers to chapter 10 of Marist Voices (Administration: a Leadership of Service), written by Br. Libardo Garzón Duque.

ARCO NORTE

COMMUNICATIONS MEETING IN COLOMBIA

From October 8 to 12, the II Meeting of Communicators of the Marist Arco Norte Region was held in Bogota, Colombia. The meeting gave continuity to the strategies proposed in the Strategic Operational Planning and generated new lines of action to continue with the positioning of the Region. Representatives of the provinces of the United States, México Central, México Occidental, America Central and Norandina participated. The objective of this meeting was to develop several key issues for the execution of the region’s Strategic Operational Plan, to analyze and review the proposals for communication services for the other areas and to project the activities to be carried out for the 2023-2025 cycle.

Another important moment for the participants was the conference entitled “Communication in Crisis”, led by the communications coordinator of the Episcopal Conference of Colombia, a space where different situations in Church environments and how to face a possible crisis from the



communication point of view were discussed.

The conclusions and projects defined at the meeting will be presented to the Regional Council of Arco Norte.

SANTA MARÍA DE LOS ANDES

A face-to-face session at the Marist Spirituality Center of Chile marked the closing of the Marist Charismatic Leadership Diploma. In addition to taking their final modules, the participants held a meeting of fraternal dialogues with the delegate of Marist Life and Mission, Ernesto Reyes, and were presented with their certificates.

STAR OF THE SEA

The Lomeri community in Fiji has welcomed Matthew Fairfax, an Australian Marist volunteer and former Canberra student, who will be living with the brothers for the next six weeks. He is part of the Bridge Builders program. Matthew has a degree in commerce and will be supporting the community in an ecological project.

ARCO NORTE

The Regional Committee met in Colombia from October 12 to 17 to socialize the progress made in the Strategic Operational Plans approved at the last Regional Assembly, and also to generate collaborative work to define the direction of the activities of each Regional Team.

CANADA

The Governing Council of the District of Canada met in Esopus, United States. In attendance were the Provincials of Mexico, United States and Brother Felix Roldan, leader of the District of Canada. Also present were Brothers Gaston Robert, former District leader, and Rick Carey, who assists in the financial affairs of the Administrative Unit.

MARISTA BRAZIL

THE II MARIST SYMPOSIUM ON EVANGELIZATION GATHERS ABOUT 250 PARTICIPANTS



Representatives of the three Marist Provinces of Brazil participated in the II Marist Symposium on Evangelization, held October 9-11 at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul ([PUCRS](#)) in Porto Alegre.

The meeting brought together about 250 people. The participants, brothers and laity, were people who together intend to strengthen the Marist processes of evangelization and aim at new pastoral horizons in response to social needs.

Brother Paulo Soares, head of the Identity, Mission and Vocation team of the Marists of Brazil ([Marista Brasil](#)), highlighted the diversity of the participants, who work in different structures, but embrace common causes and dreams. He added: "It is a way of responding boldly to the emerging needs of today's world, especially in terms of evangelization".

The three days of the Symposium were marked by talks, workshops, round tables, paper presentations and moments of spirituality.

The first day had as its theme "Evangelizing in a complex world" and was dedicated to discussing evangelization in the context of Marist mission and how it is being carried out around the world. The highlight of the day was the reading of Jesus' action and ethical relationships as a powerful force in building a more just and prejudice-free society.

The second day focused on contemporary issues in evangelization, a theme that was developed through round tables in the morning and mini-courses in the afternoon. The relationship between evangelization and digital culture was highlighted. The third and final day addressed the theme of pastoral action and vulnerabilities, focusing on Marist activity that reaches out to the physical and existential peripheries.

The 2nd Marist Symposium on Evangelization was coordinated by the team of Marista Brasil. The first edition took place virtually in October 2021, organized by the União Marista Brasil ([UMBRASIL](#)).

XXI MESSAGE OF THE MARIST INTERNATIONAL MISSION COMMISSION

MARIST EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Message XXI of the Marist International Mission Commission is the last in a cycle that began during the pandemic, in December 2020. The messages will soon be collected in a book that will be available to the entire Institute.

The message presented here, prepared by Br. Luis Carlos Gutiérrez Blanco, Vicar General, on behalf of the Marist International Mission Commission, is entitled “Embracing the Marist Way: Global Statements about Marist Education in the 21st Century”. The text highlights the identity of Marists as educators and evangelizers of this era, defenders of the values of compassion and faith in a world in constant change. The message says: “We don’t simply teach; we evangelize through education and educate through evangelization. It’s a beautiful cycle where each act of learning becomes an opportunity for spiritual growth. We believe that education is the key to powering meaningful and purposeful lives.”

Referring to the need to prepare children and young people “for the challenges of the modern world”, Br. Luiz Carlos speaks about education that goes beyond the classroom, where the Marists encourage “a culture of non-violence and communication which is mutually respectful”. Similarly, the text highlights the role of Marists as educators deeply committed to ecological awareness and the sustainability of the planet, respecting the rights and diversity of all, “understanding that our children, adolescents, and young people are at the center and are the protagonists of our mission to make Jesus Christ known and loved”. El mensaje igualmente subraya el rol de la solidaridad como parte del ADN marista: “We don’t just teach it; we live it. We deepen the service-learning approach, ensuring our students understand the power of giving back.” Asimismo, el mensaje hace hincapié en



una “Interconnected and networked education”, y enfatiza que “education is a driving force behind change”.

Al final de su mensaje, el H. Luis Carlos hace una llamada a la acción e invita a todos los educadores maristas a comprometerse inquebrantable con la educación: “We are Marists, and our love for being Marists, drives us to inspire, educate, and transform lives every day”.

The Marist International Mission Commission was created to facilitate a framework to interconnect the Secretariats, Networks and Regions in an integrated and sequential mode. Made up of Brothers and Laity, the Commission took on the task of reflecting on the centrality of Marist mission in today’s world.

If you wish to share your ideas, reflections or experiences with the Commission as a result of these messages, you can write to the email fms.cimm@fms.it

[In this link you can find all the messages that the Commission has published.](#)

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MADAGASCAR

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE MARIST INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY NETWORK

"Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground" Ex 3,5.

The Executive Committee of the Marist International Solidarity Network (RMSI) met in the city of Antananarivo, Madagascar, for its annual face-to-face meeting. The meeting took place from 2 to 6 October at the Carmelite Fathers' house in Itaosy.

The members present at the meeting were the following: Analía Ruggeri (South America), Andrea Rossi (FMSI), Br. Ángel Diego (Solidarity Secretariat), Arsacio Soladana (translator), Br. Camille (Africa), Br. Jeff Crowe (invited by the Oceania Region), Joe Nacianceno (Asia), Mark Potterton (Africa) and Br. Valdicer Fachi (invited from Cmi).

Brother Michel Maminiaina, Provincial of Madagascar, took part in the meetings for the first few days. Br. Jean Aimé, also from the Province of Madagascar, helped out with all the practical aspects of the meeting.

The work of the MSIN Executive Committee focused on the objectives of the meeting, which were: to get to know the reality of the country, and the Marist presence among the children and young people of Madagascar; to review the work done as a Network, both by the Executive Committee and the 5 Working Groups; to plan together for the next Assembly, which will be held in Rome from 17 to 21 June 2024.

At the end of the meeting, the committee highlighted three steps taken:

- The atmosphere of work and fraternity that characterised these days.
- The review of the documents and the work carried out so far, both by the Executive Committee and the Working Groups, made the group aware of the good work that has been done and gave us ideas on how to proceed in the coming months.
- The participants had the opportunity to get to know the Marist and social reality of the country through a talk by the



Provincial, Br. Michel, and a visit to St. Champagnat school and other places in the city.

- We worked on the next Assembly of the MSIN in June 2024, preparing what is needed beforehand, as well as organising some concrete activities to take place during the Assembly.

The committee is grateful to the brothers of Madagascar, in the person of Brothers Michel, Camille and Jean Aimé, for all their support in the running of the meeting. Their help was essential to the success of the meeting, and their fraternity was a clear sign that we are moving forward as a "global charismatic family", as called for by the 22nd General Chapter.

The Executive Committee extends its thanks to Brothers Jeff and Fachi who have contributed their experience and wisdom on Marist solidarity issues, as well as to Brother Arsacio for his help with translation.

The group was able to see that "interdependence, rather than working in silos or independently, must be the new normal for us". The participants thanked one another for this experience of collaboration, networking, building bridges between different realities of solidarity and Marist mission, and for being open to the light of God in our life and mission.



PHILIPPINES

FORMATION PROGRAM ON SERVANT AND PROPHETIC LEADERSHIP

The face-to-face phase of the second edition of the Formation Program on Servant and Prophetic Leadership takes place in Philippines, from 23 October till 3 November. The course, aimed at the English and French speaking public, is promoted by the General Administration

of the Institute, in collaboration with Notre Dame of Marbel University.

The course was launched on May 30th. The participants had a first phase online, till October 07, 2023. In Philippines, there are 30 participants, who came from 19 countries from America, Asia, and Africa, representing 9 Administrative Units. From the General Administration are present Brothers Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, Vicar General, Ben Consigli, General Councilor, and Goyo Linacero, Project Manager of the Strategic Plan of the General Administration.

The course is intended for leaders of Marist Administrative Units who work in the strategic areas of mission development. The objective of this formation program is to prepare Marist leaders, from the perspective of the Servant and Prophetic Leadership, for a conscious mission (education, evangelization, children's rights, governance, and management with empowerment), adapted to the current contemporary trends and emerging needs.

This program is an initiative of the General Administration in response to the call of the 22nd General Chapter to develop servant and prophetic leadership accompanying Marist life and mission.

Some expectations of the face-to-face phase are sharing of knowledge, life experiences, and perspectives of Marist life and mission in your context.



The first edition, with 61 participants from 19 countries, was held in 2022, in collaboration with the PUC of Porto Alegre, Brazil, for Portuguese and Spanish speaking Marists.

Program's content

The Marist Leadership Formation Program is based on the content of the book "Marist Voices" presented during the General Conference 2022. The program was distributed in the following blocks:

1. Servant Leadership: Introduction, concept and characteristics
2. Servant leadership, innovation and change processes
3. Servant leadership and community building (communication and interpersonal relationships).
4. Servant leadership and project development (processes and tools)
5. Leadership, new normality and networking
6. Servant leadership, "foresight" and strategic planning
7. Leadership and co-responsibility (indicator-based evaluation)
8. Servant leadership, ethical and moral foundations (ethical responsibility)
9. Servant leadership and sustainability.
10. Servant leadership: education, mission and pastoral care
11. Servant leadership, spirituality and charismatic identity.

ASIA AND OCEANIA

PROGRAM OF FORMATION FOR VOCATION ANIMATORS



The Program of Formation for Vocation Animators for Asia-Oceania took place on October 9-14 at the Marist Asia Pacific Center (MAPAC), Marikina City, Philippines. It was facilitated by Br. Lindley Sionosa, of the Secretariat of Brothers Today, and Br. Michael Sexton, of the Ongoing Formation Team. They were assisted by a local team composed of Br. Dominador Santiago (MAPAC), Br. Dulaj Fernando (South Asia), Br. Rommel Ocasionos (East Asia) and Br. George Valle (District of Asia).

A total of thirty-five brothers and one lay Marist participated in the program. They were ten from the District of Asia, four from South Asia, six from East Asia, and sixteen from Star of the Sea. Of these participants, 20 were MAPAC scholastics.

With the slogan, “Caring for and generating Marist life in Asia-Oceania”, the program aimed to respond to the needs expressed by the participants during an earlier survey, which were:

- Knowledge and skills for vocation animation and how to organize the vocation animation program.
- The realities and needs of young people in the region.
- Common criteria for selection of candidates.
- Harmonize the process of preparation to enter the aspirancy.
- Common vocation materials to offer to young people.
- The program was conducted using a combination of

inputs, personal reflection, sharing in small groups, and workshops. Br. Oscar Martin gave an online presentation entitled “Vocation Animators at the service of life”.

Br. George Valle and Br. Lecio Heckler, who were also participants, shared their experiences in vocation promotion. Br. Jone Seduadua and Br. Joe Walton, MAPAC formators and former novice masters, gave their insights on what the young men are expected to be when they start their formation. The scholastics were also invited to share to the group their experiences of being recruited, giving emphasis to what they appreciated most in their early encounter with the brothers.

In another session, the group studied the realities of young people today, especially the characteristics of Generation Z, to which the young men we hope to invite to become Marist Brothers belong. Furthermore, A Redemptorist priest and a religious sister also came to share to the group what their respective congregations are doing in vocations animation. The last two days of the program were spent to develop some proposals for the administrative units of Asia-Oceania. Small groups were organized to work on the following areas: (a) gathering the fruits of our reflection, (b) what vocation materials to produce, (c) the contents of a vocation talk or campaign, (d) elements to be included in the interview, (e) organizing the come and see experience, and (f) the one-year vocation promotion plan.

NORANDINA

PASTORAL VISIT OF BR. JOÃO CARLOS DO PRADO TO QUITO

Br. João Carlos do Prado, General Councilor, visited the Province of Norandina from October 4-16. After a few days in the novitiate of Medellín, in Colombia, from October 8 to 16 he was in the sector of Ecuador.

From October 9 to 13, a group of 24 Marist Brothers gathered at the Francisco de Sales House, on the outskirts of Quito, to welcome Brother João Carlos. The Brothers present in this country come from Catacocha, Loja, Quevedo, Quito and Palma Roja (Sucumbíos). Together with the Provincial, Brother Orlando Escobar, and some Brothers of the Provincial Council, a space was created to live the gift of fraternity, where some aspects of the journey of the Institute were informed and the life and mission of Marist Ecuador were analyzed. The reflection was animated by some guiding questions. Among them were: How is God acting and how does he help us to interpret the moment we are living? Who does God want us to be as Marists of Ecuador? What steps could we take for the sustainability, viability and vitality of the Marist life and mission in Ecuador and the Province?

At the end of each day, around the altar in the Eucharist, life was celebrated, and thanks was given to God for his presence in the midst of the province.



Br. João Carlos also met with the laity of some fraternities of Ecuador and with a group of 33 young people from Remar of the Unidad Educativa Particular Marista of Quito, who were able to share life and show their reality and experience of the Marist charism.

Fotos



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Website

<http://www.champagnat.org>

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