

MARIST MISSION: FIRST INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

JUSTIFICATION

The International Assembly constitutes **a new stage** in the life of the Marist Institute, which offers the brothers and laypeople the opportunity to reflect together, on equal terms, concerning the mission of the Institute at the present time and in the future, as well as on their own identity.

It will be an opportunity for strengthening the process of restructuring and internationalisation that the Provinces are undergoing, as from the start of the 21st Century, promoting dialogue between brothers and laypeople about what it is that motivates them and concerns them in their service to children and young people.

The process designed to prepare and realise this Assembly will provide the opportunity to ponder our own life of service in the Marist mission and the convictions that nurture this, as a dedicated vocation. This will encourage a re-reading of the text "In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat: A Vision for Marist Education Today" and a deepening of the understanding of the calls of the 20th General Chapter.

Finally, the suggestions and the recommendations that come from the International Assembly will be able to be studied by the participants of the 21st General Chapter (2009), if they decide to do so, and contribute to the process of outlining future directions for the Marist world.

OBJECTIVE

To foster, in the entire Institute, **processes for dialogue and commitment** between the participants in the Marist Mission, in such a way that they contribute to:

- **A revision of the Marist Mission** from the point of view of the entire life of Champagnat:
 - ✓ in his passion for announcing the Good News;
 - ✓ in his desire to send us to be among young people, especially those most in need;
 - ✓ in his attitude of constant discernment, so that he could adapt to the changing needs of the times.
- To clarify and deepen our understanding of "**Marist vocation**": what is individual and common for a brother and a layperson, etc.
- To promote **greater co-responsibility** between those who share the Marist Mission, especially by offering structures, models, etc. that encourage it.
- A greater understanding and appreciation of the **diversity of expressions** in which the Marist Mission is incarnated in the world of today, as well as its **internationality**, as a force that is to be used to our advantage.

STAGES OF THE ASSEMBLY

1. LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL STAGES (Contents and methodology)

- *For these stages, simple instruments will be prepared for reflection and for sharing. A subcommission, consisting of the two secretaries of the Mission and Laity Commissions and two other persons who are experts in the field of communications, will publish these instruments, counting on the collaboration of the members of the Preparatory Commission.*

- *It is planned that each theme will have an intercultural perspective, being flexible, well presented and attractive. Language that is too "academic" or "clerical" will be avoided. A starting point could be experiences or using poems, songs, etc.*
- *The preparation of these instruments will be done between January and September 2005.*
- *The local and Provincial stages will continue throughout 2006. Each Administrative Unit will develop its own schedule according to the reality of its situation and to its needs.*

I. Local Phase

Themes:

- a) The Marist Vocation of a brother and of a layperson
- b) "We are sowers of the Good News"
- c) Co-responsibility in the mission (*equal partnership*)
- d) The Marist mission lived here
- e) "Amongst the young, especially the most destitute"
- f) "In the school and in other educational fields"
- g) Champagnat attentive to the signs of the times, throughout the whole of his life
- h) "We look together towards the future"

Methodology:

- a) mixed groups (of brothers and laypeople), open to the participation of people coming from diverse fields, but identifying with the Marist charism (school, non-formal education, fraternities, pastoral care, etc): they can form new groups, or perhaps a group that already exists may wish to participate as such a group
- b) freedom of participation: the groups are formed by the people who wish to participate in this process
- c) each group chooses some of the possible themes, according to its experience and interests
- d) representatives of the Local Phase participate in the Provincial Phase
- e) the Institute's website can offer support to the different groups; this possibility includes receiving information at the personal level

II. Provincial Phase

Themes:

1. We are called together (themes a, b, c)
2. Towards a mission that is singular and plural (themes d, e, f)
3. Always renewed (themes g, h)

Methodology:

- a) all the themes are treated in this phase, grouped together as three as mentioned above.
- b) in some Provinces, the geography of the Province may suggest the need for regional meetings
- c) it could consist of a meeting over one or two days, or perhaps a process over some months
- d) those who will participate in the International Assembly will be chosen from among the representatives of the Provincial Phase
- e) at the end of the process, a synthesis needs to be sent to the Preparatory Commission, which covers:
 - the spirit with which the process was experienced in the Province;
 - the consensual results at the end of the process, that can be seen as the "credo" of the Province concerning the themes that were treated;
 - possible recommendations or suggestions that will be tabled at the International Assembly.

2. THE ASSEMBLY IN ITSELF

It is hoped that the Assembly will be an occasion for sharing about the lives of the participants and for celebrating together God's call to the Marist Mission. There is no intention of producing a document, although it cannot be discarded that some type of message may be written or some conclusions presented to the next General Chapter.

We hope that the Assembly will be a favourable occasion during which we can:

- present significant experiences of Marist Mission (from the locality where the Assembly is held, or through the use of means of communication);
- work in small, medium-sized and large groups, taking advantage of the richness of the range and variety of places, cultures and fields of education from which we have come;
- share convictions, pray and experience a process of discernment in common.

To be eligible for selection as members of the Assembly it is necessary that such individuals, ***besides having participated in the Local Phases and the Provincial Phases in their places of origin, take on the Marist Mission and see themselves as representatives of the whole Province rather than just their local area.*** The profile results, thus, in greater openness, because in the Local Phase anyone who wants to participate can do so.

The Preparatory Commission strongly suggests to the Brothers Provincial that the process of choosing the Provincial representatives be as open to as many people as possible. Two methods are suggested, without wanting to exclude any other possibilities:

- the participants in the Provincial Phase make the choice, or
- the participants in the Provincial Phase choose either two or three people, depending on the number of representatives, and the Provincial Council chooses the Provincial representatives from these people.

The composition of the Assembly will be as follows:

1 brother for each Administrative Unit	=	31 brothers
1 layperson for each Administrative Unit	=	31 laypeople
1 extra layperson in the 16 AUs with more apostolic works	=	16 laypeople
the members of the General Government	=	08 brothers
the members of the Preparatory Commission	=	04 brothers 03 laypeople
other people, such as translators and those entrusted with other services, that is to say, approximately some		101 persons

Today, in December 2004, the distribution of the 78 eligible members from the Administrative Units is the following:

AFRICA	=	10	ARCO NORTE	=	12
ASIA	=	09	BRAZIL	=	11
PACIFIC	=	10	CONO SUR	=	08
EUROPE	=	14	NORTH AMERICA	=	04

The Assembly will be held **during early September 2007**. It will last between **7 to 10 days**.

		INSTITUTE	PREPARATORY COMMISSION
2005	01		<i>Presentation Plenary General Council.</i>
	02		<i><Consult Continental Teams></i>
	03		
	04		
	05		
	06		<i>Presentation Plenary General Council.</i>
	07		13- 16: Preparatory Commission (Rome)
	08		
	09	GENERAL CONFERENCE	
	10	- Announcement to Institute	
	11	- Nomination of contacts in AU	
	12	- Distribution of material	
2006	01	START OF THE LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL PHASES	
	02		
	03		
	04		
	05		
	06		<i>Meeting of the Preparatory Commission?</i>
	07		
	08		
	09		
	10		
	11		
	12	END OF PROVINCIAL PHASE: - Sending conclusions to Rome - Choice of representatives of each Province	
2007	01	Start of preparation for the participants	
	02		
	03		<i>Meeting of the Preparatory Commission?</i>
	04	- Possible continental activity	
	05	- Possible contact with nearby participants	
	06		
	07		
	08		
	09	INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY	
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	11		
	12		