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# MARIST NEWS

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

4-9 MARCH 2024

## MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL WITH THE SUPERIORS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS IN FRANCE

### The strength of the Rock



From the  
new La Valla  
to the  
new Hermitage

Meeting of  
Provincials and  
District Superiors

Notre-Dame de l'Hermitage | March 4-9, 2024

The meeting of the General Council with Provincials and District Superiors will take place from March 4-9. The General Council has chosen the Mother House of the Institute, Notre-Dame de l'Hermitage, as the site of the meeting to celebrate the bicentenary of the laying of the foundation stone of the house, which St. Marcellin began building in 1824. At the same time, it will be an opportunity to reflect on the journey from La Valla 200 (22nd General Chapter, in 2017) to the Hermitage 200 (23rd General Chapter, in 2025). In view of this, the title given to the meeting is "The strength of the rock – From the new La Valla to the new Hermitage".



## general administration

■ On Monday, the General Council concluded its plenary session. On Thursday and Friday, the entire community of the General Council meets with the new provincials, in Notre-Dame de l'Hermitage, where the meeting of the General Council with all the superiors of the Administrative Units will take place, from the 3rd to the March 9.

■ Dorotea Cinanni, director of the General House Archive since 2022, concluded her collaboration with the Marist Institute last week, after 14 years of service. Colleagues and brothers from the Council and the General Administration met on March 23 to thank her and wish her success in her new professional stage.

■ Brother Goyo Linacero, assistant to the Econome General, visits this week, until Thursday, the econome team of Compostela in Lisbon, and then Valladolid.

■ This week, Br. Ángel Diego, director of the Secretariat for Solidarity, holds meetings with the two Marist works of Honduras, the La Inmaculada Marist Institute and the Hogar Horizontes al Futuro.

■ On Thursday, Br. Valdicer Fachi, director of the Cmi, participated in the virtual meeting of the board of directors of the Marist Volunteer Network.

■ That same day, Br. Javier Alfonso Echeverry Velásquez, who has been in the General House since 2020, returns to his Norandina Province, after having taken a course in biblical theology at the Gregorian. His new community will be in Cali, Colombia.

■ This week, the visit of the FMSI team to Africa continues. Andrea Rosi, director, and Pamela Difino were in Nigeria, while Francesco Mastroso visits the projects in Save, Rwanda.

The 22 provincials (+ 2 appointed provincials) and the 3 district superiors and 6 general councilors will be present, along with the Superior and Vicar General, as well as the Economy and Secretary General. The Secretariats and some departments of the General Administration have also been invited.

The dynamics to be used are intended to favor the exchange of ideas and experiences in a climate of synodality, silence, sharing and listening to the Spirit.

The expectation of the General Council is to update the vision

for the future of the Institute and to highlight the priority ideas to be applied, as well as to motivate each other as leaders in the service of leadership in Marist life.

This is the fifth meeting with Provincials organized by the General Council since its election in 2017. It is an initiative of this government, which through it aims to take care of the leaders, working as a team.

The image used for the meeting was designed by Br. Ricardo Gómez, Norandina Province, from the international community LaValla200> of Syracuse.

## PHILIPPINES

# GATHERING OF THE MARIST BRANCHES IN DAVAO



Last February 10, around 200 Marists from the Four branches gathered at Almacen, Davao City, Philippines, to meaningfully connect and re-connect, know each other better, and deepen the Marial bond that unites all Marists. This gathering is conducted every two years which began in 2017 with the Marist Brothers as host in General Santos City. In 2019, the Marist Fathers hosted the event in Davao City and in 2022, the Marist Missionary Sisters had the event in Koronadal City. For this year 2024, the Marist Sisters led in the organization and facilitation of this significant Marist event.

The gathering began with the celebration of the Eucharist officiated by the Provincial of the Marist Fathers, Fr. Christopher Thadeos Ganzon.

After the celebration of the Eucharist, Sr. Shiela Manalo, SM, delivered a welcome message. She stated that the Marist Family Gathering, whose theme was MARIST PILGRIMS OF THE HEART, "is a seamless garment given to us by Christ, woven by Mary, and worn by generations of Marists captured the way and the values every Marist is called to live: Let Marists always

bear in mind that they belong by a gracious choice to the family of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. In her name, they are called Marists and they have chosen her as their model, and as their first perpetual superior from the very beginning."

The said gathering was an opportunity to reflect together, and share lived experiences on how Marists can continue the spirit of their respective founders in our time, in our apostolate, in our work, and in the day-to-day living by further exploring the richness and complementarity of each branch. Sr. Shiela concluded her message by stressing a salient point that "our lives are different and are interwoven, creating a beautiful weaving of love in our world."

The Marist Gathering 2024 was graced by the presence of the Marist Sisters' Regional Leader for Asia-Pacific, Sr. Jane Frances O'Carroll, SM and the Superior General, Sr. Sr Sylvette Mane, SM. The sessions in the program were facilitated by both of them, with Sr. Sylvette providing enriching input on the theme and Sr. Jane facilitating the weaving activities engaged in small groupings.

## ONGOING FORMATION

# THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE HEART PROGRAM ENDS IN FLORIANÓPOLIS

From January 31 to February 22, 49 participants from 13 Marist Provinces: Spanish and Portuguese speaking, met to share life and spirituality in the Marist house of Florianópolis (Brasil Centro-Sul), in a program coordinated by the Team of Ongoing Formation of the Institute.

**“Descend to the heart, and go out to meet others”**

An experience, not only to have references or to know our spirituality better, but to embody it, and make it life. We began our itinerary with Brother Óscar Martín Vicario, who placed us in the spirituality of the heart as unifying, incarnate and inclusive. He invited us to look deep within us, at the fire that excites us, and that leads us to look at the world, in a peaceful, humble and compassionate way, and to recognize the presence of God that dwells in it.

With Gustavo Balbinot we pray with our hearts. A workshop that served us for a deeper connection as a group, based on the encounter with the God who inhabits us.

The second week, Josean Manzanos took us into the world of interiority, as a path to reach what is at the core of our heart. Experientially, and anchoring ourselves in full attention, silence, and stillness, we began to recognize what was in our mind, how we lived in our body, encountering our emotions, and looking at the meaning, the existential consciousness that we have, from the depths of our hearts.

With Brother Ismar we delve into the reference of Mary in our spirituality, Jewish woman, mother, and disciple who invites us to, as She did, from our concrete reality, be open to what God wants from each one, which probably challenges us, it questions our being and vocation. As in Her, a spirituality of the heart, which invites us to embrace what we are, and to live it in depth, to respond from our weaknesses and difficulties, and to be fully what God calls us to be.

In Curitiba, led by Angelo Ricordi, we visited the Marist Memorial, where we looked at our origins, and at the spirituality



of Marcellin and the community of the first brothers. Let's see how his intuitions and ways of being open ways for us to be deeper, to live in the presence of God; and also, to be more human, closer, to be a true Marist family.

We have lived the last week of the program with the reference of the encounter with the poor and most disadvantaged, led by Father Wilson, and the recognition of being a Synodal Church, which calls us to live our Marist mission and spirituality in today's world. , through the words of Brother Ernesto Sánchez. We end with a retreat and sharing what these days have meant to us.

We can affirm that our hearts have moved these days. We feel like family, we find ourselves in deep communion with each other. And this program, on a personal level for each one, has been about “anchoring ourselves in what we are and what we live”, and wanting to continue living from there, from that heart, and from the God who lives in it.

Something that is very beautiful about these days is how we relate, how we share, how we are silent and pray together, how we have come to know each other calmly and deeply, the rich dialogues and encounters that we have experienced, the continuous looks and gestures of affection. , to know ourselves as beloved children of God, to build ourselves as a Marist family with a spirituality of the heart that makes us more human, and more brothers.

Eladio Díez – Province of Compostela



## MARIST VOCATION

## BRAZIL HAS UNIFIED POSTULANCY, WITH 8 POSTULANTS

As of this year, the formation house in Fortaleza is the seat of the postulancy that welcomes candidates to consecrated life from all three provinces in Brazil. This new phase of integrating the formation journey between the Brazilian provinces was inaugurated on February 1st, when 8 young people began their postulancy. Four postulants are from the Province of Brasil Sul-Amazônia (Edrixandre França de Lima, Francisco Neilson de Souza Maciel, Jefferson Araújo de Castro and Devindro Soares Naraine) and the other four are from the Province of Brasil Centro-Norte (Jefferson Teixeira Barros, José Gustavo Felipe Morales, José Tavares Neto, Vanilson da Silva Sousa).



The community of formators is made up of Brothers Luiz Carlos Lima (Brasil Centro-Norte), Márcio Henrique Ferreira da Costa (Brasil Centro-Norte), Silfredo Luiz Klein (Brasil Sul-Amazônia) and Wellington Mousinho de Medeiros (Brasil Centro-Norte). The unification of the postulancy of Brazil could represent a

step towards the unification of the postulancy of the entire Marist Region of América Sur.

## OTHER MARIST VOICES 41 AND 42:

SERVANT LEADERSHIP  
AWARENESS AND SELF-AWARENESS

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 41 was written by Br. Rajakumar Soosai Manickam, Educator, Provincial counsellor of South Asia – India, who addresses the theme “Servant Leadership – A Joyful Expression of God’s Love for Humanity” (English | Español | Français | Português) – Video. The message refers to chapter 12 of Marist Voices (“How Many Loaves do You Have?”), written by Br. Hipólito Pérez.

Other Marist Voices 42 was written by César Nuñez, delegate of the Marist Mission in Peru – Province of Santa María de los



Andes, who addresses the theme “Marist leadership: awareness and self-awareness” (English | Español | Français | Português) – Video. The message refers to chapter 6 of Marist Voices (Awareness), written by Br. Ken McDonald.

## CENTRAL AMERICA

Educators from the Marist School “El Salvador” and the Marist School of Guaynabo, in Puerto Rico, met under the motto “Generate Life.” During this meeting, a series of activities were carried out designed to promote coexistence and the personal and spiritual growth of all participants.

## FIJI

In Suva, Province Star of the Sea, on 21st February, with the presence of the Provincial Council, 10 laypeople made a formal 12-month commitment. They committed to nurturing prayer, community and mission. It was a great celebration of Marist life and mission.

## USA

The 3 brothers in Post-Novitiate Formation (Brothers Dittus, Luis and Ryan) have been in Los Fresnos & Brownsville last weekend with Br. Rob Clark (Director of Post-Novitiate Formation). In addition, for the opportunity of fraternal support, the brothers had an evening with the Los Fresnos Community, visited classes at Saint Joseph Academy, attended an evening with the laypeople and joined SJA students in a Marist Day of Service.

## NORANDINA

The Casas Familia de Quevedo program, in Ecuador, concluded the 2023-2024 school year, which began in April. The program served nearly 30 beneficiaries in three houses; The children are accompanied by their educators, the psychosocial and administrative team, and the community of Marist Brothers that also supports the Unidad Educativa América. The program is directed by Brother Mariano Morante.

## GREECE

## FORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF MARIST INSTITUTIONS



On February 17, 2024, a Marist formation day was held at Léonin College in Néa Smyrni, Greece.

Some 230 people participated: Marist Brothers, members of the “Marial Organizations” of the Marist establishments and social works in Greece, the boards of directors, as well as numerous members of the educational, administrative and technical staff of Léonin College in Athens and Léonin College in Néa Smyrni. This session, entitled “You are at home”, was inspired by the motto of the five Marist Provinces of the Europe Region, which invites Marists to consider the school as a home, where we share the same values and the same spirit, take care of each other and accept and respect diversity and respective vocations.

The main conference was presented by Brother Josep Maria Soteras, General Councilor, who was in Greece especially for this formation. Starting from God’s Creation, the common home, Brother Josep Maria went through the house of Nazareth and Bethany, arriving at the Marist houses of La Valla and the Hermitage.

During the group work that followed, the participants had the opportunity to reflect, deepen and freely express their point of view, their concerns and their suggestions

on family spirit and the Christian mission with children and young people.

This formation has positively contributed to reinforce the feeling that the school is a second home and that as Marists, we belong at the same time to the Global Marist Family.

This day is part of the Marist Formation Sessions that are organized every year for the staff of the Marist schools in Greece. During the academic year 2023-2024 it has already been held:

- A Marist training session for class supervisors on student support (September 2023).
- A meeting of members of the educational, administrative and technical staff, hired in the last three years, at the Marist Brothers’ Community, to learn about the community life and mission of the Brothers (November 2023).
- Marist formation session for school councils, principals and assistant principals on the topic “Heroic Leadership” by Br. Ben Consigli, member of the General Council of the Institute (January 2024).

In addition, in July 2023, a pilgrimage was made to Marist places in France with 50 educators recruited in recent years.



## UMBRASIL

## 20TH ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY



The Ordinary General Assembly of the Marist Union of Brazil (UMBRASIL) took place in Brazlandia from 19 to 21 February. Its aim was to discuss and decide on the projects of Marist Brazil, as well as to celebrate its twentieth anniversary. The meeting was attended by 21 Brothers representing the three Marist Provinces of the country. Its theme was “From the Hermitage to Brasília – We are a global family with a sense of belonging and responsibility”, inspired by the passage from the Acts of the Apostles: “Those who embraced the faith lived together and had everything in common”. Each year there is an Ordinary General Assembly of UMBRASIL which, in addition to examining projects for the current and future years, is also a time to foster brotherhood among the Marist Brothers.

### First day: welcome, socialising and getting to know one another

On the first day of the meeting, the brothers joined in a moment of integration led by the Aldeia Academy. Their aim was to work on building up a collective identity based on the characteristics and experiences of the brothers themselves. Afterwards, psychologist Neimar Sergio held a guided meditation around a campfire, offering a period of relaxation and reflection inspired by the construction of the Hermitage.

### Second day: appointments, restructuring of the Institute, UMBRASIL projects and celebrations

The second day began with formal acts appointing the new members of UMBRASIL’s Board of Governors, Executive Office and Finance Council.

### UMBRASIL’s Board of Governors:

- Br Deivis Alexandre Fischer (PMBSA) – reappointed as President of the Board of Governors
- Br Dionísio Roberto Rodrigues (PMBSA)
- Br Marcelo Bonhemberger (PMBSA)
- Br José Assis Elias de Brito (PMBCN)
- Br Adalberto Batista Amaral (PMBCN)
- Br Iranilson Correia de Lima (PMBCN)
- Br Antônio Benedito de Oliveira (PMBCS)
- Br Rogério Renato Mateucci (PMBCS)
- Br Vanderlei Siqueira dos Santos (PMBCS)

In 2024, the Directors José Augusto Júnior and Adilson Janovski of UMBRASIL, the Executive Secretary of UMBRASIL, and the President of the CAD of Marist Brazil will also attend the Board of Governors but without the right to vote.

### UMBRASIL Finance Council 2024-2025

- Br Lauri Heck (PMBSA) – Chairman of the Finance Council
- Br Humberto Lima Gondim (PMBCN) – Councillor Secretary
- Br Evilasio Tambosi (PMBCS)

### UMBRASIL Executive Office 2024-2025

- Br Adilson José Janovski (PMBCS) – Director-President
- Br José Augusto Junior (PMBCN) – Director-Treasurer
- Br Marcelo Bonhemberger (PMBSA) – Director-Secretary
- Leonardo Soares – Executive Secretary

Sister Maria Inêz Furtado de Mendonça, from the Daughters of Jesus Congregation, then spoke to the brothers about proces-

## marist world

PUERTO RICO: MEETING OF MARIST EDUCATORS, UNDER THE MOTTO GENERATE LIFE



FIJI: THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF STAR OF THE SEA WITH THE FIJI MARIST EDUCATION BOARD MEMBERS



GUATEMALA: VIII PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF CENTRAL AMERICA



SOUTH AFRICA: ONGOING FORMATION FOR MARIST TEACHERS



PARAGUAY: ESCUELA INMACULADA OF HORQUETA



FRANCE: WEST CENTRAL EUROPE PILGRIMAGE IN LA VALLA

ses of restructuring. After Sister's talk, the brothers worked at tables with reflections based on their concerns and intuitions about this process.

After the UMBRASIL advisors explained the projects carried out in 2023 and those planned for 2024, Leonardo Soares, UMBRASIL's Executive Secretary, presented the 2023 balance sheet, made up of the initial proposals, those approved and those implemented. At the end of the year, the members of the Finance Council gave a favourable opinion on the previous year's results and approved the 2024 Budget, noting that it was in line with UMBRASIL's new Strategic Plan 2023/2025.

Brother José de Assis and Leonardo Soares, respectively Provincial Coordinator and Executive Secretary of the South America Region, presented the main progress made in 2023 in the Region, highlighting the publication of the new Strategic Plan, the Work Guide for the teams and the commitments planned for 2024.

The second day concluded with a dinner attended by the Secretary of the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil, Dom Ricardo Hoepers, the Board of Directors of the Conference of Religious of Brazil, the Board of Directors of the National

Association of Catholic Education of Brazil, the Directors of the Marist education centres in the region and the Directors of the network of Marist schools in Brazil.

### Third day: Mass, formation, Marist Brazil and closure

The third day began with the celebration of the Eucharist, organised by the Colégio Marista Champagnat from Taguatinga.

After the celebration, Ricardo Mariz, director of Social Education and Evangelisation of the Marist Brazil network of schools, described the journey of education of the network in 2023 and the goals for 2024. Next, Brother Natalino Souza and June Cruz, president of the Board of Directors and superintendent of the network of schools, respectively, spoke to the brothers about the main milestones of the first year of Marist Brazil.

Concluding the assembly, the executive secretary of UMBRASIL, Leonardo Soares, emphasised the importance of the assembly's deliberations for the future of the Marist mission: "It is a timely moment to highlight the responsibility that we carry in our hands, hands full of hope and faith that have nurtured our mission for more than 200 years. UMBRASIL is happy to be able to give visibility, viability and carriage to our dream of building networks for Marist Brazil, the South American Region and the Institute".



## CHAD

# PROJECT IN KOUMRA EMPOWERS WOMEN THROUGH SEWING SCHOOL

To empower adolescent girls and young women, the Marist Champagnat Cultural Center in Koumra, in Tchad, Province of West Africa, launched the project “DYAN KE HO RON TOG”. It aims to improve the living conditions and socio-economic integration of adolescent girls and young women aged 14 to 30, who lack education, face severe poverty, and are at risk of trafficking. The project not only provides income-generating opportunities but also offers a genuine chance for redemption and societal participation.

The initiative involves establishing a Sewing School at the Marist Champagnat Cultural Center in Koumra, offering 9-month courses for 30 girls and women in each training cycle. Additionally, a tailoring lab and two shop points will be set up for the creation, production, and sale of clothes and other tailoring items, including those made from recycled fabrics. The training comprises three progressive 3-month modules, including entrepreneurship skills, with practical lessons five days a week for six hours a day. Basic literacy and numeracy courses will be provided initially for beneficiaries with limited or no school attendance.

The project encourages collaboration among beneficiaries, fostering personal and community resilience. Trained women will mentor other groups facing difficulties. The income from selling products will improve their economic situation and support the project for additional beneficiaries.

The project promotes community and solidarity, emphasizing local tailoring production and creative reuse of materials. It aims to enhance girls' creativity, self-esteem, and initiative, offering locally made products at affordable prices, thereby increasing the



community's buying power. The project recognizes the value of each girl and woman as a positive resource for the community, contributing to development and rights enhancement.

FMSI supported the Mission in the design, implementation, and reporting of the project. Misean Cara has funded 75% of the costs of this project.

## Misean Cara

Misean Cara, consisting of 77 members, supports missionaries globally, drawing on Ireland's missionary heritage to empower the most marginalized. Their focus includes education, health, sustainable livelihoods, and human rights in over 50 countries. Since 2004, Misean Cara has provided funding, mentorship, and accompaniment, fostering deep relationships with those they serve. The members, representing diverse traditions, share a commitment to eradicating poverty, alleviating marginalization, overcoming crises, and promoting the well-being of the poor.

## FMSI

Marist Foundation for International Solidarity (FMSI), established by the Marist Brothers in 2007, works globally for the rights of children and adolescents, aiming for better living conditions. The Marist Institute's Foundation empowers children and youth through inclusive education, advocacy, and solidarity projects, focusing on protecting the rights of vulnerable and marginalized children. FMSI envisions a world where childhood is respected, guaranteed, and free from violence and fear.



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