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MARIST NEWS

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From the new La Valla to the new Hermitage

The meeting of the General Council with the superiors of the Administrative Units began last Monday at the Institute's Mother House, in France. The Secretariats and some departments of the General Administration have also been invited. This is the fifth meeting with the Provincials organized by the General Council since its election in 2017. It is an initiative that aims to take care of leaders, working as a team. This year, the

General Council saw the meeting as an opportunity to reflect on the path followed from La Valla 200 (XXII General Chapter, in 2017) to Hermitage 200 (XXIII 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". Next week we will dedicate a special issue of Marist News to this meeting. [All information is on the institute's website.](#)

STAND UP, SPEAK UP, AND ACT

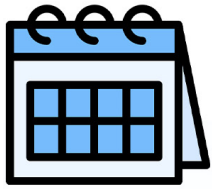
THE DOCUMENT WILL BE LAUNCHED ON MARCH 20

We're excited to announce the upcoming online launch of "Stand Up, Speak Up, and Act: A Guide for Children and Young People's Participation in the Marist Mission." This guide aims to empower children and young people within the Marist mission and community worldwide. Join us on March 20, 2024, at either 9:00 am ([youtube](#)) or at 4:00 pm ([youtube](#)) (Rome time) for this special event. The launch will feature Br. Ernesto Sánchez Barba, Superior General, and Br. Luis Carlos Gutiérrez Blanco, Vicar General.I.

How was the document developed?

This initiative, led by the Institute's Secretariat of Education and Evangelization and endorsed by the International Marist Mission Commission, commenced in early

2019 with the aim of crafting a guide centered on the involvement of children and young people within our Marist educational works. The goal was to imbue this guide



March 20
20 de marzo
20 mars
20 de março



with the essence of the Marist charism and make it accessible across all Marist educational settings catering to children and young people.

Following the initial drafting phase, the project advanced to a consultation stage. In October 2019, representatives from each Administrative Unit of the Institute were presented with a draft of the guide, encouraging them to contribute their perspectives, experiences, voices, and reflections for its refinement.

Exploring Themes through Online Consultation

In the pursuit of exploring various themes, an online consultation process was embraced, commencing in the first half of 2020, and extending into the early months of 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This innovative approach catered to the diverse needs and preferences of young participants by employing a rich array of tools such as surveys, interviews, creative activities such as drawings and socio-dramas, as well as interactive mediums like music, videos, and storytelling. Questions tailored to their age and developmental stage ensured meaningful engagement.

Simultaneously, Marist educators contributed to the dialogue through focused group discussions, interviews, and surveys, aligning their input with the thematic scope of the initial guide. Their insights, garnered through this collaborative process, pinpointed areas for adjustment, reinforcement, and expansion within the document.

By early 2021, the fruits of these consultations became evident, with feedback pouring in from various Administrative Units. Nearly 10,000 children and young adults, alongside over 400 education professionals, lent their voices, enriching the document with their diverse perspectives and experiences.

Following video conferences with project liaisons from each Province/Administrative Unit in February 2021, efforts were made to refine and bolster implementation strategies, address challenges and proposals, and recommend follow-up measures. Subsequently, external consultants reviewed the received contributions, leading to the drafting of the final version of the document.

What is this document about?

The document serves as a response to the mandates outlined in recent General Chapters and Marist International Mission Assemblies. It echoes the call from the XXI General Chapter (2009) to “become experts and advocates for the rights of children and young people in public forums,” and from the XXII General Chapter (2017) to “open the eyes of our hearts and listen to their cry; to promote, protect and defend them and empower them as agents of transformation.”

Moreover, this document aligns with the recommendations of the 1st and 2nd Marist International Mission Assemblies (MIMA I and II), which urged us “to expand

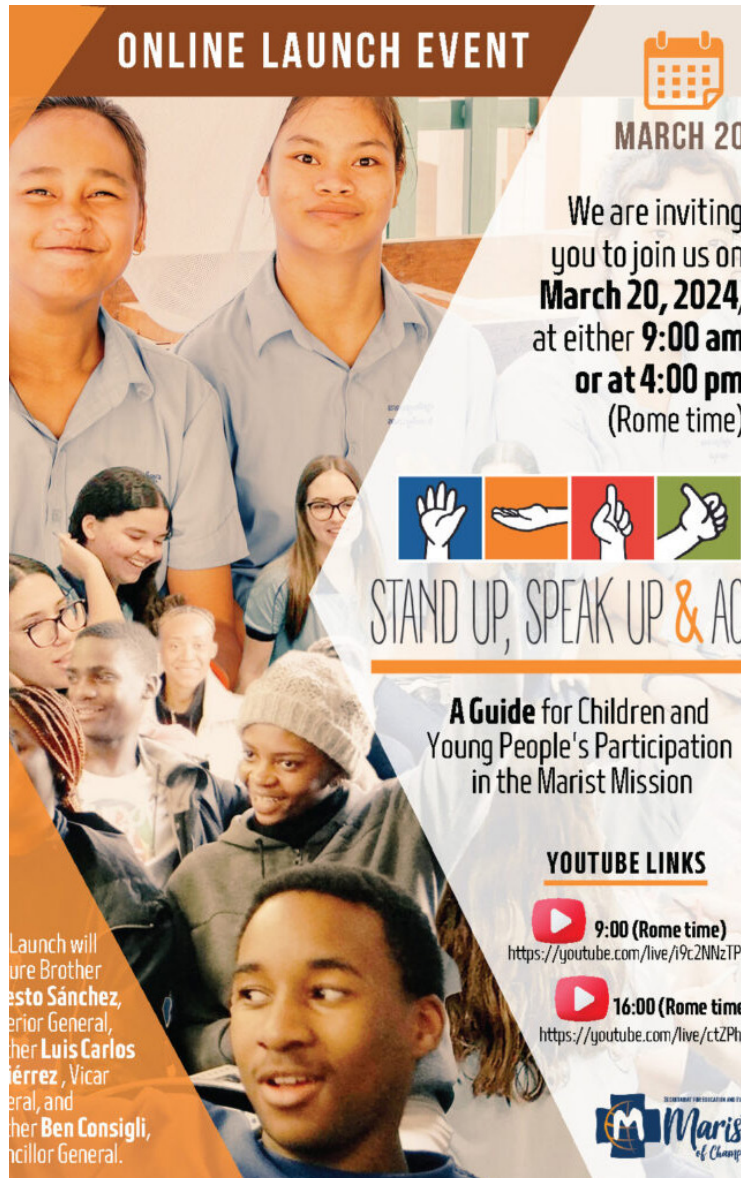
opportunities for Marist children and young people to participate in decision-making, strengthen their leadership and encourage them to act,” and “to be recognized as prophets with a voice for the defense of their rights in the political and social forums.”

The document aims to invigorate our collective commitment to guarantee, promote, protect, and defend the rights of children and young people, placing their rights to express “their views freely in all matters affecting them, and to have those views given due weight” (Art. 12, Convention on the Rights of the Child) at the heart of our educational and pastoral practice. Consequently, it becomes one of our most urgent apostolic priorities.

The document provides informational and training resources to individuals starting their journey in advocating for the rights of children and young people, empowering them as agents of change. Above all, it seeks to inspire and strengthen practices promoting child and youth participation in various Marist mission contexts.

The Marist Institute hopes that this effort will serve as a source of hope and enthusiasm for developing better ways of supporting children and young people as individuals with rights.

This new document, from 20 March, will be available both online and in hard copy format.



ONLINE LAUNCH EVENT

MARCH 20

We are inviting you to join us on **March 20, 2024**, at either **9:00 am** or at **4:00 pm** (Rome time)

STAND UP, SPEAK UP & AG

A Guide for Children and Young People's Participation in the Marist Mission

YOUTUBE LINKS

9:00 (Rome time)
<https://youtube.com/live/19c2NNzTP>

16:00 (Rome time)
<https://youtube.com/live/ctzPh>

Launch will feature Brother **Esteban Sánchez**, Superior General, Brother **Luis Carlos Méndez**, Vicar General, and Brother **Ben Consigli**, Chancellor General.

Marist
 of Change

MALAWI, SOUTHERN AFRICA

CHILD SAFEGUARDING WORKSHOP LAVALLA200> MALAWI COMMUNITY

Lavalla200> community of Malawi organized a vital workshop focused on child safeguarding. Recognizing the significance of ensuring a safe environment for the youth in Malawi, Brother Emmanuel Mwanalirenji-Gunduloni, the Provincial of Southern Africa, alongside Brother Fortune Chakasara, orchestrated this initiative. The workshop aimed to equip participants with essential knowledge and skills to effectively work with vulnerable adults and children, fostering a secure atmosphere for teaching and learning, particularly within Likuni Open Scho-

ol. The workshop highlighted the importance of child safeguarding in the context of mission work among youth in Malawi.

With vulnerable populations being particularly susceptible to various forms of exploitation and abuse, it was imperative to provide comprehensive training to community members involved in educational setting. By enhancing their understanding of child safeguarding principles and practices, the workshop sought to empower participants to create safe spaces where

children and vulnerable adults could thrive and grow without fear of harm or exploitation.

Participants explored into the foundational aspects of working with vulnerable adults, understanding the motivations behind their involvement, the methodologies employed, and the objectives pursued (Why, How, and What). This introspective exploration provided a framework for informed and purposeful engagement with vulnerable populations.

Furthermore, a crucial aspect of child safeguarding involves drawing boundaries and recognizing the signs of sexual abuse. Through comprehensive discussions and educational sessions, participants were equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries, as well as identifying and responding effectively to instances of sexual abuse.

How to “Respond to God’s Call through Ministering to Children and Vulnerable Adults” was also discussed. This topic explained the spiritual dimension of engaging with vulnerable students, emphasizing the sacred calling to serve and protect the most marginalized and vulnerable members of society. By aligning their actions with divine purpose, participants were encouraged to approach their work with a sen-

se of reverence, compassion, and humility. Addressing cultural misconceptions surrounding childhood was also paramount in redefining perceptions and attitudes towards children within the community. By challenging preconceived notions and stereotypes, participants gained a deeper appreciation for the diverse manifestations of childhood and the inherent dignity and rights of every child.

The Child Safeguarding Workshop organized by LaValla200> Malawi community represented a significant step towards ensuring the holistic well-being and protection of children and vulnerable adults in Malawi. By equipping participants with the requisite knowledge, skills, and awareness, the workshop laid the groundwork for the establishment of safe and nurturing environments where individuals could flourish and thrive. Moving forward, it is imperative to continue prioritizing child safeguarding efforts and fostering a culture of accountability, responsibility, and compassion within the community. Through sustained commitment and collective action, Lavalla200 Malawi community can serve as a beacon of hope and empowerment for future generations, embodying the principles of justice, dignity, and love for all.

Br. Frederic Nadji Ngarsandje

The community LaValla200> of Malawi is made up of two Brothers (Frédéric Nadji Ngarsandje from Chad and Dièudonné Byenda from Rwanda) and two Marist laywomen (Maggie Virginia Gundo from Malawi and Maria Liezel Igoy from the Philippines).



marist world

COLOMBIA: FORMATION COURSE FOR REMAR MOVEMENT ANIMATORS IN ARMENIA



ECUADOR: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF MARIST LIFE AND MISSION LEADERS



SYRIA: BLUE MARISTS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TRAINING COURSE IN ALEPPO



COMPOSTELA: MARIST LIFE ENCOUNTER IN SALAMANCA



AUSTRALIA: IMMERSIONS COORDINATORS WORKSHOP FOR MARIST SCHOOLS AND MINISTRIES



BRASIL CENTRO-SUL: CHAPEL OF THE MARIST COMMUNITY OF SÃO JOSÉ DOS PINHAIS

CANADA

YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE PART IN A PASTORAL ANIMATION MEETING

From February 23 to 25, Secondary 3, 4 and 5 students from École Secondaire Marcellin Champagnat in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Canada, took part in a pastoral animation event called “le Gier”.

The spirit behind the Gier event is to enable participants to return to their inner source, as Marcellin did when he sat by his bedroom window to pray, listening to the murmur of the Gier River.

During the meeting, participants experimented with different ways of entering themselves in order to find or discover their inner source, and thus overcome the limits that stand in their way and prevent them from moving forward.



NORANDINA

On February 26, the "Corazón Sin Fronteras" project in Bogotá received a visit from Cardinal Luis José Rueda Aparicio. The Cardinal was received by the Marist brothers Leonardo Yepes, Libardo Garzón, Juan Pablo Marín and Andrés Martínez; the Coordinator of Solidaridad Colombia, Eduardo Obando, and Psychologist Diana Olaya, leader of social work.

EUROPE REGION

The Erasmus Plus Marist Team of the Europe Region met in February at the Marist House in Nijmegen, Netherlands, with the aim of building a proposal for the creation of an official Marist network of internationalization, exchange, mobility, and teacher formation. The initiative seeks to strengthen the vitality of the Marist network and mission in Europe, but also in Algeria, Lebanon, and Syria.

CENTRAL AMERICA

This year the Liceo Salvadoreño School, in El Salvador, celebrates 100 years of Marist presence. On February 11, the celebration of the Eucharist of thanksgiving marked the beginning of a series of events and activities that will commemorate this centenary.

COMPOSTELA

The administrators of the educational works of the Spanish zone, of the Marist Province of Compostela, met at the end of February in Valladolid to advance together in the management of the schools, the monitoring of daily work and future planning.

AMÉRICA CENTRAL VIII PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY

The Marist Brothers and Laity of the Province of Central America held their VIII Provincial Assembly, from February 22 to 25, in Guatemala City. The assembly's objectives were to promote a space for reflection through open dialogue and listening among all the Marists of Champagnat; and commemorate all the achievements obtained throughout these 100 years of Marist presence in Central America.

The VIII Provincial Assembly dealt with five fundamental topics that addressed essential aspects for the growth and vitality of the province:

- Works, and truly evangelizing presences.
- Transmission and growth of the Marist charism from the laity.
- Economy and management, with a view to guaranteeing the sustainability and effectiveness of Marist works and presences in the region.
- Profile of the brother in the future.
- Option for the poor.

In thanking and celebrating 100 years of Marist presence in Central America

it was remembered the importance of joint work, and the shared commitment to the mission of Champagnat. Likewise, time was dedicated to reflection on the transmission and growth of the Marist charism from the perspective of the laity. The vital role that lay people play in Champagnat's mission was recognized, and ways to strengthen their participation were explored and commitment to Marist life and work.

The VIII Provincial Assembly of Central America was a significant event that reaffirmed the commitment of the Marists to their mission and values. Through dialogue, reflection and collaboration, participants embarked on a journey of self-exploration and spiritual renewal.

Looking to the future, the Marist Province in Central America is ready to move forward with determination and enthusiasm, committed to promoting the common good and social justice in the region.

The Assembly concluded on February 25 with a closing Eucharist.



OTHER MARIST VOICES 43 AND 44

GIFT AND COMMITMENT / PROPHETIC LEADERSHIP



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 43 was written by Br. Guillermo Antón, Educator, director of the school ministry in Venezuela, from the Province of Norandina, who addresses the theme “Gift and commitment: to serve” ([PDF > VIDEO](#)). The message refers to chapter 1 of Marist Voices (Introduction to Servant and Prophetic

Leadership: Call and Purpose), written by Brothers Ben Consigli and Luis Carlos Gutiérrez.

Other Marist Voices 44 was written by Sylvia Pérez and Ricardo Miño, Marist missionaries, leaders of pastoral ministry and evangelization in Bolivia, from the Province of Santa María de los Andes, who addresses the theme “Prophetic leadership in today’s world” ([PDF > VIDEO](#)). The message refers to chapter 11 of Marist Voices (Leadership Committed to Prioritising People: Growing Together, Accompanying and Empowering Each Other).

120 Marists from different parts of the world, including brothers, lay men, and women, will share their valuable perspectives on leadership, based on their own experiences. Each of them will bring a unique vision and reflect on specific aspects of servant and prophetic leadership.



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