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MARIST NEWS

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MAY 4

MARISTS OF BRAZIL ESTABLISH THE MARIST DAY OF OUR LADY GOOD MOTHER

In a letter sent on April 22, Leonardo Soares, Executive Secretary of the Marist Union of Brazil (UMBRASIL), announced the establishment, at the national level, of the Marist Day of Our Lady Good Mother, to be celebrated annually on May 4, starting in 2024. The proposal of the three Marist Provinces of Brazil was presented to the UMBRASIL Board, approved by its Superior Council and finally validated by the Ordinary General Assembly held last February.

UMBRASIL welcomed the proposal to create a day of the Good Mother because it saw in this initiative a significant pastoral potential for Marist life, in particular:



general administration

■ Brothers Oscar Martin and Ken McDonald, General Councilors, are continuing their visit to the Province of Southern Africa until the end of May. They are currently visiting communities in Malawi.

■ During this week, the Solidarity Secretariat continues to prepare the report to be presented for the Universal Periodic Review of Italy, Fiji and Madagascar, and will also travel to Australia to deepen the reports of Fiji and Kiribati.

■ Brothers João Carlos do Prado and Ben Consigli, General Councilors, completed their visit to the Iberian Province earlier this week.

■ On Tuesday, the directors of the Secretariat of the Laity met online with the group working on the theme "Legal Structures" of the process of the International Forum on the Marist Lay Vocation.

■ Brothers Sylvain Ramandimbarisoan and Josep Maria Soteras, General Councilors, began their visit to the Asian Region in Sri Lanka on Tuesday. They are meeting with the Marist District Council of Asia from Thursday to Sunday in Tudella.

■ Saturday marks the end of the ongoing formation program for those who accompany the Brothers in difficult situations, which began on April 7. Br. Ernesto Sanchez, Superior General, gave a talk to the group on Thursday.

On Friday, the visit of Brothers Jorge Gaio and Gaio Linacero, from the General Economato, to the ■ Province of l'Hermitage came to an end. The last stage of the visit took place in France.

■ On Saturday, Br. Ernesto will participate, online, in the Conference of Major Superiors of Religious of Mexico, where he will speak about synodality.

1. to highlight Mary as a Marist inspiration since the time of St. Marcellin Champagnat to the present day;
2. to stimulate the theme of vocation promotion;
3. to motivate the study and living of Marian Spirituality.

The choice of May 4 has a historical justification, because around this date in 1830, after Father Champagnat instituted the singing of the Salve Regina as part of the brothers' daily prayer, the Congregation was preserved from dangers and persecutions that threatened its existence.



In the Letter addressed to the Marists of Brazil, Leonardo states that “with the institution of the Marist Day of Our Lady Good Mother, the Marists take a further step towards the realization of Champagnat’s desire, expressed in his Spiritual Testament, ‘that a tender and filial love for our good Mother never fail you in all the changes of time and circumstance’.” [ista Champagnat – Taguatinga, transmitida ao vivo pelo Canal da Umbrasil no Youtube.](#)

[Celebración 4 de mayo \(Português\) | Good Mother | Images of Our Lady, Good Mother](#)

AMÉRICA SUR

MEETING OF BROTHERS IN BRAZLÂNDIA

From April 23-27, Brothers with perpetual vows up to 45 years of age from the [South America Region](#) gathered in Brazlândia, Brazil, to share their journey and continue their formation in order to further qualify their educational and pastoral service.

The extensive program included conferences on “Philosophical and Theological Anthropology” given by Prof. Draiton G. de Souza and also on the “Beauty of Consecrated Religious Life”, which was given by Fr. Roberto Medeiros.

The participants had the opportunity to reflect on forgiveness and reconciliation in community life, to address the importance of prayer, contemplation and spiritual direction in the journey of discipleship, to delve into the life project and to set their eyes on L’Hermitage as a source of inspiration while sharing valuable moments of interiority and experiences of fraternal life.

A city tour allowed them to visit significant places in the capital of Brazil, Brasília, and other moments of conviviality that punctuated the five days, rich and intense.

Brother José de Assis, Provincial Coordinator of the Region and Provincial of Brasil Centro-Norte, was the host of the event and expressed his immense joy at receiving the brothers from the five provinces: “To be able to collaborate in the ongoing formation of our Brothers – he expressed – especially at this time when we are promoting the South America Region with the



purpose of strengthening the vitality of great leaders to further qualify the service provided to children, adolescents and young people is of great importance for our mission.

The South America Region is a space for cooperation and common projects made up of the Provinces of Cruz del Sur (Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay), Santa Maria de los Andes (Bolivia, Chile and Peru), Brasil Centro-Sul, Brasil Centro-Norte and Brasil Sul-Amazônia.

PROVINCE OF MEDITERRÁNEA YOUTH ASSEMBLY

With the slogan “Your Voice Matters”, for the first time children and adolescents from the Province of Mediterránea gathered in an assembly to reflect on institutional child protection. Representatives from each school in Italy, Lebanon and Spain and from the socio-educational projects in Syria, up to a total of 120, accompanied by teachers, traveled on April 19 to the Faraya (for students from Lebanon and Syria) or Madrid (for those in Italy and Spain), with the idea of continuing the local process that had started in November 2023.



During the Assembly, the adolescents were encouraged to play a leading role, both in the analysis of their reality and in the presentation of the proposals worked on in their respective schools or educational works, as well as in the debate necessary to reach a consensus. The first days were devoted to rotating workshops on children’s rights, safe spaces, risks in school environments, risks in virtual environments and child abuse.

The highlight of the Assembly was a dynamic where the children reflected on the wounds caused by any type of abuse, which paved the way to discover that “their voice was important” in the search for solutions. On the last day, proposals from both the local phase and the various activities of the provincial meeting were compiled, discussed and approved by the assembly.

It is important to highlight that every day there were online connections between the Faraya and Madrid headquarters to share the reflections, to feel the provincial communion and pray together, tasks that have required a great technical and translation effort, and that have contributed to the goal of connecting and working together for child participation and protection.

The conclusions of the assembly will be passed on to the commission that will prepare the next strategic plan, so that the children themselves will contribute to making their schools or educational sites the safe environments they need for their growth.

Speak, contribute, participate, act... and transform

On the last day, Br. Aureliano Garcia, Provincial, received the conclusions of the participants and addressed some words of encouragement to them to make their lives historic opportunities for others: to speak, to contribute, to participate, to act... and to transform. He spoke to them about the importance of the word: “With words we can care, heal and cure”. He also invited them to never keep silent: “Don’t be silent, share what you think and feel; your voice matters, because it can make a difference and make a better school, a better, more beautiful, more humane world. Lastly, he gave them a final thought: “the most important events in history are love stories, which have to do with respect, inclusiveness ... May you be able to create important and unrepeatably events and stories that will be your – and our – lifeline”.

[Photos in facebook](#)

marist world

ECUADOR: WORKSHOP FROM LA VALLA TO L'HERMITAGE WITH 270 TEACHERS



MEXICO: MARIST B-LEARNING ENCOUNTER IN GUADALAJARA



LEBANON: PROVINCIAL YOUTH MEETING IN FARAYA



BRAZIL: MARIST YOUTH MINISTRY, PROVINCE BRASIL CENTRO-SUL



SPAIN: MEETING OF IBÉRICA COMMUNITY LEADERS



VENEZUELA: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF MARIST LAITY

MAY 1ST

RELIGIOUS BROTHER'S DAY

In conjunction with the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, the Conference of Major Superiors of the United States has been celebrating the feast of the Religious Brother for some years now. Also in other countries, the Marist Brothers are promoting the celebration of this feast, together with other congregations of Brothers, and they take advantage of this date to recall the importance of this vocation within the Church, to pray for the Brothers and to spread this style of life.

On this day, we bring to mind the Church's document on the vocation of the Religious Brother (Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church – and you are all Brothers: [English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#) | [Italiano](#)) and also the Rule of Life of the Marist Brothers.

Below are some resources prepared for that day by the Provinces of the United States and Star of the Sea.

United States

Religious brothers day guide – Celebrating the life and vocation of Religious Brothers: [English](#) | [Español](#) | [Italiano](#)

Star of the Sea

Prayer for communities to use and adapt for this day

[\(Download PDF\)](#)



SOUTH ASIA

The Marists of India celebrate 50 years of presence in the country in 2024. The three pioneer brothers were Sri-Lankan and arrived on 1st May 1974. They were Brothers Gregory Appuhamy, Sunanda Joseph Perera and Godfrey Edward Perera. There will be a special Jubilee celebration on Saturday, 18th May 2024.

USA

5 students, accompanied by Br. Robert Clark, from the University of Texas, visit New York for the annual Vocation Pilgrimage. They will visit the Marist Community of Welcome in Flushing, the Marist Brothers Center at Esopus and the Marist Novitiate at Saint Barnabas. The students visit the religious communities to learn about Consecrated Life as a vocational option in the Church.

CRUZ DEL SUR

90 years ago the first Marist school - the "Santa María" - was founded in Uruguay, for the poor children of La Blanqueada. The Province celebrates 90 years of life with gratitude, recognition, joy and multiple activities that call especially to the children, young people, adolescents, their families and the whole community.

BRASIL CENTRO-SUL

On April 24 and 25, the first module of the Prophetic and Servant Leadership Course was held in Curitiba. The event was attended by 60 leaders of the corporate areas of the Marist Group, and some brothers. Two more modules are planned for June and October. The organization of the course is a collaboration between the two provincial institutions, the Marist Group and the Religious Organization.

OTHER MARIST VOICES 59 AND 60:**LEADERSHIP / POLLINATING IDEAS**

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 59 was written by Br. Felix Banam Donald, Headmaster of Lycée Saint Marcellin Champagnat in Central African Republic – Province of East Central Africa, who addresses the theme "Leadership is simply a question of influencing people" ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#). The message refers to chapter 20 of Marist Voices (Spiritual and Ethical Wisdom in Leadership), written by – Br. Luis Carlos Gutiérrez.

Other Marist Voices 60 was written by Loreto Rubio, Director General of the Champagnat Foundation in Spain – Province of L'Hermitage, who addresses the theme "Pollinating ideas: let us become persuasive communities" ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#). The message refers to chapter 7 of Marist Voices (Persuading with Action and Service), written by Br. Vincent de Paul Kouassi.

Other Marist Voices

[This project](#) is promoted by the Marist International Mission Commission and gives continuity to the initiative "Marist Voices", a book launched in 2022 that addresses the theme of Marist leadership and seeks to reflect on the request of the last General Chapter that underlined that "For a new beginning, we believe in governance that favours prophetic servant leadership and closely accompanies Marist life and mission."

120 Marists from around the world, including brothers, lay men and women, have been invited to share their perspectives on leadership from their own experiences. Each brings a unique vision and reflects on specific aspects of servant and prophetic leadership. Each week two messages are posted on the Institute's communication channels.

[This link](#) gives you access to all the messages of this initiative, published as of September 2023.

FRATELLI IN LEBANON

SIX MONTHS AS A VOLUNTEER IN THE INTERNATIONAL PROJECT

In the testimony that we publish below, Mateo Arroyo Berzaín, a Lasallian from Bolivia, shares in the form of an interview, what motivated him to become a volunteer, and narrates his experience of living in an international Marist community, in Lebanon, for seven months, from September 24, 2023 to April 16, 2024, in the Fratelli Project.

The Fratelli Project, in Lebanon was created in 2016 by the Brothers of the Christian Schools and the Marist Brothers to respond to the emerging and urgent needs of the most vulnerable children and young people there.

What were your motivations for doing a volunteer experience outside your country?

I wanted to know and experience a place with a different context from what I had done before, to open my view of the world.

Briefly tell us what has marked you the most in your experience.

The people in Fratelli and in Lebanon in general, despite all that they have suffered in the country and therefore in their personal lives, still show a lot of joy and hope. Also the fact that Lebanon is full of contrasts, contrasts that probably exist in the country I come from, however, they are not as evident as here.

What are the key words, expressions or concepts that sum up your experience?

Resilience, hospitality, faith.

Describe the image and/or event that you consider most significant from your volunteer time.

I was accompanying the children while they were playing soccer, when one of them approached me with a phone, which he handed to me to read something, translating from Arabic to English he wrote the following: Thank you very much for always coming with us to play soccer.

It was a small gesture that meant a lot to me, since I was conflicted about my presence in the project and whether I was being useful or not, and that kid, not knowing that I had that going on in my head, had that great detail.

What has been the most important learning during that period?

Learning the importance of being there, because of the language barrier most of the time the role of the volunteer ends up being more of accompaniment rather than doing something concrete, something that conflicted me at the beginning, but as time went by, I learned that many times people do not want us to do something for them, but to be there with them.

I also learned the value of education not only as a way to expand



knowledge, but as a way to teach how-to live-in community and harmony with others.

What did it mean for you to live more deeply the Marist life and mission?

It was my first time having a relationship with the Marist community and it was a pleasant surprise. I am happy to know that there are more communities like those with people willing to help others, as well as following certain values. There is no doubt that when I return to Bolivia I will try to get to know or establish contact with the Marist community in my city.

What were the biggest challenges during this time?

As I mentioned before, accepting a more accompanying role took some time and a process, since at some point I came to question my value and contribution to the project, in the end it was a matter of accepting the role and finding things where one can help Fratelli.

The second challenge was to live with the instability that exists in the country, especially regarding the possibility of an escalation of the conflict on the border with Israel.

What would you like to say to those who wish to be Marist volunteers outside their Province?

It is an enriching experience that will lead you to learn more about other cultures, meet incredible people, learn more about yourself, and appreciate more things about your country of origin.

GENERAL HOUSE

FMSI AND SECRETARIAT OF SOLIDARITY PROMOTE AN EVENT ON MODERN-DAY SLAVERY

Marist Foundation for International Solidarity (FMSI) invites to an upcoming online event: “Unveiling Modern-Day Slavery: A Marist Event for Awareness and Action”! The event will serve as a vital platform to explore the pressing issue of modern-day slavery, offering practical examples, testimonies, and insights to stimulate meaningful discussions.

Organized by FMSI and the Secretariat of Solidarity of the Institute, this event will take place on May 29th from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm CET via the Zoom platform.

To participate, please register using the following link.

Feel free to share this invitation with your family, colleagues, and friends!



FMSI is the foundation created by the Institute to promote and protect the rights of children. FMSI carries on its mission through the activity of advocacy and lobbying and with projects in the countries in which the Marists are present.

FMSI was constituted in 2007 in Italy as a non-profit organization of social usefulness (ONLUS).

From 2011 it has the special consultative status before the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations.

FMSI is member of Bureau International Catholique de l'Enfance (BICE), Centre Catholique International de Genève (CCIG), Child Rights Connect, Movimiento Mundial por la Infancia de Latinoamérica y El Caribe, FOCSIV (Federazione degli Organismi Cristiani Servizio Internazionale Volontario), Observatorio Niñez y Adolescencia (ONA), Santiago de Chile.



**Fondazione Marista
per la Solidarietà
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FMSI

Per il Bene dei Bambini

GENERAL HOUSE

BR. DIEGO ZAWADZKY APPOINTED ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE SECRETARIAT OF SOLIDARITY AND CMI

The General Council has appointed Br. Diego Leonardo Zawadzky Zapata, from the Province of Norandina, to be the Assistant Director of the Secretariat of Solidarity and Cmi, as of September 1, 2024. Brother Diego will replace Brother Valdicer Fachi, who ends his service in the General Administration at the end of June, staying on until August to support the transition. Since 2018, Brother Valdicer has been the director of the Cmi, which in February ceased to be a department in the General Administration's organization chart and was integrated into the Secretariat of Solidarity and CMI.



Brother Diego will work with Brother Ángel Diego García Otaola, director of the Secretariat since September 2019. The Secretariat works mainly in the areas of Education in Solidarity, Children's Rights and Ecology, without forgetting other fields such as Social Works, Project Development, Refugees, Immigrants, Indigenous Peoples...

Br. Diego Leonardo Zawadzky Zapata

Born in Bogotá, Colombia, in 1971. He studied at Colegio Champagnat in that city and was a member of the Remar Movement. This experience awakened his Marist vocation. After graduating, he entered the postulancy and, after the novitiate in Medellín, he made his first profession in 1990. He did his scholasticate in Pasto and completed his university studies at the Saint Pius X Institute in Madrid, while living in the Marist residence in Alcalá de Henares. Years later, he studied Educational and Social Research at the University of London and Leadership and Management of Educational Centers at UNIR.

at all stages, at different times in his life. He was involved in the Ad Gentes project as part of the Marist District of Asia, on mission for six years in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. When he returned to his Province of Norandina, he lived in the insertion community of Medellín and was then director of Los Naranjos College in Bogotá and San José College in Armenia.

He has been Provincial Councillor since 2021, in charge of animating Marist life and mission in Venezuela, as well as being the Council's link with the areas of Solidarity and Communications.

Br. Diego has taught at all levels of education in different schools in Colombia and Ecuador. He has also been a formator

As a good Colombian he loves coffee, enjoys dancing and is passionate about climbing peaks on his bicycle.



Institute of the Marist Brothers General House

Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat, 2 - Rome, Italy - comunica@fms.it


Website

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