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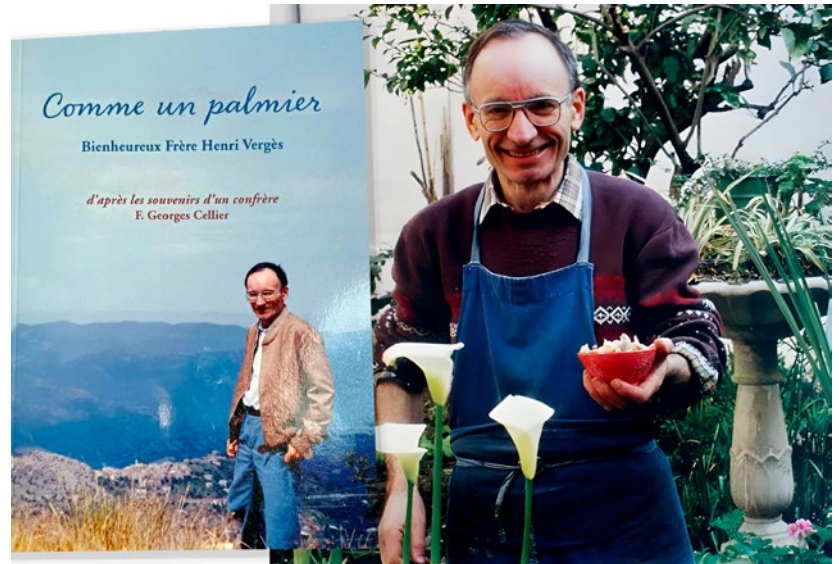
# MARIST NEWS

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

FRANCE

## LIKE A PALM TREE. BLESSED BROTHER HENRI VERGÈS

« **C**omme un palmier. Bienheureux Frère Henri Vergès » ("Like a palm tree. Blessed Brother Henri Vergès") is a book written by Br. Georges Cellier, in tribute to Br. Henri, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of his assassination in Algiers, on May 8, 1994. In the book, Brother Georges



## general administration

■ As of Monday, Brothers Sylvain Ramandimbarisoa and Josep Maria Soterias, links of the General Council with the Marist Region of Asia, are participating in Sri Lanka in the meeting of Superiors of the Administrative Units of Asia (MAC), in which other brothers and two laypeople are also taking part.

■ The visit of Brothers Oscar Martin and Ken McDonald, links of the General Council with the Africa Region, to the Province of Southern Africa continues. After visiting the Marists of Malawi, this week they began their visit to the Marist communities and works in Zambia.

■ From Monday to Thursday, the African Mission Commission is meeting in Nairobi. The Vicar General, Brother Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, and the directors of the Secretariat of Education and Evangelization, Brothers José Sánchez and Niño Mayor, are taking part.

■ The course for formators continues in Manziana and will last until November. Earlier this week Manu Gómez, director of the Secretariat of the Laity, was with them and, from Wednesday, Brother Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General, will be with them.

■ From Monday to Wednesday, Brother Goyo Linacero, from the General Econome, visited the district of Canada, dealing with economic matters.

■ Brother Ángel Diego, director of the Solidarity Secretariat-CMI, is visiting the Star of the Sea Province. He will be in Fiji until Thursday, with the aim of getting to know the Marist mission in the country and preparing the UPR to be presented to the UN. He will then go to Kiribati, where he will be until the

13th, with the same objectives as the visit to Fiji.

■ On Wednesday there was a formation meeting for brothers and laypeople from the General Administration, centered on sharing the experience lived during MIMA III. The meeting, organized by the Secretary General, Brother Luis Daniel Herrera Meza, included the testimony of Brothers João Carlos do Prado and Ben Consigli, General Councillors, Manu Gómez, Director of the Secretariat of Laity, Andrea Rossi, Director of FMSI, and Br. Lindley Sionosa, Assistant Director of the Secretariat Brothers Today.

■ On Wednesday, the directors of the Secretariat of Brothers Today, Brothers Ángel Medina and Lindley Sionosa, took part in the online meeting of the team working on the revision of the Formation Guide.

■ On Thursday, Brother Ben, General Councillor, welcomed participants to the pilot program of the MOOC on Global Citizenship offered by the Champagnat Global Network.

■ From Thursday, Brother João Carlos begins his visit to the Mediterranean Province. He will be in Lebanon until next Monday. During this time, he will visit the Champville and Jbail schools, the fratelli project and their communities. On Saturday he will meet the Provincial Council and youth groups. Next week, Br. Ben will join Br. João for the visits in Spain.

■ On Thursday and Friday, the Board of Directors of the Bedford Fund will meet in Canada, with the presence of Brother Jorge Gaio and Goyo Linacero, from the General Econome.

Cellier, from the community of Aubenas in the Province of l’Hermitage, collects memories of the years spent with Brother Henri, in France.

The book was recently presented, on the occasion of the meetings of the community superiors of the Hermitage Province, in Llinars del Vallès and in Notre-Dame de L’Hermitage.

Brother Henri Vergés, together with Sister Paul-Hélène Saint-Raymond, an Assumptionist, was murdered on May 8, 1994, a Sunday afternoon, in Algeria, after 25 years of service. He was beatified on December 8, 2018, along with other martyrs who gave their lives in Algeria. [Find more information and resources about Brother Henri Vergés, at this link.](#)

We transcribe below the book’s presentation text by Br. Alain Delorme



**“The Saints just have to be, their existence is a calling”**

This conviction of the philosopher Henri Bergson is confirmed by the testimony of Brother Georges Cellier who, in his book, evokes some memories of his experience with Blessed Henri Vergés.

For six years, Brother Georges was his disciple-companion, and what his proximity reveals makes us think of the source from which an ever-new spiritual water flows.

According to Saint Gregory of Nyssa (Life of Moses), “Spiritual life never stops going from beginning to beginning, through beginnings that have no end.”

This book appears at the right time, when the Church will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the death of the 19 martyrs of Algeria, on May 8.

May their lives, given to God and others, be an encouragement to follow Jesus, the only model.

Brother Alain Delorme, Saint Paul-3-Châteaux, January 2024

BRASIL SUL-AMAZÔNIA

**SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE FLOODS IN RIO GRANDE DO SUL**

Since last week, the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the territory of the Province Brasil Sul-Amazônia, has been experiencing a serious emergency caused by excessive rainfall. “The situation in which we find ourselves at the moment, as citizens and society, is difficult to assimilate and understand,” said the Provincial, Brother Devis Alexandre Fischer, in a letter sent to the Province. Pope Francis, too, in the traditional Angelus prayer last Sunday, assured his prayers for the people affected by the great floods: “May the Lord welcome the dead and comfort their families and those who have had to leave their homes”.

In the region, many families are homeless and without basic supplies to survive. In order to show solidarity with those who most need help at this time, the Province has organized an emergency campaign to collect donations. “Our Marist community is united in helping and easing the pain of so many people who have already lost so much,” said Brother Devis.

At least seven Marist centers in the Porto Alegre region were completely overwhelmed by the waters. The words of Brother Miguel Antonio Orlandi, who lives on Ilha Grande dos Marinheiros, one of the places affected, reflect how dramatic the situation is: “There isn’t a single house without water inside.



We can say that we have literally lost everything. Now it’s no longer possible to access the area”.

On April 4, the Marists of Brazil celebrated for the first time the Marist Day of Our Lady Good Mother. In this context, the Provincial said: “Through Mary, Champagnat teaches us to be close to the most vulnerable with courage, tenderness and love. Difficult times are times to take care of the lives of our brothers and sisters. Let’s continue together!”



## SOUTHERN AFRICA

## SUSTAINABILITY MEETING IN THE PROVINCE

Around 20 school leaders from Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Angola, and Mozambique (Province of Southern Africa) participated in a meeting on “Sustainability of the Marist mission”, held in Lilongwe, Malawi, from April 8 to 12. The meeting was led by the Sustainability Technical Team (Khalil Gibran Martins and Vinicius Alves (Brasil Centro-Sur), Br. John Bwanalli (Southern Africa) and Br. Goyo Linacero, from the Econome General.



On the first day, Br. John delivered an opening statement on the importance of the sustainability project and shared a report on the Marist presence in South Africa, the progress made, and the interesting change in attitude in the country’s schools. Afterwards, Br. Francis Jumbe, from Malawi, formally inaugurated the seminary.

As a first activity, the participants understood and shared the different realities and situations of each country of the province, and highlighted some indications and solutions, such as the expectation of privatization of schools, especially in Zimbabwe. Divided into 2 groups, the participants analysed the concept of management and governance in the schools of the province and listed the important actions that should be carried out.

On the second day, Br. Goyo spoke about the progress of sustainability projects. And he gave as an example the solutions found in some countries and also highlighted the challenges present in other countries. He also underscored the importance of changing attitudes in favour of sustainability in the province’s schools. Subsequently, Brother Innocent gave a very complete and inspiring presentation on the experience lived in Nigeria.

The change of position in this Province, in favour of sustainability, began in 2013, considering that it is a long-term process and that the results sometimes take time to appear. Given this consideration, he highlighted the importance of starting the process as soon as possible and doing it in the best way.

The third day began with the presentation, by the provincial bursars of the Strategic Planning of the Province. After that, participants began an activity that consists of 5 steps, and aims to find paths towards financial sustainability. The steps are the following:

1. Facing reality: analysis of the most emerging demands and opportunities found in different realities.
2. Good people = better solution: find 2 solutions for each mapped situation.
3. Solution for the Mission: classify the solutions found within a balanced framework of objectives.
4. Creativity – Viability: distribution of actions in a time frame and, subsequently, analysis of the viability of each activity.
5. First things first: presentation of the action plan to a council composed of the Econome General, Brother Councillor Link and Br. Goyo.

On the fourth day, activities were carried out by country, with the objective of establishing an action plan for each one, indicating the actions for each school. During this stage there was much discussion, and as a result, each country presented a complete document with short, medium, and long-term actions. Likewise, based on the demands for governance, the participants also built an action plan for the province.

On the last day, each country, and even the province itself, presented their action plans. It was highlighted the importance of using this method as a support tool to understand the priorities of each reality and monitor progress.

marist world

MALAWI: POSTULANCY OF THE PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, MTENDERE



EL SALVADOR: CMMF CELEBRATES ST. MARCELLIN AT ST. ALPHONSUS SCHOOL IN MEJICANOS



MEXICO: JESÚS SERNA ENTERS THE POSTULANCY OF MEXICO OCCIDENTAL



KENYA: MARIST INTERNATIONAL CENTER (MIC), NAIROBI



BRAZIL: SOLIDARITY AT COLÉGIO MARISTA ROSÁRIO WITH THOSE DISPLACED BY HEAVY RAINS



SYRIA: CELEBRATION OF THE DAY OF THE BLUE MARISTS OF ALEPPO ON MAY 6

SPAIN

AFFECTIVE-SEXUAL EDUCATION IN THE PROVINCE OF IBÉRICA

On April 15, 16 and 17, the Province of Ibérica held the first Marist Conference on affective-sexual education in Lardero. A group of almost 50 educators from the different educational centers and social works gathered to begin to reflect and train themselves about the model of affective-sexual education based on the model of the person of the institutional educational project. The participants said yes to sex education in the classroom inspired by the words of Pope Francis and taking into account the technical guidelines at the international level on comprehensive sex education, and also from the study of different educational proposals developed by administrations and other institutions. They also said yes to affective-sexual education because they know that today it is a family, social and educational urgency and a need of adolescents and young people.

During the conference, the participants devoted time to training and reflection on the ethical and legal issues surrounding affective-sexual education and also entered into a social and cultural analysis of sexuality in childhood and youth. They also had the opportunity to collaborate in the revision of the Framework for



affective-sexual education in the Province of Ibérica, which was born in the light of the Marist European Framework for affective-sexual education. The work in small groups served to deepen the analysis of the needs of the students, as well as the model and criteria from which the Maristas want to educate in this area.

There is awareness that excellent work is being done in the prevention of child sexual abuse, but it is necessary to broaden the objective to respond to a true integral education, as demanded by the educational system itself and the Marist institutional mission.



## PROVINCE IBÉRICA

## GENERAL COUNCILLORS CONCLUDE THEIR VISIT

From April 21 to 30, Brothers João Carlos do Prado and Ben Consigli, General Councillors, links of the Council with the Region of Europe, concluded their visit to the Province of Ibérica. The visit to the Province had begun in March. In this last stage, the first few days they went to Romania to visit the social work “Sf. Marcellin Champagnat” in Bucharest, where they were able to spend several days with the educators and children of the center. They also took the opportunity to meet with the community of Marist Brothers who live there. Back in Spain, they spent several days in Madrid and took part in the meeting of community animators. They also had the opportunity to meet with a Marist community of brothers and laypeople in Zaragoza.

During the last weekend of April, they shared the path that the participants in the course for new educators are taking, with the opportunity to visit the headquarters of the Edelvives publishing house. At the same time, they spoke about “Marist



leadership in the world” with the animators of the Lardero Youth Ministry at their camp preparation meeting. Finally, they met with the Provincial Council of Ibérica in Madrid before returning to Rome. [Photos](#)

## OTHER MARIST VOICES 61 AND 62:

## APOSTOLIC EXPERIENCE / SERVANT 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 61 was written by José Ebo Joao Francisco, Educational institution Director and community leader in Angola – Province of Southern Africa, who addresses the theme “My apostolic experience in Angola” ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#). The message refers to chapter 17 of Marist Voices (Leading with Mary in One’s Heart), written by Br. Juan Carlos Fuertes.

Other Marist Voices 62 was written by João Fett, Coordinator of the Center for Pastoral Care and Solidarity of the PUCRS, in Porto Alegre – Province of Brasil Sul Amazônia, who addresses the theme “Servant Leadership in Marist Higher Education” ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#). The message refers to chapter 22 of Marist Voices (Marist Higher Education as a Service), written by Br. Evilázio Teixeira and Br. Manuir Mentges.

**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.](#)

TESTIMONY OF DILMA ALVES

# PROGRAM OF ACCOMPANIMENT IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

From April 7 to May 4, a formation program was held at the General House addressed to people who accompany Brothers Dealing with Difficult Situations. The course, organized by the Institute's ongoing formation team, was attended by 19 Brothers and one laywoman, Dilma Alves Rodrigues, from the Province of Brasil Centro-Norte, who shares below her experience in Rome.

## Accompanying difficult situations or searching for your inner treasure?

'Recreate your life, always, always.

Remove the stones, plant rose bushes and make sweets. Begin again.'

(Cora Coralina  
Brazilian writer and poet)

When I was invited to participate in a meeting in Rome, I was surprised and grateful for the invitation and, at the same time, I did not know exactly this formative itinerary. When I said yes, I went to the course with my heart open to the action of the Spirit in my life!

From the very first moment, all the participants, the Marist Brothers and I, felt welcoming and ready to embark on this unknown journey, but confident that we would live a time of grace in our lives.

For a month, we had the opportunity to embark on a personal journey seeking to look within ourselves, to become aware of who we are, and what we were and are called to each day. We breathed! And we welcomed one another with fraternity and compassion. It was certainly a journey that allowed us to discover our inner treasure, sometimes forgotten in some corner of our heart.

The program designed with the possibility of working on content and making strategic stops contributed greatly to create a balance between thinking and feeling, and the call to welcome, listen, pray, assimilate, reflect, and nurture.

At the conclusion of this privileged time of formation, I can say that it was an opportunity in my life to begin in a new way, more aware of how my presence in the world should be. I learned that I can be more attentive to my individual needs, but also be more compassionate and in solidarity with the people around me or who demand my attention and accompaniment.



For all of us who embraced this path and gave ourselves completely to this challenging and exciting experience, at the same time, it was an opportunity to review and recreate our trajectories, nurture our dreams, and caress the soul.

We were invited to re-examine the humanity that lies deep within us, to embrace the lights and shadows that lie within us. We were asked to educate our sensibilities, to expand and expand the boundaries of our heart, to remove the stones, to plant rose bushes, to sow seeds and always begin again.

We learned that our gaze can be guided by our heart; that we can see from the heart, and that the time of the other will always be different from ours, and that a compassionate and tender attitude can help us to see the face of God in a situation of conflict or in a person who may seem difficult at a certain moment; that we can make a decision that makes us face conflicts in a positive way and learn from these adversities. The decision will always be ours! For me, the only woman who participated in the course, who joined the brothers who came from different corners of the world to live this formative journey, it was a time to cultivate my inner peace, to reaffirm my identity, to reprogram my mind, a time to listen to my heart, to rediscover my potential, to identify and know my limitations.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the Marist Province of Brasil Centro-Norte, in the person of Brother Provincial



José de Assis, for this memorable opportunity for growth; to Br. Wellington Mousinho de Medeiros and Br. Ataíde José de Lima, I thank them for their support, encouragement, fraternal friendship and the loving fellowship we had during these four weeks. Thank you very much my dear friends and brothers. To the “wonderful companions” on the road, the Marist Brothers who participated in the course, the Coordinating Team and our dear translator, and my eternal gratitude for the fraternal

welcome, the joy in living together, the gratitude and affection at all times.

May you continue to trust in the love of Mary, our Good Mother, who guides your steps in the mission entrusted to you by Marcellin Champagnat, following Jesus Christ.

May God, Father and Mother, bless you all! Thank you!

Dilma Alves Rodrigues  
Province of Brasil Centro-Norte

## SPAIN

# MEETING OF EDUCATORS OF MARIST SOCIAL WORKS OF CATALONIA

The Educators of the Marist Social Works of Catalonia, Province of L’Hermitage, met on April 26 in Barcelona. There is a total of 15 social works, comprising 3,653 users, served by 134 professionals and 128 volunteers. Brother Lluís Serra, president of the foundations of Maristes Catalunya, defined the meeting as ‘a hymn to hope’. He affirmed that “social work is about dreaming”. And encouraged the participants: “Your dream is the dream of the many people you meet every day in your centers. And these people, thanks to your dream, can make their own dreams come true.”

The meeting, led by the director of the “Hogares Champagnat” (Champagnat Homes) of Catalonia, Rubén Cano, focused on artificial intelligence.

The keynote speech “How to approach the use of artificial intelligence” was given by Anna Inglés, from the cooperative project Colèctic, which works for the inclusion, autonomy and empowerment of people and communities in the social, labor and technological fields.

One of the most awaited moments by the educators was the presentation of the dossier of the social works, by Raúl García, coordinator of the social works of Maristes Catalunya, and Albert Costa, member of the communication team of Maristas Cataluña. A document that “allows us to explain who we are, what we do, build a narrative and let us all know where they are working



from and that are interesting materials that will allow us to have updated data each year,” said Raul Garcia.

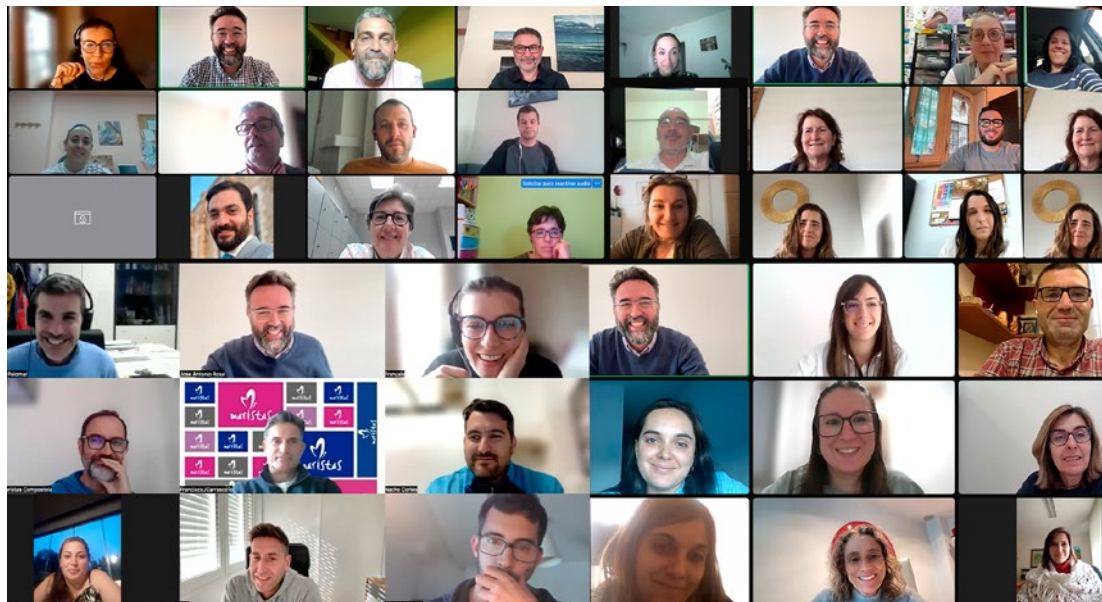
The meeting was also attended by Maria Teresa San Miguel, head of the Area of the Tutelated Youth of the Generalitat de Catalunya, who thanked the young people who work in the Champagnat Homes. Sònia Martínez, director of the Federation of Entities for the Care of Children and Youth, also participated.

The closing of the meeting was in charge of the Director General of the Champagnat Foundation, Loreto Rubio, who thanked all the people who made the journey possible, and stressed the importance of networking because everything we live “is an experience of learning and exceptional growth”, and recalled that the networks between people are “effective and affective”.

EUROPE

# REGION REFLECTS ON MENTAL HEALTH, NEUROEDUCATION, SPORT AND RELIGION

**O**n April 25 and 29, the last on-line meetings of the European teams reflecting on mental health, neuroeducation, Marist sport and religion were held for the 2023/2024 academic year. In the three previous meetings, the teams had the presence of experts to develop some content related to the theme of the group in question.



Serafín Béjar, a theologian, spoke on Christology, highlighting the connection between the self-giving of Jesus and the mission to which each Marist is called, as a Christian life project, in the key of self-giving (gratuitous, unconditional and generous). As for Mental Health, the talk was given by José Antonio Luengo, president of the College of Psychologists of Madrid and a specialist in mediation, support for couples, protocols for the prevention of self-injurious behavior and the world of adolescence. Finally, Araceli Galán, from the EDELVIVES Foundation and linked to the chair of the University of Zaragoza dedicated to Comprehensive Educational Care, spoke about Neuroeducation. She presented the conclusions of the first symposium held on the subject. Besides listening to these experts, the study groups were able to share their concerns and reflect on what they can contribute

to the Marist mission. The group dedicated to sports had the opportunity to see how the Marists of Catalonia (L’Hermitage) and Badajoz (Mediterránea) work, drawing inspiration from their dedication. All these teams will finalize their work with their own contribution that will be presented in the relative groups present on the platform of the Champagnat Global Network. There is also the work of other groups. The Erasmus team will meet during this month of May and the solidarity team, with its research on the rights of children, has already begun its work at the Cardinal Cisneros University Center. The Marist Region of Europe (<https://champagnat.eu/en/>) continues to be very committed to everything related to the Marist Mission and, from there, to the work of accompaniment and animation being carried out by the coordination and accompaniment team.



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