



## SOUTH ASIA/MDA

# MARIST COMMUNITY OF INDIA CELEBRATED 50 YEARS OF PRESENCE

On 18 May, in Trichy, the Marist Community gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Marist presence in India. The colored solemn Eucharistic Celebration was broadcasted and counted with the participations of representatives from different parts of the Institute. Brothers Josep Maria Soteras and Sylvain Ramandimbarisoa represented the General Government of the Institute, Br. Sunanda Alwis, Vice-Provincial, the Province of South Asia, Br. Allan de Castro, Provincial, the Province of East Asia, and Br. Canisio José Willrich, Superior of the District, the MDA. There were also



## general administration

■ On Monday and Tuesday, in Curitiba, Brazil, Brother Luis Carlos, Vicar General, took part in the Servant and Prophetic Leadership Program, organized by the PUC of Paraná, and in an event that concluded the “Ethics and Compliance Month”, organized by the Province of Brasil Centro-Sul.

■ On Tuesday evening, the Gier 2024 program began at the General House, led by Brothers Tony Leon (Star of the Sea), Ataíde de Lima (Ongoing Formation Team), Ángel Medina and Lindley Sionosa (Secretariat of Brothers Today). Fifteen brothers from 8 Provinces are taking part.

■ On Tuesday, Brothers Josep Maria and Sylvain, General Councillors, finished their pastoral visit to the Province of South Asia. Over the last few days, they have visited Pakistan.

■ On Wednesday, FMSI and the Secretariat of Solidarity-CMI promoted the online seminar “Unveiling Modern-Day Slavery: A Marist Event for Awareness and Action”, which included testimonies from various realities in the Marist world.

■ On the same day, Brother Ángel Diego, director of the Secretariat of Solidarity-CMI, took part in a meeting with delegates from the four provinces with a presence in Spain to begin the process of preparing the UPR for the country.

■ On Thursday and Friday, Brother Luis Carlos will be in Uruguay, where he will take part in a Congress on Education and in the celebrations of 90 years of Marist presence in the country.

■ On Friday, General Councillors Ben and João Carlos will finish their pastoral visit to the Province of Mediterránea. Since last Sunday, they have been visiting the communities in Italy.

■ Brother Ángel Medina, director of the Brothers Today Secretariat, will give a seminar on Nonviolent Communication for the participants in the formation program for international and multicultural communities. The eight participants, together with Brother Valdicer Fachi (Secretariat of Solidarity-CMI), have been in Manziana since last Friday.

Brothers representative from the Province Star of the Sea. The mass was celebrated by the Archbishop of Madurai, Most Rev. Antony Pappusamy and concelebrated by the bishop of Tiruchirappalli, Most Rev. Arokiaraj, and the bishop of Dindigul, Most Rev. Thomas Paulsamy. The celebration was followed by other priests, consecrated people and many laypeople link with the Marist Mission in India.

The Golden Jubilee celebration of the Marist Brothers' foundation in India (1974-2024) had as theme "Heart of Mary, Hands of Service".

In a message sent to the Marist of India, Br. Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General, said that "Over the course of these 50 years of our Marist presence in India and through your dedicated efforts and exemplary lives, you have made the dream of our founder, Saint Marcellin Champagnat, come true. Like drops of water in the ocean, amidst the vast expanse of India's needs and challenges, you have silently contributed to the education of countless children and young people."

### Golden Jubilee Magazine

You can read more about the history of Marist Presence in India reading the [Golden Jubilee Magazine](#). The book contains the history of the Marist mission in India over the last fifty years, along with jubilee complement messages from bishops, brothers, and laypeople across the globe. It includes photos capturing golden memories from the journey since 1974 and highlights the leadership throughout the years. During the celebration, Brother Sylvain delivered a felicitation address and message to the brothers on behalf of the Superior General and the Council. As a token of appreciation and thanks, an image of Mary was presented.

### Marist presence in India

The three pioneer Brothers were Sri-Lankan and arrived on 1st May 1974, and they were Brothers Gregory Appuhamy, Sunanda Joseph Perera and Godfrey Edward Perera.

Upon arrival they prepared the first Marist House at Thillainagar, in Trichy. Later, in 1975, was inaugurated a house for the Postulancy at Ramilinga and, in 1977, began the novitiate at Tricky. In 1978 the First Indian Brothers professed in Sri Lanka scholasticate. Since then, the brothers have also developed several schools and projects to help "untouchable" children break the cycle of poverty.

Marist Brothers in India are engaged in both educational and social services. Thousands of students have graduated in the last 20 to 30 years through the Marist schools. Many children

and young people have been empowered and supported in terms of education and healthcare. The Marist mission has had a significant impact on the children especially in rural villages. Currently South Asia Province has four communities in Tamil Nadu, India. And all together there are 17 Brothers from the province in the sector, divided into the following Marist communities:

- Maria Shanthi Illam at Uyyakondan Thirumalai, Trichy. This is also Regional Office and formation house. There are 6 Brothers.
- Marcellin Nivasa Community at P.Udayapatti, Karur district. There are 5 Brothers and all of them are working in the schools there.
- Gregory Illam, Marist Community at Mangamanuthu, Dindigul district. There are 2 Brothers working in the school.
- Marist Brothers House at Viyazhanmedu, Trichy district.

There are 2 Brothers.

There are four schools belong to South Asia Province, India Sector: Marist Boys Primary School at P.Udayapatti, Karur; Marist Higher Secondary School at P. Udayapatti, Karur; St. Marcellin Higher Secondary School, Mangamanuthu, Dindigul; Marist Nursery and Primary School, Viyazhanmedu, Trichy. Those schools are both self-financed and partly supported by the Government except Marist Nursery and Primary School at Viyazhanmedu which is fully self-financed. All the schools are in rural villages and students belong to economically backward class.

Marist District of Asia (MDA) is also present in India and has a community in the village of Talit. Two brothers from South Asia are commissioned here working in MDA. In Talit community there are other 2 Brothers from West Bengal (India) that belong to MDA.



### Marcellin Trust

Marcellin Trust is a registered and non-profit organization run by the Marist Brothers. There are different projects under the Trust such as Operation Rainbow which provides care and support to HIV/AIDS affected people, La Valla Evening Study Centre. These two projects Chetana Tribal Boys Hostel and community College come under Marcellin Trust but which belong to MDA.

### Support for the Mission in India

Missions in the Indian sector are supported by FMSI, Australian Marist Solidarity, India Village Project (Dundee, Scotland) and Maist colleges in Australia and Scotland. There are others such as Misaan Cara and the Italian Bishop's Conference.

## BRASIL SUL-AMAZÔNIA

# PROVINCIAL'S MESSAGE ON THE FLOODS IN SOUTHERN BRAZIL

**B**elow you can read the latest message from Brother Deivis Alexandre Fischer, Provincial of Brasil Sul-Amazônia, on the devastation caused by the rains that hit southern Brazil, causing much devastation and the death of almost 200 people. You can [collaborate through FMSI](#), the General Administration Foundation, to the campaign to help rebuild the region. All funds raised will go to the Brasil Sul-Amazônia Province. If you prefer, you can send your help directly to the Province, [using the information in this link](#)

## Porto Alegre, May 27, 2024

"I ask everyone to accompany this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful, because that commitment has to do with our personal dignity and highest values." (Pope Francis - Laudate Deum, n. 69).

Dear Marist Family

I am writing to update you on the situation in the state of Rio Grande do Sul after the floods. This week marks one month since the beginning of the rains. In the higher parts of the state, the rivers have receded, leaving a trail of destruction in their wake, and now begins a long process of rebuilding homes, businesses and crops devastated by the force of the currents. In the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre, the water is slowly receding, and we are seeing the beginnings of a clean-up and reoccupation process. However, there are places where recovery is not possible.

Last Thursday, May 23, the rains returned with intensity. Porto Alegre experienced another moment of chaos when other areas were also flooded. This was due to the fact that it had not yet been possible to clear the drains, clogged with mud and garbage. Aggravating factors such as this have delayed the return of people to their homes.

A week ago we resumed activities in the Marist units whose structures had not been affected. However, classes were interrupted again on Friday and continued to be cancelled on Monday and Tuesday due to the forecast and the occurrence of more rain. The schools that served as shelters have been relocating people: some have gone to other accommodations, while others have returned to their homes and/or resettled with relatives.

We continue to host people at the Marist Youth House, at the



Association of Parents and Teachers of the Marist College Rosário and at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (PUCRS). At the same time, we inaugurated a new space in Vila Marista, located in Viamão. In the last few days, we have begun to clean three units that were flooded: Centro Social Marista Ir. Antônio Bortolini, Escola Marista de Educação Infantil Menino Jesus and Colégio Marista São Pedro. We have three others that we have not yet been able to enter to clean them: Centro Social Marista Nossa Senhora Aparecida das Águas, Escola Marista de Educação Infantil Tia Jussara and Escola Marista de Educação Infantil Boa Mãe.

Throughout the State there is a movement of reconstruction and renewal of hope. To make this process possible, a series of policies and measures have been announced at the municipal, state and federal levels. The search for housing for the homeless, the recovery of businesses and new measures to prevent extreme weather events have been on the agenda of our news and social networks.

We move forward with confidence and faith. Amid all that we have experienced, we are trying to heal the wounds to continue moving forward. We want to thank everyone who has sent us messages, prayed and/or contributed resources so that we can help and begin the rebuilding process. May the Good Lord bless you all, and may Mary and St. Marcellin continue to inspire us day by day.

With my fraternal embrace,  
 Brother Deivis Alexandre Fischer - Provincial of Brasil Sul-Amazônia

## BRAZIL

# BROTHER DEIVIS FISCHER IS APPOINTED PROVINCIAL OF BRASIL SUL-AMAZÔNIA FOR A SECOND TERM

The General Council, after studying the survey conducted in the Province, has appointed Brother Devis Alexandre Fischer Provincial of the Marist Province of Brasil Sul-Amazônia for a second three-year term. In a letter sent to the Province on May 1, Brother Ernesto Sanchez, Superior General, thanked Brother Devis for accepting the leadership of the Province for a second term: “Thank you very much, Brother Devis, for your openness and generosity in continuing this mission of leadership at the service of your Province. Your experience as a brother, your ability to listen, your closeness to the brothers and laity, and your teamwork, favor your service as a leader.”

Br. Devis will begin his second term as provincial during the next Chapter, scheduled for November 25 – 29 of this year.

Br. Devis expressed his desire to continue to contribute to the mission of leadership: “For me, when we become religious, we consecrate ourselves to serve wherever we are needed. I believe that the Holy Spirit acts through the mediations that are placed in our path. I assume a new triennium

with a spirit of service, of following Jesus, as a Marist Brother. This is our greatest treasure: to carry forward the charism that has been bequeathed to us”.



## Br. Devis Alexandre Fischer

Son of Lauri Fischer and Elieda Cerutti Fischer, Br. Devis Alexandre Fischer was born on September 15, 1983 in Gramado Xavier, state of Rio Grande do Sul. He began his Marist formation in 2000, in Lajeado. In Bento Gonçalves and Passo Fundo he completed the Postulancy and Novitiate stages, respectively. He made his Final Profession on October 16, 2011.

Br. Devis has a degree in Pastoral Theology and Philosophy, with a specialization in Sociology and a Master's in Education.

His apostolate includes the positions of vice-president of the Maintainers of the Marist Network (SOME, UBEA e USBEE) from 2013 to 2018; vice-provincial of the Marist Province Brasil Sul-Amazônia, from 2016 to 2018; president of the Board of Directors of the UMBRASIL, from 2016 to 2018; manager of Consecrate life and laity, in 2014 and 2015; vice-provincial of the Marist Province of Rio Grande do Sul, from 2013 to 2015; vice-president of the Association of Volunteering and Solidarity (AVESOL), from 2011 to 2020; Director of Pastoral Coordination, in 2011 and 2012; and provincial coordinator of Marist Youth Ministry, from 2008 to 2010. He also served as Coordinator of the Marist Youth House (Caju), in 2008; professor of Philosophy at the Ivone Vettorello Marist School, in Porto Alegre, that same year; coordinator of School Ministry, teacher and local advisor of MYM at the São Luís Marist School, in Santa Cruz do Sul, from 2005 to 2007; and professor of Religious Education and pastoral agent at the Graças Marist School, in Viamão, in 2004. He also did his apostolic novitiate and pedagogical practice at the Santa Marta Marist College and Social Center, in Santa Maria, during the first semester of 2003.

Br. Devis was elected as provincial, in his first term, in 2021, and took office during the chapter held in November of the same year.

## UNITED STATES

The 4th edition of the initial formation program for marist lay people in the province, Cohort 4, finished and the participants are preparing for their commitment ceremony on Sunday, June 2nd. The commitment will be in person at Molloy, SJA, Central Catholic, Columbus, Marist Eugene, or Marist Chicago and also on Zoom at 5pm ET.

## REGION OF EUROPE

On May 16 and 17, the education delegates of the Marist provinces of Europe met in Madrid, as well as some directors and educators with experience in early childhood education (first cycle) and professional training. The purpose of this meeting was to continue to deepen understanding of these two areas and to generate a network among the Marist teams already working in them.

## STAR OF THE SEA

The province launched a publication called “The Eastern Star”, a newsletter from Timor-Leste and Cambodia. The bulletin intends to share some snippets of the mission that the Marists are undertaking in these two Southeast Asian countries. Despite their share of challenges and crises, Timor-Leste and Cambodia continue to inspire through the qualities of resilience, hope, and determination that characterize the peoples of these lands. The inaugural issue (May 2024) celebrates the growth of the Marist presence, especially through the Marist initial formation program, and the transformative power of education and social initiatives that are happening in the lives of children and young people in these two countries (download PDF: <https://tinyurl.com/4fztxrhh>).

## OTHER MARIST VOICES 67 AND 68

PRESENCE AS EDUCATIONAL STYLE  
EMPATHETIC LEADERSHIP

This week, we published messages 67 and 68 of “Other Marist Voices”. This is an initiative of the Marist International Mission Commission, which promotes a series of publications related to the development of servant and prophetic leadership in the Marist mission. This is an extended project of the “Marist Voices”.

Other Marist Voices 67 was written by Br. Steven Chinsolo, Teacher at St. Charles Lwanga Secondary School in Malawi – Province of Southern Africa. The message titled “Presence as my educational style: my Malawi experience” ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#) and refers to chapter 2 of Marist Voices (The Importance of Presence in Marist Leadership), written by Br. Ernesto Sánchez.

Other Marist Voices 68 was written by María Fernanda Rodríguez Espínola, from Paraguay, Member of the Evangelization Team of the Province of Cruz del Sur. The message titled “Empathetic leadership: a matter of decision and of body” ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#) and refers to chapter 4 of Marist Voices (Leadership of Empathy, Service and Compassion “Son, they have no wine”), written by Br. Óscar Martín.

## 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.](#)

GENERAL HOUSE

# DRAFTING COMMITTEE OF THE NEW FORMATION GUIDE

The international commission in charge of revising the 1993 Formation Guide, also known as the International Commission of the New Formation Guide (ICNFG), concluded its work with an online meeting on May 7. They put together the proposals received for the “Instrumentum Laboris”, which was produced during a previous meeting in Santiago de Compostela from August 21 to September 2, 2023.

At the plenary session last September, the document prepared by the commission was presented to the General Council. Afterwards, several brothers, laymen and laywomen were invited to critique the text. They pointed out certain situations and raised questions that were taken into consideration by the members of the commission. The last meeting served as a space to integrate in the text the new suggestions and recommendations.



## Drafting Committee of the New Formation Guide

The General Council has appointed a team which, starting from the text drawn up by the ICNFG, will be in charge of the final drafting of the document to be approved by the General Council and presented to the General Chapter of 2025.

This team is made up of Brothers Hipólito Pérez (Central America), Isidro Azpeleta (Santa María de Los Andes) and Francisco García (District of Asia). On May 17, together with the Brothers Today Secretariat, the team held its first meeting online. The

team will be responsible for making the text coherent, with the proper theological and practical foundations.

The new Formation Guide is conceived to have 3 main parts, namely, Marist formation in general – brothers and laypeople; the formation of the Marist brother; and guidelines and tools to help develop a formation plan, as well as a compendium of resources useful in formation.

The international commission, which met for the first time in October 2020, is composed of Brothers Ángel



marista news

PERU: PROVINCIAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL MEETING



EL SALVADOR: MARIST INTERCOMMUNITY MEETING



SOUTH AFRICA: ST. JOSEPH MARIST COLLEGE, IN CAPE TOWN



ITALY: BROTHERS ERNESTO AND EMILI IN THE 101ST UNION OF SUPERIORS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ASSISI



SYRIA: TRAINING FOR PROJECT MANAGERS OF THE BLUE MARISTS IN ALEPPO



BRASIL CENTRO-SUL: ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE MONTH" PROMOTED BY THE PROVINCE

Medina (Brothers Today Secretariat), Ataide de Lima (Brasil Centro-Norte, Institute's Ongoing Formation Team), César Rojas (Norandina), Fabien Bulaimu (PACE), Graham Neist (Star of the Sea), João Carlos do Prado (General Councillor), Lindley Sionosa (Brothers Today Secretariat), Óscar Martín Vicario (General Councillor), Paco García (MDA), Pere Ferre (L'Hermitage).

**General Chapter mandate**

On initial and ongoing formation, the XXII General Chapter gave a mandate to the Institute:

“For a new beginning we believe that we need new structures and processes that recognize and support our distinctive vocational paths as Marists. reform our processes of initial and ongoing formation and offer new paths at the level of the Institute and Administrative Units to care for our vocation as brothers: accompaniment, attention to each brother’s situation and stage in life.”



International Commission of the New Formation Guide – July 2022

For its part, the General Administration, in its Strategic Plan, Project 3 (Beacons of Hope: Structures for Initial Formation), invited us to “revise both the current plans and structures of the initial formation for Brothers and the Formation Guide.”



GENERAL HOUSE

# THE GIER 2024 PROGRAM BEGINS AT THE GENERAL HOUSE

The Gier 2024 Program, organized by the Marist Institute, will begin on May 29 at the General House. After their stay in Rome, the brothers from different administrative units will continue their formation itinerary at Notre Dame de L'Hermitage, France, from June 13 until June 27.

The animation team is made up of Brothers Tony Leon (Star of the Sea) and Ataide José de Lima (Ongoing Formation Team). They will be accompanied by Brother Directors of the Secretariat Brothers Today, Ángel Medina and Lindley Sionosa.

This will be the fourth Gier program which began in 2015. 63 brothers have lived this experience. It is designed for brothers who have made their perpetual profession between 5-10 years earlier. It is an experiential intercultural program to immerse into the reality of being a global Marist family.

**This year 15 brothers will participate:**

1. Julius Ikenna Egbo – Nigeria
2. Israel David Atakwu – Nigeria
3. Patrick Banda – Southern Africa
4. Sábado Valia – Southern Africa
5. Dias Gemusse Dias Gemusse – Southern Africa
6. Valerian Kalendelo – PACE
7. Jean Marie Vianney Ingabire – PACE
8. Francisco Arnold – Brasil Sul-Amazônia
9. Randriamihaja Jean Michel – Madagascar
10. Harry D. Nyanti – West Africa
11. Lawir Blaise Kuyiyo – West Africa
12. Danilo Ferreira – Brasil Centro-Norte
13. José Sotero dos Santos Neto – Brasil Centro-Norte
14. Fabrício Barbosa – Brasil Centro-Norte
15. Dionesio D. Acosta Jr. (Jongjong) – East Asia

**The program offers the following opportunities:**

- live a strong community experience with Brothers of similar age and stage of life.
- to journey as a global charismatic family with a variety of languages and cultures
- witnessing to the fruits of the Holy Spirit through the universal Church
- to know the animation of the Marist Institute and to listen to the spirituality of the heart that motivates the General Administration
- to rekindle the Brother's original passion for his vocation by visiting Marist places and recognizing the presence of Mary in the history of the Institute
- to nurture confidence in each of the Brothers so that they may be passionate promoters of Marist life in all its expressions
- to cultivate the sense of ongoing formation of the brothers at all stages of life.



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<https://www.youtube.com/user/champagnatorg>

**Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/fmschampagnat>

**Twitter**

[https://twitter.com/fms\\_champagnat](https://twitter.com/fms_champagnat)