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MARIST NEWS

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MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF MARIST SPIRITUAL PATRIMONY

The annual face-to-face meeting of the International Commission of Marist Spiritual Patrimony took place this time at our house in Manziana, from June 17th to 21st. The participants were Brothers Antonio Ramalho, coordinator (Brasil Centro-Norte), Michael Green (Star of the Sea), Patricio Pino (Santa María de los Andes), Vincent de Paul Kouassi (West Africa), Omar Peña (América Central), Guillermo Villareal (México Occidental), Demosthenes Calabria (East Asia) and Mr. Dyogenes Philippsen Araújo (Brasil Centro-Sul). Brother Ángel Medina took part as representative of the Secretariat of Brothers today, ensuring as always that all the necessary infrastructure was in place. Brother Teófilo Minga (Compostela) was the translator.

There were two contributions from the General Council. Brother Josep Maria Soterias animated a morning of formation around



the bicentenary of the Hermitage and Brother Óscar Vicario presented the greetings of the Brother Superior General and topics related to the general government. >>

general administration

■ Br. Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General, has been in Central America since last week. First, he participated in the meeting with the Provincial Council and, from Saturday until Tuesday, he visited El Salvador with the Provincial, Brother Hipólito. This year marks 100 years of Marist presence in Central America, which began in El Salvador.

■ On Monday and Tuesday, Br. Ángel Diego Otaola, director of the Secretariat of Solidarity-Cmi, participates in the meeting of the Board of Directors of BICE in Paris.

■ From Monday to Friday, the face-to-face phase of the course for leaders of the Province of Nigeria is taking place in Abuja, with 40 participants. From the General Administration, are present Brothers Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, Vicar General, and Goyo Linacero, in charge of the Strategic Plan project.

■ On Tuesday, Brother José Sánchez, Director of the Secretariat for Education and Evangelization, participated in a

panel on international networks of institutions of higher education of different congregations, during a course for leaders of La Salle.

■ The Provincial Chapter of Central America happens from Wednesday to Sunday. Brothers Ernesto and Ken McDonald represent the General Council.

■ The meeting "Spirituality of the Heart" began Wednesday in Nairobi, Kenya. The course, in English, will end on July 20. The participants will be accompanied by the ongoing formation team formed by Brothers Michael Sexton, Ataíde de Lima and Xavier Barceló. Br. Óscar Martín, General Councilor, will be with the group from Wednesday until Sunday, in charge of the first workshop.

■ Wednesday marks the end of the Gier program, which began at the General House on May 29 and the last two weeks of which were spent in France.

By videoconference, the Commission was able to talk with members of the Brother François Rivat Chair at PUC Paraná (University of Curitiba, Brazil) and with Brother André Lanfrey (Lyon, France) about studies and publications on the writings of Brother François, 1st Superior General. The Commission expressed its admiration and support for this valuable, long-standing initiative. Also virtually, Luiz da Rosa, responsible for the Institute’s communications, shared information about the publication of the document on the Fountains and Springs Symposium in December 2023, as well as other Marist publications and texts on the

Institute’s website.

On its agenda, the Patrimony Commission reserved space for the following topics: a reflection on the continuity of the Fountains and Springs Symposium, thinking about a second event; organization of the next issue of Marist Notebooks; organization of the 2025 meeting, which will take place at Notre-Dame de l’Hermitage, in the context of the Bicentenary. The members of the group were also able to find out about the situation of Marist Spiritual Patrimony in the various Provinces and Regions of the Marist world.

MEXICO

MEXICO CENTRAL SUCCESSFULLY HELD THE 6TH YOUTH MEETING FOR THE CARE OF THE COMMON HOME



The Marist Students and educators of the Province of Mexico Central met from June 13 to 14 at the Colegio México Roma, in Mexico City, to hold the 6th Youth Meeting for the Care of the Common Home, with the motto “young people united by a sustainable future.”

The event brought together young people committed to protecting the planet and had the objectives: to strengthen the commitment to caring for the environment, share experiences and learn together.

During the two days of the meeting, participants had the opportunity to attend panels, worktables and interactive workshops, in addition to presenting their projects focused on sustainability and caring for the Earth. Among the featured activities were

the poster rounds, where works on eco-technological topics, climate change and biodiversity were exhibited.

The event was attended by important educational figures and collaborating organizations, who shared their experiences and knowledge. The province thanked the enthusiastic participation of young people and the support of institutions such as Cáritas México and the Laudato Sí Movement.

Like previous events, the 6th meeting was a success and promoted concrete actions among young people, for a more sustainable future.

The fifth call of the XXII General Chapter of the Marist Brothers also invites us to “Awaken with in us and around us an ecological awareness that commits us to care for our common home”.

ASIA AND OCEANIA

On 24 June, in Vietnam, 11 Young Marist Brothers from Aisa have begun their Preparation for Perpetual Profession Program. At the first day, Br. Canisio, District Leader of MDA, offered a warm welcome in person, while Br. Peter Carol (provincial of the Star of The Sea Province) and Br. Nicholas (Provincial of the South Asia Province) joined virtually to show their support.

AUSTRALIA

Marist College Canberra marked Refugee Week 2024 with thirty students and staff welcoming Elijah Buol, CEO of ACT for Peace, an international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches Australia, to listen to his experience of being a Sudanese refugee. Twenty Marist students and staff have been participating in the Ration Pack Challenge, living on rations for five days and raising over \$2100 for Act for Peace.

NORANDINA

Since 2002, the Centro Marista de Salud Integral has existed in Venezuela, an initiative of the Champagnat School of Caracas, which provides medical attention to the entire population of the neediest sectors. It offers health services at solidarity prices in the areas of dentistry, pediatrics, cardiology, physiotherapy, traumatology, general medicine and internal medicine.

CRUZ DEL SUR

In the Marist Educational Center “Inmaculada Concepción” of Caaguazú, Paraguay, an initiative created by the Province of Brasil Centro-Sul was launched, called “defend yourself”, which promotes the full and safe exercise of the rights of children and adolescents in the virtual space, including their right to integral protection. The campaign was launched to commemorate the National Day against Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, which Paraguay celebrates every May 31.

OTHER MARIST VOICES 75 AND 76:**MAKING DECISIONS AT THE SERVICE OF THE MISSION**

This week, we published messages 75 and 76 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 75 was written by Br. Greg McDonald, Provincial Councillor of the Province of Star of the Sea – Timor-Leste. The message titled “Prophetic Leadership at the Service of the Mission” ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#) refers to chapter 11 of Marist Voices (Leadership Committed to Prioritising People: Growing Together, Accompanying and Empowering Each Other), written by Br. Gabriel Villa-Real and Br. Pere Ferré.

Other Marist Voices 76 was written by Monica Trujillo, Communications Manager of Arco Norte Region, from the Province of México Occidental. The message titled “Making decisions as a Marist laywoman, exercising servant and prophetic leadership” ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#) | [Português](#)) – [Video](#) refers to chapter 13 of Marist Voices (Communication Skills in Servant and Prophetic Leadership), written by Br. Cyprian Gandebo.

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.](#)

AUSTRALIA

100 YEARS YOUNG: CELEBRATING THE INCREDIBLE LIFE OF CENTENARIAN MARIST BROTHER VINCENT SHEKLETON

Br. Vincent Shekleton, the oldest Brother in the Province of Star of the Sea, celebrated his 100th birthday on June 19. Born in 1924, Br Vincent has dedicated over 81 years to the Brotherhood, and he has brought the Marist charism from Australia to the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and China. Br Vincent grew up in Sydney, but it was in Bexley where he first encountered the Marist Brothers and their distinctive educational philosophy at the local Marist School. And by the end of 1939, at just 15 years old, he joined the Juniorate in Mittagong to begin his initiation as Marist brother.

After professing his vows in 1943, at the age of 20, Br Vincent’s first assignment was in Lismore, Australia, where he embarked on a lifelong commitment to the Marists’ educational mission, and that would take him to other places outside Australia.

Solomon Islands

“In 1951, our Provincial sent out a notice asking if any Brothers wanted to work in the Solomon Islands. I said Yes!”, says Br Vincent, who Br Vincent initially spent three years in the Solomon Islands till 1953, then returned in 1974–78, and later in 1996–97. “The school was on land purchased by the bishop, surrounded by huts and overgrown vegetation. The Brothers taught the students in the mornings and in the afternoons, together we would clean, organize workshops, operate tractors – which we taught the children how to use – and do other maintenance work.”



Papua New Guinea

After his time in the Solomon Islands, Br Vincent was assigned to Rabaul, in Papua New Guinea, where the Marist Brothers taught at a school established by the local Chinese community. It was this Chinese community in Rabaul that built the school where the Marist Brothers, including Br Vincent, taught. “The school consisted of simple hut-like structures with thatched roofs, reflecting the humble origins of the Chinese settlers,” he says.

Thailand

Br Vincent has always embodied the Marian spirit of saying “Yes” – no adventure or place has been off limits for him. Thus, when a teaching opportunity in the refugee camps of Thailand opened up, he jumped at it. And so, in 1987, Br Vincent joined a small school in the Phanat Nikhom Refugee

Camp, in Thailand, where he taught English and educated the refugees about “life in Australia”. This transit camp housed refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, who had been transferred from other temporary shelters throughout Thailand, and who had been cleared for resettlement to other places, like Europe, North America, New Zealand, and Australia. Br Vincent spent three years teaching in the camp, and it was one of the more meaningful but emotionally painful postings for Br Vincent.

Chinese Connection

If there is a country that holds a special place in Br Vincent’s heart after the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, it must be China. He was in China from 1989 to 1990 and then again from 1992 to 1993. “China was a beautiful experience,” he says. “A local contact had given me the name Shi Le Tein – taken from my surname Shekleton”.



100 years

“This has been my life, and I have loved it since I have known it. This is the path I chose to walk. I was fortunate to travel to so many countries, meet different people, and experience diverse cultures. What can be more beautiful than this?” said Br Vincent.

Br. Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General, in a message to Br.

Vincent said: “We thank God for the gift of your live and your vocation”. He continues: “Thanks for being a very friendly, outgoing and faithful Brother. Thanks for your fraternity and marist spirituality”.

Extract from an articles published on the [website of Star of the Sea](#)

marist world

VIETNAM: PREPARATION FOR PERPETUAL PROFESSION PROGRAM



EL SALVADOR: BR. ERNESTO IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENARY OF MARIST PRESENCE AT LICEO SALVADOREÑO



KENYA: PROGRAM SPIRITUALITY OF THE HEART IN NAIROBI



BRAZIL: FEAST OF ST. JOHN IN SÃO JOSÉ DOS PINHAIS



VATICAN: PARTICIPANTS IN SOLIDARITY ASSEMBLY VISIT CHAMPAGNAT STATUE



CAMBODIA: 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF LAVALLA



“We all have fears because we are not clear about what is going to happen, and that holds us back. But we also have them because we don’t know each other, and that lasts a lifetime. We never finish knowing ourselves. The more you know yourself, the more you overcome your fears, because you feel confident. Many times, what divides us is not the most important thing. I believe that in this case, Jesus unites us. If you have a heart full of God, you will have more confidence. If you follow your heart as a young person, you can transform your place. Wherever you are in the future, always carry the Marist values”.

(Br. Ernesto Sanchez, Superior General in a meeting with young Marists in El Salvador)

GENERAL HOUSE

GIER 2024 PROGRAM IN MARIST SITES

The formation program for young brothers, “Gier”, started on May 29th. After two weeks at the General House, the group has been at Notre Dame de l’Hermitage since June 13, where they are continuing their program, which will end on June 27. Fifteen Brothers are participating, accompanied by a team formed by Brothers Tony León (Star of the Sea) and Ataíde José de Lima (Ongoing Formation Team), supported by the directors of the Brothers Today Secretariat, Br. Angel Medina and Br. Lindley Sionosa.

Br. Mario Valia, from Angola, Province of Southern Africa, tells of the experience that the group is living in the Marist places.

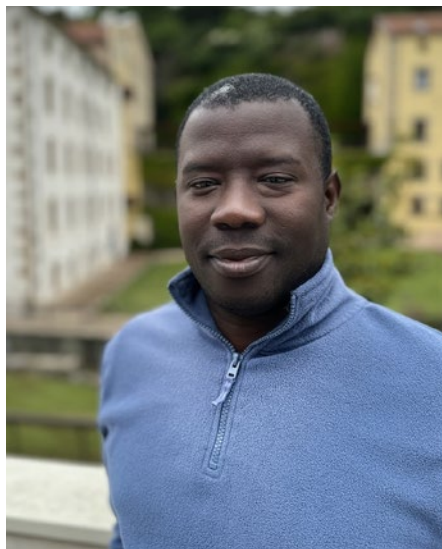


Back to the origins

I’ve always wondered why we like to return to our roots. Could it be that affection disappears? Why is it that we see joy and emotion fill the hearts of the Brothers when they visit the house and places where they lived and spent time in their lives? Could it be that we have the same longing to return to the origins where our first Brothers lived, such as the remote villages of Le Rosey, La Valla, and Notre Dame de l’Hermitage?

And those who never returned to these origins might feel joy when seeing a photograph or reading a brief description. This is exactly what I was able to see these days, in our GIER program, in France.

Now, I can hardly imagine how 208 years ago, our first Brothers, together with Father Champagnat, were able to live their vocation intensely in the conditions in which they lived, which were sometimes deplorable. However, from the vestiges of the Lavalla table and the Hermitage, it is perceived that there was more joy than I feel today, and, perhaps you, dear Brother, will be more joyful than I feel today.



Today, this joy becomes a reality when and where we live in community. Of course, when I talk about community, I mean living together and not just being under the same roof. Times have changed, and returning to our origins has become easier and turned into a ritual that our people have wisely embraced. In addition to celebrating the bonds of friendship between family and friends, which translates into usually lively gatherings, we participate in festivities that always bring us comfort.

Times have changed for our congregation as well. Today it is easier to return to our origins as a physical and spiritual place, and so we can live and feel what our first brothers experienced with Father Champagnat, whom they asked to be called “Father”.

My experience in the GIER program, in the humble community of La Valla, the cradle of our history, in the company of my Brothers, has been like returning to my first ties with the Brothers, who helped me to discern my vocation, of which I am very proud. I feel that the time has come to walk and give more life to my Marist vocation and mission, within my capabilities.



The achievements made as a group along the Champagnat Route, from Rosey to the Hermitage, have demonstrated the cohesion and fraternity of the group. Physically, it was not easy to cover the 30 kilometers, but we had a goal. We walk keeping three dimensions in mind: the physical dimension (bodily endurance to reach the goal), patience (waiting for the less physically able) and the spiritual dimension (reflecting on the meaning of walking). I have noted the renewal of the spirit in this return to the origins. I have noticed the gradual effort to free ourselves from the limits we have in order to open ourselves to fraternal dialogue, which sometimes prevent us from living together fully. It is a joy to return to our origins, to renew the spirit that is within us, and that we always need to nurture.

Our promise at Fourvière, where Father Champagnat also made his commitment, made us more aware of who we are and what our mission is. Now it remains to break the Rock of fear, of loneliness, of superiority, of isolated life, to carve the Stone of firmness in vocation, in building community and family spirit. This does not mean that the road is free of challenges: it is possible to live despite the obstacles. The life of the first Brothers was not easy either, but it was exemplary, each one with his own limitations and abilities.

May Mary help me live my vocation intensely. Thank you for the opportunity to return to the origins.

Br. Valia Mário – Angola, Southern Africa

[Photos on Facebook](#)

PROVINCE OF IBERICA

BR. ABEL MUÑOZ HAS BEEN APPOINTED FOR A NEW TERM AS PROVINCIAL OF IBÉRICA

Brother Abel Muñoz has been appointed as Provincial of Ibérica for a second three-year term. His mandate will begin with the celebration of the next Provincial Chapter to be held December 26-29, 2024. The news was communicated by Br. Ernesto Sanchez, Superior General, in a letter sent to the Province on June 18. Br. Abel was appointed by the General Council after studying the results of the survey conducted in the Province.

In his letter, Br. Ernesto thanked Br. Abel for accepting, with availability and generosity, the service of provincial leadership. “Your closeness to the people, brothers and laity, your organizational skills, your teamwork with the Council and the provincial animation groups, are of great help for your service of provincial leadership”.



Br. José Abel Muñoz Gutiérrez

Brother Abel was born in 1974 in Villafranca (Navarra). His first contact with the Marists was in his hometown. He continued his formation in Lardero and Biurrun, where he made his first profession in 1993.

He studied Biological Sciences in Pamplona and Religious Sciences in Bilbao.

From 1998 until 2016 he resided in Bilbao, first as part of a vocational welcoming community, then in the collegial community of Iturribide, and finally sharing life in Erandio, in a community of lay people and brothers.

Before being appointed provincial for the first term, in December 2021, he worked in Alcalá de Henares, coordinating the educational works and was the Vice-Provincial.

BRASIL CENTRO-SUL

PROVINCE PROMOTES PROPHETIC AND SERVANT LEADERSHIP INSPIRED BY BROTHER FRANCISCO

Brother Francisco Rivat, the first Superior of the Marist Institute, was the inspiration behind the fifth and final module of the Course on Prophetic and Servant Leadership promoted by the Province of Brasil Centro-Sul, which took place from June 18 to 19 in Campina Grande do Sul. The training, aimed at managers of the Marist Group and the Religious Organization, was attended by 50 participants.



Brother Benê Oliveira, Provincial Superior, emphasized the importance of Brother François for the Institute. Mauricio Zanforlin, Superintendent of Grupo Marista, emphasized on other hand, how this module strengthens Marist identity: “Studying Brother François, who made it possible to advance rules, brought a leadership project into the Institute. These are inspirations for us to continue in our mission”.

The Prophetic and Servant Leadership Course was inspired by the book “Marist Voices: Essays on Servant and Prophetic Leadership” and is carried out in harmony with the Strategic Planning of the General Government of the Marist Institute.

The program aimed to qualify the formation of leaders, as well as the service of institutions around Marist purposes and

values, so that leaders act in accordance with what they believe and profess.

In the Province of Brasil Centro-Sul, the Prophetic and Servant Leadership Course was divided into modules. The first, held from March 27 to 29, 2023, had as its theme “Prophetic and Servant Leadership: Contributions to Marist Practice”. The second, “Looking beyond: agility and depth in a changing world”. The third addressed the theme “Marist bases for prophetic and servant leadership” and the fourth dealt with “Marist tradition and ethical and spiritual wisdom in leadership” and was held at the Hermitage in France. The fifth module was an in-depth study of the leadership of Brother François Rivat.

In this link to the Province’s website, you can find the complete chronicle, in Portuguese, of the meeting



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Website

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