



FROM THE PROVINCIAL'S DESK



1 July 2015

Dear Brothers and friends,
At this stage of the year I have managed to visit most of the communities in the Province. I

thank God that I do have the opportunity to witness and experience community life with you. I enjoy visiting you. I only wish time allowed me to spend more time in each community. It is my privilege to speak with each one and to share your joys and difficulties. Community is an important element of Marist life. It is one of the three features I look for when I visit you:



- Prayer life
- Apostolic life
- Community life

Apostolic life seems to be the easier one for most as you: you do work hard in the schools and for the youth and for that I am most grateful. If we are

not careful our work will dominate other aspects of our lives - sometimes at the cost of the other two features. In this issue of the Newsletter I would like to dwell on the third feature, community life.

Something I learned early in my religious life (and is still good to remember today) is that when a community receives a new member it becomes a new community.

When people of different characters, temperament, taste, needs, nations or tribes rub shoulders together they can hurt one another. Community should be a place where we learn to forgive one another, accept one another in love, and bear one another's difficulties. Within a community, each member's rough and sharp edges can be smoothed, just like rough stones in a



river or on the seashore become smooth and shining pebbles with by 'rubbing shoulders with one another'.

What Is a Community?

"Community is a group of individuals who have learned to communicate honestly with one another; whose relationship goes deeper than their masks of self-mastery: who have developed some significant commitment to live together, pray together, rejoice together, mourn together, delight in each other and make others' concerns their own."

They are bound together by Christian charity unlike members of a club who come together for practical and utilitarian reasons.

Community is a place where we feel safe to be ourselves, where we can admit our vulnerabilities.

I have been reading *Come and See* by George Ukken SJ. His description of *four stages of community* is very interesting. They made some sense to me. Allow me to share his stages with you. Can you identify the stage that describes your community currently? This is good material for discussion at a community meeting

"Stage one: Pseudo-community"

It is a very cheap way of being community. People in the community are very kind to one another, avoid conflict at all cost, and want to maintain peace at all cost. They do not say what they really think, or express their real feelings in order to avoid conflicts. The unwritten rule is: don't do or say anything that might rock the boat. These rules make for smoothly functioning communities. But they also crush

individuality, intimacy and honesty, and the longer it lasts the duller it gets. Once the individuals begin to be honest with their feelings, and they allow themselves the freedom to be different from the others in the way they talk and act, the second stage begins.

Stage Two: Chaos

The chaos always centres on well-intentioned but misguided attempts to heal and convert. By and large people resist change. So the healer and converters try harder to heal and convert until they start to heal the healers and convert the converters. It is indeed chaos. The motive behind this attempt to heal and convert is not so much love as to make everyone normal, and everyone wants that his norm should prevail. The struggle during chaos is noisy, uncreative and unconstructive. Often the leader is blamed for not doing his job.

Stage Three: Emptying

It is the most crucial stage of community formation. It consists emptying themselves of barriers to communication.

The most common of them are:

- Expectations and preconception of what a community experience is.
- Prejudices, more often unconscious than conscious.
- Ideological or theological rigidity; any position that assumes the status of “the one and only right way”.
- The need to heal, convert, fix, or solve.
- The need to control. The leader of the group falls into this defect easily out of fear of failure.

Once the members have really begun to listen to one another, to let go of their pet ideas and projects (and it is a real death of their Ego), true community begins to emerge.

Stage Four: Community

In true community there is a true sense of peace. There is sincere sharing of joy and sufferings. In this atmosphere of love and acceptance healing and conversion take place although no one is trying to heal and convert. People feel free to express their opinion without hurting. There will be struggles, but it will be productive, not destructive. It always moves towards consensus, because it is a loving struggle. It takes place

on ground of love. Such a community is a gift from above. This gift comes on the group when proper dispositions are present.”



I found Father Ukken’s ideas to be challenging and suggest that, once you have read the text, you ask yourselves two questions: At what stage is our community at present? What are you willing to do about it if it is not in stage four?

I wonder if there are rules for community living that would help us reach stage four and remain in stage four. There is a tendency in human beings to see negative points in others while we can be quite unaware of them in ourselves. I think some ways of reacting to this tendency would be.

- Believe that everyone is doing his best.
- Do not try to change others, not even to desire that they change. Because trying to change others creates intolerance in yourself. Remember what people need is loving acceptance.
- Remind yourself from time to time that you are not the general manager of the world, that you are not responsible for rectifying all mistakes, correcting all faults in everyone around you.
- It is good to remind ourselves that we are not better than anyone else. When St Francis saw a criminal being carried away in chains, he said, “There goes Francis without the grace of God.”

In my visiting of communities I am always happy to see how many really find them a home and a place where love, care and family spirit is so obvious. I thank you for always welcoming me with such warmth and friendship.

May God bless you all.

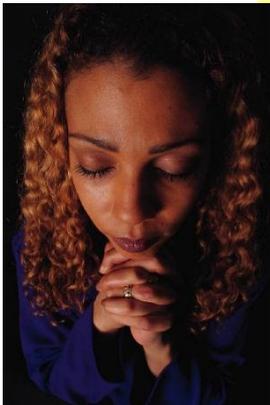
Joe

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

JULY	
02-07-1947	António Reis
09-07-1992	Elia Madimba (novice)
14-07-1934	Laurence Morrison
23-07-1985	Boston Ngulube
25-07-1970	Vigirio Bwalya
26-07-1992	Stephen Muleba
28-07-1978	José Francisco (Richa)
29-07-1969	Geraldo Medida



LET US PRAY



- ✚ For **OUR BROTHERS LIVING IN WAR-TROUBLED COUNTRIES:**
(Watch Brother Emili's video about **SYRIA**, and read the articles in this Newsletter for details about **SOUTH SUDAN** and **CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**.)
- ✚ For **MIGRANTS FLEEING VIOLENCE & DESTITUTION**, that richer nations make decisions marked by compassion and generosity in their regard.
- ✚ For our **STUDENTS**
- ✚ For our **TEACHERS** & those in **ADMINISTRATION & MAINTENANCE**.



MARIST BROTHERS presence in the CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Gold and diamonds in CAR fuelled 2 years of terror

Marist brothers are struggling to help the citizens and children of Central African Republic (CAR) return to normality after two years of terror fuelled by international interests for the country's gold and diamonds.

"Thousands of Muslims at the borders of neighbouring countries cannot return to the country because of the Anti-Balaka militia, and those who have sought refuge in dioceses and churches cannot return to their towns and homes," said Brother Elías Pérez, one of the five brothers in the country. Our community has offered

financial assistance or food to the Bishop on several occasions who has kept hundreds of Muslims on his property for over a year now,” he stated in an interview with the communications office of the Marist General House in Rome.



Br Elías, originally from Mexico, is the Principal of the Lycée Saint Marcellin Champagnat - a Marist middle and high school in Berberati located 100 km from the border with Cameroon. Three other brothers, two from CAR and one from Congo, teach mathematics, French, civic and moral education, and catechesis. The fifth brother, from France, is the director of the kindergarten and primary school.

Br Elías stressed that many people fear that Muslims will take revenge if they return to their homes. While the world is witnessing the outrageous Christian persecution in the Middle East, it is the Muslims who are being persecuted in CAR by a group created for self-defence and revenge against the Islamic group, Seleka, who took over the country in 2013.

“The journalists made a big mistake calling the Anti-Balaka “Christian militias” as they don’t have anything to do with the churches and they don’t obey anyone,” affirmed Br Elías. “They have killed hundreds of Muslims and forced thousands into exile in neighbouring countries.”

“In some places, life is starting to be organized again, but the huge poverty that resulted after more than two years of violence makes it very difficult and there is fear of what might happen,” said Br Elías.

The Central African Republic has remained unstable since its independence from France in 1960 and is one of the least developed countries in the world. After several coups followed by a regime under the self-declared emperor, Jean-Bedel Bokassa, the next big hit

was when a new Muslim rebel group formed by militias from Chad, Nigeria, Sudan and, according to CNN, possibly from Al Qaeda, “the Seleka,” captured the capital city Bangui on March 24, 2013 – Palm Sunday – and ousted the president.

CAR is one of the world’s poorest countries, but rich in gold and diamonds. Its illegal trade is being used to fund the different militia groups.

The Seleka called for the country’s division, the north for Muslims and the south for Christians. But Br Elías noted “this was impossible for the Central Africans to accept because this request came from people from other countries.” The Multinational Force of Central Africa, the French “Operation Sangaris,” and the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA) which later became the United Nations Mission in Central Africa (MINUSCA) forced the Selekas to the north. According to Br Elías, the Seleka are now controlling a large area of the north centre of the country where national authorities have not been able to settle.

But the violence did not end there with the birth of a new self defined group in 2014, the Anti-Balaka, a so-called “Christian” group of militias who commit the same atrocities as the Seleka. “As long as the Muslims do not return to the country, to their homes, as long as the Selekas remain in certain regions and as long as the Anti-Balaka remain in large regions, it will be impossible to return to normal life,” he remarked.



But with all the terror, poverty and malnutrition, the Brothers continue to struggle to help their students, who have been greatly affected. “Many of our students come without having had breakfast and their first meal

will be when they return home after three in the afternoon,” said Br Elías.

“The school spends a lot in helping sick children that each day turn up to the school’s management each day with malaria, typhoid fever, tooth decay, vomiting or diarrhoea,” he added. He underscored that there is “no shortage of young people who come to see me at recess saying they are hungry, and I help those who I know are really poor.”

He revealed that in moments of great violence in different parts of the country, “the SANGARIS, MISCA or MINUSCA were present and direct witnesses of the killing of thousands by the Seleka or Anti-Balaka and

nobody intervened. Some say they make deals with a particular group and give them weapons or permit them to do what they do,” he stated. “Others accuse them of engaging in gold and diamond trade, and to have fun as they are highly paid. Since the UN peacekeeping forces come from different countries, they are not appreciated in the same way - some are classified as serious and some as corrupt, while others as cowards who do not want to compromise,” he added. He underscored that “the reality is that there are thousands of UN peacekeepers and they haven’t been able to establish peace facing the Seleka and Anti-Balaka who are less armed and less prepared.” (Thanks to www.champagnat.org)



ANOTHER TROUBLED COUNTRY – SOUTH SUDAN **Says the Director of *Solidarity with South Sudan*:** **“We pray that the fighting ends”**

The director of *Solidarity with South Sudan*, a large solidarity project in South Sudan that includes three Marist volunteers, expressed concern after rebels officially took over the oil rich city of Malakal. “We hope and pray that the fighting will end (because) that is the first essential step towards recovery,” Brother Bill Firman told the Marist General House Press Office on May 18. “Many of the people already have too many hardships to endure,” added Brother Bill, who belongs to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. His comments came just days after rebels in South Sudan launched a large-scale attack on May 15, forcing some army units and

hundreds of people to flee the strategic crude hub. The country’s army battled to regain control the following day.

Brother Bill has been executive director of the *Solidarity with South Sudan* project since 2014. It is aimed at educating civilians in teaching, health and agriculture, and has communities in Malakal, Riimenze, Wau, Yambio and Juba. Three Marist brothers from Nigeria involved in the project live in Riimenze and Yambio - Brothers Christian Mbam, Matthew-Mary Ogudu and Longinus Uche Dimgba.

“The real problem is that no-one is effectively in control of either side and there are multiple militias that are more self-serving than really loyally aligned with the government or the opposition,” said Brother Bill. “The government is clearly not in control of the economy and the cost of food is rising rapidly. Our health training and teacher training institutes continue to operate as normal but what lies ahead for them is quite unclear,” he added. “We have students to feed as well as to educate.”

The project was born upon request from the Conference of Bishops of South Sudan. Members of the



International Union of Superiors General and its male counterpart, the Union of Superiors General, support the project – over 200 congregations of religious men and women. It has 16 members on the governing board, including Marist brother Chris Wills from CMI, part of the Marist General Administration in Rome.

“We greatly appreciate the presence of the Marist Brothers and their very significant contribution to Solidarity with South Sudan,” affirmed Brother Bill. He noted that “our work is having an impact but the biggest challenges come from the instability in the country and a waste of resources on fighting.”

“There has also been some recent incursions into religious houses by desperate people seeking money,” remarked the director. “General security is starting to break down but our members have not expressed anxiety so far.” He explained that some people say they were better off under the north and that “this is not what we expected when we voted for independence. At the moment, it is unclear what to expect, but most likely food and other goods will become scarce as well as more expensive,” said Brother Bill.

He highlighted the positive results of the project, revealing that the teacher training college and its health training institute are showing people from different tribes how to live and work together.



Brother Matthew Mary in South Sudan

“They are a fine people (and) I believe they can build a good future but they will need help for many years ahead,” stated Brother Bill. “It will take time for them to identify as South Sudanese first and as (their tribe) Dinka, Nuer, Azanda, and so on, second. The country has resources and will turn out well,” he added. “The fighting will end and re-building will start again, but the question is when.” (Thanks to www.champagnat.org)



CHAMPAGNAT DAY IN NDALATANDO, ANGOLA



For some Brothers in the community, the celebration of Champagnat day in 2015 was the first of its kind in Ndalatando (Angola). Although the community at Ndalatando is the smallest and simplest in the country, it has recently been enriched with new members who have provided new ideas for the celebration. Thanks to their initiatives and to the various apostolates brothers are carrying out among the simple people of that town, far greater numbers of people took part in the festivities of the day than in the past.

The day began impressively with Holy Mass, presided by the parish priest, and animated by the brothers, students and members of the Marist family. It was followed by a moment of recreation where the students - young ones, showed their talents and skills in dancing, singing, and performing in public. The celebrations ended with a big feast, its site decorated with banners displaying *simplicity*, *humility* and *modesty* as ideals the Marist Brothers. We were joined by a large number of religious priests, brothers and sisters, teachers and other invited guests.



And as the saying goes: “Good things do not last.” Some of us are already waiting expectantly for next year’s day celebration! As the disciple at the Transfiguration said: “it is good to be here...” Finally a word of thanks and appreciation for the unmeasured efforts (and sleepless nights) of Brothers Floriano (sup), Octaviano, Moffat, and Ângelo Cassinda (novice) in making this day very enjoyable for all the participants.

(Bro. José Francisco “Richa”)



FOURVIÈRE YEAR

Second phase of the preparation for our Bicentenary



Entrance to the Fourvière Shrine



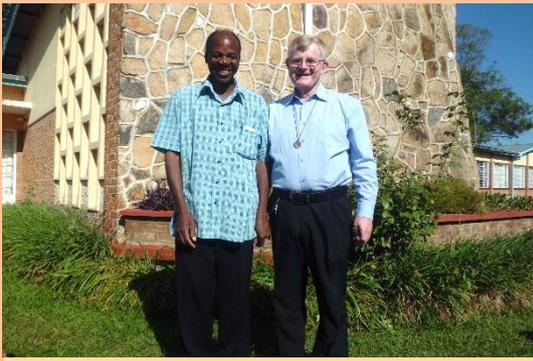
The aspiring Marists in France made their solemn promise at Fourvière on 23 July 1816. The second phase of our preparation for the Bicentenary will begin on 23 July this year and conclude on the same date next year, two hundred years after their pledge.

This pledge was very significant for Father Champagnat up to the time of his death. We would do well to mark this day by making use of the “Marist Office” (see the box below).

The **RELIGIOUS CALENDAR** for the second half of 2015 will soon be available in digital form. Councillors will be given two colour-printed booklets to pass on to each community in their area.

In addition, you will also receive a digital version of a **“MARIST OFFICE”** suitable for use on all Marist Feasts: Foundation Day (2 January); Birthday (20 May); Feast Day (6 June); Fourvière Day (23 July); Montagne Day (28 October); ...

BRO JOE VISITS CHAMPAGNAT HOUSE & KALULUSHI



Br Simeon (MP) & Br Joe



Aspirants from Angola



All the Aspirants



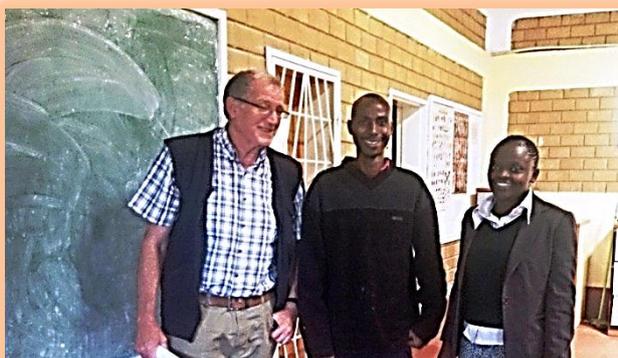
Aspirants from Mozambique



Aspirants from Zambia



Aspirants from Malawi



Br Mundo with husband & wife teachers: David Kaluba for carpentry; Elizabeth for tailoring.



Br Mundo introduces Br Joe Walton to a group of carpentry students

BERNARDO MIZEKI: A little-known African Martyr with links to three countries of our Province

Bernard Mizeki (sometimes spelt **Bernard Mzeki**; c. 1861 – 18 June 1896) was an African Christian missionary and martyr.



Early life

He was born Mamiyeri Mitseka Gwambe in Inhambane, Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique), but moved to Cape Town, Cape Colony (South Africa), when he was about twelve years old.

Missionary Work

Through the work of the Cowley Fathers' mission, and particularly the German missionary Baroness Paula Dorothea von Blomberg he became a Christian and was one of the first to be baptized in St Philip's Mission, Sir Lowry Road, on 7 March 1886. Shortly after his baptism, Bernard started work at St Columba's Hostel, which was run by the missionaries for African men. Within a few months he was sent to Zonnebloem College to train as a catechist.

In January 1891, Bernard accompanied the new missionary bishop of Mashonaland, George Wyndham Knight-Bruce, as a lay catechist among the Shona people in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). He was sent to work in the Marandellas (Marondera) district among the Nhowe people, and settled in the kraal of Mangwende Mungati. Bernard built his home there, and took people who wanted to learn into his home to teach them the gospel. In March 1896, Bernard married Mutwa (later 'Lily'), a granddaughter of the Mangwende and a Christian convert.

Martyrdom

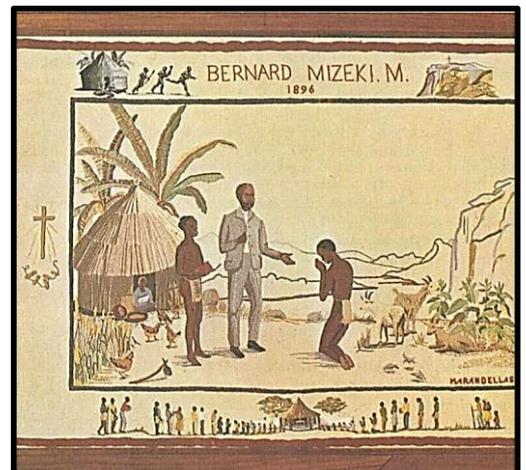
During the Matabeleland Rebellion, Bernard Mizeki was murdered outside of his home. While missionary workers were being ordered to safety, Bernard felt that his absent bishop's orders to stay could not be overruled. On the night of 18 June 1896, he was dragged from his home and stabbed. Mutwa found him still alive and went for help. Before she could return, she and others reported seeing a great white light all over that place, and a loud noise "like many wings of great birds". Bernard's body was then found to have disappeared. Mchemwa, a son of the Mangwende and an ally of the witch doctors, was later found to be responsible for Bernard's murder and the removal of his body, as well as the destruction of the mission settlement there.

Bernard Mizeki's work among the Shona bore fruit. After long years of earlier mission work in Mashonaland by white missionaries, the first Shona convert to be baptised was one of the young men whom Bernard had taught: John Kapuya. John was baptised only a month after Bernard's death, on 18 July 1896.

St Bernard Mizeki is revered as a hero of the faith in Africa. Today, Bernard Mizeki College stands close to where he lived, and the Mangwende's kraal, above the village, is crowned with a large cross to commemorate Bernard.

Veneration

Mizeki is honoured with a feast day on the liturgical calendar of the Episcopal Church (USA) on June 18.



TWO BROTHERS OF OUR PROVINCE MEET POPE FRANCIS

Pope receives over 1,000 testimonies of Latin American children and youth

<http://www.champagnat.org/400.php?a=6&n=3644>

Archive

Marists give Francis a book aimed at promoting rights of children and adolescents

345

19/06/2015: Italy

Like



Three Marist brothers, who work for the rights of children and adolescents, handed Pope Francis a book that reflects the voices of over one thousand children and adolescents from Latin America.

"I felt very encouraged, he gave me strength," said brother Vicente Sossai Falchetto, of the Marist International Solidarity Foundation, on June 18.

Brothers Vicente, Evaristus Kasambwe and Francis Jembe handed the pontiff the book titled 'Los niños no son el futuro, pero el presente' (children are not the

future, they are the present) just after his weekly general audience on June 17 in Saint Peter's Square.

The book was written by the Latin American and Caribbean Movement for Children (MMI-LAC) and published in collaboration with FMSI Cono Sur.

"I told him we are Marist brothers and that I had this publication on Latin American children and he answered me with a smile," told Br Vicente. "Everything was so fast."

"He first looked at me and only after I mentioned the word 'children' he looked at the book," he added.

The three brothers work for the Foundation, known as FMSI, in Geneva, Switzerland, where they defend and promote the rights of children and young people at the United Nations.

The book, originally in Spanish, includes comments from over a thousand children of 10 countries, of which many work for non-governmental organizations that help poor children.

"What they say in the book is that it is important to listen to them and to speak about them," said Br Vicente.

"They want to receive education, health and rights in order for them to change the future, and unless they receive these, they cannot change it," he added.

Celebrating
25 YEARS
Silver Jubilee

Bro. Arthur Ganiza
28 July 2015

BROTHER JOE'S CALENDAR & PICTURES NEW AND OLD

JULY	
1	Johannesburg
2-3	Johannesburg Provincial Council
4-7	Johannesburg
8	Travel to Rome
9-14	New models for Animation & Governance of the Institute
15	Travel to Nairobi
16-23	Nairobi Conference of Superiors
24	Travel to Johannesburg
25-31	Johannesburg
AUGUST	
	Johannesburg <i>except for visit to Nivaya Mozambique and Final Profession in Malawi (dates to be finalised)</i>
SEPTEMBER	
1-2	Johannesburg
3	Travel to Mozambique
4-15	Visit Novitiate
16-20	Visit Manhiça and Bilene
21	Travel to Johannesburg
22-23	Johannesburg
24-25	Johannesburg Provincial Council
26-30	Johannesburg



CHASSA - Garden & Administration Block



SOUTH AFRICA – First Provincial Chapter 1969

11 Members chosen to prepare the general chapter in 2017



16/06/2015: General House



The Institute's general council has appointed 11 members for the preparatory commission of the XXII general chapter in 2017.

They include brothers Joseph McKee, Eugène Kabanguka, Carlos Huidobro, Pau Fornells, João Gutemberg, Álvaro Sepúlveda, Ben Consigli, Juan Carlos Fuertes, **Vincent de Paul Kouassi**, Darren Burge, Rajakumar Susai Manickam.

“Thanks also to those brothers who have agreed to be part of the preparatory commission of the general chapter, which will animate the path of the Institute towards this important Marist event,” said superior general brother Emili Turú in a message dated May 24.

DEFINING OUR “MARIST CHARISM”

By the “Lexicon Project” of our Institute

<http://www.champagnat.org/330.php?a=11a&id=25>

Marist charism

When we speak about charism, we are referring to the special gifts that the Spirit grants to believers and that defines a specific vocation in the community for the service of the good of men and women.

Within the life of the Church, a way of living and developing a charism is through the charism of a founder and/or of the Institute. Understanding the founder’s charism as that personal gift that, being at the origin of the institution’s experience, traces the essential spiritual lines that characterize the identity of the Institute, its mission in the Church, and its peculiar spirituality.

From this perspective, what is the personal gift (charisma) left behind by Marcellin? What are the essential features that characterize our identity as Marists? There are three key elements that the Marists receive as a personal gift of Marcellin Champagnat and that today define the essential features of our identity as Marists:

Spirituality: centred on Jesus, Marian and apostolic.

- A life seduced by Jesus, lived in intimacy with Him¹.
- Cultivating the inner dimension of life, characterized by the exercise of living in “God’s presence, which accompanies and gives sense to our daily work”².
- “Marian and apostolic, invites us to look to Mary as the first disciple of Jesus for our response. She is our model of listening, of love for the poor and host to the message of God.”³

Fraternity: family spirit.

- “The family spirit provides space and time to share faith and life: it generates community. Following the example of Jesus, Mary and Marcellin, we meet with others to walk together, sharing and helping each other grow in faith and mission”⁴.
- “That they can say of you as they did of the first Christians: See how they love each other!”
(Testament of St Marcellin Champagnat).

Mission: In the midst of the children and young people.

“Help new generations discover the face of God and have life in abundance. Following the footsteps of Champagnat, we also must respond to the cry of the *Montagnes* of today. We cannot see a child without loving him and telling him how much God loves him.”⁵

1 Cf. Evangelizers in the Midst of Youth 115

2 Evangelizers in the Midst of Youth 115

3 Water from the Rock, 151

4 Evangelizers in the Midst of Youth 84

5 Evangelizers in the Midst of Youth 42

