



Marist Brothers – Irmãos Maristas
Province of Southern Africa – Província da África Austral

NEWSLETTER

2017 November-December Vol.2 #9

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MARIST BROTHERS GENERAL CHAPTER

RIO NEGRO, COLOMBIA 8 Sep – 21 Oct 2017



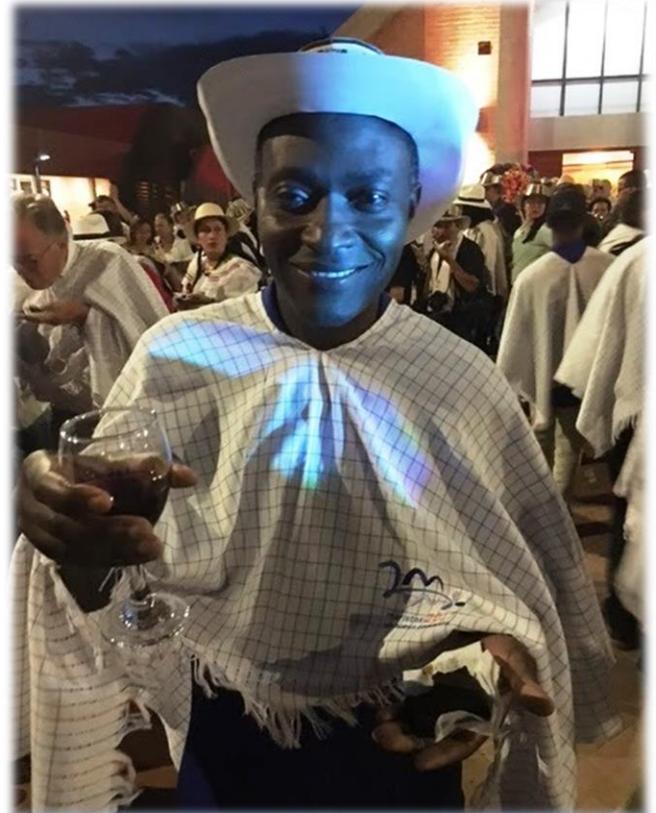
Participants from Southern Africa: Mike Greeff; Br Norbert Mwila; Br Evaristus Kasambwe:



In the centre, Br Óscar Martín (Compostela) worked in our novitiate for some time



Br Evaristus in serious discussion during one of the Chapter sessions



Br Norbert at the party celebrating our Bicentenary during the Chapter

PARTICIPANTS FROM AFRICA:



Crouching at the front: Vincent Abadom (Nigeria), Eric Kramo (West Africa), Mike Greeff (Southern Africa)

Standing on the left: Joseph Udejah (Nigeria), Michel Maminiaima (Madagascar), Venceslas Baindekeli (PACE), Francis Lukong (West Africa), Teodoro Grageda (PACE)

Standing on the right: Joachim Ezetulugo (Nigeria), Cyprian Gandebo (West Africa and MIC), Sylvain Ramandimbarisoa (Madagascar), Théoneste Kalisa (PACE), Norbert Mwila (Southern Africa), Vincent de Paul Kouassi (West Africa)

Absent: Evaristus Kasambwe (Southern Africa); Eugène Kabanguka (C.G. and PACE)



OUR NEW LEADERS



BROTHER ERNESTO SÁNCHEZ BARBA
Superior General



BROTHER LUIS CARLOS GUTIÉRREZ BLANCO
Vicar General



OUR GENERAL COUNCIL

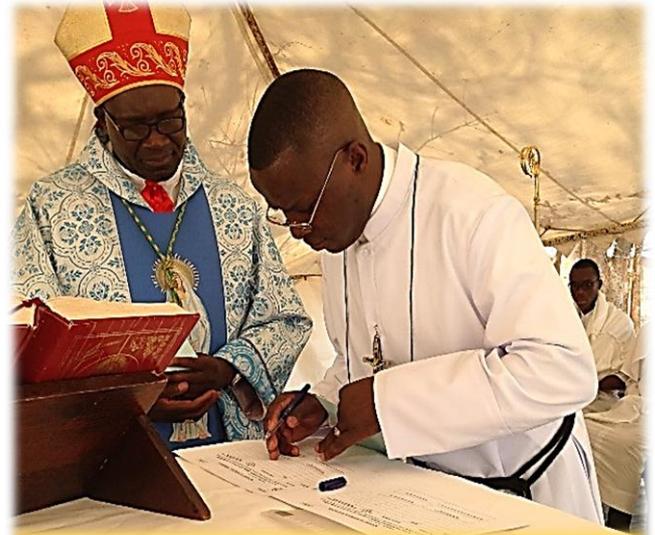
João Carlos do Prado (Brazil); Josep Maria Soteras (Spain); Óscar Martín Vicáριο (Spain);
Ernesto Sánchez (Mexico); Luis Carlos Gutiérrez (Central America);
Kenneth McDonald (Australia); Sylvain Ramandimbiarisoa (Madagascar); Ben Consigli (USA).

PERPETUAL PROFESSIONS & SILVER JUBILEE

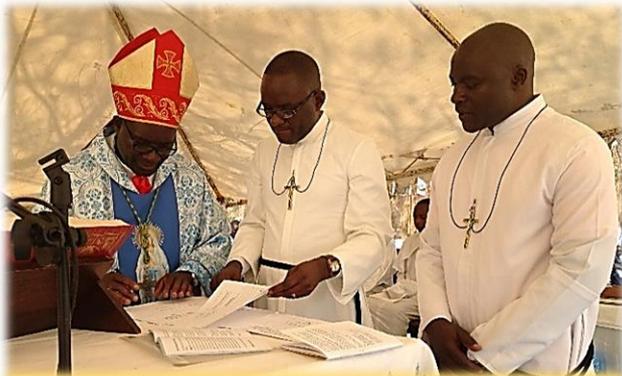
CELEBRATION IN ST PAUL'S, ZAMBIA – 15 September 2017



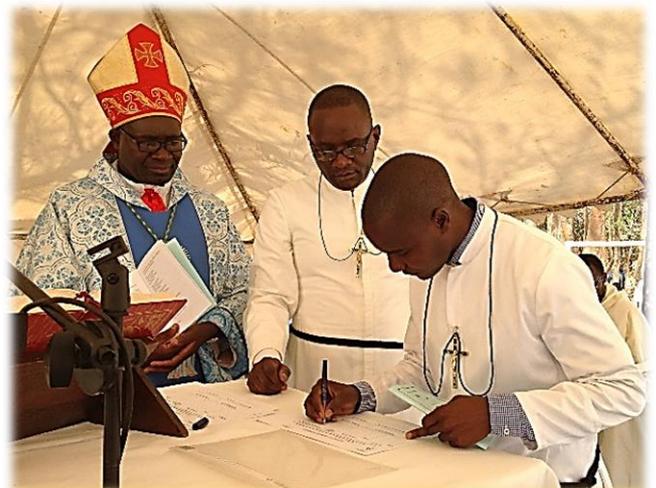
Rt. Rev. Bishop Clement Mulenga SDB of Kabwe hands over a Papal Blessing to Brother PATRICK BWALYA in the presence of family members. The celebration marked his Silver Jubilee as a Marist



Brother DAVY MBASELA signing the register after his Perpetual Profession in the presence of the Bishop of Kabwe



Br. EBEL MUTEVERI, Deputy Provincial, who received the vows on behalf of the Superior General and Br. PATRICK BUSHILYA look on as the Bishop appends his signature to the register



After pronouncing his Final Vows, Brother JOSEPH DAKA signs the register in the presence of the Bishop and Br Patrick Bwalya, Councillor for Zambia

By the profession of the evangelical counsels the characteristic features of Jesus — the chaste, poor and obedient one — are made constantly "visible" in the midst of the world and the eyes of the faithful are directed towards the mystery of the Kingdom of God already at work in history ... (Pope John Paul II in *Vita Consecrata* §1, 1996)

MY EXPERIENCE AT RIO NEGRO – BROTHER NORBERT

The recently ended 22nd General Chapter in Rio Negro has been an unforgettable experience for me. An important element was the way that life was shared among all the Chapter participants, including the specially invited young brothers and the Lay Marists who were with us for the first three weeks.



Norbert congratulates Br Ernesto shortly after his election as Superior General

The Brothers of the Province of Norandina made us feel warmly welcomed right from the beginning of the event. We enjoyed a special ceremony that included dancing by young people to welcome us in a traditional Colombian style.

Right from the very beginning to the end the atmosphere of the Chapter was characterised by an active sharing and attentive listening in worktable groups, fraternities and in the

The chapter of an institute ... is not a private affair which concerns only the members of this institute. It is an ecclesial event that is of interest to the Christian community as a whole.

(Armand Veilleux, o.c.s.o.)

plenary sessions in order to arrive at some consensus where it was necessary. A notable environment of prayer prevailed: we started the day with an individual moment of contemplative prayer, then in the Chapter hall a morning prayer, a Marial moment in the afternoon and in the evening or sometimes in the morning, a creatively prepared Eucharistic celebration that incorporated the four languages we used at the Chapter.

Among what was significant in the Chapter process were an immersion experience we had at the beginning when we visited some places of social ministry where needy children and young people are taken care of and given the much needed support for



their well-being and integral human formation.

The following three key questions were essential in making us focus on the calls we heard and the response needed to make a New Beginning:

- **What is God calling us to be?**
- **What is God calling us to do?**
- **What do we need to let go of or cannot continue in the same way regarding Marist community life and mission?**

The different voices that we heard helped us formulate the Chapter Calls: firstly, the young people who were invited to share their experience of life with us and what they expected from us the Brothers, then the voices of the Lay Marists, and the young Brothers, and of course, our fellow capitulants. We felt encouraged and challenged at the same time with the honest sharing we got through all the different voices.

Significantly, we made a bold statement on Child Abuse and our commitment as Marists to be more proactive in promoting the rights and protection of children and young people.

An important moment in the Chapter was the opportunity to make recommendations on the revised draft of the Constitutions that eventually will require approval of the Vatican.

I hope that the discussion about being a global body will lead us to a fruitful and a new beginning. We need to work at promoting more healthy community living, renewing vocation ministry, and setting up formation programmes involving both Brothers and Laypersons. Other challenges include responding to the emerging needs of our world especially those that affect children and young people; and promoting the care of the environment as our common home. Finally, we are called to leave our comfort zones in order to share more deeply the charism and spirituality bequeathed to the Marists of Champagnat by our Founder.

We pledge the new General Council the support of our prayers to strengthen them in carrying out their mandate.

Bro. Norbert Mwila,
Provincial of Southern Africa.

IMAGES FROM RIO NEGRO



The Entire General Chapter Community – Capitulants and “Support Team”



Colombian dancers at one of the Celebrations



THE MURAL IN THE MEETING HALL



Eight Lay Marist participants with Brother Emili



Superiors General - New and Former
Seán Sammon, Ernesto Sánchez, Emili Turú

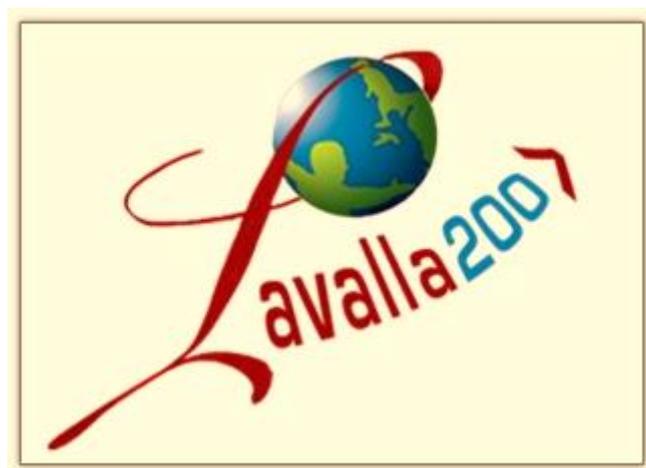


The Chapel



The Table of Lavalla
was replicated at Rio Negro

LAVALLA 200 >



THE SUPERIOR GENERAL WANTS YOU!

19/10/2017: General House

There is still time for lay and brother Marists to join the 2018 Preparation Program for Lavalla200>.

<https://youtu.be/zHUzMpg2-UA> (English 6 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWufG1W8bsg> (Español 6 minutos)

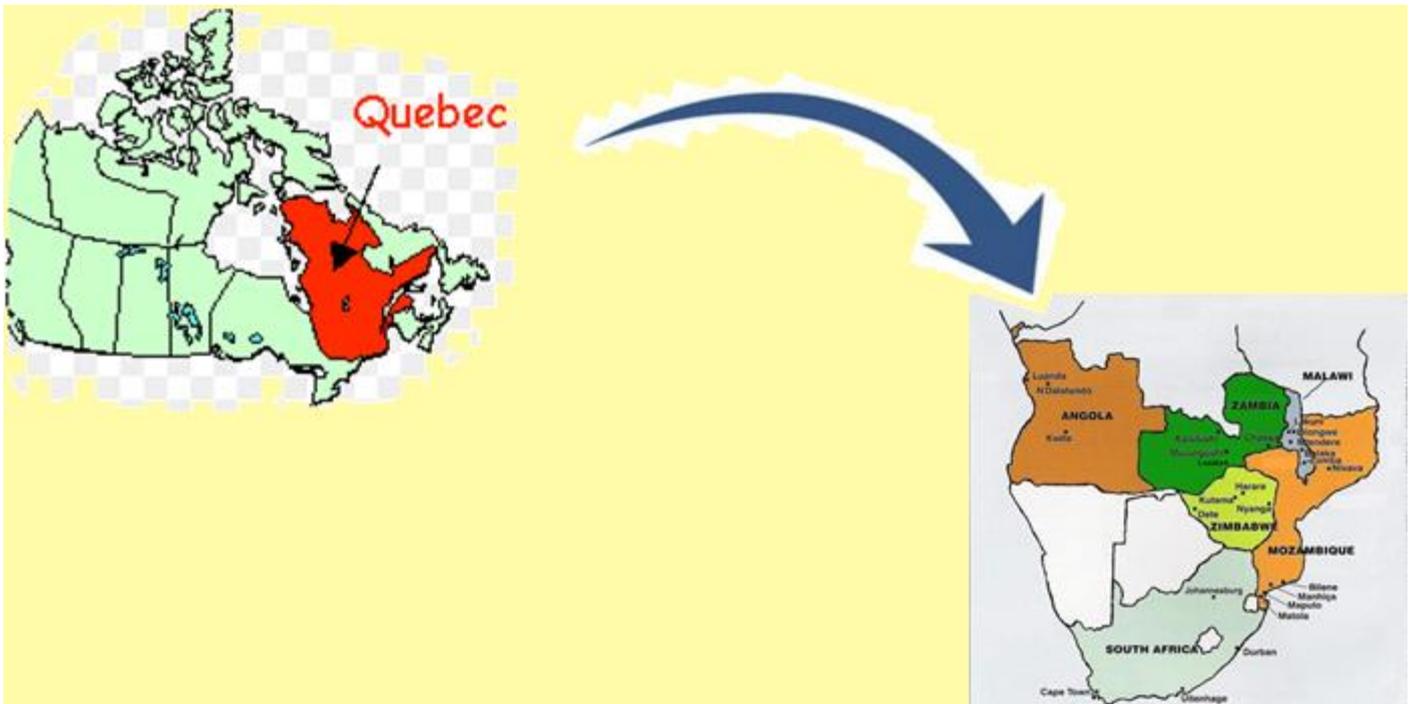
This video comments on the dream for International Communities for a New Beginning and includes some stories from lay and brother community members already appointed by the Superior General.

Already, 34 lay and brother Marists have been appointed to six Lavalla200> communities in six countries and four communities in the Marist District of Asia.

The 2018 Preparation Program will take place in Italy in May and June and will be an opportunity for candidates to discern their call to continue with the program.

Contact the Provincial of your Marist province

norbert.mwila@marist.org.za



THE CONTRIBUTION OF CANADIAN MARISTS TO OUR PROVINCE

Since 1939 when the community of Kutama was established in Zimbabwe, the Province of Iberville sent **80 Brothers** to Southern Africa of whom 24 left the Institute and 56 either have died as Brothers, or are retired, or are still serving in the Province.

The Province of Lévis/Quebec sent **48 Brothers** over the years. Eleven left the Institute, 37 either have died as Brothers, or are retired, or are still serving.

Altogether, some **128 Canadian Marist Brothers** have worked in our Province, whether in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia or Malawi.

Additionally, in the past two decades, the Brothers of Canada have established a fund the interest from which provides a substantial part of the annual income of the Province.

THANK YOU - and MAY GOD BLESS MARIST IN CANADA

Dankie, Enkosi, Ndatenda, Zikomo, Shalapo, Pitani Bwino

HOW SMARTPHONES HIJACK OUR MINDS – Nicholas Carr

Part 1. What Smartphones Are Doing to Our Minds



“The smartphone is unique in the annals of personal technology,” says Nicholas Carr in this Wall Street Journal article. “We keep the gadget within reach more or less around the

clock, and we use it in countless ways, consulting its apps and checking its messages and heeding its alerts scores of times a day.” What makes the smartphone so captivating? “Imagine combining a mailbox, a newspaper, a TV, a radio, a photo album, a public library, and a boisterous party attended by everyone you know, and then compressing them all into a single small, radiant object. That is what a smartphone represents to us. No wonder we can’t take our minds off it.”

But smartphones can also foster anxiety and undermine performance. “Even hearing one ring or vibrate, produces a welter of distractions that makes it harder to concentrate on a difficult problem or job,” says Carr. “The division of attention impedes reasoning and performance.” One study found that when a person isn’t able to answer a ring or vibration, blood pressure spikes, the pulse quickens, and problem-solving skills decline. Researchers have found negative effects in five areas:

- **Test performance** – In a 2015 experiment at the University of California/San Diego, 520 undergraduates took tests of fluid intelligence and available cognitive capacity. Subjects were divided into three groups:

- The first placed their cell phones in front of them on the desk.
- The second stowed their phones in pockets or handbags.
- The third left their phones in another room.

Students whose phones were in view got the lowest scores; those whose phones were in another room did best; and students whose phones were in their pockets or handbags scored in the middle. Interviewed afterward, almost all students said they hadn’t been distracted by or even thought about their phones while taking the tests – but that obviously wasn’t true for two-thirds of them. A similar study found that students with phones in sight made more errors on a test.

- **College lectures** – A study at the University of Arkansas found that students who brought cell phones

with them to classes and exams scored a full letter grade lower (whether or not they checked their phones during classes) than those who left phones back in their dorms. Another study came up with similar results, and revealed that the more heavily students relied on their phones in their everyday lives, the greater the cognitive penalty when they tackled mentally challenging tasks. A researcher said the areas most affected were learning, logical reasoning, abstract thought, problem solving, and creativity.

“The evidence that our phones can get inside our heads so forcefully is unsettling,” says Carr, “Smartphones have become so entangled with our existence that, even when we’re not peering or pawing at them, they tug at our attention, diverting precious cognitive resources. Just suppressing the desire to check our phone, which we do routinely and subconsciously throughout the day, can debilitate our thinking...”

- **Personal connection** – A study at the University of



Essex in the U.K. asked 142 participants to have private one-on-one chats for ten minutes. Half of the subjects had a phone in the room, half did not. Subjects were then given an assessment measuring

affinity, trust, and empathy. “The mere presence of mobile phones,” said the researchers, “inhibited the development of interpersonal closeness and trust” and diminished “the extent to which individuals felt empathy and understanding for their partners.” The effect was most striking when a personally meaningful topic was discussed.

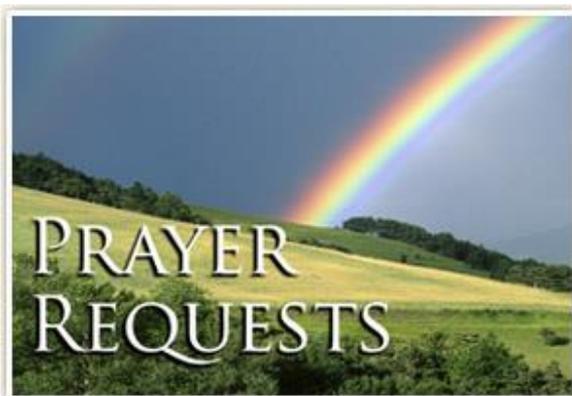
- **Memory** – Studies have found that ready access to information via Google and other search engines, plus how easy it is to jot ideas into our devices, leads us to make less of an effort to remember information because we can always look it up. But the fact that we are storing less information in long-term memory is a problem. In an 1892 lecture, William James said that “the art of remembering is the art of thinking.” Carr agrees: “Only by encoding information in our biological memory can we weave the rich intellectual associations that form the essence of personal knowledge and give rise to critical and conceptual thinking. No matter how much information swirls around us, the less well-stocked our memory, the less we have to think with.”

• **Gullibility** – In a 2013 Scientific American article, Daniel Wegner and Adrian Ward said we may be suffering from delusions of intelligence, confident that we know stuff because we can access it so quickly. When we can quickly find information, we feel as though we ourselves generated the information. “The advent of the ‘information age’ seems to have created a generation of people who feel they know more than ever before,” said Wegner and Ward, even though “they may know ever less about the world around them.” This may be why so many Americans believe lies and half-truths spread through social media by foreign agents and other bad actors. “If your phone has sapped your powers of

discernment,” said Ward, “you’ll believe anything it tells you.”

“When we constrict our capacity for reasoning and recall or transfer those skills to a gadget,” concludes Ward, “we sacrifice our ability to turn information into knowledge. We get the data but lose the meaning. Upgrading our gadgets won’t solve the problem. We need to give our minds more room to think. And that means putting some distance between ourselves and our phones.”

“How Smartphones Hijack Our Minds” by Nicholas Carr in *The Wall Street Journal*, October 6, 2017, available to subscribers at <http://bit.ly/2yIEZsP>



that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

- Eph 6:18 -

- For our **NEW GENERAL COUNCIL** in their roles of governing and animating our Marist Life.
- For our **SICK & ELDERLY** that they bear their sufferings with patience, and may soon recover their health.
- For the young men in our **FORMATION HOUSES**, and for the Brothers who help to form them.
- For Brothers who have recently been **BEREAVED**, and their wider families and friends.
- That **CHRISTIANS IN ASIA** may promote dialogue, peace, and mutual understanding, especially with those of other religions. *(Papal intention November)*
- That the elderly may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and **FORMING THE NEW GENERATIONS**. *(Papal intention December)*.



CLOSING ADDRESS AT THE 22ND GENERAL CHAPTER

I have tried to imagine, if only for an instant, what Mary may have experienced in the moments after she dared give her confident and adventurous YES to God (Lk 1:38). I believe that only a free and passionate heart enabled her to accept this unusual, unknown and new beginning.

(Br Ernesto Sánchez)

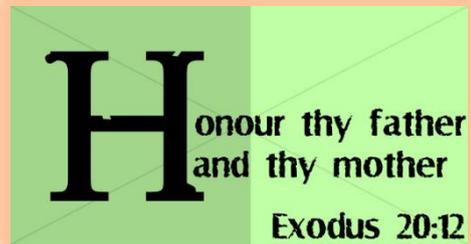
FORTHCOMING BIRTHDAYS



NOVEMBER	
10-11-1994	Gerónimo Raimundo
13-11-1932	João Torcato
16-11-1984	Francis Ndapisha
17-11-1968	Boniface Chirambo
21-11-1977	Fortune Chakasara
24-11-1968	António Viana
24-11-1994	João Gabriel (nov.adm.2016)
27-11-1948	Vincent George
28-11-1986	Mark Chikandwe

JANUARY	
01-01-1925	Paul Nkhoma
01-01-1986	Sábado Valia
07-01-1986	Raymond Mbaó
07-01-1993	Christopher Chagunda
08-01-1977	Ebel Muteveri
17-01-1994	Costenes Matias (Nov. Ad.2017)
20-01-1963	Evaristus Kasambwe
21-01-1995	Benson Taonele (Nov. Ad.2017)
23-01-1977	Reuben Banda
28-01-1962	Alexander Damalekani
29-01-1978	Maria Bobillo (International Comm.)

DECEMBER	
15-12-1990	José Ngongue (nov.ad.2017)
22-12-1994	Charles Mitunda (nov.ad.2017)
23-12-1941	João Reis
23-12-1949	Denis Ntacyica
25-12-1982	Steven Phiri
30-12-1934	Emmanuel Lapointe



CLOSING ADDRESS AT THE 22ND GENERAL CHAPTER

I would like to propose to you, and to all Marists, that we dedicate one day per week throughout the year (approximately 50 days a year) to consciously and closely support actions, or ways of being present, that will cultivate and accompany the future of our Marist life, be it in the form of religious or lay life. Everyone should ask himself or herself what he or she could concretely do. I hope that this challenge will be met by many people throughout the Marist world. For my part, I would like to be the first to respond to the invitation I make to you.

(Br Ernesto Sánchez)

MORE PICTURES FROM RIO NEGRO



CHAPEL



Each participant was supplied with a Tablet



Br Emili Turú with the eight Lay Participants



Seán Sammon, Ernesto Sánchez Emili Turú –
Three Superiors General

DON'T BE AFRAID
OF CHANGE,
IT IS LEADING
YOU TO A
NEW BEGINNING.



The Entire General Chapter Community

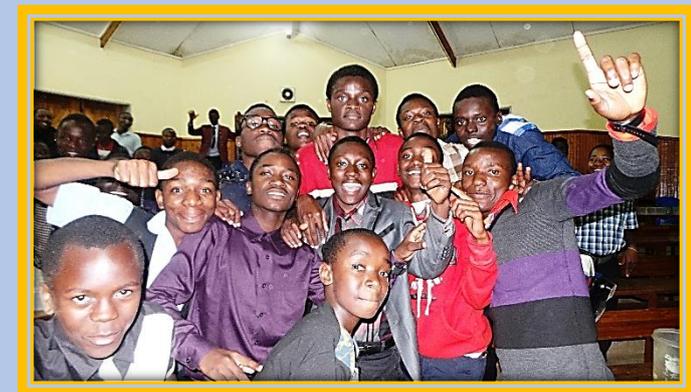
ZOMBA CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL – 75th JUBILEE



The Zomba Catholic Secondary School, popularly known as “Box 2”, is a diocesan school. Founded in 1942 at the initiative of the Catholic Bishops in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi during the Second World War, the school marked its 75th birthday by a celebration during the last weekend of October. Initially, the school was managed by the Montfort Fathers. After some years, the authorities invited the Marist Brothers to take over the running of the institution.

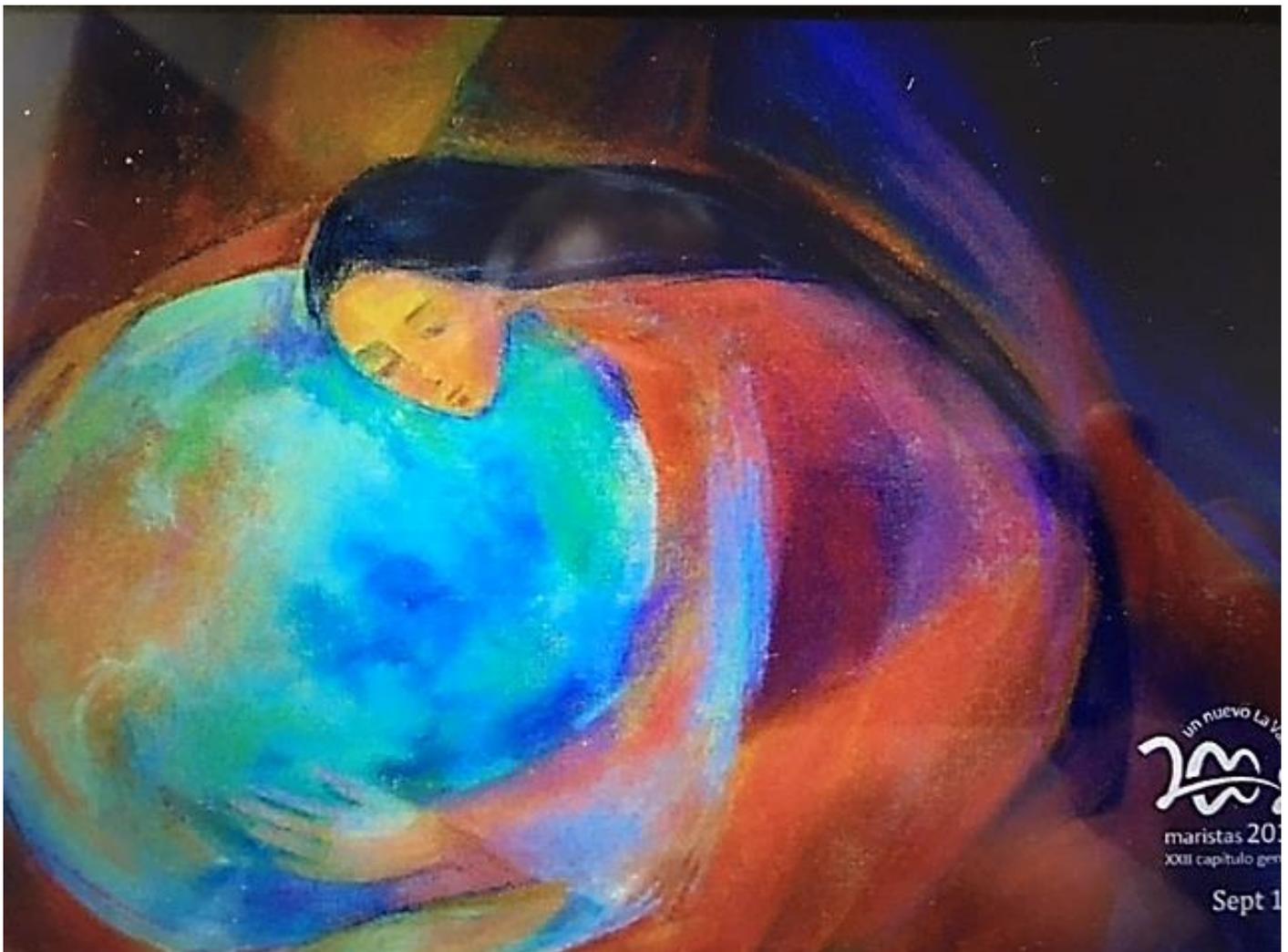
Brother Norbert Mwila, our Provincial Superior, returned from the General Chapter in time to take part in the function. A significant element of the celebration was the special message prepared for the former students by Brother Dostie (currently under medical care in Canada) who had been Head of “Box 2” for twenty years.

The photographs below were sent by the current Headmaster, Br Francis Jumbe.





AN IMAGE OF MARY PREPARED FOR OUR BICENTENNIAL



Br Norbert's Travels

24 Oct: Arrival in **JOHANNESBURG**.

26 Oct: Jo'burg to **MALAWI**.

28 Oct: 75th Anniversary of **Zomba Catholic Secondary**

31 Oct: Travel to Chassa, **ZAMBIA**.

06 Nov: Return to Lilongwe, **MALAWI**.

08 Nov: Return to **JOHANNESBURG**

17-18 Nov: Provincial Council **JOHANNESBURG**

02 Dec: In **MATOLA** for the first profession of novices



CLOSING ADDRESS AT THE 22ND GENERAL CHAPTER

Our common home, our mother earth, has been crying out to us for many years to do something to stop our excessive use and exploitation of our planet. The generosity and abundance of our common home is beginning to wear out, not because it does not want to give us more, but because we are taking excessive advantage of it in uncontrolled ways. Pope Francis, in his Encyclical Letter LAUDATO SI ‘, ON THE CARE OF OUR COMMON HOME, says: “Self-improvement on the part of individuals will not by itself remedy the extremely complex situation facing our world today. Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds. The ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion” (LS 219)

What positive consequences could be achieved if, we Marists, took a joint action, seriously, contributing our small part in the 80 countries where we are present?

(Br Ernesto Sánchez)

OUR BICENTENARY ON A POSTAGE STAMP



On 7 September this year, the day before the opening of our General Chapter, the Vatican City released a postage stamp to mark our bicentenary. Here follows the text that accompanied the “first day issue envelopes” that were available that day. The text below was available in five languages.

This year marks 200 years since the foundation of the Institute of the Marist Brothers by Marcellin Champagnat, the young vicar of the Parish of La Valla in France, proclaimed a Saint by Pope John Paul II on 18 April 1999. His history takes us back to post-revolutionary France at the end of the 18th century when during the Restoration there was a need to address the national crisis concerning schools by boosting and strengthening the education and catechesis of young people whom the French Revolution had abandoned to a future without promise.

Thus, Marcellin, ordained a priest in 1816, having a deep sense of God's presence in his life and nourished with an unwavering trust in Mary and her protection - from whose name the "Marist" community he founded originates - began his intensive work in the field of education. His conviction that "to educate young people well, you need to love them" pervades the Marist educational style whose characteristics are a constant but discreet presence among young people, simplicity, family spirit, and love at work, all in the style of Mary.

The Marist Brothers are present today in over 80 nations worldwide, but especially in the missions with one thousand formation centers, over three thousand religious brothers and around six hundred thousand students, following in the footsteps of the Founder,

spreading the Christian message through the education of children and young people.

The postage stamp produced for the occasion by Patrizio Daniele for the Vatican Philatelic Office depicts a close-up of Marcellin Champagnat, the cross, the table of the first community of brothers at La Valla surrounded by laypeople and a religious brother serving children materially and spiritually. The statue of the Virgin Mary, called the Good Mother by Saint Marcellin, recalls the Marian inspiration of the educational activities carried out by him.

