



GREETINGS

Encouraged by the welcome received by the first edition of our Bulletin, in the aura of this New Year we are delighted to send you volume two. 2013's exciting news is precisely about the excellent meetings that took place during the final months of 2012, events like the Provincial assemblies of the Champagnat Movement in several Provinces, likewise the Provincial Chapters, which have captured the new spirit of communion that the XXI General Chapter has invited us to embrace.

These lines are intended to get out the good news for all the lay men and women and brothers around the globe who are continuing to dedicate their lives to following Jesus in our Marist way. With the openheartedness of this bulletin we want to promote the new relationship among all of us who are experiencing the same Marist vocation, searching side by side for ways to infuse our charism with a greater vitality in the world of today.

My gratitude to all who through this channel of communications are contributing to bringing about communion and a true sense of internationality in every region of the Institute Thanks also to Br. Jorge Sánchez for his invaluable assistance in laying out these pages.

Warmest wishes always,
Javier

CONTINENTAL COMMISSIONS

European Commission for the communion of brothers and lay people

In November, the European Commission promoting communion between brothers and lay people met for the first time in Madrid. Working closely with the International Secretariat of the Laity, its mission is to collaborate with the European Marist Conference (EMC) in providing accompaniment for those facing the enormous challenges of giving birth to a new age for our Marist charism in the region of Europe. One of its aims was to welcome the concerns and proposals of the EMC, the Continental Commissions and the Secretariat of the Laity in seeking and suggesting vibrant responses, and serving as a channel of communication between these organizations and Provincial animation teams.

The Commission is composed of Br. Teo Aller (Compostela), Jorge García (Ibérica), Br. Albert André (West Central Europe), Pep Buetas (The Hermitage), Br. Ventura Pérez (Mediterránea) and Ana Sarrate (International Secretariat). Br. Brendan Geary participated in the meeting as President of the EMC.



Asian Commission

The Asian Commission will meet in Singapore in May. Also this year we hope to have the African Commission formed. The five Continental Commissions will smooth the way to bring about better networks of communication and animation at the international level.

FORUM OF THE PROVINCE OF CANADA



The 2012 Marist Forum, organized by the Marist Movement in Québec (MMQ), took place last November 16-18 at Cap-de-la-Madeleine. The forums are held annually and bring together all the Marists in Canada. This year's assembly brought together more than one hundred people. Its slogan "Voyagers with a Marist heart" led to beautiful discussions and prepared the ground for an important exchange of ideas about the new structure for Marist Lay People in the Province.

MEETINGS OF THE CHAMPAGNAT MOVEMENT

During the final months of 2012 there were numerous Provincial gatherings of Fraternities of the Champagnat Movement. These provide opportunities to come together, celebrate and experience vibrant personal growth. Encouraged by the Secretariat, some of these have resulted in the establishment of Fraternities. Let's take a look back at some of these gatherings meetings:

- **First meeting of Ecuadorean fraternities, lay people and brothers**

With 74 lay Marists and 9 brothers in attendance, this first meeting of Fraternities in Ecuador took place in the city of Loja. It brought to an end examining the collection of *Files for the road* over the past two years. The most relevant results centered around the discovery of the new relationship between brothers and lay people, among all who share the spirit of Champagnat; a revitalization of



lay people and Fraternities, and an invitation to sponsor local meetings of Fraternity members, brothers and lay people, to celebrate the feast day of Saint Marcellin in 2013 and prepare for the second national meeting of Fraternities, lay people and brothers, in the northern part of the country in 2014.

- **IX Provincial Meeting of the Fraternities in Central America**



October 26-28, with the slogan *Together we're on the road to a new Emmaus*, the IX Provincial Meeting of Fraternities took place in El Salvador with the participation of 144 men and women Fraternity members from Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico and El Salvador. The theme centered on the *Mission of the Lay Marist* and for that the account of the Disciples on the road to Emmaus was taken as the model for growth. Participants sought to clarify the meaning of mission and ministry from their following of Jesus. They reflected on our Marist charism, Marian spirituality and life of fraternity

in the manner of Champagnat. In conclusion they presented their plan for evaluating and updating the Movement. In groups designated faith communities participants shared their journey.

- **XVIII National meeting of Marist Fraternities in Mexico**

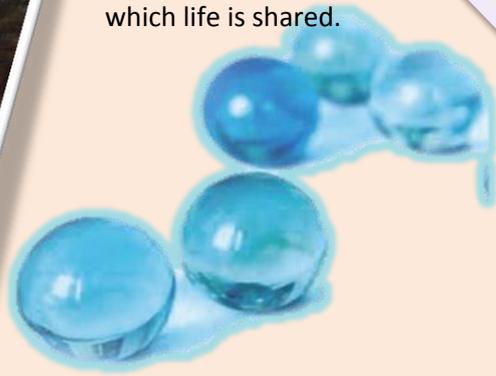
The XVIII National Meeting of Marist Fraternities, bringing to life the slogan *"Everyone who is thirsty, come to me and drink,"* took place November 2-4 in the city of Toluca. Five themes were presented. On the topic of *"In Rivers of Living Water"* participants spoke of conversion and the need to maintain their close relationship with the Father. They also reflected on *"Love for Jesus and his Gospel,"* *"Our converting in rivers of living waters,"* *"The Holy Spirit will come upon me"* and *"Staying and persevering in the way of Mary."* Each Fraternity received a wooden cross symbolizing its commitment to making Jesus the center of its members' lives. As they returned home, everyone felt united through sharing the Marist vocation that is driving them to enthusiastically continue building up the Marist family in their midst.



- **Assembly of the Champagnat Movement, Province of the Hermitage**

On October 27-28 the General Assembly of the Champagnat Movement took place at Notre Dame de l'Hermitage. This year there was an expanded Assembly with two or three members from each Fraternity along with the animators and brothers accompanying them. Brother Albert André and three members from the Fraternities in Belgium also attended. Ana Sarrate from the Secretariat of the Laity shed light when considering the vocation of the Marist Laity in relation to the Champagnat Movement, posing this question: How can we live out "the call" in our Movement and also incorporate the riches in the document *"Gathered around the Same Table"*? Without a doubt this meeting

encouraged everyone to experience the fullness of what the Lord has bestowed on us: a place where the charism of Marcellin Champagnat is revealed in our lives, a Fraternity in which life is shared.



- **National Meeting of the Champagnat Movement Fraternities, Province of Cruz del Sur.**

With representatives from eleven Fraternities, the National Meeting of Fraternities of the Champagnat Movement took place in Luján. The objective was to launch the renewal process in Fraternities being promoted by the Secretariat of the Laity. Reflection focused on responding to this call to be reborn, to renew ourselves... to give new meaning to our identity as members of Fraternities. Much thought was given to the meaning of the lay vocation as an essential dimension of the identity of Fraternity members. Plans were also put in place for Fraternities to move forward within the call to revitalize themselves in light of the challenges they are currently facing. At this point Fraternities were asked to express their core beliefs. They also presented their Life Plan, as a way to offer inspiration and meaning in their Fraternities, since for those in the Province of Cruz del Sur it is urgent to reclaim their original inspiration, the dream that gave birth to the Movement.



- **Meeting of Fraternities in the Province of Mediterránea**

On Saturdays, the 17th and 24th of November, Fraternities of the Province of Mediterránea met in Alicante and Córdoba respectively, to reflect on the Formation Commission’s proposal: to undertake an initial and ongoing formation program for Fraternities. About one hundred people participated, among them eighteen brothers who accompany and share in the life of Fraternities. Danilo Farneda, a member of The Virgin of Victory Fraternity in Málaga, offered a profound reflection-proposal. He stated that as followers of Jesus we need a common formation program oriented to our holistic development as Christians. In a lively discussion people shared their thoughts and feelings. Still to be worked out is the challenging task to deepen awareness of the personal and communal need to offer a formation program that supports people’s efforts to follow Jesus in our Marist way. There is a desire to come up with a *Provincial Formation Plan for Marist Fraternities*.

- **The Fraternities of Giugliano, Province of Mediterránea.**

The first meeting of the two Fraternities in Giugliano was held on Sunday, October 21, 2012. The first Fraternity was established in 2004, the second started up last year with a series of meetings for members to become better acquainted with one another.

As a true family, there has been no shortage of genuine encounters and exchanges among the two Fraternities and the community of brothers, everyone meeting *around the same table* where family spirit and simplicity reigned



- **III General Assembly of the Champagnat Movement, Province of Brasil Centro-Norte**

November 2-4, 2012, using the slogan “*By a road that leads to the future,*” the Third General Assembly of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family of the Province of Brasil Centro Norte took place in Brazlândia/DF. Organized every three years, the Assembly is made up of representatives from each Fraternity in the Province, the Provincial Coordination Team and the Brother Moderator. On this occasion there were 30 representatives from the 35 Fraternities in the Province. During the Assembly votes were taken on proposals to modify the Internal Regulations of the CMMF Formation Program created six years ago, meant to provide a structure for the Movement throughout the Province and respond to some points that had not been included in the Champagnat Movement’s Life Plan. This event was a historic time for the Movement in the Province because everyone had a chance to meet to evaluate the road traveled and to plan for the coming years “around the same table”.



- **I European Meeting of Animation Teams of the Champagnat Movement**

At the initiative of the European Council of the Champagnat Movement and with the accompaniment of the Secretariat of the Laity, these teams met November 1-3 at the Provincial house of the Province of Ibérica in Alcalá de Henares. The aim of the gathering was to share experiences and methods of operation, to take a look back at the existence of the Champagnat Movement until today and to dream about what it can become starting now. Participants took the opportunity to reflect on the life of the Marist Laity, how it has grown and developed, its autonomy, and where it stands in relation to the Marist Institute and the Church. From the very outset of the meeting the almost 20 participants displayed a great deal of common ground in the proposals that they made. At the moment to identify the great challenges for Fraternities, almost unanimously four major themes emerged: the value of *accompanying* persons and communities; the need for initial and ongoing *formation programs* for the Marist Laity of the CMMF; the need to be *visible* and readily available signs in the midst of everyday life; and a desire to have opportunities to be in *communion* with the brothers. Whatever the future holds, it must include these requirements.



THE LAITY AND PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS

Here are some recurring ideas at Provincial Chapters that have been held in recent months concerning the lay movement and the new relationship between brothers and the laity:



Province of Brasil Centro-Norte

Among the priorities established for the three-year period 2012-2015 is "increased efforts to foster vocations as well as joint formation programs and experiences for brothers and lay Marists living our charism."

The lay participants at this Chapter wrote a letter expressing their thoughts this way:

"For us, participating in the Assembly, retreat and Chapter verifies the spirit of the XXI General Chapter, when it affirmed that something new is happening with regard to the relationship among brothers and lay men and women. In communion we are looking for ways

to overcome differences and promote, together, the vitality of the Marist charism. During the Chapter we saw an openness and warmth on the part of the brothers. Gathered around the same table we have felt strengthened and committed to the mission of our Province, expressed in the four priorities for the upcoming three-year term. At this historic time we feel that we are co-participants."

Province of Mediterránea

Here are two of the four priorities of this 4th Provincial Chapter:

1. to empower the Marist vocation ministry of the brothers and laity, involving each individual, and especially communities; to do this through accompaniment and experiences of living in community, providing all the means necessary; having brothers and lay people stress the need for vocations to the Marist brothers and precisely defining what is Marist in the curriculum, in the day-to-day operation of our schools and in the faith-based content we provide in our educational programs.

2. to foster and implement a new relationship between the brothers and laity based on sharing common programs in formation, our Marist charism, administration, animation and planning for the future of our schools.



Province of Río Grande do Sul

Here are the immediate needs that we have come up with for the three-year term 2013-2015: 1. Care for each brother's quality of life, especially his spiritual and community life, providing him with ongoing accompaniment and fostering his growth as a member of the consecrated life. 2. The formation of brothers and lay people as leaders in the Marist charism.

Province of Norandina

These are the calls approved by the IV Provincial Chapter for the three-year term 2013-2015:

1. Spirituality and conversion, centering on Jesus, the vocation of brothers and lay people. With the help of Mary and Champagnat, as Brothers and Lay people we feel called to undertake ongoing journeys of personal and community conversion through embodying our spirituality, centered on Jesus and His Gospel. This will allow us to re-create our choice of vocation based on its own identity and complementarity.

2. Accompaniment in the life and mission of the Province. We feel called to promote a model and style of animation, administration and government; to adopt an attitude of openness and availability that will give precedence to accompanying the brothers, communities and Lay People, strengthening our sense of being a Province and guaranteeing adherence to the different processes that will be set in motion.

In the message of the Lay People present at the IV Provincial Chapter we read: "We consider our being at this Chapter a sign of communion and fraternity with the entire laity; that given the diversity of their experiences, choices



and commitments, they enliven the Marist mission, especially with regard to those who are embracing the Charism as their life option. We make our own the calls of this Chapter, committing ourselves to the life and mission of the Province, living its spirituality, undertaking our vocational journeys based on the centrality of Jesus and accompaniment among brothers and lay people.” Estas son las llamadas aprobadas por el IV Capítulo Provincial para el trienio 2013-2015:

Province of Cruz del Sur

Here are a few paragraphs from the Message of the 4th Provincial Chapter to the brothers and lay people of the Province. “With daring we want to trigger:

- Experiences that express a new paradigm of community: one composed of lay people and brothers who will animate the life and mission of cities, neighborhoods and regions; get involved in different ways to accompany children and young people; share their spirituality and mission in fraternal dialogue; live not at schools but in homes marked by a spirit of openness – all this resulting in an abundance of vocations.
- The living out of a spirituality that gives meaning, a freshness and sense of solidarity to our joyful life as Marist lay people and brothers.
- A new way of animating and getting things done: finding legal and canonical structures that allow co-responsibility of brothers and lay people to be expressed in more practical ways.”

MIXED COMMUNITIES

Some Provinces are intent on finding a way to express communion between the brothers and lay people through a shared life in community. Let’s bring to mind two of them, one in its first year and the other now in its sixteenth year.

The Mixed Community “La Valla,” in Mulhouse, France

This community sprang to life in 1996, as a response to a call from two sources: first, the XXI General Chapter’s call to establish prophetic communities, and second, the one felt by the married couple Pierre y Catherine Demougin, to live in a community with brothers, at the service of young people. This community began with four members: two brothers and Mr. and Mrs. Demougin. Their missioning ceremony took place in the presence of Br. Provincial and the Episcopal Vicar, thus signifying the two-fold nature of the community’s membership. The mission embraced was this: “To form a community composed of brothers and lay people to welcome and accompany young people in conjunction with the local Church, in partnership with other men and women in this mission.”

Looking back over the years, here is how the community describes what it has experienced: “It took us a few years to harmonize the rhythm of our everyday lives.

After all, what did celibate men who entered Marist life at the age of 12, spending their entire life in community, educating young people – and a husband and wife, married for 25 years, with grown children, having



international professional experience in industry – have in common?”

“What we have in common is a desire to respond to God’s love by placing ourselves at the service of young people. The servant Church is our common denominator, with the three violets that remind us that our road is paved with simplicity (in the way we welcome), modesty (our way of living in communion as brothers and lay people is one among others), and humility (we have much to learn from the young people in our midst).”

“In our everyday lives communion can be seen in our sharing kitchen tasks, housecleaning, tending our garden.... It can be seen when we warmly welcome everyone who rings our doorbell; it’s the entire community that welcomes. Communion can be seen when the four of us are setting the table..., a service that expands because rarely are we alone around the table. We easily go from four to twelve to sixteen places... especially when hosting solidarity events.”

At www.lavalla.org you can find lots of information about this community, materials it has developed, activities, etc.

The Mixed Community in Punto Fijo, Venezuela

María José Torres (a Marist lay woman) and Brothers Tomás Martínez and Diego Antón established this community toward the end of 2011. It sprang up after these individuals devoted themselves to personal discernment based on the Gospels, and the Congregation invited them to share their lives with the laity. It is located in a neighborhood in Punto Fijo, Falcón State, Venezuela. The brothers having had a community in the area for 12 years, a decision was made to build a separate residence so that this new community could have a home of its own, plain, with material

and furnishings common to their neighbors, in that way fostering a sense of greater closeness to them.

Our risen Lord and His Gospel is bringing into focus this community’s standards, values, attitudes and mission and led them to decide to embark on this experience. All year long it has concentrated on discerning its style of life, its way of sharing and its mission with children and teenagers. Its style of life, mission and organization, ever open to newness and change that fosters vitality, is becoming ever clearer. María works mornings at a secondary school and afternoons she dedicates her time to children with learning disabilities. The brothers are more centered on the neighborhood, directing activities. They promote and share the word in families and organize monthly celebrations of the Eucharist. The community supports itself by means of this type of work.



VARIOUS NEWS ITEMS

Updating the Champagnat Movement program

Ana and an international commission are animating the first stage in finalizing the program to update the Champagnat Movement. This has involved *taking a look* at the lived experience during the more than 25 years of the Movement. At the start of this year Province responses are being collected, offering guidelines for the second stage, to be put in place at the Commission's meeting in Guatemala next March. By then it is hoped that there will be two new members of the Commission, thus enriching its deliberations.

Retreat for brothers and lay people in Venezuela



In December the retreat for the brothers in Venezuela took place in the house at Los Teques, presenting the same theme was used at the retreats in Ecuador and Colombia,. Animated by Br. Javier, the retreat closely examined the paths that presuppose personal conversion and institutional renewal for both brothers and lay people, something that the XXI General Chapter strongly encouraged

Materials for deepening our understanding of the document *Gathered around the same table*

On the Institute's webpage you will find valuable material put together by the *Province of Ibérica*. Using nine files, it offers a process for reflecting on the vocation of the Marist laity. Each theme comes with the file to facilitate reflection, a Powerpoint and supporting documents. The material comes in our four languages.



Próxima edición de EMM en inglés

Sometime in the weeks ahead a new edition of *Gathered around the same table* will be published in English, a plainer version featuring a new translation. It is being published in Guatemala and copies can be obtained from Rome.

Commission of the Laity in the Province of Mediterránea

Recently the Province of Mediterránea named new members to its Commission of the Laity, which now consists of Br. Ventura Pérez, Ms. Teresa Rodríguez Pérez de Ayala and Mr. Bartolomé Gil Garre.

Meetings of former brothers

In various Provinces former brothers are beginning to come together for annual meetings aimed at nourishing their Marist spirit and providing them with opportunities to join existing Marist groups such as Fraternities... Meetings we have heard about include gatherings held in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Portugal, also several in Spain.

The meeting of Co-directors with the other Secretariats and the General Council

February 5-15, Ana, Tony and Javier will come together in Rome for our first meeting of the year. In addition to setting an agenda, we will have the opportunity to meet with the other Secretariats for three days and conclude with another meeting with the General Council.

Developing a “Glossary” of terms used around the Marist world

We are beginning to put together a *Marist Lexicon online*, to be available for brothers and lay men and women throughout the Institute. The program is being developed at our University in Curitiba. Fabiano Incerti is overseeing the project. So far a first set of expressions has been drawn up by members of the expanded Secretariat. These initial terms for the Lexicon will be edited by a Committee consisting of Brothers Michael Green, Maurice Goutagny, Chema Pérez-Soba and Teófilo Minga.

Formation program for the expanded Secretariat

As members of the expanded Secretariat we have recently participated in a simple but very interesting formation exercise, going over the document “Drawing near to the vocation of Lay Marists.” We set aside time to read it and after that to send our thoughts and reactions. It was a wonderful occasion for sharing a wealth of ideas, our dreams and points on which we agreed and disagreed.

Working Document for the General Chapter of the St. John of God Brothers

The LXVIII General Chapter of the St. John of God Brothers took place in Fátima, Portugal. Its main theme was “The Family of St. John of God in service to hospital care.” With this as its central theme it attempted to deepen and clarify horizons and look for new ones for the future of both their brothers and lay members. At www.ohsjd.es you can find this text in different languages. It offers avenues for

reflection that are applicable to our own programs for bringing about communion.

Forum of the Laity and shared life in the Province of Brasil Centro-Sul

The I Forum of the Laity and Shared Life, bringing together some thirty participants, lay people and brothers, was held on November 8 in Curitiba. The other two Marist Provinces in Brazil as well as representatives of the Consecrated Life and Laity from UMBRASIL were also represented. The main objective of the event was to work on the draft Document *Ways for Lay People to deepen their Marist Charism*. The document organizes the third stage of the personal formation program, entitled *Deepening*, for lay people in Marist Groups.

In this stage, which is optional, the person, whether a member or not, has an opportunity to discover and grow in his or her Marist vocation through projects and experiences in community. In addition, *Deepening* anticipates the creation of opportunities for a shared life that reinforces the vocation common to brothers and lay people. The Forum stressed the importance of designing methods that promote and facilitate the commitment of lay people based on the many ways of living the Marist charism. Present but below the surface at the gathering was the challenge to consider experiences in community and personal accompaniment programs for any men and women interested in deepening their ties to the spirituality and mission bequeathed to us by St. Marcellin.

Formation meeting at Las Avellanas

Plans are underway to organize a formation meeting to be held May 28- June 3, 2013 at Las Avellanas. The encounter will bring together members of the expanded Secretariat plus two participants from each of the continental Commissions. Among its objectives will be “to offer a formation experience at the intercontinental level that will enable participants to lead programs for charismatic vitality on their respective continents.”

ASSOCIATIONS

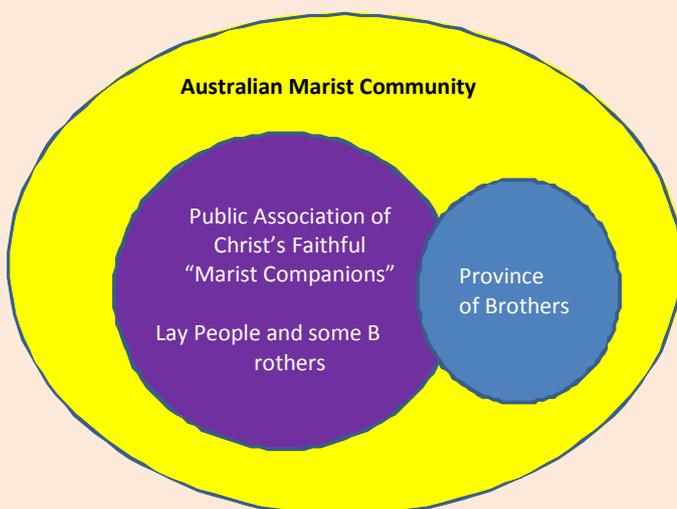
For quite some time now our documents have spoken of our search for new structures capable of showing brothers and lay Marists ways to come together as one in their Provinces. One possibility is to create an Association. Here are initial undertakings in some Provinces.

Public Association of the faithful, Province of Australia.

We face questions as these: Who will be the Marists responsible for the charism in 20 years' time, locally and nationally? How will leadership and formation work? How will we remain reliable when it comes to governance of schools and contracts? What is the preferred canonical and civil structure to be developed for Marists in Australia?

The Province has analyzed possible answers; from them, it comes out the following scheme that reflects the points of view of Brothers under 55, gathered in assembly, and the views of the Mission Assembly. A reflection has started.

The Australian Marist Community is made up of all the Brothers, along with all who self-identify as Marists, those engaged in Marist ministries, Young Marists. The Brothers will remain a Province established according to our Constitutions, with a Provincial as Major Superior.



Marist Association of Lay People, Province of Canada

During the past few years this Province has been considering a proposal to promote an autonomous Lay Marist Association and examine its spiritual, human and financial implications. At the last Forum in November, it was decided that the Iberville Marist Association (IMA) could serve as the basis for creating this association. And so the first steps have been taken to attain official accreditation for this future Marist association. It will be named *The Marist Association of Lay People* and looks forward to playing a key role in uniting all Marists in the Province.

Private Association of the faithful, the "La Valla" community in Mulhouse, Province of the Hermitage

The community in Mulhouse, consisting of a married couple, Catherine y Pierre, and two brothers, André and Henri, is legally recognized as a *Private Association of the Faithful* in the Diocese of Strasbourg. It was founded by Bishop Christian Kratz, Auxiliary of Strasbourg, Brothers André Dury and Jean Solinhac and Mr. and Mrs. Demougin (Pierre and Catherine). This community unites the faithful from all states in life who desire to carry on the work of St. Marcellin Champagnat. Its membership is responsible for assuring fidelity to St. Marcellin's work at the heart of the Diocesan Church. The Association's statutes need the approval of an absolute majority of its founding members and all its current members, at a special assembly, with every person having one vote.

FOR REFLECTION

Here is how the lay men and women who participated in the 4th Chapter of the *Province of Rio Grande do Sul* expressed their thoughts. They talk about areas of communion between the brothers and lay people.

- In our view, lay people will never be able to replace the brothers, especially because the brothers are the first to extend the spirit of fraternity and welcome by means of their witness. Therefore as lay people, we definitely want their Marist way of life to be actively present in all our educational and social centers, giving balance and unity to our mission.
- We feel that relationships reliant on power are making it difficult to practice important values like simplicity in interactions between brothers and lay people.
- We are concerned about the brothers' having plans to assure their presence in the future, and see that it is necessary for them to develop new leaders.
- We hope the brothers will continue investing time and effort in the quality of their community life and in the mutual love and care they have for one another as brothers.
- We feel a need to offer brothers and lay people opportunities for joint formation, in ways that encourage a culture of dialogue and the sharing of our lives and mission.
- We see an urgent, fundamental need to introduce a Marist formation program for personal growth, for administrators as well as all who work with them in our Institutions.
- We want to support the brothers in their efforts to find creative ways to be a brother in today's world, starting from the riches contained in our Marist spiritual patrimony.
- Together we need to find ways to strengthen trusting relationships between brothers and lay people, promoting mutual warmth and care for one another and encouraging the availability of joint formation programs.
- We feel the need to continue investing time in forming relationships between the brothers and lay people. Lay people are still unclear about what the brothers expect from them.
- Together we need to be alert and avoid letting routine tasks take away the time necessary for our personal development as Marists. We need to reflect on whether or not our activities are rooted in the Gospel.
- We want to establish a relationship of co-responsibility in our mutual care for one another: brothers looking after lay people and lay people looking after the brothers. We need more time to talk about and reflect on this.

