



Secretariat of the laity  
 Secrétariat des laïcs  
 Secretariado de laicos  
 Secretariado dos leigos

Embrace life - Sustain the future



BULLETIN May 3, 2013

## GREETINGS

These pages seek to convey, once again, the life of our Provinces in their search for charismatic vitality and ways of communion. Together, laity and brothers, we hope to continue working to provide answers to this new relationship spoken by the XXI General Chapter. Making known the efforts of provincial and continental commissions, of the animation teams, and the Expanded Secretariat, is one of the aims of the Bulletin. As it is to motivate each other to *"the challenge of helping to bring about the dawn of a new Marist life and to strengthen what is in place, making it more creative, faithful and dynamic"* (Around the same table, 169). The future of our charism is a future of communion.

We are confident about the life that is emerging. That is why we invite you to let us know about any initiative or activity that you think we'd be interested in. Having a sense of internationality is a part of what we are trying to do with this bulletin. We believe *that tomorrow will be our eyes*, as Brother Emili was telling us.

*Fraternally,*

*Javier*

### Workshop with the Provincial Conference of Africa and Madagascar.



Provinciales of Africa and Madagascar

The workshop was held from 17-19 February in Nairobi, animated by Brother Javier Espinosa. There was sharing on the subject of the laity in the process of the Institute, the new relationship between the

laity and brothers in the Institute, and the future of communion for the Marist charism. The Provincials undertook to appoint a *Provincial Coordinator* to accompany these laity processes. These representatives will form the *Continental Commission*. They also agreed to have a *training workshop* in the month of October in Nairobi with three representatives from each Administrative unit of Africa and Madagascar. We reaffirmed the conviction that the Marist charism is a gift to the Church and to the world, and that sharing with others this charism will promote more vitality to the Church in Africa and to the Institute.

### Meetings in Rome.

Tony, Ana and Javier held several meetings together in Rome, for nearly two weeks in February. Besides developing the Secretariat Agenda we shared rich moments with other Secretariats and the General Council. These days challenged us to grow in communion in pursuit of a common horizon for the Institute.



With the General Council of the Escolapians

We should also highlight, also, the meeting that we had during those days with the General Counselor of the Escolapians for Spain, who shared with us the beautiful experience they are living in a serious process of integrating the laity in one of the Provinces of Spain. They, also, speak of *Escolapian communities, shared charism, of belonging, of lay Escolapians and of Escolapian laity.*

**Meeting of the International Commission for the revitalization of the MCH, in Guadalajara, Mexico.**



Members of the international Commission for the revitalization of the MCH

In March we had the second meeting of this Commission, enriched with the participation of Michel Beaulac of Canada, Alfredo Garcia of Mediterraena and Brother Adalberto Amaral of North Central Brazil. We developed a common understanding in response to the first stage of the process and made a synthesis which allowed us to articulate a working proposal that will be sent to the fraternities. This will enable them to propose and make more specific and explicit their plans for the revitalization of the Movement. This second stage of this process will last for all of 2013.

**The Champagnat Movement in the World.**

❖ **The Champagnat Movement in Cruz del Sur**



In "Cruz del Sur" Province

In March there was a meeting of "Referentes" of the Champagnat Movement Fraternities with the aim of promoting the renewal of the Movement in the Province and to launch the year's activities of the Fraternities. We reflected on the Message of the 4<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter, highlighting the elements that invite a deeper commitment from the Lay Marist to the three calls: courageous departures from the past, continuing what's life-giving and looking for the 'new' that bears fruit. Within the Provincial Animation Plan, the Movement was placed within the area of Vocational Animation, side by side with Vocational Training. With the help of a video of the Superior General on some ideas about how to go about building "new ways of life", we reflected on the need to move towards greater inner freedom to be able to live consistently the challenges of this new era.

❖ **The Champagnat Movement promotes the vitality of lay Marists in the Philippines**



Members of the Champagnat Movement in Philippines

The Champagnat Movement of the Philippines sector, initially established at Notre Dame Kidapawan by Brother René Reyes, is already organized in all the Marist schools of the country. It started as a small group of people who gathered to share their faith, and has developed to have 225 members. All communities are committed to support the promotion of Marist vocations. The dynamics of the life of the MChFM is oriented by the presence of a brother in every community. In a wider sector, Brother John Tan has been helpful in the development of the movement, providing presence and concrete assistance to the initiatives of lay Marists. The seed that was planted one day has grown and, like the branch of a tree, the Philippines MChFM has continued to share the richness of its experience. It is in sharing with others a life immersed in the values and charism of Champagnat, the way that each member becomes a witness of Jesus and Mary

❖ **Champagnat Movement in L'Hermitage**

The animation team of the Movement met in France in February. A part of the meeting focused on the contributions offered to the revitalization process. Among the concerns raised: To be aware of the fraternities which are geographically isolated or without a brother as counselor. Are communion and autonomy compatible? How to

attract young people to the Movement? How to respond to the request for formation?

We shared with Brother Léonce the good news of the process begun in Aubenas to start a new fraternity.

❖ **The Champagnat Movement in México**

Coinciding with the meeting of the International Commission of the MCH we had a an experience of fraternity in Guadalajara with the organizing group of the National Meeting of the MCH to be held on November this year.



Group of brothers and lay people at the National Meeting of the MCH, México

**Joint formation at L'Hermitage.**

Continuing the path initiated some years ago, this year two weekends for deepening the understanding of vocation are being offered under a joint training plan of laity and brothers. These experiences are moments of reflection to deepen the new relationship between laity and brothers based on communion. They are conducted at the national level, in this case, in France and Catalonia. In the near future there is a more extended proposal at the provincial level.

They are weekends organized by the Secretariat of Communion for lay people and brothers. In the first weekend 5 brothers and 12 lay people participated. The aim was to make a revision of life in a Marist perspective and for participants to become aware of their own vocation as the new way of communion. The second weekend involved 9 lay people and 9 brothers.

The objective of this second encounter is to deepen the Marist vocation, rooted in spirituality, which motivates the mission and is lived in fraternity. *"The process undertaken in these years confirms the journey we have been making, full of hope and enthusiasm".*



Joint formation experience at L'Hermitage

### The "Marist Missionaries" of Ciudad Juárez.

Brother Javier had the opportunity to visit this Marist group in March, sharing the project with Abigail Ruiz and the group of young missionaries.



Marist Missionaries, Ciudad Juárez

This is how their statutes define what they are living: "The private association should be an instrument so that the whole world knows that God loves each person very much. This is experienced through the promotion of integral education in places on the fringe of the city and in rural areas, and in this way they cooperate with the Lord in building spaces of community and solidarity for justice and peace. The

Association is committed to acting in society at the service of human dignity, in the light of the social doctrine of the Church" (Cfr. ChFL 30).

Su intención es contar con un centro comunitario denominado "Hogar Marista", a través del cual se puedan atender las dos grandes necesidades de la zona: la educación y la salud. En este momento ya cuentan con el terreno, además de mucho corazón y mucha esperanza.



### Participation from Ana, Tony and Javier.

- ❖ Ana and Javier participated jointly in *El Escorial* for the Secretariat's presentation to the group of Brothers in formation. They were two days of fraternal exchange of the processes of communion, the lay vocation and a vision of the Marist future.
- ❖ Ana participated in Manziána with the Anglophone group during a day of formation.



UMBRASIL

- Our path together -

- ❖ Tony was present at the first meeting of the Commission for Asia, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in May. Besides the members of the Commission the Provincial, Brother Shanti and Robert were present.
- ❖ Brother Javier participated in Brasilia in the meeting of the International Commission on Mission, where he had the opportunity to talk with members of the committee about the current proposals of the Secretariat of Laity, as well as participating in the reflection of the Commission.

At the same time he visited the three provinces of Brazil, meeting with the provincial commissions, the MCH animation teams, Umbrasil and other lay groups.

### Forum of the Province of L'Hermitage.

About a hundred participants, reflecting the pluralistic composition of the Province, participated in the Forum held in L'Hermitage, in April. Brothers and Laity from France, Catalonia, Greece, Hungary, Algeria and Switzerland. The theme was "*Marist life in communion, a prophetic presence today.*" The two main objectives were to share the reality of communion between Brothers and Laity: Marist vocation, spirituality, mission and fraternity, and to walk forward together for Marist vitality in the context of the Province.

The process of the Forum had already begun in August 2012. 109 contributions were presented,

representative of more than 1600 people from the countries that make up the Province. In a dynamic of consensus the main statements and recommendations were collected. They will be forwarded to the Provincial Chapter of July.

There was strong support for the following recommendations: *We build a more fraternal world through the witness of our lives, shared in co-responsibility, in the communion of Laity and Brothers, and as a result of our formation.*

### Formation Itineraries

#### ❖ Brasil Centro-Norte.

The inspiration for this itinerary for the formation of the lay Marist has its Marist reference in the Manger, the Altar and the Cross, considered by Saint Marcellin as privileged places of encounter with Jesus.

The first theme, developed around the Manger, takes three years, with an accent on lay vocational discernment. It begins by looking at our *personal mangers*, Christian and Marist.

In the first year, participants are in the Marist Ciranda, highlighting their life experiences. The second year, is the Marist Teia: deepening self-knowledge, theology of the incarnation, life of Marcellin and birth of the Institute. The program for the third year (currently being developed) will focus on completing the process of vocational discernment.



Forum of the Province of Hermitage



Encuentro de laicos y hermanos de Brasil Centro-Norte

The development of the process is ongoing, but is already bearing fruit. To complete the itinerary, we want to define the next stage, providing accompaniment to the lay people who want to walk this path.

This training proposal is in line with the Letter of the XXI General Chapter: "To you, lay Marist man and woman, who in your heart want to live the fullness of your baptism, in the charism of Marcellin Champagnat: let us walk together!"

❖ **Brasil Centro-Sul**



Lay people and brother meeting, Curitiba

**Shortening distances, growing in communion.**

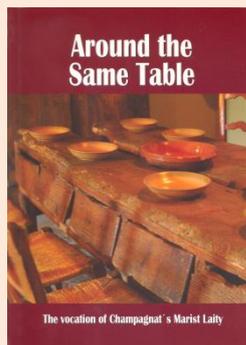
Videoconferencing is helping to keep open the dialogue between the Commissions and the Secretariat. The Commission for America sends communications regularly, as well as the European Commission. The expanded Secretariat does it in two stages, one with the Anglophones and the other with the Portuguese and Spanish speakers. This means of communication enables the sharing

of activities, the study of documents and even prayer. It also challenges us to practice some patience when connections are unreliable.

UA comprehensive document, discussed at the Forum in November 2012, entitled: "*Itineraries for deepening the Marist charism for lay men and women,*" includes a bold proposal of formation, with different itineraries, projects, community experiences and accompaniment. The *Sector of Consecrated Life and Laity* of the Province has echoed a call from the Provincial Chapter, which invited the support of formation for communities of brothers and lay people, sharing life, promoting spirituality and mission; conducting formation experiences, both specific and joint; promoting vocations ministry from a joint action of lay people and brothers.

**Materials published recently**

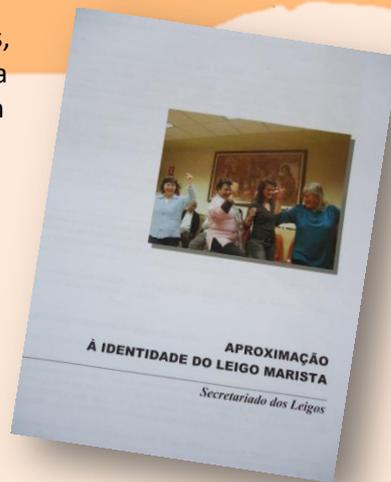
- A new edition of the document *Around the same table*, was recently published in English. With the first edition now out of print, there was an opportunity for making a new translation and editing the book in a new format which is simpler and more functional. There are copies in Rome.





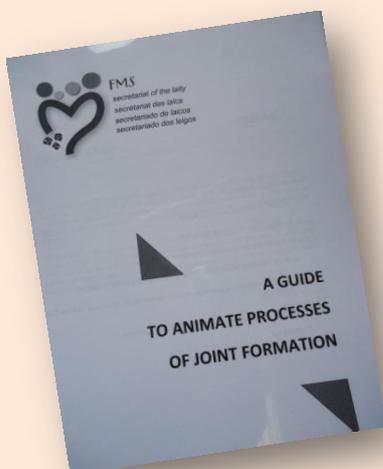
- The Province of Ibérica has just published a **new collection of notes "Grupos maristas de Encuentro"** to help in the meetings of Marist groups that have been emerging after the wonderful experience of the Forum in the Province.

- The Secretariat offers, in the four languages, a simple reflection paper, entitled: "*An approach to the identity of the lay Marist*". It can be downloaded from the website of the Institute, in the Laity section.



It has also developed a document to help in joint formation experiences, drawing together the main threads that appeared in the meetings of Les Avellanes, Quito and St.-Paul-Trois-Châteaux. It is entitled:

**"Some guidelines for an experience of joint formation."** It can also be found in the four languages on the web.



- **Documentos de Umbrasil sobre el Movimiento Champagnat.**

The Sector of Consecrated Life and Laity of UMBRASIL, has released two documents for the fraternities of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family in Brazil.



The first, *National Plan of Formation*, seeks to "provide guidelines for provincial and local leaders to help them revitalize the formation of the members of the MChFM" in the human, Christian and Marist dimensions.

The second, *Guidelines for a joint organization*, written in a clear and understandable style, presents the basic structures and responsibilities of the leaders of the Movement, in order to ensure more unity in the way the fraternities are organized.

### Upcoming meetings.

- ❖ From 18<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> May in **Canada**, meeting of the Network of Spirituality for America. Theme: "*Conversion to a new relationship between Laity and Brothers*".
- ❖ From 28<sup>th</sup> May to June 3<sup>rd</sup>: Formation Meeting in **Les Avellanes** with members of the expanded Secretariat and two participants from each of the Continental commissions. Among the themes for reflection: The Vocation of the Laity; Vocation discernment processes; Belonging; Living the Marist charism with others.
- ❖ From 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> June in **Les Avellanes**, expanded Secretariat meeting. After the evaluation of the previous Plan the new Plan for 2013-2016 will be prepared.

A REFLECTION. (Cfr. José María Arnaiz).

The laity are people called to offer a new and revitalized form to some charisms that are aging or disappearing. They can do it because when they follow their true calling they are able to talk about themselves in a new way, to re-incarnate those charisms, and to find new mediations and expressions of the same inspiration. The religious, in turn, are something completely different than they were when they felt they held the top job of the 'business' and its exclusive managers and bosses. This new sensitivity and relationship could be the source of a new form of Christian life, or at least of a joint mission project.

We have begun to look to the future as a common horizon. By doing so we can say or confirm that the religious-laity encounter must happen in the realm of being to make possible the doing (VC 39). That is why it has been noted, sometimes accurately and sometimes not so, that the consecrated were the same as the lay person and the lay person as the consecrated and the priest; that the two live the same charism from their positions and that this will lead to a new form of Christian life. This intuition now has its concrete expressions. But it is a great challenge that implies a new form of Christian life, a vital encounter and communion that needs a new, and not so easy, structure. It is up to the new founders to give expression to this new reality but there are lay and religious who experience the call to live the charism received in this way.

