



Embrace life  
Sustain the future



Secretariat of the laity

Bulletin 10 - October 2015

## From the Secretariat

---

**O**n July 23 the Fourvière Year began with the journey of preparation for the celebration of the Bicentenary of the Institute. The motto: The Society of Mary, fraternity: associated for the mission (brothers and laity)". The origin of the Society of Mary reminds us that the brothers and the laity are associated for the mission. Br. Emili told us that *"from the beginning, the first Marists imagine the Society of Mary like a great tree with different branches: religious priests, religious brothers, religious sisters and laity. The project did not obtain ecclesiastical recognition at that time. But today we recognize with thanksgiving that the Holy Spirit has made the Marist lay vocation flourish. Lay men and women from the whole world feel called to live the Gospel according to the manner of Mary, according to the intuitions of Father Champagnat and the first brothers"*.

The news contained in this Bulletin are the expression of what the first Project of the Society of Mary wanted to be, and which our last General Chapter translated it as a new relationship between brothers and laity, to carry on the mission that the Church entrusts to us. The present process of the Institute affirms this journey for the future: We contemplate our Marist future like a communion of persons in the Charism of Champagnat. The experiences shared here show us that we are already constructing that future.

Fraternallly,.

Javier Espinosa, FMS.

---

## Laity in the international encounter on the New Models of management

---

**F**our lay persons participated in the Assembly held in Rome during the month of July to concretize the waybill on new manners to carry on animation, governance and the management to strengthen the Marist Mission in the world in the future years. These four were: Pep Buetas from L'Hermitage, José María Sanz from Ibérica, Joe Mc Carthy and Peter McNamara from Oceania.





## Commitment and renewal in Saint Paul Trois Châteaux, France

During two years, Charlotte, Nicole and Charles have carried out a work of discernment within their Fraternity of the Champagnat Movement. Living the spirit of Saint Marceline, these Marists have wanted to commit themselves before their brothers and before the parochial community. In December 2014, on one Sunday in Advent each one of them expressed their bond of union with the Marist Charism, in the service of those in greater need. One after the other manifested their option to give witness of the Marist spirit in the

different places: among elderly persons, the sick... Some of the terms of their commitment: "In the spirit of Mary, with the help of Saint Marceline Champagnat, I commit myself to live according to the Gospel and to serve the Church like he did, with the principal attention to the poor and the young. In this commitment I count with the help of the Fraternity 'Henri Vergès' and of the Movement Champagnat of the Marist Family". Also Pierre, Mireille, Françoise and Joseph, renewed the commitment that they made in 2005, manifesting once again



the will to continue their mission and to give witness of it in communion with the brothers and the laity.

## Brazil: Joint Formation strengthens the Marist Charism



One same mission, one same Charism were inspiration so that 12 brothers and lay persons of Central- Northern Brazil lived an experience of joint formation during 9 days in the Marist Center of Montes Claros. This initiative provided formative moments and integration. They deepened the study of the new relationship, according to the call of the XXI General Chapter. Brother Adalberto Amaral said that sharing diverse forms of life is important for the new beginning. The encounter opened perspectives for new initiatives in the future. And a second experience was lived in this way in the month of July in Fortaleza with beginners of other Provinces of Marist Brazil. For Brothers and laity the experience stressed the importance of life in community as a fecund space to nourish faith and the specific vocation.

## Encounter of coordinators of Fraternities and Lay groups of Colombia

From the 15th to the 18th of May there was a meeting in the city of Cali. There the calls of the V Provincial Chapter to be mystics and prophets were recalled. There was dialogue on the vocation of brothers and laity, and how to accompany them for the strengthening of their vocation. A very special moment was the presentation that the coordinators made of the community projects of their groups and fraternities. By cities each one presented a Stand, where they made known the life and apostolate accompanied by gastronomic sampling of each city. Each one traveled back to his place with the commitment to help the new dawn to be born.



## The Asia Laity Commission meets in Sri Lanka

After meeting for three days in Sri Lanka, the Asia Laity Commission concluded that their effort to develop the communion between brothers and laity is their specific contribution to the Church. The meeting took place in Negombo and aimed at reflecting together, sharing experiences and planning the animation of the lay Marists throughout Asia. The proposal of developing "a formation program for lay people in Asia", taking into account the different religious and cultural realities, came up during the meeting. The Commission reflected about the General Framework regarding the Marist laity's vocational path. It highlighted the importance of strengthening the Marist laity's leadership in the Region, and requested lay lead-



ers for each Administrative Unit, as well as a schedule of meetings to facilitate an "effective regional coordination", in dialogue with the Oceania Laity Commission. They also addressed the need to "grow in our understanding of the Asian elements of our Marist life, and to update our mission by being sensitive to the predominant concerns of the Region, such as ecology and social justice". They discussed the possibility of promoting an ongoing joint formation process for brothers and lay people. "Walking together is how we become mystics and prophets, builders of communion, sharing a common mission in Asian lands".

## Lay bonding ceremony in Ibérica

Twenty-one lay persons ratified their bonding to the Marist charism in the provincial house of Alcalá de Henares on July 4, after following the process of lay Marist recognition the Province has established. It was a joyful and emotional ceremony. A short opening speech stated that the group of lay persons wanted to "confirm the Marist vocation they discovered and started living years ago. In addition, they want to tell us here and now that this vocation has filled their life and has become their way of being, that they want to carry on with their commitment to make the Marist family grow in the Church, giving hope to our world and especially to children and young people. It is not an ending point but another step in the commitment they already live, and in the expression of their sense of belonging. Today we publicly recognize your vocation and welcome you in Marcellin Champagnat's charismatic family". Within the Eucharistic celebration, each of them individually expressed his or her promise and received a Marist



cross from brother provincial's hands to commemorate their commitment.

## National meeting of fraternities in Cruz del Sur

The Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family celebrated its national meeting of fraternities on the first weekend of May in Villa

San José, Luján. Mr. Edison Carlos Jardim de Oliveira – who coordinates the area of consecrated and lay Marist life in the Province of Rio

Grande do Sul – and his wife Marilu animated the meeting. The group's reflection focused on the vocation, identity, spirituality, and mission of



the Marist laity. The motivational messages and moments of reflection attuned the participants' heart with the call to promote a greater vitality of the charism, brothers and lay people sharing together, in a common charismatic vocation. The meeting also highlighted that spirituality is the deepest driving force that brings about a new dawn for San Marcellin's charism, with-



in the context of a new relationship between brothers and laity. Mr. Mauricio Fuentes – one of the vocations ministry coordinators at the provincial level – presented the global framework of the Marist laity's vocational process. The formation criteria and stages, and the topic of bonding and belonging strongly echoed among the participants.

## Presentation of the Budget of the General Council and of the Global Framework of the Secretariat

**B**r. Javier with the help of Nohemy Pinto, Eder D'Artagnan and Pep Buetas has been presenting in diverse Provinces the Proposal of the General Council in regard to the global Framework of a Marist vocation process for the laity – men and women – to offer it in the next General Chapter. In all these Provinces there has been the invitation to introduce some formative itinerary in such a way that beginning from their experience, they can collaborate in the project proposed by the Council.



Rio Grande do Sul



Brasil Centro-Sul



Compostela



L'Hermitage



Mediterránea

## Leaders of the Champagnat Movement meet in Brasil Centro-Norte

From May 1 to 3, the leaders of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family in Brasil-Centro Norte held a formation meeting under the slogan "For a leadership that generates life!" in Lagoa Seca (Paraíba). The participants were 20 lay Marists from 10 fraternities, which live in the Province's northeastern region. The fraternities had a moment to share their process, identifying the steps forward they have taken and the challenges at the local level. The group discussed the essential requirements in the exercise of leadership within the Movement, referring to Jesus Christ as role model. They highlighted the importance of having good leaders to animate the fraternities in their day-to-day life, and the qualities and limitations in a leader's role. The meeting included moments of formation, prayer, and group interaction, and encouraged the fraternities in the path they are following.



## The Provincial Chapter of the United States invites the laity for the first time

One of the participants in the recent Provincial Chapter of the United States described it as memorable because it requested the laity's participation for the first time. The Chapter took place in Long Branch, New Jersey, from June 8 to 12, and elected the new Provincial Councilors. On the third day of the meeting, a



group of about 40 lay persons were invited to join the Chapter in order to discuss how they perceived their relationship with the Brothers now and in the future. The topics covered during the Chapter included: mission, lay membership, ministry, the identity of consecrated lay Marists, and vocations.

## Africa and Madagascar We are moving forward together and going far

From July 15 to 18, the Laity Commission of Africa and Madagascar met at Sacred Heart Marist College in Johannesburg. Four brothers

and a lay Marist prayer, worked, dreamed of the future, planned, reflected and celebrated together. The meeting aimed at studying the Com-

mission's Strategic Plan designed in Nairobi in July 2014, and at improving it by including the insights coming from the meetings that have taken



place throughout the Institute since then. Brother Erick Silali joined the team initially formed by Brothers Elias Odinaka, John Kusi-Mensah, Ernest Randriatsoa, and a lay Marist, Mike Greeff. The Commission worked with the contributions from the II MIMA, the recent animators workshop held in Rome, their former strategic plan, and the Basic Elements to design a Global Framework for the Marist laity's vocational process. They also studied Brother Emili's message on Champagnat's feast, analyzed the African context, and established a more relevant and better focused Strategic Plan. They stated again that they are moving forward together and going far!



## Joint formation experience for brothers and lay people in Colombia

From July 8 to 11, a joint formation session held in Armenia (Colombia) gathered 10 brothers and 16 lay Marists. The impressions that follow echo this



experience:

We know that by assuming the call to be prophets and mystics we will be able to live and express a number of attitudes like fraternity, solidarity, forgiveness, acceptance, accompaniment, and fidelity to the mission. Participating in the birth of the new dawn for our Institute implies promoting our charismatic vitality through the complementarity of brothers and lay people living in communion. Our shared responsibility regarding the mission leads us to leave our comfort zones and move towards the peripheries, brothers and lay people in communion, looking for new ways to express our Marist mission. We need to encourage Marist of Champagnat communities that are open to dialogue and to a healthy and trustful debate allowing its members to grow together.

## 20 years of the mixed community of Mulhouse

André, Catherine and Pierre at present form the "mixed" community of Mulhouse, and who at the same time form a "shared" community with other laity –men and women – of the community. Since a year ago they have a Council of the house. All the decisions that concern the mission are determined by this Council of six persons, each one committed in a specific activity. Jean accompanies the projects of solidarity with the support of Dany, but at the same time she is responsible for the maintenance of the annex and the apartment of Laure that she has made available to receive those who are in greater need from La Valle. Catherine, besides her work as catechist supports all those who need accompaniment because of her professional competence as social assistant. She is



always available, ready to take care of needs of the "last moment". Yves supports the preparation for Confirmation as catechist, but also as responsible of the group 'Choeur en Mission', supported by Christine. Léonore is gradually preparing to take over the direction of the choir. Yves is especially attentive to the dimension of "solidarity". Today all the activities are directed by association, in a team, and

this guarantees the space for the community of life to be attentive to those in greater need, to the new calls... The community of life also has spaces of silence, fraternity, more personal time and the possibility to develop animations such as « Goûtons la Parole », the encyclical « Laudate Si », new Marist record cards and to take care of the bonds of union with the Province.

## Australia: The Marist Association of Saint Marcellin Champagnat holds its first Assembly

From August 20 to 23, the Marist Association of Saint Marcellin Champagnat held its first Assembly at the Hermitage, Mittagong (Australia), with the participation of 64 members. The delegates discussed how the Association has been developing, set its priorities for the next three years, and

appointed eight members for the first Council of the Association's Australian Conference. Over the next three years, once the Holy See approves the Association, there will be a full transition of governance (civil and canonical) over the Marist schools from the Marist Brothers (Province of Australia) to the

Marist Association (Australian Conference). The Association will also exercise full leadership over its own life and mission as a new Marist organization. Over 500 people have joined the Association, including more than a hundred brothers, a number of priests and religious sisters, and a bishop.



## Retreat session for the brothers and the lay Marists of Champagnat in Samoa

The brothers and the lay Marists of Champagnat recently met for a retreat session in Samoa. Among other topics, they studied Marcellin Champagnat's letters. The Marist presence in Samoa began with the first school the brothers founded in 1871. Due to the civil war, they left the country in 1877. There are currently two Marist schools in Samoa.





## Meeting of the International Commission for the Revitalization of the CMMF

The Commission met for the fourth time from July 25 to 31 at the General House. Its main task now is the drafting of a new Life Project for the Movement and a supplementary document about the practical aspects regarding how the fraternities operate and organize themselves. Brother Emili's motivation words invited the team to work in tune with the conversion process the Church is undertaking thanks to Pope Francis. Ana Sarrate – who has been leading the revitalization process of the CMMF since June 2013 together with the Secretariat of Laity – stated about the present situation of the CMMF: "We have realized that the Movement is very much alive, that its members deeply love Marcellin's charisma and have a genuine interest in sharing this gift with others". During the final stage of its work, the Commission invited four guest members: Danilo Farneda (Mediterránea), Claudia Rojas (Norandina), Layza Gómez (Brasil Centro-Norte), and Brother Sylvain Raman-



dimbiarisoa as a representative from Africa.

## General House: Formation course for lay animators

From May 19 to June 2, a group of 55 lay Marists and 3 brothers participated in the International Course for Lay Animators at the General House in Rome. All Administrative Units were present, with one exception due to visa problems. The main goal of the two-week course was to train lay people as leaders of the lay formation processes at all levels (local, provincial and international). The contents, experiences, and atmosphere helped to encourage the participants' shared commitment to the lay formation processes within the Institute, and realize the call to be mystics and prophets as lay leaders. The course aimed at promoting the understanding and experience of the spiritual itineraries that are necessary to foster lay vocational processes, in order to generate awareness and unity among the Marist laity at the international level so that they can share their expertise with the Regions. At



the end of the meeting, the participants shared their rich experiences: "Now I realize that I'm not alone, other people are walking next to me". "These days were a unique opportunity to renew my lay vocation and my YES to God's call". "The commitment to my lay vocation stays with me in

my heart". "The meeting was a deep calling from God and the Brothers to live together our Marist vocation with more depth, boldness and vitality, side by side, burning with the Spirit of Christ". The participants accepted the invitation to promote similar meetings in their own Regions.

# Annual meeting of the Inter-American Laity Subcommittee

The Marist Formation Center in Guatemala City welcomed the annual meeting of the Inter-American Laity Subcommittee from August 25 to 29. The team began by reviewing the Global Framework Document, which deals with the lay vocational itineraries and the process of bonding and belonging. They discussed the proposal of organizing courses for lay animators in each Region (Guatemala, Brazil and Chile). The experience of around 80 lay Marists in Santa María de los Andes and 50 in Central America shows that accompaniment is an essential element of the lay vocational itineraries. Looking for greater synergy, the Subcommittee met with Brother Luis Carlos Gutiérrez, President of the Inter-American Conference of Provincials, and then with Brother Carlos Vélez, Coordinator of the Inter-American Commission of Spirituality, Brothers and Laity. They both highlighted the need for the different bodies to work together in a coordinated way in order to make the best use of our resources and to encourage the develop-



ment of our mission. The Subcommittee also met with a group of lay Marists who are following vocational itineraries in Guatemala.

## FOR REFLECTION

Each one around his surroundings assures the vitality of the Charism

Do you know that her presence contributes to the vitality of the Charism and permits the continuation of the dream of Champagnat? Why do we form part of the Marist Association? We are in a significant moment in the history of the Marist life of the Province and of the whole world. We are living a time of renewal. The Marist Association has been founded to gather together all the persons who desire to live the Marist spirit and who want to promote it in our society. It has been founded to contribute to the vitality of the Marist works together with the Brothers. Each one around him assures the vitality of the charism. Like Champagnat, each one rolls up his sleeves and puts on the apron to help, to serve... to accompany a person or a young person in need, to love others, to manifest humanity. Personally I am happy to form part of a Marist Province that moves, that prepares the future that desires to continue the dream of Champagnat. To form part of the Marist Association of the laity is to contribute to construct the Marist life of today and of tomorrow for the present Marists and for those who will follow us, in a spirit of collaboration and complementarity among all the Marists, Brothers and laity. We form part of this Association because we believe in the Marist spirit, because we want to transmit it and make it fructify. We have received a gift, an inheritance and we want to witness to it. The Marist Association is a great family. The availability of all Marists is necessary for the Marist life and mission. We need to continue constructing the Marist charism to assure that the Marist mission is perennial, to continue with the dream of Marcelline with the young.



*Linda Corbeil, president of the Marist association of the Laity of Canada*