

Bulletin IGMY

International Gathering of Marist Youth
Rio de Janeiro - Brazil, 2013 - Special Edition

November/2013



Marists
from all
Continents
gather in
Rio de Janeiro

Marist Youth makes a difference

Young people around the world participate
in Change and the WYD Rio 2013

- The four branches of the Marist Family dialogue with youth
- II Marist International Mission Assembly seeks greater union between Brothers and Lay

CHANGE
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!
Internacional Gathering of Marist Youth | RIO 2013

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Publication

Marist Institute

Superior General

Br. Emili Túru

Vicar General

Br. Joseph Mc Kee

General Council

Br. Antonio Carlos Ramalho

Br. Ernesto Barba Sánchez

Br. Eugène Kabanguka

Br. John Klein

Br. Josep Maria Soteras Pons

Br. Michael de Waas

Br. Víctor Preciado Ramírez

Secretariat for Mission

Br. João Carlos do Prado

Br. Miguel Ángel Espinosa

Publication Co-ordination

Support group for Marist
Communication Group

Fabiana Ferreira

Fernanda Jacometti

Irene Elias Simões

Juliana Maria Fontoura

Graphics and layout

Studio Sem Dublê and
Fábio Egg Mais

Photos

João Borges

Contact

Piazzale Marcelino

Champagnat, 2

00144 – Roma - Itália

Phone: (39) (06) 545171

e-mail: fms@fms.it



Young People make a c

A group of young people, mostly young men, are smiling and posing for a photo. They are wearing white t-shirts with a blue and green checkered pattern on the sleeves and the text "CHANGE FAÇA A DIFERENÇA! Encontro Internacional de Jovens Maristas | RIO 2013". In the background, the Christ the Redeemer monument is visible against a clear blue sky. Other people, including an older man and a man in a white hat, are also present in the scene.

Change, the International Gathering of Marist Youth (IGMY), brought together about 300 young people from 40 countries on the 5 continents and 60 young volunteers, organizers and invited guests. With the theme **“Make the Difference”** Change took place in the Marist School St. Joseph in Rio de Janeiro from 17 a 22 of July, just before the International Day of Youth.

On the second day of the meeting the participants got to know the “postcard” of the city, Christ the Redeemer. The group took the train up to Corcovado.

difference in CHANGE

CHANGE



Cristiano Ramos Pereira, a student at Marist College in Londrina, Brazil, composed the theme music for Change. The words speak about the transformation of the world and the fact that love is the only reason for living.



Young people from different countries but united by the Marist charisma.



Solidarity with the young people of Syria. The banner with messages of hope was sent to the community in the country. See the image in Marist Alep Facebook page.



During the visit to the community of Borel in Rio de Janeiro, participants interacted with the locals Change



Brother Alvanei Finamor makes a fun presentation with Christian values and Marist



The participants in Change interacted with the residents during their visit to Borel, in Rio de Janeiro. The Superior General of the Marist Brothers, Brother Emili Turu, spoke to the young people about the slogan of Change: **Make a difference!**



Young people make a difference with faith and spirituality



Joaquim Sperandio, Provincial Superior of the Marist Group, in a moment of reflection with young People



Young people with the Marist Missionary Sisters from Tonga, an island in Oceania, displayed their typical dances.



Marist Brothers from around the world united in a meeting.



From head to toe. The cultural exchange in Change was striking.



Some of approximately 40 volunteers who helped organize the event



In giving his testimony about his experience in Change, a youth from the United States said that he felt that all the participants were united by love and by the values of Marceline Champagnat.



Groups gathered to share the life experiences and activities of the day.



Joy at the closing of Change with the presentation from the "Império da Tijuca" School of Samba.

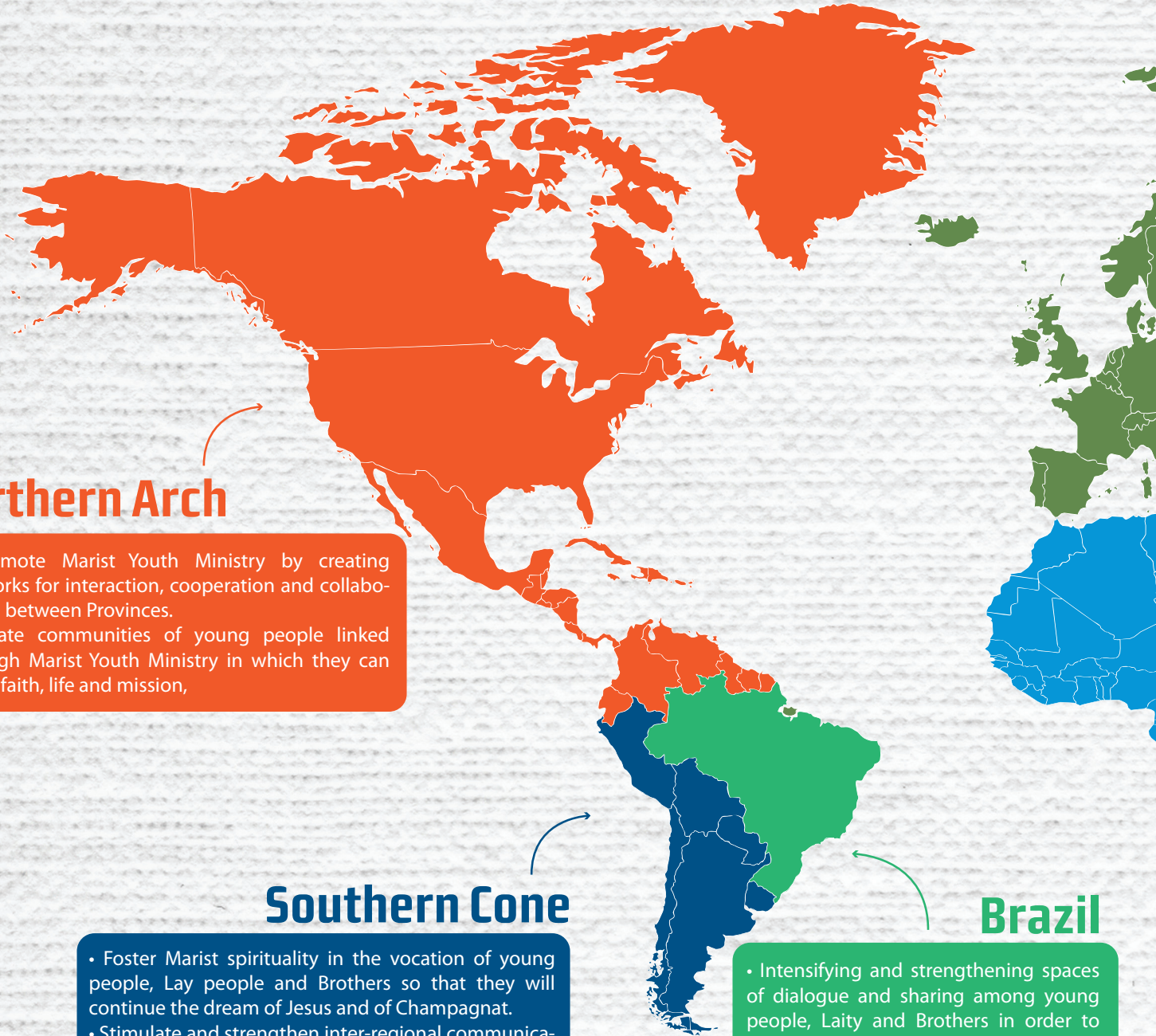
APPEALS OF IGMY

At the end of their meeting the participants in the International Gathering of Marist Youth made some proposals to the Institute and the regions relating to the Marist Youth Ministry:

Appeals to the Institute:

- Strengthen the Marist Mission so that Young people, lay people and Brothers continue to preach the good news
- Find new ways for the Marist Youth, empowered by the heritage of Champagnat, to be close to the most vulnerable.
- Cultivate the gift of listening to respond to the needs of the youth and to find concrete responses which favor the integration of Youth, Lay people and the brothers.
- Promote a space for consultation and deliberation that involves youth, by creating a Marist Youth Sub-secretary linked to the Secretariat for Mission.
- Promote exchange between the Administrative Units (Young people, Lay people and Brothers) to strengthen the internationality of the Marist Institute.
- Establish bridges between Youth, Lay people and Brothers by means of open communities which nurture Marist spirituality and identify, guaranteeing the dimension of silence, solidarity and internationality.
- Create an online space to integrate Marist Youth.





Northern Arch

- Promote Marist Youth Ministry by creating networks for interaction, cooperation and collaboration between Provinces.
- Create communities of young people linked through Marist Youth Ministry in which they can share faith, life and mission,

Southern Cone

- Foster Marist spirituality in the vocation of young people, Lay people and Brothers so that they will continue the dream of Jesus and of Champagnat.
- Stimulate and strengthen inter-regional communication so as to promote knowledge, respect for and appreciation of our differences and the similarities which enrich our mission.

Brazil

- Intensifying and strengthening spaces of dialogue and sharing among young people, Laity and Brothers in order to help in the building up a plan of life.
- Search for the dimension of **“heart without boundaries”** so that we can destroy barriers which separate us, so as to be acculturated and share our lived experiences, respecting diversity and extending ties beyond the Institute.

THE REGIONS:

Europe

- Prioritize the presence of Marist Brothers among young people
- Promote a communitarian life between youth, lay people and brothers which guarantees the dimension of spirituality and pastoral action.
- Provide personal accompaniment to young people, thereby helping them in their vocational search.

Asia

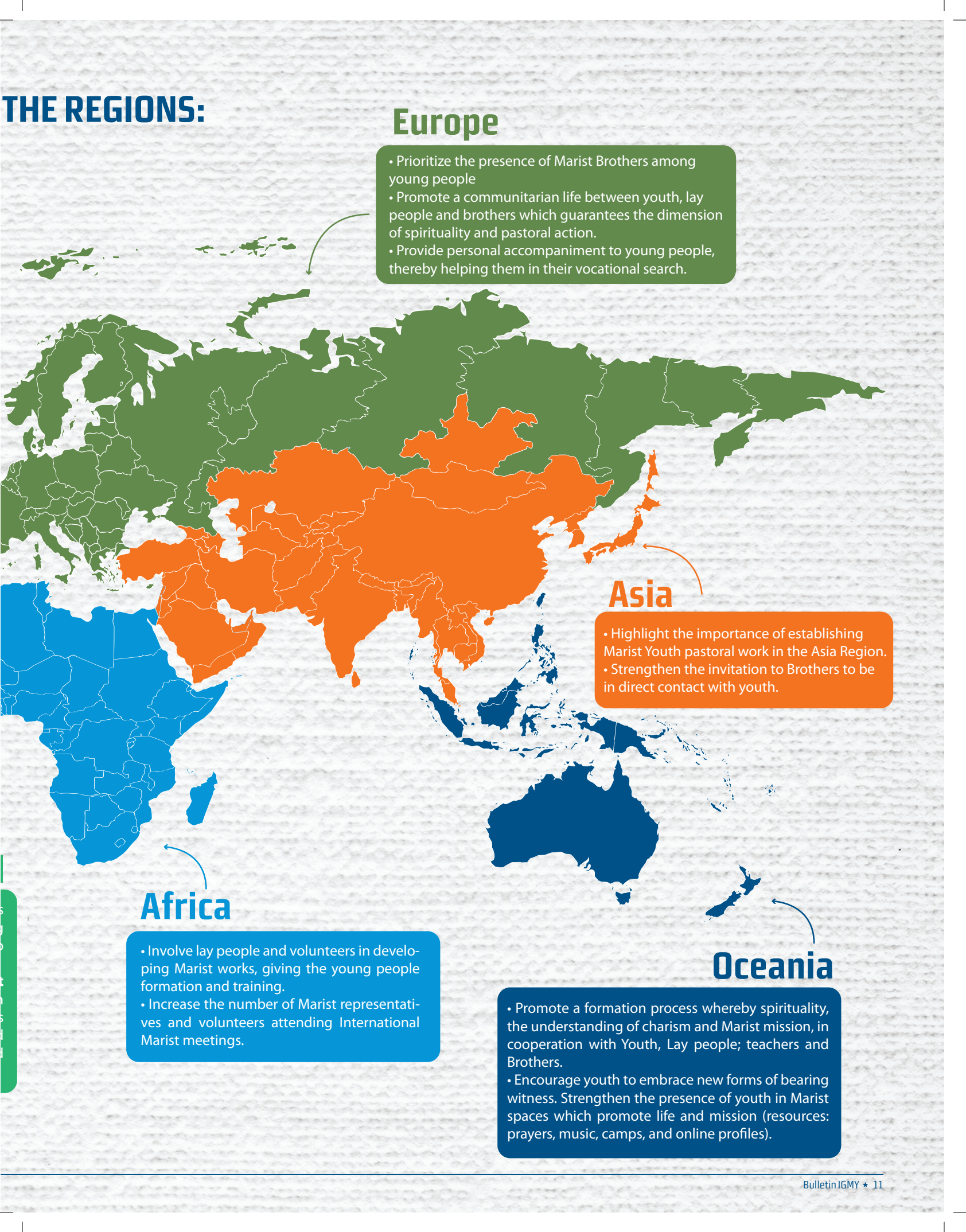
- Highlight the importance of establishing Marist Youth pastoral work in the Asia Region.
- Strengthen the invitation to Brothers to be in direct contact with youth.

Africa

- Involve lay people and volunteers in developing Marist works, giving the young people formation and training.
- Increase the number of Marist representatives and volunteers attending International Marist meetings.

Oceania

- Promote a formation process whereby spirituality, the understanding of charism and Marist mission, in cooperation with Youth, Lay people; teachers and Brothers.
- Encourage youth to embrace new forms of bearing witness. Strengthen the presence of youth in Marist spaces which promote life and mission (resources: prayers, music, camps, and online profiles).





The four branches of the

Marist Family

The Superior Generals met at the closing of Change to talk to the Marist Youth.

By Fernanda Jacometti

On July 22nd the young people from the four Marist branches met to share their experiences, get to know one another and begin a process of joint collaboration celebrating their shared common Marist identity.

The four Superior Generals were present. The aim was to dialogue with the young people present at the event with a single voice and bring the Marian face of the Church to the world. There are four Marist congregations. They are the Marist Fathers, Marist Brothers, the Marist Sisters and the Marist Missionary Sisters. All of them are grounded in the way of Mary but each branch has its own unique charisma. In this report the Superior Generals of each of the four branches talk about how they live their mission.



Emili Turú

1 Marist Brothers

The Superior General is Brother Emili Turú. The mission of the Brothers is to make Jesus known and loved by children and young people throughout the world. In order to accomplish this task, they dedicate themselves to education, evangelization, solidarity and the promotion and defense of the rights of children.

MARIST NEWSLETTER (MN) - HOW IMPORTANT ARE MEETINGS SUCH AS THESE FOR SPREADING THE MARIST MISSION AND SPIRITUALITY?

I believe that gatherings like these are extremely significant for youth. It is a select group of people who are very receptive and open to receive the messages transmitted during the meeting. The young people who were here will be multipliers of the Marist charisma. They will bring the message to their friends, work colleagues and families. We see that the participants have a great desire to make a difference and to change situations. It is interesting to note that geographical boundaries have no importance here. A few hours are sufficient for young people from around the whole world to start communicating with each other. Because, in spite of the cultural differences, they are part of the same family, the Marist family. Certainly the experience which they acquired will bear fruit. For us the Gathering is an opportunity to see how young people understand and live out Marist spirituality. Based on this information we can establish new dimensions for the future.



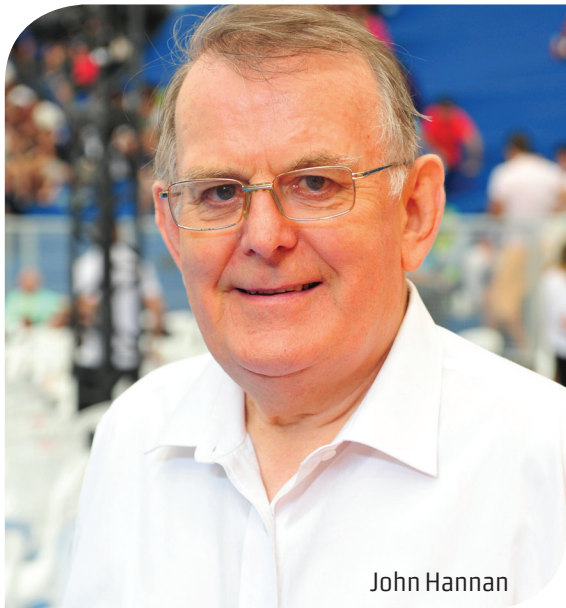
Georgeanne Marie Donovan

2 Marist Missionary Sisters

They are always ready to leave their own countries to spread the Kingdom of Jesus Christ and to make Mary known by all. They are present in 24 countries spread throughout all the continents. The Superior General of the Congregation is Georgeanne Marie Donovan.

MN - WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT MEETING AS THE FOUR MARIST BRANCHES IN BRAZIL?

As missionaries we go around the world to help communities address their needs, revealing the love of Christ as Mary did. It is a great opportunity to be here with young people from around the world. They share their experiences and ways of living the Marist love of Marcellin Champagnat. Having contact with each branch of the Marist Family helped me to grasp the fact that we are linked in community, we are connected. Hearing the testimony of young people also helped me to see how we are linked to them, because they understand the Marist message and put it into practice. We are present in 24 countries and, knowing different peoples, I understand that the Marist charisma is needed by our world. It is necessary in order to transmit hope, love, humility, justice a family spirit. These are values which society needs to strengthen.



John Hannan

3 **Marist Fathers**

The Superior General is Fr. John Hannan who lives in Italy. The congregation is delighted to receive new vocations for religious life and Marist priesthood. They offer interested young people vocational spiritual discernment in the countries where they are located.

MN - HOW CAN EVENTS WHICH BRING TOGETHER YOUNG CATHOLICS CONTRIBUTE TO AWAKENING NEW VOCATIONS?

Faith in general is strengthened when like-minded people meet in solidarity to pray, listen, be reconciled and later take on a more serious role in giving witness to the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is still more powerful in the context of World Youth Day, when thousands of the faithful and people who are searching for meaning are united around the Holy Father, so that they can be catechized, listen to the Word of God, give witness to and celebrate the joy of being Christian, because they see in the Risen Christ the source and the apex of their life. In this context, to put it more strongly, faith is contagious. By means of this experience, the Christian vocation becomes more vibrant and more focused.



Jane Francés
O'Carroll

4 **Marist Sisters**

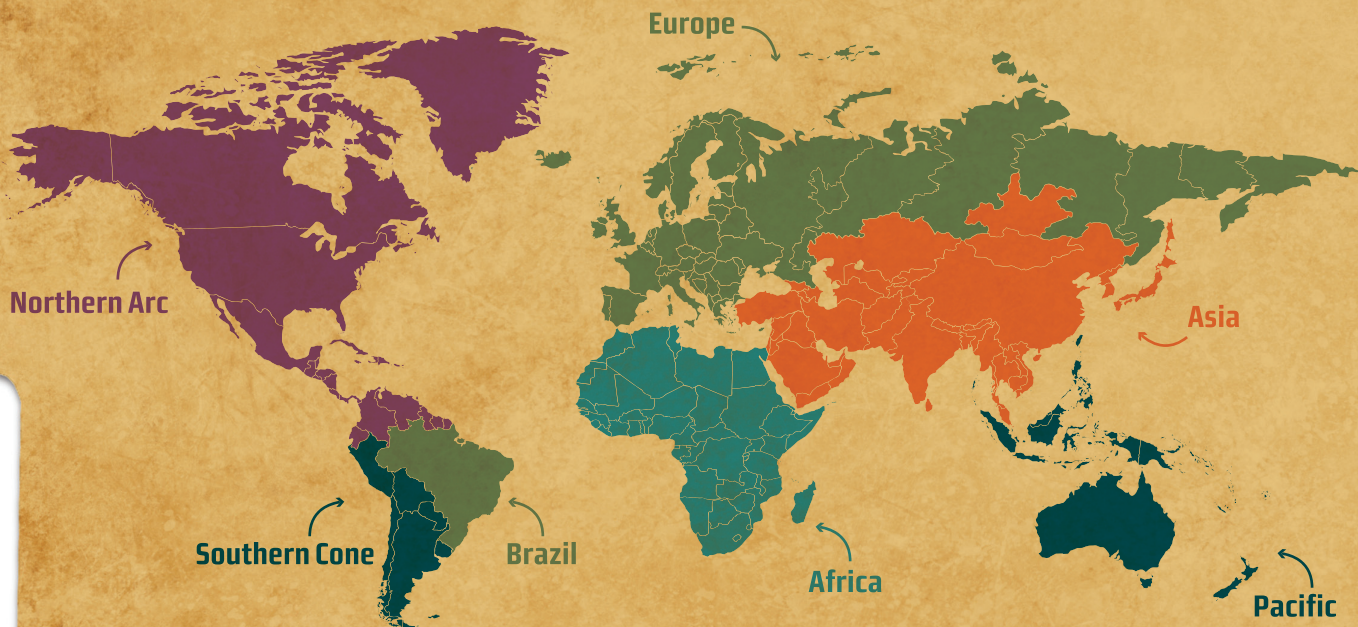
The Superior General is Sr. Jane Frances O'Carroll. The sisters are present in 15 countries and are active in the areas of education, social work, health, and the formation of lay ministries in the Church. The Sisters are called to go to locations where the needs are greatest.

MN - HOW DOES THE MARIAN STYLE, TRANSMITTED BY A FEMALE CONGREGATION, CONTRIBUTE TO DISSEMINATING THE MARIST CHARISM TO OTHER COMMUNITIES?

The Marists are called to be a presence of Mary in the world, wherever they are. We believe that we are called to follow Christ as Mary did. We will never have all the answers or all the skills needed. But, God chose us, first of all through our Baptism and then through our Marist vocation, to bring the Word of Jesus to the world in every place where we find ourselves. Jesus invites us to be like Mary, following her example, being bearers of the Good News, comfort, hope and joy to those who need to hear it, as Mary did! We choose to do this as women, consecrated women, in the contemporary Church and world.

Marist Presence in the World

by Juliana Fontoura



The Institute of the Marist Brothers began their activities in 1817 in France, starting from Marcellin Champagnat's dream of educating children and young people in Christian principles and values. This dream has been transformed into a big project which today is present in 79 countries in our world. More than 3,400 Brothers and 72, 000 lay Marists dedicate their time to making Jesus Christ known and loved in all corners of the world.

The young Marists participated in the International Gathering of Marist Youth (Change) and in the World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro. The participants had the opportunity of getting to know some Brothers and Marist Youth coming from Marist Provinces spread across 5 continents. They participated in the event to share experiences and give expression to their witness to a living and transforming faith. It was also a great opportunity



to connect with all the four Marist branches.

MARIST MISSION

To form ethical, just citizens, who live in solidarity for the transformation of society by means of educational processes grounded in Gospel values, in the Marist way.

AFRICA - 20 COUNTRIES

South Africa, **Angola**, Algeria, Cameroon, Chad, Congo-Kinshasa, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Kenya, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia and **Zimbabwe**.

AMERICA - 21 COUNTRIES

Argentina, Bolivia, **Brazil**, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Ecuador, United States, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Porto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela.

EUROPE - 13 COUNTRIES

Germany, Belgium, **Spain**, France, **Greece**, Holland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, United Kingdom, Romania and Switzerland.

ASIA - 16 COUNTRIES

Bangladesh, Cambodia, Singapore, South Korea, Philippines, India, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Pakistan, Syria, **Sri Lanka**, Thailand, East Timor and other countries.

OCEANIA - 9 COUNTRIES

Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu.

¹Marist Mission in numbers – Available at www.champagnat.org



Leonard Brito ministering at the Marist Camp in Zimbabwe.



Leonard Brito

AFRICA

Zimbabwe

Leonard Brito came to Change and World Youth Day representing the Marist Province of Southern Africa. He lives in Zimbabwe and became a Marist Brother in the 1990s when he was only 19 years old. After hearing the moving story of Marcellin Champagnat, as told by Br. Kizito Bute in school he came to realize that he had a vocation to be **“the youngest brother of Mary”**, as he himself said.

Since becoming a Marist, he has always tried to be involved in social projects. One of them took place during the Mission Ad Gentes in Cambodia. Leonard left Africa to give assistance to children in situations of social vulnerability in Southeast Asia. **“The international programme developed in the region with lay people and members in the diocese of Kampong Cham, enabled the children to receive basic lessons in English and also some grounding in health and hygiene”**, he recalls.

As a Zimbabwean, Leonard talks about his experience on the other side of the world with

pride. However, the most significant work of his life is being done in his native country. At present he is the Director of the Marist Camp in Zimbabwe, a not-for-profit organisation which brings together poor children from the ages of 8 to 11 years each year. **“We select those participating in the camp from among the outcasts, the excluded, the orphans and especially those who were infected by the HIV virus”**, he explains.

According to Brother, instead of giving the children money or material goods, the group shared with the children the simple gifts given by God, such as affection, attention and care. The experience in Rio de Janeiro has made Leonard reflect a lot about the future. For him, the development of the Marist Mission in the world reveals the power of God which shines through his humble servant, St. Marcellin Champagnat. Besides this, it shows that God is present in the lives of the Brothers and the Lay Marists and active in all that they do.

AFRICA

Angola



Silvio Albino

When he was 25 years old, the young Angolan, Silvio Albino Agostinho, left his continent for the first time to represent the Marist Province of Southern Africa at the events which took place in Rio. The responsibility was great – but he took it on seriously. In spite of enormous anxiety due to the scale of the event, he managed to befriend other young people and share his experiences as a Marist, principally those in the social projects in which he participated and developed as a volunteer in Angola. Silvio is proud to speak about the work which he undertook in the Br. Pasa Solidarity Project, in the needy community of Kaluco, situated 14 km from the municipality of Kuito.

There he dedicates all his time to needy children in the region. He tutors children, prepares snacks, gathers school materials and clothing and organises recreational activities. But the work doesn't stop there.

The whole community benefits from the work done to support the rights of the children. **“We are involved in trying to raise funds to build the chapel and adobe houses for the residents”** he says. The latest task was the building of a structure called Jumar where shows can be put on. Silvio does everything possible so that the members of the community feel involved in the society and less marginalised.

The young man also works each year in the Aid Project in the San Jose community, a home for lepers who live in precarious situations, in an area where basic items such as medicines, food, clothing and articles of personal hygiene are scarce. According to Silvio, the suffering of those people is alleviated by the human warmth of the volunteers. They become more hopeful as a result of the message they receive. **“God never forgets his children”**, he believes.

AMERICA *Argentina*

Federico Fontenla, a 22 years old Argentinian, came to Brazil to represent the Southern Cross Marist Province at Change and the World Youth Day. He tried to conceal his pride in being chosen to participate in this meeting from among many young people in the Manuel Belgrano Marist College. Everybody said that he was chosen because he always showed a vocation to communicate the message of Marcellin Champagnat and also because of his frequent and exemplary involvement in solidarity projects.

Federico belongs to the Hermitage Missionary Group who were involved in a needy Argentinian community called San Jaime de la Frontera during the summer. The varied programs captivated the volunteers. **“We ran activities such as games, dances, films and Catechism for the children in the mornings and in the afternoons we visited houses in the region,**

sharing joy and confidence with people” he explained. Young people and adults were entertained throughout the day with bingo, theatre, volleyball and football.

World Youth Day 2013 was made even more interesting for the young Marist because he witnessed the visit of the new pope to Brazil. **“Seeing the Pope gave me a unique and inexplicable feeling, especially knowing that he is Argentinian like myself”**, he said. Federico was emotional when he spoke about his impressions of **“the one who bridges heaven and earth, God and people”**.

Federico believes that, because he is humble and modest, Pope Francis will manage to get close to the people and, with sensitivity and grace, deal with the contentious issues that have cast a shadow on the Church and driven away people of faith. **“I am sure that he will manage to spread the message of Jesus, re-converting the faithful and de-contaminating the Church”** he concluded.



Federico Fontenla

Federico Fontenla with his missionary friends in the needy community of St. James in Argentina.



San Jaime 2013

AMERICA Brazil

Although Gustavo Queiroz of the South Central Marist Province of Brazil, is only 18 years old he has already had a lot of experience as a Marist youth. Everything began in 2006 when he left the interior of Parana to study in the capital city and began to be involved in the activities organized by the Youth Pastoral section of Santa Maria Marist College. For many years the brothers and those involved in pastoral work in the school taught the young man how to live as Mary did.

Gustavo learnt to be simple and just, to believe in work, to have a sense of community, to live spirituality fully, to serve the needy and especially to be a significant presence everywhere he went. **“When I wore the Youth Pastoral shirt I felt truly Marist”** he commented.

When he completed the curriculum in Santa Maria Marist College, Gustavo wanted to continue working in Solidarity projects linked to the Pastoral Department. It was thus that he registered for the Fourth Moment, a program

for alumni who wanted to continue following the steps of St. Marcellin Champagnat. In partnership with young people and those from the Youth pastoral, he continued his social and community involvement in the **“Ciranda de Pais”** project, carried out monthly in a vulnerable community of the metropolitan district of Curitiba.

Hoping to reduce the rate of violence in the municipal area of Pinhais, the group decided to carry out an integrated program to help the families of the region. The idea was to encourage the mothers and children of the region to stretch their bonds of love and begin to work together to guarantee their rights in society. **“We spread the following idea: formation without action leads to alienation and action without formation leads to emptiness”** he explained. The work undertaken by the group greatly improved the situation of the community.

Gustavo shared something about this successful experience with other young people during Change and World Youth Day and listened to interesting stories which other pilgrims had to tell about the Marist Mission in the world. **“I am certain that this lived experience with other young missionaries from around the world will have a significant effect on the work undertaken by the Provincial Youth Committee”** he said.



Gustavo Queiroz



Carla Sanchez with the children of Grumnets, Voluntary Association of Catalunya, in Spain.



Carla Sanchez



EUROPE Spain

The 24yr old Spaniard, Carla Sanchez Carpiñero, was emotional when she recalled the special moments she had experienced during Change and World Youth Day in Rio 2013. It was the first time that she had participated in an international event for young people, representing the Province where the Marist Institute's Motherhouse is located. **"I was very happy to be able to share my work in the Hermitage Province with the Marist youth from around the world"** she said.

Carla had already been involved in many social projects. One of them is in Grumnets, an association of volunteers from Catalunya which has as its main objective to educate children in Marist and Christian values. **"I have been a volunteer for six years and I hope to continue, because we have had some wonderful times with the children, sharing some important life concepts"**, she said.

As well as the voluntary experience in Grumnets, the young woman had also been involved in the Sharing Centre, a Marist Social center located in the district of **"Ciutat Vella"** of Barcelona where after-school recreational and performing arts activities are offered to children from the ages of 3 - 16 who are in situations of risk.

The young Spaniard learnt to live Mary's way of life from her mother who is a teacher at the Marist College. Since childhood she has participated in celebration, learning how important it is to reach out to others who are in need. She is proud to be able to follow in the steps of Marcellin Champagnat. Carla believes that his work became so important because it has a significance that touches people profoundly throughout the world. **"They learn about mission and they want to participate, become part of this story, this is the power that links us globally"**, she said.

Children who have benefited from the Marists on the Isle of Tinos in Greece.



Markos Palamaris



Iosif Varthalitis

EUROPE Greece

Markos Palamaris lives in his native country, Greece. He became a Marist while he was still in school. Because he has always lived surrounded by people who were committed to education and spiritual development, he learnt from an early age how important it was to help others and participate in social projects as a volunteer. **“I received so much love and attention from the Brothers and teachers during all the time I was in school that I decided to do the same for other children and young people”**, he explained.

During the summer Marist cam on the island of Tinos, Markos acted as though he was a beacon, sharing the light of Marist values with children from the region. **“I always try to transmit the teachings of Marcellin Champagnat that, later on, will be the foundations on which their personality will be built.”** In Tinos, Markos and other Marist youth did justice to the

involvement of all the brothers of the Hermitage Province, which he represents.

In Change and the World Youth Day, Markos was even more proud, because his work was recognized by the friends he managed to make during the days spent in Brazil. It was the first time that he had traveled to an international meeting of young people and his impressions of the event were the best. **“I think that if the founder of the Marist Institute was still alive, he would be proud to see the great evolution of the Marist Mission in the world”** he said.

In Tinos

22 years old Iosif Varthalitis had also worked in the camp on the Greek island of Tinos during the summer. For the last four years, the young Greek dedicated himself to the amazing experience of sharing Marcellin Champagnat’s teachings with the children. Besides this, he was anxious to show them how it is possible to live the Marist Mission on a daily basis. He is doing everything possible to spread Marist ideals throughout Greece and the whole world. What about you?

OCEANIA

Australia

The young Australian, Hendrika Duivenvoorden of the Marist Province of Australia is a faithful participant in international youth meetings. Although she is only 22 years old, she has already taken part in two multicultural Marist events and participated in Change and World Youth Day. She believes that these gatherings are extremely important, opening the eyes of young people to help the needy.

The most significant event for her was the International Marist Festival, which took place in Sydney in 2008. **“The moment that was really decisive for me and inspired me to live a Marist life occurred during this Festival when I found myself surrounded by many other Marist youth from around the world and I understood that the message of the great Marcellin has spread far and wide”** she said.

The International Meeting of Marist Youth that took place in Madrid in 2011 was another important moment for the youth. She was enchanted by the contact with a new culture, a new language and the friendships which she made with Spaniards, Brazilians, Mexicans French people and Germans. She really experienced God’s presence and the true Marist spirit During the meeting.

She also went!

Courtney Redden from the Australian Marist Province also participated in the International Marist Festival in 2008 that took place in Sydney. She recalls that at the time she was only 17 and she enjoyed herself right from the first day of the event in the house of the Australian brothers in Mittagong. She was with a group of foreign Marists and they made music, prepared performances and listened to talks.

“ This was the moment that stirred in me the realization of what it meant to be Marist” she said.

She also took part in the International Gathering of Marist Youth which took place in Madrid in 2011 and thought the experience of travelling to another continent was incredible. **“I went to the two last international meetings of youth, in Madrid and Sydney, and I can honestly say that it was a truly inspirational and moving experience”**, she notes.

It was for this reason that she decided to repeat it this year and she was not sorry. For Hendrika the World Youth Day - Rio 2013 was very special, a great commemoration of faith, hope and life. She met old friends and made new ones, she lived her spirituality and deepened her understanding of Marcellin.

The young Australian took advantage of the gathering to share with other Marist youth what she had done in the Australian Marist Province. She spoke with pride of her work as a volunteer in two programmes that were carried out through the Marist Youth Pastoral section. One of them is the “Backyard Blitz” which involves a group of young people gathering to clean up the gardens of elderly people and gather money at football games for cancer research. The other is “Bread Run” where young people are charged with delivering bread to vulnerable families.



The Australian Hendrika Duivenvoorden involved in voluntary work with underprivileged children in Spain.

The Australians,
Hendrika
Duivenvoorden,
Courtney Redden
e Hollie Hockey
attended Change.



Indians learnt about Australian culture from the Marist Youth - Hollie Hockley.

ASIA

Sri Lanka



Hendrika believes that the teachings of Marcellin Champagnat are shared by many people around the world because they touch the soul profoundly. If it depended on her the Marist style of living and the idea of helping the least fortunate would be even more widespread.

Brother Chamara Hettiarachchi of the South Asia Marist Province came to Brazil from afar with an important mission: to make the international experience of the World Youth Day available to three Marist youth. Mishel Shiro-mal, Kushan Dhananjaya and Darien Jason stepped on to the American continent to develop the capacity to listen and to share experiences and principally to revitalize the desire to follow the Marist path.

Chamara's approach and desire to benefit the boys reproduced something that he himself had experienced with the Marists in the school where he had studied. When he was only 17 he had the chance to experience the friendly and welcoming approach of those who followed in the steps of Marcellin Champagnat. **"They taught me many things, among others, a family spirit, which is one of the values that I try to pass on to the young people accompanied me to this Gathering"** he said.

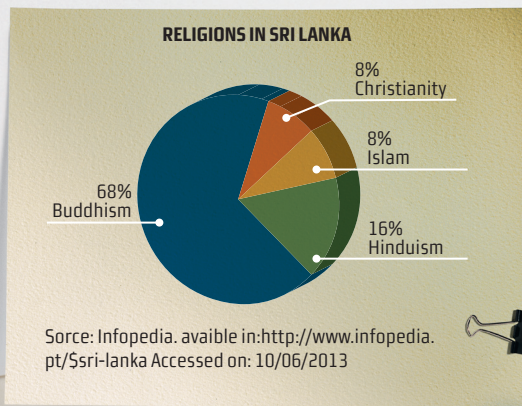
Furthermore, Brother Chamara wanted to present to the youth coming from a region of religious diversity the teachings of the founder of the Marist Institute which are being so widely diffused throughout the world. **"I think that knowing other Marist youth they are going to better understand the phenomenon of why Buddhists look for a Marist education"**, he explains.

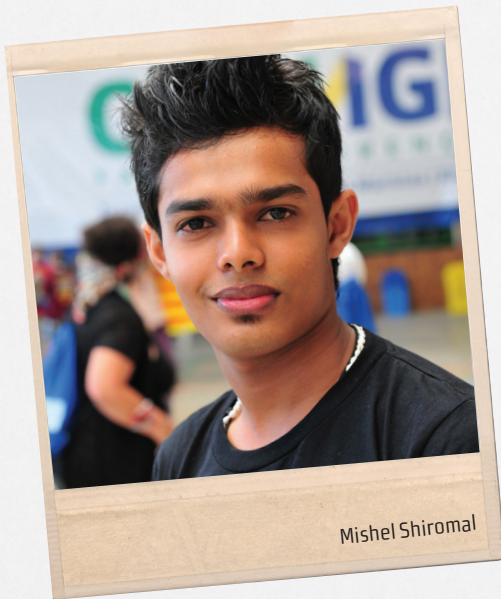
Brother Chamara works in St. Joseph's School and nobody there is segregated because they are from another religion. He has been organising

voluntary work for many years which involves young Buddhists. The Young Christians society, for example, meets on Sundays and involves many people who are interested in giving help to the poor and in visiting the sick. In the youth group at school, Marists and Buddhists dedicate their days by going to orphanages. **"We meet in these places to cook and make the children happy"** he explains.

According to Brother Chamar, the Marist education in Sri Lanka does not only offer religious teaching but reflection on social issues and universal concepts. **"that makes everyone serve the world, contributing to the good of humanity, regardless of their belief system"**, he asserts.

Br. Chamara was very happy when he saw the Marist presence in the World during Change and World Youth Day. **"In my opinion, there is no difference between our time and that of Champagnat, because the Good mother, Maria looks after us and always shows us the way so that more and more people can help the needy"**, he affirms. Similarly, the young people took advantage of the opportunity to return to Sri Lanka with a different vision of the world. For them, it was an unforgettable occasion, a way of opening up their minds to think in a different way.





“Change was an important moment for me to look inside, to better understand myself and begin to change. I believe that starting from this it will be easier to understand the difficulties of other people and to help make the world better. I am going to bring the lessons which I learnt here into my daily life in my family and with my friends. The sharing with other colleagues and the activities that were carried out gave me the opportunity to experience the spirit of being family, of fraternity, hope that it is possible to transform and the courage to put into practice what I believe in”.

“I am a teacher and I am going to share what I’ve learnt here with my students. These are experiences which show what it is to share, to serve one’s neighbour, the family spirit. Sri Lanka is a small country and the population is made up of people of different cultures with their own religions. The contact with people from so many countries from all the continents shows that there are other ways of perceiving reality and that we have to have the flexibility to change when it is necessary. I learnt that I can teach my neighbour and also learn from my neighbour”.



“During Change I stayed with very friendly people who were open and had the spirit of solidarity. I was able to talk to them about myself, and I also listened to some wonderful stories. This exchange of experiences is essential in order to inspire us to transform reality, also enabling us to look at ourselves and see how we can be better people. All those who participated in Change are following the same goal, which is transformation. The exchange of experiences is motivating. Certainly I will bring what I learnt from this interaction back to my own country”.



RENEWAL OF FAITH

More than 1,000 Marists participated in World Youth Day 2013. In all, the event in Rio de Janeiro from 23-28 July drew more than 3 million youth from around the world. The countries with the largest number of participants were Brazil, Argentina and the United States. The presence of Pope Francis served to renew the hope and the faith of Christians.



WYD opened spaces to debate with youth in Catechetical sessions



Young Marists participated in giving testimony during Catechesis



The World Youth Day 2013 was attended by over 1000 participants Marist. In all, the event attracted more than 3 million young people worldwide in Rio de Janeiro from 23 to 28 July. The countries with the largest number of participants were Brazil, Argentina and the United States. The presence of the Pope Francisco renewed hope and faith of Christians.



Marists at the Vigil of World Youth Day.

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© Photo forwarded by participants of the Journey.

On the beach of Copacabana.

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Attention given
to all

Francis: The “Normal” Pope

During the press conference after the Pope's return to Rome the reporter, Andrea Tornielli, asked Pope Francis why he carried his own suitcase. The Pope responded:

“I carry it because I’ve always done so... It’s normal. We should be normal. It seems to me a little strange that the photo of me carrying a suitcase has gone around the world. We must get used to being normal; to the normality of life”.

This is one of the points that made us enthusiastic about Francis: he is a “normal pope”. It's not to say that his predecessors haven't been so, but with Francis we feel the ordinariness of life, someone close to us, someone who is by our side at the bus stop, in the supermarket line, a warm visit of someone sharing the same table and with a ready smile. We are dealing with a “normal pope” not because he referred to himself that way but on the contrary, we see that in his life, his gestures and the events in Scripture. It is what we perceive in his meeting with the volunteers on World Youth day, on the day

of his departure: **“the service which you have given during these days brings to mind the mission of John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Jesus”**. It is what we felt during his first talk in Brazil when, referring to the familiar passage in Acts 3:1-8, he said to those who came, **“I have neither gold nor silver, but I bring you the most precious thing given to me: Jesus Christ”**.

Francis is normal because he knows the human hearts, touching on existential questions: **“Jesus offers us something better than the World Cup! Something higher! Jesus offers us the possibility of a fruitful life, a happy life and he also gives us a future”**. The Pope knows that a pastor deals with people and not with ideas, because he presents himself with tenderness and kindness and not with dogmatic prescriptions:

“I learnt that to have access to the Brazilian people one must enter by the door of their huge heart: so allow me at this time to knock gently on this door”

In the Palace of St. Joachim Pope Francis called to mind that 26 July is commemorated as Grandparents' Day. He underscored their importance in the transmission of wisdom and knowledge. "The dialogue between the generations is a treasure which should be nurtured and maintained" he said.

Mass on 25 July on the Copacabana beach

Visit to the hospital S. Francis, located on Tijuca in the Palacio of St. Joachim

The normality of Francis is in possessing a colloquial language, starting from the ordinary events of each day, as is demonstrated by his **"Theological Treatise on Solidarity"** in the talk to the community in Varginha, based on our popular saying of **"putting more water in the beans"**.

The normality of existence, as Francis teaches us - and what he asks of us, is being close, tender, simple, good listeners, excellent at dialogue, joyful and smiling. This gives rise to a culture of hope. **"Don't let them rob you of hope! Don't let them rob you of hope! But I say to you too: don't rob hope! On the contrary, let us become bearers of hope!"** (Discourse on the occasion of the visit to St. Francis of Assisi Hospital.

Normality, from the Pope's lessons, is that young people are heard, but heard starting from their own context, as Francis said on the flight which brought him to the land of the Holy Cross: **"This first journey is in order to meet youth, but not in isolation from their life; I want to**

meet them mainly in their social context, in society. Because when we isolate young people we act unjustly; we strip them of their belonging".

In reality, the normality of a papal visit is to confirm the brothers/sisters in faith (Cf. Lk 22,32). Thus it is normal that Francis would have done that: **"I came to confirm them in their faith, faith in Christ who lives in you; I also came to confirm them in the enthusiasm of your faith"** (Welcome greeting to the young people).

Based on the normality of Pope Francis we could ask ourselves: What would be normal for youth? Simply that which the "Normal Pope" teaches us: **"I want to say to them what is the outcome that I hope for of the Day of Youth: I hope that they will make noise"**.

**By José André de Azevedo
Theologian and Pastoral Advisory Group Marist**



WYD 2016 in Poland

The Polish celebrate the choice of the next venue for the event

Poland, a predominantly Catholic country, will host World Day of Youth in 2016. The choice was made in honor of the first Polish pope, John Paul II, who will most likely be canonized before the end of this year. The announcement was made at the closing of the World Youth Day 2013 by Pope Francis.



II MARIST INTERNATIONAL MISSION ASSEMBLY

The II Marist International Mission Assembly (II MIMA), scheduled for the period 17 -27 September 2014, in Nairobi, Kenya, represents a historical moment for the Marist Institute. It is an attempt to respond to the calls of XXI General Chapter, which aims to establish a relationship of greater unity and vibrancy between Brothers and Lay people worldwide.

The first Assembly took place in Mendes, (Brazil) in 2007 and had as its theme “One heart, one mission”. The spirit of the event was designed to integrate the Brothers and lay people throughout the world with the same objective. Naturally this process resulted in a new reality which will be explored in II MIMA.

The gathering is designed to have a considerable impact on the life of the Brothers and Lay people, enabling them to meet on equal terms to reflect on the Marist mission and charism in the present and for the future. There will be an international sharing of Marist experiences working with children and youth.

The II MIMA will only take place in 2014, but much has already been done in terms of the preparatory phases (local, provincial and regional). A Preparatory Commission formed by the Superior General of the Institute, is proposing a prior reflection which is intrinsic to three themes running through the whole process which will culminate in the actual event. The topics are: Spirituality, Vocation and Evangelization.

The local phase occurs in the year preceding the international event. During this period, Brothers and Lay people will have the opportuni-

ty to dialogue, reflect and celebrate life in their communities. When the local phase is over, the Brothers and Marist laity will prepare for the provincial or district phase which will take place from January to May 2014. It is a time of preparation, coordinating the communications of each Province to the Assembly and proposing the names of Brothers and lay representatives to the international gathering.

After the local and provincial phases have finished, the II Marist International Mission Assembly will take place in Nairobi, Africa. It involves a time of sharing the content covered in the preparatory phases and an opportunity for the delegates from each Province to celebrate Marist life.

In order to transmit the experience of the Assembly, the Preparatory Commission suggests the realization of meetings and events that are similar but at regional level with the participation of Brothers, Laity and Youth who have participated in the local and provincial phases. These meetings are intended to contribute to the vitality of Marist mission in the region and provide concrete expressions which reflect the international character of the Institute.

PROGRAMMING OF PHASES

- Local phase, from April 2013 to April 2014
- Provincial Phase, from January to May 2014
- The Assembly: 17 to 27 September 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya.
- Regional phase, after the Assembly - in September 2014.

The logo of the II Marist International Mission Assembly is full of significance which helps to lay out the path by which the Brothers and Lay members must travel during the international meeting. Check it out.



FIRE

Is a symbol of heat and of light which are associated with the Holy Spirit and are converted into a missionary and apostolic force. The fire leads us to the heart of mission, in the strength of the Spirit of God. In many cultures fire symbolizes the place of meeting, where history and tradition are preserved, the present is celebrated and the future planned. This signifies the large Assembly which will be focused on Marist life and mission.

TREE

Signifies hospitality, the diversity and internationality of the Marist world will feel welcomed on African soil. For Africa, the tree symbolizes the home of culture and spirituality. Children are initiated under trees, and this is where family unions are established, where the spirits of the ancestors take refuge. It is a place of meditation, a natural temple whose greatness welcomes everyone.

HORIZON LINE

From the inspiration of our origins to the third century of Marist life, from the commitment of creative fidelity and journeying until the new, we glimpse a horizon that draws us and guides us in our mission.

BLUE FLAME

Surrounding the larger central flame we find two smaller flames, bluish in color. We associate the blue with heaven and with Mary. The Assembly may be a privileged occasion to respond to the call of the Chapter "With Mary go in haste to a New Land" which is not truly new, but can be constantly renewed. New Marists in mission.



LAY ANIMATION OF THE MARIST WORLD

From the period 28 May – 3 June 2013 a meeting of the representatives of the lay animating team of the Marist world took place in Spain. There were lay people and brothers from America, Asia, Africa, Europe and Oceania. Fabiano Incerti, Director of the Institute of Science and Faith of PUCPR participated from Brazil.

The meeting discussed the themes of the lay Marist vocation, the processes of accompaniment and formation, the commitment and the communion of Brothers and Laity with the Marist chrism.

The dynamic was essentially experiential. The concern to share lived experience, realities and projects which are being experienced in the Marist world predominated at the work table, in the groups and in the moments of informal dialogue.

The most significant feeling was that a qualitative leap occurs with the concept of the lay Marist vocation is seen in view of a new relationship between Lay women, lay men and Brothers.

The following of Jesus as a lay person with the charismatic reference of Marcellin Champagnat and his community of brothers is the present-future of a chrism which enriches the Church with its mission to children and young people.

It is in this new scenario that the need emerges for Brothers and Lay people to recognize the mutuality of their vocations and assume common responsibilities to develop plans for life and mission. The lived experience in Spain tells us that our Marist future is a future of communion.

