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Br AMEstaún

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Br Emili Turù

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Br Joe Mc Kee

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Br João Carlos do Prado

■ Secretariat of Brothers today
Br César Augusto Rojas

■ Secretariat of the laity
Br Javier Espinosa

■ Secretariat of International Collaboration for Mission
Br Chris Wills

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Br Michael De Waas
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The General Council's proposal to dedicate issue No. 41 of FMS Message to the animation and government of the Institute invites us to take a look back at the pages of our history as an Institute.

Historically, the meeting summoned by Father Colin on October 12, 1839, in view of Father Champagnat's serious illness, has always been considered our first General Chapter. At that time Brother François was elected Director General together with Brothers Louis-Marie and Jean-Baptiste as General Councilors. The most notable achievement of their time in office was to obtain the French government's official recognition of "the Little Brothers of Mary as a Religious Association dedicated to teaching."¹ A decree signed by Napoleon on June 20, 1851 approved the Statutes of the Institute, including one stating that the election of the Superior General was to be a lifetime commitment, and that after he died, his Assistants would remain in office until his successor was elected.

Having obtained government recognition of the Institute, the brothers turned their attention to ecclesiastical authorities in an effort to secure its canonical recognition. To accomplish this, the Institute needed to formally adopt certain regulatory documents and submit them to the ecclesiastical authorities in Rome. The brothers' leadership team decided to convoke a General Chapter at Our Lady of the Hermitage to examine these documents.²

In three sessions thereafter, the Chapter approved its governing principles, The Common Rules (1852), a teacher's manual, The School Guide (1853), and its collection of rules for governance, The Constitutions and Statutes of Government (1854), which determined that the Office of the Superior General would be a life-

² cf. Avit 2, 257-274.
time appointment. The Constitutions and Statutes of Government state that, “The Brother Superior General and his Assistants make up what is called the Administration of the Institute.” In its proceedings, besides its concern about remaining faithful to the Founder, the Chapter was very anxious to secure uniformity among all the schools in the Institute.

A novel idea that the Chapter of 1852 introduced into the Constitutions, one that had a great deal of influence on the life and organization of the Institute for many years to come, was to make the vow of stability a prerequisite for filling certain positions. As a whole, the work of that Chapter certainly guided the way in which the Institute would operate in the future, and pointed to a definitive separation between the work of the brothers and that of the priests, in accordance with the decisions that were being handed down by Rome.

When the brothers filed the documents with the Congregation of Bishops and Clergy in Rome to obtain the approval of the Marist Institute, they included a proposal in the Constitutions that the appointment of the Superior General be for life, just as this had been approved by the French Government in 1851. The Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Clergy, which favored less centralized and authoritarian ways of doing things, refused to accept this proposal, insisting that the Institute be governed by a Superior General with a 4-year term, and that the powers invested in the Assistants be decentralized by creating Provincials. Thus Rome’s proposed directives came into conflict with the set of regulations that had been approved by the French government, whose decree had

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3 See in: Constitutions and Rules of Government, published by Antonine Perisse, Lyon 1854: Chap. 2, art. 6, p. 5. This expression appears for the first time in the Circular by Brother François in April, 1852: “This Chapter will consist of 30 professed Brothers and by the members of the Regime, i.e., the Brother Superior General and his Assistants.” Circulars Vol. 2, p. 105. This term remained in use for many years, forming part of Marist terminology in relation to the structure of Government. Brother Charles-Raphaël, Superior General, continued to use this word in captions for some photographs stored in the Marist Brothers Archives in Rome, pictures in which he appears with members of his Council. The use of that terminology fell into disuse in the years leading up to the Council Vatican II.

4 “I don’t know if we are dreaming, dear Brothers, but we believe we can apply what our saintly Founder used to say about the Church to our Congregation’s present situation. Today, the Institute is just as our dear Father founded it and left it when he died, i.e., it has the same spirit, the same purpose, the same Rules and the same Government.” Circulars Vol. 2, p. 232

5 “We will have the comfort of enjoying uniform standards throughout the entire Institute. The Common Rules will provide for uniformity in the behaviour of the Brothers in their striving for perfection and living as religious; The School Guide will provide for uniformity in the classroom and education. And The Constitutions and Rules of Government will provide for uniformity in the administration and external aspects of the Institute; uniformity in the prayers which from now on will be the same everywhere; uniformity in the training and education of the young Brothers, for they will follow the same Rule in all novitiates, learn the same lessons, listen to the same instructions and be subject to the same tests.” Circulars, Vol. 2, p. 229

6 “There will be three ranks of Brothers in this Institute. The first one is comprised of all who have not taken the three perpetual vows, whether or not they have professed the vow of obedience. The second group includes all who have made perpetual profession of the three vows. The third is made up of only those who in addition have professed the vow of stability. Only from this last group can members of General Chapters, Superiors General, Assistants, Directors of Novitiate Houses, and whenever possible Brothers on Visitation be elected.” Constitutions and Rules of Government, published by Antonine Perisse, Lyon, 1854; Chap. 6, Section Three, About the vow of stability, 1, p. 54

7 In the beginning, the Institute used a centralized government limited to a few people. In 1856, Brother François announced the creation of a Great Council which began to meet in accordance with what was set forth in the Constitutions. It was made up of “the Regime” and six brothers that it appointed. “We will probably hold a meeting of the Great Council this year. Here are the names of the Brothers that the Regime has elected to participate: Brothers Malachie, Marie, Andronic, Léon, Chrysogone and Louis-Régis.” Circulars Vol. 2, p. 247 (1856) According to the Statutes of the Association religieuse, vouée a l’enseignement, dite des Petits Frères de Marie, presented to the Council of the State and approved by Decree No. 3072 on June 20, 1851, Article 9 states: “The Brothers Assistant, the Brother Director of the Motherhouse, the Brother Procurator General and the Brother Master of the Novices, together with a brother from a school, designated by the Brother Superior General, make up the Council.” Excerpt from the Bulletin administratif de l’Instruction publique, No. 18, June 1851, p. 207, published in Circulars, Vol 2, p. 449-452.
bestowed on the brothers important rights and privileges like exemption from military service. Confrontation with the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Clergy went on for a long time. Initial negotiations ended with a decree approving the Constitutions ad experimentum, for a period of five years (1863). Nevertheless, the tug of war between our General Chapters and the authorities in Rome lasted until 1903, when Leo XIII officially approved the Constitutions. So the post of Superior General started out being a lifetime position (1851-1903). The last Superior General to be elected for life was Brother Théophane (1883-1907). With final approval of the Constitutions in 1903, a twelve-year term was adopted for the post of Superior General and his Assistants. This standard remained in effect until the end of Brother Leónida’s term (1946-1958). The 15th General Chapter (1958) introduced a term of 9 years, and then the 18th General Chapter (1985), which elected Brother Charles Howard (1985-1993), opted for an 8-year term for Superiors General and their Councilors.

In 1860, the General Chapter elected Brother Louis-Marie as Vicar General. Thus the post of Vicar General was introduced into the governmental framework of the Institute, bringing with it a responsibility to accompany the Superior General in fulfilling his administrative tasks and replacing him in case of an impediment or his being unable to carry out his work. In the years that followed only one change was made: the oldest Assistant would become the Vicar. From 1958 to the present, the Brother Vicar General has been elected by the General Chapter.

The closest collaborators of the Superior General were initially called Assistants (1851), and that term was used until 1967. With the definitive approval of the Constitutions (1903) the canonical figure of a Provincial replaced an Assistant as the head of each Province. The Assistants were no longer Superiors with hands-on authority, although they did retain special responsibility for one or two Provinces governed by the Hermitage or Saint-Genis. The
Provincials and Vice Provincials were to be elected for a three-year term and could be re-elected once. At the 14th General Chapter, the number went from 8 to 10 Assistants. At the 15th General Chapter (1958) each Assistant was elected for a group of Provinces, the groups having been determined beforehand. The position of at-large Councilors in charge of services was introduced at the time of the 16th general Chapter (1967). Brother Basilio Rueda began his first mandate (1967) with 12 General Councilors, among them the Econome General, the Secretary General and the Procurator General. That number stayed the same during his second term. However, at the 17th general Chapter (1976) the so-called Regional Councilors became General Councilors, whom the Superior General assigned to tasks in keeping with their personal expertise. The number of General Councilors was reduced to 8. At that same Chapter, the General Council took over the work done by the Councilors for Missions and Formation. Brother Charles Howard (1985) and Brother Benito Arbués (1993) governed with 8 Councilors, Brother Seán (2001) with 7. Brother Emili Turú (2009) started his term with 6 Councilors elected by the General Chapter and then he personally appointed a seventh. Brother Seán Sammon inaugurated the means for animation known as the Enlarged General Council. This consists of meetings that bring together the General Council and the Provincial Councils of Regions. The current issue No. 41 of FMS Message is part of an ongoing series covering this long history of the government and animation of the Institute and links these developments to those being planned during the term of Brother Emili Turú (2009-2017), in search of new lands for the Marist charism and mission.

At the service of a project of vitality

Br Emili Turú, Superior General
All these testimonies say much about the quality of the persons in the service of the general administration. For this reason, I would like to begin these lines by thanking the provinces for the efforts they make in placing their brothers at the service of the common good of the Institute. Thanks, too, to the brothers and lay people who compose this formidable team of the general administration and who, with great generosity, dedicate themselves to its mission day after day.

The Marist mission develops in the direct contact of brothers and lay people with many thousands of children and young people throughout the world. The general administration’s contribution to this mission is much more discrete, in the background, but no less important for that.

As I said at the beginning, the ambience of the general house is very good, but that does not mean that it is easy to create or maintain it. It is a matter of a human group, very complex given the great differences among them: of age, formation, culture, language... In addition, each person comes to Rome with his own idea of what serving in the general administration means, and it is not always easy to reconcile these mental representations with the actual practice. This makes us value even more the efforts of each one to make our community truly intercultural, and not only multicultural.

**ANIMATION AND GOVERNMENT**

The Institute has entrusted to the Superior General and his Council the task of animating and governing the Institute: “By animation and government we understand the service which the General Government offers the Administrative Units, by means of structures and procedures, to carry out the Project of vitality coming from the XXI General Chapter” (Decisions XXI General Chapter). “The General Administration is composed of brothers and lay persons who are at the service of the Institute. One and all lend their support to the General Council in its responsibility for animation and government of the Institute” (Staff Manual of GA).
These two words, “animation” and “government”, cover everything which is promoted from the general administration, trying to balance these two dimensions of a single mission. The Marist Institute is an international organization and has to be managed (government) as such. But it is also a living organism, using Saint Paul’s image: “Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with the body of Christ, which is the Church” (1 Cor 12,12); for this reason, we speak also about animation.

It is certain that an organism cannot exist without a minimum of organization, but it is probably important to remember the differences between these two concepts, in order to take care of a healthy balance and to be able to give ourselves a “project of vitality”, as the last General Chapter asks of us:

- The organization functions when there is money; the organism functions when there is life;
- The organization needs a structure; the organism requires a body;
- The organization demands a chief, an external drive to function; the organism lives from its spirit, from the harmonious interaction of all the parts that make up the whole;
- An organization is equivalent to the sum of its parts, and each part can be substituted for by an identical copy; an organism is more than the sum of its components, and no component
can be substituted for by an exact duplicate, seeing that each one is unique;

• An organism, when it is sick, must be regenerated from within, and dies when the heart ceases beating or the brain functioning; an organization has much more resistance because its structure is stronger and can operate by inertia.

How to act so that the organization does not devour the organism? How to empower a healthy, autonomous organism by giving it the level of organization adjusted to its vital needs, without sinning by excess or by defect? This is one of the great challenges facing us, and one which we hope to be able to resolve satisfactorily.

INSPIRED BY MARY OF THE VISITATION

“The mission of the General Administration is inspired by Mary at the moment of the Visitation. She senses that there is a need and sets out diligently to place her abilities at the service of others” (Staff Manual of GA).

“To visit” figures among the principal obligations of some members of the general administration and it is, without any doubt, what occupies most of their time. But those who are more stable in Rome, on the other hand, endeavour much more to give a warm welcome to the many persons who visit us. In both cases, Mary is our source of inspiration.

We know well that if we want to build a Church with a Marian face, we have to begin with our own daily lives. And, certainly, our way of working and relating to one another must let this Marian tone shine through. For this reason, when we ask ourselves in the General Council what values we want to emphasize in our way of organizing ourselves and operating, we underline the following:

• fraternal dialogue,
• active participation,
• constructive interaction between the persons and organisms involved.

The icon of Pentecost represents very well the ideals of the Marian Church, which we want to make our own: a circular community, but not closed in on itself; unity and understanding but there from the multiplicity of tongues; openness to the fire of the Spirit; sign of fraternity and reconciliation in the midst of the people; a community of men inspired by a woman who presides over them…

Finally, a light of hope in the front of darkness and death.

Conscious of the limits of our strength, we make our own the General Chapter’s prayer to Mary:

In trust we pray, like Champagnat:
“If the Lord does not build the house…” and we say, “You have done everything for us”. Magnificat!
The course that the General Council has followed in drawing up its Plan of animation and government 2009-2017 has come from the «guidelines and recommendations» of the Chapter, centred essentially on the «accompaniment and animation of the leadership of the Provinces and Districts, especially of the Provincials and the District Superiors».

(Document XXI General Chapter)

1. «to perform the constitutional tasks of animation, co-ordination and government.»
2. «to implement the Fundamental Call and set in motion the guidelines coming from the XXI General Chapter.»
3. «to encourage at all levels structures of animation, co-ordination and government which prompt the vitality of the Institute in its mission » (Document XXI General Chapter, p. 48).

Then the Council gathered together all the mandates and responsibilities received from the Chapter or coming from the Constitutions and Statutes. From this list were established the action criteria and the distribution of responsibilities among the Councillors.

• First of all came the appointment of the Councillors responsible for maintaining liaison with the Administrative Units of each
General Council’s Plan and Government

Region. Asia and the Pacific: Michael de Waas and John Klein; Africa and Europe: Antonio Ramalho and Ernesto Sánchez; The Americas: Josep Maria Soteras and Eugène Kabanguka.

Then it was decided to create four Secretariats and to appoint their Directors: Secretariat Brothers Today (Director: Br César Augusto Rojas Carvajal); Enlarged Secretariat of Laity (Director: Br Javier Espinosa; Co-directors: Ana Sarrate and Tony Clark); Secretariat of Mission (director: Br João Carlos do Prado); Secretariat of International Collaboration in Mission (Director: Br Chris Wills; Secretario of Mission ad gentes: Br Teófilo Minga). These Secretariats were completed with the Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI), which existed already, but with a new president Br Michael De Waas. Two new offices were created, one in Geneva under Br Jim Jolley, and another in Rome, directed by Br Mario Meuti;

A third decision bore on the appointment of those responsible for co-ordinating the various services of the General Administration. Br Emili Turú, Superior General, co-ordinates the Directors of the Secretariats and FMSI. Br Joe Mc Kee, Vicar General, is charged with assuring the contact of the General Council with the General Secretariat, the office of the Postulator General, the Secretariat of International Collaboration in Mission, and co-ordinates the Management and Animation Team of the General House. Br Michael De Waas does the same with FMSI; Br John Klein with the Secretariat of Mission; Brothers Josep Maria Soteras, Eugene Kabanguka and Ernesto Sanchez co-ordinate the Secretariat of Brothers today; Br Antonio Ramalho, the Secretariat of Laity; Br Víctor Preciado is co-ordinator of the department of the Econome General and contact for the Management and Animation of the General House. The figure of the Procurator General as such has vanished from this structure of the General Administration, although Br Franco Faggin has been appointed agent to represent the Institute with the Holy See. Br Juan Miguel Anaya continues as canonical consultor to the General Council.

The distribution of these charges and responsibilities is represented graphically in the organigram reflecting the organisation of the General Administration.
Some of the activities planned by the General Council for the Institute are: General Conference in 2013 at the Hermitage, a calendar of visits, a presence at significant events in the Provinces and Regions, and extended General Councils in all the Regions.

**WORK DYNAMIC OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

The Council has used three formulas for defining work at its meetings:

- meeting to define the community dynamic of the Council;
- plenary sessions in Rome, two or three times a year, to study the most important matters affecting the life and mission of the Institute;
- a monthly meeting – regular Council – to take decisions concerning requests coming from the Administrative Units. In this case, a minimum quorum is de rigueur. But the resources of the video-
conference allow the taking of decisions even if those taking part are far from Rome.

THE METHODOLOGY OF FRATERNAL DIALOGUE AND CONSENSUS

All of the above as regards organisation and structures, as well as initial decisions taken. However, perhaps more importantly was the ‘how’ we arrived there. The hallmark of our working together as a Council has been the methodology used by the 21st General Chapter of a ‘new way of being and doing’ together – a methodology which puts emphasis on dialogue, consensus building and a greater openness to the international and intercultural reality of our Institute in today’s world.

It was also quite clear to us from the very beginning of our time together that we needed to involve more voices than our own in the work of animating and governing the Institute. In the spirit of the African proverb which says, “If you wish to go quickly, go alone. If you wish to go far, go with others”, we invited different groups of people to participate actively with us in our reflections and discernment and to share in the responsibility of elaborating our plan of action. The Directors of the various Secretariats, members of the General Administration, those Brothers responsible for ongoing formation in the Institute, as well as persons from outside our Marist world, have helped us in our reflections to discern and elaborate our objectives and the values that would underpin these and which we wished to promote. And so, little by little and over time, our integrated plan of action for the Animation and Government of the Institute began to take shape in the form of the 8 ‘Objectives’, each with its ‘Courses of Action’ and ‘Strategies’.

The various times spent reflecting and working together have been deeply significant and constructive moments for all of us. They provided a forum where new ideas and different ways of understanding and thinking could be expressed in a spirit of active listening and discerning. They also helped us understand better the value and the importance of creating a coordinated and integrated plan of action so that all of us would be working towards the Fundamental Call and the Future Horizons which the 21st General Chapter elaborated. And all this based on a common and agreed upon set of understandings enabling us, hopefully, to move together in the one direction – towards a ‘new land’.
ORGANIGRAM
ADMINISTRATION GENERAL

SERVICES
- Archives
- Communications
- Translations
- Statistics
- Computers

POSTULATOR

SECRETARY GENERAL

VILLA EUR

GESTION AND ANIMATION TEAM

ECONEOME GENERAL

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSIONS

ANIMATOR COMMUNITY GENERAL HOUSE
INTERNATIONAL TEAMS

BROTHERS TODAY
- Vocations
- Formation
- Spirituality
- Community
- Spiritual Patrimony

INTERNATIONAL TEAM
- Marist Laity
- Joint Formation
- CHMMF

LAITY
- Marist Laity
- Joint Formation
- CHMMF

MISSION
- Youth Ministry
- Formal Education
- Non Formal Education

INTERNATIONAL TEAM
- AMAG
- Special Projects
- International Collaboration

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

SUPERIOR GENERAL
- General Council

COORDINATION OF DIRECTORS OF SECRETARIATS

SUPERIOR GENERAL

Emili Turú

Javier Espinosa

Josep M. Soteras

Ernesto Sánchez

Eugène Kabanguka

Antonio Ramaio

John Klein

Chris Wills

Tony Clarke

Jim Jolley

Mario Meuti

Michael De Waas

Joe Mc Kee

Ana Sarrate

Emil lurú

Antonio Ramaio

Joseph M. Soteras

Eugène Kabanguka

Antonio Ramaio

John Klein

Chris Wills

Tony Clarke

Jim Jolley

Mario Meuti

Michael De Waas

Joe Mc Kee

Ana Sarrate

Emil lurú
Secretariat of Mission

The Mission Secretariat is a strategic instrument of the General Government for the animation, strengthening and interconnection of the Marist mission at all levels of the Institute.

Its purpose is to contribute creatively, boldly and prophetically to the fidelity and development of the mission “to make Jesus known and loved by children and young people”. In response to the call of the 21st General Chapter, the Secretariat must take up the challenge of contributing to the construction of the Marist mission in a new world, with the aim of responding to the voices and calls to evangelize contemporary children and youth.

AIMS OF THE MISSION SECRETARIAT

The Plan of the Mission Secretariat for the period 2011 to 2017 counts on the collaboration of many Brothers and lay people from all parts of the Marist world. It defines the fundamental concepts of the mission, the identity and purpose of the Secretariat, the principal initiatives and strategies of this period and of some structures, for the purpose of contributing to the development of its activities.

Among the principal aims of the Secretariat are the following:

1. Animate and support the mission of the Administrative Units and the Regions of the Institute.
2. Encourage the search for harmony, integration and interconnection in network of the mission among the Administrative Units and Regions.
3. Build, in a participative way, the vision of the future of the mission.
SCOPE OF MISSION SECRETARIAT

The scope of the Secretariat of Mission includes formal education, non-formal education, social works, and projects of evangelization. The Marist mission can also be viewed in four intrinsic dimensions, presented in the following diagram.

It is possible to perceive that the four dimensions emanate from and are nourished by spirituality, at the same time as they nourish it. Marist education must be jointly a work of evangelization, solidarity and commitment to the defence of rights and to the carrying out of the obligation to children and youth. In the same way, one cannot think of evangelization, solidarity or the settlement of rights and obligations without considering the other three dimensions as constitutive elements.

Thus, all the works and fronts of Marist mission need to be viewed from these four dimensions. They are fundamental elements for the fruitfulness and vitality of the mission in a "new world".

PRINCIPLES OF MARIST MISSION

Six principles guide the path of Marist mission and are promoted by the Mission Secretariat. The first four were defined by the 21st Chapter. The fifth and sixth derive from the reflection and sensitivity of the persons who took part in the creation of the plan.

Principles

1. We want to see the world through the eyes of poor children and young people and thus change our hearts and attitudes as Mary did.

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1 Spirituality in this context is understood as living and dynamic experience of God, which is oriented at once towards action and contemplation (S. Sammon, 2007, Presentation of Water from the Rock). As he says in this document (p. 10): “(spirituality) strengthens our identity and is a crucial element for the vitality of our life and mission.”
2. We feel impelled to act with urgency to find new creative ways to educate, evangelize, be advocates for, and be in solidarity with poor children and young people.

3. We affirm that evangelization is the focus and priority of our ministries, proclaiming Jesus and his message (Mendes).

4. As Marist Brothers and Lay Marists living in today’s globalized world, we are called to have hearts and minds that are international in outlook.

5. God is inviting us, through the prophetic witness of our presence and action, to be bridges facilitating meeting, dialogue, solidarity, social justice, by reducing the unjust distances and differences between rich and poor, in the whole context of our mission.

6. By our way of living and carrying out the mission, we reveal the Marian face of the Church and we are signs of the Reign of God in the world.

**Strategic Perspectives**

Marist mission is praxis, action and reflection; the more deliberate, the greater its point. Conscientious activity can lead us truly to the transformation of the hearts of children and youth and, consequently of the world. Being conscious of the action, it is necessary we understand that the fruit does not depend only on us, but on the Spirit above all. This awareness disposes us to fulfill our part in the project which is God’s. Activity without intention is empty and does not achieve its objective. For this reason, planning of the mission is indispensable.

In this sense, certain elements can help us to make our mission more vital and viable. It is of great importance that all levels of the institution take into account the following strategic perspectives in our mission:

- Human potential
- Economic-financial potential
• Quality of services and fidelity to the charism
• Processes
• Organizational and operating structures
• Institutional positioning and visibility.

**PRINCIPAL INITIATIVES OF THE MISSION SECRETARIAT**

For the period 2011-2017, the Secretariat intends the following initiatives:

1. Accompany the discernment of the Administrative Units and the Regions so as to discover the meaning of “go to a new land”, in its proper context. For this initiative, we define as important strategies the accompaniment of the regional and Administrative Unit teams; the revision of the document on the Marist Educational Mission; to develop criteria and tools for evaluating the evangelical fruitfulness of the Marist works.

2. Create and consolidate the Secretariat with the objective of supporting the mission processes and projects in the Administrative Units, the Regions and the world.

3. Foster in our institutions a greater development of the evangelizing work of the Marist Youth Ministry.

4. Motivate the Brothers and laity to be present and work with children and young people in situations of vulnerability.

5. Organize the II International Marist Mission Assembly (AIMM) in keeping with the spirit of the I Assembly and the 21st General Chapter.

6. Continue promoting reflection and exchange about the new models of animation, management and government of all the educational works of the Administrative Units, and rethink, in this context, the presence and role of the Brothers.

7. Promote the realization of the mission in network, as well as the constitution of Marist mission networks.

**MARIST MISSION IN THE NEW WORLD — FUTURE CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES**

The years we will live up to 2017 will be fundamental for discerning Marist mission in the new world. The calls of the 21st Chapter urge us to look for new conceptual and strategic visions for the mission. The
conceptual vision will express for us what God desires of us, Marists of Champagnat, in the light of the bicentenary of the Marist foundation and the calls of the General Chapter. The strategic vision will help us take the strategic steps towards constructing this new reality God is proposing to us.

Responding to the calls of the mission in the new world requires fidelity to the dream of Marcellin and great attention to the calls and needs of the children and youth of today. The Chapter asks us for “a strongly significant presence among poor children and young people”.

To make this step, it is necessary, as the Chapter says, “to see the world through the eyes of poor children and young people”. This means to see the world from below, from the level of the excluded and overlooked of this world, just as Mary and Marcellin saw it. To see the world from below requires a change of position. A sincere, authentic presence, one of solidarity with poor children and youth, favours a personal and institutional conversion of heart. Evangelization and commitment to fullness of life, in conformity with the Gospel, should be in all our mission projects as in our hearts and minds.

We have already moved some distance in this direction, but we should place our hearts even more with children and youth in peripheral or boundary situations. We must take up the challenge to commit all our mission structures and fronts, independently of the persons we are caring for, in the transformation of the situation, of social justice, of the construction of the project of the Kingdom of God.
SECRETARIAT OF BROTHERS TODAY

OUR IDENTITY

In the programme of animation and government which the General Council wants to promote, the Secretariat Brothers today is the organization which seeks to dynamize and encourage on a number of fronts everything applying to the life and consecration of the Marist Brother, from the first moments of the call to the stages of formation along the way, as well the essential aspects such as community life, spirituality, our Marist patrimony, and the elements shaping our consecration as religious brothers. Starting from the different approaches the Institute has made during recent years, the Secretariat Brothers today was born to follow up the efforts undertaken by organizations such as the Bureau of Vocations (2003-2006), the Religious Life Commission (2005-2009), the Marist spirituality movement deriving from the document Water from the Rock, among others, in their time and which today constitute an excellent starting point for dynamizing the Secretariat.

FIXED OBJECTIVES

The Secretariat of Brothers today takes the fourth objective of the General Council’s plan of animation and government as its inspiration for shaping its action plan, its organization and its adequacy for the other objectives. So as a Secretariat we seek to « encourage the brothers to rediscover their own vocation and enthusiasm for it, so as to live it and witness to it radically, openly and joyfully in the
To do this, the Secretariat envisions four courses of action, with their respective strategies, which give concrete form to the efforts for renewal of our consecrated life with a view to consolidating our identity as religious brothers.

A - To create and consolidate the Secretariat *Brothers today* and work in combination with similar structures in the Provinces and Regions. To do this:

1. Organize the Secretariat in its internal structure and draw up a work plan.
2. Become familiar with the provincial and/or regional structures of animation of the religious and spiritual life of the brothers.
3. Create an international team representative of the different geographical situations of the Institute and the tasks taken on by the Secretariat, in view of facilitating the links with the Regions.
4. Encourage study of and reflection on the subjects proper to the Secretariat: Marial face of the Church, new consecrated life, ministries of vocations, formation, spirituality, patrimony.

5. Rapports and possible common projects with other congregations of religious brothers.

B - To accompany and promote the structures of animation and formation already existing at provincial, regional and institutional levels. To do this:

1. Promote a network in the Administrative Units with those responsible for the different fields which fall within the competence of the Secretariat.

2. To become aware of provincial or inter-provincial experiences relative to initial or ongoing formation, to vocations ministry, spirituality, patrimony, community life, etc.

3. Foster accompaniment with the ongoing formation teams of the Institute: Manziana, l’Escorial and others, on the regional level.

4. Reinforce the programmes of preparation for perpetual profession.

5. Accompany the itinerary of the International Commission of the Spiritual Patrimony: plans, integration, new team.

C - To create new processes and/or structures at all levels, which guarantee experiences and itineraries of formation, lead to personal and institutional conversion, and develop an active spirituality. To do this:

1. Draw up a reference document on the Marist vocations ministry. Hold regional meetings to publicize it.

2. Launch a process of reflection on the Identity of the Brother today (‘recover the enthusiasm’), able to be integrated into the International Assembly of the Marist Mission.

3. Accompany and encourage the creation of itineraries of growth in Marist spirituality.
4. Carry out a formation programme for community animators and future formators.

5. Organize an international colloquium on initial formation, including an evaluation process for lines and programmes of formation.

6. Encourage initiatives and proposals coming from the International Commission of the Spiritual Patrimony: research team, colloquia and course for new researchers.

D- To undertake the revision of the Constitutions and Statutes, with a wide participation of the brothers, as a way to revitalize our vocation. To do this.

1. Motivate the acceptance of the new edition of the Constitutions, as well as its use and its study, in the various formation programmes.

2. Accompany the International Commission which will be chosen to conduct this revision, with a wide participation of the brothers. (Cf. Decision, chap. 1.2, p. 46).
HOW ARE WE ORGANISED?

Our Secretariat *Brothers today* is perceived as an organization enriched by the fact of finding in each of us brothers the ‘principal character’ in the today of the Marist life that we are called to push forward. In saying « all », we would wish that each of us feels himself taking part, in the front ranks, in the construction of this new way of being brother. The elderly brother, strong from his long journey and his experience of life ; the youth in formation and the young brother, with their creativity and their initiative ; the mature brother, strong in his leadership and commitment ; the lay Marists – men and women – with their closeness and their constant support. All are a reference point for promoting the initiatives previously cited.

Together with Brothers Eugène Kabanguka, Ernesto Sánchez and Josep Maria Soteras, we have gradually refined the starting structure of this Secretariat. In the measure that these various processes become concrete, it will without doubt find the most flexible manner of organizing itself and functioning, with the participation of all. Thus, starting with the different roles we have assumed, we will be in a position to exercise our leadership in the service of the Institute.

THE SECRETARIAT’S DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE

Our dreams will without doubt become reality in the measure that we all assume in our lives and our communities the principles the General Chapter has enunciated in order to consolidate our identity, principles expressed in the first future horizon: *A new consecrated life which promotes a new way of being brother*.

All the efforts, activities, programmes, dreams and tasks of this Secretariat will be pleasantly rewarded to the extent that the various organs of animation and government at all levels (local, provincial, regional and institutional) rise to the challenges presented to religious life, starting from the richness of the geographic and cultural diversity of our Institute.

We invite each brother and each lay Marist to take up his/her share of responsibility in the task of engendering and accompanying the life of new and enthusiastic Marist vocations, feeling themselves partners and heirs in today’s world of the charism of Champagnat. May the road towards the Bicentenary of our foundation be one more encouragement and reason to live the enthusiasm which characterized Marcellin and so many brothers and lay Marists who have scattered the seeds in numerous parts of the world.
Secretariat of the Laity

The present structure of the Secretariat for the Laity was put in place at the beginning of 2002, but there’s no doubt that Br. Charles Howard in his Circular on the Champagnat Movement (1991) is the one who opened up new perspectives in the Institute’s vision of the Laity. Down through the years, with the support of subsequent Superiors General, this has fostered several initiatives by the Laity in communion with the Brothers.

Intuitively, Brother Charles recognized that given an ecclesiology of communion – all about service and charism – the top-down concept where some people direct and instruct while others obey and learn, would become a thing of the past. When the Church is seen as a communion, the various vocations in life are related to each other in such a way that they complement one another. Brother Charles also stated that the Marist charism does not belong exclusively to the Institute. It is a gift from God that extends beyond the life of the Brothers to the entire community of the Church. More than that, Brother Charles led us to see that our charism manifests its abundant fruitfulness when it is lived by men and women from various vocations in the Church. Thus the Brothers are increasingly conscious of the idea that Marist Lay men and women are not just collaborators in the mission – they embody the charism.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The present structure of the Secretariat for the Laity has emerged based on the spirit of the 20th General Chapter. It affirms that we must broaden the space under the tent and discover the richness of Brothers and Laity sharing our mission as we walk together. We must be convinced that the Spirit of life is leading us along that common path (cfr. We Choose Life, 26-30). The General Council therefore appointed a Commission on the Laity in 2002. It consisted of Brother Pedro Herreros as President, Brother Emili...
Turú, Brother Antonio Ramalho and Brother Paulo Celso Ferraresi as Secretary.

In 2005, with Brother Michael Flanigan as Secretary of the Commission, a Consultative Group of Laity was formed. Its members met in Rome in May that year to gather opinions about the direction of the Commission on the Laity. In 2006, the Commission was disbanded in favor of a SECRETARIAT FOR THE LAITY, formed and integrated into the Institute's Mission Commission. Brother Pau Fornells was appointed its Director. The following year (2007), the General Council approved the creation of a new structure for the Marist Laity, called the Enlarged Secretariat of the Laity and appointed the people who would collaborate with the Director of the Bureau: Ana Sarrate (Ibéria, Spain), Linda Corbeil (Canada), Tony Clarke (Sydney, Australia) and Brother Afonso Murad (Brasil Centro-Norte).

In 2010, with Brother Javier Espinosa in charge of the Secretariat, Ana Sarrate (from the Ibérica Province in Spain) and Tony Clarke (from the Province of Sydney, Australia) were named the first Co-directors of that Office. Those appointments were aimed at promoting a greater leadership role for Lay people and to emphasize their lay co-responsibility in the animation of the Institute.

In 2011, the General Council extended the number of members of the Bureau to seven, so as to represent the major Regions of the Institute: Ana Sarrate for Europe, Patricia Cecilia Rios Gomez replacing Linda Corbeil for the Arco Norte, Tony Clarke for Oceania, Brother Sylvain Ramandimbiarisoa for Africa, Agnes Reyes for Asia, Fabiano Incerti for Brazil and Raul Amaya for the Cono Sur. This new structure facilitates greater interaction and enhances communication among the regions of
the Institute in designing the Secretariat’s plans and lines of action. At the same time it provides for keeping in mind the broad span of cultural realities and increases the possibilities of lay leadership and animation at all levels.

The Enlarged Secretariat meets once a year and its Co-directors hold two additional meetings during that same period of time. The Plan for the next three-year term (2011-2013) sets forth the animation tasks of the Secretariat’s members. Presently its objectives include: a better understanding and development of the Marist lay vocation; the development of processes that promote the new spirit of communion taking place in the charism of St. Marcellin; accompaniment for new forms of living the Marist charism; support and encouragement for groups of Marist laity throughout the Institute; and the animation and promotion of structures of

It has been a significant experience to be part of the Bureau of the Laity at a time when the Spirit seems determined to continue urging us toward living a new relationship between Lay People and Brothers. It is a new moment in our history. It is a new moment as both Lay Marists and Brothers grapple with their understanding of this new reality, what it looks like, and how it can be effectively lived and given life. As a lay person it has challenged my personal understanding of what it is to live out my own Christian vocation. I know it has also raised questions for Brothers about their own vocational life as Brother. As a new relationship, it will have a significant impact on both our lives, in our understanding of who we are, our spirituality, what we say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to, how we live our relationships.

Through the work of the Bureau of the Laity it has been a privilege to journey with many lay people and Brothers in supporting and encouraging them to explore and grapple with this new way of relating with each other. Important questions continue to invite deeper discernment: Who is a lay Marist? What processes of formation will grow a deeper way of living Marist life (for Brothers, for lay Marists, together)? What are the new structures or forms of living the charism as lay Marists? Although the way forward is still unfolding, one thing we know is that it is God who has led us here, it is God who is with us in this new moment, and it’s God who will be with us as we discover our way together. For each one of us there is a call at this time to listen deeply to the urgings of the Spirit within, a call ‘to promote together a greater vitality of the Marist charism and its mission in our world’ (XXI General Chapter). It is an invitation for us to grow as Lay Marists. It is an invitation for us to grow as Brothers. We need each other. The future vitality of the charism and its effectiveness in setting the Gospel on fire in the hearts of young people depends upon it.

Tony Clarke
animation that favor the involvement of the laity at the provincial and regional levels. The present Plan accentuates the formation processes that are in harmony with the call to conversion urged by the 21st general Chapter.

**Expressions of Life**

Several events throughout our history have revealed a growing consciousness of the Lay vocation in the life of the Institute. In 1985, the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family, constituted by people who wished to live their Christian life according to St Marcellin’s charism, was officially recognized. There are presently more than 250 fraternities and approximately 3300 members. Through the years, regional meetings among members of the Movement have been held in America (2005) and Europe (2006, 2010). The 1993 General Chapter saw the beginning of the participation of the laity in this type of assembly. This Lay presence became extended to Provincial assemblies and chapters. It is worth noting that two of the five calls from the 2001 General Chapter are addressed to the Brothers
and Laity. Gradually lay people took positions on coordinating teams. Commissions for animating the Laity, headed by lay men and women, were specially created in many Administrative Units. We would also like to highlight the significant participation of the Laity in creating the documents *In the Footsteps of Marcellin* (1998) and *Around the Same Table* (2009). The international Assembly of the Marist Mission held in Mendes, Brazil (2007) brought together on an equal footing 50 lay people and 44 Brothers. The international joint formation meetings in Quito, Ecuador (2008) and St. Paul-trois-Châteaux, France (2009) were held with the same criteria, a more or less equal number of brothers and laity, sharing their lives in a formation process. Toward this same end, the Secretariat’s current Plan calls for five regional meetings of Lay animation teams in each Province (2011), an international meeting about the Marist Lay vocation (2012), and a process for advancing the development of the Champagnat Movement (2013).

IDENTITY OF THE SECRETARIAT

Through the years the identity of the Secretariat has been shaped by the same process being experienced in the Church and the Institute. There is no doubt that this journey undertaken by our Institute is best summarized by the document *Around the Same Table*. The text shows a clear recognition of the Marist Lay vocation. The Marist Lay person discovers the call from God to live the charism of Champagnat from his or her Lay status as a particular way to develop the Christian identity common to all believers. It is a personal call to a specific form of being a disciple of Jesus. In other words, the charism of Saint Marcellin Champagnat is being expressed in new forms of Marist life – among them, that of the Marist Laity. In light of the above, Marist Lay men and women in their particular lifestyle are heirs of the charism in their own right, thus responsible for its growth and adaptation. As Brother Charles has written, “The laity must reveal to us new angles of that charism, as they live it more fully. Spiritual sharing with them should reveal new depths in our vocation as Brothers.” The Marist Lay vocation contributes originality to our way of understanding the Founder and living his spirituality. The common heritage that the Marist Laity and Brothers share complements and enriches our specific vocations. Not only is there enough room at the table for both Lay person and Brother, we mutually need each other side by side. We have the certainty and clarity that our specific vocations are mutually enlightening and that we are a constant source of richness for each other. The Secretariat is embracing this new era in the Marist charism as a challenge, to help bring about the dawn of a new Marist life and reinforce the one that already exists, making St. Marcellin’s charism ever more creative, faithful and dynamic, challenging Brothers and Laity to interweave a new experience of the charism.
MY FEELINGS ABOUT CO-DIRECTING

When I read the Document from the 21st General Chapter, I felt certain that the Spirit had been truly present among the participants, even as we faced the challenge of putting our thoughts down on paper… It’s difficult to reduce life to the level of words. And whenever I re-read the paragraph, “we contemplate our Marist future as a communion of people in the charism of Champagnat, where our specific vocations are mutually enriched…,” it makes me wonder whether I am – whether we are capable of capturing the implications resulting from our taking these words to heart. In our concrete Marist history today, the Spirit is prodding us to walk into the future as She has always done down through history. The image of Mary’s visit to St Elizabeth springs to mind. During the years I have worked in the Secretariat, I’ve been able to perceive the life being generated by people capable of “moving” from more secure employment to unfamiliar positions, from a school with one type of student body to that with another, from a closed community to one that welcomes arrivals, from going from a country with one culture to another with a very different one… There is an unstoppable movement in the Church that is increasingly evident: as lay people we are more and more aware of our call to make Jesus’s Good News a reality. And we Marists have perceived this movement as a refreshing and life-giving reality: Brothers, Lay women and Lay men together being able to reach more children and young people than ever before… because our numbers are growing. And as members of the Secretariat of the Laity we have wanted to animate and will continue to animate this new movement of Brothers and Laity on mission together in communion. I too have been invited to move from one place to another (those who know me know how difficult it is for me to travel…) and especially to follow “an interior path” to live my Marist vocation in a family environment with my fraternity, my school, my town…, to discover a much larger Marist family, a different job and the richness of a charism incarnated in so many different cultures… I feel it is a privilege and a responsibility. In addition, the possibility of walking with other companions having great human qualities, sharing in each other’s lives and faith, difficulties and hopes – this is the greatest gift we can have in life. Since the earliest days of the Secretariat of the Laity, we have always fervently nurtured this sense of community. The many little “yeses” that we are addressing to God are leading us along paths toward greater fulfilment, despite daily difficulties and not having a clear idea of what’s in store for us… Drawing inspiration and encouragement from Mary’s confidence, we need to learn, as she did, to journey to that new land that we have not yet seen, the one in which we firmly believe that our risen Brother is waiting to welcome us.

Ana Sarrate
The thinking of the Lay Secretariat has gone hand in hand with the new relationship between Brothers and Lay Marists. This new relationship presupposes that more and more leading roles in the Marist mission and evangelization will be assumed by the Laity, with Brothers becoming their collaborators. It is about being companions, serving together and learning from one another. It will suppose a more radical image of the Brothers’ vocation, characterized by prophesying and living in community, like the image projected by St. Marcellin at La Valla when he started his assignment with his lay associates there.

The outlook for the Secretariat of the Laity points to a future with a communion of people imbued with the charism of St. Marcellin. The experience of sharing that charism is leading us to rethink the institutional model which up until now has defined our Founder’s charism in the Church. In reality this means that together we not only need to widen the tent of the Institute but also to build a new tent, where all of us, Laity and Brothers, will find our own place as affirmed in the document on Marist Education, “In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat,” §145.

At the Secretariat, we understand that this communion implies a conversion and change of mentality in both the Laity and the Brothers. In setting out on our journey we need to lead lives based on a spirituality of change that can only emanate from the Spirit of God. The following of Jesus that we share as Brothers and Lay People turns us into searchers and explorers. To search includes the notion of moving ahead with fidelity. As one author writes, “Fidelity does not consist of always staying in the same place but in moving forward in a systematic way toward something able to bring a greater fullness and conviction to the soul, a greater clarity of mind and integrity of heart.” We believe that this emerging approach offered by the last General Chapter is in keeping with this idea.

We are aware, as were the Chapter members, that the Spirit is strongly encouraging all Marists to enter into a dynamic of exodus. This must lead all of us Marists, Brothers and Laity, to abandon the non-responsive answers of the past and follow a path across the desert to the Promised Land. Sometimes, this presupposes a sense of loss for all of us – “detachment” is the word used in the fundamental call of the Chapter. Loss places us at the beginning of a new reality, which can only be lived out based on a spirituality of letting go. This spiritual path is, in our times, a challenge for our Marist lives as Lay People and Brothers, as well as for us at the Secretariat. We realize it implies a change in mentality, much discernment, great availability, renouncing our comfort zones, taking risks and – inspired by Mary’s example – fostering a deep confidence in God.
Until I was asked to take the role of leading the Secretariat for International Collaboration for Mission, I was happily spending my days in Australia and working with communities in the Pacific and Asia as the foundation director of Marist Asia-Pacific Solidarity (MAPS).

MAPS www.maristsolidarity.net.au is the solidarity agency of the Australian Provinces. Its work is to link Australian school students, teachers, families and members of the wider Marist community with other young Marists in our Oceania region; to facilitate student immersions and volunteer placements; to organise and manage international development projects; to assist remote communities with logistics and to promote advocacy for the rights of the child.

I have been doing this work for ten years and it began when I was the director, for six years, of Marist Farmhouse, an intentional community of young adults and brothers. Our ministry was one of Marist hospitality to other young adults and also to groups of teachers and brothers from our schools, welfare organisation and communities. During that time many of the young people expressed a desire to join in with our ministries on ‘the edge’; joining in with the Marist mission with ‘kids-at-risk’

I had in mind the need of Marists to be involved in Marcellin’s mission. During my teaching career I had spent six years in Papua New Guinea and four years working with disadvantaged children in what is now known as Marist Youth Care.

I hope to bring to this work my experience as a teacher, administrator and a brother Marist who has had some experience in the world of international development and the commissioning of brother and lay Marist volunteers.
1. This is a new secretariat which is one step towards answering the call of the XXIst General Chapter. This call was also signalled to us in other gatherings such as BIS review (2004); Mendes – Conference of Marist Laity; the General Conference in Sri Lanka and its affirmation of Asia – Mission Ad Gentes and previous General Chapters.

2. Brother Emili in his March 2011 letter to Provincials and District Superiors recalled some of the proposals for action of the XXI General Chapter:
   - To establish international and interprovincial communities which will be open to Marist Brothers and Lay Marists and serve in the vanguard of new areas of mission.
   - To strengthen the further development of Mission Ad Gentes in Asia, and open it out to other areas where a need is discerned.
   - To establish a Marist volunteer service in support of our mission, whose members are available to work in our ministries in need or to be mobilized for emergencies.

3. This secretariat joins four other secretariats of the General Council: Mission; Laity; Brothers (known as ‘Brothers Today’); Solidarity (operating as FMSI).

4. The action word in the name of the secretariat is collaboration – with other secretariats, provinces, districts, brother and lay Marists throughout the world.

This is a new venture which is presently in its gestation period. The birth is due with the plenary sessions of the General Council in January 2012.
My task as co-ordinator of the AD GENTES project consists in putting into practice some of the main intuitions of the General Council’s orientation relative to mission AD GENTES and to the International Co-operation for Mission.

The XXI General Chapter states that the Institute desires to develop an international and intercultural mindset. The AD GENTES project is an opportune means for realizing this project open to international and intercultural communities. Part of my work consists, precisely, in developing and disseminating throughout the Institute information relative to international missionary co-operation and to identify in the Provinces all those who are interested in a missionary work.

At the same time I have to accompany them and to help them discerning their missionary vocation.

To put to work and promote this solidarity ad intra, it is also my duty to encourage the Provincials and to discover vocations in the Provinces to respond to the missionary needs of the Congregation: Brothers, Lay missionaries, and Lay collaborators in the various projects.

One of the proposals of the XXI General Chapter is « to establish a Marist volunteer service in support of our missions ».

The work I am called to accomplish in the Co-ordination of AD GENTES must be done in a spirit of very close collaboration with the other Secretariats. Another part of my work consists in caring about the formation of the Brothers and Lay who offer themselves for a missionary work, providing them with all the information relative to the courses they must do or are advised to follow.

As for those already in mission AD GENTES, I take equal care to know their needs so as to give a satisfactory response as quickly as possible.

This is what I try to do, with much joy and willingness. This is my way of being an AD GENTES missionary.

Br Teófilo Minga
The FMSI ONLUS Foundation succeeds the former Bureau of Solidarity (BIS) which was established in 1995. Bro. Benito Arbués, then Superior General, and his Council created this Office in response to the recommendations of the 19th General Chapter of the Institute of the Marist Brothers of the Schools. The purpose of that Office was to assist the General Council of the Marist Brothers in their animation and governance of the Institute with respect to issues of justice, peace, development, and solidarity. This was especially true when these issues had an impact on the lives of children and youth wherever the Brothers and their lay colleagues were present throughout the world. Initially the Office served the Institute in the following areas:

- Providing resources, information and tools for education and animation in justice.
- Helping Administrative Units in developing countries to propose, write, present, coordinate and evaluate projects for funding.
- Advocating on behalf of just causes.
- Networking with Marist NGOs and Province/District Solidarity Coordinators.

Brother Allen Sherry (Australia) served as the first Director of this Office from 1995 to 2002. Brother Dominick Pujia (USA), his successor, saw the Office gain its status as FMSI – ONLUS in Italy in 2007, becoming an incorporated legal entity recognized by the Italian Government.

The Fondazione Marista per la Solidarietà Internazionale Onlus (FMSI) - Marist International Solidarity Foundation ONLUS (Non-Profit) - was established in October 2007. It now functions as an incorporated legal entity recognized by the Italian Government.

Br Michael De Waas, (South Asia)
President of the FMSI
the Foundation’s first President. He served in this Office until 2009. During his tenure he established an office in Geneva to work to advocate for the rights of children within the framework of the United Nations. Brother César Henriquez (El Salvador) served in this Office as its first Advocacy Officer from 2006 to 2008. Brother Jim Jolley (Australia) succeeded him in 2009.

Brother Richard Carey, as the second President of FMSI, served from 2009-2010 and resigned due to ill health. As Vice President, Brother Jude Pieterse filled this post until early 2011.

We are grateful to all the Brothers who have contributed so effectively to bringing FMSI to its present position. We appreciate their expertise, hard work and generosity in developing this Office into a Foundation recognized by the Italian Government.

Now, in 2011, under the leadership and guidance of the General Administration in Rome, the FMSI Foundation has gone through a process of restructuring in response to the Fundamental Calls made at the XXI General Chapter of the Marist Brothers in 2009.

At that time, in the spirit of St. Marcellin and the first brothers, the Chapter urged us all - brothers, our colleagues and Lay Marists – to make a strong commitment to be present and supportive of poor children and young people. To facilitate this, the Foundation has been reorganized, to have a President who is a member of the General Council, coordinating the work of its Offices in Rome and Geneva. These two Offices have their own Directors with clear job descriptions. Brother Mario Meuti (Italy) is serving as Director of the FMSI Office in Rome and is responsible for Administration, Fundraising, Networking, Promoting Partnerships, and creating Regional and Provincial Development Programs. He is assisted by Sara Panciroli.
(Italy) as the Secretary General of the Foundation, who oversees certain areas of responsibility, and by Angela Petenzi (Italy), who works as the Office’s Project and Fundraising Coordinator. In addition to the responsibilities directly associated with FMSI Onlus, the Office in Rome is responsible for carrying out projects previously supervised by BIS.

The focus of the Marist International Solidarity Foundation Onlus is children and youth in need. It pursues goals of developing solidarity through educational and social welfare programs and projects, promotes the Rights of Children and provides technical and financial support to for projects in keeping with its aims. Marist Solidarity projects, on the other hand, are geared to providing technical and financial support for pastoral and other projects of a more general nature, e.g. assistance for courses, formation houses and building projects. The Director of the FMSI Office in Rome, with assistance from the Project Coordinators, ensures that Administrative Units of the Marist Brothers, especially those in developing countries, receive assistance in the preparation, presentation, coordination and evaluation of projects they seek to fund through internal or external sources.

Brother Jim Jolley (Australia) directs the FMSI Office in Geneva and takes care of Child Rights Advocacy and Training programs. Bros. Manel Mendoza (Spain) and Vicente Falqueto (Brazil) assist him as Child Rights Advocacy Officers. At present, they work out of the offices of Friscans International. Given the complexities of the diplomatic environment in Geneva and respecting the terms of the agreement that has governed the existing partnership between the FMSI and Friscans International (FI), the Marist Director of Advocacy and Training and his staff continue to operate within the organizational framework and follow the procedures used by FI personnel.

In July 2011 FMSI ONLUS earned accreditation for Special Consultative Status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). What this means is that the UN now officially recognizes our FMSI Foundation as one of 3,400 small organizations that are qualified to provide input in several fields of activity covered by ECOSOC.

As a juridical body recognized by the UN member state of Italy, the FMSI Foundation is qualified to participate in formal UN deliberations, join coalitions and campaigns together with like-minded NGOs and Foundations, take part in working groups for child rights, offering these groups its Marist experience and expertise in working with children internationally and advocating for their rights. FMSI can now attend and offer its unique perspective on education at UN conferences and meetings, e.g., at the Organization’s Human Rights Council.

This new membership in ECOSOC is a big blessing for the Foundation and an important step forward in its development to achieve the purpose of our Marist mission, to make a positive difference in the lives of young people, especially those who are poor and most in need of our concern and advocacy. It is my privilege to become the third President of the Foundation and coordinate the work of its Rome and Geneva Offices on behalf of the General Council.
The XXI General Chapter made public the importance of the Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI) in proposing it to the whole Institute as a fundamental instrument for the Marist mission today: *We feel ourselves impelled to challenge social, economic, political, cultural and religious practices that oppress children and young people. Now is the time for us all to join in the work of the Marist Foundation for International Solidarity (FMSI).*

Our lines of direct action are indicated in Point 3 of the Document of the 21st General Chapter: *Marist Mission in a New World*, which insists that we all change our hearts and attitudes, to *see the world through the eyes of poor children and young people* and from this perspective, promote their rights in all the areas in which we operate, including political activity and denouncing abuses... But to do this, we have to be prepared and organized in a professional way.

FMSI is called to contribute to the formation programs of brothers and laity, accompanying them in experiences which foster sensibilization to the needs of poor children and youth. Without forgetting another dream of the Chapter: *To establish a Marist volunteer service in support of the Marist mission, whose members are available to work in our ministries in need or to be mobilized for emergencies.*

The Rome Office of FMSI operates concretely in the following areas:

1. **EDUCATION FOR JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY**
   Gathers information related to the initiatives and topics of justice, peace, and solidarity, of relevance to the Institute, especially those referring to the promotion of the wellbeing of the most marginalized children and young people. Our objective is to form people sensitive to these questions through campaigns and concrete activities, information
Sara Panciroli is presently the General Secretary of the Fondazione Marista per la Solidarietà Internazionale (FMSI) and she is serving her second term in this position. She mainly handles the administration of the Foundation; she assists the President in preparing the Board of Directors meetings and maintains contact with consultants regarding legal and administrative matters which may need attention. Sara is also part of the team that manages the office of the Fondazione in Rome. She is the coordinator of the micro-projects, a program to finance small initiatives in favour of disadvantaged children and the youth in the areas of human rights, education and social development, especially in the developing countries where Marist Brothers are present. She is the coordinator of the micro-projects, a program to finance small initiatives in favour of disadvantaged children and the youth in the areas of human rights, education and social development, especially in the developing countries where Marist Brothers are present. She is the coordinator of the micro-projects, a program to finance small initiatives in favour of disadvantaged children and the youth in the areas of human rights, education and social development, especially in the developing countries where Marist Brothers are present. She is the one who receives requests for the financing of projects and performs the initial selection to then present them to the evaluating committee. Once the project is approved, its coordination entails maintaining relations with the project’s managers to verify its implementation, and the presentation of reports upon completion of operations. Lastly, Sara coordinates the communication activities that are presently maintained through the website www.fmsi.onlus.org. The aforesaid task consists in the collection, preparation and adjustment of the texts, translation into Italian (the website is published in English, Spanish and Italian) and the development of the website with the programmer’s technical support. In more general terms, she is responsible for the development of new communication tools (we anticipate a periodic news bulletin) and provides support in the preparation of information publications.

2. ASSISTANCE AND CO-ORDINATION OF PROJECTS

Lends assistance to the Administrative units, especially in developing countries, for the diffusion, correct presentation and later evaluation of projects, before sending the financing from the Institute or other financing organizations. The Office requests a detailed report on the carrying out of each project and makes sure that the aid sent reaches its destination and is used properly.

3. FUND COLLECTING

To increase the resources so as to allow the Foundation to be economically self-sufficient and respond to the numerous requests it receives in favor of needy children and young people. To maintain contact with schools and charitable institutions, make its objectives known to public and private entities, in Italy and abroad, with bulletins, annual reports and the service of the web http://www.fmsi-onlus.org/

4. DEVELOPMENT OF A COLLABORATION NETWORK, BE IT WITHIN THE INSTITUTE

With the different solidarity teams or recognized non
government organizations, or with the organizations of other Institutes working like us with children and youth.

Now that we have the official recognition of the UNO, setting up this network is perhaps our principal objective. This is also the desire of the General Chapter and of Br Emili in particular: *We are trying to combine forces with other institutions which have a similar aim to ours (defense of children’s rights, the trafficking of women, protection of creation, etc ...). This is a field in which we can grow much more and where possibilities for collaboration are enormous. Let’s hope we have the boldness to take steps in a co-ordinated way and support each other! We will demonstrate in action that an alternative globalization is possible.*

At present the position of Project Co-ordinator is held by Angela Petenzi. The Co-ordination of Projects is the responsibility of part of the staff of the Fondazione Marista per la Solidarietà Internazionale (Marist Foundation for International Solidarity - FMSI) of Rome, and it is in charge of helping the Marist community worldwide to develop solidarity projects and seek donations for their financing. The Project Co-ordinator works alongside the Director of the Rome office, maintaining contacts with the people or organizations that finance projects and searching for new partners. The assistance given to projects ranges from the identification of possible organizations to finance them, to the accomplishment of the Marist community where the project is being carried out, during each phase of the project: preparation, presentation, execution and reporting. The person in charge of co-ordinating projects participates in the technical evaluation of the applications for micro-projects in addition to being responsible for collecting funds for the solidarity initiatives promoted by the Foundation, particularly formation and/or animation regarding the Rights of the Child and the special programs of the General Council of the Institute.

In addition to working on projects of a social nature for the social and economic promotion of children and the young from poor and disadvantaged sections in the weakest strata of the population, the Project Co-ordinator also assists the Marist community in the search for funds for pastoral programs, brothers’ formation centres, Marist spirituality formation courses, with the support of the Solidarity Fund of the General Council.
Go in haste with Mary to a new land! What’s this ‘new land’? Most certainly children’s rights are part of its landscape!

**OVERVIEW OF FMSI IN GENEVA**

Here in Geneva, there are three of us who work for the protection of children’s rights at the international level. Our work is guided by FMSI’s mission statement as well as the call of the XXI General Chapter to promote the rights of children, particularly those on the margins and the most vulnerable. We are guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), an International Treaty, which has been endorsed by nearly every country in the world.

**WORK OF FMSI AT THE UNITED NATIONS**

Our main interaction with the UN is linked to the Human Rights Council (HRC). The HRC meets three times a year and is responsible for strengthening the protection of human rights around the world. In particular, we use the new mechanism under the auspices the HRC called the *Universal Periodic Review* (UPR), which reviews the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States once every four years. FMSI has been very active in making submissions on children’s rights through the UPR mechanism. So far we have presented reports on twelve countries through the UPR: Australia, Cambodia, Kenya, Kiribati, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tanzania, Timor Leste, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe. Most of our submissions focused on issues concerning education for children and many of our recommendations have been accepted by these governments. We hope to involve more provinces in the years to come when the UPR begins its second round in 2012. Last January we also made recommendations to New Zealand on ‘alternative education’ when that State was reviewed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

**WORK OF FMSI IN THE PROVINCES**

The other main focus of our work in Geneva is to provide *Awareness Programs* (up to 1 day in length) for Marist groups and *Training Courses* (1 or 2 weeks in length) for those who wish to have more detailed knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and how to promote these rights through various activities in their own country. We have...
I am certain that the term “advocacy” has a very specific meaning for the English-speaking people. However, this word is difficult to translate into other languages. If we translate it into Spanish, I believe we may need more than one word to explain its significance. Therefore, we say that in Spanish it is “promoting” and “defending” and both words convey the full meaning of what we wish to express when we use this term in English.

Well, this is the task I am fulfilling in Geneva at the Office of the Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI). We attempt to promote a new culture or a new paradigm, with all the people we work with or who maintain any other type of collaboration with the Marist Institute. We attempt to raise the awareness of other people so we may focus on another aspect of our work. We seek to form or to enable people for them to succeed in directing their actions toward this new way of considering the involvement of the Institute with today’s childhood. Once these new action models are accepted, the second stage is easier to reach, that is, the promotion of the new paradigms we committed to during the last General Chapter. All of this implies, in my opinion, a step further in our interpretation of the Marist vocation, since I believe that we must not only engage in teaching as we have done to this date, rather that this new way of looking at reality must lead us to an understanding of children; we must not limit ourselves to educating them, but also care for their welfare, which implies defending and promoting their rights in the different countries and cultures where we work.

Br Manel Mendoza

held awareness courses at El Escorial, Manziana, Barcelona, MAPAC (Manila) and MIC (Nairobi). A one-week training course was held in Brisbane in last year and a two-week course will be held for the Brothers at MAPAC in October.

An important development for us is the appointment of province ‘link’ persons to be the liaison between each province and FMSI. So far we have fourteen provinces that have nominated their link person. We plan to hold an extended workshop for Province Link Persons in the first half of 2012. We welcome invitations from provinces to conduct awareness programs and workshops in their own country to help promote the rights of children there. We look forward to helping the Marist Institute develop its expertise in protecting children and become better known worldwide as defenders of children’s rights. It is an exciting venture into this ‘new land’ and we invite you to join us on our journey.
« It is in making others happy that I find my own happiness ». This thought of Father Champagnat has accompanied along my Marist journey. I quickly recognized that I could contribute to this difficult mission.

I am at present working with Fondazione Marista per la Solidarietà Internazionale – FMSI (Marist International Solidarity Foundation). For a very long time, I dreamt of such a space in the Marist Institution. FMSI certainly exists, in fact, in the Marist Institute, but it is not fully known. What is the mission of FMSI? It seems a bit confused, just like the ‘provocator’ aspect of our mission. If I harp on this subject, it is because the task we are performing in Geneva is not yet very clear for our Provinces and Districts. We are called to work in favour of the most disadvantaged children, and that totally changes the perspective of our activity, without abandoning the great mission we have inherited from our origins. Millions of children exist who must be defended before they can become subjects or objects of a process of human growth.

I arrived in Geneva in January 2011. But my role as Agent in defence of the rights of the child has been developing for more than 15 years already. Working in the perspective of rights means a change of paradigm. The great step our Institution is taking consists in making explicit the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. Let us not forget, either, that integral education, including the different dimensions of human life, has been and remains an efficacious way of promoting and protecting the rights of the child.

Such is our challenge, such is our mission. We are, in fact, in Geneva as the Marist International Solidarity Foundation – FMSI, only in the measure that we are in all the Provinces and Districts of the Marist Institute. That is our principal task in the Foundation: Sensitize and form other persons so that they are in a position to act in accord with this new mode of institutional commitment, in their Provinces and Districts, according to the directives of the International Convention of the Rights of the Child.

Br Vicente Sossai Falqueto
SERVICES OF THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
Brother Jorge Flores Aceves, has been appointed Postulator General by the General Council for a period of three years.

Brother Jorge, 71, is a Mexican belonging to the Province of México Occidental, and has been working as Vicepostulator on the Diocesan Cause of Brother Basilio Rueda. In Rome, he will be working on the cause of Brother Crisanto and his 67 companions martyred in Spain.
Financial and administrative at the service

The administration department aims at supporting the continuity and vitality of the Institute and its mission in light of the challenges that the Institute is facing today in the area of finances and the evangelical use of the assets."

1. Attend to the functions that the Constitutions (169) ascribe to the General Administrator with respect to the finances of the General Administration: Present every year to the Brother Superior General, for his approval, the financial report of the General Administration, as well as the information pertaining to the financial situation of the Provinces and Districts. Prepare the budget for the General Government.

2. Coordinate the work of the Financial Team to respond to the tasks determined by the 21st general Chapter pertaining to the Financing of the General Administration and the financing of the administrative units.

ACTIVITIES

The Accounting and the Management of the Treasury department have been reorganized so as to reach the first objective.

Accounting in Euro currency to provide information to the General Government, to the Provinces and the Italian tax authorities.

The Treasury handles the movement of resources from the administrative units to support the general government and to fulfil the needs for Solidarity of the Institute, especially pertaining to formation in Asia, Africa and for special projects in the Marist world.
MANAGEMENT of the Mission

SUPPORT TEAMS

The Accounting and Treasury departments are managed by Brothers Roy Deita and Javier Ocaranza. We are seeking co-ordinated action with Brother Antoni Salat, the legal representative of the “Casa generalizia del Istituto dei Fratelli Maristi delle Scuole” (General Curia of the Marist Brothers of the Schools), a legal entity that supports the administrative and financial activity with transparency while responding to requirements in force.

The present International Commission of Economic Matters, made up of 5 Brothers and two lay individuals, primarily attends to the 2nd objective and “assists the Brother General Administrator in the application of the financial policy of the Institute”.

The Commission for Economic Matters was constituted to help the General Administrator in his work and to study requests of a financial nature submitted to the General Superior.

TOWARD THE NEAR FUTURE

The General Administration department:

a) Will have to work alongside the Secretariats for the Mission and Laity in promoting programs of formation for administrators and leaders of the Marist mission in light of the mission and its challenges for a new world and also start reflection about the financial implications of co-responsibility of Brothers and laity.

b) Through its work, it gives continuity to the process of the Evangelical Use of Goods, attending to formation and discernment with respect to the use of the assets from an evangelical perspective, and promoting simplicity in our own life and structures.

The office of the GENERAL ADMINISTRATOR is composed of the Econome General and the Deputy Econome General. The Econome General has charge of the finance of General Administration and is a member of the General Council. (Cons., Art. 160). The Deputy Econome General is in charge of accounting and most of the movements of funds and effect arrangements between the General Administration and the different Administrative Units of the Institute. Presently, the Econome is Brother Victor Preciado of Mecixo Occidental and the Deputy Econome General is Brother Roy Deita from the Philippine sector, East Asia Province.

As the Deputy Econome General, I was appointed for a term of 3 years. My main task is to assist the Econome General in efficiently discharging his function related to the finances of the General Administration. Most of the time I spend my time doing accounting works, to make sure that data are up to date and available on time. Also, the related check and balance functions of preparing bank reconciliations, checking the validity and authenticity of invoices and receipts as well as confirming entries in the statement of accounts for payments every month are part of my job.

In general, I see my job as a support / or service to the Econome General.

Br Roy R. Deita, (East Asia)
Direction of the General House

The personnel in the service of the General House consist of Brothers and lay people at the disposition of the General Administration. The direction of the General House is responsible for management, hospitality, maintenance and other services shared with the « Casa per ferie ».

Management

Management is concerned with the needs of the personnel of the house, distributes the physical spaces in an appropriate way, and provides for the persons concerned the instruments necessary for carrying out their tasks. It studies the different implications established by the official organizations and the various laws emanating from them. It studies the aspects relative to the laws, in the service of the General Administration and tries to propose solutions to the needs that arise.

Hospitality

The House offers hospitality to Brothers visiting Rome, who are on their way to courses of spirituality or who take part in the different international Marist commissions. It also welcomes family members of the Brothers and other persons lodged in the « Casa per ferie » and who have direct links with us. It is important that we are able to receive them and dispose of spaces prepared for the good development of their mission.

On occasion, we receive groups from our Marist centres who wish to become familiar with the house and meet some of the Brothers, or have some religious celebration.
MAINTENANCE

One of the essential tasks of the Direction is maintenance. The dimensions of the house and its age cause problems relating to pipes, leaking, equipment, machinery, and others, which require careful and precise maintenance. The application of the norms in force at any time often lead to important changes.

THE «CASA PER FERIE»

The « Casa per ferie », which occupies the buildings of the former International College, shares with the Direction of the house various services taken in charge, in common, by the direction of the « Casa per ferie » and the management.

The direction has to remain attentive to the needs which manifest themselves in day to day life and try to find an adequate solution. The response to certain needs means a real challenge at certain times, such as the preparation and development of the General Chapter, the holding of two courses of formation at the same time for two different groups of Brothers, or the fact of having to resolve one-off situations which demand time and concrete solutions.

Thanks to the devotion of the brothers and our collaborators, we can face up to the daily round, with the strong support, at certain moments, of technicians and enterprises to bring certain particular works to a successful conclusion.

Br Francisco Javier Ocaranza, (México Occidental) Administrator of the House

ADMINISTRATOR OF THE HOUSE

I help the Director of the house as its Administrator, and work with the Treasury of the General Administration. I make the payments to the employees and for the expenses run up in the house and keep the corresponding accounts.

I am the liaison with the company that provides our food supplies and supply the provisions necessary for the festal celebrations of the brothers.

I devote my attention and services to the brothers and groups visiting us. I also take care of the management of documents, repairs and fuel supplies for the vehicles of the house.
So reads N. 137.8 of the Brothers’ Constitutions. We must add to that specific mission the coordination of the statistical services of the Institute, translations, Communications, computer system and archives, according to the Organization Chart of the General Administration.

Following the 21st General Chapter, a new horizon and a new manner of communicating the directions of the General Secretariat illuminate conceptually and practically the work achieved and the one still to be achieved. The phasing out of obsolete computer programs is demanding the need to rethink or reconsider our present status and the issues of the future. Today, the diversity of means of communication available to us, technology, and the generosity in commitment of all those who are part of the General Secretariat do not allow us to give time to small-scale suggestions, but rather to search for and achieve major transformations within our General Administration department.

As it journeys on a path leading to the objectives of governance and animation of the Institute, the General Council has included on its agenda the promotion of a modernization of all General Administration services. In fact, the action plan that the General Secretariat has launched could be characterized as a new era, revolving around three axes: a smooth and constant correspondence with all Provincial Secretaries; the modernization and update of the Institute’s database and implementation in all Provinces and Districts; and the invitation to all provincial secretariats to use the PERGAMUM management and filing tool and library developed by the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do
Paraná, Brazil (PUCPR), which succeeds the Archivum v.2 system that a few Administrative Units and the General Administration have been using for some years.

The above-mentioned will have repercussions on the quality of the mission of animation and governance of Provincials and their Councils and, at the same time, we aim at better ensuring the conservation of the documentary heritage that the new computer science may significantly weaken if no measures are taken in time. This heritage is the tangible testimony of the human and spiritual experience of our religious family as it passes through history. Its conservation consolidates our identity and allows us to maintain references which facilitate new adjustments and incarnations of the charism. The proper operation of any Provincial Secretariat must ensure, among other basic things, a systematic update of data and an adequate filing of documents.

I am certain that the General Secretariat cannot meet all expectations in light of the great diversiity in the Institute; however, we are all invited to join in these proposals.

As part of the aforementioned Project, a meeting by regions is planned between the General Secretary and the Provincial Secretaries; this initiative aims at the actual application of these new tools so we may all walk united towards a new land.

As the person responsible for the Statistics Office, I work directly with the General Secretary. I am mainly in charge of maintaining the database of Brothers, novices and affiliates of the Institute. For purposes of statistics and research, I particularly follow up on the process of entry to the novitiate, temporary professions, destination of the brothers and their functions. I prepare an annual statistical report which is sent to the Vatican and communicated to the Institute. I computerize the process that pertains to the sending of books and magazines that are published in the General Curia and I maintain contacts with the provincial secretariats and novitiates. I translate from English and French into Italian.

Emanuela Lisciarelli

December 2011
Br Josep Roura,
(L’Hermitage)
Coordinator of the translators and translator into French

Translation Service

Brother Sean Sammon, the previous General Superior, liked to say that the function of translators at the General Curia was indispensable. Actually, thanks to his work, the information is transmitted throughout the Institute by way of written documents or the website “champagnat.org” since our Congregation is international, it has the duty to circulate the main pieces of information and documents in the four official languages: French, English, Spanish and Portuguese. That is why there is a translator for each of these languages at the General Curia. In addition to performing written translations into French, my task in the team is to coordinate the work of the other translators. I send them the texts that need to be translated by e-mail, which I receive from the Brother Superior General and his Council, from the different secretariats as well as the Publications, especially the ones destined for the website www.champagnat.org. With respect to other more extensive translations such as Memorandums, Marist Notebooks and other documents, we request the collab-
At the end of 2006, I was invited to take charge of translations into Portuguese in the General House in Rome. At first, I was in a hurry to help the Br Provincial find other names. Besides this, there was a list of reasons emerging which prompted me to refuse the proposal. But the invitation came a second time. So I landed in Rome, on 27 February 2007. And here I have found myself since. The future is in God’s hands.

What is the translator’s function in Rome? In 1962, and in a special way from 1968, the Institute decided to translate the Circulars and other official texts into the four languages: French, Spanish, English and Portuguese. It fell on me to translate into Portuguese, “last flower of Lazio, wild and beautiful”.

Certain translations require great fidelity, especially to the ideas: documents of the Institute, studies, circulars, messages, letters to individual persons or groups of Brothers, to the authorities. Others prove less demanding: chronicles, news items, reports of meetings, etc.

Whatever the translation, it is imperative not to mistreat the language. This requires recourse to dictionaries, including tables of verbs and the rules of grammar. Careful revision and a rereading are also necessary and, as far as possible, comparison with the translation into the other languages.

The translator has the duty of not betraying the text and not anticipating the news. It is frequently tiring work, requiring great concentration, like so many others as well.

From my experience, translation is interesting although monotonous work. It is encouraging to know that the texts become accessible to so many people. Haste is incompatible with a good translation; it is annoying to discover last minute errors, made at the time of lay out and printing.

But since perfection is not of this world, we must be content with what human effort and ingenuity achieve.

Br Aloisio Kuhn, (Brasil Centro-Sul) Translator into Portuguese
Br Aloisio has already written about the work of the translators in general, so I limit myself to saying something about my own work here in the General House. I was asked to come here at the end of 2008 to take over the office of translator into English. At the time, I thought my main task would be translating from French but, in fact, I soon found most of the documents coming to me were in Spanish. In the beginning, my knowledge of Spanish was rather rudimentary, but after three years it has considerably improved. I also get the occasional document in Italian, and I now have sufficient experience with that language to do a passable translation. With such a wide range of documents to translate—news items, letters, prayer services, reflections, historical articles, financial and project reports, legal documents, texts for power point and other presentations, minutes of meetings, among others—we get plenty of practice! My contract for another three years has just been renewed, so I will not be returning to my province until the beginning of 2015.

Br Edward Clisby, (New Zealand)
Translator into English

Gabriela Scanavino
has been doing the work of translation into Spanish since January 2009.
oration of external translators, mostly Brothers. Each translator has his or her own technique and methods; the essential point is that the work must be done well. It is in fact normal for dictionaries and other reference books to occupy places of honour in the office of a translator. Each of the four official languages presents its own richness, complexity and... traps, which put the translator’s capability to the test. Each one must seek to find the means to achieve good results.

In my capacity as coordinator of translations, the interested parties e-mail to me the document which needs to be translated, indicating the language they need it translated into, as well as the deadline for return of the text. I then send the text to the corresponding translator, indicating the delivery date and sometimes adding further clarifications. A text usually needs to be translated into the other three languages. When the translations are delivered to my computer, I resend them to the petitioner, by e-mail. Since we work in a team, we quite often exchange our points of view regarding difficulties in the texts we receive. We all know that when we read and re-read a text, we run the risk of missing mistakes, repetitions and so forth; that is why it is advisable to have someone else review the translations. That is what I customarily do.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all our very helpful collaborators. Their work in the darkness, discrete although indispensable, makes our task much more pleasant and effective.
The Direction of Communications

The Direction of Communications, in the services of the General Administration, has the responsibility for applying the communication policies determined by Brother Superior General and his Council: disseminate the guidelines of the General Chapter, communicate and disseminate the program, reflection, guidelines and activities of animation and government of the Superior General and his Council, and to foster the spirit of communion among the Brothers.

The personnel composing the Direction of Communications are Br Antonio Martínez Estaún, Director (from 1 September 2005 to 31 December 2011; from this date, he will be replaced by Br Alberto Ricica from América Central), and Mr. Luiz Da Rosa, Webmaster (since 1 April 2003). Brother Antônio Ramalho is the liaison between the Direction and the General Council.

The Communications Committee, appointed by the Superior General, is responsible for the drawing up and implementation of the annual Action Plan and for following the policies of communications and publications entrusted to the Direction.

The instruments with which the work is realized are the web www.champagnat.org, the weekly Marist News, and the printing department where the FMS Message, Marist Notebooks and other occasional publications are prepared.
I am responsible for the oversight of the web site of the Institute, in collaboration with the Director of Communications, and a member of the Publications Committee of the General Administration. Since 2003, we have been working to share with the Institute, via the site www.champagnat.org, the Marist mission and charism as they are expressed in concrete form in the various world situations. We have been trying to create an infrastructure which is in harmony with the reality of information technology, by realizing appropriate applications and spaces to receive the different Marist transmissions, from historical texts right up to the audio and video. Currently we are in process of developing the fourth version of our site. Each week, the bulletin « Marist News » is sent to about 5 thousand persons.

As well as assuring the technical aspects, we stay in contact with the Administrative Units and the general public, and try to be a link uniting, through the site, the Marist world.

Luiz Da Rosa
Webmaster
With respect to support services for the office of the Secretary General, I am responsible for a number of specific and well-defined services and tasks. I am also responsible for a series of supplementary and occasional services. The most frequent tasks I must perform on a daily basis include the following:

- Organize and handle the shipping of publications. From the moment a book, letter or any other publication is off the press, I prepare the packages and handle their shipment in the most adequate form throughout the Marist world and according to the distribution list previously established by the office of the Secretary General.

The organizational chart of Brother Superior General and his Council for the 2009-2017 term designates me the manager of general services at the Generalate.

Br Ton Martínez, (L’Hermitage) Manager of general services at the Generalate
Maintain the extra copies of publications stored in the warehouse in order to respond to the requests of Brothers and provinces.

Maintain photocopy machines and printers at the Generalate, and carry out whatever task is requested; handle contacts with the technical maintenance companies and manage the supply of consumables.

Manage the purchase and supply of drinks and food for the refreshment areas and other services located in the house.

Organize the transportation of travellers to and from the airport for the Brothers and people visiting the Generalate.

Contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the landscape surrounding the property of the House.

There are always requests to respond to in such a large community.

My name is Iolanda Gallo. I perform my service to the General Administration of the Marist Brothers as receptionist. Since 1993, I have been occupied attending to those who come to the General House and transmitting the telephone calls coming in and going out. I also have to attend daily to sorting and distributing the mail and parcels which arrive at the reception desk. I also attend to requests for papal blessings and obtaining them.

Iolanda Gallo
Reception
The general archives have been subject to developments and changes brought about by changes in the location of the General Administration. Marcellin moved them from La Valla in 1825, transferring them to the Hermitage. They were moved again in 1858, when the General Administration relocated to a more centrally located site in Saint Genis-Laval. In 1903, with the brothers having to leave France under duress, the archives were hurriedly taken to Grugliasco, Italy. In 1939, at the beginning of World War II, they were returned to Saint Genis-Laval. Finally, they arrived at their current home in Rome in May 1961.

The Archives Service accomplishes the following:

- **Constitutes** the historic archives of the Institute and guarantees that the essential elements of the documents stored in the archives are duly recorded.
My name is Dorotea Cinanni. I am an archivist and since 2009 have been working in the Archives of the General House of the Marist Brothers in Rome. I am responsible for the cataloguing of the historical documents, in particular those coming from the provinces, which refer to the period from 1817 down to 2000.

How is the cataloguing of the documents done? In the first phase of pre-classification, the documents are analyzed and then arranged in order by type of document, author, destination, subject and relevant province, in accordance with the catalogue of the Institute. Once this phase is completed, the documents are catalogued and filed using the computer program Archivum, which assigns all the data describing the document: author, sender, date, subject, support, location, etc., thus permitting an easy and rapid search.

Another facet of my work consists in attending to the requests for data which researchers request from the archives, Brothers as well as former students or other persons looking for information about the life and works of the Marist Brothers. In addition, I am responsible for cataloguing the documents drawn up by the Secretary General.

Dorotea Cinanni
Archivist
Lucia Distefano, with a degree in Political Sciences in Rome, has been working in the Archives of the General House of the Marist Brothers since 2006. After having contributed to the cataloguing of the documents relative to the Provinces and the Brothers, her current work consists in transferring the registers of documents already catalogued on the old database of the General Archives, called Ficdoc, to the new database called Archivum, a computer software shared with the General Administration and some provinces. To effect this transfer, I check all the data extracted from the old database to make a report of agreement with the criteria of the new software. Once this operation is concluded, all the registers standardized in this way are registered and stored in Archivum, which allows a rapid and easy search for the archived documents.

Lucia Distefano
Archivist
Guarantees the filing of all the documents processed and received by the General Administration

Sees to the proper conservation and maintenance of the documents

 Responds to the research requests it receives

Provides documentary support to the individuals who request it

Looks after the library attached to the archives, which holds books directly related to our Marist heritage and world.

Main activities performed in the archives:

– Entry of graphs and documentation into the computer system
– Adoption of new software for document management
– Classification of documents from Provinces and Brothers
– Transfer of the existing database.
– Harmonization of document containers.

Achievements and pending tasks:

– Prioritizing immediate and future tasks
– Ready ing documents needed by members of the General Administration
– Providing dependable consultation for the members of the General Administration
– Helping the Brothers and Laity to consult documents available on the Internet
– Completing catalogs of documents from the previous catalogue (prior to 2001)
– Completing the transfer of documents from an earlier database
– Classifying material in the library attached to the Archives
– Putting together catalogs pertaining to various services of the General Administration
– Providing Formation for Brothers serving as archivists in the Provinces
– Taking care of customary tasks: background research for documents; repair and preservation of deteriorating documents; binding of memoranda, letters, magazines, etc
These articles of the Constitutions recall the ideal of our community life, which is valid for the whole Marist world and, with even more reason, for the community of the General House. The role of the Superior is indicated in number 152 of the Constitutions: the Superior “is at the service of his Brothers in the accomplishing of their personal, community, and apostolic vocation”. But how to realize this vocation in the General House?

At present, the community is composed of 25 brothers coming from 11 different countries and belonging to 13 separate provinces of the In-
stitute. They have been called by the Brother Superior General to help the General Council in its task of animation and government. For four years also, the students, who once formed part of the International College, have been an integral part of the community, which sees itself enriched by their contribution of energy, joy, and creativity. Separated from their provinces, the brothers lay aside direct activities and responsibilities, and could live a certain “cultural” isolation, aggravated by a feeling of solitude and the risk of becoming locked up in their own world. In this context, it is important to find a community in which they can entertain fraternal relationships which allow them to grow humanly and spiritually and perform efficiently the work that has been assigned to them.

In the reflection leading up to the drawing up of the community project, we are conscious of this fact: we are an international, multicultural and multigenerational community. In announcing the approval of the community’s project of life, Brother Emili said that our diversity is a gift and challenged us to: pass from a multicultural community to an intercultural one, in which the specific nature of each one is converted into a richness for all of each. As reminder and indicator, he left us a little bridge, symbol of the commitment to build positive relationships among ourselves, with the aim of representing here, in Rome, what is happening in communities of the Institute the world over.

One of the concrete animations of the community, in the context of the General Administration, is to facilitate communication through the use of a common language. So the brothers make an admirable effort to use Italian in prayers and at meetings. There are times which foster privileged relationships and good spirit, such as the informal spaces for sharing, community meetings, celebrations of birthdays and outings in small groups...

Finally, prayer in common (the Eucharist in the morning and evening prayer at nightfall) have a key place in the motivation and support of our mission. The brothers prepare them with care and creativity and animate them from their culture. Doing them in Italian, although a little difficult for some, is a sign of the desire to pray together and to pray with a single heart.

In this context, the Superior works in close collaboration with the community council in trying to appraise the enormous value of each brother, with the aim of guaranteeing a satisfactory service to the Institute, at the same time as confronting the challenge of cultural integration and respect for diversity, so as to increase unity without falling into uniformity. Perhaps this community finds itself in an ideal situation to open new ways for dialogue.
My specific function in this house is to provide spiritual assistance to the Brothers who work in the General Administration or who are in Rome while attending University. I am providing this clarification since the Curia relies on another chaplaincy led by Father Jose del Carmen De la Cruz, a second-year student of Psychology at the Salesian Pontifical University, who cares for the spiritual needs of the Institute’s General Government.
In summary, our job consists of presiding over the different liturgical celebrations that are held in both communities on a daily basis and in being available to welcome the brothers who wish to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

However, my most important mission consists in learning about all the beauties offered by the community, such as: community life, the brothers’ testimony and their generosity in Christian life, their surrender to the mission that each one carries out, etc.

You cannot imagine the enormous richness I have acquired in nearly three years since I have been sharing and living the Marist spirituality. That is why I take this opportunity to thank the brothers for the possibility they have offered to me, to express my admiration and offer them my prayers so they may continue their beautiful mission as educators of the new generations that Jesus Christ has entrusted to them through our father Marcelino and Our Good Mother.

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SECRETARY OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

This is not a role provided for in the Constitutions. It does not appear in the organigram of animation and government of the General Council.

To have at least one personal secretary is a tradition and a necessity for Superior Generals, and Br Emili proposed it to me a few days after being elected. It is a discreet mission, very Marian, of great trust and confidentiality.

I have to be available to the Superior General for anything he needs: to help him with the correspondence and the activities that unfold, and to be available to respond to the thousands of small details connected with the mission of the Superior General. And to know how to stay on the second floor.

Br José M.a Ferre, (Mediterránea) Secretary of the Superior general
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While doing Biblical studies at the Gregorian University, he set up the operational base for communications during the XXI General Chapter in Rome. At present, his studies completed, he has been entrusted with the diagnosis, analysis and implementation of a new system of communication for the General House which allows for the integrated and harmonised work of the General Administration, and especially of the General Secretariat with all the Administrative Units of the Institute.

AMEstaún.- Questions like these keep coming to the General Secretariat or to the Direction of Communications: How many Brothers are there in the Institute at the present time? How many were there at such a date? In what fields of knowledge are there most brothers with university qualifications and how are they distributed? Marcelo, how could we reply to these questions, with the instruments we had available, before you undertook your work?

Marcelo.- If an inquisitive young person or a teacher interested in the details of the statistical data of the Institute asked me these questions or similar ones, I would have to answer simply: «I don’t know». In the best case, I could give him only an approximate answer. In the General Administration, questions like these arrive daily and it is not easy to answer.

AMEstaún.- From whence comes the difficulty of giving accurate and efficient answers?

Marcelo.- More than ten years ago, some Brothers working in the General Administration created a computer data base for drawing up the official statistics for those years. They did excellent work. However, over the ten years, the technology has made extraordinary advances, permitting better performance. In addition, the life of the Institution itself, the integration...
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of lay people into the Marist mission, the diversification of the works, etc., require new ways of looking at things. The instrument we had had no more capacity to absorb the new data, and was simply not up to solving the problems that we are coming up with today. For a number of reasons which have been carefully studied, we arrived at the conclusion that it was time to create something new with the technology available today, looking forward to the future.

AMEstaún.- What directives did you receive from the General Council?

Marcelo.- Br. Superior General and his Council took up the challenge to find a solution to the problems facing the General Administration in order to provide an adequate response to the needs of the Institute. They encouraged the creation of a new system for archiving data as well as responding in a precise and reliable way to all the needs.

AMEstaún.- How did you organise the work of creation and setting in motion the new data storage system?

The work was launched in the last term of last year (2010). The first step was to ask ourselves what we wanted, what we needed and what criteria seemed most appropriate to us for giving a framework to the new project. A great challenge which could only be approached as a team. For many months, consultations were made with the various secretariats which make up the General Administration. We spent many hours of discussion and reflection with those responsible for drawing up the statistics of the Institute or the running of the General Secretariat. Their contributions tested the patience and ingenuity of those concerned to imagine a computer system which might mirror the living reality of the Institute with reasonable fidelity. We also carefully examined the systems and means used by certain Provinces to respond to their needs from the point of view of the organisation. The timely comments or questions of those familiar with our project have been extremely precious. The Council followed the work with interest and gave it the more encouragement as it advanced towards solutions.

AMEstaún.- What criteria guided the search for solutions to arrive at a computer system faithfully reflecting such a complex international presence of the Institute?

Marcelo.- We perceived this need from the start. What has appeared first in the reports is a list of the criteria to be taken into account. These are some of the most important of them:

- We needed a **solid data base**, with data true and up to date almost in real time, capable of offering results, lists, and automatic and reliable calculations.
To construct a system with a centralised data base, but with decentralised management, so that the person closest to the event may translate it into data form.

It had to be a gradual system, that is to say that it may be developed on new platforms and technologies as new needs and possibilities appear, and that new modules may be added without depending on the original development team.

The system had to be supple at the moment of creating reports, making statistical analyses, historical reports or presenting possible future scenarios, and so that the data could be handled by a software usually employed by the users, such as Open Office or Microsoft Office.

The system had to be multilingual so that all the users could understand it better and chose the options desired with ease and precision.

It should not be necessary to install special programmes in the computers of the users, but all operations should be effected by a centralized server. Thus, every update or correction made in the server would be immediately available to everyone without having to update their computer.

The system had to be on multiple platform, that is to say that it functions in any computer furnished with a browser connected to the net, independently of the operational system utilised: MacOS, Windows, Linux, etc.

To take advantage of the power, the documentation and the availability of an open source software pin order to create a solid, current and economical system.

The data structure, the lists and the statistics had to cover not only the needs of the General Administration, but also those of the diverse Province and District Secretariats.

The system we wanted to construct had to be easy to use, supple in the navigation and the transfer of data and, at the same time, reliable.

Assure the possibility of interconnection of the data and statistics system with the archiving system.

### STRUCTURE OF THE NEW SYSTEM OF THE ARCHIVING AND MANAGEMENT OF DATA OF THE GENERAL HOUSE

AMEstaún.- How was the new system of archiving and managing data arrived at?

Marcelo.- Things matured little by little. One day, the first outline appeared before our eyes, the first ‘map’ of the structure of the new data system, then the second version, the third... It was the ninth version (enriched by some subsequent modifications) which ended up convincing us, after having passed the logical texts it was submitted to. This version is represented in the chart you can see on the page adjacent.

AMEstaún.- What are the fundamental nuclei of this structure?

Marcelo.- As each can see, the data structure is organised around four nuclei:

1. the Administrative Units
2. the persons
3. the houses
4. the publications

Around these four nuclei a complicated network of tables of data and relationships is developed. All this together will allow us to have available what is necessary to be able to reconstitute the history of a person, a house (school, novitiate, social work, etc.), an Administrative Unit (current or former), and also to make statistical calculations and to make forecasts.

AMEstaún.- But a new user may be struck by the absence of sets of physical spaces like those hiding behind terms such as «country» or «diocese», etc. Have you had any difficulties in delimiting the nuclei?

Marcelo.- It was a challenge to find an option which brought the whole system into harmony. It may be that the concept which seems strangest is that of roles of a house, although, on the other hand, it may be somewhat familiar. This is the
way we have found of integrating in the interior of a physical space what we call *house*, while distinguishing the different functions (*or roles*) which are developed in the interior of this space. To cite a classic situation, in a *house* one can find a community of Brothers (one *role* of this *house*) and a school (another *role*). This distinction has allowed us to resolve quite well some real difficulties which are produced in our little Marist universe.

**AMEstaún.- Is the information contained in the data base available to everyone?**

**Marcelo.-** The information accumulated contains nuances of different orders. In order to respect the *persons* above all, and as a way of guaranteeing the consistency of the system, a certain ‘hierarchy’ has been established among the users, each having different possibilities and attributions according to his role. Thus, general data and statistical reports will be accessible to all users, while private or more personal data will be only available to those entitled to it in function of their mission.

**AMEstaún.- Now that the ‘map’ of the structure has been achieved, you have begun to draw up its computer support...**

**Marcelo.-** As soon as we were convinced of the viability of this data structure, we set ourselves to imagine and develop the user interface, the screens the users will see, the entry formularies, etc. and at the same time, we studied the different ‘material ‘architectures’ on which we were going to mount our system, that is to say, the servers, the different characteristics and provisions, the type of internet connection, the nodes of network connection and security, etc. This research and reflection faced us with another problem: it was indispensable to improve the infrastructure of the network of the General House.

**TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GENERAL HOUSE NETWORK**

**AMEstaún.- What are the technical characteristics of the General House network?**

**Marcelo.-** On the table on the next page, you can see a diagram of the present General House network. It is organised by a gateway of current technology allowing many simultaneous internet connections and the internal separation of different sub-networks for
different services. The gateway itself is provided with a very effective antivirus system and content filter. The diagram allows us to appreciate:

- Two connections to internet: one fibre optic (of 4 Mb / 4 Mb), normally used for the connection of servers that can be contacted on internet and for access to the internet by the General Administration and occasional guests of the house. Another connection ADSL (of 7Mb / 384 kb), normally used to provide access to internet by the students and from the bedrooms of the Brothers. In this way, access to the internet is balanced and, in case of need, one of the lines can operate in place of the other if it is faulty or ceases functioning.
- A first sub-network called DMZ where are found the servers one can access on internet, like the one hosting the web site [www.champagnat.org](http://www.champagnat.org) and the services of the data system.
- A sub-network called LAN1 which integrates all the teams of the brothers and the networks of the General Administration, with their team of servers
- A sub-network called LAN2 which integrates the teams of the brothers who are following higher studies in the different Roman universities.
- A sub-network called WLAN which integrates the wifi system and provides access to the internet to the rooms destined for guests, but does not allow access to the servers and other teams of the General Administration.

AMEstaún.- How was the computer system already working in the General house updated?

Marcelo.- At the same time as the torrid heat of the Roman summer, a new ensemble of HP servers arrived and these are in process of valiantly carrying out their daily work. It does not seem to me useful to go into much detail, but I will nevertheless allow myself a few lines of computer jargon to satisfy the curiosity of those who know something about the subject. The data system is set up in the following way:

- One server HP Proliant DL370 G6 with a system of RAID 6 hard disks for the database. Briefly, a server with great benefits, very reliable. It could happen, for example, that two of the disks break down (something extremely rare); well, even in that case, the data would not be lost.
- Two servers HP Proliant DL360 G7 with two mirror disks for the web server of the data system: one for normal work, and the other for the situation where the first has a problem.
- In all the servers has been installed a Linux operating system based on Debian.

We have in addition installed a system of «replication» of the database in real time and a backup system for all the services and data, which is updated every time changes in the system’s code file are introduced or every 6 hours.

- In October, at Guardamar, following the first Meeting of Provincial Secretaries in Spain, we began the stage of setting the system en route. Day after day, meeting after meeting, new functionalities and numerous improvements are enriching the system thanks to the corrections and contributions of many.

If, thanks to the commitment of all the participants, we succeed in maintaining the planned rhythm of work as it has developed up to now, for the month of October 2012 we will have a precise and real «numerical image» of the Institute. And a short time afterwards (perhaps a year), we will be able to have available the data of the current history of the Institute.

It is question of an ambitious project, thought out by teamwork, built by teamwork, implemented by teamwork. This tool will be an efficient instrument for responding to questions like those posed at the beginning of this article.
To a new land!

The General Administration is composed of brothers and lay people, entrusted with the service of supporting the Brother Superior General and his Council, those responsible for the Administrative Units, the Brothers and those who work with them, in the carrying out of the mission of the Institute.

The mission of the General Administration is inspired by Mary in her Visitation to Elizabeth. She senses that there is a need and sets out diligently to place her abilities at the service of others.