



VIA LATINA 22

295 - December 2020

News from the General Administration of the Society of Mary

World Council of the Marianist Family (WCMF)



On the weekend of November 7th and 8th, a virtual meeting of the World Council of the Marianist Family took place.

This Council is made up of the General Councils of the two religious branches (FMI and SM), that of the Alliance Mariale (AM) and the International Team of MLCs. It normally meets once a year, in Rome, for three days. The peculiar circumstances of this year forced a virtual meeting of two half-days.

As time was more limited, we reduced the contents of the agenda, and sent the usual reports from each branch to all the participants before the meetings took place. Thus, it began with a brief presentation of the most important events in each branch during the last year.

The central theme of the meeting was a reflection on our being a Charismatic Family, based on the document "A Charismatic Family, the Marianist Family" (approved at the 2019 Council) and on the reflections and comments sent by the communities and members of the Family.

You have already received a message from the Council informing you in more detail of the issues involved. From Via Latina we invite you to continue deepening this very important aspect of our charism, which is to be a Marianist Family.

The Extended General Council in Virtual Meeting

On November 19th and 20th, the four members of the General Council and the five Zonal Presidents met for two afternoons of work and sharing. This particular structure, the "Extended General Council" meets annually "for the sharing of information, for long-term planning and for strengthening animation and solidarity within the Society of Mary", in the words of the Rule of Life (7.61).



During our meeting, we were attentive to the situation of the Society of Mary in this period of Covid-19. We congratulate everyone on the enormous effort of adaptation and creativity that the brothers and their collaborators have shown in order to face this new situation, full of unexpected events. This meeting also discussed those members of the Society of Mary who, because of their age or health, are very fragile. We must express our gratitude to all of you. The calls that come to us from beyond our communities and works also challenge us and demand our attention.

We also evaluated the effects of the recommendations of the last General Chapter, especially for our life as a Marianist Family or for the deepening of our charism. These are invitations that must continue to resonate within us in order to bear fruit. The development or strengthening of national or local Family Councils can give us much encouragement.

We shared information concerning the ongoing projects of the General Council as well as the outlook for the General Leadership Assembly scheduled for July 2021, in Rome. It will be an opportunity to return to these themes with an experience enriched by the months that have passed since the meeting of the Extended General Council.

This annual contact is important for all of us: General Council and Zonal Presidents. It strengthens our unity of vision and action. By this means, we also wish to encourage the functioning of the Zones, which offer a very interesting level for intensifying the collaboration between the Units of the Society of Mary, since this contact is becoming more and more necessary.

Annual Seminar of the Education Commission of the two Unions of Superiors General concerning the Global Education Pact

As a member of the "Education Commission" of the Union of Superiors General (men) and the International Union of Superiors General (women), the Assistant General for Instruction participates once a year in the work of this commission. This year, due to the pandemic situation, the seminar took place online, with the possibility offered to all curias to invite a limited number of other people of their choice. Thus, Brother E. Maximin Magnan, together with five other Marianists from different continents, whom he had invited, took part in this seminar held from November 12-14, 2020, involving five hours of work per day.

In all, nearly 700 people, men and women from 68 countries, with every conceivable diversity of cultures and contexts, coming from various educational traditions of the Church, including religious and lay people, shared ideas, from the perspective of Catholic schools, concerning our vocation as educators.



The echo of Pope Francis' call to "rebuild the Global Educational Pact" generated enriching reflections and a passion to continue working to make our world a better place. Technological support was a major challenge, but it allowed everyone to participate as planned. The work of the technological infrastructure, the design team, the translators (French, English, Italian, and Spanish) and the facilitators and coordinators was invaluable.

At the end of this seminar, the six Marianists who took part in it met, via zoom, to exchange ideas and reflections. As a congregation committed to education, the concerns of this pact challenge all of us, and in the coming weeks and months we will continue to give them due attention.

A Committee: "Marianist Saintliness"

For the last two months, at the request of the General Council, four brothers living at Via Latina have formed a committee entitled "Marianist Saintliness." Why? To promote the fourteen individuals of Marianist sanctity, already recognized by beatification or on the way to such recognition.



L-R: Fr. Antonio Gascón, SM, Fr. Miguel Ángel Cortés, SM, Fr. Eddie Alexandre, SM and Bro. Frédéric Bini, SM

God gives us the saints to encourage and guide us on the path of Christian life. It is important not to let this help be lost, especially when it concerns our Marianist Family. A beatification or canonization is above all the fruit of the people's devotion and attachment to this witness whose power of intercession we use, bringing about graces and miracles.

The four members of this committee are: Eddie Alexandre, SM, who leads the team, Antonio Gascón, SM, Postulator, Frédéric Bini, SM, and Miguel Ángel Cortés, SM.

They will work to remind us of the place that these witnesses can take in our lives and in our pastoral ministry. A monthly article in Via Latina is already helping us remember these individuals. Fr. Eddie Alexandre will be contacting each Unit shortly to request the help of a brother from that Unit who can also play such a role among his confreres and form a network with the Roman team. In opening the third millennium, Pope John Paul II invited us to develop a "pedagogy of holiness"; Pope Francis calls us to recognize the "saints next door"; may the witnesses of our Marianist history help us to do this.

"Brother to all"



"Fratelli Tutti" is the challenge that Pope Francis has given us. When we look at the lives of some of our brothers, we recognize them as, "Brothers to all". This is the case for one of them, Miguel Ángel (*Michel*) Quiroguá, a Colombian born in 1972, murdered by paramilitaries on the Atrato River on September 18, 1998. About forty people, in two boats, were going joyfully to celebrate the patronal feast day of a local village. An unwarranted identity check: a just word, to defend the poorest: the militia leader shoots a bullet into the heart. Miguel dies instantly.

He knew well what he was doing, this paramilitary leader, this anti "all brothers". Miguel had just finished a degree in social sciences in order to be close to everyone and to defend the truth in the face of corruption and threats. Moreover, he was young and religious; he had made his first vows on December 12, 1992 in the Society of Mary. Miguel was indeed a danger, a hindrance to the paramilitary militias and they had to eliminate him.

To be "brother to all" is dangerous. Michael gave his life, he was ready, and he lived in real life, the prayer he said every day after communion:

*Lord Jesus, unite your life with mine,
Unite my life with your life,
Unite our lives with the lives of others,
So that I know how to share, to be more human,
And, little by little, build in this world,
The Kingdom of God our Father,
Through justice, life and liberation
Giving to the poor and oppressed,
According to the Marianist way
In the footsteps of the Risen One.
Amen*



**Marianiste
FMI**

New Circular from the FMI Superior General

Sr. Franca Zonta, FMI, has just written an interesting circular to the sisters of the FMI. It is entitled “A Matter of Style” and is offered in the context of the recent Papal Encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*. It is presented on the occasion of the Patronal Feast of the FMI, December 8.

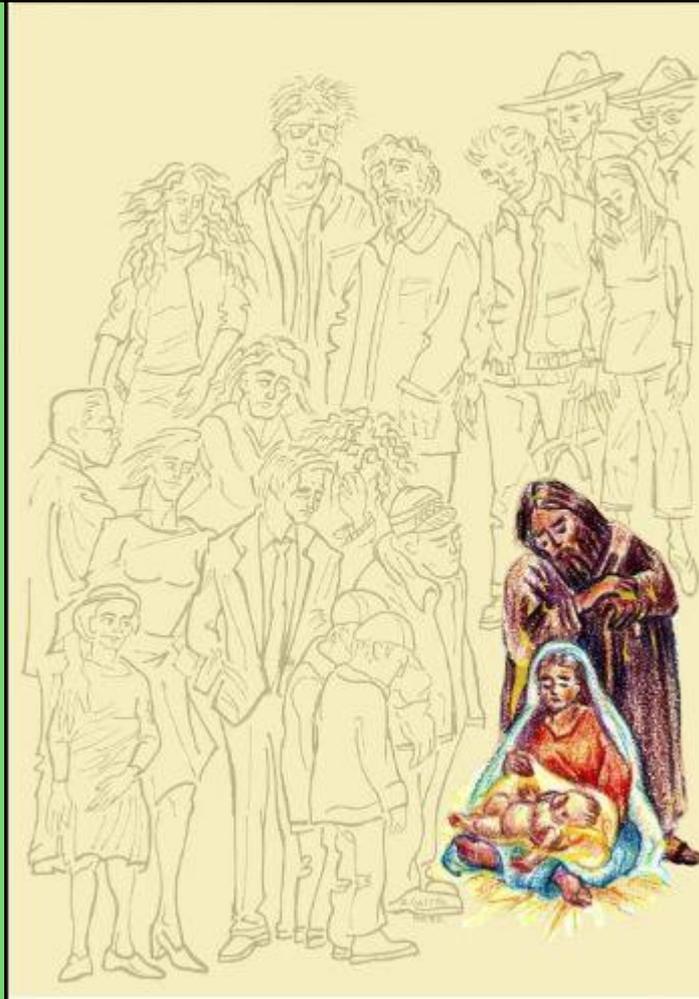
You may read or download the circular in various languages by clicking the links below.

[ENG](#)

[ESP](#)

[FR](#)

[IT](#)



The Community of the General Administration and the Community of the Chaminade International Seminary wish all our brothers and sisters, their collaborators and families, a Holy Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

G.A. Communications recently sent

- **Death Notices: # 33-34**
- **Nov.16: *Summary of the responses and work proposals***, in three languages, to participants in the consultation on initial formation (June 2020), from Fr. Pablo Rambaud, SM, General Assistant for Religious Life.
- **Nov. 27: *Message from the World Council of the Marianist Family (WCMF)*** in three languages to all Marianist religious.

G.A. Calendar

26 nov-6 dec.: Fr. Pablo Rambaud, SM, General Assistant for Religious Life and Bro. E. Maximin Magnan, SM, General Assistant for Education, visit Malawi (Region of Eastern Africa)

Address changes

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