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News from the General Administration of the Society of Mary

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Bro. Peña professes First Vows in the Province of United States

Bro. Guillermo “Memo” Peña Contreras professed first vows in the Society of Mary (Marianists) on June 8, 2024, at Capilla de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Querétaro, Mexico. Director of Novices Bro. Dennis Bautista, SM and Assistant Director of Novices Fr. Tim Eden, SM presented Bro. Memo as a suitable candidate for the profession of vows after a period of formation and discernment. His vows were received by Fr. Oscar Vasquez, SM, Superior of Province of USA, and with the Assistant for Religious Life, Fr. Tim Kenney, SM, concelebrating.

Many family members, friends, and Marianist religious from the Querétaro and Puebla communities in Mexico and the United States attended the vow ceremony and reception that followed. The ceremony was also live streamed so

that Marianist Family members and friends from all over the world could witness the celebration virtually.



Bro. Guillermo with his family.

Bro. Guillermo Peña Contreras, 33, is the son of Antonio Peña Alegria and Silvia Contreras Mendoza. Born in Corregidora, Querétaro, Mexico, he excelled in school and received a law degree from Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro in 2013. While practicing law, one day, he was invited to join prayer in a chapel at a Marianist community that he'd walked by a thousand times before on the way to his grandmother's house. During Holy Week of 2019, he decided to join those Marianist brothers, living with them in Querétaro as a Marianist Aspirant. "I like community life because you can feel the love and support of a family in not just a physical sense but also in a spiritual way," said Memo.

He moved to San Antonio in December 2020 living at the Casa Maria Marianist Community as a pre-novice. He attended courses at the Mexican American Catholic College and began an intensive English program at St. Mary's University. During his time in Texas, he also used his law degree to help several

local charities. Memo will begin his service at the Querétaro Marianist Community.

First Vows in the Region of Korea

On June 22nd, 2024, Bro. Joseph Choi made his first vows at the Marianist Center of the region of Korea during the mass presided by Fr. Dominic Park, Regional Superior.

Shortly after graduating from Mokpo Marianist High School in 2013, he began his pre-novitiate program. During this time, he completed his university studies and military service. In December 2020, he went to San Antonio, Texas, USA, where he continued his pre-novitiate program, learning English, until July 2022.



Bro. Joseph Choi with his family and Bro. Dennis Bautista.

In August 2022, he moved to the novitiate in Dayton, Ohio, USA, to begin his novitiate program. He returned to Korea on April 7, 2024, and professed his first vows on June 22, 2024.

About 140 people attended his first profession ceremony, including his family, the Marianist Family in Korea (SM, FMI, MLC), as well as the novice director of the Province of USA and the Regional Superior of Japan. His novice director, Bro. Dennis Bautista, SM gave him a message of encouragement and congratulations at the end of the Mass.

The daily prayers for his first vows that the Marianist Family in Korea offered on social media for more than a month helped him prepare for his profession.

With the prayers of the entire Marianist Family, may he continue to grow in his vocation as a Marianist.

On the road to the General Chapter

Next Saturday, July 6, the XXXVI General Chapter of the Society of Mary will begin in Rome, bringing together some forty people, including capitulants, guests, translators and other auxiliary personnel.

In the last two months prior to the Chapter, two online meetings of the capitulants were held. The first, to explain the proposed schedule and the synodal method that will be followed during part of the Chapter. The second, for those capitulants participating for the first time, giving directions and clarifications for a better participation in the Chapter from the beginning.

The capitulants also received the Chapter *Manual of Procedures*, which will be reviewed and approved at the beginning of the Chapter, as well as the propositions that have been submitted.

On the other hand, all communities and members of the Society, as well as other branches of the Marianist Family, have been invited to join a prayer network during the Chapter to ask for the guidance of the Spirit and of Mary during the Chapter.



Young people are the central theme of the Chapter: how to proclaim the Gospel to them and how to make them participants in this evangelizing mission. There will be other topics for discussion, as well as the election of the new General Council that will guide the Society of Mary for the next six years.

The Chapter meeting room is almost ready. All that is missing are the guests at this feast.

A People of Saints. Marianist Holiness

Blessed Chaminade wrote to the priest Noailles in 1826: "The main spirit of the Society, which is to present to the world the spectacle of a people of saints, and to prove by the fact that today, as in the primitive Church, the Gospel can be practiced in all the rigor of the spirit and of the letter". Blessed Chaminade wished that all his disciples, the laity of the Marian Sodality, the religious Daughters of Mary and the religious of the Society of Mary, also those affiliated to the Society, and now the Marian Alliance, all form "a people of saints". Some of these disciples have been declared models of holiness and intercessors of the Marianist Family: Blessed Chaminade and Blessed Mother Adèle, Blessed Martyrs Carlos, Fidel, Jesús, Jakob, Miguel, Florencio, Sabino and Joaquín, Venerables Lamourous, Faustino, Domingo and Vincente, and Servants of God Miguel and Father Halter.

In a beautiful and complete article of the *Dictionary of the Marianist Rule of Life*, Father Salaverri makes a wonderful doctrinal exposition of Marianist holiness in our origins, in the tradition of the Society and in the Marianist spirituality renewed according the theology of consecrated life of the documents of the Second Vatican Council.



**Marianist Icon by Fr. Salvatore Santacroce, SM
Chapel of Villa Chaminade, Verbania Pallanza, Italy.**

Our Founder summarized his ideal of holiness for the two Institutes he founded in these words to Father Louis Rothéa in 1822: "How I wish you to become a saint! Let us count as synonymous in the expressions saint and son of Mary!"; and in a letter to Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon: "With saints we shall succeed in everything, but, with ordinary or imperfect religious, we shall do almost nothing". For this reason, and in the first article of the first Constitutions of 1839, we read that "the little Society that offers its feeble services to God and to the Church, under the auspices of the august Mary, proposes two principal objects:

1°) with the grace of God, to raise each of its members, to religious perfection [...]". Where we must understand the term "perfection" as "holiness". Fr. Salaverri explains that "the Spanish version uses "sanctification" in articles 49 and 4.17a. In article 1, the Spanish translation uses the word "perfection", but in the sense of fullness. The word "holy" ("people of saints") is found twice in Article 33. In articles 34 and 49 it speaks of "sanctity" ".

Therefore, the evangelical fullness or perfect imitation of Christ, to which the Marianist religious is called, is called "holiness". This is the main reason why we have entered Marianist religious life and it is the necessary condition for fulfilling the second purpose proposed by the Constitutions of 1839: To work for the salvation of souls and the propagation of the Gospel.

However, much clearer than my explanation are the words contained in Fr. Salaverri's article and the chapter on personal sanctification in the *Spirit of our Foundation*. In both texts, you will find the words of the Founder and his disciples and the articles of the 1983 Rule of Marianist Life. Good spiritual reading for summer vacation.

José María Salaverri, *Sainteté*, in *Dictionnaire de la Règle de Vie Marianiste*, Rome, CEMAR, 1988, 792-808.

Idem, *Holiness*, in *Commentary on the Rule of Life of the Society of Mary*, Dayton, NACMS, 1994, 579-603.

Idem, *Sanctity*, in *Dictionary of the Marianist Rule of Life*, Madrid, ed. SM, 1990, 689-702.

La sanctification personnelle du religieux, première fin de la Société de Marie, in *L'Esprit de notre Fondation, d'après les écrits de M. Chaminade et les documents primitifs de la Société*, Nivelles, Imprimerie Louis Havaux-Houdart, 1910, vol. I, 51-72.

The Personal Sanctification of the Religious, the First End of the Society of Mary, in *The Spirit of Our Foundation, according to the Writings of Father Chaminade and of Our First Members in the Society*, Dayton, St. Mary's Convent, 1911, vol. I, 53-74.

Prayer for the XXXVI General Chapter



XXXVI
GENERAL CHAPTER
SOCIETY OF MARY

*Mary, to you,
who always gives us Jesus,
who bore him in your womb,
who accepted us as children at the foot of the cross,
we pray for our General Chapter.*

*Open us to the action of the Spirit,
so that the Chapter
may be a time of discernment and encounter.
Help us to know young people better,
that we may share with them the Gospel of joy,
the joy of living centered on Jesus Christ,
the living Gospel,
and thus, be able to offer better,
without exclusion,
the gifts of our Marianist religious life to all,
and attract others to collaborate with us
in building a more just and fraternal society.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Mother of the Marianist Family
Pray for us.*

G.A. Communications recently sent

- **Death Notices: N. 7-9**
- **June 4 : *Communication #8 with the Chapter Manual of Procedures and the propositions presented***, in three languages, to the Capitulants of XXXVI General Chapter from the Preparatory Commission.
- **June 5 : *Bulletin #4***, in three languages, to all Marianist religious from the Preparatory Commission.
- **June 28 : *Communication #9***, in three languages, to the Capitulants of XXXVI General Chapter from the Preparatory Commission.

