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News from the General Administration of the Society of Mary

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First Profession of Vows: Bro. Petrus Nag, SM

The Marianist Region of India celebrated a moment of profound joy and grace on May 12, 2026, as novice Petrus Nag pronounced his First Profession of Vows. The sacred celebration took place at Nirmal Deep, the novitiate house for the Region, marking a significant milestone for the Marianist Family and the local Church.

In 2022 Brother Petrus enrolled in the Joyal Training School in Binda—a Marianist initiative—for professional driving training. It was during these four

months that he first encountered the Marianist community. Moved by their lifestyle and charism, and gently guided by the inspiration of Fr. Sebastian Baru, he began to discern a religious vocation with the Society of Mary.

In 2022, Brother Petrus formally entered the Marianist Aspirancy Program at Deepahalli, Bangalore. He successfully completed his pre-novitiate formation. Shortly after, on June 15, 2024, he entered Nirmal Deep, officially commencing his two-year canonical novitiate.

Having completed his intensive spiritual formation Brother Petrus committed his life to God by profession of the evangelical counsels according to the Rule of Life of the Society of Mary.



L-R: 1st year Novices Amit and Sujit, Fr. Jinu Muthukattil, Novice Master, Bro. Prakash Kujur, Regional Superior, Bro. Petrus Nag, Fr. Ignase Arulappan, Deputy Regional Superior, 1st year Novice Alex, Bro. Ajay Soreng, Assistant Novice Master and Fr. Birendra Kullu, Novitiate Staff,

The Solemn Eucharistic Celebration commenced at 10:30 AM in the novitiate chapel. Fr. Ignase Arulappan, SM, Deputy Regional Superior and Assistant for

Religious Life, presided over the Holy Mass, while Bro. Prakash Kujur, SM, Regional Superior, officially received the vows.

Around 160 guests gathered to witness and bless the newly professed brother. The congregation included Brother Petrus' family members, Marianist Lay Community members, Marianist Sisters and Brothers from various communities, and local religious.

Following the liturgy, the Nirmal Deep community had the privilege of extending its warm hospitality to all attendees, sharing a festive fellowship meal and celebrating the gift of Brother Petrus' "Yes" to the call of God.

Region of Korea hosts annual meeting of the Asian Zonal Conference

Leaders of the Asian Zonal Conference (AZC) met May 6-7, 2026, at the Marianist Community in Goyang-si, South Korea, for their annual meeting focused on shared mission, international collaboration, and the future of the Society of Mary in Asia.

Bro. Prakash Kujur (IN), Superior of the Region of India and President of the Zone, led the meeting with Fr. Dominic Park (KO), Superior of the Region of Korea, and Fr. Isao Jean-Baptiste Aoki (JA), Superior of the Region of Japan. Mr. Kiyoshi Hirata, lay Marianist, served as Japanese-English translator. Also present were Fr. Ignace Arulappen (IN), Deputy Regional Superior of the Region of India, and Fr. Renny Markose (IN), Secretary of the zone and Director of the Asian Center for Marianist Studies.



L-R: Dominic Park, Kiyoshi Hirata, Isao Jean-Baptiste Aoki, Ignace Arulappen, Prakash Kujur, Renny Markose, André-Joseph Fétis and Dennis Bautista.

The meeting shifted to a hybrid format at the last minute after participants from India were unable to receive visas, a challenge becoming more common in international gatherings. Their absence required remote participation through Zoom. With three different languages spoken, participants relied on Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools for real-time translation. Despite technical challenges, this flexible approach enabled productive dialogue across three countries, three languages and two time zones. The success of the meeting also reflected the careful planning and coordination of the brothers of the Region of Korea, who hosted the gathering.

Topics included leadership development, regional collaboration, updates from the Asian Center for Marianist Studies, and the ongoing discernment process for a possible future foundation in Vietnam, including timelines, logistics and next steps.

Superior General Fr. André-Joseph Fétis and Bro. Dennis Bautista, Assistant General for Education, joined to support this discernment. Following the method of spiritual conversation, they guided the process, fostering shared discernment and deeper collaboration among the three Asian units as they considered this significant step for the future of the Society of Mary.

Fr. Miguel Ángel Cortés appointed President of the Marianist European Conference (MEC)



Based on the proposal made by the Superiors of the Units of Europe, at their meeting in Madrid (April 8-11, 2026), the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, appointed Fr. Miguel Ángel Cortés, SM, President of the Marianist European Conference. His term of office will start on July 1, 2026 and will last five years, as stipulated in the MEC statutes.

He succeeds José Maria Alvira, SM (ES), who is the outgoing President. We thank him for having put at the service of Europe, during the past five years, his enthusiasm for the Marianist life and his great experience in leadership and education. Since the 2015 General Leadership Assembly, a Zonal Conference may choose to place certain projects common to all the Units under the responsibility of the President.



For the follow-up of these projects, the Superiors then delegate their authority to the President, who can act on them in the manner of a major superior. In this case, the President is appointed by the Superior General so that he or she can effectively benefit from this canonical authority. This explains the procedure adopted.

For the MEC, these projects concern in particular the pastoral care of young people and vocations, the formation in the charism of religious and lay people working with us and the strengthening of the European school network. This collaboration is expected to be gradually enhanced. One of the important tasks of the new MEC President will also be to facilitate the restructuring process of the European Zone currently under preparation.

Father Miguel Ángel was Provincial of the Province of Spain (2011-2019), he

also worked very actively in the areas of formation and pastoral care for his Province. He is currently completing his second term as Rector of the Chaminade International Seminary in Rome, as well as Procurator General of the Society of Mary. We thank him for his availability in the service of this new responsibility and we assure him of our fraternal support.

Celebrations at the Chaminade International Seminary

During the month of May, the Chaminade International Seminary experienced two important celebrations: the diaconal ordinations and the institutions of the lay ministries of Lector and Acolyte.

Diaconal Ordinations

On Saturday afternoon, May 9, in the Parish of the Holy Name of Mary in Rome, the celebration of the diaconal ordinations of seven brothers took place: Yves Agbadou (Ivory Coast), Patrick Cahill (Meribah), Christophe Mbonde (Congo), Epidius Ngosa (Zambia, Eastern Africa), Gilbert Okade (Kenya, Eastern Africa), Daniel Orellana (Chile, Latin America) and Raoul Rouamba (Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast). The celebration was presided over by Bishop Aurelio García, Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. In his homily he gave some important messages to the ordinands. He recalled: "The deacon is the man of the threshold: close to the altar and close to the street; close to the liturgy and close to the wounds of the world. He recalls that one cannot break the Eucharistic Bread without sharing the bread of charity." And again: "Ordained ministry only makes sense if it reflects the heart of Christ. Jesus does not rule over the flock; he knows it, loves it, looks for it. He does not flee in the face of danger, he offers his life."



Left to right: Patrick Cahill, Christophe Mbonde, Yves Agbadou, Gilbert Okade, Bishop Aurelio García, Daniel Orellana, Epidius Ngosa, Raoul Rouamba.

The celebration brought together a large number of people. In addition to brothers, sisters and lay people from the Marianist Family of Rome, Jean-Marie Leclerc, Regional Superior of France, Joseph Bellizzi and Peter Heiskell, Provincial and Vice-Provincial of the Province of Meribah, and some religious from the units of the new deacons were present. Family and friends from France, the United States, Chile, Ivory Coast and Spain traveled for the occasion. Religious communities, friends and acquaintances from Rome linked to the ordained brothers also participated. The Ivory Coast was represented by its two ambassadors in Rome, to the Italian State and to the Holy See.

The choir of the Rosminian Seminary, a neighbor of our house and with which our community maintains a good relationship, helped to enhance the experience of the celebration. At the end of the Eucharist, we enjoyed a time of conviviality around a snack very well prepared by a group of volunteers from the Parish.

Inspired by the *Magnificat* of Mary, we praise God for the vocation of these seven brothers who are on their way to the priesthood. We ask the Lord that the gift received in ordination will bear abundant fruit in their lives.

Institution of Lay Ministries

On Friday, May 29, in the framework of a Eucharist participated in by the two

communities of Via Latina and presided over by the Superior General, Fr. André Fétis, three seminarians were instituted as acolytes and four as lectors.



L-R: Henri Baragou, Juan Pablo Espinoza, Roméo Angba, Nicolas Assogba, Fr. André-Joseph Fétis, Antony Owino, Emmanuel Saopa, Jerin Pananthanam

Acolytes: Roméo Angba (Ivory Coast), Nicolas Assogba (Togo) and Henri Baragou (Togo)

Lectors: Juan Pablo Espinoza (Mexico, United States), Antony Owino (Kenya, Eastern Africa), Jerin Pananthanam (India) and Emmanuel Saopa (Malawi, Eastern Africa)

After this step taken on their journey of formation, we entrust these new ministers to the action of the Spirit and to Mary's maternal care.

Meeting of formators - Nazareth 2026

Since May 18, a group of 26 formators of the Society of Mary have been meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, together with the Assistants General of Education, Bro. Dennis Bautista, SM, and of Religious Life, Fr. Pablo Rambaud, SM.

Both the General Council and the heads of the Units see the need to meet and reflect frequently on how to adapt our formation to current condition, increasingly globalized and in movement towards an increasingly intercultural world, together with the rapid cultural changes that are taking place (internet, social networks, AI...). In addition, our situation as the Society of Mary, which is smaller but increasingly international, makes it necessary for us to share our reflections and our strengths frequently.



The group of formators participating in the Nazareth meeting with the Assistants General of Education and Religious Life, and Fr. Joyzy Pius Egunjobi (in the center, standing).

In response to these needs and realities, this meeting was convened, which will continue until June 3. The meeting is taking place at the Dimesse Sisters' center in Nairobi.

The group is made up of some of the formators from the USA, Latin America, Ivory Coast, Togo, Congo, Eastern Africa, India and Korea, as well as Bro. Hervé Dagbo, SM, Vice-Rector of the Chaminade International Seminary.

The main objective of the meeting is to review together the different dimensions of formation (human, spiritual, religious, apostolic), especially in the initial stages (first discernment, pre-novitiate, novitiate and temporary profession).

This first week has been focused on the themes of the human dimension, and for this we have had the presence of Fr. Joyzy Pius Egunjobi, Director of the

Psychological-Spiritual Institute of Nairobi. In the mornings, Father Joyzy reviewed topics such as the human foundation of grace, self-knowledge and emotional and affective maturity. In the afternoons, small group discussions were held to discuss case studies illustrating how to apply these concepts to real situations with candidates in formation.



**The Regional Council of the Region of Eastern Africa
with the Assistants General for Education and Religious Life**

On Sunday 24, the Solemnity of Pentecost, the entire group participated in the Eucharist that was celebrated at the regional house of the SM in Nairobi. At this celebration, the members of the Eastern Africa Regional Council took office. Fr. Pablo Rambaud presided over the Eucharist. All the participants in the Nazareth program joined the brothers of the Region along with many other guests.

In the next issue of VL22 we will share more information about the second part of the meeting.

Bro. Erick Otiende, Director of the Community of the General Administration

On Saturday, May 9, during the morning prayer in the presence of the whole community, Bro. Erick Otiende was installed as the new Director of the

Community of the General Administration. He succeeds Fr. Antonio Gascón, whom we thank for his many years of service in this position.



Bro. Erick Odhiambo Otiende is originally from Kenya where he was born in 1974. He belongs to the Region of Eastern Africa. He made his first vows in 2000 and his perpetual vows in 2006. In Kenya, he was trained in education, English and English literature, religious education and psychological counseling. In the United States, he obtained a Master's degree in *Educational Leadership*, and he recently participated in an intensive training at the Center for Marianist Studies in Dayton (NACMS) preparing new specialists in the Marianist charisma. In Kenya and Zambia, he has worked actively with groups of children and young people inspired by the example of Venerable Faustino. He participated in Eastern Africa's Regional Council as an Assistant for Education and Deputy Regional Superiore; he was also Director of the community of the scholasticate of Nairobi for many years. Arriving in Rome in October 2025, Brother Erick was asked by the General Council to set up with Bro. Hervé Dagbo (IV) a secretariat dedicated to youth ministry, according to the recommendations of the General Chapter (cf. *The Promise of Life*, 82 c).

We thank him for having accepted this new responsibility with availability and the enthusiasm that characterizes him.

The "Good" Father Chaminade

We are all familiar with the account of Creation in Genesis 1 with the refrain "and God saw that it was good" and at the end of the sixth day: "Behold, it was very good."

We see this goodness of God manifested in the creation that we must take care of, but even more so in the love that Christ showed us in his abasement, even to the point of dying on the cross for our salvation (cf. the hymn in Philippians). This goodness, this love, this mercy are a permanent gift: "The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom 5:5). It is our turn to be witnesses of this goodness of God and to live by it.

Father Chaminade drew his goodness from the living source that is the Heart of Christ and that of Mary. Cultivating this virtue in humility, William Joseph became the image of what he contemplated and he touched hearts by what he was in the depths of his being.

He made this goodness a means of evangelization: "We must attract people, and especially the youth [...] by our mild, amicable, patient manners. (to Father Caillet, June 16, 1825).

"How he captivated souls in order to win them to Jesus and Mary! All those who were fortunate enough to live with him, or to know him closely agree in declaring that he won hearts, and, according to one of his disciples, he fascinated them by his zeal overflowing with meekness, delicacy, attention, mercy, and loving civility. He has given us most valuable recommendations upon this subject; he tells us that meekness founded on faith ought to act as an unction or a perfume upon the interactions of the religious of Mary among each other, with their pupils and seculars." (*The Spirit of Our Foundation*, I, p.85).

The system he established in the Marian congregation of Bordeaux responded to the precept of Jesus: "that no one should be lost" (cf. Jn 6:39). "To win Aspirants it will not suffice merely to have the spirit of faith and the love of virtue; over and above sweetness, amenity, kind attention, undaunted and unruffled charity are necessary. [...] We must watch over him as over a tender pet bird [...]: he is free in this that he is forced to nothing, and he is not because we

overwhelm him with kindness, goodness, and nourishment." (*The Spirit of Our Foundation*, I, p. 86).

It is in these same sentiments that he recommends to teachers and principals:...to imbue themselves for their pupils "with all the sentiments of the Saviour and all the tenderness of Mary." He invites students who encounter difficulties to share among themselves: "Those who are more responsible for them, to pray for them, ask for their conversion, invoke the lights of the Holy Spirit to direct their conduct."

But "no success can be expected with a pupil unless he has first been won over and, up to a certain point, esteemed and loved." (Letter to Father Chevaux, February 7, 1834, points 6-7).



Mrs. Elena Otero (Argentina), cured of a tumor through the intercession of Father Chaminade

Father Chaminade "is a father, and a good father, for this name has sprung spontaneously, from the beginning, from the hearts of his children' They all call me their father, which I am in fact in the supernatural order; to the name of father, they usually add that of good, although they know that at times I am quite severe

towards some: this is because they well know that the love and even the natural tenderness which I have for them comes only from above, from the spiritual paternity with which God has vested me" (to Father Caillet, September 10, 1844). "Receive for yourself, and for all my dear children of Saint-Remy," he wrote to Brother Clouzet, "the blessing of the Father whom God has given you upon this earth, and who, all unworthy as he is, participates in the love which the heavenly Father has for you. (April 5, 1824). To Father Meyer: "I shall never lose sight of your spiritual needs for I feel that I am your father and that you are my son. I wish to return you to Jesus and Mary in a condition worthy of them" (October 29, 1832).

This constant attention, this concern for his children, was not only spiritual, it was also concrete: when the first brothers left for Saint-Remy from Bordeaux, he made sure that they had everything they needed, money, linen...

We know the crises that Good Father Chaminade went through: tensions with David Monier, with Father Lalanne, with his assistants during his last years: he always remained amiable. He sought to save everyone, including Narcisse Roussel, while keeping his eyes fixed on the objective lived in faith of not deviating from the inspiration he had received from God.

Let us not think that the paternal kindness of Father Chaminade is an outdated attitude, made for another time; we have undoubtedly experienced encounters with radiant people, Brother Roger of Taizé, for example, or the reflection of a strong paternal image such as Raymond Halter S.M. We find this invitation to living goodness today expressed in these few lines from Madeleine Delbrel (born in Mussidan, 1904-1964): "The goodness of heart from Christ, given by him, is to the unbelieving heart a presentiment of God himself. She has, for the unbelieving heart, a taste unknown to God and she makes it aware of his encounter. It is, for the unbeliever, unusual, linked to this absolute unusualness that God is for him. It awakens, questions the slumbering forces of his heart, forces unknown to him whose living reality he sees in him. It sympathizes with that which in the heart of the unbeliever is both the most solitary and the most apt to turn inwardly, secretly, to God as a possibility. " (*Atheisms and Evangelization, Volume VIII of the Complete Works*, Nouvelle Cité 2010, p. 150).

On this same theme, we could also let ourselves be challenged by the "epiphany of the face" of the philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas.

Chaminade is more "modern" than we think. We will only be able to truly understand him through one prism: that of faith. All his life he acted by faith, that's the key, let's read him again with this key, otherwise we won't be able to understand him.

Publications

Faustino

The bulletins published regarding the Cause of Venerable Faustino are available in the three official languages via a link.

[Newsletter n.44](#)

We invite you to read and share them.

Circular of the Superior General of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate



We are sharing with you Circular No. 10 from Sr Susanna Kim, Superior General of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate, on the occasion of the 210th anniversary of the founding of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate, which was celebrated on May 25.

To read the circular, click on the following link: [Circular](#)

G.A. Calendar

- **June 9-15:** Fr. Pablo Rambaud, Assistant General for Religious Life, visits the Area Community of Canada.
- **June 23- July 31:** Fr. Pablo Rambaud, Assistant General for Religious Life, participates in the meeting of Patronato SM and in the *Horizons* program in Spain.
- **June 24-30:** Bro. Dennis Bautista, Assistant General for Education, participates in the General Assembly of the Province of the USA.