



VOCATION MINISTRY: “RETAKE THE INITIATIVE”?

Cannot we hear that invitation to read the lines that follow, addressed by Bishop Dagens to his brother bishops at their request and to today's Christians? He writes again: “instead of looking for and denouncing the external obstacles, we must urgently dare to

show forth the Christian newness, the Christian identity from within what is given to us by God.” Was not that Father Chaminade's attitude in particularly difficult times, vis-à-vis the radical changes following one upon another that he experienced in the course of his long missionary life?

And what if, in order to transmit the Christian life and the call to the religious life, I were to more decisively retake the initiative?

(For the Chaminade Year, don't forget to consult www.marianist.org regularly!)

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Next issue:

OCTOBER 2011

Please remember to send me news and photos of your activities, texts, documents, ...

Thank you!

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SHOWING CHRISTIAN NEWNESS FROM INSIDE THE FAITH

It is easy to look outside the Church for the causes of the current difficulties in the Christian mission. We can't deny those external causes: they are real and linked to some complex phenomena, like that of secularization, which have social, cultural and spiritual components.

That secularized culture and society have the tendency to marginalize, to reduce and sometimes to caricature religions, and especially Christianity. More radically, perhaps, because of the “ruptures in tradition” that have occurred in our history over the past forty years, the Christian Tradition is virtually unknown, ignored or treated as being merely what are the most superficial or most external aspects it might have.

Obviously we will have to come back to this grave phenomenon of rupture and to the urgency about rehabilitating the heritages of which we are the carriers (...).

For the moment, we need to rehabilitate within ourselves a fundamental attitude: instead of looking for and denouncing the external obstacles, we must urgently dare to show forth the Christian newness, the Christian identity from within what is given to us by God.

Instead of letting ourselves be controlled by criteria that are alien to the faith, it is indispensable that we ourselves determine who we are as believers, who rely on the promises of God, the fidelity of Christ, the strength of the Holy Spirit.

That holds for **our essential identity as Christians, as baptized persons** who, from our baptism, express ourselves precisely **in terms of fatherhood, of sonship and of fraternity**. What can we do so that that reality of our filial and fraternal being as children of God might inspire a “lifestyle” that can show an authentic face of human existence, above all in the face of the individualism that holds the illusion of determining for itself its own origin and end?

That holds for **the transmission of the faith in our secularized society**, which can only be rooted in the **pascal mystery of Christ**, with all that this mystery includes, both for the confrontation of the mystery of evil and for the trust placed in God in the face of evil and death.

Simply put, the transmission of the faith, whatever be the obstacles it might encounter, is always based on a spiritual experience, and not on some type of strategies.

That holds also for the way of understanding and living **the mystery of the Church and her specific way of being visible**. While certainly something visible, the Church is essentially a sacramental reality: she is from God, from Christ and from the Holy Spirit for the life and salvation of the world. Like a river, she cannot be separated from her upstream source in God, nor from her mission downstream in the world.

So that for the Church, because of her sacramental identity, to evangelize is to intend and to act in such a way that the Revelation of the Gift of God in Jesus Christ touches, forms, transforms our real humanness, our current society, and very concretely every human being who is waiting for Truth and Love.

Dagens (2)

To these three fundamental givens (Christian identity, transmission of the faith, mission of the Church), there might be added many other elements constitutive of the Catholic Tradition. For the moment, it is a question above all of putting the stress upon this "reversal," this conversion of the attention, of the intellect and of the heart that is asked of us, if we wish to retake the initiative from within the faith, instead of having to resist pressures or evaluations coming from the outside, at the risk of becoming dependent upon that very thing that we criticize.

DAGENS Claude, Mgr, *Entre épreuves et renouveaux, la passion de l'Évangile*, Paris, Bayard-Cerf, 2009, pp. 23-25.



MY THREE WISHES FOR YOU

A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM FATHER CHAMINADE

Before I blow out the 250 candles, I want to pass on to you three great wishes that I have for you. I am opening my heart as a father; my words come from the depths, from the interior that is the essential, and I want them to go directly to the heart of each one of you and be engraved there.

My first wish for the Marianists is that they be **Happy**.... Joy is our strength and the strength of every believer.... When someone comes to a Marianist community he should be at peace and find joyful people there; for the Marianist, the delight in being such must be evident. Let them sing the Magnificat, a lot more, which both I and Mary love to hear.

The second wish for the Marianists is that they be **Faithful**; ... I wish that they might never lack the courage of faith. That they persevere in doing good... that they not tire out too soon.... That they continue in prayer, in the service of the poor, in formation, in recitation of the Rosary, in the service of human needs, in the encouragement of others, in the witness which makes an impact in their work.

The third wish that I have for you is that of **Fruitfulness**... The fecundity of one who gives birth to new things, of that which grows within and brings forth Marianist life and breeds and multiplies Marianist life. This year I really wish for you to grow....

Begin with the poor. Pray a lot and the Father will give you abundant grace and the Marianist charism will catch on and there will be new lay communities and at least four religious vocations among the Sisters and Brothers of the Unit. I want to see you with the excitement of the life that is seething inside of you. Don't be afraid to grow. Be afraid of sterility. The task of each community this year is to found another community. I will help you do it with a special grace.

For learning about Happiness, Fidelity and Fruitfulness, the best school is that of Mary, I tell you. She teaches us fruitfulness; from her we learn to affirm and multiply life, to revive and live that new life....



Marianists, now I have told you what are my wishes for you. In this year I will implore Mary and the Father that they might be fulfilled.

April 2011

William Joseph Chaminade

(Marianistas Chile—13-04-2011)

Let us rekindle our faith in vocations being a grace and a grace which is asked for and granted. At the same time, may all of this motivate us to live a community life which is inviting to Marianist life.

José María Arnaiz, sm

"OF GODS AND MEN" ... AND THE SM

This movie dedicated to the martyred monks of Thibirine in Algeria is currently having an unexpected worldwide success. There is the question of the encounter of peoples and cultures, but also of the religious life in which one can see the concrete reality and the mission. Can we perhaps use this film with young people, or even with adults, and dialogue with them about it? That could be an opportunity to speak about the religious life and also about what they see in our own life.

One element of interest to us is that the prior of that community, Father Christian de Chergé, and his brothers were our students in Paris, at the Collège Sainte-Marie de Monceau; the school was later transferred to Antony



SAINTE-MARIE DE MONCEAU—PARIS (1945 ca)

Photo Valetta

(Institution Sainte Marie). Father Christian attended the school from 1947 to 1954, the year of his *baccalauréat* (French secondary school diploma). In 1954, he was one of 7 student finalists for the Alumni Prize; in fact, that year, in the Scientific Section, he came in 1st in Physics and History, 2nd in Geography and 3rd in Mathematics, Chemistry, Natural Sciences and English, and in consequence received the 1st place Price for Excellence. But later, he would shine in a completely different way.

We maintain contact with his family, one of his brothers having been on the business council of the ownership corporation of the Antony school. One of his nephews has just finished his studies at that school and is a member of a youth fraternity.

On May 21, 1996, the entire world learned of the death of the 7 monks, after a long wait since the day of their arrest. Shortly afterwards, at Sainte-Marie in Antony, a Mass was celebrated in their memory. The bulletin of the Province of France recounted it:

“Sunday, June 23 [1996], Memorial Mass for the 7 monks of Our Lady of the Atlas. The Prior, Father Christian-Marie de Chergé, was an alumnus of Ste-Marie de Monceau, just as were his brothers. A very beautiful religious ceremony. Mrs. De Chergé was present with one of her sons. Father Délas presided; also on the altar, among the 10 concelebrants, were Father Gizard (then Provincial of France), and Father Tutas, who was on his way to the General Chapter. The musical direction by Father Giraud matched the quality of that moving ceremony. Two moments of intense emotion during that Eucharist: when Henri “proclaimed” the wonderful text of his brother Christian [his Testament], entitled “When an *A-Dieu* [goodbye = God be with you] is envisaged” and when a mother of a Sainte Marie student came up to read a text intended for Mrs. De Chergé:

‘Your heart, like that of Mary, has seen the sword and the brilliant happiness of the shining glory where your son awaits you. Thanks to your son, thanks to you to whom we owe your son, who from now on intercedes for us, thanks to Jesus Christ who guides certain persons through such burning paths, giving us the desire to go that way in our turn as much as possible.

Please know that I pray for your son as he asked...but conscious that it is he who prays even more for the entire world, reconciled.’”

(Nouvelles, no. 265, July 10, 1996, pp. 269-271)

The life of Father Christian is in part a result of the Marianist education which he received, so let us be proud of him. This might be an additional motive for presenting his witness to our students, to young people, to our surroundings. May he be for them an invitation to courage, to fellowship and to faith. And we don't doubt that he has not forgotten his Marianist years and that he is especially with our students and young people of today.



63 YESES TO THE MARIANIST VOCATION!

“THE MAN WHO DOESN’T DIE” - Testimonies about the Marianist Family, 2011

The publicity is now starting for 63 life testimonies from among our Marianist Family, 34 lay persons (Marianist Lay Communities, MLC), 9 Marianist sisters (Daughters of Mary Immaculate, FMI), and 20 Marianist male religious (Society of Mary, SM). The book has just been published in paperback (with a splendid cover design by Sergio Miguel, SM), and *Agora marianista* (<http://foros.marianistas.org/tema-12291.html>) is offering it in digital form for everyone.

The chaminadian expression, “The man who never dies,” refers to the transmission of the charism from generation to generation. (...) we want to keep passing life on, transmitting the charism...

Enrique Aguilera, sm



For reading these testimonies, there are two possibilities:

Order the book

Each week consult the forum “Testimonios” (<http://foros.marianistas.org/tema-12291.html>) (Familia marianista de España), on marianistas.org

(http://www.marianistas.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=140:testimonios-de-la-familia-marianista&catid=10:actualidadesp&Itemid=38). You can subscribe on this page to receive weekly a new testimony by e-mail.

HERE ARE SOME EXTRACTS...



PRESENTACIÓN

P. MANUEL CORTÉS, S.M.

Superior General of the Society of Mary

The Christian life burns with the desire to communicate itself.

“We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete” (1 Jn 1:3-4).

Like the beloved disciple, we have been led by Mary to penetrate the entire meaning of the Incarnation as a mystery of communion between God and man, from which springs, and for the sake of which exists, the mission, every mission, that of the Son, that of Mary, ours. This is the basis, the common ground of a common charism, from which springs up a wide variety of lives. That is what the witnesses below make us see.

(...) these testimonies enliven the experience of our Marianist vocation and strengthen our communion with one another.”

THE WITNESS OF

ANGEL AGUADO

Marianist Fraternities (CLM)

Carabanchel alto. Madrid

“As a kid, when it was my turn for the petitions at Mass, I always prayed for the poor. But when it was over, I still felt powerless before the threat of poverty. It was in coming to know the O.7, Movement, when I began to go out to join the struggle in the street, to sleep in the doorways of la Almudena, to lock myself into the station at Atocha, to chain myself in the Ministry of the Economy, to camp out with the thousands of impoverished persons in la

Castellana, struggling for a more just and united world. (...)

I also spent a few years in the Scouting movement; it was there that I picked up “Be Prepared”; we are on permanent mission 24 hours a day; at any moment opportunity can present itself and we can’t afford to be caught sleeping; however little our help might be, the other person needs it.”



The witness of HUGO DIEGO AKAITURRI
Marianist Religious. Society of Mary.
Vitoria. Community and Colegio Santa Maria

“The gifts were incredible that God had prepared for me for the road: a deep relationship with the Lord that washes over me every morning; a special sensitivity to the poor – with the worthless, the marginalized, with those of India and with those of Colombia...-;-; a sense of life that springs up from inside and of walking safely because you know in whom you have put your trust; but above all, a community of brothers in which I feel loved, valued, empowered, esteemed and sent on a mission, their mission, that of Mary: to carry Jesus, to carry peace, joy, humanity, nearness, confidence... that is, family spirit, to so many men and women, children and youth to recall to them that we are all brothers, children of the same Father who loves us madly. Yes, being a Marianist is the greatest thing that could have happened to me.”



The witness of ROBERTINA ALDANA
Marianist Sister. Colombia.

“With our Mother Mary I have entrusted my way as a Marianist sister to this beloved continent of hope, where Mary is so loved by all the Latin American people. It is nice to see that the charism our founders gave us almost two hundred years ago is so current and necessary in such a dechristianized era, but in Latin America a strong and deeply rooted love of Mary our Mother is alive and well. Since the 5th Conference of Aparacida we are living the continental mission at the local and diocesan levels, as being disciples and missionaries to bring the good news to all peoples that they may have life in abundance... Blessed Father Chaminade and Venerable Mother Adele de Trenquelleon experienced something similar, at seeing so many people confused at the level of faith and evangelization.”



...ple confused at the level of faith and evangelization.”

The witness of ANTONIO BRINGAS
Marianist Religious. Society of Mary.
Madrid. Siquem.Community

In my 60 years of religious life I have been in 16 communities.
 Currently I am in the Marianist Residence of “Siquem,” which cares for the infirm Brothers of the Province who need more care, helping them however I can. (...)
 My life has been guided by the conviction that the pascal mystery of Jesus is made present in the actual conditions of each day and each moment.



The experience of “accepting” reality as it comes, however disagreeable, has been followed, often not immediately, by an unexpected and joyful resurrection. This experience has guided me in my long life and has sustained me in my vocation. Help me to thank God for this gift.

ARGENTINA – COLEGIO DE BUENOS AIRES — LIFE PROJECT

May 2011

Just as we do every year, this year we are renewing the invitation to the boys and girls of the pre-university class to participate in the “Life Project” retreat.

Basically, the experience of the retreat seeks to promote the encounter of the students with themselves and with God in order to discern their vocation and to light up some paths for the development of their life project in the face of the real world in which we live.

Almost 50 boys and girls participated in two groups. The experience was very enriching, both for the involvement of the students and for the participation of the parents.

From now on there will be the possibility of continuing to deepen vocational searches through the Youth Ministry of the 5th year which has just begun its activities recently. <http://sitio.marianista.edu.ar/?p=7498>



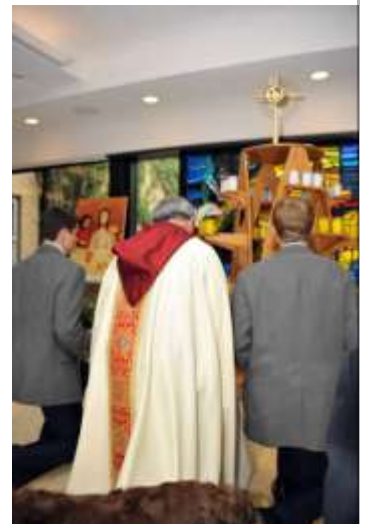
PROVINCE OF MERIBAH

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/kellenberg/sets/72157626608956291/show/>

The link above is to a set of photos from the service of Eucharistic Adoration and the Rosary that we celebrated on Sunday, May 22, 2011 as part of our celebration of the Chaminade Year and the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. 200 members of the Marianist Family, including the Brothers, students and teachers from all three schools and their families, gathered to pray the Luminous Mysteries and to reflect on the gift of religious vocation.



Our vocation work this year -- or rather God's work! -- has been fruitful. We hope to have three men join as aspirants in July. Please keep them in your prayers.



Father Hirokazu Takada has just been appointed vocation director in Japan. A team of three or four religious will work with him and all the brothers are invited to put their efforts in common. This activity will be carried out in close collaboration with the Marianist sisters in Japan.

JAPAN

(Region of Japan Bulletin, No. 2, April 28, 2011).

Best wishes to the new team for good work and lots of success!

BRO. TOM WENDORF LAUNCHES VOCATIONS BLOG: "My Calling"

Bro. Tom Wendorf, Province director of vocations, started a blog about Marianist vocations. “It is personal and topical, and it’s meant especially for the young men and women who are exploring Marianist vowed religious life,” says Bro. Tom. “The more I write it, the more I realize it could be helpful for anyone interested in the Marianist Family.”

Read more at: <http://tomwendorf.wordpress.com/>

FamilyOnline, Volume 10, Number 6; Wednesday, March 23, 2011



CONGO KINSHASA

The vocation ministry at Kinshasa R.D. Congo decided to take the Chaminade Year as the theme of our monthly prayer days. On Saturday and Sunday, February 26-27, 2011, we gathered 35 aspirants in the community of Limete (Kinshasa). Saturday evening we addressed them with the topic: THE MARIANIST VOCATION according to Father Chaminade. The atmosphere was good, the young people posed lots of questions about the life of Father Chaminade and the criteria for admission to the novitiate. On Sunday, February 27, Father Christophe Muyuka, Coordinator of the Congo Sector, led a two-hour discussion on the topic of the year, "Chaminade, Apostle of Mary." After his instruction, the youth were divided into five groups for exchanges. The day finished at 3:00 p.m. with the Rosary and the Three O'Clock Prayer.

In Kinshasa there are many vocations, but discerning them is sometimes difficult to do.

In union of prayer, Bro. Awilo and Bro. Alain, SM



NAIROBI - Faustino

At the same time as the birthday of Father Chaminade, the Faustino Group of Nairobi celebrated its own birthday. Happy birthday to both of you! (For a taste of the cake, see the group....).



VOCATION CAMP HELD IN BANGALORE, INDIA



From May 23 – 27, five men participated in "Vocation Camp" at St. Joseph Community in Deepahalli, Bangalore, India. Beginning this month, they will join the Marianist candidate's program in Deepahalli. Brother Arul (far right) was, at the time, vocation director for Tamil Nadu, India, and organizer of the camp. He is now at the international seminary in Rome, where we wish him a good formation period.

(FamilyOnline, Volume 10, Number 12; Wednesday, June 15, 2011)



VEN+ID: A VISIONARY PROJECT FOR THE CONSECRATED LIFE IN SPAIN

<http://www.masdecerca.com/2011/02/venid-un-proyecto-ilusionante-para-la-vida-consagrada-en-espana/>

VEN+ID is a Macrofestival of the Consecrated Life which will be part of the activities of **World Youth Day (WYD)** in Madrid.

Next August 2011, for the great number of youth who will be coming to Madrid, we want to put on an **artistic event of high quality** that shows **the current reality of the Consecrated Life in Spain and in the world**, under the sponsorship of the Festival of Youth that will take place in the afternoons of the WYD.

The show will revolve around ... three "key words": **CALLED, GATHERED, and SENT**. There will be a series of musical and other artistic performances, interspersed with various **audiovisuals and witnesses**.

The event will take place in the **Sports Palace of the Madrid Commune** on **August 18**.

The **goals** set for the Macrofestival are:

- **Help** the youth who are participating in WYD to **become acquainted with** the vitality and fruitfulness of the Consecrated Life in its many diverse forms in Spain as a precious gift in a Church of fellowship.
- **Promote** the Consecrated Life as a possible and magnificent vocation for being happy today.
- **Show** the joy in the following of Christ within the Church according to each one's vocation.
- **Celebrate** in a youthful way the fellowship of vocations and charisms within the Catholic Church.

To see what is being prepared for this Macrofestival, there is a dedicated blog at: <http://www.macrofestivalconfer.blogspot.com>



Bauru—BRASIL — Integration of Marianist Young Adult Community and the Marianist Lay Community “Irmão Manolo” (Brother Manolo)

During this year in which we commemorate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, many proposals were presented to us young people searching to give new meaning and flavour to our lives: meetings with the participation of Marianists, both lay and religious. This shared path of spirituality, helped us know from the centre and heart of our community, how to love and be present to our neighbour.

These impulses, received with and in prayer, taught us to share experiences and helped us grow in faith and intimacy with Mary our Mother, resulted in our thinking and believing beyond what we could have ever imagined. They generated strength of spirit that motivated us to bring and offer love and service with Mary to the many places in which we find ourselves: university, work, family...

Thaissa — Marianist Young Adult Community .



2011, April 8

2500 students and teachers from Marianist schools of France in Lourdes

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Thank you for sending news and photos about your activities, suggestions of texts, of documents, of websites.... Thanks! (genrelsm@smcuria.it)