
FAMILLE MARIANISTE
MARIANIST FAMILY
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MESSAGE ABOUT THE MEETING OF THE WORLD COUNCIL
13-15 NOVEMBER 2002

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We want to share with you the joy we had in meeting as the World Council of the Marianist Family (WCMF), sharing three days of reflection, prayer, and community in Rome, November 13-15, 2002.

This year we had several new members. To get better acquainted, each one spoke of his or her Marianist history, hopes and expectations for the World Council. A great family spirit was evident from the very beginning.

Our work began with a presentation by each Branch (lay communities, Sisters, male religious, secular institute) of the most important developments and activities it had experienced during the past year.

In accord with what we had planned last year, our reflection then focused on three **topics of reflection**:

- the mission of the Marianist family,
- vocation ministry in the different Branches and as a Family,
- lay people who are very close in spirit but do not belong to any of the four Branches.

We will invite each of the National Councils of the Marianist Family to take up these same topics for study and discernment, so that we can work together in the different parts of the world and share in a common process of reflection.

Then we reviewed the objectives and strategies that the WCMF had set at its beginning in 1996. We were happy to note that these objectives have been realized for the most part. In addition, we were pleased by the clear growth in our awareness of being members of a single family within the Church, gifted with a particular charism.

This review led to the articulation of some **new objectives** for the near future:

- *mission*: to raise the consciousness among the Branches of our mission as a Family
- *informal Marianists*: to provide support and encouragement for those who are not formally associated with one of the four Branches
- *vocation ministry*: to explore our mutual responsibility and discover means of working together.

As in other years, we reflected on the work of the different **National Councils of the Marianist Family**, both in areas where they have already existed for some years and in those where they are just now beginning. We invite all members of the Marianist Family to renew their commitment to support and take part in these National Councils. Through them, we hope as a World Council to channel initiatives.

We also reviewed the goals and objectives of the **International Marianist Volunteer (IMV) Program**, presented in a report from José Luis Pérez of the Lay Communities. We were very happy to note that we have made much progress in communication among groups and persons sending and receiving volunteers. We are pleased with the fact that already today there exist some concrete experiences of volunteer work, which can be continued in the near future through the work of the IMV. As a World Council we want to thank José Luis for his efforts and commitment to this project and we encourage him to move ahead, involving the collaboration of the Marianist Family.

The presentation of the **International Center for Marianist Formation (ICMF)** by Tom Giardino, SM, was well received by the World Council. We offered Tom comments and suggestions about making the new ICMF a truly useful tool for the whole Marianist Family in the world. This center aims to help us deepen the knowledge of our Marianist charism.

Turning to the area of **Marianist Family communications**, we studied the workings of our internet site (www.marianist.org) and the publication of the second issue of our "Family Album." The World Council expressed its appreciation to the people who manage our internet site, while urging the National Councils to motivate all our members to take part by sending in materials. We also thanked all those who made possible the publication of the "Family Album" and decided to start working on a third issue. Ezequiel Reggiani, CLM, was assigned the leadership of this project. We also ask everyone to cooperate with this effort when asked to send in photos or articles.

The World Council felt very hopeful about the **first lay communities in Haiti**, a country entirely new to our Family. The Marianist Family in Canada has taken up the service of advising and assisting the initial developments of our charism in Haiti.

As a Family, we feel that we need to be explicit in our concern for violence and injustice and to look for ways to collaborate in building a world of justice and solidarity. We are studying the possibility of creating a **Marianist Non-Governmental Organization** accredited to the United Nations, as a concrete commitment to justice and peace.

At the end of this year's meeting, David Fleming, SM, finished his term as **president** of the WCMF. Carles Benéitez, CLM, took up for the next two years the responsibility of coordinating and animating the Marianist Family. In the name of the members of all four Branches, we want to thank Dave for his dedication and his service in developing the Marianist Family.

We would like to take advantage of this communication to the whole Marianist Family to announce that our **next World Day of Prayer** will be celebrated on October 12, 2003, with a pilgrimage in Africa. More details will be forthcoming later.

During the meeting we felt close to all the members of the four Branches of the Marianist Family and to all our friends and families, and we felt your warmth and prayerful support. We thank you for that!

We remain united on our common journey, through the Mother to the Son.

José-María Alvira, s.m.
Javier Anso, s.m.
Iñaki Barrio, c.l.m.
Marie-Joëlle Bec, f.m.i.
Carlos Benéitez, c.l.m.
Paola Brivio, f.m.i.
Isabelle de Cantellauve
(Alliance Mariale)

George J. Cerniglia, s.m.
David J. Fleming, s.m.
Mary Louise Foley, f.m.i.
Tony Garascia, c.l.m.
Estela Ibarra, f.m.i.
María José Jaúregui, f.m.i.
Ezequiel Reggiani, c.l.m.