



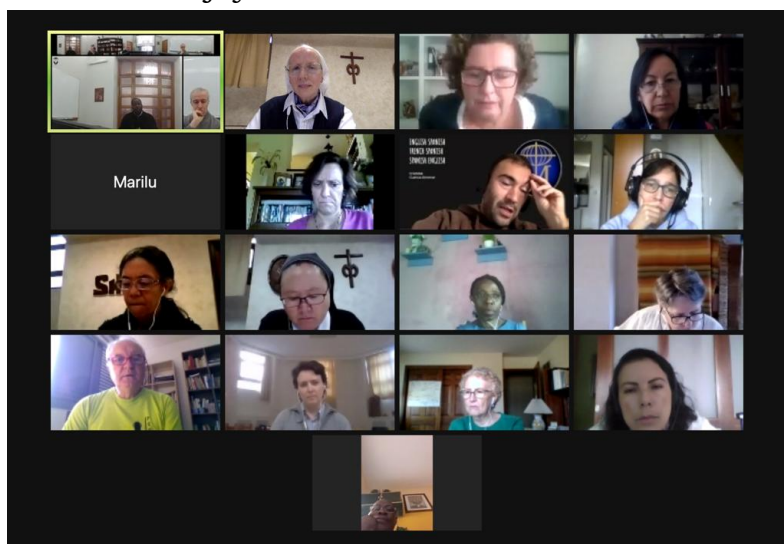
World Council of the Marianist Family
Consejo Mundial de la Familia Marianista

Rome, November 10, 2020

Dear Marianist Family,

Fraternal greetings to all on behalf of the World Council which met on November 7 and 8. This year our annual meeting was "special." As we have become accustomed to it for some time now, our meeting was held online. It was two intense days during which we felt very close together despite the distance.

The reunions or the hugs, the coffee together, the simplicity of that sharing, so beautiful and so precious during the breaks, the walks in the beautiful garden of Via Latina were missed, but it was also a joy to be able to see one another on screen and chat. The pandemic forces us to renounce many things which mainly affect the area of relationships. We are very close to all those who, members of the MF, and members of our families, friends and acquaintances, have been affected by the pandemic. We are also close to all who are directly involved in this struggle that really concerns all of us. Our fragility and vulnerability make us feel even more the importance and need to hold hands as we walk together.



The reports of each branch had been previously sent to the members of the Council, which made it possible to deal immediately with the various questions on the agenda.

Several points were the subject of our sharing.

1. **Document on the Marianist Charismatic Family.** We received many responses: from national councils, communities, and individuals belonging to the four branches. There were many convergences.

We highlight a few:

- **Formation:** it is important to insist on mutual formation in faith, in the spiritual life, and in the charism. The common terms we use do not always refer to the same ideas.

- **Youth and vocation ministries:** many stressed the need to be more present in this area. Youth must once again become the privileged domain of Marianist family as it was for our Founders. We would hope for a vocation ministry within the family and for the family by creating teams for this.

- The **poor:** the MF cannot be deaf to the cry of the poor which is raised on all sides. How will we respond? A question that remains open.

- **National and local councils:** it is only by giving more reinforcement and life to national and local councils that we will make the MF fruitful. We are all aware of that. We need to give a greater impetus to the local MF body. Situations vary considerably in different parts of the world. We encourage all initiatives aimed at strengthening encounter, dialogue, reflection, collaboration, the mission of the MF.

- **International MF Assembly:** this wish appeared in some of your responses. During our meeting, we were not able to dwell on this point. We think, however, we think that for the moment, the Continental and National Assemblies of the MF should be preferred. The Latin American continent is preparing for one such meeting. Those will be the best means to pave the way for a future International Assembly or a Synod of the MF.

- **Communication:** there is a great wealth of initiatives and talents within the MF. Today, it is fundamental to improve communication, dissemination, also using new technologies which provide valuable support. Overall, the document was appreciated. There was no lack of suggestions for supplementing it or making it more understandable in certain places. Therefore, certain aspects concerning the birth of the MLC in 1801 were integrated into the historical part, as well as the inclusion of Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous as an important collaborator of the Founder.

The new text will be annexed to this communication with the 2021 calendar. Thank you all for your thoughts. We hope that the **Marian face** of the Church, as a charismatic contribution of the MF, will shine more and more wherever there is a member or group of the MF.

2. **Friday Magnificat.** We had the opportunity to discuss this monthly document which, during these years, has made us aware of the many activities of the MF in the fields of justice, peace, integrity of creation. They have given special content to our Magnificat on the first Friday of each month.

We are very grateful to the team in charge and to all who have collaborated with them. The world is changing rapidly and we believe that this instrument should also be renewed. After an in-depth discussion, we entrusted the team with the task of giving a new appearance to that publication. It will have a new format, a diversity of content, it will no longer be monthly and, what could not be missing, a new name: **Marianist Magnificat!** A big thank you to the team, made up of members of all the branches, which will give a new direction to this publication.

3. **Next World Council 2021, November 11 - 12 - 13:** In the hope of being able to meet again in Rome, our next World Council will be a time of discernment, which will begin with a strong time of initial prayer, to develop the goals for the next three years 2022-2025. These goals will include challenges that arise from the main themes that we consider to be priorities in the MF: formation, youth, the cry of the poor, the path of communion as a charismatic Family. All this in the

light of the *Global Educational Pact* and Pope Francis's latest encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, and, of course, in the light of the Marianist charism.

So that the goals that we develop might be the result of synodal work in Family, we will once again ask for your contribution. You will receive a communication on this subject in January. We thank you in advance.

4. **2021 Patronal Feast, March 25:** It will be hosted by the MLCs.

5. **World Day of Marianist Prayer 2021:** October 10. We will meet in spiritual union at the Marian Shrine of Subukia, Kenya.

We are living in the Jubilee of the Earth, which will end in May of next year. It reminds us of our commitment to take care of our common home, of this planet which welcomes us, and that we would like to leave in better condition for future generations.

With the awareness that we are all pilgrims, foreigners, migrants on the boat that welcomes us, we walk towards the Son of Mary who asks to live among us. With Jesus, with Mary, we approach the opening of the new year with hope, even if it carries a future that is unknown. We would like for the fragility that we experience to be for the whole Marianist Family a precious opportunity to make the face of Mary shine out; an opportunity to make the presence of the Mother of God more living and tangible as the one who accompanies and supports us.

We entrust to her the sick, those who have lost their loved ones, their work, all those whom the pandemic has plunged into sorrow, without forgetting the victims of violence and discrimination.

With the certainty that Mary accepts our prayer, let us on our side accept the invitation of Her Son to make us "**good Samaritans**" for the brother and sister whom we find on the edge of the road.

Lord and father of humanity, you who created all human beings with the same dignity, breathe a fraternal spirit into our hearts.

Inspire us with a dream of encounter, of dialogue, of justice and peace.

Help us create healthier societies and a more dignified world, without hunger, without poverty, without violence, without wars.

May our hearts be open to all the peoples and nations of the earth, to recognize the good and the beauty that you have sown in everyone, to forge bonds of unity, joint projects, shared hopes. Amen!

**A MERRY CHRISTMAS OF PEACE
AND HOPE TO ALL!**

