



December 8, 2023
Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

Dear sisters and brothers of the Marianist Family,

The World Council of the Marianist Family met in Rome, November 3- 5, 2023.

Our meeting this year was held a few days after the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome, a highlight of the universal Church, committed to walking together at the invitation of Pope Francis. We have read the "Letter to the People of God" from the Synodal Assembly where we can see what must also animate our Marianist Family and our World Council when we find ourselves "together, in the complementarity of our vocations."

We began our meeting with **a morning of meditation** proposed by Fr. Miguel Ángel Cortés, SM, who put us in unison with the Synod on the central objective: at the service of the mission. For synodality should generate a more missionary Church. The Letter to the People of God reminds us: "the vocation of the Church is to announce the Gospel not by focusing on itself, but by placing itself at the service of the infinite love with which God loves the world."



During these three days, **we shared our experiences and our reflections on implementing the objectives that we have defined for several years**, seeking to respond to the calls of the Holy Spirit.

> **The WCMF wishes to develop communication** with all the councils - national and local - of our family throughout the world to encourage our life as a spiritual family, based on local situations. A proposal will be disseminated in this regard.

> **One concrete possibility of cooperation concerns formation.** A commission is being set up to define the areas and means of common formation in our family.

> **The WCMF has updated its statutes**, with some adjustments. We are continuing our reflection on the various situations of our family beyond the four branches: a project will be addressed in the countries to better specify the aspects of an "extended family."

> Finally, attachment to our charism **makes us attentive to the projects underway in the places of our foundation, in Bordeaux**, the Chapel of the Madeleine, and in Agen, with an international dimension.

The members of the leadership teams of the four branches were present in Rome, including one connected from Togo by Zoom. After this hardworking and friendly meeting, the numerous exchanges

in different languages, we entrust to Mary our Mother all the projects and achievements of our Council.

The secretariat of the WCMF has for some years been in the hands of Lourdes Otaegui, from the MLC of Spain, who wanted to commit to other missions, especially among young people. We thank her wholeheartedly for the service rendered to our Council, which will now be taken care of by Bro. José Ignacio Iglesia Puig, SM, of the G.A. community of the Society of Mary, who participated in this meeting of the Council.

*In this Advent season,
we are preparing to welcome Jesus our Savior, Light of the world and Prince of Peace.
Welcoming his coming among us, even though the land
where he was born is in the grip of war...
and so many regions of the world are experiencing conflict and violence!
With the Holy Family, let us contemplate the Word made flesh,
and let us seek the peace that comes from God.*

**It is he, Christ, who is our peace...
In his person he killed hatred.
He came to announce the good news of peace...**
(Ephesians 2:14-17)



Bethlehem – Fresco in the shrine in the Shepherds' Field (*Custodia Terrae Sanctae*)

**Merry Christmas!
And a Happy New Year to all!**

The World Council of the Marianist Family