



Conseil Mondial de la Famille Marianiste

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

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE WORLD MARIANIST FAMILY

Dear brothers and sisters,

The meeting of the **World Council of the Marianist Family (WCMF)** took place in Rome on **October 26-28**. The meeting was held at the General Curia of the Society of Mary, whose members, with their spirit of hospitality and their usual generosity, welcomed us with great affection.

All the members of the Councils of the sisters (FMI) and the brothers (SM) participated. From the Alliance Mariale (AM) the Responsable Général was present and all the members of the International Team of Marianist Lay Communities (MLC) attended, except the representative of South America, Nidia Rodríguez Salazar.

The meeting was chaired by Béatrice Leblanc, the International President of the MLC, who greeted the incoming secretary, Lourdes Otaegui, and thanked the outgoing secretary, Charles-Henri Moulin, for the work he has done over the nine years in which he held that position.

The first item on the agenda was the sharing of the life of the four branches throughout the last year.

1) FMI REPORT

The Marianist Sisters shared news about the beatification of Mother Adèle. The entire Marianist Family (MF) shared their joy and they were aware of the interest that the beatification has aroused in all the branches. They appreciate the support and enthusiastic participation of all the branches. The annual liturgical celebration will be on January 10, and they hope that everyone will join them in celebrating that day festively.

In the visits made, they have met with the National Councils of the Marianist Family, learning how great are the possibilities of working together. In some places the four branches are already working together.

As requested by their 32nd General Chapter, they have created an international team to review and reflect on formation. Also following the indications of the General Chapter, they have begun a process of reconfiguration to achieve structures more suited to their current situation.

2) SM REPORT

The fundamental topic was last summer's General Chapter. The principal theme that illuminated the reflections of the Chapter was the Marianist Family: how to be religious in MF, how to be missionaries in MF. To be "a man who does not die," it must be done in MF. As a consequence, three messages have been addressed: to collaborators, to young people, to the MF. It is an invitation to a collaboration to which they commit themselves, a proposal to work together, to discern the mission,

to develop concrete pastoral projects, to improve communication, to promote Family Councils and to develop MF in all its dimensions.

The evaluation after the completion in 2018 of the celebration of the Bicentennial of the founding of the FMI and the SM was very positive, very fruitful. The brothers expressed their gratitude for the support and enthusiasm of all the branches in their celebration. It showed that we are walking together in our charismatic mission.

3) AM REPORT

The Alliance Mariale was deeply affected by the death of Bro. Felipe Melcher of Peru, a person who loved the MF and supported the AM.

From September 2017 to 2018, the AM has worked on three documents:

- 1) "The commentaries on the future statutes," with a view to being recognized as a secular institute of diocesan order.
- 2) Between January and April they worked on the document "The identity of a consecrated lay woman in a Marianist secular institute," a document that reflects what they are and what they want to be in the future within the MF, and which was voted on at the beginning of their General Assembly.
- 3) "Priorities of the General Assembly": in the next five years, the AM intends to reflect upon the common mission of the Marianist Family, in light of the three messages received from the other three branches of the Family. The members of the AM are feeling a new dynamism projecting them into the future.

4) MLC REPORT

In August, at the international meeting in Seoul, the new team was chosen. It was a meeting marked by the sense of Family. "The laity want to be more fully members of the MF," said Felix Arqueros. "What steps should we take to move towards a greater commitment in the union without confusion?" Félix Arqueros, in his farewell circular, invites the Family to "walk hand in hand."

At the Korean meeting many examples of mission in Family, in all regions, were revealed. We all have gifts that we want to share.

Ten challenges for lay Marianists were raised, among them: the desire to renew the sense of belonging by assuming the financial consequences, integral formation by stages and the initial formation of the new members, service to the poor and the excluded, and to youth.

Next, **other matters of general interest** were addressed:

- a. The charism and the mission lived in Family: starting from the general conviction that the charism is a key element for living in the Marianist Family, the need to continue deepening in it through formation and formation in common.
- b. Three areas of work as Family were proposed: youth, the family and the poor. And all the members of the Family are invited to promote activities that allow working along these lines at the local, national and continental levels.
- c. A line of reflection was opened around the term "Marianist charismatic family." Throughout the next year, Sister Ana Lúcia de Goes, Mercedes de la Cuadra and Father André Fétis will work on it and present it to the next Council.

- d. The possibility of holding a World Assembly of the Marianist Family was raised. There was general agreement, although it was decided to let the idea mature within each branch until the next Council. It was suggested to promote Family assemblies on the national and/or continental level.
- e. The statutes of the WCMF were revised to clarify the manner of voting and the duration of the Secretary's responsibility.
- f. The objectives for 2018-2021 were also revised and it was decided to prioritize point 3 about "Family Spirit".
- g. It was proposed that the *Friday Magnificat* e-zine be opened in its contents to all possible areas of personal liberation. A new editor was proposed to replace the previous one.

DATES OF THE MARIANIST FAMILY FOR THE NEW YEAR

- 1) The World Day of Prayer: October 13, 2019. In communion with the sanctuary of Our Lady of l'Atakora in Benin.
- 2) The patronal feast: March 25, 2019. To be prepared by the SM.

In the WCMF we have experienced the desire of each of the branches to be more intensely involved in the Marianist Family. We understand that being a Marianist is a gift and our charism acquires all its value when we live it as a Family. No one is superior to the others and we all need each other. In order to walk hand in hand we must be what we are and put our talents at the service of the others and of the mission. Thinking about Family, discerning the future and committing ourselves will help us to promote our common mission together.

In that spirit and with the strength of the Holy Spirit, we encourage you to imagine new ways to grow as a Family, to commit ourselves courageously with the young and with the needy. We invite you to reflect on how to strengthen our experience of God.

With our warmest greetings,

WORLD COUNCIL OF THE MARIANIST FAMILY