



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 Marianist Family in the World
FROM: Manuel Cortés, SM, President of the WCMF
DATE: Rome, November 11, 2016
RE: Report of the World Council of the Marianist Family 2016

REPORT OF THE WCMF 2016

The World Council of the Marianist Family met at Via Latina, from November 9th to 11th with almost its full membership, for the first time since its creation, with the participation of the entire General Council of the Alliance Mariale. Only Béatrice Leblanc (MLC) was unable to be present, for professional reasons.

We spoke together about the life of the Family, about who and what we are, sharing our riches with one another. We are happy to forward to you a resume of what we discussed.

REPORTS

1. Report of the MLC

- The 2016-17 Directory of the MLC was presented. There are currently 5,997 lay Marianists in 579 MLCs. New communities are being formed in Cuba, in Benin, and Cameroun.
- During the 3rd World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities, held in Rome in 2014, Pope Francis gave the lay communities two topics to reflect about: conversion and mission; he also stressed the importance of keeping the freshness of the charism.
- The MLC recalled how important it is to create bridges among the members of the four branches in order for the Family to advance.
- The next international meeting of the MLCs will take place in Korea August 12-18, 2018, with the theme: *"Walking Hand in Hand: The Gift of Laity to the Marianist Family."*
- We shared about several joyful occasions in the various regions of the world.

2. Report of the SM

In July 2015, The General Leadership Assembly of the Society of Mary met in Rome, bringing together the superiors of all the Units. That assembly has given some orientations for the General Chapter of 2018, the preparation of which has already begun with reflections about four themes. In fact, four documents on those themes have been offered by the General Council as essential elements for our Marianist life: *The Common Life and Our Vow of Poverty* (S.M. 3 Offices no. 143); *The Marianist Identity of Our Apostolic Works; Fostering New Vocations; To Know, Love and Serve Our Founder's Inspiration*, Circular No. 6 of the Superior General, written for the occasion of the bicentennial of the foundation of the Society of Mary. After input from the reflections that take place in all the communities, a working document will be prepared for the General Chapter of July 2018. All the documents just mentioned are accessible on the website www.marianist.org, in the Society of Mary's section.

3. Report of the FMI

The Marianist Sisters have given priority to formation through international programs based in Agen and Rome: preparation of young sisters for perpetual vows, programs for community superiors, and for sisters enjoying a sabbatical trimester.

Great hopes have come out of the steps now occurring in the Cause of Mother Adèle, which is moving forward more and more towards the beatification we have all been waiting for.

As part of the Bicentennial, and as a concrete sign of the vitality of the missionary spirit of our Founders, the sisters will have the joy of seeing two new foundations in 2017 in Vietnam and Malawi. The first community will have three Vietnamese sisters, the second two Togolese sisters and two Indians.

The FMI are currently engaged in preparing their General Chapter, which will take place in July-August 2017 in Rome. One of the themes of the Chapter to be addressed is that of a restructuring, which had already started with the creation of the Region of Latin America.

4. Report of the AM¹

- The AM has produced a book on the wonder of their vocation, which has helped the entire group of the members to get to know one another better, sharing what they have in common and weaving some very strong spiritual, fraternal and human bonds among themselves.
- One beautiful initiative took place in Latin America where the members met in Lima in December 2015 for the first time. Exchanges are continuing via Skype.
- The AM is taking into account the concern about vocation ministry. They are trying to make themselves known locally to ecclesial bodies, and to the Marianist Family. Lifestyle witness remains, however, their preponderant element.
- The AM has made its request to the Roman Congregation for the Consecrated Life for recognition as a Diocesan Secular Institute.

BICENTENNIAL

The celebration of the Bicentennial of the foundation of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate in May 2016 brought us great joy for the opening of the jubilee year. The year will continue with the anniversary of the foundation of The Society of Mary, October 2, 2017, until its conclusion on January 22, 2018. This is a time for giving thanks for the presence of the two religious institutes at the heart of the Family and for going deeper into the meaning of that gift for all of us. The Bicentennial Icon continues to travel around the world, and echoes are reaching us about the joy of being together as a family, with that concrete symbol of the presence of our Founders.

CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION OF LAY MARIANISTS

The MLC presented to the Council a document entitled *Being a Lay Marianist in a MLC*. The document comes out of the discernment of the International Team, offering us an instrument which helps us to clarify our identity in the different countries. It is based on the identity document of Santiago de Chili (1993).

The MLC wanted to present and share this work with the World Council. Thanks to that sharing, the document has been enriched. The International Team was quite happy to receive the suggestions of the other branches of the Family in order to incorporate them into the text. When the

¹ *Alliance Mariale*.

final version will have been approved by the International Team, the document will be sent to the national leaders of each country.

INTERNET SITE and JUSTICE AND PEACE

We wish to remind you about the existence of the Family's international website. We invite you to visit it: <http://www.marianist.org/>.

You will find the webpage *Justice and Peace*, as well as the opportunity to subscribe to the *Friday Magnificat* <http://www.marianist.org/site.php?menuaccess=284>); the latter continues to be sent to all SMs, FMIs, AMs and Lay Marianists who have email addresses.

MARIE THÉRÈSE DE LAMOUROUS

The World Council of the Marianist Family has opened a reflection about the place of Marie Thérèse de Lamourous in the Marianist Family. That reflection is underway and will be a working topic at the next meeting of the World Council.

THE PATRONAL FEAST OF THE MARIANIST FAMILY will be celebrated on **Saturday, March 25, 2017**, on the Solemnity of the Annunciation. That is a day to give thanks for the Marianist vocation of each one among us. It will be prepared this year by the MLC.

THE WORLD DAY OF MARIANIST PRAYER is always a great time of celebration for the entire Family; whenever possible, it is always good to be able to get together on that occasion. In 2017 the date of the celebration of the anniversary of the foundation of the Society of Mary will also be the World Day of Marianist Prayer. That will be **Sunday, October 1, 2017**, the day before of the actual anniversary day. Some directives on how to unite ourselves at that celebration will be communicated in due time.

We have decided to publish a yearly calendar of celebrations and events important for the Marianist Family. We are sending it to you along with this message.

In the course of this World Council meeting, we have experienced the joy of living and sharing together. We all have the desire to grow together as Marianist Family. We are sure that the Bicentennial will bear its fruits.

NEXT MEETING OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF THE MARIANIST FAMILY: November 1-2-3, 2017.