

NEWS BULLETIN



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SPECIAL EDITION: XXII GENERAL CHAPTER RIO NEGRO, COLOMBIA SEPTEMBER 08 – OCTOBER 20, 2017

DAY 8: Thursday, September 15, 2017: Sensing, making presence, realizing



On Friday, 15th September, the General Chapter participants dedicated themselves especially to the exploration of today's reality, an essential step required before attempting to find any solutions.

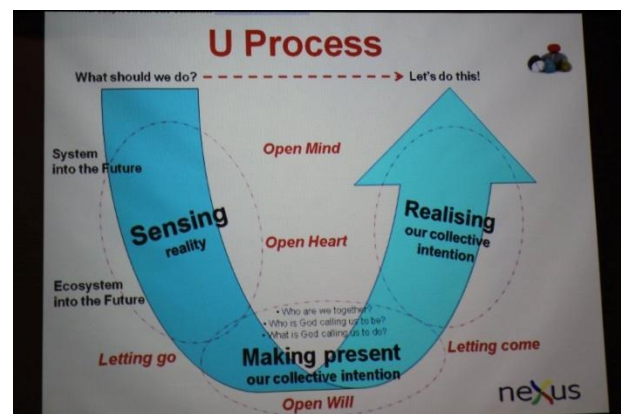
Beginning with prayer

As happens every day, both the beginning of the morning and the afternoon work, there is always a prayer that is creatively prepared by the Liturgy and Animation support team: Alicia Alexandra Morales Culqui and Brothers Tony Leon, Anselmo Kim and Fabrício Alves da Cruz. The prayer time is usually fifteen minutes. These moments of prayer help the group to pray and to contemplate the mystery of God in their own lives, laying the groundwork so that the reflection is a contemplation of the will of God in relation to the charism of Marcellin Champagnat.

A little silence

In the past two days, the participants have lived two intense experiences: the visit to the social centers in Medellín and yesterday the encounter with young people. This morning, an hour of silence and meditation was offered as a way of connecting these two experiences with the Chapter process, reflecting mainly on how such encounters touched one's heart.

U-Process



The facilitator, Matthieu Daum, today led participants through the U-Process dynamic process that is being used in the Chapter. For an organization that is changing, there are always issues needing to be resolved. There is a tendency among many to want to arrive at solutions, almost always the outcome of personal interpretations and individual responses. Instead,

for decisions to be sound, this process requires a change in our way of thinking and seeing. There is a methodology that helps achieve the desired change.

How do we apply this to the Chapter? When faced with the question "What does God wants us to do?", the tendency is to respond immediately, with individual impressions, that can lead to hasty decisions, with little foundation.

The dynamics of the U-Process consists of three moments, making a path suggested by the letter "U": Sensing; Making Presence; Realising.

- Firstly, it is necessary to feel the reality (sensing), to see what surrounds us and, how it is that which exists around us.
- Then making presence in the ecosystem, that is, to perceive what happens around us; how people are affected by what happens; opening the heart to the essential and thus not losing touch with reality. It is also necessary to analyze what we have been doing; What is our identity as a group? What needs to be eliminated?
- Finally, it is necessary to realize, taking into account the needs, the existing resources and from then on adopt a procedure that creates a new model for the emerging reality.

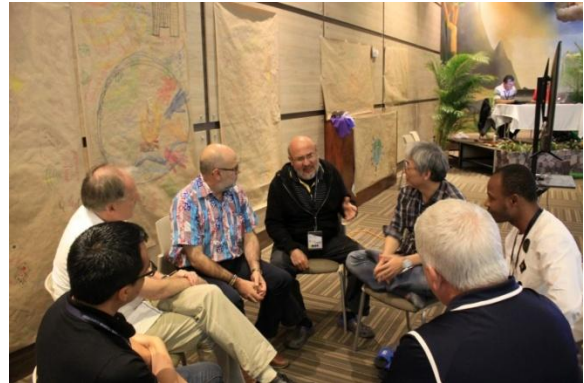
Methodological proposal of the Chapter



It has been proposed to the Chapter that during the first two weeks the participants focus on discovering the reality. Now they are discovering the reality in general: "What is new? What is around us?" Next week they will look at our

institutional body, to see what is happening within the Institute. From the consciousness that comes from this process, it will be easier to set the directions for the future. It will then be possible to work on concrete themes of Marist daily life, such as the Constitutions and the Rule of Life; the New Models Project; the Laity; what kind of government to adopt, etc. Having a clear vision, hearing the emerging calls.

Thinking 10 years ahead



To help raise awareness of the reality, some questions were posed to the group, laying the foundations for the Institute's ability to adapt to a changing world:

What will exist in 10 years that does not exist now?

What exists now and will exist in 10 years?

What exists today that will not exist in 10 years?

What do we need to find out more about?

To create this vision, the facilitator invited the participants to explore eight trends: Economic, Political, Health, Educational, Environmental, Religious (and spiritual), Sociological (population) and Communication Technologies.

Synthesizing trends

Each participant could choose one of the above trends to deepen the reflection. All afternoon participants worked in these newly

created interest groups. They were given the task of presenting the vision of these tendencies with a symbolic element and a reflection in a PowerPoint presentation. While some of the group worked on their presentation, others were given disposable materials to create a symbol that would describe their view of the trend. The symbols created were placed in the back of the room, together with the orange trees planted a few days ago and will remain there as an element of continuous reflection. Groups will deliver their presentations in tomorrow's plenary session.

Meeting in fraternities ends the day

The last activity of the day was the individual fraternity meeting. The objective of the 16

fraternities is not to do business, but to create a space for each person to share with the others in the fraternity their personal experiences, feelings and thoughts.

Br Marcelo De Brito

Br. Marcelo was the person responsible for organising the technical aspects of the Chapter, such as translation, sound and video systems in the Chapter Hall. He has been present during this first critical week of the Chapter when problems technical issues were most likely to occur. Brother Marcelo needs now to return to his Province. Brother Emili thanked Marcelo, on behalf of all the Chapter participants, for his commitment and dedication.



**Brother Vincent de Paul
Member of the Translation Service**

DAY 9: Saturday, September 16, 2017: Celebrating the Bicentenary of the Institute

Saturday, 16th September, everyone associated with the General Chapter celebrated with Marists of the Norandina Province, the Bicentenary of the Institute, which the General Council wanted to celebrate in three moments: January 2, June 6 and during the Chapter.



Celebrating with laity and Brothers of Norandina

The Marists of the Norandina Province felt very proud to be able to host the General Chapter participants in Colombia. They have shown their affection in a number of ways. Today, especially, they expressed their love and dedication for Marcellin Champagnat's charism in the creative program they prepared to celebrate the Institute's Bicentenary.

Many people from countries associated with the Province wanted to come to celebrate the Bicentenary with the Chapter participants, however, space was limited and only a few could be present. The members of the Marist family who came to participate in a way represented not only their own Province, but the entire Marist world. In all, almost 400 people attended the celebration.

Representatives came from 13 Marist Colleges of Colombia, 28 fraternities of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family (CMMF), social centres and the Province administration services. There were 70 people from Medellín

alone: the Novitiate community and the young people who had participated in the Chapter session of last Thursday. Some postulants from Loja, Ecuador also participated.

"Alborada" open the day



It is a tradition in Colombia to begin certain feast days with a Marian prayer, praying the rosary in procession. The laity of Colombia organized the early morning Marial prayer, which begun at the road entrance of the La Salle Conference Centre, where the Chapter is held. The statue of Our Lady of Fourvière was carried in procession. This statue had moved around the three countries of the Norandina Province as part of the Province's Bicentennial celebrations.

Plenary Session

While the Colombian Marists prepared the fiesta in the courtyard, the Chapter participants met for their morning session to share the presentations they had prepared on each of the 8 trends that exist in the world today. The goal was to develop an awareness of these areas and try to glimpse what the reality will be like 10 years from now.

The work of the group was summarized in words, symbols, garbage materials, and a Power Point presentation. Each group

presented their conclusions. The presentations (Power Point) can be downloaded from the following links: economic, political, health, educational, environmental, religious (and spiritual), sociological (population) and communication technologies.

Feast and Mass



At the end of the working session, the Chapter participants joined a large number of members of the Marist family in the plaza. In this space, different Marist groups of Norandina Province had organized a stand showcasing typical products and samples of Marist activities. It was a time to meet, to relax, to enjoy the music and dance.

The Bicentenary Mass was celebrated in the Chapter Hall at 12.30 pm. The Apostolic Nuncio of Colombia, Ettore Balestrero, a former Marist student in Genoa, Italy, presided. In his homily, he left three tasks for the Brothers: to help sanctify the people with whom they are dealing; to keep strong their service of the

Church; to witness to the power of Christ's love.

The party continued in the afternoon.



After the Mass, everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch together at Casa De La Salle. In the afternoon, a lively program of song, movement, folkloric dance, testimonies and brief introductions was enjoyed with affection and enthusiasm. The Marist College in Manizales also gave special theatrical presentation telling the story of Marcellin Champagnat and our Marist

Brother Emili received some gifts from participants and took the opportunity to thank the Norandina Province for hosting the General Chapter and the special Bicentenary celebration. As a gesture of gratitude, Brother Emili gave Brother César Rojas, Provincial of Norandina, an icon that was painted in Greece, that represented the three symbols associated with the 3-year preparation for the Bicentenary: Montagne, Fourvière and La Valla.

The program concluded in the plaza. Brother Emili and the General Council led the singing of happy birthday while the bicentennial cake was cut.

The fiesta finished with dancing and a fireworks show. After the energy and excitement of the day, people bid farewell to each other with a sense of joy of being Marist, belonging to this great Marist Family and being able to share the gift of the Marist charism.