



“To be more closely united, work more creatively, and act in greater solidarity we form one province beyond national limitations...”

GREETINGS FROM PARIS!

How can the province animate its strategy for promote vocations? Confreres with a special concern for this ministry considered this question in La Neylière. Those involved in the finances of the province reviewed important facts and policies. The solidarity committee put the final touches to plans for the colloquium and the provincial met with representatives of European Marist Laity. This month is an example of having too much material to include it all in one issue of EuroInfo. Some material will be published in the future issues. We thank those who sent us contributions.

Joaquín Fernández and Martin McAnaney

Solidarity Committee meeting, Rome February 2-3

The committee met for the last time before the colloquium, *“In the face of the globalisation of indifference, is there a place for mercy?”* (La Neylière, March 29 – 31). The number and the range of experience of the people registered for the event is encouraging and the committee reorganised the process to take account of this. It promises to be a significant occasion for us all. The committee considered ways of disseminating the content of the colloquium afterwards, using the written word and contemporary media. If you have not already done so, please register now with Ad Blommerde (ad.blommerde@zonnet.nl).

Leaflet: bit.ly/solidcoll



Vocation Promotion session, La Neylière, 5-7 February

Provincial Chapter 2013 adopted a vocation promotion strategy (bit.ly/VocStratEng) The initial section of this strategy focuses on the confreres instead of listing first the needs of young people. The key for us as Marists in this ministry, is to release the power of the Marist charism for ourselves and then to share it with others. In all regions of the province, confreres have taken initiatives to offer others the possibility of Marist religious life. It has been difficult to find an effective way to support these initiatives at the wider provincial level. 15 confreres explored ways forward and were stimulated by a presentation given by Fr Alan Neville MSC. Research shows that candidates today seek to belong to a community with a mission, one which is confident about its own identity and hopefully about its future! (bit.ly/VocStudyEng) It is a challenging picture! The group offered 5 proposals to the provincial council as a way forward: (1) Develop a presence on social media, (2) Appoint a fulltime provincial vocation promoter and team, (3) Organise an international volunteering programme, (4) Community renewal, and (5) a province-wide faith development programme for young people.



Gathering of regional bursars, their assistants and the provincial administration, Paris, February 18-19



Each country reported on important events, financial trends and issues related to the change of Statutes due on July 1st. Participants noted that many of the trends are common across the different countries. They took stock of the ongoing process of the harmonisation of accounts and in the light of experience, identified its benefits and challenges. Provincial Chapter 2013 asked for a provincial review of funds available for care of the sick and elderly and this was carried out in 2015. Bursars were encouraged by the report of the review committee and they considered its recommendations. Joaquin Fernandez, the provincial bursar presented the consolidated provincial accounts for 2014 and the annual budget for 2016. Larry Duffy, the acting bursar general, shared information about the wider Society and explained the mechanisms for funding mission activity and international formation. The group also considered an alternative internal mechanism for calculating its own contributions. All agreed that the open exchange helps build a system which enables different parts of the province to be in solidarity with one another and to do so more coherently.

Prayer intention

The Year for Consecrated Religious Life came to a close this month. We pray for all those discerning God's call to them. We remember all those in formation in the Society of Mary, especially those from the European province, including Daniel Fernandez preparing to be ordained to the priesthood on April 30th, Alcalá de Henares, Spain. May they be given the wisdom to hear God's call, the courage to respond generously and may others be inspired to live faithfully their baptismal commitment.



Joint meeting of the European Coordination Group of Marist Laity (EMLC) and the provincial council, Paris February 13-14



After the assembly of Marist Laity in Los Negrales, Spain (August 2015), the EMLC and the provincial council met to identify ways the province can better promote Marist laity and our common mission in the light of that assembly. The joint meeting first focused on a review of the proceedings of Los Negrales and a sharing of information about the new provincial structure. Jan Hulshof (NI) facilitated a reflection on the meaning of "common mission", No. 3 and 25 in the provincial directory for relations between Marist religious and laity. Finally the groups considered preparations for the forthcoming provincial and general chapters, other ways of collaborating together in the Work of Mary, and celebrating the Fourviere Pledge (July 23rd).

Obituary

Robin Duckworth (Eng) 21.02.2016.