

▶ ECHOES FROM THE LIFE OF THE EUROPEAN PROVINCE

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



## GREETINGS FROM PARIS!

The theme of pilgrimage continues this month, a group of young people associated with European Marists travels to Krakow and another group from Rome makes its way to the shrine of the Madonna della Libera, Italy. There are also other gatherings of Marist confreres taking place towards the end of this month in Italy, Spain and Germany and we will include echoes from these events in the next issue. For many this time of year is traditionally the “re-entry” after the holiday season, and we wish all of you the blessings you will need in taking up the routine of ordinary life in the coming year!

Joaquín Fernández and Martin McAnaney

## July 23, Pratola, Italy: Bicentenary of the Fourvière Pledge

A group of pilgrims from the Marist parish of Santa Francesca Cabrini, Rome, travelled to Pratola Peligna, the Marian shrine to celebrate the Bicentenary of the Fourvière Pledge. They were accompanied by the parish priest Franco Messori (IT), and Fr Renato Frappi (IT) and a group of lay Marist from Pratola welcomed them. They celebrated the Eucharist, and in front of the image of the Madonna della Libera, Fr Franco read the text of the Fourvière Pledge. At the end of the celebration the local lay Marists offered everyone a reception which comprised of little pizzas, cakes, water melon, and drinks... It was a festive moment of celebrating the birth of the Society of Mary in the Church.



## Prayer intention

Heavenly Father, grant that we may bear witness to your mercy. Teach us how to convey the faith to those in doubt, hope to those who are discouraged, love to those who feel indifferent, forgiveness to those who have done wrong and joy to those who are unhappy. Allow the spark of merciful love that you have enkindled within us become a fire that can transform hearts and renew the face of the earth.  
(Extract from World Youth Day 2016)



## Pilgrimage to World Youth Day, Krakow, Poland, 25 – 31, July

In a letter written (11 August) to his 53 fellow pilgrims, Fr Pascal Boidin (UK) began by reminding them of the week they spent in Lyon following in the footsteps of the first Marists at Fourvière by participating in the Youth Festival, Dare to Dream (17 -23 July - [www.bit.ly/DaretoDream2016](http://www.bit.ly/DaretoDream2016)) and the Bicentenary Mass (23 July - [www.bit.ly/200anniv](http://www.bit.ly/200anniv); [www.maristinter.org](http://www.maristinter.org)). He went on to share some thoughts on the pilgrimage to WYD which followed. "At Krakow we met the contemporary Church in its diversity, women and men of all origins and backgrounds. We were warmly welcomed by residents of Rzezawa, happy to receive young Christians. At the invitation of the Pope, we reflected on the theme of Mercy. We celebrated and had fun! And Fred, our bus driver, invited us to sing again and again: 'I am filled with joy, an immense joy! On a more sombre note, while we were visiting Auschwitz, and on hearing the sad news from France of further attacks, we became aware that evil is still at work in the human heart and that it can lead to even worse outcomes and yet, in Jesus Christ, it is defeated. This is the time for Mercy. The Pope invites us to leave our comfort zone, "our couches", to welcome the gentle presence of God in our lives and to live it. "I must stay at your house" Jesus said to Zacchaeus.

More than ever, the women and men of our time need to hear a message of hope: that it is possible to live together, violence and foolishness do not have the last word, and that we are created to love and to be loved.

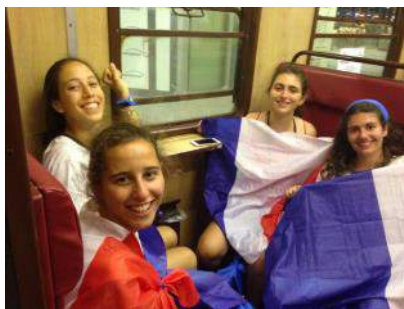


And now we have returned home and we have taken up the ordinary rhythm of life or we will take it up: of studies, of work. What will remain with us after these two weeks of shared life? There will be the encounters and the shared beautiful moments: the joys, difficulties, friendships...

'To be Instruments of Mercy', was the theme of the final session of catechesis at Rzezawa, and it is also a strong focus of Marist spirituality... I would like to offer you three things to do in the coming year:

1. **Pray:** take the opportunity this year to deepen your life of prayer
2. **Serve:** ... have a concern for the poorest who are there where you are
3. **Share:** share your faith, by the questions you ask yourself and your Christian friends, it's a good way to deepen little by little your path of faith...

... As the words of the hymn say, "Let our feet follow in the footsteps of Jesus, as Mary did, the first to take the path!"



## Notes from the annual European Retreat, la Neylière, 24 – 30 July

Fr Gerry Hall (Aus) has made available his handouts for the retreat, "Promises yesterday and today". They are mostly in English and can be found at the following link: [bit.ly/2016SMretreat](http://bit.ly/2016SMretreat) The PowerPoint presentations are also available by contacting Martin McAnaney ([mcananey.martin@gmail.com](mailto:mcananey.martin@gmail.com)). The retreat brought together the themes of the Fourvière Bicentenary, Marist spirituality and the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

### Obituary

José Rodriguez (Esp) 03.08.2016