



EURO info



ANNUAL REVIEW AND CONSULTATION MEETING (ARC), ROME, 1 – 10

Martin McAnaney writes: “The ARC meeting is the yearly opportunity for the superior general and his council to meet with unit leaders from around the Marist world. The aim is to review plans and to strengthen communication amongst the leadership group. It has become an essential mechanism to deepen mutual understanding and to generate collective ownership of initiatives and developments. This year was the first ARC for the new general administration and was my second experience of it. Before leaving for the meeting, I was asked what could possibly take 10 days to discuss? It is not so much the subjects addressed that take the time but building up the fraternal group so that the serious questions about the future of the Society of Mary can be addressed adequately (bit.ly/2O2UIGk). We began with a day of retreat “In the upper room”, in the company of Mary and the apostles calling on the Holy Spirit to enlighten our reflection. We heard reports from the superior general and the bursar general. The hard facts about the demographics of the Society were presented. We know we are reducing in numbers but to see the facts in stark figures is a wake-up call. Flowing from this, ARC considered the meaning of Mission in a time of diminishment, the governance structures which could help us to be more effective in the future, and how we form Marists appropriately for this future. This future-oriented thrust has its origins in the General Chapter 2017 *Declaration on the Mission*. In a time of diminishment, we can lose sight of the fact that there is a next generation of Marists. There was no danger of that for us this year. A part of the future of the Society of Mary was visible to us on the two occasions we met the 15 Marist students from our Theologate, Casa Di Maria. We also witnessed Njong Kenneth Akua (Cameroon) making his perpetual profession in the SM (bit.ly/2SaFHQN). To change the pace one afternoon, the programme incorporated a brief but fascinating guided tour to the Vatican Museums including a unique photo opportunity in an empty Sistine Chapel! What stands out for me is the sense that we were collectively building a future for the Work of Mary which I found profoundly encouraging.”

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

GREETINGS FROM PARIS!

We read some reflections on the recent meeting in Rome of the leadership group of the Society of Mary. This focused on imagining the future of the SM. We anticipate the launch of a project to strengthen links between confreres and within communities in the province. It will take place on 14 November. In these unsettled financial times, the Provincial Investment Advisory Board met to assess the state of the province’s resources. We appreciate all those who contributed material and invite you to keep sending it to us.

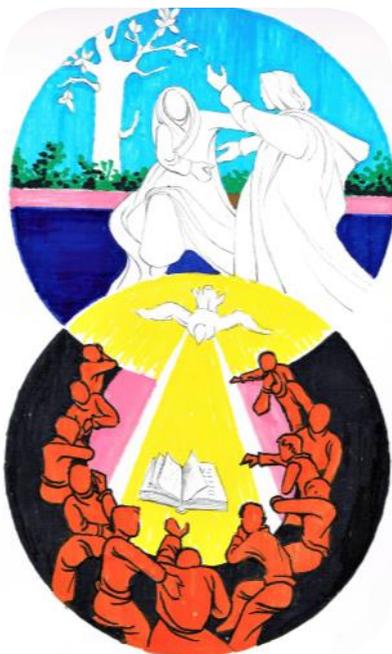
*Francisco Chauwet and
Martin McAnaney*



THE YEAR OF CELEBRATING COMMUNITY,

The European Provincial Chapter 2017 (January) emphasised community life, promoting connections between communities and confreres, and caring for each other across the province – to strengthen the bonds amongst us. The inspiration was N.127 of the Marist Constitutions, “The ministry of loving service to one another in community is a primary apostolate...”. A working group, Hubert Bonnet-Eymard (Fr), Tom Kouijzer (NL) and John O’Gara

(UK), came up with creative suggestions of the elements of the year: (i) a symbolic image for the year, (ii) the action of circulating a special book from community to community into which confreres would insert prayers, thoughts, reflections, images – basically whatever communities wish to share about themselves with the wider province, (iii) 4 reflection sheets for personal and communal use, (iv) pilgrimages, and (v) peer group gatherings. They also suggested linking the events with Marist Laity and our partners in mission, especially because of the European Marist Laity gathering being organised in An Grianan, Ireland, 28 July - 2 August 2019 (bit.ly/MLay2019). A striking image for the year was created by Gianni Colosio (It). It forms the cover of the book. 4 reflection sheets entitled “Celebrating the Encounter” were prepared by the French confreres François Drouilly and Bernard Thomasset. These will be available in the 6 languages of the province. The year will be launched during the concluding Eucharist of the Council of the Province, Paris, 14 November, the vigil of the anniversary of the death of Fr Colin.



PROVINCIAL INVESTMENT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING, PARIS, 4 OCTOBER

Jimmy McElroy (Ire), the provincial bursar writes, “Mr Bertrand la Clavière, the Financial and Administration Manager, and I organised a meeting of the Investment Advisory Board. The Board’s mission is to offer guidance on the provincial investment portfolios. The material goods entrusted to the province are at the service of the Society of Mary’s (SM) mission and ministries, and the care of our more fragile confreres. The Board follows clear guidelines based on the values of the Gospel and the social doctrine of the Church. We are always mindful of the needs of the wider SM, and of all of God’s people, especially ‘the least of these my sisters and brothers’. In a time of international trade wars and run-away capitalism, it is reassuring to know this Board is providing us with expert advice and guidance.”



OBITUARY

Herman Kloosterman (NL) 06.10.2018
Hermann-Joseph Zumsande (De) 14.10.2018

PRAYER INTENTION

On the occasion of the Synod of Bishops on Young People: Lord Jesus, we pray for all the young people of the world. Help them respond to the call you make to each of them, to realise a proper plan of life and achieve happiness. Keep their hearts open to dreaming great dreams and make them concerned for the good of others as they joyously proclaim you as Lord. Amen