

## "DARING TO HOPE"

This was the theme chosen for the 2023 session (13-20 August) of *Relais Mariste*. The invitation



stated: "In times of crisis, of all kinds, what could be more necessary than hope? It is precisely in the most difficult situations that it reveals itself: it makes us see the breach in the wall, the possible in the impossible... Daring to hope is an invitation to accept uncertainty without remaining a spectator of events, an invitation to walk in the light of Christ and to give life...".

**For this 30th anniversary** - the first session dates back to 1993 - *Relais Mariste* took place in Alsace, near Fouchy, where the Marists served a group of rural parishes for many years. 88 people responded to the call, half of them adults, the other half young people and children.

The programme included a variety of evenings (an Alsatian evening, a night walk, stargazing...), lots of music, organization like preparing and serving meals. We explored this year's theme from different angles: my relationship with Mary, my place in the Church in the wake of WYD and at a time when we are preparing for the synod on synodality, 'hope or the impossible journey', the evocation of great figures who have left their mark on Alsace - Saint Odile, of course, and also Charles de Foucauld -times of celebration, including August 15th, and at the end of a beautiful walk in the forest, a presentation on Jean Claude Colin, the educator...

What makes it possible for *Relais Mariste* to offer such a rich programme? As a member of the preparation team, with eight other people, I was able to measure the complexity of the operation. But I also witnessed the team's commitment to ensuring that the week ran as smoothly as possible. It's a commitment that's contagious, in a way, because when it came time to form a new team to take charge of the 2025 session, the candidates came forward with great enthusiasm, as if they were happy and honoured to take their turn and help bring this wonderful adventure to life!

*Hubert Bonnet-Eymard, sm*

## DEAR MARIST FRIENDS

Remarkably the combined experience of the confreres whose profession jubilees we celebrate this year amounts to over a thousand years of Marist life. Innumerable hearts and minds have been touched and lives have been changed.

We want this mission to continue, not just elsewhere in the world but here in Europe where the Society began.

So, let's cooperate as fully as we can with the initiatives to encourage vocations and let us not forget John Larsen's request that each community devote an hour's prayer per week before the Blessed Sacrament for vocations.

*Ad multos annos!*

*Kevin Duffy, sm*

## PRAYER INTENTION:

Vocations to the Society in Europe



## RETREAT AT LA NEYLIÈRE SUMMER 2023

The retreat was from Sunday 20 to Saturday 26 August 2023. There were 23 participants, lay people and religious - mainly women with two Marist Fathers. It was preached by Bishop Yvan Mathieu SM, auxiliary bishop of Ottawa-Cornwall, Canada. The theme was *"With Peter, learning to follow Christ to the end"*.

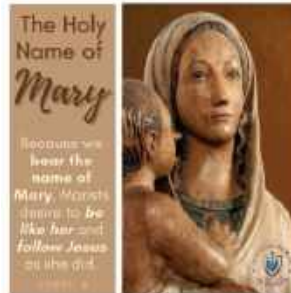


The daily program was centered on three major aspects: Prayer of the Church, the Eucharist and two talks each day drawn from the gospel of Luke. The retreat preacher, an experienced exegete with a special Marist approach, helped us listen to the word of God in a more practical way. We received fresh insights on our call to discipleship in daily life.

One thing that struck me from the retreat was the transformation in the life of Peter, advancing and regressing. The Lord is not waiting for a perfect person to be his disciple. We do not rely on our own ability to carry out his mission, we must allow the Lord to guide and lead us. Despite a scorching heatwave, it was a grace-filled week of spiritual nourishment.

*Christian Abongbung, sm.*

## THE FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME OF MARY AROUND THE PROVINCE



## JUBILEES OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSION 2023

Congratulations to all our jubilarians for decades of faithful service. It's not a competition, and there's no league table. But if there was, Italy would be clear team winners this year and Ireland has the prize for the individual event!

**50 years:** Giancarlo Balzi, Giuseppe Fontana **60 years:** Christian Andraud, Gerard Burns, Jean Chevillard, Giovanni Colosio, François Drouilly, John Hannan, Sante Inselvini, Angelo Omodei, Michele Palumbo, Renzo Pasotti, Bruno Rubecchini, Wilhelm Tangen, Willehad Thyen, Piero Topini, Sergio Velucchi **70 years:** Bernard King

