EUROPEAN PROVINCE OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

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EuroINFO

Australian pilgrimage in the Monts du Lyonnais

La Neylière, 27 Sept-7 Oct · by Jimmy McElroy, SM



Early last October I had the privilege and the pleasure to be chaplain to a group of Australian head teachers and senior educational managers under the leadership of Chris Comerford and Greg Colles.

The name of this group was ***Marist Charism and Culture.*** Every few years or so they come to visit the Marist places near Lyon and then go on to visit Rome. If they make such a long journey, you can only imagine the level of their commitment. Sr Teri O'Brien was her usual indefatigable and generous self in guiding us on our way and leaving no stone unturned.

We stayed in La Neyliere where we received a warm welcome and then moved on to a small hotel in Belley. We visited all the usual Marist historical places: La Neyliere, l'Hermitage, Puylata, Fourvière, Le Puy, Belley, Cuet, Cerdon, and Jarnosse, St Bonnet le Troncy, Ars and more besides. Frankly, ***being with this group was a deep experience in Christian living.***

One should use superlatives with care but still be true to one's experience. We had Mass every day and, in the evening, a shared reflection which was personal and moving. The pilgrimage meant a lot to each of us. It is humbling and inspiring to follow in the footsteps of our founders. Yes, we have indeed a profoundly rich charism. I have no hesitation in saying that the young people in Australian Marist schools are blessed indeed to have such committed Marist teachers ministering to them.

MARIST FATHERS' SCHOOL COMPLEX, DAKAR, AFRICA

Solidarity between French and African Marist schools

by Youssouph Stev Youm, SM, Headteacher



On 4 October 2026, the Marist Fathers' School Complex in Niakhirate received a generous donation of books and textbooks, totalling 805 kg, coordinated by Mr Lionel Roos-Jourdan of St Joseph – La Cordeille. This second donation will greatly support the development of a research, documentation and learning centre for pupils and teachers.

The schools expresses its sincere gratitude to the Marist schools in France for their continued support of the Marist mission in Senegal, and to the French Navy for facilitating transport to Dakar.

We hope this partnership will continue to grow, ***allowing us to learn from one another and strengthen the Marist spirit of solidarity and cooperation.***

We will ensure that our students understand the origin of these books and the values of gratitude, sharing and international friendship they represent.

Our heartfelt thanks go to all those whose generosity has made this meaningful initiative possible.

Dear Marist Friends,

Here in the provincial house in Paris, we have received several concerned enquiries from different countries. How are things in Paris? Thank you for that. This morning we had a Zoom conversation with bankers in the Netherlands. Our meeting had been planned for Paris in person, but they changed it to Zoom because of what they were seeing on their news. Without underestimating the serious situation, we can say that for most people, especially older people, life goes on as normal. That being said, we should of course be concerned for those for whom things are not going well, including many young people in Europe.

Kevin Duffy, SM

PRAYER INTENTION

the well-being of young people in Europe

GENERAL HOUSE, ROME

Annual Review Consultation 2026

by Kevin Duffy, SM



The "Annual Review Consultation" (ARC) is an annual meeting of the Superior General and his team with the major superiors of the units of the Society. It is very packed with reports and discussions. Just to pick out a couple of items of particular importance for the province of Europe.

The first is La Neylière. A report on the future of La Neylière mandated by Declan Marmion was presented and discussed. For me, the most striking feature of the discussion was the attitude of the younger confreres from the "global south". ***Their determination that we continue in this patrimonial site and develop it can only be described as a visceral.*** Subsequent to ARC, the Superior General has decided that the Society will continue to develop La Neylière.

The responsibility for its staffing, governance and management, and for developing (hopefully with the help of other units) a substantial support fund for ongoing capital expenditure remains with our province until the next General Chapter.

The second item of particular importance for us in Europe is the projected collaboration between Africa, Canada and Europe. How can we best work together to promote the development of the Society in Africa, and, for example, the mission in La Neylière and the educational mission in Canada and Europe? There will be more on this in the coming year or two.

SAFEGUARDING

The Council of the Province in la Neylière, France

by Br. Norbert Enste, SM



I was delighted to accept the invitation to the Council of the Province in La Neylière on 20 October 2026 on the topic of ***"Safeguarding: to be feared or to be embraced..."***
Carole was waiting for us at Lyon Airport. We arrived in La Neylière at around 7.30 pm. Over dinner, we had a lovely opportunity to welcome the participants from the CoP and chat with them.

On Tuesday, Elodie Brian spoke about her work on child protection and how she came to be involved in this cause. Elodie works for the CRR (Commission for Recognition and Reparation). She offered important insights into how we, as members of religious orders, should approach this issue and what might help us.

Personally, I found it very helpful to hear this from her once again. It reminded me how important it is to keep re-engaging with this issue so that child protection remains a living concern. I was also deeply moved by the next two sessions of this meeting.

Bernard Thomasset reported on cases of abuse in France. I could sense the shock in the room as he read out from various letters written by victims. A sad chapter.

Jean-François Aubry's personal testimony also made a deep impression on me. He spoke about his experiences as a victim. ***What moved me most was that he was able to speak so openly to us Marists about the suffering he had endured. But he also spoke about the steps towards reconciliation that have been taken.***

For me, it was a worthwhile meeting, and I would like to thank everyone who organised it, especially Elodie Brian, Bernard Thomasset and Jean-François Aubry. I would also like to add that it was once again lovely to have been at La Neylière.