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News from the General Administration of the Society of Mary

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Initial Assembly of the New Region of India

May 5, 2024, was the official starting date of the new Region of India of the Society of Mary. This event took place in the context of an assembly, which was held from May 2 to 5 in Bangalore (Karnataka State, India). Almost all the members of the new Region (77) participated in the assembly, as well as a large group of guests.

The Superior General, Fr. André Fétis, SM, and the Assistant for Religious Life, Fr. Pablo Rambaud, SM, represented the General Council. Representing the Province of the United States were the Provincial and Assistant Provincial, Fr.

Oscar Vasquez, SM and Bro. Bernard Ploeger, SM, along with several members of his Council.

In addition, several brothers who have lived and worked in India over the years attended the assembly, including Bro. Delmar Jorn, SM, who dedicated a good part of his life to India.



Father André-Joseph Fétis, Superior General, with the members of the new Council of the Region of India

Fr. Florian Roger-Chabot, SM, who also lived there for many years represented Canada. The superiors of the Regions of Japan, Korea and East Africa were also present. The Marianist Sisters (FMI) were represented by the Provincial Superiors of Japan (Sr. Scholastica Le) and from Korea (Sr. Marianna Kang) and several of the sisters of the District of India and Sr. Laura Leming of the Province of the United States. On behalf of the MLCs, the national officers from India and Korea were present.

During the assembly, several moments were dedicated to remembering the past with gratitude, especially those brothers who have had a special bond with India and who have passed away. They also looked at the present, the reality of the current communities and works, with their richness and complexity. In addition, one could not fail to look to the future, to the challenges and the calls of the new Region. All this took place in a festive and celebratory atmosphere, combining times of prayer and celebration with more informal moments of encounter.



Group photo at the end of the Assembly

During the final celebration, the decree of the Superior General was read, erecting the Region of India of the Society of Mary. At the same time, the new Regional Council was installed. The Council is made up of Bro. Prakash Kujur, SM, Superior, Fr. Ignase Arulappen, SM, Assistant for Religious Life, Bro. Basant Kujur, SM, Assistant for Education, Bro. Pratap Guria, SM, Assistant for Temporalities, and Fr. Prasad Nitta, SM, Counselor.

Bro. Schuller professes First Vows in the Province of United States

Bro. Chicago Joe Schuller professed First Vows in the Society of Mary (Marianists) on May 18, 2024, at Queen of Apostles Chapel in Beavercreek, OH. Director of Novices Bro. Dennis Bautista, SM and Assistant Director of Novices Fr. Tim Eden, SM, presented Bro. Chicago as a suitable candidate for the profession of vows after a period of formation and discernment. His vows were received by the Provincial, Fr. Oscar Vasquez, SM.

His mother, Kerry, and brother, Stingray, were joined by many family members, friends, and members of the Marianist community at the vow ceremony and reception that followed. The ceremony was also live streamed so that Marianist family members and friends from all over the world could witness his first profession.



Bro. Chicago Schuller with his family

Bro. Chicago Joe Schuller, 25, was born in Harlingen, Texas and raised in Mission, TX. He first met the Marianists upon entering college at St. Mary's University in San Antonio, TX. He pursued his education while at St. Mary's University, and after graduating in 2020 with a bachelor's degree in business administration, he applied for Aspirancy with the Marianists. He completed pre-Aspirancy volunteering as a farm hand at an urban farm co-op and assisting brothers with men's small groups at University of Dayton. Bro. Chicago then moved back to St. Mary's University, engaging in ministry with Holy Rosary Parish, Central Catholic High School, and TECABOCA (a summer camp for youth). For his apostolic year, his service was split between assisting in the Office of Temporalities for the U.S. Province in St. Louis, MO, and working at the Marianist Mission in OH.

After professing First Vows, Bro. Chicago will be assigned to the Maryland Ave. Community in St. Louis, where he will be engaged in ministry at St. John Vianney High School in Campus Ministry and Institutional Advancement.

Diaconate Ordinations at the Chaminade Seminary in Rome

The ordinations took place on May 11, 2024, in the Chapel of Our Lady of the Pillar at Via Latina 22. The two new deacons are: Messi Gatien Loubiya (Congo-Brazzaville) and Showraiah Ravulapalli (India). It was a beautiful celebration, well prepared by the two communities and the staff of the house, and attended by a very large group of people. Present for the ceremony were the communities of Marianist religious men and women from Rome, members of the Marianist Lay Communities, representatives of the parish of the area, religious communities with which the seminary has a close relationship, friends of our community and of the new deacons. Bro. Jean-Marie Leclerc, SM, the Regional Superior, represented the Region of France. The Region of India could not be present due to problems with the visa of the brother who was to come. The ordination was transmitted via internet so that the confreres and relatives of the new deacons were able to follow it from their respective locations. The choir of the Most Holy Name of Mary Parish provided the songs for the Eucharistic celebration.



L-R: Bro. Messi Gatien Loubiya, Card. Luis Ladaria and Bro. Showraiah Ravulapalli

His Eminence Cardinal Luis Ladaria presided over the ceremony. In his homily, he recalled that "only in love can the Word be proclaimed, just as only in love can the ministry of charity be exercised". He added, addressing the new deacons: "No human need can leave you indifferent. The closeness and consolation of those who suffer must be the sign of the closeness of Jesus, the only one who saves and consoles".

After the Eucharist, the celebration continued in the garden of the house with refreshments and a very pleasant time of fellowship.

We thank God for the vocation of Messi and Showrry, and for having consecrated them in their vocation at the service of the Society of Mary and the whole Church. At the end of June, the two will return to their respective Units.

Institution of Ministries at the Chaminade International Seminary in Rome

On May 24, 2024, the celebration of the institution of ministries took place at the Chaminade International Seminary in Rome. The ceremony was held in the large Chapel of Our Lady of the Pillar at Via Latina. The two communities living at the Curia Generalizia participated in the liturgy. Seven seminarians received the ministry of lector: Yves Agbadou (CI), Patrick Cahill (ME), Christophe Mbonde (RDC), Chrishala Ngosa (Z), Gilbert Okade (EAK) Daniel Orellana (CH) and Raoul Rouamba (CI). One seminarian received the ministry of acolyte: Claudel Noël (CI). Fr. André-Joseph Fétis, Superior General, presided over the liturgy. Although the ministries of lector and acolyte are lay ministries, the Church also includes them in the formation process leading to the priesthood. In his homily, Father André invited the new ministers to live in an attitude of inquiry, open to God's signs and newness, and in a spirit of service.



P. André-Joseph Fétis, Superior General with the new readers and acolyte

We thank God for the path of formation followed by the eight brothers who have received these ministries. Once again, we entrust them to the Spirit and to Mary's maternal love, so that they may continue to grow in their response to the call they have received.

Appointment of the Regional Superior for the Region of Austria-Germany

After consultation with the brothers, Fr André-Joseph Fétis, SM, with the consensus of the General Council, has appointed Fr Helmut Brandstetter, SM, as Regional Superior for the Region of Austria-Germany for a third consecutive term. This mandate will begin on August 13, 2024, the feast day of Blessed Jakob Gapp.

The General Council is very grateful to Fr. Helmut for his generous acceptance of this new mandate, and congratulates him on his commitment to ensuring the best possible direction for the Region. He will provide this service with the support of all his brothers and with the collaboration of his Council. The Austrian Region can also count on the excellent collaboration of a competent group of lay people.



One of the important tasks of the new Council will be to prepare for restructuring within the European Zone (CEM).

We assure Fr. Helmut and the brothers of our prayers for them and for all those with whom they are associated in their mission.

Miguel Ángel Quiroga and the victims of violence

This Easter season reminds us that "there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends." (Jn. 15, 13). When, on September 18, 1998, "Michel" defended a person from a paramilitary group and was shot dead, he was fulfilling the words of Jesus. Why does dying at 26 in such conditions make no sense? This question often comes from the relatives of the victims of violence. In the face of ongoing-armed conflicts with their attendant toll of victims, especially children, the issue is becoming a daily one.

Michel made the sacrifice of his life, of everything he had dreamed of achieving with his intellectual abilities, his commitment as a Marianist religious, his shared joy... everything collapsed in a few seconds. Why? When you are a Christian, giving your life has meaning. This gift joins that of Jesus, who freely gives himself up to the kiss of Judah, to the condemnation of the chief priests, to the hands of secular power, and to death on the cross. However, through this surrender, the risen Jesus becomes a source of eternal life for all humanity. The answer to our "why?" "It is in Jesus' love for us, and in the example he sets for us."



Meeting of Colombian Marianist religious. Michel is the one in the center, at the bottom.

By giving his life, Michel, and so many others today, bear witness to the fact that a life offered, united to Jesus, is a life given out of love, and has meaning. It mysteriously bears fruit and gives us the courage to continue our journey with the Lord, in communion with the martyrs of our time.

Let us pray again for all those who must answer for their faith in the face of violence, with the prayer Michel left us:

*Lord Jesus,
unite your life with my life, unite my life with your life,
unite our lives with those of others,
so that I can share and be a brother,
and that I build in this world
the Kingdom of God, our Father,
bringing justice, life and liberation to the poor and oppressed,
Following in the footsteps of the Risen Lord. Amen*

Pilgrims from the USA visit the General Administration



On April 22, approximately 30 pilgrims visiting Rome were welcomed at the General Administration. They celebrated the Eucharist, toured the building and grounds, and shared a homemade pizza lunch on the terrace. The pilgrimage was organized by Marianist Mission, a work of the Province of the USA, and accompanied by Fr. Tim Kenney, SM, Assistant for Religious Life. The Community of the General Administration was grateful for the visit and congenial interaction during this visit!

Prayer on conclusion of the Third Session of the Second Vatican Council



O, Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, to you we recommend the entire Church and our ecumenical council!

You, auxilium Episcoporum, aid of bishops, protect and assist the bishops in their apostolic mission, and all those priests, Religious and laymen, who help them in their arduous work. You who were presented by your Son Himself, at the moment of His redeeming death, as Mother to His best-loved disciple, remember the Christian people who entrust themselves to you.

Remember all your sons; support their prayers to God, preserve their faith, strengthen their hope, increase their charity.

Remember those who are in tribulation, in need, in danger and particularly those who suffer persecution and who are in prison because of their faith. For these, O Virgin, obtain fortitude and hasten the desired day of just freedom. Look with benign eyes on our separate brothers and condescend to unite us, you who brought forth Christ as a bridge of unity between God and men. O, temple of light without shadow and without blemish, intercede with your only Son, mediator of our reconciliation with the Father (cf. Rom. 5, 11) that He may have mercy on our shortcomings and may dispel any difference between us, giving us the joy of loving.

To your Immaculate Heart, O Mary, we finally recommend the entire human race. Lead it to the knowledge of the sole and true Savior, Jesus Christ; protect it from the scourges provoked by sin, give to the entire world peace in truth, in justice, in liberty and in love.

And let the entire Church, by celebrating this great ecumenical assembly, raise to the God of mercy the majestic hymn of praise and thanksgiving, the hymn of joy and of exultation, because the Lord has worked great things through you, O clement, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Saint Paul VI, November 21, 1964.

G.A. Communications recently sent

- **Death Notice. N° 5-6**
 - **May 20: *Communication no.7***, in three languages, to the members of the Unit Councils from the Preparatory Commission of the General Chapter.
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