

## ▶ 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!

Another instrument in the province’s new way of functioning, the *Council of the Province*, began operating this month. Life in the province is not all work, we hear from the Netherlands about a relaxing excursion. People smuggling and trafficking is recognised by the Vatican as the greatest human rights issue of our day. We hear from Pascal Boidin about his visit to the so-called Calais “jungle”. Life gets underway in the formation house in Dublin.

We thank all those who contributed this month and we remind you, news is always welcome.

Joaquín Fernández and Martin McAnaney

### Council of the Province (CoP), Paris, 22-23 November

This meeting was historic because it was the first of its kind under the new Statutes. Formally the group was composed of the provincial administration and regional superiors, and now regionals are replaced by representatives chosen by local superiors in each country.

The agenda was how to make the most of the coming weeks to prepare for the provincial chapter (January 2017). Exchanges included a sharing of impressions about the functioning of the new structures, a consideration of both the broader perspective of the Society of Mary through feedback from the Annual Review Consultation meeting (Rome, 20-28 September) and the contemporary context in Europe and the province.

Naturally the CoP considered the draft agenda for the chapter (circulated last May), but it mostly concentrated on enhancing the preparations “while leaving room for the spontaneity of the chapter!” The meeting proved to be a rich exchange of perspectives and highlighted the challenge of communication in the new structure in order to enrich discernment and consultation.



### Prayer intention

The Society too is “surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses” inviting us to “persevere in the race set before us” (Heb 12:1). We pray that the fidelity shown by our brothers and martyrs, witnesses of the faith until death, may strengthen our fidelity today and that their intercession may sustain our efforts to serve the Church and the people of the society in which we live.



## The house of formation, *An Turas*, Dublin, Ireland

*An Turas* means 'the journey' in the Irish language. This is the name given by the first Marist community to occupy 181 South Circular Road in Dublin. The former family home has reopened as the formation house for Marists in Europe. The three confreres who moved in, all agreed *An Turas* was a most appropriate name for the new formation adventure. They are Tom Kouijzer (NL), David Corrigan (Ire) and Paul Walsh (Ire). While living separately from the confreres based in the nearby presbytery of St Teresa's, Donore Avenue, they form one religious community with John O'Gara (UK), superior, and Cormac McNamara (Ire), parish priest. Tom is following a 2-year Master's programme in Pastoral theology at Maynooth outside Dublin, and his pastoral insertion is with his confreres in St Teresa's parish. David is curate in the parish. Paul's role is primarily as the one responsible for initial formation in the European province. *An Turas's* looks forward to welcoming confreres over the coming years, and the community relies on the prayers and support of everyone to carry out the mission entrusted to them.

## Hulst staff excursion, the Netherlands, 14 October



The 5 lay staff members working for the Marist Fathers at the community of Hulst decided to take a day-trip to Mechelen, a city not far from Antwerp.

Of course, a couple of the confreres also joined them, Joop Reurs (NL) and Piet van der Aart (NL). It was an opportunity for all of them associated with the same house, to enjoy each other's company in a relaxed setting while not focusing on jobs to be done! They report that it gave them new energy to go forward and fostered a good spirit. We could all try this!



## The cause is introduced for the beatification of 5 Spanish Marist martyrs, the Cathedral of Alcalá de Henares, Spain, 12 November

Of the 9 Marists martyred in 1936, 5 were shot near Alcalá de Henares, Madrid. Their names are in a first group of 44 martyrs - lay people, diocesan priests, religious and a contemplative nun - whose causes were introduced by the bishop of the diocese. The eldest was 42 and the youngest 24. As well as the members of the committee instructing the cause, the bishop introduced witnesses who will be called to testify in the coming months. Fr. Angel Antón (Esp) will be the witness to present statements and relevant documents of the Marist martyrs.



## Calais "Jungle", some reflections, 11 October

Pascal Boidin writes, "I spent a day at Calais with François Rolland, a young man and a former parishioner of NDF. He completed his studies in London in June and since then he has been on placement in Calais with Secours Catholique, the Catholic social services. I went there a few days before the "jungle" was dismantled. I was struck by just how young the migrants were – most of the men were in their twenties, and there were many minors. Women and children also quite numerous, live in tents separated from the men and so were not so visible. Shops, grocery stores and also places of worship, were to be seen. The Eritreans built a church, one of the last buildings to be destroyed. The theme of the icon offered for meditation there was "I stand at the door and knock" (Ap: 3.20). Dismantling the "jungle" has not solved the migration crisis in Europe. Men, women and children continue to flee war or poverty, and are knocking at our door. What will be our