

## ▶ 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...”



### Tell your story!

Pope Francis writes in the opening paragraphs of *Evangelii Gaudium*, “I can say that the most beautiful and natural expressions of joy which I have seen in my life were in poor people who had little to hold on to” (EG 7). When they met in Paris (May 6th – 7th), the Solidarity Committee were inspired by the Pope’s choice to speak about his personal experience of solidarity with disadvantaged people. This month the committee invited all confreres to reflect on their personal engagement in solidarity ministry, an element central to the Marist vocation (C.12). They further asked confrères to write the story of their experiences and share them with the committee who will find ways to circulate the narratives more widely to inspire others, especially future generations of Marists! Material on solidarity ministry will be available via a blog: [maristeuropesolidarity.eu](http://maristeuropesolidarity.eu)



### GREETINGS FROM PARIS!

An important text requested by the provincial chapter, is published this month. Important questions were addressed by the formation and solidarity committees and one of them launches a major project. We offer a web-link to follow some interesting reflections of one of the province’s students. The mandate of the current provincial council comes to an end.

Joaquín Fernández &  
Martin McAnaney

### Prayer Intentions



“God’s presence accompanies the sincere efforts of individuals and groups to find encouragement and meaning in their lives. He dwells among them, fostering solidarity, fraternity, and the desire for goodness, truth and justice” (*Evangelii Gaudium* 71). You are invited to pray that Marists in Europe may recognise God’s presence in all those around us and to whom we are sent. We pray also that Alan Williams (Eng), to be ordained Bishop of Brentwood (London) July 1<sup>st</sup>, will receive the graces he needs to embrace the challenge of evangelisation in his new responsibilities and ministry.

## Provincial Council (PC) meeting, Paris May 12th – 14th

The current provincial council met for the final time this month. Besides routine items, it discussed proposals from the solidarity committee, plans for the replacement of Dominique Villebrun (education promoter) who retires next month, the future governance of the French region and it agreed guidelines for the legislation committee.

The mandates as councillors of Jean-Marie Bloqueau (Fr) and Joaquin Fernandez (Esp) come to an end on May 31st and they are replaced by Pascal Boidin (Fr) and Marcello Pregno (It). At the PC meeting in June, the former and new councillors together will review the work of the last years and begin to think about the future.

## Formation Committee meet in Paris, May 5th



The members are Jean Marie Bloqueau (Fr), Tom Dalzell (Ir), Alois Greiler (De), Martin McAnaney (PA) and Sr Leontine Shannon (English province of the Sisters of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary). At its 4th meeting the committee considered progress for the 4 students from the province and that of possible candidates. It addressed also the issues of how to create links between local and International formation programmes in order to have a more consistent process in the Society of Mary, and the need for a formation community in the European province.



## Tom Kouijzer (NI) shares some reflections

“... Mary is concerned for us and aware of the challenges we face and that she is involved in facing them with her presence and love.” Tom, a Marist student in Rome, contributes some thoughts to the Marist Youth International blog on the text “The Age of Mary”, which inspired him on his Marist journey:

<http://bit.ly/TKAgeofMary>

## A Directory for Marist confrères published this month

“Taking its responsibility for promoting Marist laity and fostering collaboration, the Province lets itself be guided by a Provincial Directory...” A team comprised of Jan Hulshof (NI), Bernard Bourtot (Fr) and Rory Mulligan (NI in Norway) drafted a text for the Directory which is addressed to professed religious. They worked in consultation with Michel Macquet, representing the European Coordination of Lay Marists, and the confrères who liaise with laity in the different regions of the province. It is intended to support our shared concern to promote all vocations, in particular vocations to live as Lay Marists. The French and English publications appeared this month and are in the process of being circulated. Other language versions will follow in the near future. PFD versions available: French [bit.ly/smlayreFR](http://bit.ly/smlayreFR); English [bit.ly/smlayreEN](http://bit.ly/smlayreEN)

## Annual National Assembly of Marist Laity, Castiglion Fiorentino, Italy, May 1st and 2nd

On Saturday 3rd after a successful assembly, they celebrated the engagement of ten new members entering the Marist Family. The ten women who live in Reggio Calabria, South of Italy, started their formation in January 2013. It was a pity that 3 of them could not travel to Castiglione for family reasons. Congratulations to all concerned!



## Obituary

Tom Bambrick (Ire. & Oc.) 16.05.2014