

► 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 AND DAVAO!

The students of the province form the main focus of news this month. Undoubtedly the major event for the Society of Mary this month has been the profession ceremony marking the conclusion of the novitiate in Eden, the Philippines. The fact that the European province had a novice participating makes it especially significant for us. Rome was the site of another gathering of students from the province to make their contribution to the ongoing discernment about the future of Marist presence in Europe. The prayer intention also directs us towards the Philippines. We continue to welcome contributions from the province so please bring us up-to-date with events. We wish you all every blessing in 2015!

Joaquín Fernández & Martin McAnaney

Meeting of the European Marist students, Monteverde, Rome, 17-18 January

What will the future presence of the Marist Fathers and Brothers in Europe look like in the future? This was the main question explored at a session in Rome by the three students, Daniel Fernandez (Esp), Tom Kouijzer (NL) and Thilo Saft (Ger), along with two members of the provincial administration, Hubert Bonnet-Eymard and Martin McAnaney. The session formed another phase in the on-going discernment about the future mission and structure of the province which is taking place amongst confreres, and in the wider Society of Mary. The students represent 2 generations with their own unique perspectives on this question and their perspectives form an essential part of the process of discernment. Their conversations ranged from “dreams”, qualities of the presences of Marists in the future, to initiatives which could help us move from the current context and reality, and so build the desired future. A major task certainly which concerns all the members of the province but the younger generations will be the ones who live with the consequences of our decisions today. The picture emerging confirms the general direction of the mission of the province and the challenges we face as a group of Marists in Europe today. There were no immediate decisions to be taken during the session, however it makes a contribution to the process leading to new Statutes for the province. The conclusion of all was that it was very worthwhile and for the students to meet together, was a value in itself.



The profession of Nikolai Massen (NL) at Eden, Davao, the Philippines, 25 January 2015

For over a year now many of you have been praying for Nikolai and the 2014-15 Marist novitiate group at Eden. Finally the big day of their profession arrived. Our European novice from Norway joined his 9 fellow novices from 5 different countries in the noviciate chapel during a Eucharistic celebration at 10h30, to commit himself to the three vows in the Society of Mary. English was used as the common language yet during the liturgy 6 languages were heard including Cebuano, a local language. They were joined by over 100 well-wishers including members of the Marist family, other religious congregations, members of the host-families which welcomed the novices at times during the programme, and neighbours. The music for the liturgy also reflected the international, multicultural

group and the novices provided an impressive range of musical skills. Next year's group of 10 novices which begins on February 1st, also attended and helped with the celebrations. Martin McAnaney (PA) was there on behalf of the European province and had the privilege of formally representing the Society of Mary receiving the vows of the whole group. After the Mass there was an opportunity for a formal photograph at the Grotto newly built by the novices in the course of the year. This was followed by a very animated meal in the grounds of the community, a genuinely family event. One Marist Father remarked that he could not remember the last time he was at a gathering which included 20 young men interested in dedicating their lives to living the Marist charism in the Society of Mary! It was truly a remarkable gathering for all concerned. We continue to pray for the professed Marists as they take the next step in their lives and for the new group of novices as they start.



Prayer Intentions

As Marists our attention this month has been focused on the Philippines. We remember in our prayer the work of Marists in that country and one of the ways the province supports those efforts. Catholic University School (CUS), a Marist school in Dublin, Ireland, has a "CUS Philippines project". The idea arose from a desire to link the school (www.cus.ie) with the Marist missions in the Philippines (<http://on.fb.me/1v8870k>). The first group of pupils and teachers went there in October

2007 and the tradition has continued every year since. The benefits of the project are many, and include providing practical support, usually for education initiatives with Marist connections and offering pupils and the staff direct experience of contact with people who live with material poverty. It is a valued aspect of the life of the pupils, both current and past. The constant feedback from pupils, staff and parents is that they receive far more than they give. Please pray for the people served by the CUS Philippines project, the Marist family communities and their friends in the Philippines, and the pupils, parents and staff of CUS.



Obituary
Philippe Dealberto (FR) 29.01.2015

