

THE COUNCIL OF THE PROVINCE MET AT LA NEYLIÈRE ON 24-26 MARCH

Representatives from almost all the units were present along with the Provincial and Council. The aim was to explore the purpose and vision for communities and confreres in communities without institutional apostolic commitments and to help those involved in animating and administering such communities or 'Residences', as they were called in Fr. Colin's time.



We had two 'inputs' – one from a French diocesan priest, Fr. Bernard Colombe, who has a life-long association with the Marists and another from Bernice Reintjens, a married Dutch laywoman, who administers several retired religious communities in Holland.

Fr. Colombe used the symbol of Nazareth – as a place of presence and salvation – to explore the contemplative dimension of Marist religious life. If Marists have been apostolically active for much of their lives, now that they have 'retired' it is an opportunity to develop the contemplative dimension of their Marist vocation. The ministry of intercession in the Province is an expression of this. **'Residences' can be a 'powerhouse of prayer' for the mission of the Society.** Senior confreres' fidelity to community prayer is inspiring for the 'younger' or more active confreres.

In short, the vocation and mission of senior confreres do not cease with the lessening of their pastoral ministry. Bernice spoke about how inspiring leadership comes from service rather than from authority. Recognising the importance of roles and boundaries (who is responsible for what?) leads to good decisions. As far as possible it is important to include confreres in decision-making. **Communication is key, while regular community meetings can facilitate ownership of decisions.**

We also heard feedback from previous consultations with our lay managers and other employees in the different national units. Overall, our lay colleagues feel very much part of our Marist family. They see their work as more than a 'job'. They appreciate regular review meetings and feedback. The relationship with the local superior is crucial and at times there can be confusion as to who makes certain decisions: the lay person or the canonical Marist. The fine atmosphere of the days was due not only to the hospitality and cuisine at La Neylière but also to the tremendous behind-the-scenes work of Edwin McCallion and Martin McAnaney who devised the process, and to Odile and the team of interpreters all of whom ensured the meeting went smoothly.

Declan Marmion, sm

DEAR MARIST FRIENDS

People have often quoted Pope Francis's assertion that we do not just live in a time of change but in a change of time. President

Trump's dramatic upending of the world order brings this home in a new way. We must face new threats but also new opportunities. One such opportunity is to make the European Province more and more a communion for mission by exploiting what contemporary technology has to offer: the recently launched of the new Provincial Website

www.maristeurope.eu,

great and hard work coming from the Provincial Communications Committee. Happy Easter!

Kevin Duffy, sm

PRAYER INTENTION:

for the work of the Provincial Communications Committee



MARISTS IN EDUCATION AT LA NEYLIÈRE, MARCH 2025

Around a hundred Marists in education gathered at La Neylière for its annual session from 20 to 22 March 2025 on the theme of 'Bearers of Hope'. This meeting is intended to be a time for renewal, for fraternal reflection and for reflection to shed light on our missions. The programme therefore includes times for prayer, socialising and relaxation, visits, discussions and talks on the chosen theme.

This year, our speakers were Father Henri-Jérôme Gagey, former director of the Institut Théologique d'Auvergne and currently a priest in a parish in Créteil, and Philippe Revello, head of sixth form at the Lycée de Meyzieu. The quality of the presentations and the discussions that they stimulated mean that we can return to our homes with the desire to propose *'a new evangelisation, capable of making itself heard in this world'* as Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI) put it.

Vincent LANGLOIS, French Tutelle Delegate

THE THORPE CUP



Twelve Marist network of educational establishments in Europe came together (on 24-25 March) to take part in a 5-a-side football competition organised this year by Ste Marie Lyon La Solitude. The Thorpe Cup has its origins in England. In the 1940s there were two Marist schools in the northeast of England in Hull and Middlesbrough. An annual football competition between them was a popular fixture on the school calendar. A local businessman 'Mr. Thorpe' sponsored a trophy for the winning team. Over the years the competition expanded to include all the Marist schools

in England. The cup was then repurposed in 2022 for a 5 a side network tournament. This is the second Thorpe Cup 5 a side football competition. *The winning team was Ste Marie Lyon La Verpillière.* They retained the trophy they won during the first Thorpe Cup 5 a side in 2022. M. Marc Bouchacourt Head of Establishment Ste Marie Lyon presented the prizes and P. Roger Lordong, sm presented the cup on behalf of the Marist Fathers in Europe.

Frank Dowling, Provincial Delegate for Education

WE ARE AN EASTER PEOPLE, AND ALLELUIA IS OUR SONG!

Pascal Boidin, sm told us on the phone that during Easter night ten adults will be baptized in Notre Dame de France, three men from Congo and seven young adults from London, students and young professionals. In addition, 7 adults and 3 teenagers will be confirmed. It won't be breaking news for the Times, but it is news, nonetheless. Now that so many people feel that they are being carried away in a downward spiral of gloomy news and dark prospects, *these people receiving baptism and confirmation are being lifted in an upward movement of light and hope, with Christ, the Living One.* Our confreres Maciu Jimmy from Fiji and Alex Junior Tella Nembot from Cameroon, when on March 25 they made their profession in Davao, also associated their lives with Christ's death and resurrection. By taking the vows, they gave an extra push to the upward path of their lives, which began with their baptism: "a daily dying and rising with Christ" (Const. 94). Our sisters and brothers receiving baptism and confirmation, and our newly professed confreres recall the joyful cry of John Paul II in Adelaide (1986): *"We are An Easter People, and Alleluia is our song!"*

Jan Hulshof, sm