



EURO info



To be more closely united, work more creatively, and act in greater solidarity we form one province beyond national limitations...

CHAPLAINCY TO PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED, FRANCE

Roger Lordong (Fr) writes, “Since 1974, the year of my novitiate, I have been discovering this world I had not known. I have worked side by side with these people who give me more than I give them. It is their joy at being alive that has marked me and continues to do so every single day. They have helped me to advance in my Marist vocation. For several years, I have been a member of the Association “*Grillons et Cigales*” (“Crickets and Cicadas” - grillonsetcigales.org). It was founded in Lyon by a blind priest over 80 years ago. He wished to help his blind brothers and sisters find their place in society and in the Church. He showed me the way to do this, and every day I try to be faithful to this mission. It has been a special joy for me to accompany young people and adults on their annual holiday... A few years ago, I was asked to be the national chaplain of “*Voir Ensemble*”, (“*See Together*” - voirensemble.asso.fr), a Catholic movement for the blind and visually impaired. This association has more than 3,000 members in all the dioceses of France. We manage 36 institutions and services... This year our theme is “**Fraternity and Solidarity**”. We have published a booklet to allow each group to reflect, pray and meditate on the theme. Every year we organize a national pilgrimage to Lourdes for 300 to 400 people... We also have an International Solidarity Group (ISC) which links with our blind brothers and sisters in Africa. Our community of Ste Foy, Lyon, regularly welcomes blind people to Sunday Mass and to other celebrations. This mission of our community corresponds well to the apostolate to the poorest.”

(Full text in Fr & En: www.bit.ly/2NfroJa)



GREETINGS FROM PARIS!

A confrere in France shares about his pastoral work amongst people who are blind.

A pilgrim offers his perspective on the Sahagún project in Spain.

A new PowerPoint presentation on the Marist spirit is available in French and English.

A heartfelt thanks to all our contributors.

Francisco Chauwet and Martin McAnaney

AN AMERICAN LAY MARIST'S EXPERIENCE OF THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO PROJECT, SAHAGÚN, SPAIN

Michael Burns, English teacher in Marist School Atlanta, Georgia, USA, writes: “As soon as I walked in the door wearing my “Marist XC” T-shirt and said in Spanish, “Hola, mi nombre es Michael. Soy americano y Marista”, I was greeted like a friend: “Oh, you’re the Marist professor from the USA! Welcome! So glad you made it.” I had been at the Marist albergue for only 2 minutes and already I felt special... I soon saw how the other pilgrims were greeted as they entered. Everyone got the V.I.P. treatment! It was no surprise to see Marist hospitality in action. At 5 p.m., we filed into the large multipurpose front room. A long table was set with kettles for coffee and tea and all sorts of sweet and savoury snacks.



Fr Daniel (Fernández) welcomed everyone and invited us to have something to eat and drink. Pilgrims came from Spain, Alaska, France, China, South Korea, Poland, and England. We went around the circle sharing our stories. Some were heart-wrenching, such as the young Spanish woman who was walking the Camino in memory of her recently deceased father who had not finished the whole journey before his death. Some shared stories of just looking for adventure or the chance to get away from the craziness of daily life and to enjoy the simplicity of Camino life. Others told stories of overcoming horrible pain and blisters yet remaining determined to make it to Santiago. A young Chinese woman told in a hesitant voice about being a Christian missionary in China, a country not often hospitable to religion. We were all strangers, yet there was an openness of spirit and a shared sense of camaraderie among us. As others spoke, I thought how wonderful it was to have this forum to share. These are stories that we need to tell. We need to say them out loud. We need to be heard. There were probably 25 people at the evening Mass in the monastery’s small chapel. At the end of Mass, Fr Daniel went around the pilgrims and gave each of them a blessing. Once again, I felt special. We all did. The supper which followed was plentiful and eclectic: cheeses and cured meats, a few quiches, a casserole, home fries, baked carrots and broccoli, a salad, and, of course, bread and some wonderful Spanish red wine... Fr Daniel explained a bit about the Society of Mary and how he hoped the albergue was a way for Marists to put their values into action and serve the pilgrims as Mary would. As I shouldered my backpack the next



Just outside Sahagún: Monument marking the halfway point of Camino Frances. Just 400K to go!

day and wished “Buen Camino!” to the other pilgrims, I thought to myself, “These guys are doing it right. I can’t wait to tell the Marists and people back home about it.” The Camino, and the world, need more places like the Marist albergue. [For the full text (Eng) click: www.bit.ly/smbergssahag]

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION ON MARIST HISTORY AND SPIRITUALITY

Maristes en Education is an official Catholic Lay Association in France, with both lay and religious members. Its mission is to promote Marist values and spirit in the field of education. Its communication team recently created an attractive new PowerPoint presentation as a resource for transmitting our Marist heritage. *Maristes en Education* agreed to share this valuable resource through *EuroInfo*. To access the French version: www.bit.ly/lesmaristes2019 and the English version: www.bit.ly/sm2019pres



PRAYER INTENTION

for the Extraordinary Month of Mission:



Heavenly Father, when your only begotten Son Jesus Christ rose from the dead, he commissioned his followers to “go and make disciples of all nations”. Empower us by the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be courageous and zealous in bearing witness to the Gospel, so that the mission entrusted to the Church, may bring life and light to our world. Amen.