

What is the Spirit saying through the young?

Br. Emili Turú - Superior General
International Marist Youth Meeting
Buitrago, Spain - 15 August 2011

What is the Spirit saying through the Marist youth meeting for several days in Spain and representing many other thousands of youth of the world over?

Such is the question behind my attentive listening. Here is something I have learned from our youth:

- They feel themselves youth among many other youth; they are happy to live their Christian life as believers from the Marist charism; they wish to be involved in the construction of a Church with a Marial face.
- With grateful hearts, they love what they have received and are receiving within the framework of the Marist Institute, and precisely because of this, they desire that we encourage even more strongly the evangelization of children and young people, and that we give them all the place that belongs to them.
- They dream of a different world and they are seriously committed to its transformation, through education, pastoral accompaniment, defence of the rights of children, adolescents and youth, safeguarding the planet.
- They seemed to me fully international, valuing the richness of cultural diversity and communicating among themselves beyond the language barriers. In the simple and transparent sharing of their personal stories, they appreciated the sacred value of each person.
- They want to follow up this initiative of the Marist Institute; so they dream of an International Youth Team which could also promote and accompany similar ventures in the future.
- I listened to the message some of the youth delivered through their silence, reminding me that there are continents which should take place in the front ranks and be better heard in society, in the Church and among us. Briefly, what is the Spirit in train of telling me, what is It in train of telling us through the Marist youth?
- That the charism of Champagnat is alive and that it is the a source of inspiration for thousands of young people in the five continents; that the Marist mission is as relevant as it was 200 years ago. For this, “we must have brothers” and we must also have lay Marists – men and women – who wish to carry on the dream of Marcellin.
- That we must continue to promote and reinforce the evangelization of children and youth, especially through the MYM.



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- That we must accord children and young people all the place that belongs to them, so that they may be protagonists of their own story, and not simply passive recipients of our actions.
 - That our horizon, like that of Jesus, is the construction of the Kingdom of God, with clear signs of our preference for children and youth in a situation of marginalisation.
 - That we are invited to be more present among the young, welcoming them and listening to them: their energy, enthusiasm, joy... are a blessing for us all.
 - That the Marist Institute must be capable of setting out in search of new spaces of interior growth, at the side of so many young people thirsty for spirituality.
 - That, as Marists, it is demanded of us to present, in a particular manner, a special way of being Church, in Mary's way: the Pentecost community which, in the diversity of languages, is capable of making itself understood; an open, accepting community, which offers without imposing; which serves without looking for honours or recognition.
- Mary, our good and tender Mother, thank you for your discreet but efficacious presence, all through these days of grace. Blessed are the young people who, gathered here or elsewhere in the world, joyfully bear your name. May they be sowers of the good news around them, committed Christians and active citizens, as Champagnat desired.
- We place the Marist Institute in your hands, sure that you will continue to do everything among us. **MN**

Message of the Marist youth

International Marist Youth Meeting
Buitrago 14 August 2011

The Marist youth gathered at the International Meeting at Buitrago wish to give thanks for the opportunity of having lived this experience, in which we have all felt a single spirit, a Marist charism.

We are very grateful to the Marist Institute for accompanying us, for showing us what Jesus, Mary and Marcellin Champagnat can contribute to our lives, for betting on us as Marist agents, for believing in us as persons with multiple abilities.

We are grateful for the mission of the Institute and the model it lives and transmits, to be light and hope in the situations of each province, and for giving us a model in our

lives which helps us be persons and to improve the world at every turn.

Thanks for being an open institution: the family spirit, the welcome at any time, at any moment, make us really feel part of this family. This spirit has ensured that at this meeting we have been able to continue discovering and sharing the Marist charism.

Thanks for the opportunity of being able to share the faith with other young people, because this supports our hope of transforming the world according to the plan of Jesus.

Attentive to the reality of the world

We young people are part of the world and, as such, we wish to journey towards a new world, towards a new land. A land that can be at peace and where the disadvantaged can

be on equal terms, where we can arrive at understanding through healthier and more comprehensive relationships.

We believe that it is important to become familiar with the situation in which we live and its needs so as to find answers adapted to today's world.

We believe that solidarity is the way of expressing the presence of God in the world; Marcellin Champagnat knew how to read the situations of his time and to respond. In our times, we find ourselves confronted with a situation marked by the crisis of faith, injustice and degradation of the environment and we Marists must be prepared to face up to these situations through education.

We wish to foster a change of the structures of the world, the Church, the Marist Institute,... so that they are at the service of society, especially of the most disadvantaged – in material and spiritual terms.

Marist youth today

As Marist youth we feel a co-responsibility with the brothers and laity in the Marist mission.

We wish to transmit life –wherever we are– because it is the best that we know how to do. We want a living world, a world that feels, a world that loves: everything we do with sincere love is good for all.

We want to live and celebrate the faith without complexes, from the spirituality, being heralds of the Good News with courage and perseverance.

What we can offer the world is our witness, our love, our commitment and our own persons. We want to cultivate a global view, but without losing any of the vision we have of working in a local way. We want to develop this task as active agents in each of our countries, in all our movements, in the schools, the universities ... in order thus to actualize the experience of the Hermitage in the world of today.

To the brothers

We young people also need some changes to feel ourselves closer to you. Do not remain enclosed in the Marist sphere, help us to open ourselves to the Church together with you, in the world. Find with us an equilibrium within the Mission shared between



brothers and lay people, but do not lose your identity as brothers; we need you to keep on updating the institution of Marcellin in an accessible and humble form.

We young people need the brothers not to be afraid of expressing the word of God to us, the message of Jesus and the wit-

ness of your Marist life. It is really vital and crucial for you to be revolutionaries and brave men on this subject in the society in which we live. We possess a very clear Marist identity, but we also have the need to feel ourselves as Church, to be able to be the Marial face of the Church of today, to sense ourselves part and power of today's Church, open to the different charisms there are in the Church.

We share the concern for the future of the ageing of the brothers in certain parts of the Institute, which could lead to a withdrawal from the Mission. Encourage the presence of the brothers among the little children and the youth. Encourage the formation of the Marist spirit and the closeness of the brothers so as to foster Marist vocations, whether to the brothers or to the laity.

Concrete proposals

Make possible the creation of Marist youth committees at the local, provincial, regional and international levels to continue generating and sharing concerns and proposals related to the life of young people and the Marist Institute (possibility of taking part in the next Marist mission Assembly).



Commit ourselves to the defence of the rights of youth through participation in political institutions.

The new technologies are a good opportunity for making us feel part of a network, for facilitating contacts, for making us feel close to one another, for sharing, for proposing solutions to the situation of the youth in the world,... (chat, blog, social network,...)

Take as reference for our pastoral work the document: Evangelizers among youth.

We propose that cultural exchanges be promoted between provinces and at the regional level so that we can continue being aware that the reality we live in our communities is very different from what they live in other places. Youth meetings are necessary for sharing experiences of life and also for proposing exchanges to do youth work in a different situation, because this favours person-

al growth and is a Marist work at the same time. To be aware of other realities generates in us a commitment towards others and

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provides us with a global vision at the time of working on the challenging task of changing the world; this is the good news from this Meeting.

MN



Santa Teresa WYD Pilgrimage 2011

The following article was written by the seven young adults from Santa Teresa who went with Br Rod Thomson to the Holy Land and World Youth Day in Spain, August 5 to 25, 2011.

We'd like to start with one of our testimonies: "Before coming to WYD, some Sunday mornings I just stayed warm in bed and didn't go to Mass. But I started praying

some Rosaries in my room as I knew I was going to go soon. Certainly when I was on the Pilgrimage having Mass every day with the others was really good, with different music and different Priests, singing the Our Father for the others in our language, but sometimes over there I felt good and other times lonely. But overall the highlights for me were in the place where Jesus was born,

and in the cave where he was buried. A special feeling of calm and just like someone was standing with me. Very special, I'll never forget."

Maybe two or three times in our lives do we have a mountain-top experience. Certainly very few of us from Santa Teresa will have the experi-



In Jerusalem

ence again of travelling to the other side of the world in a three-week pilgrimage! In our journey to Israel and to Spain we met some amazing people, we saw some amazing things, and we certainly experienced our faith in new and enriching ways.

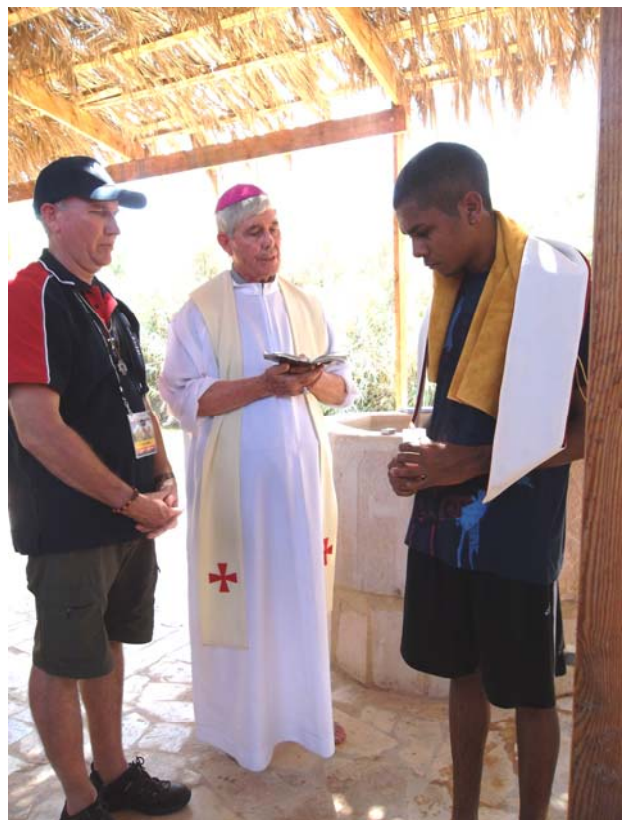
We floated on the Dead Sea. We journeyed around Galilee retracing Jesus' footsteps, and visited Peter's house in Capernaum where Jesus lived. We celebrated the Baptism of one of our fellow pilgrims, Stuart from Santa Teresa, in the exact same place where Jesus was baptised. We celebrated Mass in a boat on Lake Galilee – and danced a Jewish folk dance together! And Jerusalem



At the Sea of Galilee.

was amazing, as amongst all the places we went, we visited the church of the Holy Sepulchre and went inside the very tomb where Jesus was laid. And finally, in Bethlehem, we touched the very spot where Jesus was born.

But to add to these wonderful experiences, we journeyed to Madrid where after a week of activities with over two million young



Br Rod Thomson & Bishop Eugene Hurley with Stuart McGrath from Santa Teresa.

people from all over the world, we celebrated Mass with the Pope and our own Bishop Eugene concelebrating. Sleeping out under the stars the night before to prepare for the morning Mass was indeed memorable, as was the scorching 45 degree heat wave in the afternoon, followed by a 9pm freak storm that shook the stage area and stopped



David, Juan & Stuart with Bishop Eugene Hurley in morning Catechesis in Madrid.

the Pope's talk for 10 minutes (but he stayed there in his seat in the rain with the rest of us!!!).

A big thank you to all our sponsors, supporters, family and friends. Just to let you know that this is not the end but merely a beginning for the next stage of our faith journey as young adults at Santa Teresa. Our plan is to continue to be involved in supporting the Children's Liturgy once every fortnight at Sunday Mass, as well as setting up a Parish Young Adult group that will meet monthly. Plus we'll keep in contact with the Alice Springs group and our larger

Diocesan group with a Retreat we're organising on December 9 and 10. **MN**



Stuart & Juan from Santa with friends



Marist Young Adult Retreat at Ocean Grove

Maddie Hellings MYAM

From the 23rd-25th of September a group of young adult Marist's gathered at the brother's residence in Ocean Grove for a weekend full of laughter, sharing, formation and bonding. The weekend presented the opportunity for around 20 Marists; young lay and Brothers, to meet new people and deepen already existing friendships.

Sessions started on the Saturday morning and they covered a number of different topics. We heard from Hendrika Duivenvoorden, Br Pat Connell and Maddie Hellings about their time in Spain at the *International Gathering of Marist Youth and World Youth*



Day 2011. Conversations around scripture and faith development for young adults also took place which were incredibly honest and touching.

Mini Olympics on the beach bought out the competitive side in everyone, as we had races to build sand castles, built forts to hide behind as we played a beach version of dodge ball!

On Sunday we spent the morning planning the next moves for Marist Young Adult Ministry and what it means for the young adults who are involved. This presented many new ideas and a few challenges to overcome in 2012. After this Father Andy Hamilton, a Jesuit Priest who had spent the weekend with us, celebrated Mass for us,

which ended the weekend in a perfect way.

Overall the weekend was a fun-filled time

together, a time to reflect and learn. We all look forward to the next chapter for Marist Young Adult Ministry! **MN**



The Water Pistol



My five year old son squealed with delight when he opened his birthday present from his grandmother. It was a water pistol. He promptly ran to the sink to fill it.

"Mom," I said. "I'm surprised at you. Don't you remember how we used to drive you crazy with water pistols?"

My mom smiled and said, "Yes, I remember."

Express Lane

I was in the express lane at the store quietly fuming. Completely ignoring the sign, the woman ahead of me had slipped into the checkout line pushing a cart piled high with groceries. Imagine my delight when the cashier beckoned the woman to come forward, looked into the cart and asked sweetly, "So which six items would you like to buy?"