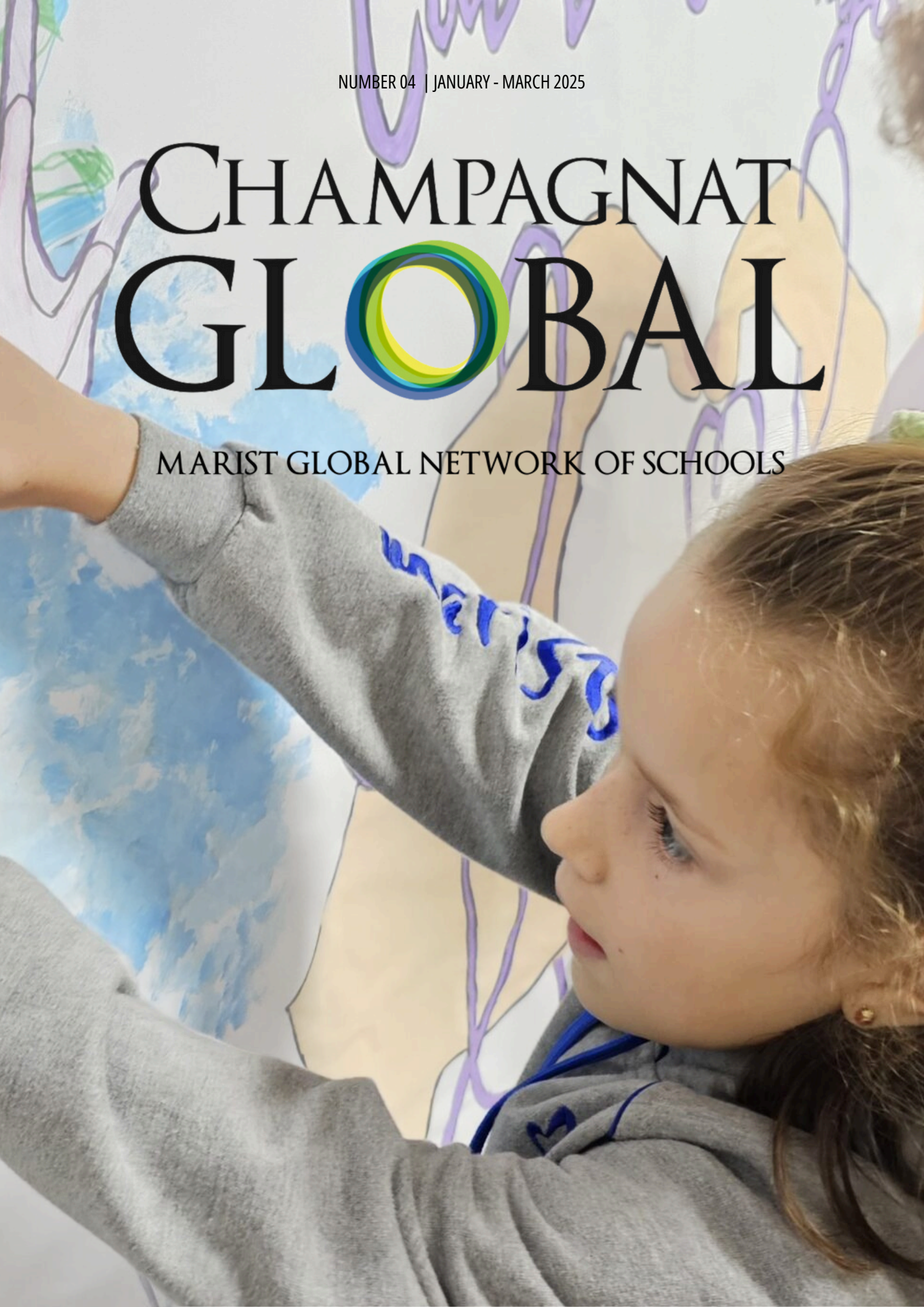


NUMBER 04 | JANUARY - MARCH 2025

CHAMPAGNAT GLOBAL

MARIST GLOBAL NETWORK OF SCHOOLS



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EDITORIAL

Dear Marist of Champagnat!

I am sure you are familiar with the famous phrase of our founder: **‘The spirit of a Marist school is the spirit of a family’**. Incorporating the ‘global’ and motivated by the ‘New Year, New Life’, we wanted to set ourselves a purpose for 2025... Just as last year we dedicated each issue to a Marist mission network, this time we want to take a tour of **all the regions with a Marist presence**. And dear reader... we want you to join us on this journey.

So, we kick off the first issue of the year by getting to know the region where the **cradle of our Institution** is located and where the **2nd Champagnat Global Meeting: EUROPE** took place.

If you think about Marist Europe, two key places will automatically come to mind: **L’Hermitage** (Lyon, France) and the **General House** (Rome, Italy). However, our mission goes much further. The **Marist Region of Europe (MRE)** is the administrative unit to which the **four Marist provinces of Europe** belong (Compostela, Ibérica, L’Hermitage and Mediterránea) and the District of Central-West Europe.

Spain, Portugal, Romania, France, Greece, Hungary, Algeria, Italy, Lebanon, Syria, Germany, Great Britain, Belgium, Ireland and the Netherlands make up MRE. Shall we get to know it?





‘The Champagnat Global Network is starting again from where it began.

Marcellin's dream is alive, the mission continues thanks to the passion of those who also believe in the network’.

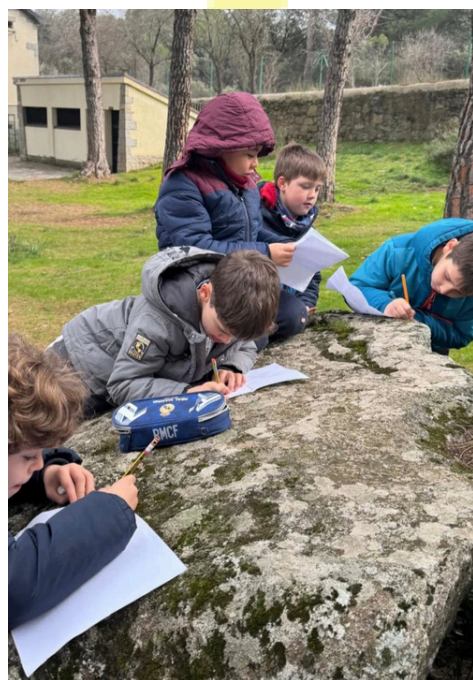
GESUALDO D'ALTERIO

Istituto Pio XII - Naples (Italy)

T E S T I M O N Y

MARIST REGION OF EUROPE, from 'a broad observation', at 'sunset'

Simply fascinating... This is how the Marist Mission is being carried out in the 21st century, and this is how we perceive it in this Marist Region of Europe (MRE). In this article, we begin by focusing on the two meanings of Europe that we find if we analyse the term itself. These two meanings of Europe are: **'wide observation'** and **'sunset'**. But what does that have to do with us? We explain below.



because in Europe we find ourselves at a moment in which precisely, in that 'twilight', from the maturity acquired, from sitting down to dinner, like the disciples of Emmaus, with 'the unknown', but ready to share, like the bread that Jesus broke on that evening, we are working hard to help dawn break, as Brother Emili Turú, not many years ago, and we do it by **generating, accompanying and promoting 'Homes of Light'**, as our current Superior General, Br. Ernesto Sánchez, suggests to us in each Marist presence. We set off running, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, to tell you about it in this **special space of 'Champagnat Global'**, as those incredulous disciples did, even if it seems to be 'night-time' and things do not make sense.

In the expression 'broad observation', we see going, as they narrate in the Gospels, to the other side, to the unknown if necessary, if in this **we risk the vitality and viability of the Marist Mission and Life**, putting children and young people who need it most at the centre.

Both expressions could not be more accurate at the present time. In our Region, for a long time now, Marist Life and Mission have been viewed on the basis of a **broad perspective**, which goes far beyond the local, **focusing on the networks and synergies** that we are called to generate as Marists of Champagnat, in all dimensions, not only of the Mission (education, pastoral care and solidarity), but also in the charismatic dimension of Marist Life. Everything is being done in a **supposed 'twilight'** of both Mission and Life, but this is not the case if we understand 'twilight' as



In the Marist Region of Europe, this is being done from a structural point of view, with a commitment to a **new reorganisation that will allow us to optimise our resources** at all levels in the region itself. There is a desire to **prioritise new institutional processes** that will allow for the viability and vitality of the charism. In the first place, the creation of the **district of West Central Europe**, already belonging to the province of L'Hermitage, and its fusion and coordination, has been promoted in order to respond to the challenge that the Mission proposes in that area of the Marist Region of Europe. Secondly, after much reflection and prayer too, the need has been seen to generate a **new Marist province** emerging from the confluence of the three existing ones of Compostela, Iberica and Mediterranea. **How much richness**, in Marist, is this new province also called upon to generate! This process began on 1 September 2024 and is expected to be completed in 2028. And thirdly, finally, in honour of the meaning of Europe as 'broad observation', we continue to be committed to a **dynamic of coordination and accompaniment** from the regional reality, as a shared reality that continues to unite us in order to be that all One, which the Lord asks of us in Jn 17:21.

If you have reached this point in the reading, you are surely thinking, as people in Europe are thinking, that Marist Mission and Life are at an **EXCITING moment**.

Be warned! It is not an easy moment, we cannot be innocent and we are not, because it is full of difficulties that come from outside the institution, and sometimes also from within, but one feels that throughout the process it is the Spirit that pushes and that, faced with a reality that could seem to be one of 'sunset', in the end, we are in a **reality of recreation**, of taking a step forward, even, we would dare to say, in a very vocational step/moment, probably not expressed as in the past, with a greater number of

Brothers (which hopefully will happen), but there are committed responses from many Christians who are seeing in the Marist charism the vehicle for **realising their following of Jesus**, and for attending to the realities of so many children and young people who need us in the 21st century, expressing these commitments in different ways.

And from the 'broad perspective' with which we define Europe, we can understand much better the **challenges and issues** to which our Region is called to respond. Clearly, we are faced with the challenge of having agents for this mission, as aligned as possible with it, at a time of a decrease in Marist religious vocations but an **expansion of projects in the Marist Mission**. To achieve this, it will be essential to work in depth on our **Marist Youth Ministry (MYM) movements**, coordinated with the Institute's own MYM Network. The groups that belong to the MYM are the Marcha Groups, Marist Life Groups (GVX), Marist Scouts, Fajmacor, etc. They are clearly a privileged space from where they can make an invitation explicitly Christian



and Marist vocational training, and where it will be possible to go deeper into what God is asking of us, with some of them even seeing Marist life as something that could shape their lives. Alongside this, it will be essential to have Human Resources teams made up of people who are familiar with everything related to this professional field, from a technical point of view, but who also have, as far as possible, a **significant experience of the charismatic**.

Our Human Resources are called to be **authentic 'Divine' Resources**, since it will be these, who are selected as agents of the Marist Mission, together with the vocations of Brothers that continue to be given, that will increase the likelihood that God will come to be experienced in so many actions by our children and young people, whether in **schools, social projects and universities**. Communication between these teams and those whose explicit mission is Marist Life will be essential. Together they will be able to generate training and support resources that enable us to deepen our charism and our mission.

Another challenge, thinking about our Marist Mission, is the **generation of initiatives and formative experiences** that enhance leadership in our Marist Region of Europe (MRE), as defined by the Institute: service-minded, prophetic, qualified and happy. It can generate a lot of commitment to the Marist Mission.

We are already referring to it implicitly in this text and it is nothing new for our Region, as we have been working on it for many years now, and the fact is that another challenge is formation, but taking into account today's demands in terms of Mission. We are about to finish the latest **General Design of Marist Formation (DGFM)**, which will take place in 2026. That being the case, we are preparing the ground to generate the new design that Europe needs to attend to the realities of formal education, pastoral and solidarity, and hence the commitment of the Regional Council (a union of Provincials and companions) to this action in view of the mission, such as formation, maintaining the structure that allows its management and its implementation, such as the MRE (FCE) monitoring and coordination team, which has among its functions, everything related to training.

In this area of training, at MRE we also have the challenge, always thinking about the Mission, of **attending more and better to children and young people**, and doing so by walking alongside our Marist university in Europe, the Cardenal Cisneros University Centre (CUCC) in Alcalá de Henares; together with the Institute of Marist Studies, located at the Pontifical University of Salamanca, and hand in hand with it, coordinated with the Higher Education Network of our Marist Institute; linked to other European reflection groups and commissions, such as Erasmus +, Affective-Sexual Education, etc.; and in connection with other training spaces such as the San Pío X Institute of the La Salle University in Aravaca (Madrid), which **will allow us to train many Marist teachers in Religious Sciences**, together with other congregations that we have invited. As an example of initiatives that go hand in hand with action in the mission and the university in Europe, we now have underway the **project of training through Microcredentials** and also that of research (observatory of Marist childhood for Europe), at the CUCC, on the rights of children and their participation, both led by those responsible for solidarity in each province and the MRE, and wanting to work together with PUCRS in this area and the **observatory of youth at that university**.

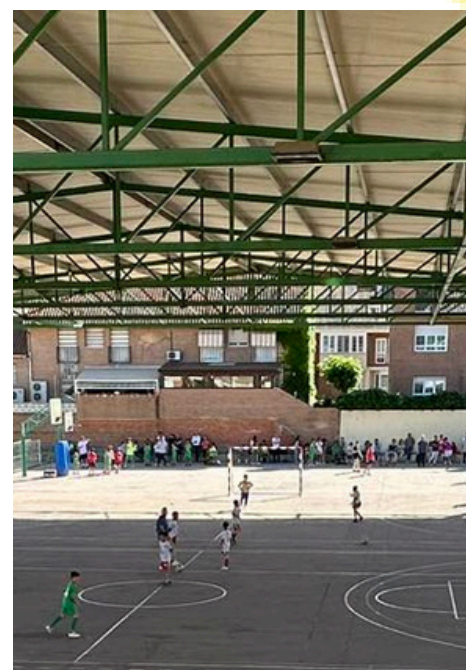
In the field of education, there are other fundamental challenges such as continuing to work on all aspects of affective-sexual education, bringing this work to schools and social projects; the clarification of our Marist educational **model in the MRE**; the explanation and transmission of the documents In the footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat. Marist Educational Mission and Raise, give your opinion and participate, in coordination with the Secretariat of Education and Evangelisation (with this secretariat we also have the challenge of advancing coordinated); work on Artificial Intelligence and its application in the

classroom and in other contexts, sharing the path with the Global Champagnat Network; and a long etcetera of projects that are already underway and will be in the future.

Finally, we would like to put on record that there are projects, in this regional sphere, from the Marist Mission, which will continue with great vigour and these are the **work towards having a common educational motto** for all types of Marist works; the **pastoral task together with the young European Marists (EJEM)** and the **generation of a network with young adults** in Europe; training in topics for **better and greater attention to young people; collaborating proactively in the projects** derived from the Secretariat of Solidarity and Volunteering, such as the Focal Groups, for example; walking together with the communication and child protection networks in Europe; also accompanying everything related to the Marist laity. And all this, always in coordination and **working with Church institutions** such as the Spanish Episcopal Conference and those of other nationalities, if applicable; the Confederation of Religious of Spain and other nationalities; Catholic Schools

As I said, it's EXCITING, isn't it? And all because of the commitment, as Champagnat had, to, in the face of situations that could mean 'sunset', the end, the meaninglessness of Life, to make 'a broad observation' from God's point of view, that is to say, a **desire to see beyond and to bring Life**, where a priori there could only be limitation, an end... EXCITING, LOOKING BEYOND, AS THE MARIST REGION OF EUROPE.

José Antonio Rosa - MRE Coordinator



"IT'S HAPPENING"

Don't miss out on all the latest news from Champagnat Global, the global Marist network of schools. This term has been notable for various provincial meetings, training in A+S as well as the theatre production that a school in Venezuela is taking on tour around the country.

Meeting of the Boards of Directors of Chile's schools

From 6 to 9 January, the members of the **Executive Councils of the twelve Marist schools in the Chile Sector** and the Areas of Animation met in Limache, in the Valparaíso region. On this occasion, the directors were able to **learn about new planning and management methodologies** presented by Marcelo Cordeiro, strategic advisor to Maristas Brasil, the Provincial Plan and the Sectoral Annual Plan for 2025, among others.

The first day began with a prayer in memory of Brother Luis Carlos Gutiérrez (RIP). This was followed by the **welcome of the new directors** and Marcelo Cordeiro, strategic advisor to Maristas Brasil, who will be accompanying the work during this year. A message from our Provincial of Santa María de los Andes, Brother Pablo González, was then shared, followed by a few words from the Executive Secretary Manuel Llanos and the Mission Delegate Marcela Hormazábal.



After lunch, the directors took part in a Connection activity, in which they celebrated the fruits of their labour in recent years, and ended the afternoon with a retreat to **reflect on the past, present and future, led by the Area of Life**, with the slogan 'As Marists we walk in the footsteps of Champagnat', which was repeated at the end of each day.



On Tuesday, after a period of prayer, Brother Álvaro Sepúlveda, Vice-Provincial of Santa María de los Andes, gave a presentation on the **new Provincial Strategic Plan**, and then gave the floor to Marcelo Cordeiro, who, together with the Mission Delegate, spoke about the lessons learned along the way and the SOAR Matrix, a planning model that identifies strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results. In the afternoon, Marcelo, together with the Executive Secretary for Life and Mission, Manuel Llanos, presented the **BLUE evaluation model**, which helps to identify those that need to be eliminated, reduced, increased and created.

On Wednesday the 8th, after prayer, Marcelo presented again on the **OKR methodology**, which consists of a working method that orients the actions and efforts of a team towards common short- and medium-term objectives. After a break, Executive Secretary Manuel Llanos led two modules on the development and presentation of the Annual Sector Plan and the School Boards for 2025.

On Thursday, the final day began early with a presentation by Pedro Díaz, from the **Mission Sector on People Management**, along the lines of what provincial planning postulates.

Esteban Mena, pedagogical coordinator of the Marist School of Villa Alemana, said that **the meeting was encouraging**, 'because everything that has been raised with us regarding strategic planning and people management is very fertile ground for orienting what **Marist education implies** in terms of what the Province is asking of us'.

The headteacher of the Marist School in Curicó, Jessica Torres, for her part, assessed the changes that lie ahead: 'I am left with a lot of strength, a lot of hope that **the changes are always positive if well planned** and, above all, with the experience of people who are very enthusiastic about these changes. Faced with a new reality and new contexts, we have to make all the necessary changes and adjustments, with boldness and hope that everything will turn out well'.

Finally, the Mission Delegate, Marcela Hormazábal, emphasised that these CODIS mark a time of transition: 'We are finalising a strategic plan that **covers the period from 2020 to 2025**, and we are now embracing the strategic approach of the Santa María de los Andes Province, so the work has focused on that, on getting to know the tool we are going to use, but also on celebrating what we have achieved in the previous period. Now comes a new era, a new way of doing things, the directors welcomed it, it **was a very fraternal CODI, full of dialogue and family spirit**.

We would like to thank the members of the Boards of Directors of the twelve Marist schools in Chile for their enthusiastic participation and the members of the Sectoral Animation Areas and Provincial authorities for the organisation.

Joaquín Melli – head of communications Santa María de los Andes



Meeting of Marist Teachers in Valencia (Spain): Reflection and dialogue on a shared legacy

On 21 January, the teachers of the Marist school in Valencia (Spain) held their first meeting to work together and explore the message conveyed in the book '**In the footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat. A Marist Educational Mission**'. It was a moment around the same table and surrounded by Marist images and symbols, where through an enriching network we were able to talk, share, express emotions and have the opportunity to revitalise our commitment to Marist charism and spirituality.

Through our dialogues we were able to delve into what **it means to 'be Marist' in our time** and how we can live our vocation from a renewed perspective in the 19th century. We reflected on the changes that have taken place in the world, in the Church and in the Institution, which are relevant to Marist education today. It was clear that we have new challenges in our hands as Marist educators, just as Saint Marcellin did in his time, but his **example of courage and enterprise** is the flame that makes us adapt today to the new times, opening us up to the different realities and needs of our students.

One of the most enriching aspects of this meeting was the **opportunity to share our personal and professional experiences** and to connect not only with the essence of our educational mission, but also with each other as a community of educators. The spirituality and values that Marcellin bequeathed to us, such as simplicity, love of work and close presence, were strongly repeated in each dialogue.

We would like to thank everyone who made this meeting possible because through these moments as a family and as continuators of the **dream of Saint Marcellin**, we were able to continue promoting our path to becoming beacons of hope, renewing our commitment to moving forward with enthusiasm and faith, remaining faithful to our mission and to the legacy that Marcellin left us.



Eager to live and experience the next chapter, 'Following in the Footsteps of Saint Marcellin', we will continue to tell you about this adventure from the community in Valencia, where we feel the spirit of Saint Marcellin alive.

Amparo, Manolo y Beatriz – teachers Sagrado Corazón Valencia School

¿Sabéis que no voy a estudiar?: the theatre production by the students of E.T. Hno. Idelfonso Gutiérrez (Venezuela)

The play '¿Sabéis Que No Voy a Estudiar?' (Don't You Know I'm Not Going to Study?), written and directed by Brother Ángel González, premiered on 17 January in Maracaibo, Venezuela, after a year of hard work that included the **creation of the script, the preparation of the cast and multiple rehearsals.**



The narrative centres on the arrival of the Marist brothers in the city a century ago and the **fundamental role they played in helping a family** that was struggling to provide their children with a safe environment in which to study and achieve their dreams.

The play intertwines two stories that share a common goal: to **highlight the value of education and its transformative impact** on families. This performance is part of a series of activities organised to commemorate the Marist centenary in Venezuela, underlining the commitment to comprehensive, quality education for the country's children and young people.

The artistic group, made up of 20 students from the E.T. Hno. Idelfonso Gutiérrez, will continue its programme of performances, not only in Maracaibo, but also in other cities where the Marist order is present in the country.

Maristas Norandina Communication

Discover the piece

Educators from San Luis School and CEC Hno. Isla (Argentina) continue their training in Service-Learning

Organised by the Provincial Solidarity Team, within the framework of our Marist Mission, the Meeting on the active pedagogy of '**Service-Learning in Solidarity**' took place on 7 February in the city of La Plata (Argentina), marking the start of the new academic year.

In the form of a workshop, the attendees, as well as continuing to advance in their training, were able to begin to **build links and potential synergies for working together** in the planning of socio-community projects.

They also reflected on the role of Marist Educational Centres in the construction of a culture of peace, of transformative solidarity and of encounter.



The workshop gave them the chance to share some of the experiences of service-learning carried out in Marist centres and other institutions worldwide, motivating them to rethink their own projects and ask themselves: How can we include this pedagogy in the learning experiences and trajectories of our children and teenagers? What steps should we take? From what perspectives?

From this starting point, they were encouraged to think of concrete actions to begin developing the first projects integrated into their own workshops and/or curricular spaces, proactively joining in each action of the Reimagining Education process in which all Marists are committed to the pursuit of a true educational and social transformation.

Isabel Tresca – Coordinator of the Solidarity Animation Team and Liliana Ferreirós – Cruz del Sur Provincial Communication

DISCOVER OUR AGORÁ **A+S GROUP**



INTERVIEW



Kairoi: a time of
opportunity that endures
after almost 50 years

They defined Champagnat as 'a very loyal uncle', they sang to the Good Mother despite 'running out of voice' and they set Marcellin's spiritual testament to music.

To talk about Kairoi is to talk about some of the songs that have accompanied us in the Marist world generation after generation. The Greek origin of the word means 'a time of opportunity', a favourable time to transmit the values of the Gospel to young people, speaking to them in a new language and betting on an open Church.

It was in June 1979 when a group of young brothers recorded a cassette with 20 songs entitled 'Jesús Vive'. As a result of this work, the PPC publishing house contacted them and in October of that same year they released the album 'Jesús es el Señor' (with the PPC publishing house and its PAX record label).

Kairoi has been renewed throughout its history, currently the group no longer exists, but its work does. Retreats, communions or religious celebrations, there is the Marist melody that has travelled around the world. That 'time of opportunity' endures over the years. Proof of this is that any Marist student is able to follow the melody of 'Tú serás hoy Champagnat', applaud to the sound of 'María Música de Dios' and get emotional singing 'Buena Madre'.

From Champagnat Global we had the opportunity to talk to Brother Toni Torrelles, one of the founders of the musical group together with Brother Eladio Gallego and Brother Miquel Cubeles.

How did Kairoi come about? What role did each of you play in the group?

During our Marist training, a group of us, both students and brothers, with a creative musical sensibility, got together to work on the project 'Kairoi-Marist community'. At the same time, we came into contact with the Charismatic Renewal and we presented our first album, 'Jesús es Señor' (Jesus is Lord), commissioned by that spiritual movement.

Why did you decide to create Kairoi?

It was the possibility of collaborating on the various creations and presenting them in disc, cassette and CD format to the local Spanish Church: Kairoi (times of opportunity, of the presence of God).

What has Kairoi meant to your life?

A creative spiritual tension placed at the service of the Marist mission. A space for evangelisation shared with concerts and testimonies. An experience of synodality between brothers and lay people who have been part of the group at different stages.

How do you think your music has influenced the Marist schools?

I see that many of the messages we convey have accompanied the dynamics of Marist animation. Musically, we were always 'amateurs', but we knew when a melody could reach the generations of each stage travelled.

Why do you think it is necessary to study music at school?

Rather than 'studying' music, I would talk about 'practising' music: singing, dancing, creating, listening, performing... To feel the realities that surround us in a different way, the power of songs, the strength of music from all periods, the experience of doing it with others...

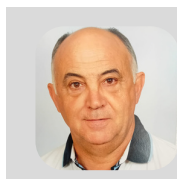
What advice would you give to students who want to get started in music?

I don't think I'm the best person to advise in this case, but I think that every 'little passion' should be developed as much as possible. Music is a good companion for growing as a person and as a spiritual being.

Discover the
discography
in his logo



MARIST TEACHER LIVES



Br. José Manuel García

‘There are teachers you remember all your life,’ says the phrase. The same ones that when you walk through the school corridors are surrounded by children. This is the case of Brother José Manuel García (better known as “Manolo”) at the San José del Parque School (Madrid, Spain).

If you happen to be in one of his playgrounds and you bump into Manolo, you will get to know the essence of this brother who is adored by pupils of all ages. Famous for being the school's official sweet supplier, he is also known among the little ones for his joke about ‘being the one who cooks the food in the canteen’. A secondary school social sciences teacher, his pupils (Adriana and Miguel) describe him as ‘friendly, a joker and a Burgos fan (football)’ who ‘likes us to work in silence’ and who ‘tries to get the best out of us, he forms very special bonds knowing how to be by our side at all times’.

Following in the footsteps of St Marcellin, Manolo did not have ‘a moment of decision to become a teacher’. As he explains to Champagnat Global: ‘When I decided to orient my life towards an institution like the Marists, it was implicit that I would dedicate myself to the education of children and young people (...) but I can assure you that I was greatly encouraged and inspired to see Brothers COMMITTED and HAPPY in their educational work’.

Once he began his career as a teacher, in the same school where he is currently working, he felt ‘comfortable and happy’. ‘For me, what is special compared to other professions is above all being able to carry out your mission with PEOPLE and not with things. To accompany them, to walk with them and to see, even if it is in the long term, that it is worth dedicating your life to it’, he says.



Manolo began teaching in 1978 but before that he participated in camp activities, catechesis, sports activities, etc. in places like Alcalá and Sigüenza. He has been a teacher in the schools of Chamberí, Zaragoza and San José del Parque, as well as a director in the schools of Guadalajara, Villalba and Talavera de la Reina.

Some of the moments he highlights are his classroom experiences in countries such as Bolivia, Colombia, Chile and Guatemala, claiming that ‘they are moments that remain etched in the heart’. The preparation for First Communions in the various schools that ‘are events that mark a time’ and the personal interviews with teachers, families and pupils from the management team are ‘rewarding moments’ for the most part.

When asked what advice he would give to any Marist teacher, Manolo is clear: ‘Don't forget what we have been told so many times, that to educate you have to love the children, that the figure and life of MARY should always be present in your classroom and in your life. Above all, that you should feel very happy among children and young people. Finally, and despite the fact that it is not very fashionable to say so, that he thinks that discipline, order and effort are not an end in themselves, but they ARE necessary as long as they are applied with affection and fairness. A child, a young person, knows when the teacher who sanctions or punishes them does so with affection or not’.

THE CORRESPONDENCE

BLUE MARISTS

Br. Georges Sabe

Dear Marists of Champagnat,

Good morning from the sky over Aleppo (Syria).

With this morning greeting, I usually share a few words, a daily prayer that I share with so many friends.

For the last three days, my prayer has been a plea to the Lord for PEACE in my country, Syria. We are at a very difficult time in the country's history, and it is a great pity that so many people are being killed by armed groups that nobody can control.

Since 8 December, there has been a complete change in the country's government. Armed groups have occupied the country and the president (Bashar al-Assad) has fled to Moscow.

These armed groups are governing us and we are suffering terrible acts of revenge against the population: massacres, beheadings, destruction of houses, robberies, kidnappings...

As if 14 years of war were not enough... The population is tired, without any illusions, losing hope, with no future of peace.

The Blue Marists, who have been here since 2012, building a project of solidarity with the people who are suffering most from the horrors of war and seeking to sow hope in spite of everything, continue to contribute to the birth of PEACE.

It is not easy, we ourselves are restless. The 160 volunteers who carry out 14 projects (development, education, emergencies and medication) and we need to have that inner strength that helps us to keep going.

Being a Marist of Champagnat today, in our reality, is a gift. Knowing that the global Marist family supports us and prays for us helps us.

Happy journey towards Easter.

AT SCHOOL

Discovering the world through the senses: An experience of empathy and inclusion at the Mexico Maternal, Preschool and Primary School



At the Mexico Maternal, Preschool and Primary Institute, we had an unforgettable day dedicated to **strengthening empathy, inclusion and respect for people with disabilities**. This activity took place in the SHALOM classroom, a space where our children voluntarily participated in a sensory experience that led them to discover the world from a different perspective.

An activity with blindfolds

The children blindfolded themselves and, guided by the teachers and colleagues from the SHALOM Group, explored their surroundings using only their senses of touch, hearing, taste and smell. This activity was designed to put them in the shoes of those who face the challenges of living with

without sight, helping them to better understand their reality and develop a greater sensitivity towards their needs.

The power of colours beyond sight

The activity was inspired by *El libro negro de los colores* (The black book of colours) by Menena Cottin and Rosana Faría (Ediciones Tecolote, 2006), a work that invites us to reflect on how blind people can 'see' colours through their other senses. Through this book, the children learned that Tomás, the protagonist, does not need to see colours to experience them: he perceives them through their smells, textures, sounds and flavours.

For example, the children experienced the freshness and aroma of mint to imagine green, or the sweet taste of chocolate to evoke brown. This activity not only immersed them in Tomás' sensory world, but also allowed them to reflect on how we perceive the world beyond sight.

Lessons in inclusion and mutual support

Through this activity, our students were able to understand how a blind person perceives and experiences everyday life, creating a space for dialogue and shared learning.



Beyond the sensory experience, the exercise strengthened fundamental values such as inclusion, respect and solidarity.

We are proud to know that this activity had a **profound impact on our students**, helping them to understand the importance of supporting and living together with empathy towards those who face different realities to their own. These kinds of experiences reflect our commitment as an educational community to educate well-rounded, sensitive people who are committed to others.

Fabian de Jesús Bárcenas Ramírez – SHALOM Group and teacher

This is how they celebrated Respect Day at the Istituto Fratelli Maristi Giugliano (Italy)

On the morning of 20 January 2025, at the **Istituto Fratelli Maristi in Giugliano in Campania**, in the province of Naples (Italy), on the occasion of Respect Day (established on 20 January by Law No. 70 of 2024), a celebration was organised for all the students, who gathered in the gymnasium for a **moment of conviviality and reflection**.

Before the celebration, **preparatory activities were carried out in all the classes** by tutors who, with educational dynamics, involved the students, making them **reflect on the issues of bullying and cyberbullying**. During these activities, each class used a recycled box to build part of a symbolic wall. On one side of each box were phrases representing insults and offences directed at the victims of bullying, while on the other side were words of encouragement and support.

The boxes made by the different classes were then joined together, forming a large wall in the centre of the gymnasium.



At first, the wall represented a **collection of horrors and ugliness**. During the celebration, secondary school pupils, holding hands and supporting each other, read the **negative phrases** out loud.

Then the older children invited the primary school children to join in. All together, holding hands, they **destroyed the wall and then rebuilt it**, transforming it into a symbolic work of beauty, with words of affection and solidarity. This gesture demonstrated how, by helping and supporting each other, it is possible to transform selfishness and cruelty into support, empathy and, above all, respect.

Giuliana Russo – representative of the antibullying team Istituto Fratelli Maristi Giugliano

Radio patio 983: the school radio station of the Marist College La Inmaculada in Valladolid (Spain)

From the 2022/2023 academic year, the Marist school La Inmaculada in Valladolid (Spain) has a new activity ready and waiting for anyone who wants to join: **the school radio station, Radio Patio 983**.

To revitalise the school, offer students an introduction to the wonderful world of radio and **give a new twist to the concept of communication**.

Making the voices of our students heard with philosophical and not-so-philosophical debates and getting to know the teachers and members of the educational community a little better, these are just some of the objectives of our school radio station: 'Radio Patio 983'.



We would particularly highlight the interviews with Beatriz García, our director, in which we were able to get to know her in a much deeper and different way than we would in a classroom, and the one we were able to do with Brother Santamarta, who passed away a few months after it was done, and which served as a **great message of Life and Marist Charism** that has been left for posterity.



We have also trained a group of teachers so that they too can continue with this idea and make it something much bigger than it is.

Francisco García Crespo – secondary and sixth form teacher

Did you know that you can listen to all our podcasts online? We hope you enjoy this enriching project as much as we do! **[CLICA AQUÍ](#)**

Maristes Sants – Les Corts de Barcelona (Spain) exchange programme with Germany

For the last 26 years, Maristes Sants-Les Corts in Barcelona (Spain) has been using this method to give its German students a first-hand experience of **total immersion** in the language.



The first 16 years took the form of a **one-week study trip, staying with German families** first in the Black Forest and then in Bavaria, with whom they shared breakfast and dinner, as well as Sundays. When not with them, the students took part in recreational and cultural activities in the area where they were staying.

With time, the opportunity arose to carry out a much more immersive activity to practise German and experience **how a teenager and their family** live in the city of Cologne: a school exchange with the Deutzer Gymnasium Schauterstraße secondary school. And this is the tenth consecutive year that it has been carried out (interrupted only by the pandemic).

During the exchange, the students stay with the families participating in the exchange and it is carried out in two parts: the **first in Cologne** in the week before the Christmas holidays, so that the students can enjoy and get to know the famous **Weihnachtsmärkte** (Christmas markets) of this city on the banks of the Rhine, as well as carry out multiple activities with their German exchange partners, such as visiting the Schokoladenmuseum (chocolate museum), the city of Bonn with its Christmas market and usually also the Museum of Contemporary German History, as well as the Memorial to the Victims of Nazism in the former building of the Gestapo headquarters in Cologne. There are also **various activities at the school** for students to interact in German and Spanish. The weekend is spent with host families, with whom they take part in the activities that each family is willing to offer them.

The second part takes place in Barcelona (usually a couple of weeks before Easter), where German families also host the German students for a week and **different leisure and cultural activities** are carried out to help them get to know us a little better. Among them, and depending on availability each year, we visit several of the following points of interest in the city: the Sagrada Família, the Parc Güell, the Museu del Disseny (Design Museum), the Castell de Monjuïc (Montjuïc Castle), the Museu Olímpic i de l'Esport (Olympic Museum), as well as different areas of the city such as Passeig de Gràcia, Les Rambles, El Born, Santa Maria del Mar, the Gothic Quarter, the Gòtic neighbourhood, Plaça Espanya, etc. There are also **activities at school to encourage interaction** between them in both languages. At the weekend, our host families organise activities for the students they are hosting.

In short, a great experience for all of us that we hope to be able to continue carrying out for a long time.

Enric Rubio – German teacher



Promoting psychological well-being in educational centres: an unquestionable challenge

One of the positive consequences (there are not many, by the way) of the experience during and after the pandemic has undoubtedly been the **visibility of mental health** in the social and political debate in our society. And, fortunately, it seems to have done so for good. With all the opportunities that this circumstance represents for the improvement of our social organisation and lifestyle, although not without risks in the case of acting in an inconsistent, partisan manner far removed from scientific evidence.

The failure of our society in terms of mental health and psychological well-being and, in particular, the segment of the population that takes in our **children, teenagers and young people**, has been in decline for a long time, profusely warned about by research for at least a generation, and based on very different variables that, logically, must have to do with the dizzying **changes suffered in a very short time** in areas of special relevance, all of them related to our lifestyle, in its many dimensions.



If there is one thing that we have been able to verify in recent years, it is that mental health is significantly affected by what goes on in our immediate surroundings (Luengo, 2022).

'Reflecting on our mental health means thinking, also rethinking, **what model of society we have created**, the value of equity as a response to vulnerability and inequalities, how we live, what the priorities are, what the principles and values are that guide everyday life, our routines and inertia. And the world we are leaving at the feet, and before the eyes, of our children and teenagers. Of course, the **commitment to improve our legal system** in terms of rights, especially for the most disadvantaged, is important. But it is not enough, it should not be enough

the dictates of the bulletins and official doctrine are enough for us. The 'north' towards which we are heading depends on how critical we are of what we are really doing with our lives and the present and future of childhood and adolescence'.

And, in this context, the role of the system and of educational centres takes on unparalleled relevance, an unquestionable challenge that we have to face decisively, managing in a consistent and courageous way the administration of values, objectives, times, spaces, contents and interpersonal relationships for a new century, for a school immersed in a changing society, in a changing world, with an uncertain future.



for our way of life and the very conception of the human being.

The practice of **improving psychological well-being** in educational communities must be guided by the perspective of what scientific evidence tells us about the **practice of effective actions**.

In the post 'Promoting psychological well-being in educational centres: the need to act with criteria' (Luengo, 2024), a series of essential ideas are proposed in the **configuration of programmes for the promotion of psychological well-being and the prevention of psychological disorders in educational centres**.



Namely:

- Interventions should be based on scientific evidence and incorporate key elements for the detection of adverse effects and consequences.
- Attention to the promotion of psychological well-being and the prevention of emotional maladjustment in children and adolescents (and young people) in schools is necessary. However, it is essential to be aware that unwanted iatrogenic effects may occur in some of the participants in the projects if the actions are not adjusted to tested programmes.
- Not everything we do to prevent inadequate mental health states with the populations we refer to is suitable for everyone who participates in this type of programme. The assessment of each context in which activities are applied is understood to be essential, especially with regard to boys and girls who are most at risk and most vulnerable.
- We should definitely consider the promotion of psychological well-being and the detection and prevention of emotional disorders from the pure 'talk-conference' models to be definitively outdated. It is the dialogic and participatory models that seem to provide the best answers to the need that makes them emerge.
- Working on these issues in educational centres requires planning that goes beyond episodic (internal and/or external) and essentially reactive action and is incorporated in a systemic and structural way into specific programmes, for the whole educational community, within the educational project of each centre and especially integrated with plans such as tutorial action, attention to diversity and the promotion of peaceful and democratic coexistence (and cyber-coexistence), the promotion of care and good treatment among people and the prevention of abuse and violence.

It is essential to work rigorously and with evidence. Otherwise, a series of actions can become a case of 'bang-bang' with little impact on the population we are acting on. 'It is not easy to respond to the demands of such a changing and "noisy" society. And educational centres find themselves under pressure not only to respond to new needs, but also (disproportionately) to resolve the risks they entail; but the prevention models in schools are not working and do not conform to the scientific evidence on their parameters of effectiveness. Good intentions are not enough, nor are isolated actions implemented as barely-connected add-ons to the projects of educational centres.

Programmes based on the idea that expert knowledge comes exclusively from outside, from others, who come in, present, cover a time and a space... And leave are not enough. (Luengo, 2025).

The time is now. The moment is now. In a context that favours life at school from a community perspective. Working for the improvement of the mental health of our children, adolescents and young people involves actively incorporating the combined action of other agents, teachers and families.



José Antonio Luengo Latorre
Dean-President
Official College of Psychology of Madrid



Marist School of Santa María de Tui

The Marist Brothers' presence in Tui officially began on 22 January 1909, the date on which the Bishop of the diocese, Don Valeriano Menéndez, published the Decree authorising the foundation. The founder of the Marist work in Tui was Brother Richard Giffon. Brothers Richard, Robustien and Luis Maxence (all French) found the ideal place for the new work they had planned in the 'Pousa das Costiñas'.

The Brothers, who had been staying at the Generosa guesthouse since their arrival in Tui, moved into the Pazo on 14 May 1909. The chosen Pazo, located in front of the current building to the west, was surrounded by vineyards and fields of rye and corn. From that moment until the present day, the house has undergone various phases of construction, as well as different functions related to the Marist mission.

Between 1922 and 1953, various extension works were undertaken, with constructions that were temporarily maintained until the construction of the current building was completed with three of its four wings. In 1948 the beautiful chapel-church was built, which is illuminated by a set of fourteen stained glass windows depicting the life of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, completing the fourth wing of the building, and in 1956 the statue of the Founder was erected on the occasion of his Beatification.





Throughout this period, the work of the Marist Brothers in Tui was fundamentally aimed at the training of their aspirants or seminarians, and the house saw numerous generations of young people who, from the first decades of the 20th century until 1995, received training, education and professional preparation (juniorate, novitiate, teacher training, etc.).

From 1933 to 1941 the house also housed a boarding school, whose pupils were officially enrolled at the Institute of Tui, and where they received their classes.

From 1952 to 1963 the 'Luis Vives Teacher Training College' was established and later it became the 'Santa María Secondary School'.

In 1996, the renovation of part of the house in which the community was centralised was completed, as well as part of the offices and staff room as they are today. In 2004, a complete renovation of the interior of the entire building was completed, adapting it to the needs of the school, just as the manor house was renovated and converted into the current youth hostel.

The latest stage began in 1996 when the house was given a new purpose, being approved as the 'Colegio Marista Santa María', in partnership with the Galician Regional Government for Infant, Primary and Secondary Education.

It began with the first and second years of primary school, with two classes that expanded the educational offer year after year, until secondary education was incorporated, as well as the infant stage, taking over the activity of the Sisters of Charity of the school of La Milagrosa.

Throughout the history of the Marist order in Tui, there has always been a very close relationship with the residents of Tui, becoming a significant place for the Historic City, as well as a significant presence and with links to other religious congregations present in Tui, the Council, the Bishopric, the Minor Seminary, various cultural and sports associations... being an open space beyond its specific function, which is why in 2009, on the 100th anniversary of the Marist presence in Tui, the Council awarded the Medal of the City of Tui to the Institution.

But in addition to what has to do with the local presence, the house in Tui has been, over time, a place of meeting and welcome for many Marist brothers, young people and educators from the Marist presences in the northwest of the province, enabling training, the development of youth ministry activities, moments of retreat... and becoming a place remembered as special and linked to significant personal experiences for many people.

On 1 September 2024, the community of brothers closed as a result of a restructuring process, but in every space and corner of the house and the grounds, but above all in the lay people and educators of the centre, there is the living testimony of the presence of the brothers, as well as a charism that is embodied in trying to bear witness to the Marian face of the Church in Tui from the Marista Santa María School, the MarCha youth movement, the meeting and accommodation centre and the relationship with the local area.

A place where we all belong



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