



# Marianist International Volunteers

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**The MIV establishes a Partenship**  
(between the Marianists of France and the Catholic Delegation for Cooperation)  
**MIV News from Bangladesh.**  
**New MIV placements: Congo and Brazil.**

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## Marianist International Volunteers

Dear friends  
of the Marianist Family,

In this first edition of the MIV Newsletter 2007 we are sharing the news of the activities that the MIV carried out in France during the first three months of this year, as well as some updates of our MIV volunteers who started their experience in 2006 and continue this year, like Jane (Malawi) in Bangladesh, and some of the new MIV volunteers 2007: Ciro (Colombia) in Brazil, and Sébastien (France) in Congo.

We remind all our readers that your collaboration in helping us circulate this material is essential, since several MIV volunteers 2006 and 2007 have been first "recruited" by this very same newsletter, and are currently volunteering in different parts of the world.

We hope you enjoy reading this new edition of the MIV Newsletter of May 2007, which by the way is

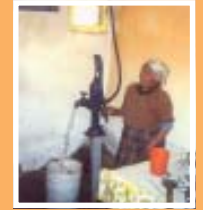
also available in French and Spanish if you wish to have it, and do not hesitate to share your comments and suggestions with us about this material.

May this be a year of tight bonds of solidarity and shared mission.

**José Luis Pérez**  
MIV Coordinator.



**The MIV offers the possibility to volunteer for six months to a year or two in pastoral ministry and/ or development projects animated by the Marianist Family in different parts of the world, such as the ones presented in this newsletter. For further information, contact the MIV Coordinator, Mr. José Luis Pérez at [joseluisperez@sinectis.com.ar](mailto:joseluisperez@sinectis.com.ar)**



# The MIV and the Marianist Province of France

From January 7<sup>th</sup> to February 12<sup>th</sup>, the Province of France hosted José Luis Pérez, also and better known as “Perico”, his nickname. As far as I’m concerned, I found his visit very revealing, since I didn’t really know much about the MIV’s scope and strength before. The MIV offers a very interesting opportunity to the Marianist Family. I’m very grateful

today for the fruitful work that Perico has done at the Office of Temporalities for which I’m responsible for the Province of France. In concrete, we succeeded in establishing a partnership with the DCC: Catholic Delegation for Cooperation. This collaboration between the MIV and the DCC is very interesting, since this organization

is in charge of the evaluation and formation of the candidates, their insurance and re-entry expenses, besides granting them a subsidy/compensation upon completion of their mission if the term of service is of one year, two or more. The Province of France, for the MIV project, and in collaboration with Sébastien Marot’s volunteer experience in Congo Kinshasa, will assume its part, namely Sébastien’s personal expenses, air tickets and vacation days. The host community, for their part, will assume the costs of room and board for him. I’d like to point out that I truly appreciate Perico’s personality and charism. I hope that more lay people will join him to further develop the MIV. I believe that we are before an interesting missionary and vocational challenge that all the branches of the Marianist Family should support. Something that I find particularly original about the MIV is that it offers

the possibility that volunteers from emerging countries may participate, and it doesn’t only invite volunteers from rich countries to serve in developing ones. This is a novelty that needs to be highlighted. Perico’s testimony in the Schools of France has found a good echo amongst the youth, and I have no doubt that it will awake vocations of volunteers who will put their talents at the service of God and of the others. Long live the MIV!

**Dominique Michel** / Marianist Religious in charge of the Office of Temporalities of the Province of France



The writer of this article in his office



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## The MIV in Bordeaux

On January 21st -22nd, the « Marianist World » set their eyes and heart on Bordeaux to celebrate the encounter with the Father of our Blessed Founder. On those same days, Perico (José Luis Pérez) from



Argentina, the MIV captain, was spending some days at the chapel of La Madeleine and at the Maison Chaminade. Certainly, in order to pray and receive there a new missionary launch, but mostly for recruitment and fund-raising for the MIV. The Marianist Family from Bordeaux was celebrating together at the Sainte-Marie Grand-Lebrun School. In a few minutes, Perico managed to persuade everybody there of the need and importance to become involved with the MIV project. He had a reason of weight: Sébastien Marot had come from La Rochelle to meet in person Bordeaux, Chaminade, and the Marianist Family, before initiating his formation program in view of his upcoming MIV experience in Kinshasa, Congo, as from September 2007. Born and raised in Agen, the south of France, alumni of the Sainte Foy school, run by the Marianist Sisters, Sébastien is glad to enjoy this opportunity to discover another

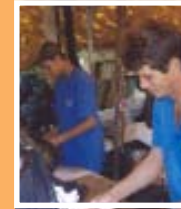
continent while entering the Marianist missionary field. And the French Marianist Southwest did not turn their back on the idea of becoming a club of supporters to the MIV – by means of their friendship, their prayer, and also their financial assistance to a part of this project! The following days, many Grand-Lebrun students hosted Perico with great joy and attention.

The grain has been largely sown; we hope it bears abundant fruit! Many thanks to the sower!

**Robert Witwicki** / Marianist Priest,  
Pastor of The Madalaine Church in  
Bordeaux



**José Luis**  
presenting the  
MIV to the  
students at the  
Sainte-Marie  
Grand Lebrun  
school.



# MIV + SM/FR + DCC/FR = Collaboration/ Solidarity

Upon his last visit to France, José Luis Pérez, MIV Coordinator, has established an agreement of partnership and collaboration between the Marianists of France and the DCC that will affect prospective MIV volunteers from France. Our first MIV volunteer in partnership with the DCC is Sébastien Marot, who will volunteer in Congo as from September 2007, and who has already received his first formation weekend organized by the DCC.

Since 1967, the Catholic Delegation for Cooperation (DCC) has sent 15 000 volunteers in 70 countries. The DCC is both the service of the French Episcopate for Cooperation and a volunteer-sending Non-Governmental Organization accredited by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The international voluntary service is based on a partnership between the MIV, the Marianists of France, the volunteer and the DCC.

The volunteer...

...he/she puts his/her professional experience to the service of a team on a particular project;

...young and generous, he/she seeks to give the best of himself/ herself;

...he/she volunteers to fully share the fraternity between men and women, and the solidarity amongst people;

...he/she contributes to the discovery of France in the country where he/she serves;

...sent by the Church, the volunteer is a link between our communities. He/she lives on behalf of its values.



The MIV and the Marianists of France...

...they are responsible for a project in the field of human promotion. They need, temporarily, somebody with skills that they cannot find locally;

...by welcoming a volunteer, they allow him/her to live a true and unforgettable human experience;

...thanks to the MIV/ the Marianists of France, a volunteer will open his mind and his heart to other cultures;

...the MIV/ the Marianists of France will participate in the progress of his/her spiritual life;

...this experience of voluntary work will serve as a strong base in building a life project and will be a foundation to the volunteer's future commitment to his family, to the Church and to his professional and personal orientations.

## Volunteer and partner (Marianist Province of France), an organized mutual exchange

The usual time spent abroad by the volunteer is 2 years. But the length of the mission can vary from 12 months to 6 years. Most of the volunteers join their mission in September or in January. **Nine months** can elapse between the partner's written application for a volunteer and the arrival of the volunteer.

During his/her mission, the volunteer's status is ruled by the February 24th, 2005 French Law concerning volunteers and international solidarity associations sending volunteers. The DCC is accredited by the French government to send volunteers within the framework of this law. The Government supports the DCC financially for volunteer's social coverage and training.



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## News from Bangladesh

Here are some of the scoops about my experience as a volunteer here in Bangladesh: I will soon be traveling to one of our rural projects (Kachua), where things are really very busy, so I will probably stay there for a month. I will later come back to Dhaka in the middle of this trip for reports and meetings. During the month of April, we will be finished with what we are doing in Kachua and I will spend most of the time in Dhaka and a few day visits to other rural projects. As far as our community life is concerned, we will soon be having a one-year volunteer from Malawi, like me, who learned about the IIRD (Integral Institute of Rural Development) at St. Montfort Press in Malawi. His visa documents have been sent and he plans to come here in a month from now. In our house we are also having a Vietnamese internee from St. Mary's University, her name is

Ahn, and when we receive the Malawian we will be five in total. Our family is really growing and it will be a blessing to have another prospective new MIV volunteer from France, Claire, in September/October this year.

Some characteristics of the Marianist International Volunteers' Program in Bangladesh are:

1. **Motivation:** A volunteer should want to live and work among the rural poor. However, there are opportunities at our liaison office in Dhaka the capital for clerical work, if this is preferred.
2. **Goal of the program:** The goal is to assist poor families to come out of poverty through economic and social development.
3. **Responsibilities:** A person can choose according to her/his talents and inclination. There is a wide variety of development

activities such as elementary education, medical treatment, special women's programs, agriculture, construction works, small industry and marketing, etc.

4. **Place of Service:** IIRD works in six rural areas and has a coordinating office in Dhaka.

Volunteers are welcome to visit all areas and choose the place of service as well as the activity.

5. **Time of Service/Schedule:** Volunteers are welcome for any length of time. The government requires a special visa for anyone desiring to stay in Bangladesh more than 3 months. It usually takes several weeks to process a work permit here once a volunteer sends documentation to us.

6. **Support Groups:** The population and culture of the country is mostly Muslim, with about 10% Hindu and 1%

other. Any volunteer should be prepared to share the different culture. The IIRD workers live in small supportive communities in the rural areas. The one Marianist here will be happy to be available to any volunteer as desired for guidance, spiritual direction, etc.

**Jane Mbale** / MIV Volunteer from Malawi in Bangladesh





# Prospective MIV volunteer 2007 for Congo

For the past few months, I have been in contact with the Marianists to volunteer internationally in a French-speaking country in Africa. As I lead a very active associative life as a Scout, and as I'm a passionate kids' educator, I found it logical to become involved in the MIV project.

Our choice has been oriented towards a school for the street kids in Kinshasa, in

the Democratic Republic of Congo, which will start in September this year. On the last days in January I could meet José Luis Pérez in person, who is in charge of my candidature, as well as Father Robert Witwicki sm. We had the chance to discuss about my future experience as a volunteer and to get to know each other better. In general terms, my mission will turn around two

main pivots: assisting in extra curricular school activities (non-formal education) and to teaching French to the kids. To facilitate my mission, we have contacted the DCC. For the time being, I've had the chance to participate in their first formation week-end about intercultural communications and social logics. This formation has been very strong and enriching for me, and I left

this course with a different view of the world, and a different approach from the one I had before. In any case, it was an experience that I will treasure for a long time in my mind. Little by little, my project is taking shape, and I truly hope it will become a reality.

**Sébastien Marot** / Prospective MIV volunteer from France in Congo



Sébastien Marot - center - prospective MIV volunteer in Congo with José Luis Pérez and Robert Witwicki at the Celebration of Blessed Chaminade.



Fr. Jean-Louis Barret with Sébastien Marot at the Celebration in Bordeaux on January 22nd.



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## From Colombia to the rest of the world

The story of this Colombian guy starts about one year ago when he felt called to give himself up to God, and to make a difference in the community. This is how I started my search on the Internet in order to find an experience of international volunteerism.

A few months later someone at the CNVS recommended me to contact José Luis Pérez. Since then, he has

been accompanying me all throughout this journey.

The process and its demands are essential to better understand the responsibilities of the volunteer with the community where he or she will later serve. At the beginning I admit that I was a little scared about the speed with which the project was developing, a project that could

become a whole life project... Little by little, and after getting to know the Marianist communities in my country, which by the way I didn't know about before contacting the MIV, my dream of volunteering was beginning to take shape. The previous years of my life in which I participated in masses, prayers meetings, rosaries and social-justice activities could not compare with the joy I experienced as I was envisaging my upcoming term of service as an international volunteer. At the end of last year, and after a seven-year-long relationship, I proposed marriage to my girlfriend. After she gave me her consent, as well as her parents, my desire to volunteer was becoming stronger. I felt deeply called to share my life with the most needy ones, to feel and enjoy God's presence, and to experience a time of holiness, humbleness and service. The marriage date was approaching, and I had several talks and meetings with the lay and religious Marianists in Colombia,

which contributed to my personal and spiritual maturity. The story goes that in January this year the Marianist community in Kenya gave me their consent to volunteer with them for six months. I therefore immediately started



**José Luis (MIV Coordinator) with the author (new MIV volunteer from Colombia in Brazil).**





all my transit visa procedures, as there are no airlines that fly directly from Colombia to Kenya. I was then obliged to go through the UK, Holland, Brazil or South Africa. I tried with two of these countries, but it was to no avail. Their reason was that I did not have the entrance to Nairobi, Kenya for sure. I was then overwhelmed by sorrow and pain, as my wedding date was still

approaching. Yet, my condition as a lay catholic and fervent believer never led me into despair or hopelessness. My fiancée's support was also essential in this venture. Thank God, a few days later, many volunteer opportunities cropped up, and some of them curiously enough on the same day: Bangladesh, India and Brazil. After having gone through a long process of visa errands, I

decided to shoot at Brazil, where I will volunteer with the community in Marília for three months working with the marginalized youth. I learnt from this experience that God opens up doors and shows us the way. Even after being formed by the Scolapians and having participated in the San Pedro Claver community as a lay member, today Jesus and Mary have shown me the incredible Marianist Family, a family that I promise not to disappoint, and for which I'm willing to give up all my joy and my work. Upon my re-entry in Colombia, I will certainly keep on working together to publicize the experience of international volunteerism. All my gratefulness to Fr. Martin Solma SM, Bro. Domingo Fuentes SM, Ezequiel Reggiani CLM, and especially to José Luis Pérez CLM who made this experience possible. **Ciro Duarte** / MIV volunteer from Colombia in Brazil

**My arrival in Brazil was very well received: All the people who welcomed me gave me all their support, which facilitated the adaptation to my new life here. I'm currently working with the youth at risk of all ages, in a program called Barracão. My contribution as a volunteer will be very varied, ranging from sports activities to Spanish and computing classes, which will all start next week. There are about 80 youths in the program, divided into two groups: the morning and the afternoon. They all have lunch and receive tutoring classes for school support, and my favorite one, because of its originality, is the Circus one, in which the kids learn to juggle, to jump and to walk on the tight-rope, among others. I would like to express all my gratitude to the Marianist brothers or Bauru and Marília, as well as to the MIV coordinators for having granted me this opportunity to serve as a Marianist International Volunteer.**



**Ciro with some of the coordinators of the Barracão program.**



# MIV Update 2007

## In-service/ Confirmed Volunteers

Name Origin	Destination As from	Mission
Jane Mbale Malawi	Bangladesh 09/06	Rural development.
Nathalie Requin France	Togo 09/06	Education, religion.
Ciro Duarte Colombia	Brazil 03/07	Sports, computing, Spanish, circus.
María Pilar Lis Spain	Kenya 07/07	English, religion, sports.
Sébastien Marot France	Congo 09/07	French, sports, computing.
Patricia Cayo Peru	Kenya 09/07	English, religion, sports.

## Prospective volunteers

Name / Origin	Destination	Mission
Claire Penpenic / France	Bangladesh	Rural development.
Jean Emil Dumas / Haiti	Congo	Librarian.
Iñaki Odriozola / Spain	Bangladesh or India	Rural development.
Izaskun Odriozola / Spain	Bangladesh or India	Rural development.
Carmen Gómez / Spain	India	Youth at risk.

