Members of the General Administrations of all four branches of the Marianist Family met from November 15-17 at Via Latina 22 in Rome. This annual meeting of the SM, FMI, MLC and Alliance Mariale allows for ample sharing of news and information, collaboration on joint projects and planning of future events. At this meeting, the World Council prepared its Annual message, Christmas greetings, a document on Common Mission as well as preparations for upcoming events like the Marianist World Day of Prayer (October 13, 2013) and the World Day for Marianist Vocations (April 8, 2013).

Congratulations to Brother Philip Melcher, SM, on his re-appointment as Superior of the Region of Peru. This second term of office will commence on January 1, 2013 and will continue for three years. The Region of Peru, with 15 professed members, has communities in Callao, Lima and Trujillo-La Libertad. We thank Felipe for his fine leadership these past years and for generously accepting a second term of service.

The Marianist Family unites in praying the Magnificat on Fridays. Mary's Magnificat reminds us of our call to work for justice in the world.

The World Council of the Family of Mary publishes the Friday Magnificat each month. It is a short, multi-lingual electronic newsletter highlighting Marianist works of Justice and Peace. It is free for anyone who wishes to receive it by e-mail. To order it, or to see previous issues, click the links below.

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SM FOUNDATION IN HAITI

On October 9, 2012, Fr. Manuel Cortés, SM, Superior General, in agreement with the Regional Council of Canada and the Superior of the Haiti Foundation, issued a decree closing the Society of Mary’s presence in Haiti. This is a sad conclusion to a deeply painful series of events and it profoundly touches the members of the Foundation, the Region of Canada and the entire SM. The decision comes after our brothers in Haiti, a country that has seen so much tragedy, were forced to witness the brutal murder of their young confrere, Brother Yxnold Chevalier on August 29, 2012. We do not know the motives behind this attack. The matter is in the hands of the Haiti police. What we do know, regrettably, is that the resulting fear and trauma that it has created, makes it impossible for us to continue in the Foundation.

The young and fragile Foundation of Haiti was devastated in January 2010 when a strong earthquake seriously damaged some of their homes and forced the temporary relocation of the novices to a Benedictine monastery outside of Port-Au-Prince. They were just getting back to a more stable and permanent arrangement when this latest tragedy struck. It has been a devastating blow, not only to the Marianists in Haiti, but to the Region of Canada and other collaborators, who have invested so much personal generosity and goodwill in this mission. In addition, we have great concern for our Haitian brothers, the seed of hope for our future mission in Haiti. They have been offered the opportunity to continue as Marianists, becoming incorporated into other Units. The leadership of the Foundation, Fr. Florian Royer-Chabot and Bro. Hervé Buillo Du Bodan are remaining for the time being, to see to the details of the Foundation’s closure.

Let us continue to keep this intention in our prayers!

Notice regarding the 2013 International Personnel

Because of a programming error, members of the SM who do not have an e-mail address listed with the General Administration were inadvertently left off the listing in the back of the 2013 International Personnel. We are working to provide an addendum to the book and will send it out shortly. We offer sincere apologies for this omission, especially to those whose names are missing.

Correction: In the last issue of VL22, in the article about the Area Community of Switzerland, mention of the 50th Jubilee of Bro. Peter Vollmar, SM, was inadvertently omitted. We apologize to Bro. Peter and the brothers of the Community for this omission, and congratulate him with gratitude for his many years of faithful service to the Church and the SM!
The document of the XXXIV General Chapter, *To Enliven the Fire that Enkindles Other Fires*, extensively addresses the theme of the Marianist religious as a missionary. At the root of our charism as Marianists, we understand our vocation as a call to “assist Mary in her saving mission.” Indeed, Blessed Chaminade reminds us that “you are all missionaries.” All throughout the nearly two hundred years of our history, the Society has defined its life and work in terms of mission. Now, this latest document takes up the same theme. Is this just a restating of what we have always heard? Are these more pious words that make the document well written and sound faithful, but in the long run will have little practical effect on our lives and work?

I believe that it is up to each religious to answer these questions for himself. It will depend on each religious whether or not what has been written is, in fact, received and taken to heart. I think it can be said, however, that surely the brothers of the General Chapter saw that it is a critical theme for us today, in the practical order, here and now. Today, as we are acutely aware of our world’s need for *New Evangelization*; the delicate situation regarding our resources, both temporal and in personnel; the desire for strong faith formation, both within the SM and outside of it; and the ever-growing interdependence of a technologically interconnected world, we realize that the call to be missionaries still resounds as urgently as it did in Fr. Chaminade’s days. The Chapter addresses our missionary mandate within this context.

The Chapter addresses the issue from the perspectives of both the individual religious (*Marianist Life Plan* – more information on this soon from the Office of Religious Life!), as well as corporately, as a community or Unit (*Missionary Project*). In both cases there is the need to come to a clearer understanding of our identity: what has been our tradition; who we are at this moment in reality; and what our motivations and concrete goals are. From there, we seek orientations that will work towards those goals. We are called to do this both as individuals and as brothers together in mission, for the salvation of our own souls, and those of God’s people. The document itself is merely words on paper. It is we who will make it come to life as we embrace its call to revive our missionary spirit as dedicated religious and as a religious institute.

*Enlivening the Fire*... offers several concrete areas for our consideration in this call to mission: ongoing personal spiritual development, active promotion of vocation ministry, qualitative formation, fraternal accompaniment of each other in all stages of life, attentiveness to education as a “privileged means” to evangelize, community and family spirit, common mission with the other branches, and a spirit of global interaction which allows us to share with and support each other for mutual benefit.

Our Chapter document provides a very poignant reflection on our identity as Marianist “missionaries.” I invite all members of the SM to prayerfully take to heart its words. As Mary listened first, then accepted, and finally lived her mission, so may we also do the same!

Michael J. McAward, SM
MESSAGE FROM FR. ANTONIO GASCÓN, SM, DIRECTOR OF AGMAR.

Up until this point in time, the Marianist religious Quirin HILGERS was considered to have left the Society of Mary in 1945. For this reason, his name is not included in the last Necrology (2009).

As a result of information recently received from Fr. Joseph Hilgers, SM, and Fr. Léo Pauels, SM, we now know that Quirin HILGERS died in combat during the Second World War, on July 31, 1944 in Witebsk (Belarus). Furthermore, in his hometown of Weywertz (Belgium), he is remembered as a Marianist religious and every year, the pastor of the local parish celebrates a Mass for his eternal repose.

After having consulted his personal file, and not having found any explicit renunciation of his religious state, having seen several documents from the Sacred Congregation for Religious relating to his military service, and after having consulted the Superior General, Fr. Manuel Cortés, SM, it is deemed proper to insert Quirin HILGERS (1920-1944) among the list of deceased Marianist religious.

All are asked to inscribe his name into page 226 of the Necrologium, the page for July 31, in the following manner:

Quirin HILGERS, 1920-1944, Witebsk, 24

Also, please remember to inscribe his name in the chronological (year 1944) and alphabetic (letter “H”) lists as well.