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Tracing Rivers of Life

Br Cyprian Gandeebo

All 81 participants and 16 invitees congregated at Center for Community Transformation (CCT) to commence the 23rd General Chapter on September 8. On this birthday of Mary, our Good Mother, the Superior General, Br Ernesto B. Sanchez officially opened the 23rd General Chapter committing into her hands, with confidence, the present and future of the Marist Brothers Institute. From the very beginning of our Institute, he affirmed, Mary has inspired and accompanied us in our following of Jesus and in our mission to make him known and loved. Therefore, he called on all participants to turn to her once more and asking that she helps us to listen to the voice of the Spirit, as she herself did, and to respond with an open and generous heart.

He appreciated all who contributed to the commencement of the Chapter and invited all and sundry to live fraternity as one global Marist family. He encouraged the participants to take advantage and make the best of the event as "the Chapter is a privileged moment in the life of the Institute – a time of grace". Hereafter, he invited participants to "deepen the bonds between the diverse parts of our Institute,













and together to discern the voice of the Spirit, so that we may respond to will of God for Marist life and mission in the years ahead, within the realities of today's world". He invited us to be "Rivers of Life for our world" and urged us to "open our hearts, to go further, to make space for those on the margins of society: the young, the poor, and the displaced".

The facilitation commission of the General Chapter, reinforced by two expert facilitators, Dr Estela Padilla and Dr Jessica Joy Calendario, expounded the methodology of synodal discernment (using the "conversations in the Spirit" approach) a distinctive element in the Synodal journey that encourages authentic dialogue. This process, guided by the Holy Spirit unfolded in three stages: each person sharing his/her perspective; a space is given for others to respond; and finally, the group seeks to build consensus and make decisions. Each stage is separated by a time of silence to foster reflection. This synodal process involves "listening that leads to conversion and a conversion that leads to mission".

This discernment centered around three strands: Coming Home, Opening Windows and Tracing Rivers of Life. The "Coming Home" element highlighted "coming home to Community, and coming home to the Church" wherein attention was focused towards 'returning to our homes' – our familiar zones. This discernment process centred around three strands: "coming home, opening windows and tracing rivers of life":

1. Coming Home:

The first element focused on "coming home": to God, to community, and to the Church. During this phase we reflected on our personal relationships with God, our communal life, and our connections to the Church, in relations to our response to be a Synodal Church/community of consecrated Brothers.

2. Opening Windows:

The second element focused on "opening windows" where we listened to some experiences and reports of innovations and challenges from some Marist ministries and also with some realities of the local church and youth ministries.

3. Tracing Rivers of Life:

The third phase focused on "tracing new rivers of life". The goal was to synthesize all the insights gained from the reflections from the two previous strands in order to discern directions for the next eight years. The key task is to clarify where God is leading us, and to chart new pathways for change ensuring the Institute remains vibrant and responsive to emerging needs of children and young people.

Building on these three phases, we synthesized the themes, with the goal of arriving at consensus around the central message and the calls that the General Chapter will present to the Institute, for the next eight years. The central theme that guided the "tracing rivers of life" was, "A Community on Mission: Being present in the world with a Synodal and Marial Face".

At the end of identifying the Marian and synodal values that expressed and sustained this call, proposals of "crossings and conversions" required for our growth and renewal were made for our Marist life and mission. The following summarizes the proposals for each of the crossings and conversions that emerged:

Mission

We are invited to be a sign of good news for today's children and young people. The chapter delegates emphasized values such as integral care, service, boldness, innovative education and a communal response to the mission.

Governance and Leadership

In this category, we proposed fostering leadership and governance models that support a viable and sustainable future. The core values include teamwork, listening, discernment, transparency, accountability, co-responsibility, and vision for the future.





Community Life

This call emphasizes the diversity of vocations and the importance of welcoming both gifts and vulnerabilities – creating a home for all that reflects and responds to today's social, ecclesial and Marist realities. The key values include compassion, care, simplicity, good communication and respectful leadership.

Marist Vocation

This call emphasizes on the renewal of vocational culture through comprehensive formation and attentive accompaniment. The values highlighted are active listening, witness, discernment and care.
Spirituality
This call invites all Marists to an incarnated spirituality, centered on Christ and capable of transforming lives. The core values here include transformation, ecclesial and intercultural dialogue, simplicity, discernment and contemplative listening.

In the end, the following Brothers were elected to the General Council to lead the Institute for the next eight years:

- Br. Peter Gerard Carroll, Superior General, from Star of the Sea Province (15th SG).
- Br Hipolito Perez Gomez, Vicar General, from Province of Central America

The General Councillors included:

- Br Deivis Alexandre Fischer, Brasil Sul-Amazônia
- Br Juan Carlos Fuertes Mari, Mediterranea Province
- Br Mark Okolo Omede, Nigeria Province
- Br Raja Kumar Sooisai Manickam, South Asia Province
- Br Carlos Alberto Rojas Carvajal, Norandina Province
- Br John Hazelman, Star of the Sea Province





Building the New Hermitage

Br Cyprian Gandeebo



Participating in the 23rd General Chapter of the Marist Brothers in Tagaytay, Philippines, from 8 September to 8 October 2025, was a profoundly enriching and transformative experience. This experience reaffirmed the sacred and pivotal nature of such an assembly in the life of the Marist Brothers Congregation.

A General Chapter is not merely a meeting; rather it is a spiritual encounter and a sacred space for discerning the future directions of the Institute. It was a privileged moment of grace where Marists from all over the world gathered in prayer, reflection and dialogue to listen to the call of the Spirit and to renew the Institute's vitality and mission.

Guided by the theme "Home for All, River of Life," the 23rd General Chapter invited the Institute of the Marist Brothers to contemplate and co-create "the New Hermitage." This image was not meant to signify a physical building, rather a living spiritual reality – a home that flows like a river wherever Marists live faith, create



fraternity, and bring life to others.

Throughout the Chapter, there was a profound sense of the Spirit moving among us, urging us toward deeper communion and renewal. The daily rhythm of incarnated prayer, reflection and conversation helped us to rediscover the essence of our Marist identity – rooted in simplicity, humility, and family spirit. We were reminded that our mission today is to be a "home for all", especially for the young, the poor, and the marginalized – those on the peripheries of society.

The Chapter was also a significant moment for the discernment and election of the new General Council, comprised of the Superior General, the Vicar General, and six General Councilors. This newly elected team is entrusted with the responsibility of accompanying the Institute in living out the Calls of this Chapter and guiding our journey into the future of building the "new hermitage".

The election process was marked by prayer, transparency, and a spirit of trust. It was indeed an experience of genuine synodality – walking together in faith, listening deeply to one another, and allowing the Spirit to speak to us through our collective discernment. The newly elected leadership team thus embodies our shared hope for a renewed Marist life rooted in fraternity, service, and prophetic courage.

One of the most memorable and symbolic moments of the Chapter came during its conclusion, when Br. Peter Carroll, the newly elected Superior General, invited us to "pool our resources together to build the New Hermitage." He reminded us that such a hermitage cannot be built by any single individual; rather, it is a collective endeavour of all Marists of Champagnat.

In the discernment process, each capitulant was invited to write descriptive words or phrases to symbolically represent the foundation, walls and roof of this new Hermitage. Together, we built the new hermitage: the foundation, walls and the roof.

My personal descriptive words for the foundation (rock) were faith and providence. Marcellin Champagnat built the Hermitage based on trust in God's providence and faithfulness. We need the walls of humility, modesty, and simplicity

which are the hallmarks of our Marist spirituality. For the roof I placed it under Mary's maternal care and tenderness, sheltering all who will dwell within this spiritual home. What words or phrases will you use to describe the building of "this new hermitage"?



Indeed, this powerful ritual of symbolically building the "new hermitage" spoke deeply to me. It reminded me that the renewal of our Institute depends not on the vision and/or effort of a few individuals but on the collective commitment of all Marists – Brothers and Lay Marists. Building the New Hermitage is therefore an invitation to co-responsibility, communion, and co-creation. Participating in this Chapter also revealed an experience of fraternity, unity and shared mission. It renewed my conviction that our future as Marists will be built on genuine collaboration, trust, and a deep sense of belonging.

We left Tagaytay with a renewed heart – inspired by the spirit of communion that characterized our work and by the diversity of voices that came together in harmony. The Chapter reaffirmed the belief that our Marist mission continues to be relevant and life-giving, especially when we live it as a family that welcomes all, listens with compassion, and acts with courage.

Like St. Marcellin Champagnat, we are called once again to be builders of hope and communion, constructing together a home where all can find life, meaning and a sense of belongingness. The envisioned New Hermitage is not bounded by walls or geography; it is wherever Marists choose to live with open hearts, to walk humbly with others, and to be a sign of God's tenderness in our world today (closing remarks of the new Superior General, at the 23rd General Chapter).

As we look back on this sacred journey, we carry the conviction that the spirit of the just ended 23rd General Chapter in Tagaytay (Philippines) will continue to flow throughout our Province and the wider Institute – like a river of life, nourishing every Marist community and mission. Hence, I invite every one of you to take the calls of this 23rd General Chapter to heart and express them through simple, practical daily living.



Good News from the Marist Province of West Africa

"Four young men say 'yes' to the call of Marist life."

The Marist Postulancy of West Africa joyfully welcomed four new postulants into its formation community on October 4, 2025. The occasion was marked by a Eucharistic celebration filled with thanksgiving, reflection, and a profound sense of commitment to the Marist way of life.

The ceremony brought together Brothers, formators, and friends of the postulancy to witness these young men's first formal step on their journey of discernment and consecration. The four new postulants — one from Ghana, two from Chad, and one from Cameroon — responded with faith and generosity to God's invitation to follow in the footsteps of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, founder of the Marist Brothers.

A Celebration of Faith, Culture, and Mission

Rooted in the Word of God, the celebration drew inspiration from the Acts of the Apostles (1:12–14):

"They all with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers."

and from the Gospel of John (15:1–11):

"Remain in me, as I remain in you… to bear fruit."

These Scripture passages beautifully captured the spirit of the day — a call to prayerful communion, perseverance, and fruitfulness in the service of God's people.

The atmosphere was one of deep joy and fraternity, blending faith and culture in a celebration that reflected the unity and diversity of the Marist family across West Africa. Songs, prayers, and symbolic gestures highlighted the desire of the new postulants to root their lives in Christ and in the Marist charism of simplicity, humility, and love of work.

Accompanied by Prayer and Hope

As these four young men begin their journey of formation and discernment, they are accompanied by the prayers of the entire Marist Province of West Africa. Their formators walk beside them, guiding them toward a deeper understanding of their vocation and helping them to grow in the spirit of Mary — the first disciple and model of trust and faith.

We entrust them to the care of the Good Shepherd and to Our Good Mother, praying that their response may bear abundant fruit for the Church and the Marist mission.

"May their 'yes' echo the courage of Mary and the zeal of Champagnat, inspiring others to follow Christ with joy and generosity."







Empowerment Seminar for Student Leaders in Ashalaja

On Friday November 7, 2025, the Marist Youth Ministry´s (MYM) National Secretariat of Ghana organized an empowerment program for school prefects from Our Good Mother School, Ashalaja; Ashalaja 1 Government Basic School, Ashalaja; and Avornye Government Basic School, Avornye, all located in the Accra region.

The seminar, which took place at Our Good Mother School, Ashalaja, aimed to equip student leaders with the skills, confidence, and sense of responsibility needed to lead effectively in their respective schools.

A total of 36 student prefects participated in this formation program, which combined inspirational talks, group discussions, and interactive leadership activities. The resource persons for the day were Br. Linus Ngam, fms, and Mr. John Wilfred, both of whom shared valuable insights on leadership, teamwork, and service rooted in Marist values.

The session encouraged the prefects to view leadership not merely as a position of authority, but as a mission of service and example, inspired by the life and values of Saint Marcellin Champagnat. Participants left the seminar motivated and better equipped to lead their peers with humility, commitment, and a spirit of collaboration.

The event concluded with words of gratitude to the facilitators and organizers, and with a renewed commitment from the young leaders to be agents of positive change in their schools and communities.



Lycée Collège Marie Kétal Launches the 2025 – 2026 Academic Year



The Lycée Collège Marie Kétal officially opened the 2025–2026 academic year on October 1, with a vibrant ceremony filled with enthusiasm and hope. The event brought together students, teachers, and staff to mark the beginning of a new school journey under the theme of dedication and excellence.

In his opening address, the Principal, Br Ngardoum N. Succès, welcomed both new and returning students, urging them to embrace hard work, discipline, and collaboration throughout the year. He also shared important guidelines to ensure a smooth and productive learning environment.

The school chaplain, Abbé Claude Doualta, imparted a special blessing for the new academic year, invoking God's guidance and protection over the entire educational community.

The ceremony was also marked by words of orientation from the two school Censeurs (disciplinary advisors), who addressed the new students and teachers, encouraging them to uphold the values of respect, diligence, and integrity that define Lycée Collège Marie Kétal.

The day concluded in a spirit of optimism and commitment, as students and staff looked forward to a fruitful academic year filled with growth and success.









Marist Aspirants "Come and See" Program in Bouaké

"Come and See: Discovering the Marist Vocation" (Jn 1:39)

From October 31 to November 1, 2025, the Marist aspirants gathered at the Bouaké community for a "Come and See" program focused on vocational discernment and fraternity.

Over these two days of encounter, prayer, sharing, and community life, the participants took time to reflect on God's call in their lives and to deepen their understanding of the mission and charism of the Marist Brothers. Inspired by the example of Saint Marcellin Champagnat and accompanied by the maternal presence of Mary, they experienced a joyful journey of discernment, faith, and brotherhood.

This gathering marks a hopeful beginning for a new vocational year in Côte d'Ivoire, renewing commitment and enthusiasm for the mission of Marist vocation animation.









1. Mary maintains her "Yes" from the joy of Annunciation to her grief at the foot of the Cross.

Many of us are quick to say yes to seemingly good, interesting, and captivating projects. Similarly, we are swift to renege when the full picture of the project, along with its ugly aspects, unfolds. The Blessed Virgin is certainly not of this kind. She was resolute in her fiat, with the favour of God that makes her full of grace. She says yes throughout until the end.

Educational implications:

In joy or sorrow, be prepared to support your learners. They need you most when they are suffering on 'the cross'. Beyond this, it is important to instil faithfulness and perseverance in them. Learners should recognise that these qualities carry great honour. All areas of life—academic, religious, social, etc.—reward faithfulness and perseverance. For instance, like Mary, learners must persevere in their studies even when it becomes extremely challenging and there are enough reasons to give up. Let your exemplary life articulate these attributes to your learners.

2. At Cana, Mary urges the servants at the wedding feast to do whatever Jesus tells them

Perceiving the disgrace about to befall the young couple, she swiftly consulted her son, Jesus, to do something about it. No one asked for her opinion or contribution, yet she acted with discretion, concern, and love. After the seemingly disappointed response from him, Mary still turned to the waiters with these assuring words, "Do whatever He tells you." The Blessed Virgin demonstrated trust and faith in Jesus, knowing that he would do something beautiful in the end.

Educational implications:

Do we point to Jesus to our learners? What does a learner stand to gain if he/she acquires the best of knowledge without the fear of God? After all, the Good Book says that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. True wisdom comes from knowing Jesus. The pedagogical significance of this attribute of Mary is that we are to prioritise catechism in our schools to give credence to our mission statement: To make Jesus known and loved. Let's not grow weary in telling learners to do whatever Jesus tells them to do. Another quality that Our Good Mother demonstrated in the episode is faith. She acted with hope and faith. She was convinced that her son would never disappoint. Our behaviour should exhibit faith so that our children can learn, knowing that they learn faster and better by imitation. Again, the behaviour of Mary in the story invites us to be sensitive to the plight of our learn-



ers and to act swiftly with concern. For instance, if it is observed that a child is being abused at home or in school, we should intervene as Our Good Mother would do. We don't need a formal invitation before we attend to such emergencies. Mother Mary shows the way.

3. Together with Joseph at Nazareth, Mary provided Jesus with a nurturing environment.

"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man". Lk 2:52. It takes a psychologically stable environment for a child to grow well like Jesus. Even though there was persecution by King Herod, the flight to Egypt, the holy couple provided the child Jesus with the right environment he needed to grow well. The inner peace and the harmonious and tranquil home were sufficient for Jesus' growth and development.

Educational implications:

In your heart of hearts, do you love your learners? Do you offer them the right environment to grow? Is the atmosphere in your classroom one of care, concern, tolerance, forgiveness, and unity? Is your relationship with your learners or co-workers' cordial enough to make them willing to come to school? What is the relationship among your learners, between learners and teachers, and among teachers? What about bullying, intimidation, and abuse? Are learners and teachers free to express themselves or is there a deep-seated culture of silence? This is a sample checklist to evaluate the conduciveness of your school environment. Note that many psychological sanctions do not promote growth in wisdom and stature. They fill the 'little Jesuses' in your school with fear, leading to stagnation in knowledge acquisition and even physical growth. Like Mary, we should allow people in our educational space to develop inner peace—protect them from all forms of abuse, encourage freedom of expression, provide them with the right to play, and so on.

4. Mary pondered the events of her life and of her Son's.

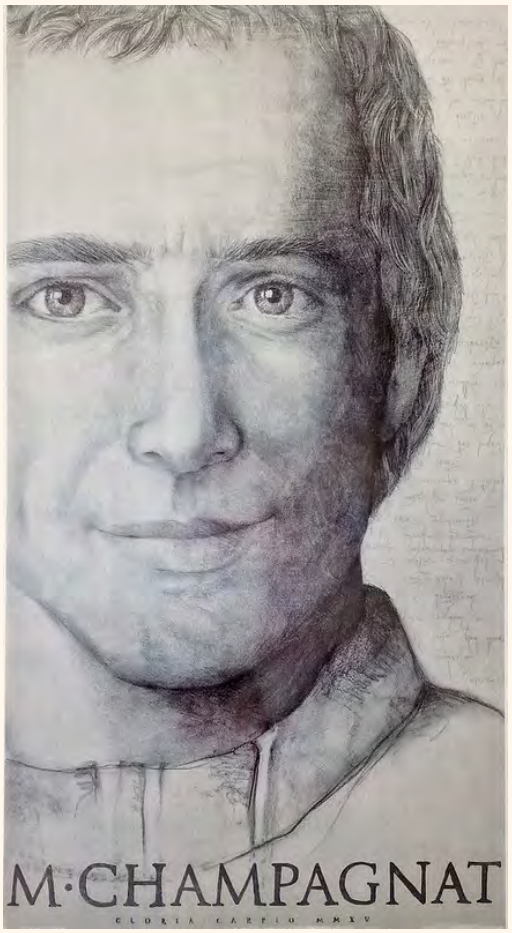
In the Holy Scriptures, there are moments where the Blessed Virgin receives messages or has experiences that call for deep reflection on her son before deciding what is in his best interest. She did exactly that. At least two instances, noted in Luke 2:19 and 2:51, explicitly mention that "Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart." This underscores an essential trait of Mary as a wise educator: she did not act impulsively but only after careful thought and understanding of the situation.

Educational implication:

Here, the Blessed Virgin Mary encourages us to be contemplative or thoughtful educators. There is a need for careful reflection on a learner's behaviour, especially those we find challenging, before deciding on suitable measures to address them. Sometimes, this may involve research to find a solution. We should not forget that fervent prayer is part of the reflective process. Like Mary, let's go the extra mile for the best interest of the young person we wish to help. Additionally, Mary's attitude inspires us to research and consider issues carefully before responding. Only then can we truly make a positive impact on our learners. We should not be quick to dismiss their answers as wrong. Instead, we should seek explanations before giving our final verdicts. We must not underestimate their comprehension skills or enter the classroom unprepared. Every lesson should be thoroughly researched and rehearsed to prevent embarrassment. We ought to act discreetly, following the example of our model, Mary.

Conclusion:

From part 16 to the current edition, the write-ups have endeavoured to demonstrate the educational applications of some traits or experiences of Our Good Mother. In my humble opinion, they are not exhaustive, thus leaving room for your personal contributions. I remain hopeful that if the few discussed traits are adopted or carefully implemented in our schools, classrooms, or ministries, we will be recognised as individuals who not only preach but also live by a pedagogical approach, ' In the way of Mary. ' In our next edition, I will start exploring the pedagogical principle of the' Family spirit. '



Meeting of the Marist Laity at Centre Scolaire St Marcellin Champagnat, Bouaké





The Marist Laity of Champagnat Bouaké gathered on Thursday, October 30, for a meeting marked by strong participation and a deep spirit of communion and fraternity. The purpose of this gathering was to plan the activities for the 2025–2026 academic and pastoral year, while strengthening the mission and visible presence of lay Marists within the school community.

During the meeting, participants reflected on various initiatives aimed at promoting Marist values, encouraging greater lay involvement, and supporting the holistic education of young people.

A significant moment of the session was the intervention of Br. Aristide Yao, recently returned from the General Chapter held in Tagaytay City, Philippines (8 October – 8 November 2025). Invited to share key orientations from the Chapter, Br. Aristide highlighted the renewed emphasis placed on the vocation of the laity within the Marist Institute. He presented the major insights and priorities concerning the emerging recognition of the Marist Laity as an integral body within the Institute, along with the guiding principles agreed upon during the Lay Forum. His contribution inspired participants to deepen their commitment and to see themselves as active co-responsible partners in the Marist mission.

The gathering unfolded in a warm and family-like atmosphere, true to the Marist spirit of simplicity, humility, and fraternal love. Participants expressed their gratitude for the organization of the meeting and shared their enthusiasm for the upcoming programs and projects.

The session concluded with a prayer, entrusting the year ahead to Mary, Our Good Mother, and renewing the commitment of the Marist Laity to accompany young people and promote the educational mission inspired by Saint Marcellin Champagnat. With renewed zeal, the Marist Laity of Bouaké look forward to a year rich in service, growth, and shared mission.



The Provincial Council meets in Accra

The Provincial Council of the Marist Province of West Africa convened in Accra, Ghana, from 28 October to 3 November 2025 for a weeklong session dedicated to strategic planning, evaluation, and governance of the Province's mission.

The primary objective of the meeting was the review and approval of Community Life Plans and Budgets for the 2025–2026 canonical year. This key exercise ensures that all Marist communities across the Province are equipped—spiritually, pastorally, and financially—to carry out their mission with renewed energy and clarity.

Throughout the week, the Council engaged in deep reflection on the life of the Province, assessing current realities, setting priorities for the coming year, and strengthening systems for accompaniment and accountability. In a spirit of fraternity and shared mission, Council members reaffirmed their commitment to animating Marist life and strengthening the presence of the Brothers in the five countries of the Province: Ivory Coast, Ghana, Cameroon, Liberia, and Chad.

By approving community life plans and resources, the Province ensures that each community has the necessary support to deepen its spiritual life, foster fraternity, and continue its apostolic mission, particularly in the field of education and youth evangelization, following the example of Saint Marcellin Champagnat.

The meeting concluded with a renewed sense of hope and purpose as the Province prepares to enter the new canonical year, committed to walking together as brothers and servants of young people, always under the guidance of Mary, Our Good Mother.





First Term Resumption at Marist Bilingual Comprehensive College, Babenga

The first term resumption at Marist Bilingual Comprehensive College, Babenga, took place on Sunday, September 7, 2025, ushering in a new academic year filled with excitement, promise, and renewed commitment to the Marist mission of education.

Although still in its early stages of development, the college continues to grow steadily, currently accommodating students in Form One and Form Two, aged between nine and twelve years. This small but vibrant community is becoming a true family where students, parents, and Brothers share a common vision — to form good Christians and responsible citizens.

A Campus Prepared with Love and Dedication

In the weeks leading up to the reopening, the Marist Brothers and their collaborators worked tirelessly to ensure that the campus was ready to welcome students once again. Classrooms were cleaned and arranged, dormitories prepared, and every corner of the compound carefully tended to. Their efforts created an atmosphere of warmth and hospitality, setting the tone for a smooth and joyful resumption.

By 7:30 a.m., the first families began arriving, their cars filled with luggage, smiles, and a touch of nervous excitement. The Brothers and boarding staff were on hand from the earliest arrivals until late afternoon, guiding parents through registra-

tion procedures, helping new students settle into their dormitories, and ensuring that everything ran seamlessly. This steady flow of arrivals continued until around 6:00 p.m., transforming the campus into a hive of cheerful activity.

Joy, Emotions, and New Beginnings

For the Form Two students, the day was one of reunion and joy. They returned with confidence, happy to see their friends, teachers, and Brothers again. Their presence brought life and continuity to the school's growing spirit.

For the Form One students, it was a day of firsts — the first time living away from home, the first step into a new academic environment, and for many, the first experience of belonging to a boarding school community. Though some showed a mix of excitement and nervousness, their earlier visits to the campus for interviews had already made the environment familiar and reassuring.

As evening drew near, emotions ran high. For many parents, saying goodbye was not easy — especially for those entrusting their nine-year-olds to the care of others for the first time. Tears flowed freely, both from parents and children, yet those tears were mingled with trust and gratitude. Everyone knew their children were in good hands — the hands of the Marist Brothers, known for their care, discipline, and holistic approach to education.

A Promising Start to the Year

The day ended with an atmosphere of peace and hope. The dormitories soon filled with the laughter and chatter of new friendships being formed, while Brothers moved from room to room, ensuring that every child felt at home.

As night fell over Babenga, the community stood ready to begin another chapter in the story of Marist education — one guided by faith, family spirit, and the unwavering desire to help young hearts grow in knowledge, virtue, and love of God.







Pope Leo XIV Recognizes Saint Marcellin Champagnat as a Champion of Catholic Education



In his Apostolic Letter Drawing New Maps of Hope (2025), issued to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Gravissimum Educationis, Pope Leo XIV celebrates the enduring vitality of Catholic education. The Pope acknowledges with gratitude the many religious congregations that "took their first steps in the field of knowledge," enriching the world of learning "in a pedagogically innovative and socially visionary way." Among these pioneers, he highlights Saint Marcellin Champagnat, founder of the Marist Brothers of the Schools, as one of the great champions of Catholic education.

Pope Leo XIV notes that Champagnat "dedicated himself wholeheartedly to the mission of educating and evangelizing children and young people, especially those most in need, during a period when access to education was the privilege of a few." Inspired by deep faith and a love of Mary, Champagnat saw education as a path to both human and spiritual growth. His founding vision—to make Jesus known and loved through the education of the poor—transformed rural France and gave rise to a worldwide movement of Marist schools.

The Pope commends the Marist Brothers' contribution to forming "new generations of believers and citizens" through an education that integrates faith, reason, and compassion. By referencing Champagnat in his Apostolic Letter, Pope Leo XIV affirms that the Marist educational charism continues to be both relevant and transformative. It calls educators not only to teach, but to accompany the young, especially those marginalized or forgotten. In the spirit of Gravissimum Educationis, Catholic education is to be inclusive, holistic, and rooted in Gospel values.

The Pope concludes with a challenge: to "renew the passion for education as an act of hope." For the Marist Brothers and their collaborators, this is both recognition and invitation—to continue their founder's mission of making education a living expression of faith, love, and social justice in an ever-changing world.





Opening of the 2025 2026 Academic Year Recollection at Centre Scolaire Saint Marcellin Champagnat, Bouaké

The staff of Centre Scolaire Saint Marcellin Champagnat de Bouaké began the new academic year with a spiritual recollection held on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, under the inspiring theme:
"Pilgrims of Hope for a Renewal of the Marist Mission in Bouaké."

The recollection, animated by Br. Parfait, invited the staff to reflect deeply on their Marist identity and mission as educators. Drawing inspiration from Romans 5:1–7, Br. Parfait emphasized the power of faith, perseverance, and hope — essential virtues for those called to form young people in the spirit of Saint Marcellin Champagnat.

Throughout the session, participants engaged in prayer, meditation, and group discussions centered on three guiding questions:

- Where do we see the spirit of Champagnat in our daily lives?
- What are the signs of hope we recognize despite the challenges we face here in Bouaké?
- What concrete actions can we take to renew the Marist mission in our context today?

These reflections fostered a sense of unity and renewed commitment among the teachers and staff. Many expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to pause, pray, and refocus on the true meaning of their vocation as Marist educators — serving with simplicity, presence, and love.

The recollection concluded with a Eucharistic celebration and a fraternal sharing as the community entrusted the new academic year to God's grace and the intercession of Saint Marcellin Champagnat.

As pilgrims of hope, the staff of Centre Scolaire Saint Marcellin Champagnat de Bouaké move forward with renewed faith and energy, to continue building a community where young people grow to be good Christians and responsible citizens.

Opening Mass of the 2025 2026 Academic Year at Lycée Collège Marie Kétal



The School community of Lycée Collège Marie Kétal gathered joyfully to celebrate the Opening Mass of the Academic Year 2025–2026, a moment of thanksgiving and spiritual renewal for students, teachers, and staff.

Presided over by Abbé Claude Doualta, chaplain of the institution, the Eucharistic celebration invited everyone to entrust the new school year to God's providence. The students actively participated through prayers, readings, and songs, making the celebration both lively and prayerful.

One of the highlights of the Mass was the Universal Prayer, during which students presented their intentions for a peaceful, successful, and grace-filled year. The school choir also animated the liturgy beautifully, filling the atmosphere with melodies of faith and joy.

This moment of communion reminded all participants that true education embraces both the mind and the spirit. As the new year begins, the Lycée Collège Marie Kétal School community continues to walk in faith, unity, and dedication to excellence.









The School Canteen: A Place of Care and Community at Champagnat Bouaké

At Centre Scolaire Saint Marcellin Champagnat de Bouaké, the school canteen plays an important role in the daily life of the students. Each day, a good number of pupils enjoy their lunch in the canteen, under the guidance and supervision of the Brothers and teachers, ensuring that the experience is not only nourishing but also educational and community-oriented.

The canteen provides a clean, safe, and welcoming environment, where students can eat in comfort and enjoy a balanced meal prepared with care. Great attention is given to hygiene and food safety, from the preparation of meals to the cleanliness of the dining area. The staff, known affectionately as les cantinières, work diligently to ensure that every meal served contributes to the health and well-being of the children.

After lunch, students have a moment of rest before returning to their afternoon classes. This time of relaxation helps them recharge their energy and return to learning with renewed focus and enthusiasm.

The existence of the school canteen is also a great relief for parents, especially those who live far from the school or cannot come to pick up their children at midday. Knowing that their children are well cared for, fed, and supervised throughout the day brings peace of mind to many families.

The school community extends its special thanks to all who contribute to the smooth running of the canteen — the Brothers, teachers, and dedicated cantinières — for their daily commitment to ensuring that every student is well attended to and cared for.

More than just a place to eat, the canteen at Centre Scolaire Saint Marcellin Champagnat de Bouaké embodies the Marist spirit of family, simplicity, and love, creating a space where children feel at home and grow together in friendship and gratitude.









Celebration of the Holy Mass at Marist Bilingual Comprehensive College, Babenga







At Marist Bilingual Comprehensive College, Babenga, the Holy Mass occupies a central place in the life of the school. It is more than a religious obligation — it is a living expression of the school's mission "to make Jesus Christ known and loved" through a truly holistic education that nourishes both the mind and the soul.

As part of its commitment to forming good Christians and responsible citizens, the school community gathers joyfully to celebrate the Eucharist three times each week — on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Fridays. Each celebration provides a sacred moment to pause, reflect, and reconnect with God amid the rhythm of academic life.

Although the college is still young, with pupils between the ages of nine and twelve, the Marist Brothers and their collaborators have succeeded in creating a deeply spiritual and welcoming atmosphere. Their dedication ensures that every celebration is lively, meaningful, and participatory. Before each Mass, students rehearse hymns and liturgical songs, guided by the brothers, who teach them not only the music but also the spirit behind each melody. This helps the children experience the Eucharist not as passive observers but as active participants in the mystery of faith.

The Masses have become special moments of unity and joy for the entire school. Teachers, students, and brothers come together as one family around the altar. The younger pupils often take part in reading the Word of God, bringing up the offertory gifts, and leading songs, learning through these gestures the beauty of service and community life.

Through these regular celebrations, the school gently nurtures the students' spiritual growth, helping them to develop a deeper relationship with God. The experience of prayer and song strengthens their faith and forms in them the Marist values of simplicity, family spirit, presence, and love of God.

For many students, these liturgical moments are among the most cherished memories of their school life. They learn that faith is not confined to the chapel but is something that gives meaning to every aspect of their education.

In this way, Marist Bilingual Comprehensive College, Babenga continues to build a community where the Gospel is lived daily — a place where young people are prepared not only to succeed academically, but also to become compassionate, faith-filled individuals who will one day transform the world in the spirit of Saint Marcellin Champagnat.

Beginning of the Academic Year 2025/2026 at St. Pius X Catholic Colleges, Tatum









The 2025/2026 academic year officially began at St. Pius X Catholic College on August 17, 2025. However, this reopening was short-lived, as the school had to close just ten days later due to a seven-week lockdown imposed following unrest caused by separatist fighters. The school resumed activities on October 14, 2025, after the conclusion of the presidential elections.

On October 19, 2025, the school held a Thanksgiving Mass to celebrate the safe return of students, the remarkable 100% success rate achieved in the 2025 GCE Certificate Examinations, and, most importantly, to thank God for protecting Rev. Fr. Febian Binyoy, the college chaplain, who had been kidnapped and tortured by separatist fighters before being safely released.

The Mass, held on Saturday, October 25, 2025, was officiated by Rev. Fr. Evans, Parish Priest of Ndzeveru Parish, and assisted by Fr. Febian Binyoy. In his homily, Fr. Evans expressed gratitude to God for the school's academic successes and for safeguarding the chaplain. He also commended the school administration for their care of the students and praised the students for their dedication and seriousness in their studies, encouraging them to continue striving for excellence.



A New Academic Year Begins at St. Albert Comprehensive College, Bafut

The atmosphere at St. Albert Comprehensive College (SACC), Bafut, was filled with energy and anticipation as both students and staff gathered for the first Sunday assembly of the 2025/2026 academic year. The event also featured the principal's address, marking an inspiring start to a year full of promise and renewed commitment to excellence.

A Moment of Renewal and Commitment

Under the leadership of Brother Therence Wiykiynyuy, the newly appointed Principal of SACC Bafut, the school community came together to reflect on its mission and set the tone for the months ahead. The principal's address was not only a message of welcome but also a call to unity, hard work, and faithfulness in living out the school's Marist values.

Gathered in the assembly hall, the teachers and students listened attentively, their faces reflecting both excitement and determination. The principal encouraged everyone to approach the new academic year with zeal, discipline, and a spirit of collaboration, reminding them that education is a shared journey where each person contributes to the growth of the community.

A United and Motivated Community

The photo captured during this special gathering beautifully reflects the mood of the day — a united team ready to embrace new challenges. The teachers of St. Albert, standing proudly with their students, symbolized the heart of the Marist educational mission: the commitment to guiding young people with love, patience,

and dedication.

Brother Therence's leadership has already brought a renewed sense of enthusiasm and direction. His words resonated deeply, encouraging both staff and students to see the new academic year as an opportunity to grow not only intellectually but also spiritually and morally.

Moving Forward in Hope

As the sun set on that first Sunday, one could sense a collective readiness to begin again — to learn, to teach, to serve, and to live together as a Marist family. The community of St. Albert Comprehensive College, Bafut, stands at the threshold of a new chapter, one filled with hope, faith, and determination.
With the guidance of Brother Therence Wiykiynyuy and the support of dedicated staff, the school looks forward to a fruitful year ahead — one that will further the Marist dream of forming good Christians and responsible citizens, inspired by the spirit of Saint Marcellin Champagnat.





Cultural Week at MIUC, Nairobi: Celebrating Unity in Diversity

The Marist International University College (MIUC) in Nairobi marked its annual Cultural Week from 3rd to 8th November 2025, a vibrant celebration honoring the rich diversity and multicultural identity of the institution. This special event highlighted the presence of more than 17 nationalities represented among the students, reflecting the international spirit and global mission of the Marist Institute.

Throughout the week, students animated the campus with a joyful atmosphere of fraternity, creativity, and intercultural exchange. Each day carried its own dress theme, inviting participants to explore various expressions of style and identity:

- Monday: Official Wear
- Tuesday: High School Uniform
- Wednesday: Crazy Outfit
- Thursday: Old School Fashion
- Friday: Sportswear
- Saturday: Cultural Attire & Grand Finale Celebration

Of particular note was the enthusiastic participation of the scholastic Brothers from the Marist International Center (MIC). They were fully engaged in the activities, giving life to the event through their presence, performances, and cultural contributions, thus reinforcing the spirit of unity and brotherhood within the Marist family.

The celebration reached its climax on Saturday with a day-long festival on campus, bringing together students, faculty, and staff. The program included:

- Procession and performance of all national anthems,
- Cultural exhibitions and artistic presentations from each country,
- Traditional dances, songs, and culinary displays,
- Recreational and intercultural activities fostering dialogue, respect, and mutual appreciation.

Cultural Week at MIUC continues to be a powerful witness to the Marist values of internationality, inclusiveness, and global solidarity, echoing the vision of Saint Marcellin Champagnat who called us to "form good Christians and virtuous citizens" in every context and culture.

As the celebration concluded, participants renewed their commitment to living in harmony, promoting peace, and embracing diversity as a gift and a strength for the Church, the Marist world, and humanity.









Marist Brothers Catholic School Hosts Inter-Students Competition





The campus of Marist Brothers Catholic School in Kpain´s Town - Liberia came alive on October 24, 2025, as students gathered for an exciting inter-students' competition that brought together both new and returning learners in a day filled with energy, laughter, and friendly rivalry.

The event featured a wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities, including soccer, kickball, volleyball, and quiz competitions. From the first whistle to the final round, the atmosphere was electric — a true celebration of team spirit and youthful enthusiasm.

Promoting Teamwork and Healthy Competition

The main objective of the competition was to promote teamwork, discipline, and sportsmanship among students while strengthening bonds within the school community. By working together in teams, participants learned to communicate effectively, support one another, and celebrate both victory and effort — values that lie at the heart of Marist education.

Teachers and organizers noted the high level of participation and enthusiasm displayed by students throughout the day. Whether on the sports field or in the quiz hall, every student showed dedication and joy, proving that learning also happens beyond the classroom walls.

A Celebration of Talent and Spirit

The competition offered an opportunity for students to showcase their talents and creativity, while discovering new abilities and forming lasting friendships. The cheers, laughter, and moments of shared excitement reflected the strong sense of family spirit that defines Marist institutions.

At the end of the day, the school community gathered to celebrate the winners

and express gratitude to all who contributed to the event's success. The school administration extended heartfelt congratulations to the victorious teams and sincere thanks to the organizing committee, teachers, and students for their commitment and enthusiasm.

Building the Marist Spirit Beyond the Classroom

More than just a day of games, the inter-students' competition was a reminder of the school's mission to form well-rounded individuals — students who grow intellectually, physically, and spiritually. Through such activities, Marist Brothers Catholic School continues to nurture young people in the spirit of simplicity, family, and love of work, echoing the vision of Saint Marcellin Champagnat.











Opening Mass at Collège Catholique Marcellin Champagnat, Korhogo

The community of Collège Catholique Marcellin Champagnat de Korhogo gathered joyfully on Wednesday, October 22, 2025, to celebrate the opening Mass of the 2025–2026 academic year. The celebration, held within the school premises, was a moment of gratitude, renewal, and blessing as students, teachers, and Brothers placed the new school year under God's loving guidance.

The Holy Mass was presided over by Father Kolo Pierre, Assistant Parish Priest of St. Antoine de Padoue Parish, Petit Paris. His presence and message gave a deeply spiritual tone to the celebration, reminding everyone of the true purpose of Catholic education — the formation of both the mind and the heart.

A Call to Commitment and Spiritual Growth

In his homily, Father Kolo warmly welcomed all students, especially those joining the school community for the first time. He invited them to begin the academic year with seriousness, responsibility, and openness to learning. Education, he emphasized, is not just about acquiring knowledge but about growing into responsible, respectful, and compassionate young people.

He urged the students to listen

attentively to their parents, teachers, and the Marist Brothers who accompany them daily. He also encouraged them to learn from one another, highlighting the importance of teamwork, friendship, and mutual respect in the learning process.

Above all, Father Kolo reminded everyone of the need to stay spiritually grounded — to entrust their studies and efforts into the hands of the Lord, regardless of their religious background. Whether Christian or Muslim, every student was encouraged to seek God's blessings and to live values of faith, peace, and fraternity.

A Moment of Serenity and Reflection

The celebration unfolded in a serene and prayerful atmosphere, marked by reverent singing, attentive listening, and heartfelt participation. The students displayed maturity and discipline, reflecting the values at the heart of Marist education — simplicity, presence, and love of God.

The celebration served as a powerful reminder that academic success finds its deepest meaning when rooted in spiritual wisdom and moral integrity.

Looking Ahead with Hope

With the grace received during the opening Mass, Collège Catholique Marcellin Champagnat de Korhogo begins this new academic year filled with hope, energy, and enthusiasm. Under the guidance of the Marist Brothers and the dedicated teaching staff, students are invited to live each day as a step toward excellence — academically, spiritually, and humanly — following the example of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, who taught that to educate a child is to touch the heart.









Sporting Activities at Marist Bilingual Comprehensive College, Babenga



At Marist Bilingual Comprehensive College, Babenga, education goes beyond the classroom. The school recognizes that true formation involves not only intellectual growth but also physical, emotional, and social development. In keeping with this holistic vision, the college has made sports and physical activities an integral part of school life.

Every Tuesday and Sunday, students eagerly take to the field for their scheduled sporting sessions. These moments are more than just a break from academic work — they are occasions for joy, teamwork, and the cultivation of important life values such as discipline, perseverance, and respect for others.

Sports as a Tool for Growth

The Brothers and teachers believe that physical activity is essential for sound health and balanced growth. Through games and exercises, students not only develop their physical strength and coordination but also learn how to cooperate, communicate, and celebrate collective success. These experiences prepare them to face challenges with confidence and resilience, both in and out of school.

Although the college currently operates with limited sports facilities, enthusiasm remains remarkably high. The boys show great passion for football, often turning the school's open grounds into lively playing fields filled with energy and laughter. The girls, on the other hand, display impressive skill and teamwork in handball,

a sport that has quickly become a favorite on campus. Their spirited participation reflects the joy and confidence that physical activity brings.



A Spirit of Family and Participation

What makes the sporting activities at Babenga truly unique is the active involvement of the Marist Brothers and boarding staff. They do not stand aside as mere supervisors; instead, they join the students on the field — playing, cheering, and sharing in the fun. Their presence transforms the playground into a space of connection and family spirit, embodying the Marist value of being present among young people.

This close interaction between Brothers, staff, and students strengthens relationships and fosters mutual respect. The students see in their mentors living examples of balance — individuals who combine faith, learning, and healthy living in joyful harmony.

Forming the Whole Person

Through these regular sporting activities, the college continues to nurture well-rounded young people — students who grow not only in knowledge but also in physical strength, character, and moral values.

In the words of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, the founder of the Marist Brothers, education must touch the heart as well as the mind. At Babenga, it also strengthens the body — helping every child to become a good Christian, a responsible citizen, and a healthy, happy member of society





We welcome your valuable input.
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