

October 06, 2017



CONSECRATED LIFE - Tuesday, 3rd October, Brothers Ernesto Sánchez Barba of Western Mexico was elected as Superior General, and Luis Carlos Gutiérrez Blanco from the Province of Central América as Vicar General of the Institute of the Marist Brothers.

Election of the Superior General

The election of [Br. Ernesto Sánchez](#) as Superior General began with the Brother capitulants meeting in the Chapel at 7:30 a.m. After the singing of the 'Salve Regina', Brothers Seán Sammon and Emili Turú, the two previous Superiors General, distributed to each capitulant the short-list of Brothers who received the most nominations. A time of contemplative prayer and discernment followed until 10 a.m. when the capitulants gathered in the Chapter Hall to begin the election process.

The election process for the new Superior General began with prayer, prepared by Br. Tony Leon, invoking the coming of the Holy Spirit upon everyone involved. Those seated at the moderator's table were Brothers Emili Turú, President of the Chapter, Ben Consigli, Coordinator of the Facilitation Commission, João Carlos do Prado, Chapter Secretary, and Deives Fischer and Bernard Beaudin, the youngest and oldest Brothers respectively. Deives and Bernard had the role as scrutineers. Brothers Aureliano García and Michel Maminiaina Razafimandimby were also invited to assist the Chapter Secretary.

The election process concluded at 10.55 a.m. Following tradition, Brother Deives Fischer, being the youngest Brother participant, left the Chapter Hall to ring the bell, announcing the election of

Brother Ernesto. This event and the congratulations extended to Brother Ernesto by everyone present at the General Chapter, was streamed directly to hundreds of people watching via Facebook.

With the greetings completed, Brother Ernesto, accompanied by Brothers Emili Turú, Seán Sammon and the whole Chapter community, processed with a relic of St. Marcellin to the Chapel singing the Magnificat. Once in the chapel the Sub tuum praesidium was sung.

At this moment of thanksgiving to God and to Mary, Brother Emili invited Brother Ernesto to share with everyone some first words as Superior General:

This is a moment when my heart is burning with joy. Thank you for your trust. To know that we are together, in this adventure of helping create a “New La Valla”, that we desire this with all our hearts, gives me courage. During this election process I kept with me the rosary my mother gave me when I left home 39 years ago to go to the Postulancy. She told me, “I’m going to ask Mary to be with you!” This is what I desire during these years when I will be serving everyone associated with our Marist life and mission, Brothers, lay people, educators, everyone. I put everyone in the hands of Mary. Let this be a Marian time, with all that it means. I would like to end by thanking particularly Seán and Emili for all that I have learned from them. I will try to carry this responsibility with great care and affection, and to the best of my ability.

Election of the Vicar General

In the afternoon, [Br. Luis Carlos Gutiérrez Blanco](#) , Provincial of Central America, was elected Vicar General of the Institute. The process was very similar to the election of the Superior General. At 3.00 p.m. capitulants gathered in the Chapter Hall. The election process began with a Marian prayer led by the new Superior General, Brother Ernesto. A time for individual personal reflection and discernment followed until about 4.30 p.m. when the capitulants returned to the Chapter Hall to begin voting. At about 5:15 p.m. Brother Luis Carlos received the majority required. All the capitulants, and everyone associated with the work of the Chapter, lined up to convey their congratulations to Luis Carlos, who together with Brother Ernesto will lead the Institute into its third century.

Thanksgiving

At 6.30 p.m. a joyful mass of thanksgiving was celebrated for the election of new Superior and Vicar General. Frei Rodrigo Ortiz OFM was the celebrant. The General Chapter community was joined by the Medellín Novitiate community and the Marist community of San Domingo.

After mass, the celebrations continued with drinks, followed by a sumptuous dinner prepared by the kitchen staff. During the dinner, a local mariachi band made a surprise visit to honour the election of Brothers Ernesto and Luis Carlos. This gesture was generously organized as a gift from the management of Lasallian Conference Centre. The music and singing provided by the mariachi band perfectly complimented the spirit of joy, excitement and celebration everyone felt in welcoming the election of the 14th Superior General and the Vicar General.