

# MARISTS ON A JOURNEY



Catechesis8/12

15th February 2013

## “Believe in Love”

Pope Benedict XVI. Lenten Message 2013.

### LENT IS:

Taking a good look at Jesus, until you learn from him, until you can see him with your eyes closed.

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, until you learn to run and tell your brothers and sisters, going in search of others and placing yourself at their service.

Being silent within so that you can hear the Word of God. A time of conversion not of mortification.

Liberating efforts, not the usual practices.

Sharing joy, not suffering and solitude.

It is a softening of the heart, a letting go of all violence within you.

Progressive detachment overcoming consumerism.

Open yourself to life in the Spirit

Each day we come closer to our meeting in R o de Janeiro.   Only 159 days left!

We have come to a moment of grace in our Pilgrimage a time of conversion during this Lent which has just begun. Our Holy Father Pope Benedict has given us a message for meditation during this time.

### The whole of Christian life consists in responding to God’s call.

This way of life is born of an encounter with Jesus who reveals the love of the Father to us and here there is an unbreakable link between faith and charity. Charity is love lived in faith, and our faith bears fruit in charity.

“Christian existence consists in a continuous mountain - climb to meet God so that we can then return, bringing love and the strength that comes from love, in order to serve our brothers and sisters with



the same love of God.”.

Spiritual Theology speaks of: contemplation and action, mysticism and prophecy. Both of these are intimately united, and both are a gift from God for humankind.

F a i t h i s t h e underlying element, it goes first and is seen as authentic when it is crowned with charity. This is widely understood as love in solidarity, struggling for justice, and at the same time committed to the integral good of the person, the Gospel of Jesus, the project of the Kingdom of God and salvation from the Father.

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## DISCIPLES OF JESUS



### PRAYERFUL LISTENING TO THE WORD

Lent begins each year presenting us with the text on the temptations in the desert. This Liturgical cycle B it is taken from the Gospel of Mark (1, 12-15). A short Gospel at the centre of which are the words of Jesus: **"The time has come , the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the Good News"**

The disciples are called to conversion. However our conversion is not a call to grief and sorrow. We present you with this fragment of a text from the extraordinary Bible scholar Dolores Aleixandre, entitled **"You have changed my sorrow into dancing"** based on Psalm 30, meditate and comment on it.

"and if it were the interior music to which we listen, which makes us dance with a determined rhythm and make incomprehensible gestures for those who do not listen? And when our dance fails will it not be because we have disconnected from the Gospel channel?"

Living our Lent insisting on our need for conversion as the "only channel", could have an effect different from what we intend and convert us into frustrated people for having failed to reach a high level of perfection or, following the metaphor of the dance, staying rigidly and timidly in the corner of the dance hall, with awkward feet and deaf ears to hear the music which aims to seduce us in its rhythm, unable to risk participating in the movement without knowing where it will lead us.

Lent is here again, offering us the good news that we have another opportunity to dance, just like the barren fig tree in the parable of Jesus (Mt 21,18-19). Once again the invitation in the letter to the Hebrews resounds in our ears: "with so many witnesses in a great cloud on every side of us , we too, then, should throw off everything that hinders us , especially the sin that clings so easily, and keep running steadily in the race we have started. Let us not lose sight of Jesus , who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection ." (Hb 12,1-2) The phrase evokes the one who leads the race , the one who begins the dance, we could translate that as *us, ourselves*, without making too much of a mistake.

*What , if we can live Lent in this way?*

Watch out for notes in News for the journey in [www.maristoyouthinternational.org](http://www.maristoyouthinternational.org)

¡We are already registered! ¡We will see you in Rio!



There are still some places .... Encourage your friends!

*"Go make disciples of all nations "* (Mt 28,19)



## The voice of the Pope:

*Dear Young People:*

### 2. BECOME CHRIST'S DISCIPLES

This missionary vocation comes to you for another reason as well, and that is because it is necessary for our personal journey in faith. Blessed John Paul II wrote that "faith is strengthened when it is given to others!" (Redemptoris Missio, 2). When you proclaim the Gospel, you yourselves grow as you become more deeply rooted in Christ and mature as Christians. Missionary commitment is an essential dimension of faith. We cannot be true believers if we do not evangelize. The proclamation of the Gospel can only be the result of the joy that comes from meeting Christ and finding in him the rock on which our lives can be built. When you work to help others and proclaim the Gospel to them, then your own lives, so often fragmented because of your many activities, will find their unity in the Lord. You will also build up your own selves, and you will grow and mature in humanity.

What does it mean to be a missionary? Above all, it means being a disciple of Christ. It means listening ever anew to the invitation to follow him and look to him: "Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart" (Mt 11:29). A disciple is a person attentive to Jesus' word (cf. Lk 10:39), someone who acknowledges that Jesus is the Teacher who has loved us so much that he gave his life for us. Each one of you, therefore, should let yourself be shaped by God's word every day. This will make you friends of the Lord Jesus and enable you to lead other young people to friendship with him.

I encourage you to think of the gifts you have received from God so that you can pass them on to others in turn. Learn to reread your personal history. Be conscious of the wonderful legacy passed down to you from previous generations. So many faith-filled people have been courageous in handing down the faith in the face of trials and incomprehension. Let us never forget that we are links in a great chain of men and women who have transmitted the truth of the faith and who depend on us to pass it on to others. Being a missionary presupposes knowledge of this legacy, which is the faith of the Church. It is necessary to know what you believe in, so that you can proclaim it. As I wrote in the introduction to the YouCat, the catechism for young people that I gave you at World Youth Day in Madrid, "you need to know your faith with that same precision with which an IT specialist knows the inner workings of a computer. You need to understand it like a good musician knows the piece he is playing. Yes, you need to be more deeply rooted in the faith than the generation of your parents so that you can engage the challenges and temptations of this time with strength and determination" (Foreward).

### Reflect and share:

*What is the relationship between being a missionary and being a disciple? What are the essential elements of discipleship? To what is our Holy Father inviting us? .*

*"You have changed my sorrow into dancing"  
Psalm 30, 12*

# In Mary's way



## Signs of God's love: They loved to the end

Adapted from Brother Benito Arbués, Fernando Figueroa and P. Manuel from Unciti y Ayerdi

In this section of "In Mary's way" we present the testimony and generous self giving of some Marist Brothers Fernando de la Fuente, Servando Mayor, Miguel Ángel Isla and Julio Rodríguez.

Without any doubt their surrender to God was not only on the day of their martyrdom, 31st of October 1996, but was expressed in no end of daily actions, in a generous self giving to God whom they found in the eyes of every child and adult in the refugee camp in Nyamirangwe and in the different areas of apostolic ministry in their home province.

The violent death of Servando, Julio, Miguel Ángel y Fernando has interrupted the physical presence of a religious community in the Nyamirangwe camp. Their lives today have a new dimension and their message speaks louder than ever of Jesus Risen from the dead. Many people of good will have come to God through their testimony.

### Who are Fernando, Miguel Ángel, Servando and Julio?



Fernando had lived most of his life outside of Spain, in Chile, where he was Formator and Provincial Councillor. He was only one year in Zaire.

Miguel Ángel, had lived 13 years in Argentina and 22 in Costa de Marfil, where he was superior in the Sector. Julio spent 14 years in Zaire and for only a few months was a member of this community in Nyamirangwe.

This was the first missionary experience for Servando. As was the case with the other Brothers it was for one year, but due to the circumstances in the refugee camp he had accepted to stay another year.

### What did they do in the refugee camp?

In August 1994 The Brothers in Ruanda decided to have a presence among all classes of people there.



They reopened three communities establishing a mission for schools. Six Brothers began a new community ministering to Refugees out side of the country. Faced with the difficulties for the refugees and for the Brothers from Ruanda, they strengthened the community with non African Brothers; but as the dangers persisted the Brothers opted to withdraw all Ruandan Brothers from the community in Bugobe.

### Disciples of Jesus, witnesses to hope in Mary's way

Four notable missionaries, four lamps alight with love were quenched on the last day of the month of the missions.



Four martyrs for solidarity who "loved to the end". Four violets always alive, who are now adorning the garden of the Marist world.

Four missionaries, "messengers of hope for the world". In one of his letters Brother Fernando said: "we are the principal support of this

abandoned people who are now without hope."

Their testimony in this violent situation reminds us of Mary, the mother of Jesus. What comes to mind is Mary at the foot of the Cross, she was there, as mother, powerless to ease the pain and agony of her Son; powerless to do anything for Him, powerless to embrace Him, an expression of love, his cheeks black and blue from the beating, powerless to place her hand on his forehead tormented by the crown of thorns.... ... but she was there, standing upright, reduced to a mere presence. What a presence she was, what a mere presence, what a quality of maternal presence for her Son who cries out to His God: " why have you abandoned me?".

The four Marist Brothers had opted to be there, to stay there, to remain there alone without any protection. To be there for "their people", to bring back "their own"

They were not heroes, they knew what they were doing, in body and soul they were afraid. They were fully aware of the risks involved in their decision.

Miguel Ángel had written a few very strong phrases on a post card nearly a month before they died: "I know that I am destined to die in Africa, I know I am no hero; but I feel that I must accept the consequences of what God is asking of me at this time. Everything is urgent and provisional, very provisional. Only God can know what could happen; but He knows and remains silent.... We must believe, hope and love always. This is what we do, mounted on uncertainty almost like being mounted on a horse"

