



International Center for Marianist Formation

Centro Internacional de Formación Marianista
Centre International de Formation Marianiste

TO: Participants: *Spirit of Saragossa* Seminar

FROM: Manuel Cortés, SM – General Superior, Society of Mary and Marie Joëlle Bec, FMI – General Superior, Daughters of Mary Immaculate

DATE: 1 March 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

In the name of our two Institutes – and, why not?—of the whole Marianist Family, we thank you for accepting to come. Thank you for your availability and your generous and enthusiastic dedication to the service of living out our charism. We are happy to note that you form a rich and diverse group, representing the universality of our ministries and cultures.

Welcome, Brothers and Sisters to this time of living together, of sharing and listening at the school of our Founders. What effect did the Word have in their life? What commitment did it draw them to? This Word which has been a source of inspiration, of creativity, of service in their life still has something to say to us today. Thus, you have here the offer of discovering “The Spirit of Saragossa,” a thirty-day retreat.

Is there anyone who has not dreamed of a thirty-day retreat in the Marianist spirit? Our Founders’ texts are a treasure trove. But who will do this? Who will have the time? And so we have a mixed team of Brothers and Sisters, who have been working for more than two years. They have worked, and after an initial outline they have consulted the different Units, and now they plan to introduce you to such a Marianist retreat.

There is a wealth to discover to offer our Brothers and our Sisters preparing for their definitive commitment, and also more broadly to the various branches of the Marianist Family, and even beyond. A charism is always given for the good of the Church. Let us not be timid; let us dare to offer what we have received from our Founders.

We count on you, trusting that your work will be fruitful. And not only at this meeting, but we count on you in the practical giving of this retreat and of this entire project that will need to be completed and perfected along the way. So we need you to travel on this exciting journey which is just beginning. We need your experience to get it started, as well as your continuous evaluation for its direction and improvement.

We ask the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of Mary, our Mother, to enlighten you and accompany you in your task.

Manuel Cortés, SM and Marie Joëlle Bec, FMI